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UNIVERSAL ROMANIAN THINKERS

PSILOSOPHY AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

THE CANTEMIRIAN ANTHROPOLOGICAL MODEL

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*Abstract: Dimitrie Cantemir was a forerunner of the philosophical anthropology not only in the Romanian area, but also in the European one. The analysis that we present in this text is based on his work **Descriptio Moldaviae**, conceived two years after his election as a member of the Academy of Berlin (1714) upon the recommendation and request of the German scholars who asked him to write about his people. Thus, Dimitrie Cantemir offers a contextualized anthropology expressing a multidisciplinary vision (a historical, geographical, ethnological, sociological, legal, economic and literary one) about the Moldavian society's kinship with the European one. In fact, a scholarly approach based on a synchronic-diachronic comparative method that contributes to an inter- and trans-cultural understanding in the 18th century, which gives it a European resonance. The Cantemirian model is not infallible because there are also many erroneous information that can be explained both by the lack of a model (Cantemir had no model) and by the limited information of the time. His model is imposed in contemporary anthropological knowledge both through the consciousness of objectivity and through critical self-consciousness, but also by the vastness of information, the accuracy of the method used and the modern conception underlying it.*

Keywords: philosophical anthropology, history, culture, geography, nation, knowledge, tradition, society.

Dimitrie Cantemir's work fully reveals its meanings and pithily defines its place in the development of the Romanian and European culture, if we relate it to the era in which it was created. By contrast with everything written in the Romanian culture until the turn of the 18th century, Dimitrie Cantemir stands out both through the scope of his preoccupations and the novelty of his ideas, being the first encyclopaedic scholar of our culture, a pioneer in some fields. There are several stages that can be delimited in Cantemir's creation.[1] Between the Ottoman and the Russian periods of its creation, there are, however, some

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[1] Ştefan Lemny, The *Cantemirians. The European Adventure of a Princely Family from the 18th Century*, Iaşi, Polirom, 2013, p.180.

essential differences. When he was living in the sultans' empire, his preoccupations were mostly literary and philosophical; in Russia, history is at the heart of his thinking. Prior to 1711, his writings mirrored a personality troubled by existential questions. After this date, he began to investigate the history of the Moldavian-Romanians and that of the Ottomans, the geography of Moldavia, the religion of Muslims; his works are a kind of mirror of the peoples he studied. Thus, knowledgeable about several cultures and languages, Dimitrie Cantemir met the conditions of the anthropologist, because his paradigm of thought concentrates all the cultures of his time, achieving a true symbiosis between the East and the West.

The motivation on which the predilection of anthropology for the *area of alterity* is based seems extremely serious, the declared stake being the ideal of objectivity: the study of a socio-cultural fact requires some epistemological distance, and this (it is argued) cannot be obtained within the same system of values. There are voices in the specialized literature arguing that an anthropologist cannot approach the truth of a fact as long as he belongs to the same culture.[2] In ***Descriptio Moldaviae*** Cantemir manages to depict ***a complete anthropological model of Moldavia*** owing to the objectivity of his thinking, to his highly developed critical and self-critical spirit. From the research works undertaken in the specialized literature, one could find out that the Romanian thinker had no model to write such a complex work. Thus, *Descriptio Moldaviae* stands out as a reference work for his creation, as it makes an astounding proof of the his encyclopaedic thinking, accounting for his historical vision, for his new ideas about the geography of Moldavia (being at the same time the first cartographer of Moldavia) as well as his for knowledge about ethnology, cultural, historical, political, religious, legal and psychological anthropology. Thus, through its scientific conception - geography being studied in connection with history and economy - the ***Description of Moldavia*** is above the similar works of the time, Dimitrie Cantemir being acquainted with them.[3]

In this article we intend to address Dimitrie Cantemir's contribution to his contemporary anthropological knowledge, magistratively prefigured in ***Descriptio Moldaviae***, a work elaborated at the urge of the German scholars who recommended him to write about his people in order to make him known around the world. Originally, he wrote about his people in Latin, at the foreigners' request: "Urged and invited by some foreign friends, and more than that by our kinship with the Berlin Academy of Sciences, not just once or twice, but many times, being urged and asked to inform on the origins and the age of the Moldavians, at least briefly ..."[4]

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[2] Hastrup, Kirsten, *Native Anthropology: A Contradiction in Terms?,* in: *Folk*, 1993, 35: 147–161.

[3] Cantemir Cantemir uses in the documentation for this work the following writings - indicated by P.P. Panaitescu (*Dimitrie Cantemir: Life and Work*, Bucharest, 1958): *The Old and New Geography of Meletie de Arta*, written in 1701 and published twenty-seven years later, consulted in the manuscript during his stay in Constantinople, *Polonia sive de situ, populis, moribus, magistratibus et respublica regni poloniae, libri duo de Martin Cromer, Descriptio veteris et novae Poloniae de St. Sarnicki, Introduction to geography by* Hrisant Nottara *etc.*

[4] Dimirie Cantemir, *Description of Moldavia,* afterword and bibliography by Magdalena Popescu, 2nd edition, Bucharest, 1976, p.243.

The basis of the Cantemirian anthropology

Thus, Dimitrie Cantemir had to answer some questions that the foreigners from the turn of the eighteenth centuries could have asked themselves, such as those concerning the identity of the Romanians and their countries.

The two centuries, the 17th and the 18th century, between which the life and activity of the Moldavian prince is placed, are decisive for directing the interest of the illuminated intellectuals towards the knowledge of the popular ethnic cultures. The Enlightenment trends, to which Dimitrie Cantemir's interest in religion and folk culture responded, situates the Moldavian ruler on that line which marked the approach of the Romanian society to the threshold of the modern world. At that time there were some European ideological trends to which the well-known humanists had adhered and, as we can see reading the Cantemirian works, the Romanian prince was acquainted with them. We consider it quite importance to remind the names of his contemporaries ...., scientists, philosophers, writers who were active in the West of Europe: Isaac Newton (*Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*, 1687), Gianbattista Vico (*New Sciences Concerning the Common Nature of Nations*, 1725, 1730, 1744), Montesquieu (*Considerations on the Causes of the Greatness of the Romans and their Decline)*, 1734, *The Spirit of Laws*, 1748), etc. In the second half of the 18th century, in the first quarter of which Dimitrie Cantemir lived and worked, Johann Gottfried von Herder developed the theory of cultural nationalism, according to which "the spirit of the peoples" manifests itself through their language and songs.

In the context of our research we considered it important, before entering into the Cantemirian anthropological model, to analyze the motivation of the work, what made Dimitrie Cantemir write *Descriptio Moldaviae*, how did this work originate?!

The circumstances are well known, even in detail, but *a minimum of historical data* seems to be necessary in this approach. We recall, therefore, that after the Battle of Stănileşti in 1711, against the Turks, Dimitrie Cantemir would take refuge for the rest of his life (he will die in 1723) in Russia, under the protection of Tsar Peter the Great, who had been his ally in the above mentioned unfortunate battle.

The benefit was that, indirectly, through Peter's orientation towards the West, the erudition of the Moldavian prince would find new ways of affirmation in the West of Europe, where scientific knowledge manifested itself as a focal value, where the paradigms of scientific explanation were being built up and where the new knowledge was being validated. The Tsar held him in high esteem , and even gave him as a gift an estate in the area of Kharkov, called (after the name of its new master) Dimitrovka.

As a result, freed from the cares of his reign (who would have overwhelmed him, of course, if he had remained on the throne of Moldavia), Cantemir continued to write with even greater commitment, especially in Latin.

During the Russian period he wrote his main works on philosophy of history: *Monarchiarum Physica Examinatio [The Examination of the Nature of Monarchies], Descriptio antiqui et hodierni status Moldaviae [The Description*

of the Old and Today's State of Moldavia] and Historia incrementorum atque decrementorum Aulae Othomanicae [The History of the Rise and Fall of the Ottoman Empire].

Translated (even posthumously) in English, French and German, these writings will trigger reflections in the European consciousness of the next two centuries, some of their ideas resonating with those of other bright minds, or becoming a source of inspiration for writers such as Voltaire, Byron, Victor Hugo. The description first appeared in German, which reminds us that the Academy of Berlin lied at the basis of the project and that the author had been among its members.

It goes without saying, therefore, that Dimitrie Cantemir's invitation, in 1714, to become a member of the Academy of Berlin was fully justified. The entrance of the former Moldavian prince into the high institution was mediated by Baron Heinrich Huyssen, a German scholar from the Russian Imperial Court, a sort of Ambassador of the Academy, who became himself a member of the Academy, acting as a mediator between the German and Russian scholars.

But the choice involved a duty, namely: the presentation of a specialized work, something similar to what is today called the "reception speech", a rule that has been perpetuated and which the academic institutions still respects (in slightly variable forms) in our days.

As far as the thematic orientation is concerned, some outstanding exegesis of the Cantemirian work (George Vâlsan, P. Panaitescu) once launched the hypothesis that the theme of the work had been proposed (and almost imposed) in Berlin. Some Polish writings circulated a geographic confusion between Moldavia and Walachia, and it was supposed that the German scholars were expecting their new colleague at the Academy to clarify these things.

It has been demonstrated, however, that "the urge of the Academy of Berlin, far from imposing a plan for a wider work, was limited to the recommendation of a subject, probably chosen out of respect to the high candidate, leaving him all the freedom as how to approach it" (Holban 1973: 8).[5] However, it is important to note that the high-level academy showed full confidence in the candidate's competence to deal with the topic precisely because *he belonged to that place*!

Desciptio Moldaviae had an 'adventurous' destiny: the manuscript which was in the possession of his son, Antioch, was taken to England when he went on a diplomatic mission as a representative of the Russian emperor at the Royal Court in London; from here he went to Paris. After Antioch's death, it seems to have gone through the hands of several people, successively, to eventually reach Petersburg, where, through the decision of a publisher in Berlin, the work was translated into German by Professor Ludwig Joh.Redslob and published, between 1769-1770, in "Magazin fur die Neue Historie und Geographie". In 1771 the second edition, came out, prepared by Busching, *Demetrii Kantemirs ehemaligen Fursten der Moldau, historisch-geographisch-und politische Beschreibung der Moldau* (Frankfurt and Lipsca), historisch-geographisch-und politische Beschreibung der Moldau (Frankfurt and Leipzig). A few years later (1789), the

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[5] Maria Holban, "*Introduction*" to Dimitrie Cantemir *Descriptio Moldavie*, translation by Gheorghe Guţu, The Academy Publishing House, Bucharest, 1973, p. 8.

work will be translated into Russian and published in Moscow. So, in the 18th century, translations of the work were printed and circulated three times successively, becoming thus accessible to the scholarly world outside the Romanian Countries.

The first Romanian edition of *Descriptio Moldaviae written in Latin, according to the wish of his colleagues from the Academy of Berlin*, came out later, in 1825, the second edition came out in 1851, and the third one in 1865.

The Academy commissioned Al. Papiu Ilarian to collaborate and publish the Latin text of Cantemir's work in 1871. This was accomplished in 1872, when the volume entitled: "*Demetrias de Cantemiri Princips Moldaviae description of antique et hodierni Status Moldaviae, ex museo asiatico Academiae imp. Sccient.Petropol*" came out. This is the first Romanian translation after the Latin original. The second edition of this translation was made by Miron Nicolescu, published in 1909 in the "Socec Library". In the same year, at the "Library for All" another edition of the *Description of Moldavia* after the 1851Negruzzi's edition came out and in 1923 a second Latin translation by George Pascu was published at the Romanian Book Publishing House, followed by Gh. Adamescu's translation at the same publisher. It is the most valuable work of Dimitry Cantemir, it arouses the reader's interest even today due to the richness and authenticity of information contained. We find herein precious details of the home and foreign policy, of economic issues, of the circumstances in which the principality's throne was gained and lost, information that is true because it is validated by the scholar prince who went through a similar situation and who lived for many years in Constantinople in the midst of the High Society thereof, and so on. Equally precious is the information about customs and traditions, beliefs, and so on.[6]

"The authors who researched his works recognize him [Cantemir] as the forerunner of the Romanian ethnology".[7] The value of the Cantemirian monographs as primary documentary source (the first known mourning) or even as singular (for some events from the Moldavian area which have disappeared, such as Căluşarii and Drăgaica) has often been noted.

Some data impress by subtlety such as this distinction belonging to the legal anthropology. "Therefore, two kinds of law were born to the Moldavians: a written one, based on the edicts of the Roman and Greek emperors and on the decisions of the councils, and another one, unwritten, which we could rightly call the custom of the earth [in Latin: *quod consuetudinem gentis recte diceres*]"[8]

Here is a last question that has remained, even today, as far as we know, in a state of latency: *How will have Cantemir collected his ethnographic information*, so naturally integrated in the *Description of Moldavia*? The question is fully justified if we think that the author of the book spent great periods of his life away

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[6] Dimitrie Cantemir, *Description of Moldavia, translated by Gheorghe Adamescu, Bucharest, The Romanian Book Publishing House, 1925*, XI.

[7] Datcu, Iordan "Cantemir Dimitrie", in: Iordan Datcu, The *Dictionary of Romanian Ethnologists, the* 3rd revised and enlarged edition, Bucharest: Saeculum I.O. Publishing House, 2006, pp. 185–188.

[8] Cantemir, Dimitrie, (orig. 1714–1717). *Descriptio Moldaviae / Description of Moldavia*, bilingual Latin–Romanian, translation from Latin by Gh. Guţu, *Introduction* by Maria Holban, Bucharest, The Academy Publishing House, 1973, p. 246

far from his country: at age of 15 he was sent by his father, Prince Constantin Cantemir, as a pledge to Constantinople, where he would remain (even if intermittently) for about two decades, so that after the turn of the fate of 1711, he would live for more than a decade in Russia. It has been said that the aspects described by Dimitrie Cantemir could be considered "points of a kind of questionnaire"[9]. That is why we find it even more appropriate to try to clarify how the author came to collect his ethnographic material.

As far as the behaviours from the princely court and from the boyar class (at weddings, funerals, etc.) are concerned, things seem simple: Dimitrie Cantemir will have known these behaviours as a member, himself, of those social environments. It is common knowledge, for example, that in the very short chapter "About the Gentlemen's Funeral" he reported what he had seen at the funeral of his own parent. But on what basis did he describe such ceremonies in the sphere of the peasant life? Let's say, though, that if there are native germs of vocation, our prince will have had in his genetic code some affinity for the peasant world. His father came to the throne of the country starting from the condition of a yeoman, a condition that also shaped his talent for playing the whistle.[10] A certain biographical detail helps us get an insight into the answer to the question of how he collected the ethnographic data. We take over this detail from one of the recent researchers of his life and work, the same we just quoted above: "Peter [the Great, the Tsar of Russia] also recognized his right to protection and judgment over the Moldavians who shared his fate: 24 big boyars, 448 more modest nobility and countless ordinary servants, that is, about 4,000 souls"[11] well, nothing prevents us from believing that the batch of about 4,000 souls will have been the sample on which Dimitrie Cantemir might have carried out his basic ethnographic documentation as to the traditions at wedding, funeral, etc.

As we have already mentioned, for such practices at the level of the boyar class and the princely court he would have gathered his information more easily, living himself at that social level, but for the simple people's habits it is supposed that he would have interviewed some of those "ordinary servants", belonging to the peasant and craftsmen walks of life. However, we would like to point out that the most valuable part of the *Description of Moldavia* is that it depicts contemporary social aspects, mores and political events of the time, included in the chapters dedicated to the election and declassification of princes, ecclesiastical hierarchy, legislation, wedding and burial customs, and so on. The writer attaches great importance to the popular productions - dances, customs, legends, etc. to define the specific of folk life proving a superior understanding of the character and the social function of folklore.

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[9] Holban, cited works.

[10] Şt.Lemny, The *Cantemirians. The European Adventure of a Princely Family from the 18th Century*, Iaşi, Polirom, 2013, p.62.

[11] Ibidem, p.93, 215

Descriptio Moldaviae between subjectivity and objectivity

As we have shown above, the work is written in Latin, the language of correspondence between Dimitrie Cantemir and the foreign scholars, especially the German colleagues, an additional proof that it was addressed to them mainly. There was a draft version in Romanian, but it did not materialize or, in any case, left no trace. The content itself confirms the idea of a dual orientation from the point of view of the book reception. The foreign readers, completely unaware of the Moldavian realities, are the first to be targeted; the country's detailed description is addressed to them. But the author does not lose sight of his compatriots, convinced that he will benefit them by helping them to to know each other better and to improve themselves "as it is better for the country to open its inhabitants's eyes to the myriad of sins they committed than let themselves be deceived by delusional flattery".

The Academy of Berlin granted the author confidence, precisely because in the world he described he was "at home", according to the expression of today's anthropology. As far as he is concerned, Dimitrie Cantemir will have noticed with an astonishing perspicacity for that time the suspicion he was exposed to, but he wanted to be overly objective, sometimes at the expense of his people.

Here is how he started the chapter entitled "*On the Moldavians' Customs*: "Having to describe the Moldavians' mores, a subject unknown to any foreigner, or known only to a few of them, the love of the country [in the page in Latin: *amor patriae*] urges and commands me to praise the nation which gave birth to me and to speak highly of the inhabitants of this land I originate from; on the other hand, the love of truth [veritatis studium] opposes and prevents me from praising things which the right judgment urges me to criticize.

"I think it is better for the country to open its inhabitants' eyes to the myriad of sins they have committed than to let them be deceived through delusional flatteries and skillful indulgences, and so be confident that everything they do is good, while everyone who has more moral criticizes such acts." (Cantemir 1973: 209). The prince chiefly condemns their laziness, their proneness to drinking alcohol and their unstable character. We might as well consider that the opinion is entirely conventional, coming from a great aristocrat, not very inclined to tolerate the weaknesses of his former subjects, but seized by a slight lyricism when nostalgically evoking his native lands: the high mountains of Moldavia are, he says, "an exquisite artist" and deserves to be as famous as the Olympus. Undoubtedly, the members of the Academy of Berlin will have converted these words into an extra reason to appreciate superlatively the effort and the work of the ex-prince scholar. We must not forget that Moldavia represented for him the principality where he had reigned and where he hoped to come back to take over the reins of power. Without any doubt, this hope pushed him to overrate the real prerogatives of the ruler: the absolute master of the country, he exercises, he argues, a right as "none of the Christian princes has, except for the Russian Tsar." It is not hard to guess his intentions: Dimitrie speaks more of an absolutist reign he wishes for himself rather than the really existing one. Not to mention that such opinions could adorn the colours of the Moldavian princes' coat-of-arms and raise them to the same rank as the other crown heads of Europe. In the same

spirit, he depicts a heroic picture of the Moldovan history. After accusing his compatriots of laziness, he starts praising their bravery in wars. For him, the Romanian Countries managed to survive because of their military capabilities, unmatched by other peoples. How else could we explain, he asks, that the Greeks, the Bulgarians, the Serbs, the Hungarians were subjected to Muslim conquerors, while the Romanians were not, being the only ones on this side of the continent who knew how to preserve their autonomy to a large extent? This is how the theme of the "Romanian exception" was born, which will be subject to many theoretical debates in the future.[12] "If the Moldavian has a good horse and better weapons", he writes, "then he thinks that nobody will defeat him, and he would have the guts of quarrelling with anybody, even with God himself, if that would be possible".[13]

The statement perfectly illustrates the exciting style of the work. Skilful soldiers, they "stretch, well, the bow", "skilfully handle the spear, their favourite weapon being the broadsword. Two of the flaws assigned by Cantemir - laziness and the fact that "they are not lovers of learning"[14] - wrong the diligent Moldavians out of whom enlightened minds emerged later brightly illustrating the most diverse areas of culture. Cantemir probes a consciousness of objectivity extended somewhat to paroxysm, which cancels here and there any trace of patriotism and love for his nation since you cannot say about your people that they hate learning and have no capacity to appreciate the learned men, a completely untrue aspect concerning the Moldavians. Cantemir appreciates, somewhat with a dose of subjectivity that direct observation of reality from the perspective of his experience as a ruler is one of the strengths of the book "Whoever wants to give a political description of Moldavia should, in my opinion, examine first the way in which it is ruled. Because we think that even the most learned men failed in this description".[15] Thus, the prince scholar notes the deep vices of the great boyars that he submits to harsh criticism. He rises against the oppressed peasantry, at the discretion of their masters, "*it is not stipulated beforehand how long to work, but it is up to their master to decide how many days they should go to work.*" If the boyar "*wants to do him injustice, then he beats the peasant until he willingly gives him what he wants to acquire*".[16] Cantemir deplores the fate of Moldavia, ruled by people who bring it great prejudices. "It is almost impossible to say what people deprived of soul have occupied the highest ranks of honour. For this reason, among the top-ranked boyars, there are often to be found vain, arrogant people who, besides having no idea how to deal with the country's affairs, also lack good character and manners and are not used to leading honest lives, who have nothing worthy of praise, but

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[12] Şt. Lemny, cited works, p.187.
[13] Dimitrie Cantemir, *Descriptio Moldaviae,* cited works.
[14] This imputation to ordinary Moldavians is unfair. The social-political conditions prevented the spread of learning among the masses. In the eighteenth century, education had gained somewhat extended, through the establishment of some schools, which, however, were attended only by the sons of the boyars and even among them, a rather large number were studying in Poland.
[15] Dimitrie Cantemir, *Description of Moldavia,* introductory study, antology and final notes by Constantin Măciucă, Bucharest Youth Publishing House, Lyceum, 1967, p.27.
[16] Ibidem, 29.

what is good in one and another, was given by nature, without any teaching from the outside."[17]

"The temple of greed" is strongly lightened in the *Description of Moldavia*, revealing the decrepitude of its servants. In the chapters *On the strengthening of gentlemen*, *On the removal of the Prince from the throne*, within the ceremony of such moments we find inserted genuine characterizations of the high Ottoman dignitaries whose corruption is vigorously denounced. These are the strongest chapters of the volume, both through their documentary and artistic value. The sumptuous garments, differentiated according to the ranks and changed according to the ceremonial needs, the picturesque of the ritual, the novel cortege of an enthroned ruler, the intricately elaborated speeches and the trapped style of the Sublime Porte are skilfully used by Cantemir to depict true scenes of his time, turned into precious historical pictures over the years.

Although he believed sincerely, but in vain, in his country's alliance with Russia, and in the possibility that the understanding with this country and the Tsar Peter I might free Moldavia from the Ottoman dependence, Cantemir kept staring towards the West. We believe that the rapprochement with Russia was undertaken by the prince precisely in the context of the modernization of the country's elite following the Western model, imposed by the Tsar. In this new Europe, built according to ancient Roman Western patterns, the Prince wanted to secure a dignified position for Moldavia and the Romanian Countries in general. But, in order to get such a position, Europe needed to know who the Romanians were, to know and appreciate them as they deserved.

Nicolae Iorga distinguishes an evolution of Dimitrie Cantemir's conception from the *Description of Moldovia* to the *Chronicle*.[18] In the course of the documentation for the two works, the author's ideas were specified, crystallized and even modified. In the *Description*, the author, defending the Roman purism of the Romanians, wrote that the Romans who settled in the new Romania (Dacia) could also have Dacian women. Other ideas expressed here: the Romanians withdrew to Maramureș driven by the migrants, Moldova remaining deserted for a while; the hunting of the aurochs was real, the country's coat of arms stemming from it, Roman city was founded by the Romanians, the Romanians are a lazy, changing people, full of vices, courageous at the beginning of, then coward, only God's goodness held us together as a people; the Turks did not let our lords have the right to war and peace, nor to send messengers to the foreigners; buying the Turks with gold was a clever thing, similar to that of the merchants of Venice; our peasantry was made up of foreign "neighbours", etc. However, in the *Chronicle*, many of these ideas change, not accepting anything that could be considered degrading. The history of the Romanians becomes dignified and clean, almost immaculate. Cantemir intended to modify the *Description of Moldavia* in accordance with the glorious, patriotic ideas that animated him, after reading so many sources and getting acquainted with the way

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[17] *Ibidem*, p. 30.
[18] Nicolae Iorga, *The History of Romanian Literature in the 18th Century (1688-1821), vol. I. Dimitrie Cantemir's Epoch: The Epoch of Chesarie's from Râmnic,* Edition prepared by Barbu Theodorescu, Bucharest, 1969, p.221-331.

of presenting histories of the other European nations.[19] He had access to all important sources (he could speak Greek, Latin, Slavic, Turkish, Arabic, Persian, etc.) and to the modern historiography (he could speak many of the European languages of his time, including Russian, Polish, English, French, German etc.). From the critical and objective vision of his youth, he came to the conclusion that he had to put the past at the service of glorifying his people by actually elaborating, in an articulated form, the first "modern historiographical myths": the pure Roman origin of the Romanians their massive and uninterrupted persistence at north of the Danube, throughout the entire territory inhabited by the medieval Romanians, the successful stoppage of the Ottoman Empire's invasion, the role of Western civilizations' defenders, the permanent and exclusive cultivation of dignity and honour, etc.

Why all these? Precisely because at the turn of the eighteenth centuries the continent's resizing was taking place, going from "the small to the great Europe," amid a "crisis of the European consciousness."[20] All states and peoples were looking for a place under the sun, as honourable, as dignify, as lofty as possible. And the glorious and immaculate past could become a very serious argument for the recognition of such a leading place. It was a world that abundantly resorted to the "historical right". For this, of course, the past had to be beautified, adapted to needs, purified of all evils.[21] The lesson had been taught by the great states and Western nations, by the elaboration of pompous histories of countless magnificent deeds, of illustrious and pure origins, of old, imprescriptible, historical rights. That is why the young Cantemir's critical and frustrating realism - who meanwhile became a distinguished member of the republic of European letters - is gradually being replaced by an elaborate, yet immaculate, presentation of the national past.

Cantemir had a *critical self-consciousness capable of achieving, under any circumstances, the objective knowledge of the researched reality.*

Our approach reveals the Moldovian Prince not only as an eloquent figure of his time, but *also a representative of the exemplary critical self-consciousness*, especially for anthropological knowledge.

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[19] *Ibidem*, p. 327.

[20] Paul Hazard, *The Crisis of the European Consciousness* (1680-1715), translated by Sanda Șora, forward by Romul Munteanu, Bucharest, 1973; Pierre Chaunu, The Civilization of Europe *during Enlightenment,* translation and forward by Irina Mavrodin, Bucharest, 1986.

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THE OTHER IN CANTEMIR'S HISTORY: CONTRADICTIONS

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Abstract: The present paper compares two images of Ottoman figures depicted by Dimitrie Cantemir in his "History of the Growth and Decay of the Ottoman Empire" One of these figures is Sheikh Bedreddin (Peder Ulledyn, as referred to by Cantemir), the leader of an uprising in 1419. The second is Daltaban Mustapha Pasha, a controversial figure, whom Cantemir depicted as 'one of the greatest heroes of the age.' Cantemir's account of Sheikh Bedreddin is in consonance with the dominant narrative of Ottoman chronicles, whereas his description of Daltaban Mustapha Pasha is a digression.

The paper addresses the issue of Cantemir's adherence to Ottoman traditions and discusses Cantemir's interpretations in the light of his critical filtering of sources and integration of historical knowledge.

Keywords: Sheikh Bedreddin, Daltaban Mustapha Pasha, Ottoman historiography, Cantemir's History.

I. Cantemir's selective enterprise

The telling of history is a selective undertaking. The use of dominant historical narratives and diversions from traditions are challenges for the historian. There is no doubt that the reconstruction of Ottoman history was a seriously demanding task for Dimitrie Cantemir terms of his selection of sources and their interpretation. It is generally agreed that Cantemir began writing his History of the Growth and Decay of the Othman Empire in Istanbul and completed it in Russia. In any case, Ottoman military power was seriously de-escalated when he undertook the task.

This paper shall attempt to address the issue of Cantemir's adherence to Ottoman traditions and to discuss Cantemir's interpretations in the light of his critical filtering of sources and integration of historical knowledge, with two specific references: Sheikh Bedreddin and Daltaban Mustafa Pasha.

1.1. The question of identity and the „other"

„Historical works reconstruct experiences through their narrative representation, elaborating in the process a relationship between the narrator, the past and a community of readers. Thus they become means of identifying a person or a group within a broader context, not only providing answers to questions of identity but also outlining plans for future actions."[1]

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[1] Smarnakis, I..,. *Rethinking Roman Identity after the Fall (1453): Perceptions of 'Romanitas' by Doukas and Sphrantzes in Byzantina Symmeikta,* 25, 2015, pp. 211-234.

Cantemir, as the narrator of Ottoman history chose to relate to the past and his community of readers in a certain way. His choice was molded by several factors, including his education and his values. Values are undeniably culture bound.

This brings us to the questions of Cantemir's culture, education, identity and eventually "the other" in Cantemir's History. We know that Cantemir's initial education was shaped in the context of the classics, under Cacavelas' tutelage in his hometown Iasi. Yet he was well acquainted with Islamic learning and Ottoman historiography. What, then, shaped Cantemir's identity as a historian is an intriguing issue. Did Cantemir make normative judgments in his history and if he did, what contributed to the moral structure of his narrative?

1.2. Criticisms of the History

Who were Cantemir's intended readers? According to Vasileanu, we do not have sufficient knowledge about Cantemir's target audience "since he never indicated it explicitly in his treatise"[2]. However, members of the Academy of Berlin had received it well and responded enthusiastically. Vasileanu concludes that Cantemir's choice of Latin among all the languages he possessed points to "an intellectual community of the Western world, where Latin was the language of scholarship"[3].

Moving to the reception of Cantemir's History, the European readers saw a "Dragoman of the West and of the East" in History as Iorga chose to call Cantemir[4]. Iorga mentioned Leunclavius, Lonicerus, Busbecq and Byzantine chroniclers among Cantemir's sources, but argued that the first part was a translation or a paraphrasing of a chronicle by Saadi Effendi of Larissa[5]. Iorga accused Cantemir of writing in the manner of his Oriental predecessors," in the same spirit and with the same exterior forms"[6]. This was the official attitude of the Palace chroniclers and the judgments were dictated by tradition. Panaitescu, on the other hand, concluded that the first part was an abridgement of Turkish history, though the annotations were Cantemir's original contributions[7].

Thus, Romanian reactions focused on the dominance of Ottoman historiography, nowthistanding the multitude of sources in the main text. Scepticism about the value of Cantemir's History was rooted in its ‚perceived biased' content,stimulated by Ottoman chroniclers.

II. Two contrasting images

I chose two contrasting images in Cantemir's History to discuss Cantemir's relationship with the dominant narrative of his times: Sheikh Bedreddin (Peder Ulledyn, as referred to by Cantemir), the leader of an unprecedented uprising in

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[2] Vasileanu, M., *What was a relevant translation in the 18th century?* Research in Language, Vol.15:1, 2017, p.83.

[3] Ibid., p.84.

[4] Dutu, A., Dimitrie Cantemir, *Historian of South East European and Oriental Civilizations,* Bucharest, 1973, p.22.

[5] Birsan, C., *Dimitrie Cantemir and the Islamic World,* The Isis Press, Istanbul, 2004, p.110.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid, p.111.

1416 and Daltaban Mustapha Pasha, a controversial figure, whom Cantemir depicted as one of the greatest heroes of the age.

2.1. Sheikh Bedreddin

This is how Cantemir depicted the rebellion of Sheikh Bedreddin:

"The fruits of these victories obtain'd with so much blood and labour were like to be wrested from Mahomet, by the fraudulent hand of an Impostor. At this time were raised in Asia great tumults by a man of low fortune belonging to a family of a certain petty Prince, Peder Ulledyn. Mustapha, eldest son of Bajazet fell (as we have related) in the battle with Tamerlane; but it was said to be uncertain whether he was carried away captive, or slain with the sword of the Enemy. The Person above-mention'd falsely assum'd the name of Prince Mustapha, and being assisted by the advice of Peder Ulledyn, gathered together a numerous band of profligate Men, with whom he laid waste Zagara, and the neighbouring Countries. The next Spring attempting greater things, he besieg'd Nicaea, and persuaded the inhabitants to join in the rebellion."[8]

Within a single paragraph, Cantemir uses three humiliating words to describe rebels: fraudulent, petty, profligate. The description is perfectly in line with the social values of the Ottoman chroniclers. In fact according to chronicler Aşıkpaşazade (himself a Sufi), Sheikh Bedreddin's Sufi followers „coveted not wisdom, but demolishing the sacred law and winning the Sultanate."[9] Aşıkpaşazade called Bedreddin a „hypocrite"[10]. Oruç bey accused Börklüce Mustafa and Torlak Kemal for spreading malicious ideas, while sixteenth century historian Yusuf bin Abdullah accused Bedreddin for being persuaded by the devil.[11]

But who was Bedreddin? Bedreddin Mahmud b.İsrail b.Abd al-Aziz was born around 1359 in Simavna, close to Edirne (Adrianople). His father was the ghazi warrior of Simavna.[12] Bedreddin studied Islamic canon law, logic and astronomy in Bursa, Konya and Jerusalem, eventually meeting the Sufi Sheikh Husayn Akhlati in Cairo and becoming a Sufi himself. He was appointed as the chief military judge (kadıasker) in 1411 by Prince Musa. After the victory of Prince Mehmed over Musa in 1413, Bedreddin was exiled to İznik (Nicaea). Leaving Iznik in 1415, Bedreddin made his way to Sinop and from there across the Black Sea to Wallachia. By this time, he was supported by Börklüce Mustafa and Torlak Kemal in Anatolia. The uprisings in Anatolia led by Torlak Kemal and Börklüce Mustafa were eventually suppressed by Mehmed's forces and Börklüce was crucified. Bedreddin had moved to the Balkans to establish a second front, arrested by Mehmed's forces, and hanged in 1416 in Serres, Macedonia.[13]

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[8] Cantemir, D., *History of the Growth and Decay of the Othman Empire,* Part I, IX, p.74.

[9] Douglas, A.H., *A History of the Ottoman Empire,* Cambridge University Press, 2017, p.45.

[10] Aşık Paşazade, *Osmanoğullarının Tarihi,* ed. K. Yavuz and M.A.Y. Saraç, Koç Kültür Sanat Tanıtım A.Ş., Istanbul, 2003, p.426

[11] Nazlar, N., *The Image Of The Other in The Fifteenth-Century Christian And Muslim Hagiographies,* Unpublished Master's Thesis, The Department Of History, Bilkent University, Ankara, 2008, p.87.

[12] Kafadar, C., *Between Two Worlds, The Construction of the Ottoman State,* the University of California Press, Berkeley, 1996, p.143.

[13] Norris, H.T., Islam in the Balkans, Hurst and Company, London, 1993, pp.267-268.

The significance of this uprising lies in its main theme: Bedreddin and his disciples preached the abolition of all personal property and possessions. Differences between Islam and Christianity, on the other hand, were negligible.[11] As such, Bedreddin was the „heretical leader of perhaps the most significant, albeit failed, revolutionary movement in Ottoman history."[14]

We are not well informed about the fatwa that sent him to death, as there is disagreement among Ottoman historians. Aşıkpaşazade's comment ('his blood is halal and his property is haram') suggests that he was found guilty of apostasy. Apostasy in Islam is commonly defined as the conscious abandonment of Islam by a Muslim in word or through deed. On the other hand, 16th century interpretations by ulema and succeeding fatwas issued suggest that he was considered a murtad. (As a religious term, the word murtad is used to describe a person who converted to another religion or to atheism after being a Muslim). Bali Efendi's layiha to Sultan Suleiman (1520-1566) described Bedreddin as an apostate who offered alcohol to his students.[15]

2.2. Daltaban Mustapha Pasha

The second figure I want to compare with Cantemir's description of Sheikh Bedreddin is Daltaban Mustapha Pasha, who was honoured with the longest of annotations in Cantemir's History. Daltaban 'was the greatest wizard from the country of Mesopotamia' (Istoria Ieroglifica).[16]

Daltaban was a janissary, born in Manastır (Bitola), a close and faithful friend of Constantin Cantemir. Daltaban remained faithful to Cantemir brothers, which was 'a thing uncommon among the barbarians'.[17]

After becoming a janissary agha in 1691, Daltaban served as serasker in Babadağ. He was called Daltaban (barefoot) because of his habit of walking barefoot day and night. In 1696, he joined Mustafa II's Austrian campaign as Anatolian beglerbeg, subsequently serving as Diyarbekir beglerbeg. During the negotiations of Karlowitz, Daltaban was the Governor of Bosnia. During his tenure in office in Bosnia, he conducted multiple successful raids against Habsburg and Venetian positions. In late 1702, one of Köprülü grand viziers, Amcazade Hüseyin Köprülü, was replaced by Daltaban Mustafa Pasha, partially because the former had been unable to reverse the military losses that had resulted in the Treaty of Karlowitz (1699): "His successor, Daltaban Pasha, was a man of a totally different type, a savage Serbian, who could neither read nor write, and who had acquired a reputation for gross cruelty which he fully justified in his more exalted position."[18]

Daltaban was a controversial figure, often officially charged with corruption and maltreatment of subjects in almost all of his positions, once sentenced to death, pardoned and sent to exile.

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[14] Kafadar, C., Ibid.
[15] Çiğdem, R., *A Life in Banishment in Iznik: Sheikh Badraddin Simawni,* Uluslararası İznik Sempozyumu, 2005.
[16] Cantemir, D., *Hieroglyphic History*, Gramar Publishing House, Bucharest, 2001.
[17] Cantemir, D., *History of the Growth and Decay of the Othman Empire,* Book IV, Ann. 30.
[18] Lord Eversley, 1917, *The Turkish Empire: Its Growth and Decay*, Unwin, London.

For all that, this is how Cantemir described his loyal friend:

„A man very famous among the Turks for his warlike virtues"[19].

The post of Janissary Agha gave him "the first opportunity of making his virtues known to the world for he took very great care of public tranquillity, severely chastised disorderly persons"[20].

The acceptance of tributes by Daltaban, though acknowledged by Cantemir, were 'applied to augmenting his forces'[21].

Daltaban's execution in 1703 was hailed as a 'universal bliss'[22] by the Ottomans and lamented by Cantemir: 'Such was the end of the bravest soldier the Ottoman Empire ever produced.'[23]

III. Cantemir's reconstruction of ottoman history

How do we explain Cantemir's confirmation of the dominant Ottoman narrative in the case of Sheikh Bedreddin and his diversion from it in the depiction of Daltaban Mustapha Pasha? Who was the ‚other' in Cantemir's History? How Ottoman was Cantemir in his construction of Ottoman history? These are puzzling questions.

Let us look at Cantemir's selection of Ottoman sources. In his preface to the History, Cantemir criticized earlier Christian historians of the Ottoman empire for their failure to use Ottoman sources: 'From these troubles Streams of Christian Historians, ignorant, as we observ'd, of the Turkish Learning, have been forc'd to draw what should have been taken from the Fountain-Head'[24].

However, he was selective in his usage of Ottoman sources: "He claims to have based his own account on the chronicles of authors he identifies as 'Sadi Effendi' and 'Heshri' (History, p. xii-xiii); but Franz Babinger has argued that a good many of Cantemir's Ottoman sources are impossible to identify, concluding that either the Incrementa relies on a number of hitherto unknown or unidentified works, or Cantemir quotes his sources from a faulty memory – or perhaps even freely invents them…More intriguing than the question of which authors Cantemir used appears to be the question of which authors he did not use. Rather surprisingly, he makes no mention of reformist authors of the seventeenth century, such as Koçi Bey or the encyclopedist Hajji Khalifa, among whom the notion of Ottoman decline had become a commonplace, and who argued for reforms in the empire. It is unlikely, however, that he was wholly unfamiliar with reformist ideas; and the idea of Ottoman decline already appears very title of his work."[25]

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[19] Cantemir, D., Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Özcan, A., *Daltaban Mustafa Paşa, in TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi,* 8, Istanbul, 1993, pp. 433-434.

[23] Cantemir, D., Ibid.

[24] Cantemir, D., *op.cit.,* p.2.

[25] Leezenberg, M.M., *The oriental origins of orientalism: the case of Dimitrie Cantemir in R. Bod,* J. Maat, & T. Weststeijn (Eds.), The making of the humanities: volume II: from early modern to modern disciplines, 2012, p.254.

IV. Conclusions

Cantemir's History text can be read on several different levels and is subject to endless interpretations , embodying both the master narrative and the counter narrative. In so far as reconstruction of history is inevitable, Cantemir builds the Ottoman past in complex ways. Cantemir's conception of history brings in elements of culture , individual experiences and subjectivity, reflecting divergent views, using dominant narratives and counter narratives, challenging dominant practices of historical scholar ship. As such the History has a unique historical and educational value.

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THE CONCEPTION OF MIRCEA ELIADE ON THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS AND
COMMUNICATION BETWEEN CULTURES

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Abstract: Leader of the generation of young writers and intellectuals in Romania during the interwar period, Mircea Eliade has become to be known worldwide as a theoretician and historian of the religious phenomenon. Brilliantly illustrating the history of religions through fundamental works, Eliade considered that the systematic study of religious ideas from pre-modern and extra-European societies made an important contribution to overcoming European-centered outlooks and building a more adequate image of the relation between specific and universal in culture. Through the progress made in the last century, when communication between cultures expanded, the history of religions facilitated the mutual knowledge of cultures and thus partook in the reconstruction of the "global universe", a process highlighting the contributions of all cultures to the heritage of humanity.

Keywords: new spirituality, sacred and profane, the myth, the terror of history, global universal.

The road to a new spiritual program

Through his prodigious work and the influence he had on his generation, Mircea Eliade (1907-1986) takes a special place in Romanian culture. In retrospect, 110 years since his birth, Eliade stands out as a multifaceted personality, a Renaissance-type mind, thirsty for knowledge, attracted by various spiritual experiences (literature, philosophy, religion, history, culture theory, languages study, Orientalism, journalism, essay-writing, etc.). He is in the line of the encyclopaedic creators of Romanian culture, a line inaugurated by Dimitrie Cantemir and then illustrated by personalities such as B.P. Hasdeu, M. Eminescu, N. Iorga, L. Blaga or G. Călinescu.

In order to draw a portrait of the scholar in his youth, we should mention that Eliade made his debut in the '30s of the 20th c. as a successful prose-writer of fantastic novellas and novels featuring a literature of authenticity and intense subjective experiences, framed onto a mythological and religious symbolism. He also made his name as a forceful essayist with studies that approached in an original manner arcane and challenging themes from the wide realm of the philosophy of culture and the history of religions (the meaning of life, forms of knowledge, myths, folk culture, folklore, religious symbols, the relations between

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sacred and profane, reconsideration of tradition, the place of religion in modern world, the destiny of the Romanian culture on a universal level). After a training period in India (between 1928-1931), where he studied philosophical systems and Indian religious practices, Eliade would focus his knowledge interest on the symbolic forms of archaic cultures and the comparative research of religious experiences in different times and places.

During the war, he worked in diplomacy (cultural attaché in London and Lisbon), and after 1945, with the establishment of the Communist regime in Romania, he went in exile to Paris and then to Chicago, where he taught for about three decades the comparative history of religions. In the post-war period, he stood out in scientific and academic milieus with reference works in this field, and was acknowledged as one of the most-renowned specialists in Orientalism and comparative research of religions. Proof thereon are the eulogies from personalities of the day, such as Giovanni Papini, Georges Dumézil (who invited him to hold classes at the École des Hautes Études), Carl Gustav Jung, Gaston Bachelard, Georges Bataille, Paul Ricoeur, Pierre Channu, Joachim Wach, the latter inviting him to teach the history of religions at the University of Chicago in 1956. For instance, Georges Dumézil, who wrote the preface to the *Treaty of the History of Religions* (1949), published in Paris, wrote that Eliade was "passionate, daring, had immense readings and a precise formation as an Indianist"[1], hence, he was a specialist trained to hold academically a discipline such as the history of religions.

Eliade's prominent personality was noticed ever since his student years, when, animated by great projects and a strong will for self-improvement, he set to himself an intense working schedule and a highly rigorous intellectual discipline, as he confesses in his memoirs. Let us mention the fact that Eliade asserted himself against a cultural background torn by heated aesthetic, epistemological and political disputes and oppositions (traditionalism vs. modernism, rationalism vs. spiritualism, Europeanism vs. autochthonism), therefore, in a climate of spiritual and moral crisis, when the Romanian intelligentsia was searching for a new cultural ideal. At the same time, an interesting "intergenerational conflict" broke out in the Romanian cultural space during the inter-war period, against the background of artistic avant-garde movements and the shift in attitudes and thinking patterns, in response to the crisis of values and classical rationalism. It was a period of spiritual inter-regnum, in which intellectuals from the old generation (headed by N. Iorga, V. Pârvan, C.R. Motru, etc.) were still active, with their values and style, while the new generation, on the offensive and radical in its critical attitude, tried to set a new spiritual ideal and a new cultural paradigm.

The apex of this confrontation was reached in 1927, when Eliade developed a genuine cultural program for the new generation of intellectuals: a series of 12 articles published in 1927 in the „Cuvântul" newspaper, under the title "Spiritual Journey". In these articles, Eliade laid out (when he was only 20 years of ager!), in an incisive and expressive way, the main themes, concepts and attitudes that would define the spiritual orientation of the new generation of thinkers, on the

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[1] Georges Dumézil, „Preface", to the vol. Mircea Eliade, *Treaty of the History of Religions*, 3rd edition, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 1999, p. 11.

way of taking hold of the stage of Romanian culture. Making a vigorous analysis of the deficiencies in Romanian society and of the new historical challenges, Eliade drew out certain action lines in culture, with the following coordinates: the criticism of the positivist and objectivist scientism (including classical, mono-linear evolutionism), the revaluation of subjective experience, the prevalence of the spiritual over the political and economic aspects, the overcoming of dilettantism and the aspiration for synthesis, the creation as an authentic mode of human assertion, the rediscovery of religious experience and Orthodox spirituality. Starting from this programmatic document, Eliade's generation would later on be named „Generation 27". This group included, among others, the essayist and thinker Emil Cioran and the future playwright Eugen Ionescu - who left Romania during the war and brilliantly asserted themselves in French culture - and philosophers Constantin Noica and Mircea Vulcănescu, who had remained in the country and suffered extreme repression by the communist regime, the latter ending his life under torture in the prisons of the time.

Eliade's study raised a wide controversy in the epoch. A critical but also a comprehensive standpoint was taken by literary critic Șerban Cioculescu who reproached him to over-emphasize the mystical attitude, and to marginalize rational knowledge and scientific demarche. Eliade came back with important clarifications, showing that unlike the war generation, who had a historical, national ideal, the young intellectuals were now „free," „available to all kinds of experiences."[2]. Thus, the „new spirituality" for which he and his generation militated ddid not rule out rationalist tradition, instead it rounded it off with new forms of approach, among which intuition, inner reflection, subjective experience, ethical and religious commitment. Eliade's study is a relevant document for the intellectual atmosphere of the time, for the turmoil of the new generation, for its critical assessment landmarks, and also for the new way of dealing with the issues facing Romanian culture.

Eliade was dominated in his youth by a „Luciferian" passion for knowledge, he avidly read whatever was at hand and he was driven by the desire to explore and assimilate as many topics, issues and disciplines as possible, from science, philosophy, history, mythology to the history of religions and natural sciences. His passion for knowledge and creation was similar to the drive shown by the 1848 militants, committed to a titanic effort to fill in the „gaps" of Romanian culture, to keep up with the move for modernity, to be synchronized with the pace of the European world. The characterization Eliade so empathetically made to the „heroic" 1848 generation, in the introductory study to B.P. Hasdeu's *Literary, Moral and Political Writings* - 1937, applies to Eliade himself, so that we can say it is a lucid self-characterization. „The same diverse and contradictory concerns; the same thirst to roam through as many as possible spiritual geographies of the world; the same many-sided activity, sometimes in a rush, sometimes improvised, always emerging, however, from the desire to push the Romanian culture to step over as many gaps as possible, uplifting it on a „world plan", proving the creative power of the Romanian genius (...). What characterizes this

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[2] Mircea Eliade, *Romanian Prophetism. Romania in Eternity,* vol. I, Roza Vânturilor Publishing House, Bucharest, 1990, p. 11.

age is the thirst for the monumental, the grandiose; (…) the dominant spiritual gesture of the 19ᵗʰ c. is a Renaissance gesture: creations on great models, gigantic plans, the consciousness of human dignity, Romanian Messianism. «God was with us»".[3]

Indeed, the young Eliade projected „creations on great models", made „gigantic plans", believed he had a „Messianic" vocation, was animated by a strong „creative will," and these traits would lead him to the great syntheses of his mature years. After the great victory of 1918 - the accomplishment of national unity -, Eliade argues that Romanian intellectuals, freed from historical imperatives and political tasks, have the chance to focus only on spiritual creations. „The generation of my father and that of my grandfather had an ideal: to unite together all the Romanian provinces. This ideal has been fulfilled. And I am lucky to be part of the first generation of Romanian scholars who are free, who has no program".[4] Although he militated for the „primacy of the spiritual" over the political, for the „independence" of the intellectuals, and therefore for the political non-commitment of those destined to a creative and spiritual mission, in 1937 Eliade wrote several articles in favor of the legionary movement, a political extreme-right formation, having a nationalist and Orthodox orientation. This episode is explained by some exegetes by the fact that, showing a political „myopia", like many other well-known intellectuals of the time, Eliade saw the legionary movement as an ethical, spiritual and religious reform movement, not as a movement with strict political goals.[5] Eliade's conjectural sympathy for an extreme right movement – for which he would be later on criticized by some biographers and exegetes - was not something singular among the Romanian and European intellectuals, it was rather part of a social and cultural trend which should to be dealt with analytical tools from the field of political sociology.

The History of Religion: Unity and Diversity

Eliade's interest in the subject of religion is obvious ever since his bachelor's thesis, in which, writing about the Renaissance philosophy, he restores magical thinking and spiritualist doctrines, in contrast with the rationalist outlook prevailing in the current interpretations of the Renaissance movement. Following his experience in India, he defends his doctor's thesis in philosophy with a work on Yoga doctrine and practices, a work he publishes in French in 1936: *Yoga. Essai sur les origines de la mystique indienne*. In this work, Eliade demonstrates that yoga belongs to the archaic and indigenous background of India, being taken over by Brahmanism and other philosophical and mystical doctrines (Samkya, Vedanta and Buddhism, then in Tantrism and Hinduism), as a technique of accessing the absolute, by self-mastery of body and mind. Universally acknowledged by various Indian doctrines, Yoga is a technique of purifying the

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[3] Mircea Eliade, *On Eminescu and Hasdeu*, Edition coordinated by Mircea Handoca, Iaşi, Junimea Publishing House, 1987, pp. 59-61.

[4] Mircea Eliade, *The Test of the Labyrinth. Talks with Claude-Henri Rocquet,* Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2007, p. 24.

[5] Sorin Alexandrescu, *Romanian Paradoxe*, Bucharest, Univers Publishing House, 1998, pp. 193-268.

soul and releasing the individual from the chains of karmic law, a form of „deliverance" from the space of an inauthentic life, in order to acquire a true, plenary and conscious existence. Eliade rewrote and reorganized this work thematically and republished it in 1954 in Paris under the title: *Yoga - immortalité et liberté.*

The studies and essays in his youth foreshadowed the themes and ideas that would give consistency to the works of adulthood. Ioan Petru Culianu, in his monograph on Eliade's work, published in 1978, considers that the theoretical foundations underlying Eliade's work are to be found in his youth works, written in Romanian.[6] Thus, the idea of the myth as an expression of an „exemplary model" and the theme of the relationship between the sacred and the profane pervade many of the texts written by this author in his youth. Here is an excerpt from the *Commentary to the Legend of Master Manole* (1943): „For the archaic man, a thing or an act has meaning only to the extent that it partakes into a prototype, or to the extent that it repeats a primordial act (for instance, Creation)".[7] Or, „everything he does or thinks is the copy of a divine prototype or cosmological gesture".[8] Things and actions from the profane world find their model in the world of sacrality, in *the ultimate reality*, beyond the spectacle of phenomena and appearances, while the sacred is embodied in various forms of the profane world in the hierophanies. These ideas, insights and approaches contained by his youth works will be developed and proved starting from a huge documentary, historical and ethnographic material, in the monumental works of maturity: *The Treatise on the History of Religions* (1949), *The Myth of the Eternal Return* (1949), *Sacred and Profane* (1957), *The Nostalgia of the Origins* (1970), *The History of Religious Ideas and Beliefs* - in three volumes, published between 1976 and 1983, plus a posthumous volume.

Eliade builds a phenomenological theory of religion and mythical thought, searching for the *unitary* structure of the religious phenomenon in the historical *diversity* of its forms of manifestation. He starts from the idea that religion is a constitutive dimension of human condition, expressing man's permanent need to relate his life, experience and acts to a transcendent reality. All human societies, in the historical diversity of their organization, worked in their collective representations with an area of sacrality, drawn apart from the sphere of immediate experience, invested with the function of source and reference system for the meanings bestowed on history and human life. Here are the constant and universal elements of religion.

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[6] Ioan Petru Culianu, *Mircea Eliade*, Bucharest, Nemira Publishing House, 1995.

[7] Mircea Eliade, *The Road to the Center*, Anthology made by Gabriela Liiceanu and Andrei Pleşu, Bucharest, Universe Publishing House, 1991, p. 390. The work comprises a selection of the studies and essays published by Eliade in Romanian, in his youth. The anthology's authors write „a note on the edition", stating: „An author of an exceptional work, as history and the analysis of the religious phenomenon have not known since Max Müller and Frazer, Eliade is standing as a reference point in the humanities of our days, for its capacity to recompose the in-depth structure of the humane based on the whole spiritual history of man from the Neolithic to the present day. The roots of this extraordinary work [...] are entirely in the theoretical work of Eliade written and published in Romania between 1929-1943" (*op.cit.,* p. 5).

[8] *Ibidem*, p. 403.

In the „Foreword" to *A History of Religious Ideas and Beliefs*, Eliade takes up the idea expressed in other works, namely that religion is a permanent structure of human condition, not a transient phase in human evolution. „It is hard to imagine how the human soul could function without having the conviction that something irreducibly *real* exists in the world; and it is impossible to imagine how consciousness would emerge without *the meaning* given to man's impulses and experiences. The consciousness of a real and significant world is closely related to the discovery of the sacred. Through the experience of the sacred, the human soul became aware of the difference between what is revealed to be real, powerful, rich, and meaningful, and what is devoid of these qualities, that is, the chaotic and dangerous flow of things, their random and meaningless appearances and disappearances [...]. Briefly, the sacred is an element within the structure of consciousness and not a stage in the history of this consciousness. At the most archaic levels of culture, *to live as a human being* is in itself a religious act, since food, sexual life and work carry a sacramental value. In other words, to be or rather to become a *human being* means to be religious".[9]

A child of his time, Eliade stands apart from the evolutionist, historical and functionalist outlooks that authoritatively dominated the field of the philosophy of culture for almost a century, and places his research on the history of religions on the horizon of phenomenology and hermeneutics. Without overlooking the historical perspective, Eliade considers it necessary and possible to reveal certain structural and universal aspects of religions, namely, to map out a „morphology of religious phenomena", standing as a guide for writing their „history". Therefore, to reveal the „structure and morphology of the sacred" is the primary theoretical task Eliade embarks upon, along with the studies in which he examines various experiences and forms of religiosity (yoga, shamanism, alchemy, myths, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, various forms of religious symbolism, etc.). Combining the historical and structural perspective as well as the hermeneutic one, still present in the writings published until 1943, Eliade develops an integrated theory on the essence of the religious phenomenon and the historical evolution of symbolic forms.

From this perspective, Eliade is interested in establishing the structures, functions, and meanings of various religious forms and manifestations in however historically and geographically remote contexts, conjunctions and cultures. After examining a considerable bulk of these forms and after their reconstitution by the comparative history of religions, a synthesis, it is possible to draw a synthesis integrating the elements into structures and explaining them through symbolic mechanisms, traceable in the variety of historical embodiments. The religious phenomenon can be often perceived as „a polymorphous and sometimes chaotic mass of gestures, beliefs and theories",[10] so that Eliade underlines the complexity of the religious phenomenon and the need to study religion from an interdisciplinary perspective, including the historical,

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[9] Mircea Eliade, *A Historiy of Religious Ideas and Beliefs*, vol. I, Bucharest, The Scientific and Encyclopedic Publishing House, 1981, p. VIII.
[10] Mircea Eliade, *Treaty of the History of Religions*, 3rd edition, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 1999, p. 14.

morphological, sociological, cultural and psychological approaches. „In reality, there is no religious fact in a pure state. A religious fact is always and concurrently historical, sociological, cultural and psychological. If the historian of religions does not always insist on this multiplicity of possible meanings, it is mainly because he is essentially interested in the religious significance of his documents".[11]

The decisive work of the historian is *the interpretation* of meanings, thus applying a hermeneutic aimed to reconstruct the authentic significance of the facts within the religious and symbolic system in which they appeared, a work engaging cultural, social and historical contexts. The social and historical context of religious experiences must be pertinently investigated, nonetheless Eliade always fights against the stand taken by those who reduce religion to the status of an epiphenomenon derived from other social structures. Against the rationalist-positivist and evolutionist conceptions - which explained religion by linking it only to the stage of „primitive cultures" and to a supposed „pre-logical" mentality of forms that would be inevitably overcome by the development of rational knowledge -, Eliade endeavors to discover the permanent and universal structure of the religious phenomenon, considering that the distinction between the sacred and the profane, as well as their interferences, are manifest in all cultures and in all ages, including the present age, which Eliade believed to be „the ultimate stage of desacralization".

The defining structure of religious life resides, according to Eliade, in two opposite aspects, which concomitantly manifest themselves: the sacred-profane dissociation and the „manifestation" of the sacred into the profane. To express this „passage" from the sacred to the profane, Eliade introduces the concept of „hierophany," by which he generally designates „something that manifests the sacred". Hierophanies work as *a sign* of the sacred: „An object becomes sacred insofar as it incorporates (that is, it reveals) something other than itself".[12] Hierophanies, having an endless diversity (objects, gestures, myths, symbols, images, rites, ideas, etc.) are „modalities of the sacred", forms in which the sacred is expressed in the profane world (current experience), forms revealing an original or hidden plane of existence. The variable relations between the sacred and the profane, through the dialectics of hierophanies, can be traced back through the comparative history of religions, which, according to Eliade, is just the „history of devaluations and revaluations of the process in which the sacred is manifesting itself".[13] The archetype, the myth, the symbol and the rite form the integrated elements of a system of beliefs and representations in archaic cultures, as well as the elements of an ontological, existential system, with a practical and psychological value in profane existence. The archetype is narrated through the myth, it is practically updated through the rite and becomes permanent through

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[11] Mircea Eliade, „Religions", a study from the work *Interdisciplinarity and human sciences*, translation from French of the work with the same title published in 1983 under the UNESCO aegis, Bucharest, The Political Publishing House, 1986, pp. 386-387.

[12] Mircea Eliade, *A Treaty of the History of Religions*, ed.cit., p. 26.

[13] *Ibidem,* pp.35.

the symbol. These four elements make up a unitary structure of the religious phenomenon.

Religions - a response to the „terror of history"?

One of Eliade's most original works, playing a key role in his thinking system, is *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, published in 1949 in Paris. In this book, Eliade condensed the leitmotifs of his work, and built his philosophical vision on history based on a dualist anthropology and ontology, in which the sacred opposes the profane, and the archaic opposes the modern. Beyond the differences, Eliade looks, however, for the „passages", the manifestations through which the sacred is embedded into the profane, and the archaic survives camouflaged into the modern. Studying archaic societies, Eliade writes that he was amazed by one of their dominant feature: „the revolt against the concrete, historical time, the nostalgia of a periodic return to a mythical time of origins." Behind this refusal of history lies a „certain metaphysical valorization of existence", a different valorization embraced by modern philosophies („mainly Marxism, historicism and existentialism") which emphasize on the „historical man", the man „who is able to create himself within history".[14]

The archaic man does not positively value history, with its events, on the contrary, he tries to reduce their significance to primordial acts, described in myths. Against the horizon of traditional societies, archetypes are updated through rites and religious ceremonies, which aim to suspend the profane time, to bring history back into the mythical, sacred time, *in illo tempore*. Thus, „an eternal return" takes place, a cyclical regeneration of mythical time, through rites and symbols, conferring meaning to profane acts. Through these strategies, archaic cultures develop a response to the „terror of history," a concept by which Eliade understands „cosmic cataclysms, military disasters, social injustices," the sufferings and misfortunes befalling individuals and peoples during their lifetime. The terror of history is an expression of the „suffering," of the irrationality and violence in human life, all of this being bearable since they „have a meaning," they are not seen to be arbitrary or gratuitous, but are the result of magical interventions or of a will-power not under human control. Suffering has a „cause" (divine will, personal mistake, wickedness of enemies, etc.) and has a „meaning" (the wrath of a god, a divine punishment for falling into sin, etc.), and the archaic man „bears it because it is absurd,"[15] „but it has a soteriological, redeeming, purifying function." The terror of history is always invested with „a sense"", as in the karmic law of Indians, or in the prophetism and messianism of ancient Hebrews. The cyclical regeneration of mythical time through rites and other ceremonies is a typical strategy of these societies to respond to the terror of history.

The archaic man does not value positively history, its events, on the contrary, tries to reduce their significance to primordial acts described by myths. In the horizon of traditional societies, archetypes are updated through rites and

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[14] Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, Bucharest, Encyclopedic Universe Publishing House, 1999, pp. 7-8.
[15] *Ibidem,* p.96.

religious ceremonies, which aim to suspend the profane time, to bring back history during mythical, sacred, in illo tempore. Thus, there is an „eternal return", a cyclical regeneration of mythical time, through rites and symbols, conferring meaning to profane acts. Through these strategies, archaic cultures develop a response to the "terror of history," a concept by which Eliade understands "cosmic cataclysms, military disasters, social injustices," the sufferings and misfortunes that individuals and peoples suffer in their existence. The terror of history is an expression of "suffering," irrationality and violence in human life, but all of this can be borne because they „have a meaning", are not considered arbitrary or free, but are due to magical interventions or a will is not under human control. Suffering has a "cause" (divine will, personal mistake, wickedness of enemies, etc.) and has a „significance" (the wrath of a god, a divine punishment for falling into sin, etc.), and the archaic man "supports it because it is not absurd", but has a soteriological, saving, purifying function. The terror of history is always invested with "a sense", as in the karmic law of the Indians, or in the prophecy and messianism of the ancient Hebrews. a typical strategy of these societies to respond to the terror of history.

Unlike the archaic man, the modern man lives in a desacralized universe and values history in a positive way, with its events, its news and "irreversible" changes. In modern societies we deal with a different vision of time and history. It is a "historicizing" vision that vectorizes time on an axis that leads inexorably from *past to future*. From this representation derives the elements modern man has at his disposal in order to respond to the terror of history: the faith in evolution, the myth of progress, the projection into the future, the historicist perspective, the idea that human history is a necessary development on the course of a mono-linear time. In the modern age, triumphant are evolutionist and positivist conceptions, for which myths and religions are revolute phases in the evolution of humanity, so that they should be ruled out. Nonetheless, in modern societies, the sacred survives in „camouflaged" forms, being encoded in artistic symbols of great variety and degraded forms of myths (legends, fables, narratives, superstitions).

According to Eliade, post-Hegelian, historicist philosophies justify human tragedies by relating them to a "immanent sense" of history or to an objective „necessity," likely to enforce a certain fatal, compulsory scenario for the unfolding of events. The 19th c. mono-linear evolution worked with the idea of *a one-way and universal direction of history*, which it considered to be achieved by Western civilization. Eliade argues that historicist visions were supported by „thinkers belonging to nations for whom history was never a continuing terror. These thinkers would probably have adopted another perspective if they had belonged to the nations marked by the «fatality of history»".[16] Representations of history are conditioned by the status of the societies in which they appear. Therefore, the outlooks on history, encoded by the theorists from the societies placed in the "center" of the Western system, *differ fundamentally* from the outlooks we encounter in the societies from the outskirts of this system.

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[16] *Ibidem*, p. 156.

Modernist historical conceptions are also expressions of a mythical vision, but which is "camouflaged" under the veils of scientific assumptions and approaches. Basically, here also it is about the idea of an earthly paradise, mythologies placed at the dawn of historical time, while modern ideologies, such as Marxism or Liberalism, locate at the end of time, taking the shape of a happy, fair, non-conflicting society. It is also a form of abolishing history, of restoring archaic eschatologies, but placing the "golden age" at the end of history. Let us mention the theorists who spoke not long ago about the „end of history", who believed that the collapse of communist regimes would mean the victory of economic and political liberalism and, implicitly, the end of social, ethnic or ideological conflicts.[17] Eliade ends up this „philosophy of history" by stating that for the "man fallen into history", for the modern man „irremediably integrated into history and progress", this myth, which projects paradise at the end of history, is a form of consolation and a way of bearing with the terror of history. Separated from the mechanism of archetypes and ritualistic repetition, the Christian man finds rescue from the tragedies of history by giving them a trans-historic significance. Without this solution, man would be an easy prey to permanent terror and despair, as described by existentialism or the literature of the absurd.

Communication between cultures and the reconstruction of the „global universal"

The progress made by empirical research and theoretical approaches in the field of the history of religions have had a wider impact on conscience of contemporary world. Researching the beliefs and symbolic practices of Eastern and Asian cultures, the history of religions overturned the Euro-centrist vision, highlighting the contribution of other cultures to the heritage of humanity. Eliade interprets in a new manner the universal meaning of cultures. All cultures have at their core a universal background, shapes through which human condition is translated into symbols. These days, owing to the fact that we have knowledge of all the cultures of humanity, past and present, we can restore the universal meanings encoded in various spiritual creations.

As he explicitly noted down, Eliade deliberately placed his research into the perspective of universal history,[18] advancing the thesis that each „local" culture should be integrated into the vast panorama of humanity's macro-structure in order to reveal its universal significance. The universal is a key concept, but it is differently understood now. The universal now signifies what ontologically belongs to all cultures, irrespective of the fact that their achievements are validated or not by a metropolis that controls at a given time the surface of a geographic area. Eliade saw the national specificity integrated into the universal, but not dissolved into it. The clash between Western spirituality and archaic, traditional or extra-European cultural models has paved the way for a new

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[17] Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, Bucharest, Paideea Publishing House, 1994.
[18] Mircea Eliade, *From Zamolxis to Genghis-Khan*, Bucharest, The Sceintific and Encyclopedic Publishing House, 1980, p.19.

understanding of the diversity of cultures and a new concept of their temporality. The lesson of this confrontation leads to the idea that there is no culture whatsoever which would hold the absolute key to decipher the world and that at any time there would be possible other keys and ways of existence. „Western culture seems to make a prodigious effort of historiographic anamnesis. It strives to discover, to „awaken", to recover the past of the most exotic and peripheral societies, both the prehistory of the Near East and also the cultures of the almost extinct „primitives". It wishes to bring back to life the humankind's past in its entirety. We are witnessing a vertiginous widening of historical horizon. This is one of the rare, heartening syndromes of modern world. Western cultural provincialism - which begins history with Egypt, literature with Homer and philosophy with Thales - is about to be overpassed".[19]

Our age has intensified the communication between cultures, and owing to this phenomenon, cultures „open up" to each other, understanding one another on a deeper level. This opening enriches each and every culture and stimulates spiritual creativity.[20] Eliade has mainly in mind the encounter between present-day cultures and archaic and traditional cultures, thus producing a totalization of all the moments and evolution lines followed by the cultural phenomenon. However, the process is more-embracing and includes, naturally, the communication between current cultures, those that are engaged in the history of today, regardless of their level of development. Therefore, the scale and intensity of intercultural communication generated one of the „most vigorous and also the most innovative projects of the second half of the 20th century".[21] Each culture must assimilate into its structures meanings from other cultures, it must „translate" the values of other cultures into its own language. Thus, the idea of translation acquires a higher meaning, says Paul Ricoeur. „Translation is the mediation between the plurality of cultures and the unity of humanity".[22] Here is one of the meanings of the syntagm „universal civilization".

Every culture is a „coincidence of contradictions", a totalization of them in original forms. In-depth, cultures are embodiments of the symbolic language, ways in which given societies encode their cognitive and practical experience. We find here archetypes, myths, symbols, beliefs and attitudes that can be considered as „exemplary models" for a given culture. Based on this original layer, cultures „communicate" with each other; different historical facts and creations can unravel to the researcher similarities, significant correspondences, common forms, attitudes that fit into the field of variability of the same human condition. The generative matrix of cultures exists only through the historical sequence of its appearances. All appearances are important and significant for the restoration of the global universe. By following these in-depth meanings, in their diversified

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[19] Mircea Eliade, *Aspecte ale mitului* (Aspects of the Myth), Bucharest, Univers Publishing House, 1978, pp.128-129.

[20] Adrian Marino, *Hermeneutica lui Mircea Eliade* (Mircea Eliade's Hermeneutics), Cluj-Napoca, Dacia Publishing House, 1980, pp. 293-348.

[21] Mircea Eliade, *Istoria credinţelor şi ideilor religioase* (A History of Religious Ideas and Beliefs), vol.I, Bucharest, The Scientific and Encyclopedic Publishing House, 1981, p.XII.

[22] Paul Ricoeur, *Despre traducere* (On Translation), Bucharest, Polirom Publishing House, 2015, p. 130.

expressions over space and time, we can restore the „profound and indivisible unity of the history of human spirit." No culture can be the substitute of the universal, no culture can be universal without being profoundly specific. The demarche of spiritual „archaeology", of *anamnesis*, as Eliade writes, strengthened the conscience of the unity of human phenomenon, and also the ever clearer conscience of the inner diversity of this unity. Every culture has a deep native background through which it communicates „organically" with other cultures, so we can talk about similarities and an „intercultural consonance"[23] between different areas of civilization. Consonance is obtained using various notes in a musical score, not singing on the same note. Diving deep in specificity, you find the immanent, consubstantial universe. Cultures, at all their levels of existence, are universal and specific at the same time.

The new paradigm therefore claims a theory of relativity with applications in human sciences. The characteristics and determinations of a culture are not absolute values, instead they are representations and functions of the standpoint from which the observer studies them. The encounter with „another", with another culture is a fundamental experience which brings the awareness that the symbolic values and practices defining us are relative and cannot be enforced upon other cultures as universal norms. "Acknowledging the existence of „others„ inevitably entails the "relativization" or even the destruction of the official cultural horizon".[24] Once the structural diversity of societies and cultures was discovered and assimilated in depth, it triggered a serious crisis in Western thinking, writes Eliade. The Western man considered himself „the master of the world, the author of the only valid universal culture, the creator of the single real and useful science, and so on. And all of a sudden, he finds himself on the same level with all the other people, that is, subject to the conditionings of unconsciousness and history; he is no longer the only creator of a great civilization, he is no longer the master of the world".[25]

Therefore, discovering other cultures, the Western man discovered himself to be *relative and different* from other forms of the human condition. It is an implicit validation of all human ways of understanding and experiencing human experience in its structural polymorphism. „Ultimately, it can be said that, despite the risks of relativism it entails, the doctrine according to which man is exclusively a historical being ushered in a new universalism."[26] It is no longer the universalism of a single culture model, instead it is the universalism that makes "justice" to all the cultures of the world, the universalism that reconstitutes and totalizes the expressive moments of humanity.

The history of religions, in the way Mircea Eliade developed and practiced it, contributed to building a new humanism and an open and reflective consciousness, through which we can understand both the unity of cultures and also the diversity of its forms of creation and manifestation.

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[23] Sergiu Al-George, *Archaic and Universal,* Bucharest, Eminescu Publishing House, 1981, p.21.

[24] Mircea Eliade, *Nostalgia of Origins,* Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 1994, p. 17.

[25] *Ibidem,*p. 87.

[26] *Ibidem,*p. 88.

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ELIADE' S "PROPHECIES" ON MASS MEDIA
— FULFILLMENTS OR UNPREDICTABLE DEVELOPMENTS?

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Abstract: Basing my paper on an anthropological and psycho-social approach of mass culture and mass communication in some of their fundamental aspects, I am concerned, first of all, in the highlighting of some great theoretical intuitions which Mircea Eliade have had about them. These intuitions were about the future changes in society, in mass-media and in our entire civilization. I will refer to them as "prophecies", as some authors have named them. Then I am concerned in setting some imaginary limits which such "prophecies" appeared to have had at their time. Furthermore, I shall formulate some of my conclusions about the unpredictable consequences or developments that the cultural events visualized in advance by Eliade are producing in our times.

Keywords: mass culture, mass communication, mass media, myth, prophecy.

> *Motto:*
> *"after all, culture is something which we are cultivating. But pay attention to this: we are becoming just what we are cultivating."*
> *(Rafail Noica, The Culture of Spirit)*

Some fulfilled "prophecies" and some of their limits

Mircea Eliade was referred to as the author of some "prophecies" which he made even in his youth; authors such as Dan Zamfirescu gave this name to some of his surprising intuitions, which the further course of cultural events was to fulfill them, or to confirm them. One of these prophecies was about plausible social movements on a global scale — a severe political crisis, even another war, and all these pretty soon after The Great War was ended; in 1927, by his regular writings in "Cuvântul" journal, Eliade was trying to prevent his generation from cultural provincialism, from wasting its creative energy, from procrastination, and the urge was this: maybe his generation will have a short "providential" time for creation, in its history, maybe just ten or twenty years of freedom: freedom of speech, of belief etc.

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Another "prophecy" of Mircea Eliade was aiming at highlighting the rise of irrationalism in the 20th Century's culture, especially in the mass culture. In his *Spiritual Itinerary*, he was noticing about irrationalism that, after bringing into existence and historical manifestation The Great War,

"now it is becoming more and more obvious in the Western spiritual and cultural life as well: it shows in the rehabilitation of religious experience, in the big number of conversions, in the increased interest for pseudo-spiritualities and Oriental teachings (theosophy, neo-Buddhism, Tagore etc.), in the success of surrealism, in the psychoanalitical fashion etc."[1]

Indeed, today we witness the expansion and diversification of what I call "PSY area": focus on the training of the mind, of the human psyche in order to trigger, develop, augment paranormal endowments; the exploration of the unicity of one's own spiritual life, setting one's own "objects" of idolatry and, hence, the rising of one's own spirituality to the rank of exceptionality; the development of pseudo-theories and guides on the immersion into the non-rationality of some Oriental practices of reborn pagan polytheism through astrology, numerology, chiromancy, divination, witchcraft, magic, near-death experience etc.

Indeed, rationality seems not to be a good gained once and for all in civilization, in the public speech, in historical decisions throughout generations, and this fact is noticeable due to the weakening of the concern for theory, concept, critical thinking, logics, argumentation. Nowadays, in the public space, in mass communication, the symbolic thinking prevails, in which symbol sticks to the area of non-rationality or even irrationality through: imaginary, increased emotionality, unconscious, subconscious, virtualization, mystical or supernatural experiences, paranormal perceptions etc.

If it was to trace furthermore the consequences unpredicted by Eliade of this decrease in rationality nowadays, we could say that, progressively, the image tends to dominate the media space where the *logos* used to reign: the image drives away or limits more and more the area of rational discourse, of the Word (with capital letters) or of theoretical thinking. Under these circumstances, the media messages are primarily decoded through interpretation. It becomes fit for the approach of the current extended iconosphere which, little by little, confines the logosphere. Since it is no longer related to a single meaning, or with meanings set as generally accepted conventions, or with the creative environment of logic, concept and critical thinking, iconosphere lets itself explored through interpretation, incessantly generating meanings. Its images are classified as: interior to the subject (as in phantasms, daydreaming, dreams) or exteriorized in the world (works of art or of communication), strictly individual and private or which belong to the culture's sphere (utopias, myths).[2]

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[1] Mircea Eliade, *Profetism românesc*, Bucarest, Roza Vînturilor, 1990, p. 11.
[2] See Lucien Sfez, *For a Criticism of Communication*, Bucharest, Comunicare.ro, pp. 335-337; J.-J. Wunenburger, *Life of Images*, Cluj, Cartimpex, 2002, pp. 11-16.

Other "prophecies" about mass-media[3]: the development of new and multiple forms of cult, ritual and idolatry toward objects of luxury or technological discoveries (a new fashionable automobile, for example); the tendency to transform ordinary people into heroes, "mythical" characters, icons, and then to destroy or "cancel" them in an instant (for example, political candidates).

Indeed, there have been created in the late 20th Century song lyrics like: "I'm in love with my car" (*Queen* band), or "you kiss your car good night" (Shanya Twain)< indeed, there have appeared reality shows (like *Big Brother*) which made stars out of ordinary people.

About the persistence of myth even in profane, disguised forms of the (tele)visual productions, Eliade highlights the future psychological role of the *story*, as a form of mythical creation for modern man. The author says that a story has the tendency of repeating an initiation at the imaginary level, and in other forms than the myth used to do, but with the same role: the initiation makes every individual "special", privileged, when he compares himself with all the others. The story is nowadays a sort of personalized myth, with personalized values. Eliade wrote: *"Without being conscious of this, or just having the sensation of amusement or escape from daily life, man living in modern societies still benefits from this imaginary initiation offered by a story."[4]*

More than this, to better understand what Eliade was seeing in the future, we shall evoke here Gilbert Durand's theory on the imaginary, in order to explain why there appears an idolatry of the images, or, in Max Weber's phrase, the "polytheism of values". Apparently, this "inflation of imagery" is derived from the need for concretization, plasticization of what is abstract, intangible, unreachable; and this seemed to turn the entire modern culture upside down; it is a dimension of postmodernism and relativism which fades away from the traditional Western culture based on the written word, on its rhetoric, its syntax, its argumentation, i.e. everything that revolved around the "Gutenberg Galaxy", according to McLuhan's term from 1964 in *Understanding Media*.[5] Nowadays we are living in the Internet Galaxy, or the Virtual Galaxy.

Still there are some consequences of the present mass communication through images which Mircea Eliade failed in predicting. As certain specialists underline, this kind of mass communication marks the feelings in a very particular, memorable manner and its impact on the affective memory is much more emphasized as the sensations, representations, inner data and reverberations are deeper.[6] The forms of what we generically refer to as "image" can be: metaphor, myth, ritual, allegory, dream, illusion etc. All these turn, through interpretation, into stories. Therefore, rationality visibly decreases in the image-based communication. Hence, the disappearance from mass-media of the

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[3] Mircea Eliade, *Aspects of Myth,* Chapter "Myths and Mass Media", Bucharest, Univers, 1978, pp. 173-180.

[4] Ibidem, p. 189.

[5] Gilbert Durand, „The Imaginary", in *Adventures of the Image*, Bucharest, Nemira, 1999, pp. 125-126.

[6] Alain Joannès, *Communication through Images*, Iași, Polirom, 2009, p. 15.

traditional intellectual models, of epistemic authorities, of academic opinion leaders, invited to participate in debates broadcast in prime-time shows. The new generations are fed with non-models, non-specialists; more recently, a new type of "expert" is invited to speak: the universal analyst for whom no domain is unknown, as long as he easily rules on every issue; he feels no respect for any domain because he lacks the minimum knowledge to realize how incompetent he is. Universities become foreign enclaves for the media culture.

Another "side effect" of today's mass communication which Eliade couldn't predict is that mass media managed, progressively, - according to some specialists[7] - to diminish the social cohesion, to diminish public opinion, to turn society into a sum of separated publics or audiences, made up of consumers of mass media productions.

Further more, as the contemporary anthropologist David Le Breton says, *„There appears a new dimension of reality, through the universalization of the show, and man essentially becomes sight-driven, to the detriment of the other senses. Images become the world (mass-media, high-tech, photography, video…)"*[8]

New departures from Eliade's "prophecies"

We find in Gianni Vattimo's contemporary writings some relevant considerations about the recent phenomena developing in mass media which couldn't make the object of Mircea Eliade's reflection, by the middle of the 20th Century.

Gianni Vattimo speaks of a current vertiginous multiplication of communication, by "speaking up", by expressing the points of view of numerous subcultures, by proliferating the worlds, the histories, the truths; we are dealing with a generalized communication, with an encompassing media market, with a *mass media* society".[9]

I have noticed five contemporary developments, five phenomena characterizing the mass media society that I deem relevant in this context. Here they are, in a summary description:

- a new form of multiculturalism, that no longer resembles the one of the 20th century, promoted through the on-site anthropological studies; emerges as a valorization of the difference per se, more and more visible in the contemporary communities and societies in racial, ethnical, national, religions, mentalities and traditions etc. terms; in which neither tolerance, nor integration are promoted, but rather the respect towards diversity, acceptance of equalizing plurality;

- the irreversible shift (which I already mentioned) from the epoch of the *logos*, of the word as expression of human rationality, to the epoch of the image;

- the permanent global spinning in the Internet Image Galaxy, with negative consequences in the declining of conceptual discourse, theoretical thinking and the habit of reading; all these in favor of the expansion of image, emotional or schematized discourse, less conceptually abstract, symbolic thinking, the heard

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[7] U. Frevert & H.-G. Haupt, *20th Century Man*, Iaşi, Polirom, 2002, pp. 10, 11.

[8] David Le Breton, *Anthropology of the Body and Modernity*, Timişoara, Amarcord, 2002, p. 191.

[9] Gianni Vattimo, *Transparent Society*, Constanţa, Pontica, 1995, pp. 5-10.

word (including the audio-book). Both traditional mass media and the new media contribute to this through the virtualization of the social networks, of the websites, forums, blogs, podcasts; through online quasi-anonymously built encyclopedias and articles devoid of bibliographic references; through interactive televisions and video games; through the emphasis on schematization and a grammaticality of the messages conveyed via e-mail messenger, skype, SMSs etc.

- mass media, by all their complexity of forms and by focusing on sensational, have shaped the phenomenon of show-society. Nowadays they are focused on what is shocking, what entertains or constantly promises the sensational, the perpetual state of exception and uniqueness for the eyes of the privileged, tuned viewer. In it, the political, juridical, economic, military and diplomatic measures are taken on TV, the electoral and post-electoral marketing often trigger, all around the globe, corruption-related scandals. The VIPs take the place of the moral models and mass-media simulate independent journalism and democracy.

- as Tzvetan Todorov acknowledges, due to the new shape of our society, the human existence is today stained by the superficiality and coldness of inter-human relations, by loneliness as lifestyle; alienated from himself, living alone or engaged in unauthentic relations, nowadays' individual has fewer chances to achieve self-accomplishment. His life is affected by "certain forms of communication that impoverish and alienate, as well as by individualist representations on this existence that make us live our own human condition as a tragedy..."[10]

Of course, these tragedies couldn't concern Mircea Eliade by his time, although their shadows could have been born in the 20th Century, and increased in this beginning of the 21st Century. But looking back at the world that the Romanian scholar have analyzed, we can see the differences between his world and ours more clearly. Should we expect another "prophetic" scholar to help us find solutions to our problems, or should we search for them as long as this world still can be healed of its social diseases?

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MIRCEA ELIADE. FROM THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS TO PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

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„We believe that philosophical anthropology (our underline) could learn something from the way in which pre-socratic man (or traditional man, in other words) has valued his position in the universe”
Mircea Eliade, "Myth of the Eternal Return"

Abstract*: The Romanian anthropological model set up by Dimitrie Cantemir in Descriptio Moldaviae[1] was taken to a higher level of philosophical elaboration and refinement in the thinking of Mircea Eliade, who asserted himself in contemporary anthropological knowledge through a "new philosophical anthropology and a new humanism"[2]. This research aims at a novel approach to Mircea Eliade's work, integrating his contribution in the field of the history of religions into a philosophical anthropology centered on the concept of sacredness as a universal dimension of man. Concerned with the issue of human being, Mircea Eliade evokes in his work the mutation that takes place in the mentality of the post-Renaissance European man who lives the desacralization of nature. Viewing man - in fact, the whole humanity – from the perspective of its temporal-historical metamorphoses, Eliade turned his growing interest towards a philosophical anthropology, based on a phenomenological-hermeneutic method. Basically, his approach aims at a **new humanism**.*

Keywords: *sacred, desacralized man, history of religions, philosophical anthropology.*

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[1] Dimitrie Cantemir, *Descriptio Moldaviae*, Bucharest, Cartea Românească Publishing House, 1928., transl. by Gh. Adamescu.
[2] Mircea Eliade, *La nostalgie des origins* [*The Quest*], chapt. *A New Humanism*, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 2013, p.11-25.

Born in Bucharest in 1907 and deceased in Chicago in 1986, Mircea Eliade was, and is appreciated by specialists[3] as the most important historian of religions and the most important interpreter of symbols and myth. An incredibly prolific writer, Eliade had what he called the "double vocation" of religion scholar and author of literature. The language of his literary writings was Romanian. The most important of his scientific works – from the *Traite d'histoire des religions* (English translation as *Patterns in Comparative Religion*) and *Le mythe de l'eternel retour* (*Cosmos and History: The Myth of Eternal Return*) from 1949, to the *Histoire des croyances et des idees religeuses* (*A History of Religious Ideas*) of 1983, have been written in French. He was also the main editor of the 16 volumes of the *Encyclopedia of Religion* published in 1987.

In the landscape of Eliade's creation, the *Ordeal by Labyrinth*: *Conversations with Claude Henri Rocquet[4]* (interview book) is somehow a *testament* inasmuch as through it Eliade defines both his research method as a historian of religions, and the purpose of this research, which is the **rediscovery of archaic and primitive spirituality**. This rediscovery is important to modern man, being a retrieval of his own origins, and implicitly of his identity. Here we discover the ideas and beliefs that underlie Mircea Eliade's entire scientific and literary activity: the idea of the unity and sacredness of the cosmos and life, the idea of the unity, liberty and creativity of human spirit. In the thinking of this researcher of myths and religions there exists a close connection between spiritual life, freedom, and culture.

Regarding the scientific discipline which he founded, not only within Romanian culture but in the world, Eliade confesses: ".... the *history of religions* penetrates into what is essentially human: in man's relationship with the sacred. The history of religions can play an extremely important role in the crisis we know today. Modern man's crises are largely religious, to the extent that they represent an awareness of meaninglessness. When a person has the feeling that he has lost the key to his existence, when he does not know what the meaning of life is, it is entirely a religious issue because religion is the very answer to the fundamental question: what is the meaning of existence? ... In this crisis, the history of religions can be a Noah's ark of mythical and religious traditions. That's why I think this "absolute discipline" can have a regal function"[5]. This is a text in which the author suggests that history of religions is a philosophical discipline because the problem of the meaning of existence is a fundamental theme of philosophical anthropology. In this respect, Mircea Eliade argues that "more than any other humanistic discipline (i.e., more than psychology, anthropology, sociology, etc.), the history of religions can open the way to a philosophical anthropology, for the sacred is a universal dimension ..."[6]. The author's

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[3] Douglas Allen, *Myth and Religion in Mircea Eliade,* Cluj-Napoca, Casa Cărţii de Ştiinţă Publishing House, 2011, p.5.
[4] Mircea Eliade, *Ordeal by Labyrinth*: *Conversations with Claude Henri Rocquet* (*L'epreuve du labyrinthe*. published in 1978 in French in Paris), Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 2007.
[5] Mircea Eliade, *Ordeal by Labyrinth, op.cit.,* 2007, p.144.
[6] *Idem, The Quest, op.cit.,* p. 23.

arguments in support of the above idea are presented as follows: "… the beginnings of culture are rooted in religious experiences and beliefs. In addition, even after they have been radically secularized, cultural creations and social institutions, technology, moral ideas, arts, etc. cannot be properly understood unless their original, religious matrix is known, a matrix that they have tacitly criticized, altered or rejected, becoming what they are now: profane cultural values"[7]. Thus, the historian of religions is able to capture the permanence of what was called the specific existential situation of man "of being in the world," for the religious experience is correlative. In fact, to become aware of his own mode of being, to assume his own presence in the world is a "religious" experience for man. However, Eliade points out at the end of the chapter "A new humanism"[8], that neglecting the search for the authentic center of a religion can understandably explain the inadequacy of the contributions made by the historians of religions to philosophical anthropology.

In Search of Origins

Regarding the relationship with philosophy, Mircea Eliade writes "It is regrettable that we do not have a more precise word than that of "religion" for naming the experience of the sacred … (however) the term may still be useful if we always remember that it does not necessarily imply faith in a god, in gods or in spirits, but the experience of the sacred is related to the ideas of being, meaning and truth … It is difficult to imagine how the human spirit could function without the conviction that something irreducible exists in the world, as it is impossible to imagine how consciousness could emerge without giving meaning to the pulsions and experiences of man. The consciousness of a real and significant world is closely related to the discovery of the sacred. The sacred experience has paved the way for systematic thinking. Thus, the philosophical thinking has been confronted from the beginning with a world of meanings that was, structurally and genetically, religious. This may be enough to raise the interest of philosophers in the work of religious historians and for phenomenologies of religions."[9]. Eliade expresses here a point of view he upheld from the first books published in France to the end of his life, namely that the philosophical concern with being, the ultimate causes, and the position of man in the world had emerged from the essential ontological preoccupations of homo religiosus. The relation with the sacred, understood as supreme physical being, was a defining and constant anthropological dimension, already evident in the Neolithic man, who was firmly grounded on the earth. Earth that he represented as "a cosmos sacralized and organized with the help of the gods. These were constantly present through the theophanies, being invoked in special places and moments. Gods, as patrons and protectors, are the origin of everything that exists. They represent the causal ground of the world, before any beginning of philosophical speculation on the arches. Within human communities, the sacred cult is maintained and practiced by performing the rituals by specialized initiated persons, well

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[7] *Ibidem,* p.24.
[8] *Ibidem,* p.25.
[9] *Ibidem*, the Preface. p. 5

acquainted with the myths. From within these religious elites, at one point, emerged the philosphers, in Eliade's opinion. This would have taken place in a time when rationalism, which eroded the sacredness of myths, had already had been imposed. The appearance of the philosophers' sect is put in correlation with the twilight of the solar hierophany. In the *Treatise on the History of Religions*,[10] Eliade writes "It is worth highlighting the affinity of solar theology with rationalism and the elites, be they initiates, heroes or philosophers ... the solar hierophany tends to become the privilege of a closed circle, of a minority of the elect ... Assimilated to the << intelligent fire >>, the sun ends by becoming a cosmic principle in the Greco-Roman world. From hierophany he turns into an idea ... Heraclitus already knew that "the sun is always new every day". For Plato it is the image of the good, the one that manifests itself in the sphere of visible things. For Plotinus it is the intelligence of the world ... The last to come among the "chosen", the philosophers, have managed to desacralize one of the most powerful cosmic hierophanies."

Through his unique work in the field of the history of religions, Mircea Eliade sets the epistemological limits between philosophy and religion, succeeding in somehow placing in history the "philosophical" episode of humanity, unfolded between ancient Greece and postmodernism. He does not venture to comment on the philosophical issues of modernity, limiting himself only to evoking the mutation that takes place in the mentality of the post-Renaissance European man who is experiencing the desacralization of nature. But Eliade surmised that there was actually a process similar to the one in ancient Greece, which is even more radical, involving the major role that philosophy had occupied, instead of religion. The perspective of these temporal-historical metamorphoses of man- in fact of humanity - Eliade's growing interest for a philosophical anthropology, based on a phenomenological hermeneutic methodology. Moreover, the Eliadian project aimed at a new humanism. It is not by accident that the first chapter of *The Quest* is entitled: **A New Humanism.**[11]

Eliade, concerned with the development of a philosophical anthropology, does not hesitate to comment on the "ontologies" of primitive beliefs, especially in books dedicated to a broad circle of intellectuals. He makes repeated references to "the meanings of being" of religious concepts. And one of the themes that he dealt with, from the very beginning, refers to the "degrees of being" of reality, of the world that sacredness "opens". In this direction, the temporality specific to man, correlated with the notion of space that gravitates around the center, has an important role. The center, the axis of the world, under its diverse manifestations, facilitates the encounter between the various ontological levels polarized by the sacred and the profane. *This ontological mediation of a specifically anthropologic space-time, which the existence of the sacred man puts into focus, is one of Eliade's significant contributions to the philosophical anthropology project.*

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[10] M. Eliade, *Treatise on the History of Religions*, Bucharest, Scientific and Encyclopedic Publishing House, 1981.

[11] Idem, *The Quest*, *op.cit.*, p.11-25.

Eliade is mindful of the fact that the man of archaic cultures, as well as that of elaborate religious universes, understands himself as being in a world created, at some point, by supernatural beings. A moment that could be called the "origins." Of course, the origin, the moment of creation, of hatching cannot be placed, simply, "in time". But connecting the "phenomenon of origin" with a subsequent existence in time, is perfectly comprehensible[12]. All the aspects of the daily life of the archaic man have their *raison d'etre* in their creation, in the initial and exemplary model instituted at the beginning by the gods. That is the essential moment, the essence that precedes the present existence, which is real, but ephemeral. This understanding applies both to the surrounding nature and to the human world, for example to such human practices as fishing, hunting, sexuality, agriculture or medicine. In terms of temporality, reality appears to have two levels, correlated with two kinds of time. A first level is that of the actual, matricial reality, which is original, established in the quasi-time of the beginnings, when a thing was created or an act was first performed by the gods or ancestors, establishing an exemplary model. The archetype is solidary with "the time of origins". It is the level of true reality, of the essence. A reality that precedes, in time, the actual existence that we encounter in everyday life. The two hypostases of the world, the essential one, from the original time of creation, and the present one, of an ephemeral existence in the present, introduce temporality as ontological support. In essence, the anthropology of the archaic sacred man that Eliade analyses, reveals an ontology in which the existence of the world is required to be sustained by a continuous appeal to the archetypal model instituted at the origin of creation, by supernatural beings. In other words, through an orientation towards the past, through a periodical ritualistic return to the matricial, creative past. A reminiscence of this archaic conception is partly encountered in the Platonic doctrine of ideas[13]. However, with the Greek philosopher, the meditative-contemplative recourse to this trans-temporal instance is meaningful only for knowing the truth, and not for maintaining the world, as real, and effective, for man.

Methodological requirements

Mircea Eliade was unique among the specialists in the history of religions, for his interest in a philosophical anthropology conceived in a broad sense, integrating the perspectives of the humanistic sciences in which he dealt. His phenomenology and hermeneutics are part of the mainstream methodologies cultivated in the era of human sciences before the explosion of cognitivism and artificial intelligence. Ricoeur pointed to Eliade -notes Culianu[14]- - as of the promoters of a type of hermeneutics that does not fall into a fallacious "demystification". His creative hermeneutics would be defined in a simple contrast with the "Freudian or Marxist hermeneutic of suspicion".

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[12] Mircea Lăzărescu, *The Quarrel of the Wise around Time: Cioran, Eliade, Noica and ...Heidegger*., Timişoara, Brumar Publishing House, 2017, p. 88.
[13] Plato, *The Republic*, book VI:I book VII, Bucharest, Scientific Publishing House, 1968.
[14] I.P. Culianu, *Mircea Eliade*, Iaşi, Polirom Publishing House, 2004.

Eliade's language and preoccupations intersect, at least in part, with the openness of the Heideggerian interrogation on the meaning of being[15]. Arguments to this are Eliade's explicit reference to ontology, the constant recourse to the concept of being-in-the-world and the centering of his analysis on the issue of temporality. However, Eliade remains a scientist who relies on the documentation and the theoretical heritage of the specialists in his field of research. Asked by Claude-Henri Rocquet, what is his *research method*, the Romanian thinker confessed: "*The first point was to go to the best sources – the best translations, the best commentaries. To this purpose, I personally ask my colleagues and the specialists. This saves me from treading thousands of pages of little interest. The care to know the sources thoroughly is one of the reasons why I devoted seven or eight years to the study of Australia. I had the feeling that I could read myself all the necessary documents, which would have been impossible for Africa or for the American tribes.*

The second point is that, when you approach an archaic or traditional religion, you should start with the beginning, that is with the cosmogonic myth. How did the world come about? Who created it? God, a creator, a mythical ancestor? Or maybe the world was already there?

And a divine figure started to transform it? Then come the myths of the origins of man and of all the institutions".[16]

It can be understood from the above text that the hermeneutic of the history of religions followed by Mircea Eliade in his approach aims at identifying the transcendent in human experience, at isolating, from the enormous mass of the "unconscious", that which is trans-conscious, and furthermore, revealing the presence of the transcendent and the supra-historical in everyday life. For Eliade, the trans-conscious, whether it is analyzed as a mental, religious state, or as fundamental capacity, faculty, category or structure, has a non-historical, transcultural, universal status. In some places, he appears to use the concept of trans-consciousness as a necessary criterion for all religious experiences: to distinguish mythical and religious phenomena from non-religious phenomena. In this context, the intentionality of the sacred and the unique and universal structure of the dialectic of the sacred requires a "superior" structure that is irreducibly religious, or at least specific to the consciousness.

It might be said that the methodological assumption of the irreducibility of the sacred is born from the frequent criticism that Mircea Eliade makes to the previous reductionist positions[17]. According to Eliade, the scholars of the past, using certain rationalist, or positivist norms analyzed facts by introducing them into unilateral, evolutionary schemes. Eliade admits that anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists, and historians of the twentieth century have unveiled new dimensions of the sacred, but criticizes them for reducing the meaning of

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[15] Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (Being and Time), Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 2002
[16] M. Eliade, *op.cit.,* p.139-140.
[17] Douglas Allen, *Myth and Religion in Mircea Eliade,* Cluj-Napoca, Casa Cărţii de Ştiinţă Publishing House, 2011, *op.cit.,* p. 40.

religiousness to its anthropological, sociological, psychological or historical analysis.

Instead of conclusions

The conclusion of Eliade's critique can be expressed in the following anti-reductionist demand: the scholar should try to understand the religious phenomena in their own "reference plan". To reduce the interpretation of myths to a non-religious reference (sociological, psychological, economic, etc.) is to neglect their intentionality and not to understand their unique and irreducible "element" the sacred. "The consciousness of a real and significant world is intimately linked to the discovery of the sacred. Through the experience of the sacred, the spirit has perceived the difference between what is revealed as real, powerful, rich and meaningful, and what is lacking in these qualities ... the chaotic and dangerous flow of things, their haphazard and non-sensical appearance and disappearance ... the sacred is not an element in the structure of this consciousness. In the most archaic stages of culture, living as a human being is in itself a religious act, because eating, sexual life and work have a sacramental value. The experience of the sacred is inherent to man's way of being in the world. Without the experience of the real - and of what is not real - the human being cannot be made up. It is on the basis of this evidence that the historian of religions begins to study the different religious forms[18]. But it can only be discovered through a "phenomenological" method. From this perspective, Eliade insists on clarifying the understanding of this central concept for his Anthropological project, the sacred does not involve faith in God, in gods or in spirits. It is the experience of a reality and the source of consciousness of being in the world. What is this consciousness that makes us people? It is the result of experiencing the sacred, of the division that is being operated between the real and the unreal. If the experience of the sacred essay is essentially from the order of consciousness, it is obvious that the sacred will not be recognized from the outside. Only through the inner experience will it be recognized in the religious acts of a Christian or of a "primitive".

It can be understood from the texts presented that Mircea Eliade's view of religion is, from the perspective of philosophical anthropology that connects information from several fields of human knowledge, such as history, sociology, psychology, philosophy, religion, culture, a unique project in the history of human thinking. For Eliade, "homo religious" is the "total man," and the science of religions must become a complete discipline in the sense that it must use, integrate and articulate results obtained by various methods of approaching the religious phenomenon. Thus, the *history of religions* could rise to the rank of a *new humanism*.

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[18] Mircea Eliade, *Ordeal by Labyrinth*, *op.cit.,* p. 150.

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ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ETHICS AND RELIGION

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Abstract: Recently there has been a substantial and concerted effort to rehabilitate religion in the field of philosophy in general and its intersection with the subdiscipline of ethics in particular. This resurgence of interest has been, to the delight of practitioners of philosophy, very much accompanied by overgenerous funding and financial support for academic positions, fellowships, programmes and projects. This extracurricular resurrection of focus on and attention to religion in the discipline of philosophy is not only welcome to philosophers for the wider exposure of philosophy to the public domain but also for proffering new opportunities to expand the remits of research and investigation within various subdisciplines of philosophy, especially in ethics. However, against the backdrop of the persistently chequered history of the relationship between philosophy and religion, the purpose of this paper is to survey the areas of contention specifically in the field of ethics where the liaison has been, to say the least, tempestuous if not outright acrimonious and hostile. Such a survey allows a measured approach to the interaction between religion and ethics that would ultimately benefit both parties in this transaction.

There has been a common conception, or for that matter a misconception depending upon one's vantage point, at least since the inception of the Abrahamic or Semitic religious tradition in the antiquity, that religion is the sole source or the foremost fountain of moral values, and thereby giving rise to the early forms of the divine command theory in ethics. Often than not the Decalogue or the Ten Commandments as narrated in the book of *Exodus* in the *Hebrew Testament* is taken to be the best exemplar of this perspective. These commandments 'written with the finger of God' (*Exodus* 31:18) are then followed by *another* set of normative regulations commonly referred to as the Book of the Covenant whereby the relationship between the divine being and the people with whom the covenant is made is placed under a covenant fidelity.

However, a more imaginative and fabulous portrayal of this type of ethical theism – in this specific case, ethical monotheism – is presented in the book of *Proverbs* in the literary style of *Wisdom Woman* calls. "Lady Wisdom" – a personified call of conscience and measure of moral rectitude that seems to be a

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(mysterious allegorical) combination of goddess, prophetess, and angel[1] – makes her appearance bemoaning humanity that

> Does not wisdom call,
>> and does not understanding raise her
>> voice?
> On the heights, beside the way,
>> at the crossroads she takes her stand;
>> beside the gates in front of the town,
>> at the entrance of the portals she cries
>>> out:
> "To you, O people, I call,
>> and my cry is to all that live.
> O simple ones, learn prudence;
>> acquire intelligence, you who lack it.
> Hear, for I will speak noble things,
>> and from my lips will come what is
>> right;
> for my mouth will utter truth;
>> wickedness is an abomination to my
>> lips.
> All the words of my mouth are righteous;
>> there is nothing twisted or crooked in
>> them.
> They are all straight to one who
>> Understands
>> and right to those who find
>> knowledge. (*Proverbs* 8: 1-9; New Revised Standard Version)

Then, after a few more admonitions and advices, she swiftly moves on to stamp her authority and establish her credentials by reminding her audience that,

> The Lord created me at the beginning[2]
>> of his work,
>> the first of his acts of long ago.
> Ages ago I was set up,
>> at the first, before the beginning of the
>> earth. (*Proverbs* 8: 22-23; New Revised Standard Version)

And, with this declaration emphasising the genesis and source of moral precepts and percepts prior to other divine creations including humanity, one more time the reader is reminded of the true *authorship* of ethical values and norms, namely, the ultimate divine being.

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[1] Historically speaking, there is an interesting predecessor of the biblical Lady Wisdom in the character of the ancient Egyptian goddess *Ma'at*, daughter of the creator god *Amun Re*, where she personifies *justice* and *equity*.

[2] Or *me as the beginning*.

Notwithstanding the intellectual and philosophical vicissitude of the foregoing ethical theism over the past several millennia[3], one may set the *upshot* of this theistic outlook on morality against the statement of one of the most preeminent ethicists of the twentieth century where the chapter on the relationship between morality and religion is concluded by the comment that the 'trouble with religious morality comes not from morality's being inescapably pure, but from religion's being incurably unintelligible.'[4] Furthermore, in a later work, he renews his criticism of religious ethics by remarking that 'the development of the ethical consciousness means the collapse of religion' not because a religious ethics (even a crude one) 'is logically debarred from being ethical' but rather for the dialectical reason that 'if the self-understanding of religion is not to be left behind by the ethical consciousness, it has to move in a direction that will destroy religion.'[5]

Despite Williams' pessimism and in view of the recent rise of intense interest in the relationship between morality and religion, it may not be amiss to explore the prospects of theistic ethics by charting out the contours of its territory where it might run afoul of the development of our ethical consciousness. This will obviously provide an opportunity to forestall possible pitfalls and problems that might render theistic ethics, in Williams' word, 'unintelligible'.

In pursuit of this conceptual cartography, one may start by first recognizing that the concept of theistic ethics is multivocal in the sense of being subject to two broad types of scrutiny. *First*, the idea of theistic ethics may be examined through two different *approaches*: (A) theistic ethics as *a set of moral values* whereby a type of normative ethics based on God and religion is being offered, and (B) theistic ethics as *a source of moral values* whereby a type of metaethics founded on Divine Command Theory is being offered. *Second*, one may examine the idea of theistic ethics from two *perspectives*: (a) theistic ethics from an internal (*ab intra*) or "within the community of believers" perspective, and (b) theistic ethics from an external (*ab extra*) or "without the community of believers" perspective thereby involving the community of "all". There are thus four possible combinations of examining the content and character of theistic ethics.[6]

In the first stage of sketching this four-fold schema, one may look at theistic ethics by applying the internal perspective to the two foregoing approaches: that is, probing the problems and issues arising from taking theistic ethics as a normative theory and then as a metaethical theory. From an internal perspective,

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[3] Compare, for instance, the very first statement of Francis Macdonald Cornford – one of the foremost authors of his generation on ancient Greek philosophy at the turn of the twentieth century – in the preface to his *From Religion to Philosophy* in 1912 (New York: Harper Torchbooks/Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1957): The words, Religion and Philosophy, perhaps suggest to most people two distinct provinces of thought, between which … there is commonly held to be some sort of *border warfare*.' (p. v; emphasis added)

[4] Bernard Williams, *Morality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972, p. 86.

[5] Idem, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, London: Fontana Press/Collins, 1985, p. 33.

[6] They are: (one) theistic normative ethics from an internal perspective (Problems (i) and (ii) below), (two) theistic metaethics from an internal perspective (Problem (iii) below), (three) theistic normative ethics from an external perspective (Problems (iv) to (viii) below), and (four) theistic metaethics from an external perspective (Problems (ix) to (xv) below).

the normative interpretation of theistic ethics faces two central concerns: (i) the phenomenon of moral difference and disagreement among believers in terms of what ethical values are sanctioned by the scriptural sources creates a problem of consistency and authenticity. Patently the fact of moral difference and divergence – possibly as a consequence of the variety of scriptural interpretation due to, for example, context sensitivity of understanding – is not in itself a critical cause of concern until one appreciates the *absence* of a relevant *decision procedure* to resolve such conflicts and clashes. Moreover, the problem is heightened if, as the result of the development of our ethical consciousness, we come to subscribe to the doctrine of ethical conflict-regulation whereby it is stipulated that moral requirements must be capable of authoritatively regulating ethical conflicts. (ii) A related, though separate, second problem in the same category is what may be called *Abraham's Sorites* where the prophet presented God with a sorites series in his intercession for Sodom and Gomorrah when God was intent on destroying the *whole* cities and Abraham posing the question: 'Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked?' (*Genesis* 18: 20-33). Wittingly or otherwise, what is very significant about this sorites by Abraham is to highlight the complexity and intricacy of the *epistemology* of making moral judgments. How does one make a moral judgment?

(iii) This concern conveniently connects to the third issue arising from the application of the internal perspective to theistic ethics not as a normative theory but as a metaethical theory when Abraham in his pleading with God says that it 'is impossible' for God to 'kill the innocent with the guilty'. In other words, Abraham is setting a *constitutive constraint* on the nature of divinity by requiring that the 'judge of all the earth *has to* act justly' (emphasis added), thereby implying, if not declaring outright, the independence of a significant *source* of morality from God. In fact, it is not surprising that historically one comes across sects of, for example, various Abrahamic or Semitic religions that explicitly impose the condition of justice on divinity such as Karaites in the Jewish tradition and Motazalites among Muslims.

In the second stage of using the four-fold division, one may look at theistic ethics by applying the external perspective to it as a normative theory and then as a metaethical theory. From an external perspective, the normative interpretation of theistic ethics faces the following five interrelated issues: (iv) Problem of Universality: how universal are the moral values emanating from a theistic normative theory? This issue obviously overlaps with a family of positions centered around the idea of *moral particularism* according to which there is substantial doubt about understanding morality in principled terms. (v) Problem of Compatibility: how compatible are the moral values of a theistic normative system with non-theistic moral values? (vi) Problem of Partiality: how does a theistic normative theory account for the *partiality* promised and presumed in such frameworks towards certain "chosen" or "favoured" people? (vii) Emergence of New Moral Values: how does a theistic normative account handle and regulate the advent of new moral values? (viii) Problem of Incompleteness: how does a theistic normative theory explain one of the lessons of the process of what

Williams calls 'the development of the ethical consciousness' that our moral outlook is ultimately incomplete?

Finally, in covering the last step of the four-fold permutations, the external perspective as applied to theistic ethics in the form of a metaethical theory draws our attention to the following six subjects: (ix) Euthyphro Dilemma: modernising the terminology of Plato's Socrates in the dialogue *Euthyphro* for our contemporary purposes, the issue can be stated as, 'Is what is morally good, morally good because God approves it, or does God approve it because it is morally good?' (x) Abraham's Sorites: in this incarnation, the sorites can be used to sow the seeds of moral scepticism and consequently to cast doubt on the viability of any theistic ethics. The idea here is predicated on the use of sorites by sceptics of both ancient and contemporary eras to undermine a variety of epistemological as well as ontological realisms and objectivist outlooks. (xi) Problem of Subjectivity: can God know what it feels like to be a non-divine moral agent and thereby questioning the fairness or justness of God's sitting in judgment on such moral agents? This problem has an interesting connection with a variant of the paradox of omnipotence, *viz.*, the paradox of sin: can God commit sin? (xii) God's Command of Moral Values and Omniscience: does God really know what moral commands to make in light of the occurrence of *divine regret*? Having observed 'how wicked everyone on earth was and how evil their thoughts were all the time,' God laments that 'he was *sorry* that he had ever made them and put them on the earth. He was so filled with *regret* that he said, "I will wipe out these people I have created, and also the animals and the birds, because I am *sorry* that I made any of them."' (*Genesis* 6: 5-7, emphasis added) Generally, there is a tremendous tension between omniscience and regret, especially in the context of a divine being authoring moral mores for "creatures" that will belie them by their beliefs and deeds. (xiii) God's Existence and Moral Motivation: can the existence of God provide motivation for acting morally? This question actually manifests itself in three different forms: (1) the Socratic version in the form of Euthyphro Dilemma, (2) the Kantian version in the form of Categorical Imperative, and (3) the Humean version in the form of "is/ought" or naturalistic fallacy. (xiv) God's Creation of Moral Agents: can God create moral agents that freely always choose the good? Obviously, the question has an important overlap with the traditional problem of evil. And, finally, (xv) Problem of Moral Luck: if, as part of the development of the ethical consciousness, we have come to realize the significance and impact of moral luck on our actions and inactions, how does a theistic ethics deal with *this* pervasive trait of our lives?

Now, having gone through a number of issues arising from assaying theistic normative and metaethical theories from both internal and external points of view, one may cautiously conclude that: until and unless one finds some satisfactory grip on these problems, one may be chasing a will-o'-the-wisp in expecting theistic ethics to shed light on our profoundly human ethical consciousness.[7]

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DIFFERENT FORMS OF DEMOCRACIES - CAN COUNTRIES CHANGE FORM OF GOVERNMENT, AND WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF SUCH TRANSITION?

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Abstract: In the 21st Century, many of the world's countries are democratic in various degrees, and it is the most prevalent form of government in western countries. Either it by democratic system in general or by parliamentary democracy in particular, it has important economic and political consequences. It means "the power of the People", but it does not always mean the same. It influences every aspect of our lives, and share several common features, such as equal right to vote, basic human rights, separation of powers between the institutions of the state, freedom of opinion, speech, press, and religious liberty. However, there are variants to each democratic system. The question arises whether or not a country can change its government system and what can be the implications of such a change? It is possible to assume that a country may decide that its system is not compatible due to internal influences and/or external influences, and create a change. Thus, the paper explores and examines the different forms of democracy and whether it is possible to change between systems of government and what are the implications.

Keywords: Representative Democracy, Presidential Democracy, Parliamentary Democracy.

Introduction

"Government of the people, by the people, for the people", this was the definition of democracy ascribed by U.S. president Abraham Lincoln[1], and in the global world of the 21st Century it seems that most of the people want democracy. Indeed, currently many of the world's countries are democratic in various degrees, and many countries worldwide have embraced democratic system of government[2].

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[1] Abraham Lincoln (1809 – 1865) was the 16th president of the United States. Lincoln led the United States through its Civil War, issued the emancipation of slaves and aimed to abolish slavery, strengthened the federal government, and modernized the economy. The above quote is from his speech in dedicating the military cemetery at Gettysburg: "... that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom--and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth". Retrieved from:

https://www.whitehouse.gov/1600/presidents/abrahamlincoln.

[2] According to the Democracy Index of 2016, almost one-half of the world's countries can be considered democracies of some sort. "Democracy Index 2016". The Economist Intelligence Unit. https://www.eiu.com/public/topical_report.aspx?campaignid=DemocracyIndex2016

A country's form of government has important economic and political consequences and it influences every aspect of the lives of its citizens, both directly and indirectly. Today, democracy is the most prevalent form of government in western countries. In its origin, it is a Greek word, a composite of demos and kratos, which means "the rule of the people."[3]

There are many forms of democratic systems of government. For example, one can mention direct democracy, guided democracy, liberal democracy, representative democracy[4] – all are form of democratic rule. The form of government can vary, but democratic government share some common features, that enable them to be labelled democratic. For example, they all rely on democratic ideology, which is centered on the notion of the sovereignty of the people.

The various systems of democratic government can be divided into two main categories: direct democracy and indirect democracy.

Direct democracy means that the people directly vote and manage their lives and the state. Such a situation is clearly impossible in modern counties.

Indirect democracy means that the people vote and elect the government but they do not rule and manage the state in a direct manner. In other words, an agent, elected body that represents the people, manifests the power of the people. This is the form of modern representative democracy. The meaning is that in modern democracies, most decisions are taken not by the voters, but by political representatives appointed by the voters. However, even this category has several variants.

This raises the question of the benefits that each system of governance hold and can be the reasons nations choose one over the other. Another question is the ability to change the system of government - that is to decide, for example, that the parliamentary system is no longer fulfilling its role and should be changed to presidential form of governance, and what can be the implications of such a change.

Research Hypothesis

Democracy is the most prevalent form of government in western countries. In its essence, democracy means "the power of the people." There are several forms of democratic systems of government, and they share democratic features, such as well established institutions, or a voice that is given to each member of the democratic society. However, there are variants to each democratic system. Thus, the paper explores different forms of democracy and examines the advantages of the different forms. In addition, the paper examines the possibilities of changing one form of democratic system of government with another and the possible implications of such transit.

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[3] J.T., Ishiyama, *Comparative Politics: Principles of Democracy and Democratization* , (Vol. 8). John Wiley & Sons, 2011. p. 27.

[4] Representative democracy includes both Presidential Democracy and Parliamentary Democracy, and the latter is the most common governance system among democratic western countries.

Democracy

During the 20th Century, many countries worldwide have embraced democratic government. A country's form of government has important economic and political consequences, as it influences every aspect the lives of its citizens, both directly and indirectly. Any system of governance, for example a democratic system, authoritarian, or any other form of ruling, is: "An ensemble of patterns that determines the methods of access to the principal public offices; the characteristics of the actors admitted to or excluded from such access; the strategies that actors may use to gain access; and the rules that are followed in the making of publicly binding decisions".[5]

Democratic societies rely on democratic ideology, which is centered on the notion of the sovereignty of the people. In other words, the ideal of democracy is the notion that the country's citizens, situated as political equals, can exercise common control over political power.[6]

In its origin, it is a Greek word, a composite of demos and kratos, which means "the rule of the people."[7] In our modern age, democracy is primarily a unique system for organizing relations between rulers and the ruled[8]. The are several forms of democracies but they all share several features, such as well established institutions, or a voice that is given to each member of the democratic society.

Democracy is the most prevalent form of government in western countries[9], however, not all forms of democracies are identical. Democracy can be divided into two main categories, which are: (1) Direct Democracy, in which there is a direct participation of all citizens, or (2) Indirect Democracy, in which representatives elected by the people form the government. Within the latter form, the most prevalent is that of Representative Democracy.

However, representative democracy is also composed of different systems of government that can also be viewed as belonging to two main categories: (1) Presidential Democracy, where the head of the state is an elected president[10], and (2) Parliamentary Democracy, where the elected body is the parliament[11]. Within the democratic countries, parliamentary democracy is the most popular political governance form[12].

Although the democratic system is the most prevalent form of government, the number of "full democracies" has declined. This decrease continues the

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[5] P.C., Schmitter, & T. L., Karl, „What democracy is... and is not", *Journal of democracy*, 1991, 2(3), p. 76.

[6] B., Gilley, „Is democracy possible?", *Journal of Democracy*, 2009, 20(1), pp. 113-127.

[7] T., Ishiyama, *op.cit.*, pp. 27.

[8] P. C., Schmitter, & T.L., Karl, „What democracy is... and is not", *op.cit.*.

[9] "Democracy Index 2016". The Economist Intelligence Unit. https://www.eiu.com/public/topical_report.aspx?campaignid=DemocracyIndex2016

[10] For example, USA or France.

[11] For example, UK, Germany, Spain, Italy.

[12] K., Strøm, „Delegation and accountability in parliamentary democracies", *European journal of political research*, 2000, 37(3), pp. 261-289.

"regression" of recent years, a decrease that is partly due to further erosion of trust in government and elected officials[13].

As mentioned above, democratic societies rely on democratic ideology, which is centered on the notion of the sovereign people.[14] However, this is not always the case. Ober[15] claims that democracy is a word that has come to mean very different things to different people, but in its essence, it is the power to do things.

Democracy, in its entirety, has many shades, and the democratic societies and regimes are not all the same. In addition the democratic governing can be problematic and fragile, for example as in the case of liberal democracies throughout western countries, which can be perceived as an uneasy combination of two fundamentally different sets of principles, liberal on the one hand and populist / democratic on the other[16]. Hence, democratic societies and democratic governments can vary from one country to another.

Moreover, the definition of Democracy is not a single definition and there is ambiguity surrounding the term[17]. Anckar[18] quotes four different definitions of democracy: "The first definition identifies democracy with majority rule. Only form counts in this definition, and a majority decision depriving the minority of its political rights is thus democratic. The second definition identifies democracy with majority rule as well as with guarantees for civil rights, and in this definition both form and content count. The third definition gives still more weight to content, in so far as it adds, for instance, demands for a certain economic policy to demands for civil rights. Finally, the fourth definition observes content only and disregards form. Decisions are "democratic" if they have a certain content; arrangements for decision-making are in themselves irrelevant".

Different Forms of Democratic Government

Democracy does not consist of a single unique set of institutions, and there are various forms of democratic forms of government. However, the various types of democracy, and their diverse practices produce a similarly varied set of effects[19]. For example, one can mention Direct, Guided, Liberal, Representative – all are form of democratic rule. The democratic forms of government do share some common features, which enable them to be labeled as democratic, such as:

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[13] "Democracy Index 2016". The Economist Intelligence Unit. https://www.eiu.com/public/topical_report.aspx?campaignid=DemocracyIndex2016

[14] B., Gilley, „Is democracy possible?", *Journal of Democracy*, *op.cit.*

[15] J. Ober, „The original meaning of "democracy": Capacity to do things, not majority rule", *Constellations*, 2008, 15(1), pp. 3-9.

[16] Canovan expands: „'Liberalism' is concerned with individual rights, universal principles and the rule of law, and is typically expressed in a written constitution; whereas the 'democratic' strand is concerned with the sovereign will of the people, understood as unqualified majority rule and typically expressed through referendums." (M., Canovan, „Populism for political theorists?", *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 2004, 9(3), p. 244.

[17] D. Anckar, „A definition of democracy", *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 1982, 5(3), pp. 217-235.

[18] Ibid, p. 218. Anckar quotes these four definitions from Westholm's dissertation on John Stuart Mill (Westholm C.-J. 1976. Ratio och universalitet. John Stuart Mill och dagens demokratidebatt).

[19] P.C., Schmitter, & T.L., Karl, „What democracy is... and is not", *op.cit.*.

general and equal right to vote (the notion of one person = one vote), basic human rights to every individual person, separation of powers between the institutions of the state, freedom of opinion, speech, press, and religious liberty, among others.

The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)[20], which publish periodic rating index, known as the Democratic Index, of 167 countries worldwide, use five different categories to examine the state of democracy.

The five different categories the index measures are:
1. Electoral process and pluralism;
2. Civil liberties;
3. Functioning of government;
4. Political participation; and
5. Political culture.

These categories can give an overview of the fundamental elements that democracy is made of. Not all democracies have the same extent of freedom of the press or civil rights but in democratic forms of government, these categories are of importance.

Moreover, the democratic institutions, the establishments that are a fundamental component of democratic countries can also vary. For example, modern liberal democracies combine three basic institutions: the state, rule of law, and democratic accountability[21].

The specific form democracy takes is contingent upon a country's socioeconomic conditions as well as its entrenched state structures and policy practices[22].

Representative Democracy

The majority of modern democracies are representative democracies. The meaning is that in modern democracies, most decisions are taken not by the voters, but by political representatives appointed by the voters, who are elected by the public and have the power invested in them to decide policies as well as other representatives, presidents, or other officers of the government.[23]

Representative democracy is a type of democracy founded on the principle of elected officials representing a group of people, as opposed to direct democracy. This category includes various types of government systems, such as, constitutional monarchy (The United Kingdom), parliamentary republic (Ireland), and federal republic (the United States)[24]. However, in general

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[20] http://www.eiu.com/topic/democracy-index
[21] Francis Fukuyama, „Why is democracy performing so poorly?", *Journal of Democracy*, 2015, 26(1), pp. 11-20.
[22] P.C., Schmitter, & T.L., Karl, „What democracy is... and is not", *op.cit.*.
[23] A. Loeper, "Cross-border externalities and cooperation among representative democracies", *European Economic Review*, 2016, 91, pp.180-208.
[24] Ibid.

representative democracy includes two main categories: presidential and parliamentary, and a newly added category that is a hybrid of the two[25].

Although all three rely on the same principles, there is considerable empirical evidence that presidential and parliamentary systems have very different effects on a whole range of political issues, ranging from public spending, trade policy to political stability.[26]

Parliamentary System of Government

A parliamentary system is a system of mutual dependence,[27] a system of democratic governance of a state where the executive branch derives its democratic legitimacy from its ability to command the confidence of the legislative branch, typically a parliament, and is also held accountable to that parliament. In a parliamentary system, the head of state is usually a different person from the head of government.

Parliamentary system is the dominant form of government in Europe, and other regions worldwide, such as India in Asia, Israel in the Middle East, and many more.[28]

One of the main characteristics of this system is that parliamentary systems separate the two roles, with the head of state in a largely ceremonial role and the prime minister as head of government. Another characteristic is that the head of government's authority is dependent on maintaining support in the legislature. Thus, distinguishing feature of parliamentary governments is the absence of fixed terms. The confidence votes used to sustain a coalition implies that a government can fail at any time.[29]

Presidential System of Government

A presidential system is a system where a directly elected executive represents an entire country, and the heads of state and government are often embodied in the same person.[30] This head of government is in most cases also the head of state, the president.[31]

There are four key characteristics of presidential systems. First, there is the separation of powers between the various branches of government. Second, the

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[25] J.T., Ishiyama, *Comparative Politics: Principles of Democracy and Democratization* , op.cit.

[26] These political issues include, among others, public spending, trade policy to political stability. Ibid, pp.177.

[27] Strøm, K., „Delegation and accountability in parliamentary democracies", *European journal of political research*, 2000, 37(3), pp. 261-289.

[28] It is important to note that not all parliamentary democracies are of the same structure. Countries with parliamentary systems may be, for example, constitutional monarchies, such as the case of the UK or Sweden, where a monarch is the head of state while the head of government is a member of parliament. Another system of government that is parliamentary democracy is the parliamentary republics, such as Germany, among others, where a mostly ceremonial president is the head of state while the head of government is regularly from the legislature.

[29] J.T. Ishiyama, *op.cit.*

[30] Ibid.

[31] There are countries that also have presidents, such as Germany, Hungary, and India, but these are largely ceremonial heads of state.

presidents are directly elected through some type of nationwide vote. Third, presidents serve fixed terms and these terms are not dependent on the continued support of the legislature. The fourth characteristic of presidential systems is that presidents, as chief executives, form their own cabinets[32].

Hybrid System of Government

This system employs elements of both presidential system and a parliamentary system. Generally, it occurred due to particular crisis or as a legacy of some authoritarian past. Countries that have hybrid systems include, France that has a mixed system developed out of a national crisis, Russia that the hybrid system is due to its past, and among other countries one can mention as another example Afghanistan.[33]

Change of Form of Government

Can a country change its system of government? What can be the implications of such a change? Most of the western world today is democratic. But democratic governance does not always means the same method or system of governing. Hence, it is reasonable to assume that a country may decide that its system is not compatible due to one reason or another that can be related to internal influences and/or external influences.

The change involved can be to different extent, it can be a change of a democratic system or a change to a democratic system, in which case there is choice to be made between the different systems. There is considerable empirical evidence that presidential and parliamentary systems have very different effects on a whole range of political issues, ranging from public spending, trade policy to political stability.[34]

In this regards it is worth mentioning that the subject of selecting a system of government systems (choices that include presidential, parliamentary, or hybrid - semi - presidential), is one of the most debated, and perhaps least understood, principles of comparative politics[35]. Thus, a change of a system involves many aspects that needs to be consider, and in addition, it involves change of the establishments and governing bodies.

When the change is minor, or more accurately it involves only one aspect of the government system (such as the voting system) the question is less significant. There are examples of such changes within democratic system.

However, what about a change from a system that is not democratic to a democratic system? This also is possible and many times, it is related, directly or indirectly, to external forces. For example, the democracy in nowadays Iraq is due to external influence. Such examples exists but, as the EIU state regarding the Arab Spring, these countries for various reasons cannot sustain democratic rule.

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[32] J. T. Ishiyama, *op.cit.*

[33] Ibid.

[34] These political issues include, among others, public spending, trade policy to political stability. Ibid, pp.177.

[35] Ibid.

It is important to note that having a democratic systems and election based governments do not always mean that the government is democratic. For example, one can consider the case of Turkey.

But if we focus on a change between one form of democratic system to another, primarily a change from presidential democracy to parliamentary democracy, or vice versa, from parliamentary democracy to presidential democracy, the question is whether there is any meaningful impact to such a change of system?

As one examines the different systems it seems that if a democratic society is examined by the degree of its freedoms it enables, or according to EIU five categories[36], or other factors such as national wealth, life expectancy, or corruption, among others, it seems that the particular system chosen is less important. What are important is the society and the cultural political tradition it holds.

As mentioned, in its origin, democracy is a Greek word, a composite of demos and kratos, which means "the power of the people." Since there are many variants to the democratic system, it may just be that the power of the people is that of being heard, and as a nation democratic institutions take time to establish themselves. Thus, a change involves the breaking down of established existing bodies and creating new ones instead.

Thus, a change to democracy form of government entails freedoms that the citizens and leadership have to take responsibility over. A change from one democratic system to another seem to have more cultural and procedural affect, whereas a change in a system that is not democratic should be carried out slowly and gradually not to create a gap that can be infiltrated by non-democratic players.

Conclusions

There are many forms of democratic systems of government and as a general category, it is the most prevalent governing system in western countries since the 20th Century. A country's form of government has important economic and political consequences. It influences every aspect of our lives, both directly and indirectly.

A change of government system can be from one type of democracy to another, which will be related to internal factors, or a change from a form of government that is no democratic to a democratic system, which will be more influenced by external factors.

A change of governing systems has many implications, as empirical evidence suggest that presidential and parliamentary systems have very different effects on a whole range of political issues.[37] However, such a change involves a change of

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[36] The five different categories the EIU's Democratic Index measures are: 1) Electoral process and pluralism; 2) Civil liberties; 3) Functioning of government; 4) Political participation; and 5) Political culture.

[37] J.T., Ishiyama, *Comparative Politics: Principles of Democracy and Democratization*, *op.cit.*

the voting system and a change of the ruling bodies and establishment and not a change of the citizens' way of life and ability to voice their opinions and demands.

Thus, it seems that in regards to a change from one democratic system to another, the particular system chosen is less important. This is because that the democratic character of these countries' depends to a large extent on the society and the cultural political tradition it holds. However, when the change involves a change from a non-democratic regime to a democratic system the impact can relate to all aspects of life, and not always for the better. Democracy seems to demand a certain degree of maturity of a nation and of the citizens, maturity that cannot be reached without freedom, pluralism and diversity of opinions. And when these are achieved, the proper functioning of a particular system, that will always involve advantages and disadvantages, will rely mostly of the society and the political culture it developed.

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ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

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TOWARDS A NEW EUROPEAN PARADIGM?

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Abstract: By analogy with the Th. Kuhn's Concept of "Scientific Paradigm", we tried to evaluate the initial theses of the European construction. Today's Europe is looking for answers within, and a "revival" of the joint project is needed. Globally, continuing to integrate the European economy is the obvious answer. The initial theses of the European construction remain valid, the continental integration being the strategy of economic competitiveness. Not the theories of the European paradigm need to be changed, but the economic outcomes should be more visible and convincing, throughout internal projects.

Keywords: European paradigm, integration process continuity, validity of initial theses, European "crisis", common European future.

❖ Overview

The mandate of the first elected President of the European Union seems, at least until today, three years after the beginning of the mandate, to be the most difficult for the entire European construction in its history. The immigrants wave of 2015-2016, Russia's aggression in Crimean Peninsula and UK's exit from the European Union, seem to put the substance and depth mechanisms of the entire common European construction to a heavy test.

We will say from the beginning that the EU is, for the first time in its history, in the situation to "cope with" the geo-political conjunctures, of overwhelming multitude and significance, given that until 2000, EU was the one to shape both its conjunctions and options, through new and new configurations of the European architecture, through new and new integration provisions, through new and more EU members. In other words, *for the first time in its history, after 2010, EU has been in the situation to respond to the challenges, and not to deliver safe benefits.*

Through the above assertion, we want to emphasize *the need to change the paradigm of evolution for the entire common European construction.* Today, with the elaboration of this material, we consider that the entire "philosophy of the EU's operation must go to a different level, and the 50th anniversary since the signing of the Treaty of Rome regarding the European Economic Community[1] represented a threshold, not only symbolic, for the necessary resuscitation and remodeling of the European paradigm. More than 50 years of successive

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[1] Treaty of Rome,
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/RO/TXT/HTML/?uri=LEGISSUM:xy0023&from=RO, accessed on 21.11.2017

enlargements, but also of deepening the European unification process requires, exactly through the experienced realities, the reshaping of the existing paradigm, and for this we will try to render its fundamental theses.

❖ Principles of the first 50 years

The signing moment of the Treaty of Rome, five years after the initiative of creating the European Coal and Steel Community, actually represents the validation of the beginnings of the European Community and the transition to another integration horizon. "Generally speaking, the ECSC "has largely contributed to the formation of a genuine European spirit", allowed the generalization of the *Common Market* in the economy as a whole, within the organizations set in motion by the 1957 Treaty of Rome. The ECSC constituted a starting point for the setting up of the *Common Market and EURATOM*."[2] The progress represented by the switching from the integration of an economic area following to the recorded benefits, to the integration of the entire economies of the six founding members, is a validation of the Paris initiative of 1952. With the Treaty of Rome, three principles that will function for the next 50 years will be the foundation of the entire European construction, as we know it today. In short, we will present them, being convinced that they functioned as "beliefs" of the successive integration theory, just as in Thomas Kuhn's theory of scientific revolutions. For this reason, even if they are not properly expressed, they permeate from the very objectives and arguments of the successive treaties of the European construction.

*1 The belief that putting together, for starters, the economies of the six founding members will provide both the possibility of streamlining the activities, and the strengthening and expanding thereof. This conviction may seem childish today, but in the post-war era, it meant an act of European courage, solving at that time the historical problem of the disagreements and tensions between the Central European countries, led by France and Germany.

An expression of the classical economic theory, the economic integration of several partners provides the image of the phenomenon known today as "globalization", with its pre-sequence, "regionalization". Following the integration and streamlining of the same type of activity at the level of several economic actors that became partners, the very global representation and automatically the global level negotiation capacity, become more consistent.

Therefore, according to the Kuhnian theory of fundamental beliefs that form a paradigm, in our case the one of the European construction, the deep belief of the founding fathers of the European Community according to which "putting together, (the community), the economies of the six founding countries, will automatically lead to streamlining and strengthening of the aimed economic results."

*2 The second belief generally shared by the members of the European community was that the deepening of the initial integration at the same time in more and more areas, together with the achieving of more and more provisions,

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[2] Nicolae Păun, Adrian Ciprian Păun, *History of European Construction,* European Studies Foundation, Cluj-Napoca, Publishing House, 2000.

will maximize the process of coordinating the economies of the member countries, and will automatically deliver increased efficiency by correlating the integrated activities and generally shared goals. The deepening of the initial integration, seen from the perspective of the ever deeper integration of the legislative and technical provisions in the assumed areas, has subsequently created a Common Market, effective and consolidated, which succeeded to deliver tangible results in a short time.

The firm conviction according to which the "integration by sharing a common legislation on the entire economic market" is for this reason the second general thesis recognized by the founders of the European Union, by what was then called the "European Economic Community"[3].

*3 Finally, the third mutually shared belief is the one according to which the continued expansion of the community space and also of the common European economy, will confer both power to it and automatically prosperity to its citizens, and at the same time will fulfill also the initial projection of continental integration under the umbrella of the common European civilization and consciousness. Going through the classical theories regarding the European space and its geographical boundaries, the European leaders continued, in the more than 60 years of history, to relate to a necessary and ideal enlargement of the European Community, whose geographical boundaries were not reached until today. The Western Balkans and the Eastern Flank of the European Union are today boundaries whose files are still analyzed, but which can provide a fulfillment of the common European dream and the European paradigm.

The shared belief that "the enlargement of the European Union" within the geographic boundaries of the continent will consolidate the economic project and will fulfill the original European paradigm stands for these reasons as the third idea that forms the European paradigm that operated from the beginning of the project until the first part of the 21st century.

Of course, in the summative assessment of the thesis we are proposing, there may be remarks about the "engines" of the current European construction, namely the objectives of ensuring continental peace and, in parallel, of the welfare of the European peoples. We will only say that they really are the objectives of the theory of European economic integration, without minimizing the importance of the profound "beliefs" of the initiators and followers of the European construction process.

However, as time passed in favor of validating the three beliefs, the economically expected results came as arguments and engines for the new waves of enlargement, as well as for the sustained efforts of integration deepening. But, anyway we look at the whole effort, today we can summative assess the results of the European construction process from the perspective of the three fundamental theses - communion, deepening and enlargement - which really stood at the base of the "European paradigm". But also today, the whole world and its approach

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[3] Treaty of Rome, art. 105;
https://ec.europa.eu/romania/sites/romania/files/tratatul_de_la_roma.pdf,   accessed   on 27.11.2017;

have changed, so that, we believe that the "European paradigm" also needs to change.

❖ **About the "crisis" of the European paradigm and its darkness**
In the discourse of the European elite, its university intelligentsia, communities and regions, all carefully and generously cultivated by the EU through debates and think-tanks, the term "crisis" attached to the European construction and perspective appears with an insistent recurrence, and more dangerous, cultivating pessimistic visions and projections. Undoubtedly, this type of discourse, which has succeeded by consistent multiplication to set a reserved environment, is the result of legitimate expectations of the citizens of the European Union, as well as of obvious route difficulties that suggest some objective concern on different levels of debate (intellectuals involved, decision makers, politicians who have to settle pro-European choices).

The two sources of concern about the European future can be dismantled by solid, logical and perspective arguments, so that the trust environment of the first 50 years of European reconstruction to return to the targeted population. Because we have to indicate this fact, *the current mistrust in the EU's power to revive,* clearly shown in Eurostat[4] surveys, *fits into Kuhnian theory according to which the current paradigm no longer benefits from the trust of specialists.*

Mistrust, respectively the dropping level of the population's trust in the European institutions and the common European future, is a natural result of the latest developments at continental level. We put on the first place of the motivation for this popular psychology phenomenon, the immigration crisis of 2015-2016 and the hesitations or delays in reaction of the European leadership, as well as the unsympathetic positions of the member states representatives. "The first lesson that we can draw from the development of events of 2015 is that the system must respond quickly to the crisis challenges. A certain reaction slowness, occurred as a result of customs and European institutional procedures, can be admitted today as a criticism of the system itself."[5] Not at all erratic, in our own assessment, the immigration crisis has been the biggest test for the European institutions and the European acquis, as well as European solidarity in the face of the difficulties on the ground. *The immigration crisis of 2015-2016 was in fact,* in the light of the experienced phenomena, *the first true stress test in 60 years of community history, faced by the European establishment through its leaders, the legislation created and the institutions responsible for managing this type of situations.*

We point out the immigration crisis phenomenon as one of considerable weight and importance in the history of the European Union, considering that it is also the apex of a modest evolution in projects and achievements of the same common construction in the last years. More precisely, once with the year of 2000, an era of minor achievements, if not of image failures, accompanied the

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[4] The number of the European polls regarding the citizen's trust in EU institutions are lower and lower;
[5] Dobra Dorin-Mircea, "Borders as a source of crisis; the great challenge of the future EU", European Institute, *Polis Magazine*, Volume IV, no. 3 (13), Iaşi, 2016, p. 6.

common European destiny. If we are to remember even the "European Convention", then the crisis of 2008, the immigration crisis and today the Brexit, we can understand more easily why the EU is going through a period of less brilliance.

In fact, going back to the UK's exit of EU, we will say that with it, the Union will also take the test of such challenge. The result of an unfortunate situation, stuffed with irresponsible politicians and misinformed citizens, Brexit will prove to be a "lose-lose" result initiative, in which both sides will have to lose. Provided in the Treaty of Lisbon[6], the possibility for a Member State to exit the Union will trigger reactions and rebounds that the European institutions have not encountered until now. Regardless of the outcome, the symbolism of this initiative contributes to installing and settling of the general feeling that the EU is going through a less prolific, if not unfavorable period, a feeling that reflects its reality even in the very polls that measure the citizens' trust in the European project.

By choosing to leave to other studies and other authors the in-depth analysis of the subsequent configurations of these phenomena, which are also the cause of the rise of nationalisms and extremisms at the national election level in the Member States, we will only point out the immediate significance and effects of those two. "In a globalized world, almost all problems cross over the border. (...) And the nation states are becoming less and less willing to work together to solve common problems."[7] We will say here that, one by one, *the immigration crisis has tested the feelings of European solidarity and security, and the Brexit has profoundly affected the feeling of trust in an ordinary project only used to expand*. We also have sufficient reasons to prove that the EU now needs a "reboot", both in action and in vision, which will propose a new European paradigm or at least reinforce it, capable to restore the continent citizens' lost for the moment trust.

We are, therefore, in the moment of sufficient pressure on the current paradigm, at which moment, both the elite and the populations exercise and make debates and initiatives capable of replacing it. What are the solutions to be, we will see, today we can only suggest which of its theses are still legitimate and what new theses might find their place in the paradigm of the European Union's future.

❖ Towards a new paradigm?

The power of generous ideas and great projects in the society has demonstrated its effects throughout history, perhaps a history of ideologies that would show honestly the evolution of the European world is insufficiently valued, and if we only take a look at the contemporary common European project we can confirm this assumption. European unification as an idea, with its entire historical path, has started also from an idea, transformed into a goal and put into practice when even European history proved its necessity.

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[6] Treaty of Lisbon, art. 50; http://www.lisbon-treaty.org/wcm/the-lisbon-treaty/treaty-on-European-union-and-comments/title-6-final-provisions/137-article-50.html, accessed on 24.11.2017.

[7] Fareed Zakaria, *Post American world*, Iasi, Polirom Publishing House, 2009, p. 48.

By referring to Th. Kuhn theory on scientific revolutions, we are only trying to make an analogy between the two aspects so that we can better emphasize the need to refresh and automatically revive the continental unification project. However, we separate ourselves from the very purpose of the Kuhnian theory; *Europe does not need a paradigmatic revolution, today, Europe only needs a reaffirmation of the initial theses, their reordering, and enriching of the results offered to its citizens by more tangible goals.* As the time of great ideas with their romanticism has passed once with the entry into the 3rd Millennium, unification is already accomplished, the citizens want and expect from the common project the capacity to deliver at the level they were used with, but, from this point of view, Europe has slowed down its pace, and for the reason I pointed out at the beginning of the work, it was for the first time in its history forced to respond to events that it did not initiate, this way guiding its agenda in unwanted directions.

Today, in the conjuncture summum in which the EU is, it faces several consistent criticisms of which we mention two that intertwine and condition each other: the European leader's crisis and the European project crisis.

The first criticism of the EU's governing formula is that regarding its leaders. But this criticism, we have to say, is omnipresent in the history of humanity and its projects. Citizens, based on historical experiences and ideal relating to them, through the perceived benefits or lost profits, tend to idealize past personalities, objectively or less objectively, by relating current leaders to the history's personalities. This is why today, the citizens of the European Union compare the great efforts of the founding personalities of the Union, J. Monnet, R. Schuman, Adenauer, with its today's leaders[8]. And this comparison will always be an unfair one for the today ones. If we were to refer only to the immigration crisis, which we called the EU's biggest crisis of solidarity so far today, we would say that Germany's decision to assume the full immigration force, supported by Chancellor Angela Merkel, was a fundamental decision for the very existence of the Union, and essential for its entire future. But time did not left these effects set up, so we can put the German Chancellor personality among the Union's personalities.

In its turn, the second criticism of the lack of projects regarding the future of the Union, objectively felt by its citizens, is a stage one, due exactly to the need to change the operation paradigm of the EU. Temporarily classifiable, this period, the one of the beginning of the millennium, following the first 50 years of initial European construction, falls precisely in the period of pressure, experimenting and testing of some new necessary paradigms. But even in this case, only the pressure of diurnal events, do not allow us to see with sufficient accuracy that these things happen even closer to us and more frequently than we observe. The President of the European Commission, J.C. Juncker, succeeded twice this year, to draw up possible future scenarios, first, on the occasion of presenting the five possible scenarios for further development[9], second, on the occasion of

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[8] Femke Van Esch, *The nature of the European leadership crisis and how to solve it,* https://www.researchgate.net/publication/297605617_The_nature_of_the_european_leadership _crisis_and_how_to_solve_it , accessed on 28.11.2017;

[9] Commission presents White Paper on the future of Europe: Avenues for unity for the EU at 27

presenting the "current status of the Union"[10]. We could see enough possible projections only on these two occasions. In the same topic, we can classify also the efforts to chart the evolution of the future Union made by the two representatives of the European tractors, both after the national elections: the President of France and the Chancellor of Germany.

Therefore, seeking to prove that the conjuncture stage in which the European Union is, gives us the right to say that the European general ambient supports the theory of a new necessary paradigm, we are trying to show that the term "crisis" is not necessarily attachable to the current state of the Union. To do so, all its initial theses, communion, deepening and enlargement, should not be able to answer to the current problems of the common project. But, as we will try to show, we are far from such a situation, being rather in the need for a revaluation of the entire vision, with more consistent concerns in certain areas.

❖ The theses of the original paradigm at test today

So, it is to be seen if the original paradigm "beliefs" within the "normal science"[11] resist the today's test, if the old theses of the common European project can solve the problems faced by the Union. For the work does not seem too obvious, the existence of the Union is not questioned, no crisis of the last few years shook the institutional structures, rather they were conjunctural phenomena to which the Union responded, managing to overcome them. A paradigm revolution would be necessary only when the fundamental theses would no longer support themselves. For this reason, we will try to pass through an evaluation test to see if they are still supported.

1. "The belief that putting the economies together will offer the possibility to streamline and consolidate the living standard" is, therefore, the first of them. This thesis, not only proved its validity, but what in the first place seemed like a streamlining effort, today is a gesture for ensuring the existence and competitiveness. In today's globalized economic world, regional integration arrangements or even co-operation, are the only formulas to ensure global economic relevance. The European Single Market, with the integration it has reached, is the only element that can ensure both the security of European companies and the level of competitiveness that the European economy transformed in a global "asset", recognized as an international brand. On a reverse logic, today, probably no European economy would ensure at least half of the volume of goods and services on sale, without the free access to the European Single Market, and without its international strength. We, therefore, conclude by saying that it is exactly the economic integration that ensures the welfare and

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http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-17-385_en.htm , accessed on 27.11.2017;
[10] President Jean-Claude Juncker's State of the Union Address 2017
http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-17-3165_en.htm, accessed on 27.11.2017;
[11] Th. Kuhn, *The structure of the scientific revolutions,* Concepts of "normal science" and "tension" seem to us to be eloquent here,
https://projektintegracija.pravo.hr/_download/repository/Kuhn_Structure_of_Scientific_R evolutions.pdf accessed on 28.11.2017;

growth of the European economic level, and for this reason we consider valid the initial belief regarding the necessity of European economic integration.

2. The belief that integration "deepening" towards a fully-fledged Single Market, with ever-expanding economic freedoms and generalized common legislation is the second thesis of the "European paradigm" as we see it today. Starting from today's reality, in which the European economy stands firmly world-wide, and from some points occupying the first place, we can say that this thesis proves its validity as well. And the steps that can be taken (possibly a unified fiscal and tax code) can contribute to a necessary progress in the Union's economy, so that it can maintain or even strengthen its current relevant position within the global economy. Maintaining, sustaining and even further deepening of economic integration through additional visions and projects, can even strengthen, by bringing the entire EU economic potential into the Single Market, the engine of European activity to a considerable level in the coming years.

3. At the end of our assessment, the third thesis of the European paradigm, according to which further expansion will obviously bring more power to an integrated economy across the continent, seems to be also the most controversial belief and, in any case, the most neglected of the theses. Expressed at EU level through the Union's Enlargement Policy, the enlargement trend today is apparently blocked at the few Balkan states in the South East of the Union, and in a less clear situation in the East, where three of the six countries of the Eastern Partnership even initiated a petition to the European Parliament on their future way towards European Union. "The joint declaration was signed by the head of the Moldovan Parliament, Andrian Candu, his Georgian counterpart Irakli Kobahidze and the chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Andrei Parubiy. The leaders urge the European Parliament to adopt a resolution at the Eastern Partnership summit to be held in November 2017"[12].

We assert, however on this occasion, that the EU Enlargement Policy must be continued for at least two reasons, supplementing the initial logic of EU enlargement.

a) In the context of Brexit, accelerating the accession processes in the case of countries that opened these files would prove the power and perpetuation of the European construction today;

b) The common European project is one built exactly on accession to European values, and one of them is exactly solidarity. The right of neighboring countries to want to become part of the European Union is one that calls for a engaging answer from the Union, which thus demonstrates respect for the founding values and, moreover, shows the credibility of the entire European project.

We therefore believe, following these arguments, that it is exactly the thesis of "continuing the EU enlargement" that requires the greatest efforts in the near future, the consistency in accepting new members being also the strategy that would most strongly strengthen the future of the EU. *For the very intentions and efforts of the neighboring countries to become EU members demonstrate that*

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[12] https://frontnews.eu/news/en/6362/Ukraine-Georgia-and-Moldova-were-asked-to-consider-the-possibility-of-their-membership-in-the-EU, accessed on 28.11.2017;

the European project is a valid one in the future, confirmed by the very standards it has been able to reach until today.

❖ So, do we need a new paradigm?

Today, in assessing what we called the "European paradigm", namely the "beliefs that form normal science" by referring to the Kuhnian theory of scientific revolutions, we assert that all its theses are validated for a new historical cycle. The continuation of integration, its deepening through new common regulations and provisions, as well as the enlargement of the common economic space, still represents the valid solution for the perpetuation and consolidation of the European construction.

Emphasizing the need to continue the enlargement of the European Union as a confirmation of the definition of the Community construction itself, we consider that it is rather needed to highlight some already existing EU actions, such as regional development initiatives that are getting faster into the lives of their citizens. For the concrete results are those that maintain the citizens' trust in the European project and if they are not fully aware of the subventions on the food they eat, they will certainly be satisfied with a new infrastructure project that will further link the extremities of the European Union.

"A more accessible Europe to all" should be the motto of the coming years, and the big EU countries should be more interconnected not only by road corridors, but also the naval and railways should keep the European leaders' attention.

The initial driving force of the Union is not lost today, but the world has become much more complex in all its configurations, and the European Union must become able to deliver results at a different level. The paradigm is therefore the same, the initial theses are still valid, and their products must have a new level of manifesting.

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CRAFTING THE NEW CIVIL SOCIETY – ROMANIA'S PROTEST CULTURES AND THE SOCIAL MEDIA

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Abstract: Romanian society experienced a difficult post-communist scenario, marked by successive formulas of "civil engagement", last decade hosting however a major reconversion of previous civil expressions. The informational revolution supervened after 2000 generated new forms of civic activism on behalf of youth, which became a new actor on the public scene. In this context, multiple questions arose. What type of civil society does emerge by the medium of new social media? The millennial movement represents in the end a maturation of Romanian public sphere, an extension of a community of values and representations which has lacked dramatically in the last 30 years? The research is grounded on central hypothesis which claims that the civil society's topography and semantics represents a critical quantifier of the democratisation scale within the framework of post-communist space. The typology, magnitude, sustainability, and organic growth of a "civil sphere", all constitute signals of a genuine engagement of society's culture, institutions and normative towards a liberal democracy project.

Keywords: protest cultures, civil society, post-transitional paradigm, modernization

1. Civic culture – a different history of Eastern Bloc

The fall of communist systems at the beginning of the '90 triggered a complex phenomenon of societal change, former socialist countries engaging on the road to democratization. Nonetheless, the paths to democratization and liberalisation were substantially different and strongly influenced by the previous cultural and structural legacies.

In Central and Eastern Europe a dissidence movement flourished as "a highly restricted version of civil society"[1], acting as an adjuvant vector in triggering the democratization movement. By reconstruction and recovery of traditional relational networks, the reformed communism versions silently build the scaffolding of future democracy. This new civil society also inaugurated a change of paradigm, by insertion of a more inclusive definition. The classical theories operated with functional definition of the civil society, seen mostly as an intermediary layer amid the state and the individual, and having its fundamental

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[1] Michael Walzer, *Toward a Global Civil Society,* New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1998, p.7.

function in promoting and nourishing a complex nexus of relational networks[2]. Yet the effervescent social movements arose in Poland during the '80, induced a new semantic to the term. The "civil society" transformed into a "civil sphere", "a world of values and institutions"[3], relying more on cultural landmarks than on the presence of concrete relational chains. *Solidarity* succeeded in creation of a latent civil society, which gradually produced major changes within Polish late communism.

This silent transition began after the release of Gorbachev reformist doctrine in the middle of the '80 and culminated with the apparently unexpected clash of the system at the beginning of the '90. The transformation of civil society in a cultural community had a major relevance for further post-communist and transitional evolutions trough intervention of some key factors. First implication triggered by the "virtualisation" of the civil society refers to the construction of a latent social contract. Countries such as Poland or even Hungary, where this equation of civil pact began to function, experienced a balanced transition. The interactions between various social groups were moderated by adhesion to the same sphere of values and the genesis of new institutions and norms was potentiated by a behavioural clause[4]. A second implication of this reconversion of civil society definitions and landmarks refers to the rites of separations instituted after the collapse of communist *oikumene*. The very existence of a silent transition during the '80 created the space for a gradual dismantling of communist legacy. New elites had the time and liberty to stratify, while the hard-liners and soft-liners of communist nomenklature entered in a negotiation game. Mechanisms of severance were non-violent and the cryptic survival of communist cultural or structural artefacts became improbable, as well as an inversion or confiscation scenarios.

The third implication, and probably the most important, concerns the change of spatiality supervened within civil society definition. Prior to this transformation, the participation within civil society was limited trough adhesion to a relational and organisation chain. Historically, associations and relational grids were apanage of the urban culture[5]. Often they exclude the genuine participation of the spatial or social peripheries into the political and civic community. The emergence of the civil sphere within reformed communist regimes recreated the civil spatiality, allowing marginal or peripheral culture to play an active part within new social pact. Revolving around landmarks as solidarity, tolerance, opposition against communist rule, the new civil sphere induced an essential identitary reunification. By establishing a congruent cultural agenda of political change, the emergent civil sphere assured an erasure of boundaries and classical cleavages. Against Central Europe optimistic prospects

[2] Ferdinand Tönnies and Jose Harris, *Community and Civic Society,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, p.13.
[3] Jeffrey C. Alexander, *The Civil Sphere,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 4.
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for democratisation, the Eastern border was hosting a paramount of uncertain evolutions. Ukraine, Yugoslavia and even Bulgaria were experiencing major difficulties in construction of a new social pact. Romania represented a special case within this tensional geopolitical realm. The deficit of evolution accumulated by the eastern paradigm of communism had multiple sources, but one the critical factor concerns the absence of a functional civic dimension. By refusal of Gorbachev "reformist heresy" launched under auspices of two key concepts, *glasnost* and *perestroika*, Ceauşescu regime created an encapsulated society, marked by multiple development faults.

The confining condition for genesis of a civil sphere was eliminated through the presence of a parental state[6], confiscating even the traditional or benign relational networks. The reformed branches of communism produced a new equation of civil society due to the relaxation of the political pressure and by the instrumentality of new social and economic equilibria. Gorbachev reform reduced the developmental gap between centres and peripheries and created a common ground for a congruent cultural agenda. Yet, great differences endured the internal reform started within borders of progressionist communism. The structural asymmetries of Communist Bloc were harmonized, but they remain active even in the field of transitional experience[7]. For the radical dissidence of Romanian "national communism" the detachment from adaptive evolutions of communist world generated a double historical downfall.

The absence of an authentic "civil sphere", although difficult to coagulate in the dark decade of the '80, nourished hidden transitional costs. One of the first implications of the new "civil sphere" referred to the creation of a latent social pact. In this context, various groups and relational networks could manifest their adhesion to the same panoply of values. The social and cultural consensus was obtained through a slow distillation process, which in Romanian case was absent. The reverberations of this initial cultural and normative crisis remain influential until the late stages of democratic consolidation. Since civil society tends to manage cleavage in society[8], the absence of such cultural or relation concept exposed Romanian transitional society to aggravation of previous classical social fractures, fostering also new ones.

A second implication of the new civil sphere implied the separation rites. Hosting one of the most violent transformative exercises, Romanian post-communist society was deeply marked by the heritage of its revolutionary foundation. The new public sphere shaped after the revolutionary breakthrough by a "handful of former of dissident intellectuals"[9], was leaving in shadow marginal or peripheral groups, networks or community of values. Once consummated the single unifying social impulse, the urge to discharge the

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[6] Verdery, Katherine, *What Was Socialism and What Comes Next?* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996, p. 66.

[7] Mark Howard, *The Weakness of Civil Society in Postcommunist Europe,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, p.85.

[8] Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations,* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015, p. 486.

[9] Verdery, Katherine, *What Was Socialism and What Comes Next?,* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996, p. 109.

personalized dictatorship, Romanian post-communist society confronted with a fragmentary social and cultural agenda. The solitude of intellectuals as vectors of message in this new created civil sphere raised multiple concerns. Difficulties encountered in absence of a generalized legitimacy of the social pact and the continuous interference of centrifugal political forces, created the presupposition for a civil offensive in favour of project of liberal democracy. Activism of intellectuals in early and median stages of Romanian democratisation could be considered as a singularising feature of local transition[10].

Still, this peculiar treat brings into debate the third function of the concept of public sphere – the reformation of the social spatiality and equations of politic and civic participation. As regards the Romanian case, the civil sphere emerged in a disconnected urban universe, leaving the society's edge trapped in different shades of modernity and experiencing different versions of social pacts. The recovery of nationalist discourse and extremist drifts were doubled by the dissolution of political classical identities and landmarks. New created or rediscovered social communities, shaped under various vectors as landownership, labour associations, interwar political traditions or contextual social narratives, exploiting local cultural appetence for providential leadership and millennialism, become active. The complex nexus of organisations, association and political structures constituted a relevant symptom of nascent democracy. The pressure in establishing functional contestation groups represented an intuitive condition of the democratic game. However, lack of functionality of the government demonstrated the creation of mimetic democratic game, rather than the presence of a genuine civil space and authentic political participation[11].

This intermittent civil society supported a startling reconversion after 2000, when a major informational and cultural change supervened. The internet culture induced a new trajectory for civil action, trough agency of new informational, interactional and initiative opportunities. The social media and the proliferation of informational sources generated new equations of civic action and participation. In this context, an influential and often virulent civil society sprang back to life. In the same time, this new civil formula had as a defining element the recovery of the initial behavioural tendencies of early transitional stage. Youth mobs and social media action groups inherited the primary equations of the '90, influenced by a range of separate and often conflictual elements: refusal of classical political identities, mythologization of tradition and appetence for anti-systemic and radical solutions.

The new civil sphere emerged in the late stages of Romanian consolidation of liberal democracy was accompanied by a discrete, yet influential reconversion of the political spectrum. Fragmentation and multiplication of political forces occurred, doubled by phenomena as volatilisation and continuous genesis of small political actors, decline of political vote, strong anti-systemic and anti-

[10] Romulus Brâncoveanu, 'Maşinaria politică, societatea civilă şi critica culturii', Sfera politicii, XV, 2007, n. 126 - 127, p. 75.
[11] Robert Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition,* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971, p. 26.

political action platforms subsequently converted in ephemeral political vehicles. Apparently, youth mobs and the social media tend to play a triggering role in this essential change of paradigm within Romanian political expression and culture.

The sources of this recrudescence of early transitional and transformative symptoms remained cast is shadow. The motivations of a sudden change of dynamic of Romanian society were analysed and over discussed, but the verdicts were contradictory. The recreation of strong civil action could be translated ambivalently, as genuine manifestation of a mature democracy or as a worrisome signal on behalf of a society which failed in managing its internal cleavages. Yet, cyclic dynamics of Romanian protest culture could disclose a more tinted scenario. Rising civil activism and youth protest culture could be linked with an evolutionary perspective upon democratic establishment. Rites of passage were followed by rites of confirmation, democratisation proving to be a continuous process, depending on multiple equilibriums. Re-emerging youth protest movements at the eastern border of classical liberal Europe re-opened complex problematic including topics as: interdependencies arose amid modernization and democratisation, tensional relation between westernization and reinterpreted traditionalism or active disobedience and silent contestation groups. Some of the invoked themes tend to foster more prolific explanations and debates, while others were intentional avoided as a difficult legacy of local culture. Fallowing section will try to sketch a very general perspective of Romanian contemporary civic phenomenon and to highlight some of its possible implications upon democratic game.

2. Rites of passage versus rites of confirmation – the multiple transitions

The history of Romanian transition made the subject of multiple theoretical enquiries. The fascination exerted by the exotic nuances of Romanian late communism, labelled by Linz and Stepan alternatively as a "sultanistic drift"[12], than as a classical socialist formula, created the presuppositions for tireless post-revolutionary research endeavours. At the same time, the unicity of Romanian violent anti-dictatorship revolution stimulated also the scientific interest for what was called a "laboratory case" of post-communist transition. Yet, despite its difficult foundational legacy Romanian society succeeded in consolidation of a democratic system, subsequent to multiple convulsive episodes. Early transitional distortions and anti-democratic slippages benefited by detailed analyses, mostly tending to bias the economic infrastructure and hidden transformative costs of communist past. At the end of 2000, as a general consensus, Romania was declared as a consolidated democratic environment, the research interest for this exceptional case of eastern communism being shadowed by more spectacular geopolitical topics.

After 2013 the global scene confronted with a reigniting civil dynamic, which fundamentally changed the societal topography of Eastern and Western Europe.

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[12] Juan Linz J, Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe, Baltimore*: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, p. 385.

Although the sources of protest cultures within East European dormant democracies were complex and difficult to frame, some factors tend to detach: informational revolutions, inter-generational cleavages, propagation of cultural of disobedience, structural economic changes. Development of youth protest culture in former communist space shared common ground with global contestation movements as "Occupy phenomenon", but their tailored domestic motivations and impulses remained conclusive. Romanian post-transitional society offered the grounds for a spectacular reconsideration of its difficult historical heritage. Intensity and amplitude of its civic symptomatology recalled a changed perspective upon its consolidation and evolution pathways. Although the triggering vectors for this fundamental reconfiguration of public speech and civil action were complex and difficult to isolate from a general context of change, some elements tend to be perceived as more influential than others.

First essential mutation supervened within Romanian civil culture imply the digital revolution. Ascent of Internet as fundamental interface for socialization, information and assessment of key cultural landmarks started after 2000, with a significant delay from western paradigm. The adjourned virtualization of youth movement in Eastern Europe represented a fundamental step in establishing the framework of future civic contestation dynamic, but in Romania's case this evolution leap had a peculiar significance. The grassroots movements of the '80 and the inception of further civil action, which facilitated the clash of Eastern Bloc, were based on the virtualisation of a community of values. The character of "total movement"[13] shared by *Solidarnosc* in Poland was based on erasure of classical boundaries and contours of social architecture, under unifying pressure of a new cultural, social and political agenda. Romanian evolution towards democratic establishment was missing this essential step, the transition and consolidation pattern concealing an atomised and fragmentary social pact. The digitalisation of civic action emerged as a natural process of reconstruction of new communities of values which lacked at the end of the '80.

Another important factor which influenced the new civil movements ignited after 2000 refers to presence of a generational cleavage. Youth activism was originated in a substantially different perception upon transition, post-transition and democratic objectives. Youth activism inaugurated within Romanian society after 2000 landmark was dependent by bridging different memory realms, including distorted or reinterpreted recollections of communist era or reignited traditionalism affinities. Generational divide was followed by a multiplication of classical cleavages and tensional axes. Romania and not only, experienced a digital border, operating within apparently homogenous and coherent social and cultural clusters. Civil society and civil culture, crossing several development stages, were now facing an antagonistic approach towards modernization, democratisation or social change. The re-traditionalization of public discourse and the exploitation of traditionalist nostalgia by former progressionist activist movements was not a singularising Romanian phenomenon. Poland, a classical example of successful civil development, faced after 2005 a drawback in its civil

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[13] Geoffrey Pleyers and Ionel N. Sava, *Social Movements in Central and Eastern Europe,* Bucharest, Publishing House, 2015, p. 8.

discourse. Limitation in freedom of speech and rising censorship passed merely unobserved, a meaningful example remaining the political pressures and escalation of public discourse in topics as national identity or globalisation. Digitalisation of civil activism and the generational fracture inaugurated a dual formula of civil society.

This mirrored process was more visible and consequently more influential in Romanian landscape due to previous configuration of social, cultural and even economic architecture. The Romanian transition lacked an authentic Green Up Rising[14] and a solid mobilisation of its margins and rural peripheries. Even if detachment from communist past apparently assured the gradual dismantling of anti-modern vocation, the behavioural and cultural conditions of consolidation[15] as genuine attachment towards liberal values were still jeopardized. Duality of civil contestation movements and their synchronized emergence were potentiated by the digital phenomenon and by the generational change, but surprisingly or not, the two factors do not contributed to a genuine evolution of previous problematics o civil functions and equilibriums.

The Romanian youth contestation movement had multiple significant moments in the recent years, but present discussion will approach only two referential points: the inception landmark of 2013 and latest evolutions of 2017. Being known under symbolic label of Romanian Autumn, the protest movement of 2013 ignited under a general social and cultural pressure. The Rosia Montana topic acted as triggering vector for materialization of discontent, blame vote upon political class and not least, need for change. The protest against Rosia Montana mining project had a complicated panoply of motivations and adjacent subthemes. Yet significant for the civic action perspective remains the development dynamic. Started initially as an environmental movement, militating for elimination of mining projects using cyanide extraction, Rosia Montana case transformed into one of the largest social and cultural civic phenomenon of post-communist history. This startling reconversion of the initial environmental claims in an anti-systemic social movement was made possible by some background clauses. The Romanian reigniting civic action was potentiated by the economic and cultural effects of the previous global crisis experience and economic hardship. The Orange Revolutions wave, supervened as a historical tournament of East European pathway toward democratisation in the early 2000. These classical electoral revolutions supervened within post-communist landscape tended to reflect the development of civil society in relation with constitutive conditions of democratic participation, as increasing international "collaborative networks" and genesis of new participative formulas[16]. Also, the Orange Revolutions were considered as media-savvy revolutions, marking a crucial landmark in post-communist severance mechanisms. The political action

[14] Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies,* New Heaven and London: Yale University Press, 1968, p. 72

[15] Larry Diamond, *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation,* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999, p. 166.

[16] Valerie J. Bunce and Sharon L. Wolchik, 'International diffusion and postcommunist electoral revolutions', Communist and Post-Communist Studies, 2006, vol.39, no.3, p. 284.

was potentiated by new virtual communities, fostering new forms of mobilisation, identity building and collective action. Youth activism increased, civil society became more and more active and the political spectrum tended to adapt to new formulas of participation.

However, the proclaimed exit from communism and detachment from transitional bureaucratic elites was in most of the cases incomplete[17]. Even if important changes supervened on the political scene after 2004, in synergy with East European atmosphere, the corruption symptomatology remained critical for Romanian public agenda. Youth activism was treated as peripheral and civic awakening was limited by a hermetic political culture, remaining refractory to change. Major transitional parties conserved their dominant status, political spectrum remaining frozen and difficult cu access. The general explanation of this isolation phenomenon remain directly linked by structural differences conserved during transition, and also incriminate a lack of common cultural and social agendas, and reconfirmation of political marginality of various groups[18].

In contradiction with this apparently frozen civic landscape, in 2012 a wave of street contestation phenomena emerged. The 2012 street protests occurred after several attempts of Romanian government to change health and social policies and to reduce basic state support in this field. It was a meaningful demonstration that the Orange Revolution did not represent one of the final phases in consolidation of democracy. The ingravescence of cultural and social cleavages and the re-emergence of early transitional claims become the starting basis for Rosia Montana radical manifesto, including themes as change of political class, awakening of civil spirit and institutional reform. On this tensional background, Romanian civil society was exposed to a dual process, of identity building and consequently, of mobilisation.

The ascent of anti-corruption discourse and the denunciation of "kleptocratura"[19] continued within Rosia Montana topic, stimulated by strong political stake of the subject. The silent transition from the environmental movement towards a generation manifesto produced gradually, trough interventions of some subsidiary factors. The long span time in which the Rosia Montana topics captured the public debate and the ritualization of civil action within a fixed calendar nourished the creation of new cultural dissidence. The Facebook generation phrase was born during major mobilisation movement of 2013, the weekly marches becoming an innovative mobilisation tools for a nascent civil community. The slogan #UnitedWeSave Rosia Montana became the trademark of a new generation, recovering some of the '90 youth movement motivations and societal projects.

The foreign reflections of Romanian youth movement disclosed the image of a new civic society demanding accountability form elites and regaining influence

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[17] S.R. Graubard, *Exit from communism,* New Brunswick and London: Transaction, 1993, p. 36.

[18] Grzegorz Ekiert and Roberto Foa, *Civil Society Weakness in Post-Communist Europe: A Preliminary Assessment,* Torino: Carlo Alberto Notebooks, 2011, No. 198, p. 5.

[19] G. Eyal, Ivan Szelenyi and Eleonor Townsley, *Making Capitalism Without Capitalists: Class Formation and Elite Struggles in Post-communist Central Europe,* London and NY: Verso, 2000, p. 174

at a level never seen after post-revolutionary civic resistance. Yet, some interesting changes occurred within profound architecture of civic society. One critical element refers to a reunification of social, political and economic claims. The denunciation of distorted forms of political decision and participation brought together groups, structures and individuals anteriorly separated by strong differences. In comparison strong with the '90 youth movement, new civil community was defined by a more inclusive and harmonising setting agenda. The intellectual movement born in first months after communist breakthrough was centred on isolation of former communist elites and recovery of democratic projects. The discourse against the others was a critical factor in establishing the new identity of the University Square phenomenon. The 2013 civic movement somehow overpassed this fragmentation and succeeded in mobilisation of previously fragmented social realms. The classical cleavages of urban and rural, left and right, nation and globalism were temporally countermanded for supporting a unifying cause.

The Rosia Montana episode is considered as the starting point of new civic movement in Romanian contemporary frame. Yet, the general implications of this new phase of civic mobilisation become more visible during fallowing development stages. The Rosia Montana episode stimulated the inception of new referential landmarks within political spectrum and dissolved decades of post-transitional party structure symmetry. Yet, the coagulation of new political forces may not be the essential consequence of this spectacular civic contestation movement. Important civic episodes alternated after 2013 inception moment, demonstrating that new civil communities continue to influence the society's structure and transformation patterns. The 2017 political evolution brought back citizen on the streets in a massive protest movement against political forces attempt to soften the anti-corruption legislation. Foreign media labelled this major civic action as "the biggest outpouring of public anger" (The Guardian) since the fall of communism. The street marches mobilised more than a half a million of protesters, asking for bottom-up reform of political class and reconfirmation of Romanian society engagement towards democratic and liberal values. The internal composition of the contestation movements became more and more complex, exceeding the age barrier, the generational divide and even geographical limitations. The diaspora communities juxtapose to a major internal mobilisation, bringing together urban nucleus and marginal space, in a general attempt to block a decline of democracy. The phrase #Rezist (#Resistance) transformed into the flag of new civic matrix.

Even if Romanian government has backed down its projects of decriminalise the corruption, the protest movement continued as a manifestation of civic revelation. The final phase of new civic awakening could be translated as a confirmation rite. Romanian evolution from communism to democracy was engraved by multiple slippages and distortions. In the same time, the symptomatology of multiple transitions brings into debate some changes occurred in definitions of democratisation. Democracy can be seen as an interactive construct, and not as a self-conserving structure, the transition stages being followed by multiple reconfirmation and reassessments of societal

equilibriums. In his context, contemporary civic reactions could be associated to such a confirmation rite, bridging communities and groups in an attempt to recover some fundamental development faults.

3. Conclusions

The opening part of the discussion passed in review the essential functions of the civil society within framework of post-communist change: the establishment of new social pacts, trough agency of new community of values, the assurance of a functional transformative mechanism of social scaffolding, facilitating the insertion of democratic formula and the reformation of social spatiality, by connecting previous fragmented social and cultural spheres.

A very general enquiry on Romanian contemporary civil activism revealed interesting similitudes with early transitional phases of the '90, but also some major reconversions of civic behavioural and referential component. The adjourned virtualisation of Romanian civil society, partially liberated by its traditional networking limits, triggered the dissolution of anterior cultural cleavages, inherent to a fragmentary modernization. "Networked young citizens"[20] created a common ground in their claims to civic action, even if sometimes role of civic movements remained unclear. Nevertheless, between the mimetic civil contestation movements, ignited after 2013, as a result of multiple global changes in political culture of participation and communication, and some of emerging neo-traditional reactions of Eastern Europe linger multiple nuances. The anti-globalist, anti-liberal movement coexist with a strong pro-liberal, western inspired youth culture. More, they tend to mix and hybridize. Also, genesis of elites and promotion of new leaders and political options is still hindered by revival of early transitional transformation crises. The public scene speech remains the privilege field of small groups, even if new crafted civil society begins the insertion of new types of democratic participation and political action. In the end, the third function of civil society, moderation and harmonisation of the classical cleavages, couldn't be neither fully materialized. Bijective reactions determined both by digital revolution and generational evolution raise significant questions regarding the vulnerabilities associated to a society's mechanisms of cultural adaptation, mobilisation and structural change. Polarisation of public scene can occur, followed by rising militancy on behalf of radical groups and associations, as a critical response for both, state and silent majorities' apathy[21]. Present enquiry upon Romanian democracy's evolution in relation with new civic dimension remains nevertheless very general, but still tent to highlight some important tendencies.

Facebook generation and the new protest culture do not represent a fragmentary phenomenon involving only urban, well educated, pro-democratic youth, but the materialisation of a complex, and yet unrevealed civil sphere. The interaction between invisible communities and their vanguard message is not

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[20] B.D. Loader, 'The networked young citizen: social media, political participation and civic engagement', Information, Communication & Society, 2014, n. 2, p. 143.

[21] Michael W. Foley and Bob Edwards (1996) 'The Paradox of Civil Society', in Journal of Democracy, 1996, vol. 7, n.3, p. 84.

always fully deciphered. Intergenerational chains speak for themselves in new formulas of civic virtually, in an "iceberg metaphor". The interplay created by visible contestation movements, acting as a pressure vector upon the state and the latent civil networks is critical for understanding further recreation of democracy clauses. The tele-communities tend to double in a virtual environment the social media filter, the civic digital activism benefiting by subsidiary support on behalf of yet silent audiences. Different generational clusters, including marginal communities and counter-cultures are renegotiating a social pact, trying to build a new formula of participative democracy, within framework of a new communicational revolution.

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THE CULTURE OF THE MACABRE AND MORS VIVENS IN MEDIEVAL ENGLISH POEMS: PEARL, BEVIS OF HAMPTON, AND THE DISPUTACIONE BETWYX THE BODY AND THE WORMES

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Abstract: *The culture of the macabre is always at the centre of life in the Middle Ages due to contagious disease, famine, war, the lack of hospices and medicine, and infant mortality. Living in such a culture in medieval England requires a familiarization with the fear of sudden death. To prepare for death, medieval people avoid sin, perform good works, take part in the sacraments, and keep to the teachings of the scholastic theologians. In this context, this paper will explore how the culture of the macabre and afterlife are understood in the Middle English Pearl Poem, Bevis of Hampton, and The Disputacione betwyx the Body and the Wormes.*

Keywords: *Middle Ages, Medieval England, Middle English Poems, Manuscript, Illumination, Macabre, Afterlife.*

The culture of the macabre is always at the centre of life in the Middle Ages due to contagious disease, famine, war, the lack of hospices and medicine, and infant mortality. Living in such a culture in medieval England requires a familiarization with the fear of sudden death. To prepare for death, medieval people avoid sin, perform good works, take part in the sacraments, and keep to the teachings of the scholastic theologians. In this context, Innocent III's influential *De miseriacondicionis humane* [*De contemptu mundi*] illustrates the idea of death: "Morimur ergo semper dum vivimus, et tunc tantum desinimus mori cum desinimus vivere. Melius est mori vite quam vivere morti, quia nichil est vita mortalis nisi mors vivens" (Lewis, 1978).

[We are therefore always dying while we live, and we only stop dying at such time as we stop living. It is better to die for life than to live for death, because mortal life is nothing but a living death]

While some of the Middle English poems describe how the innocent heroines and heroes die and how they deserve to go to heaven after their sudden deaths, some of them only refer to the physicality of the body after death or the idea of *mors vivens*. To begin with, *The Disputacione betwyx the Body and the Wormes*

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refers bubonic plague -a contagious disease- and the inevitability of the decaying of the corpse.[1] A pilgrim flees the plague hears in a dream vision, a debate between a recently buried body and the worms who are consuming it. The inscription of the poem directly refers to the death and the decaying of the dead body that is completely a natural phenomenon:

<blockquote>
Take hede unto my figure here abowne
And se how sumtyme I was fressche and gay
Now turned to wormes mete and corrupcion
Bot fowle erth and stynkyng slime and clay
Attende therefore to this disputacion written here
And writte it wisely in thi hert fre
At ther at sum wisdom thu may here
To se what thou art and here aftyr sal be
When thou leste wenes. venit mors te superare
When thi grafe grenes. bonum est mortis meditari".
(Rytting, 2000; 218-32)
</blockquote>

[Take heed of my figure here above and observe how I once was fresh and gay and now am turned to worms' meat and decay, nothing but foul earth and stinking slime and clay; attend therefore to this disputation written here, and write it wisely in your free heart so that you may acquire some wisdom here by seeing what you are and hereafter shall be; when you least expect it, death will overcome you; when your grave groans, it is good to meditate upon death.]

The basic theme of this poem is a debate between the body and the soul, both accusing each other for the sins committed during life. The above-mentioned inscription on the tomb provides a message to living readers of the body's present state. The notion that the death of the heroes and heroines in the Middle English poems is usually untimely to the poet, seems to represent an acme of Christian aspiration. In this context, the Middle English *Pearl* poem seems to present a narrator who laments the loss of his favourite pearl, which he refers to as either 'it' or 'her', describing it in womanly terms – 'So smal, so smote her syde were' (l. 6; 'so small, so smooth her sides were') – as well as in terms of a precious stone.[2] (Stanbury, 2001). Unable to recover from his loss, he 'slode vpon a slepyng-slate' (59; 'slid into a sudden, deathly sleep') in the garden where 'hit fro me sprange' (13; 'it sprang away from me') and has what he declares to be an out-of-body vision (61–4). He finds himself walking through a glittering aureate landscape alongside a light-filled river, on the other side of which he eventually spies 'a faunt, / A mayden of menske, ful debonere' (161–2; 'an infant, a noble maiden, very gracious'), dazzling white and pearl-encrusted. He addresses her as his lost pearl and identifies himself as a jeweller.

During the ensuing exchanges, she is a dead human being, not yet two years old at the time of her death, and that, in the Jeweller's words, 'Ho wat me nerre

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[1] *The Disputacione betwyx the Body and the Wormes* survives in British Museum MS, Add. 37049.

[2] *Pearl* survives in a single manuscript, one of the treasures of the British Library, MS Cotton Nero A.x.

ten aunte or nece' (233; 'she was nearer to me than aunt or niece'). In answer to his hailing her the Maiden rebukes him, first for describing her as lost, then for believing all and only what he sees and finally for imputing to himself the power to cross the water which separates them and to stay with her forever. She advises him rather to seek reconciliation with the Lord whom he has offended by his rebelliousness. Taken aback, he asks about her present state and she explains that she is a queen in heaven and Bride of the Lamb.

The notion that Pearl's death, untimely to him, represents an acme of Christian aspiration is one of many shifts of perspective that he has to confront in the course of the poem. She died innocent and is therefore 'saf by rygt' (684; 'saved by right'), having incurred no debts. Her spirit has been incorporated properly – indeed, ideally – into the society of the afterlife. As a Christian she has, in leaving the flesh, been subtracted from death; for, as baptism replaces birth as the commencement of life in the spirit, so bodily death is superseded by 'te deth secounde' (652; 'the second death') of damnation or spiritual death, from which Christ's sacrifice releases the baptized. Pearl is therefore an example of a sudden death of infant mortality in the Middle Ages.

Another aspect for the culture of macabre is the war and *the Chanson de Roland* may be given as one of the best examples which refers to the inevitability of death at battlefield.[3] In Charlemagne's long war against the Saracens of Spain, King Marsile of Saragossa, the last unconquered Muslim city, offers to capitulate, secretly intending to renege once the invaders have returned home. The Frankish barons wonder whom to send on the risky mission to negotiate. Roland, Charlemagne's heroic nephew, nominates his stepfather Ganelon, who promptly swears vengeance on his stepson. Ganelon plots with the Saracens to ensure that when the Franks withdraw, Roland, his friend Oliver and the twelve peers (Charlemagne's major barons) will lead the rearguard, which the Saracens will then ambush at Roncevaux. During the first assault, Oliver asks Roland to blow his horn, the oliphant, to recall the emperor and the main body; Roland refuses. The Franks repel the first Saracen wave but gradually succumb before the second. Oliver now rejects Roland's proposal that the oliphant be sounded, but Archbishop Turpin (one of the twelve peers) insists and Charlemagne returns. The Saracens are put to flight but all the Franks are dead, including Roland and Oliver. As a Christian, warrior, Roland dies at the battlefield and goes to heaven as the Pearl-maiden does.

Among the poems mentioned above, the most complex poem appears to be the image of St George in *Bevis of Hampton* regarding the representation of the macabre.[4] It is usually accepted that the episode of St George in *Bevis* is, in

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[3] *Chanson de Roland* is extant in Oxford Bodleian Library, MS Digby 23.

[4] *Bevis of Hamptone* survives in eight manuscripts: The Anglo-Norman *Boeve* was preserved in two manuscripts, which form the basis of Stimming's edition: the fourteenth-century Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS nouv. acq. ff. 4352 (B) and the thirteenth-century MS Firmin Didot (D), which perished in World War ll; Edinburg, National Library of Scotland, M.S Advocates 19.2.1 (Auchinleck), dating from the 1330s; London, British Library, MS Egerton 2862 (S), dating from the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century; Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, MS XII. B.29 (N), a paper manuscript dated to 1457; Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College, MS 175/96 (E), compiled sometime between the third quarter of the fourteenth century and the early fifteenth century;

narrative terms, a completely detachable episode that bears no essential relationship to the rest of the story. However, the portrayal of St George may be regarded as an inseparable part of the romance viewed from a different angle. Samantha Riches has noted that St George was known as El-Khadr. (2005, 1). One may note that in the modern era in the English speaking world, St George is best known as patron saint of England. (Morgan, 2006, 93; Good, 2009, xiv). St George, born in Cappadocia, was known as El-Khadr. Riches has explained that 'El-Khadr is reputed to have found the Fountain of Youth or the Well of Life, which is said to be located near the confluence of the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. Drinking from this fountain confers immortality and it is claimed that El-Khadr has been repeatedly killed and resurrected'. (2005, 4).

The cult of St George evokes the idea of immortality, and *mors vivens* in the Middle English *Bevis,* with similar representations of the miraculous well. St George has been regarded as the patron saint of England since the Third Crusade and he has helped the crusaders during the Third crusade. (Nicholson, 2016, 26). The addition of the St George episode indicates Eastern influence, as the saint first appears as the helper and protector during the crusades and his reputed 'Easterness' is westernized in the narratives especially after the Third Crusade. When considering the Third Crusade, it seems inevitable for the *Bevis* poet to have added St George. St George, who is related to Elijah in the Old Testament, is also related to St Theodor in Anglo-Saxon, Medieval Latin, Anglo-Norman and Middle English narratives, while he appears as Tudur in *Arabian Nights*. While the story of St George was widely known both in the East and West, his addition in the Middle English *Bevis of Hampton* seems to have been thought through carefully. Bly Calkin has noted that 'the naming of St George represents an explicitly anti-Muslim corrective to Bevis's moments of assimilation into Saracen culture'. (2005, 58). While Calkin's suggestion appears to minimize anxieties about hybridity, 'nemenede sein Gorge' is far from removing his encounters with the Saracens. (Rouse, 2008, 116). Rather than the primary function of the reference, the association between St George and *Bevis* seems to suggest more than that. In the second part of the poem, the hero, Bevis as a second St George fights and kills a dragon:

'Lord Christ'queth Bevis tho,
'Mai eni man the dragoun slo'!
His men answerde, withouten lesing:
'Thar nis neither emperor ne king,
That come thar the dragoun worei
An hundred thosend men and more,
That he nolde slen hem everichon,
Ne scholde hii never thanes gon'.
(Herzman, 1999, 2713-2720)

Cambridge, University Library, MS Ff. 2.38 (C), a late-fifteenth- or early-sixteenth-century paper manuscript. There is also the late-fifteenth-century Manchester, Chetham's Library, MS 8009 (M), but this contains a hybrid text of *Bevis* which often diverges considerably from the versions of A, S, N, E, and C.

These passages show that killing a dragon is a very difficult task and it may only be done by a superhuman. Bevis as a second St George, is the superhuman who does this job in *Bevis*. Bevis as St George helps the inhabitants of Cologne though he is not asked for help. Bevis has a premonitory dream. In it, there is a miraculous well, in an unspecified place and healing properties spring from a virgin who is having a bath in its waters. Bevis is bathed in this well to be able to kill the dragon. While fighting with the dragon, the dragon's venom reaches upon the hero's flesh, 'a foule mesel alse yif a were' (2830). Instead of being killed, Bevis finds life in the well - which evokes El-Khadr's Well of Life - and the dragon cannot approach the well. Here, as Bevis finds himself in the well of youth, he becomes immortal.

To conclude, the culture of the macabre is always at the centre of life in the Middle Ages, therefore in the Middle English poems. *The Disputacione betwyx the Body and the Wormes* represents how contagious disease affects the human body how a body decays after death. The *Pearl* poem refers to the infant mortality and depicts how a two year old maiden dies and goes to heaven and becomes one of the Brides of Christ. Roland's death is because of the inevitable outcome of the battle, and he goes to heaven as a knight in *the Chanson de Roland*. St George is an example of *mors vivens* as he never dies and appears abruptly when needed in *Bevis of Hampton*.

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NEO-MODERNISM IN CONSTANTIN ȚOIU'S NOVELS

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Abstract: The aim of this article is to offer an insight into a very interesting prose, written by Constantin Țoiu during the Romanian literary Reconquista, in the '60s, '70s and '80s. Although he describes some tragic aspects of the communist regime, such as the terror imposed by the state militia, the political investigations, the betrayal of close friends for certain advantages or the imprisonment without any legal motivation, the writer does not want to be considered only a dissident voice of the obsessive decade – as the 1950-ies were called by Romanian critics. He would not like to be considered a courageous author, whose sole purpose is to tell the truth, but an artist, a writer who has managed to revive the literary values of the interwar Modernism: the pleasure to narrate, the perspectivism of narrative voices, the aestheticism of writing, the authenticism of the story. Thanks to all these features of his fiction, he is one of the most important representatives of Romanian Neo-modernism, whose novels are still delightful to read today, when the communist realities are just history.

Keywords: Neo-modernism, literary Reconquista, authenticism, perspectivism, psychological novels

As a literary movement, Modernism can be divided into two distinct periods, an Early Modernism, which manifested itself after the First World War, as a reaction to the horrors of the global conflict, and a Late Modernism, which emerged after the Second World War and extended towards the 1980s, in an attempt to find an artistic refuge from the haunting memories of atom bombs and the Holocaust, and from the disappointing communist realities.

Romanian Neo-modernism marked the second half of the 20th century and is regarded as a form of Late Modernism, developed later than any other European literary manifestation of this kind. On the one hand, it tried to re-establish a connection over time with the interwar modernist tradition and, on the other hand, it aimed at introducing a new literary orientation, far from the principles of the socialist realism and the proletarian culture.

The Romanian neo-modernist canon was imposed by the literary critics against the communist ideology of the epoch, thus being established as an anti-canon, as an alternative to the official reductionist canon. The main difference between these two canons resides in the perspective that either of them offers: an individualistic one in the case of Neo-modernism, and a social collective one in

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the case of the officially selected works. At the same time, there is a dichotomy of attitude between the two forms of literary manifestation: the neo-modernists speak only for themselves, whereas the representatives of the official canon adopt a so-called civic attitude and speak on behalf of an entire social class.

The diagram of the entire period in which the two canons co-existed has been made by Eugen Negrici in his magnificent work entitled "The Romanian Literature under Communism". This book, considered by the author himself a study of "literary morphopathology"[1] explains in detail how the process of literary creation used to be regarded in Communism: as an unusual tri-partite scheme, involving the writer, the censor and the reader. Each of these three instances was supposed to make compromises: the writer did not openly say everything that he/she wanted to say, but expected his/her target audience to read between the lines, the censor protected the official ideology, but could be tolerant enough to let some subversive ideas slip, and the reader was satisfied with surrogates of truth, trying to find the author's hints or the deeper meanings hidden in the work of fiction.

The most difficult period of the Romanian literature was the one between 1947 and 1964, when the censorship imposed by the newly-established communist regime was very drastic. After 1965, when Nicolae Ceauşescu took the lead, the situation was slightly improved, because the new General Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party wanted to consolidate his position as a more progressive leader than his predecessor, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, and accepted a relative liberalization of literature. This period, suggestively called "the time of Reconquista", was marked by the emphasis on literariness rather than political ideology, on autonomy rather than affiliation to a certain doctrine.

Looking at the writers who published after 1965 through the magnifying lens of psychoanalysis, we can notice a common desire for taking revenge on those who mutilated the Romanian literature during the previous period, an emotional outlet, a retrospective criticism towards the ugliness encountered in the literary works of the 1950s. Aestheticism, a dominant feature of the literary works written in the 1960s - 1970s, can be regarded as a sublimation of the rudimentary character of the prose published in the previous decade, whereas the predilection for self-accusation and the passion for investigation can be considered, in a psychoanalytical manner, a transfer of the object from the violence of the accusations made during the previous period to the feeling of guilt and the wish for purification through confession.

The literary Reconquista manifested itself at all the levels of creation, influencing the forms, the themes and the style of the new literary works, which it attempted to bring back to the fertile land of authenticity. In their search for authentic values, the initiators of the Reconquista mainly resorted to the principles of the interwar Modernism, whose genres, topics and typologies, although obsolete in some respects, were still the only viable solution for closing the gap made by the wrongdoings of socialist realism.

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[1] E. Negrici, *The Romanian Literature under Communism*, Bucharest, the PRO Foundation Publishing House, 2002, p. 4

The main representatives of literary Reconquista bring to the foreground some social classes that were negatively presented during the previous period, such as the intellectuals or the city dwellers belonging to the middle class. They show great interest in the psychology of these people and, from this point of view, their works closely resemble the novels written during the interwar Modernism. An explanation for this preference for psychological aspects could be that emotions, feelings or other manifestations of the soul are universal and, consequently, do not have to relate to a certain ideology.

Besides psychology, a main topic of the literary creations in the 1960s - 1970s is one that was a taboo subject during the previous decade, namely the criticism towards the faults of the communist regime, especially those committed by Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and his adepts. The optimism manifested during Dej's epoch towards the communists' accomplishments in various fields is now replaced by scepticism and by a tragic feeling of the absurd.

The mission of the writers during the Reconquista was to re-establish truth as one of the principal values and to dissociate aesthetics from politics. The struggle to accomplish these desiderata got fiercer after 1971, when Nicolae Ceauşescu's *July Theses* – a famous speech in which the communist president pleaded for a Neo-Stalinist offensive against cultural autonomy and a re-instauration of the strict principles of socialist realism – revived the fear that the horrors of censorship might return. Under this pressure, a new generation of writers emerged as the protectors of the values regained during the previous years and as the continuers of the Reconquista, able to create a better prose in terms of narrative techniques.

In Eugen Negrici's opinion, the generation of writers who published their works after 1971 managed to take the modernization and Europeanization of the Romanian literature a step further. Nicolae Breban, Augustin Buzura, Constantin Ţoiu, Alexandru Ivasiuc, Sorin Titel and Dumitru Radu Popescu paradoxically succeeded in reaching the highest degree of literary complexity. The emergence of this generation of writers, who were familiar with the interwar literary techniques, especially with stylistic complexity and the multiplication of narrative layers, and had a great interest in fine analyses, problem-solving and myth narration, has led to the rediscovery of a literature that was believed to have been lost in the darkness of the strict canon imposed by socialist realism.

The main goal of these writers was to reach the level of the interwar prose and to re-connect contemporary literature with the values of Modernism. Nevertheless, the true Neo-modernists who wrote during this period managed to reach a better literary level than their interwar predecessors and, by combining fiction with exegesis and realism with self-reflexivity, they obtained a greater subtleness in terms of narrative techniques.

One of the main representatives of this type of "tolerated" literature is Constantin Ţoiu, who, in the novel entitled *Galeria cu viţă sălbatică* (*The Gallery of Wild Vine*), published in 1976, offers one of the most veridical descriptions of the Romanian intellectuality in the 1950s. Tormented by the fear that the diary he has lost might fall into the wrong hands, the main character, Chiril Merişor, lives in uncertainty until his diary is really found by the repressive "Securitate" (the

Department of State Security). Although he is innocent and the authorities cannot accuse him of anything, his feelings of guilt, anxiety and constant fear make him kill himself, in a scene that reminds of Gelu Ruscanu's suicide in *Jocul ielelor* by Camil Petrescu, a typical modernist text.

After his success with this political and, at the same time, psychological novel, Constantin Țoiu set as the main topic of his works of fiction the evolution of some exceptional characters, whose struggle with fate was worth being saved from oblivion. The effect of uncertain times on remarkable people could be devastating, and the only weapon against it is the capacity of story-telling. In this respect, Țoiu's outlook on life and literature is very similar to the modernist perspective embraced by both Mircea Eliade, who highlighted the importance of narration as a redeeming act, and Marin Preda, who was also interested in the relationship between individuals and history.

Constantin Țoiu's favourite topics are the impact of disease or loneliness on the human psyche and the paradoxical image of death as a correlative of freedom (in a society that encouraged class struggle, someone's death could mean someone else's freedom). Strictly related to this strange connection between death and freedom, there is the image of the double, a romantic theme exploited by Modernism and definitely imposed by Jorge Luis Borges. Țoiu focuses on this topic in the novel entitled *Căderea în lume* (*The Fall into the World*), published in 1987, where he shows that, despite their conflicts, the two protagonists, a legionnaire and a communist, are actually the same character in two hypostases. From this point of view, they remind us of Borges's theologians, who fight against each other, although they ultimately preach the same faith of uniqueness as the proof of freedom and they both believe that individuals are free precisely because they are unique. The very name of the main character, Babis, suggests the idea of uniqueness, but, because it is also borne by his nephew, alludes to the identity of condition between the two: the communist nephew has the mission to write the biography of the legionnaire uncle and, after he manages to overcome his initial feelings of repulsion towards the other's ideology, he starts worshipping his uncle, whom he perceives as his own spiritual double.

The narrative formula that Constantin Țoiu uses in his novels reveals the qualities of a highly refined prose, which cultivates uncertainty both in the structure of a character and in the choice of symbols, presented from different angles in order to enhance their semiotic potential. This permanent uncertainty has the role to create the so-called effect of reality, which reveals the complexity of an authentic life.

The main characters in Țoiu's novels – Chiril Merișor in *Galeria cu viță sălbatică* (*The Gallery of Wild Vine*), Mega Pavelescu in *Însoțitorul (The Companion)* or Babis Vătășescu in *Căderea în lume* (*The Fall into the World*) – are typical modernist characters: complex, memorable and able to make the whole story gravitate around them, to present a charming world, which is unfortunately on the verge of extinction.

Due to his almost obsessive effort to save history through its representative figures, Țoiu has been surnamed the "chronicler of Life"[2]. Accessing the memory of some exceptional beings and approaching the story from their perspective, he usually resorts to a well-known modernist procedure, namely the stream of consciousness, which was successfully employed by his favourite novelists, Marcel Proust and James Joyce. His constant remembrance of the illustrious dead people up to the identification with them is related to some issues of conscience often experienced by the writer, who feels nostalgic about a long gone world. The extinct society of the past is presented from different angles: a certain mentality, some social rules, a specific behaviour and a particular way of expressing thoughts and feelings. The language is extremely interesting, as it is anecdotic, ironical and witty, in bitter contrast with the dull wooden language used during the communist regime.

All the above mentioned aspects have led to the idea that Constantin Țoiu was the first author who, although living and writing in Communism, embraced the retro style of the interwar modernist period. As a representative of Neo-modernism, he believes in the interbellum values and attempts to bring back the savour of that artistic and intellectual world through his writing. His approach of literature in this manner is a form of dissidence, because he tries to create grandiose characters in a socialist society based on the principles of equality between individuals and, in doing so, he manifests his repulsion towards the contemporary society, which displays nothing from the previous grandeur but some remarkable figures, who deserve to be recovered or redeemed through narration.

In an era of doubt, as Nathalie Sarraute used to call the post-war French literature (taken as a model by the representatives of Romanian Neo-modernism), destiny slips through the very fingers of the ones living it and, consequently, the characters who are fully aware of their actions and take constant part in the plot are no longer appealing, so they should be replaced by ghost-like individuals, closer to non-existence than to presence.

This tendency could have been inspired to the Romanian writers not only by the new French novel, but also by the American post-bellum plays. Just like in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, in Constantin Țoiu's prose the absence becomes an overwhelming presence, which, through remembrance, can ennoble the entire atmosphere. Such an absent character that becomes the centre of a whole novel only because is permanently evoked by the other characters is the legionnaire Babis Vătășescu in *Căderea în lume* (*The Fall into the World*). This last novel written by Țoiu before the Revolution in 1989 is the first book in which the author gives up his resentment against politics and manages to turn a legionnaire – one of the most despised figures during the communist regime – into a real hero with a messianic destiny.

Although the title of the novel alludes to the Biblical legend of the original sin, the writer does not mention it explicitly, but refers to an idea from Lucian Blaga's philosophy: the Luciferian knowledge allows humans to cross the barrier

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[2] Ibidem, p. 307

of limited cognition, but inevitably leads to a fall. At the same time, the title alludes to the fact that politics implies falling and "the fall into the world" is actually the fall into the abject realities of communist politics.

Distinguishing authenticity from authenticism, inasmuch as authenticity is specific for diaries and memoirs, whereas authenticism characterizes first-person narratives, Dumitru Micu includes Constantin Țoiu's prose in the sphere of modernist authenticism. Even if it continues the line imposed by Camil Petrescu, this kind of fiction is different from the interwar prose due to the need to adapt to the new literary climate, in which the indiscriminate use of modernist themes and techniques would have inevitably led to anachronisms. On the contrary, during the 1980s, the revived anthropocentrism surprisingly aims at rendering authenticity by means of new attitudes and forms of expression.

Since it flourished at the same time with Postmodernism, the Neo-modernism of the 1980s seems to be only the echo of a long gone epoch and is seen by some contemporary writers like Florin Iaru and Mircea Cărtărescu as inappropriate in the postmodern climate, which tended to synchronize with the Western literatures. In Cărtărescu's opinion, Modernism died when Postmodernism was born and some writers' attempts to revive it are doomed to fail.

Despite this negative perception, Constantin Țoiu's books were well received by the readers both during the communist period and after the Romanian Revolution, being considered an alternative to the official politicized literature. This was mainly due to their catchy themes and interesting narrative techniques inspired from the modernist prose.

For example, the topic of *Căderea în lume* (*The Fall into the World*) is similar to that of *Patul lui Procust (The Procrustean Bed)* by Camil Petrescu: the tragic portrait of a real man is created from pieces of memories, within an ample investigation with biographic purposes. The main character itself, the legionnaire Babis Vătășescu, resembles Ladima in many respects: he is extremely sensitive, but endowed with a remarkable dignity, which makes him endure a tragic destiny. Just like Fred Vasilescu, the narrator Babis Vătășescu, the nephew of the absent character, tries to compose a meaningful biography out of disparate information and affectively resonates with the fate of his uncle, which he wants to present in the most appropriate light. Moreover, in order to turn his uncle into a memorable character, he associates his image with a Biblical legend, depicting him as a Christ living among criminals.

The entire space in which Țoiu's characters move – the interwar Bucharest – is re-constructed from the narrator's perspective, thus resembling Joyce's Dublin, and the inter-bellum period is presented as a fabulous epoch – a golden age in the true sense of the words, totally different from the communist "Golden Age". As a gifted chronicler of Life, endowed with a great capacity of evoking the past, Țoiu manages to re-create a space and a time that he intends to immortalize in his readers' conscience. Nevertheless, he is not so much interested in the spatial and temporal coordinates of his fiction as he is in the evolution of an individual character that experiences all sorts of turmoil and crises until he finally fulfils his destiny. From this point of view, *Căderea în lume* (*The Fall into the World*) can be considered a Bildungsroman, which focuses on the development of a

personality and, at the same time, on the different stages that a legionnaire had to pass through.

As the author of a complex work of fiction, in which the psychological analysis is combined with the political allusions and the subtext plays a major part, Constantin Ţoiu uses various narrative voices, in the modernist manner of William Faulkner. For example, one of those who tell the story of the absent character Babis Vătăşescu is a cripple. Leo Negotei's disability is spiritual rather than physical. He is obsessed with the idea that he betrayed his friend, who, as a legionnaire, was sentenced to death by the communists, and refuses to get out of his room. This infirmity or, rather, this refusal to move implies a static perspective upon the world, reflected in the way in which Leo narrates the events: history is seen at a standstill and people are reduced to the humble condition of actors in a play written by an almighty playwright. In Eugen Simion's opinion, this kind of narrative voice is the most appropriate because, at the symbolic level, history is crippled by dogmatism and intellectuals find themselves in the impossibility to fully express their ideas, thus being "disabled" by the political context.

Resorting to the technique of perspectivism, so much used by modernist writers, Ţoiu places his characters between parallel mirrors, presenting them from various perspectives. Babis Vătăşescu, for instance, is seen from three different angles: of his faithful lover, of the friend who betrayed him and of the nephew who venerates him. Thus, the writer avoids including him in a particular psychological category – unique and predictable – and demonstrates, in a purely modernist manner, that the character is what the reader wants it to be.

Ţoiu is one of the few Romanian writers who theorized the narrator's position. In his articles, gathered in the volume entitled *Destinul cuvintelor (The Destiny of Words)*, he claims that he cannot accept the egocentric apanage of the realist writer – omniscience – and pleads for the modern narrator's withdrawal behind some personae that may confer the writing a plus of verisimilitude. The end of *Căderea în lume* (*The Fall into the World*) supports this statement and reveals a typically modernist perspective on the relationship between the author, the narrator and the character: "*When I tried to turned, dazzled by the vision, I tripped over something that was lying on the floor… It could have been the narrator's skin, taken off for a moment. All you need is to see it and you will meekly put it on again, becoming who you really are.*"[3]

Despite Ion Negoiţescu's opinion that Ţoiu, unlike Camil Petrescu, does not aim at proving a theory, but writes only for emphasizing a sort of "thinking for thinking's sake"[4], it is obvious that, beyond the seemingly free stream of thought, there is a deep allusive level, in which the negative aspects of Communism are severely criticised, so the prose has a precise purpose and the subtext plays an equally important part as the text – the dialogues with double meaning and the sarcasm of some lines remind us of Henry James's novels and delight the readers with their wit.

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[3] C. Ţoiu, *The Fall into the World*, Bucharest, "Cartea Românească" Publishing House, 1987, p. 285
[4] I. Negoiţescu, Contemporary Writers, Cluj-Napoca, Dacia Publishing House, 1994, p. 447

As a whole, Constantin Țoiu's literary creation is based on the rediscovery of the modernist themes and techniques in a totally different social and political context. The writer finds his inspiration in the works of his favourite Romanian interwar writers and adapts their main literary techniques to the necessities of his age. He has the same ability to reveal the depths of the characters' psyche as Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu, the authenticism and aestheticism of Camil Petrescu, the preference for a free stream of thought, like Anton Holban, and the capacity of including an individual in a both mythical and ordinary history, like in Mircea Eliade's prose. By re-establishing the connection with the repertoire of themes and procedures used in the interwar epoch, despite the restrictions imposed by the official ideology of the communist regime, Constantin Țoiu proves to be an authentic Neo-modernist writer, whose novels can be included in the pantheon of Romanian modernist prose, next to those written by his favourite authors.

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"PORPHYRIA'S LOVER" AS AN IMPROVISATION OF "THE SICK ROSE"

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Abstract: "Stephen Greenblatt discusses the originality of the texts in literature in "Culture" (1982), and he concludes that literature which reflects the culture at the same time is an accumulation and improvisation of the works, which enables literary mobility and exchange. This paper will analyze Robert Browning's "Porphyria's Lover" as an improvisation of William Blake's "The Sick Rose" from Greenblatt's perspective. Robert Browning is known as an influential poet in the Victorian Age while William Blake is one of the cornerstones of the Romantic Period. Proving what Greenblatt claims, by applying similar theme, subject, symbols and characters, it is clear that Browning successfully improvises Blake's poem. The purpose of this work is to compare and study these two poems written in different ages by different poets, and to find the similarities and improvised elements to support Greenblatt's theory."

Keywords: Greenblatt, Browning, Blake, Porphyria's Lover, The Sick Rose.

Introduction

Is every literary text wholly original? This is a controversial question today. In general, it is thought that to find an original text is almost impossible because most of the possible issues and topics have been said or discussed in literature till now. Speaking on English Literature, there are milestones such as Geoffrey Chaucer, William Shakespeare, John Milton, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Lord Byron, Daniel Defoe, and Samuel Johnson; indeed, these are only a few of the major writers, artists, poets and playwrights. Considering their works, it can be claimed that these writers exemplified most of the theories and movements with their masterpieces in English Literature. Today, to create or invent a new genre or movement requires a deep analysis and understanding of their works to find the raw themes; nevertheless, it is almost impossible to be free from the shadows of the originals. Stephen Greenblatt approves this idea and claims that literature is like an accumulation of themes and plots, that is why the contemporary works are the improved versions of the previous ones.[1] When analyzed from Greenblatt's perspective, it is seen that by writing *Porphyria's Lover*, Robert Browning

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[1] Stephen Greenblatt. *Culture*. Beijing: Foreign Languages, 1982. *Utm.edu*. The University of Tennessee. Web. 01 June 2017. <https://www.utm.edu/staff/cbradshaw/Culture.pdf>.

masterfully improvised William Blake's *The Sick Rose* after adding more details and using more symbols.

Stephen Greenblatt: *Culture*

In *Culture* (1982), Stephen Greenblatt claims that literary works usually reflect the culture of the society and time they are written in; that is why, while analyzing a literary work, the reader should also consider the cultural and social conditions in the age that the work was produced. "If an exploration of a particular culture will lead to a heightened understanding of a work of literature produced within that culture, so too a careful reading of a work of literature will lead to a heightened understanding of the culture within which it was produced" (227). He adds that culture and literature are bound to each other and this makes culture mobile. Thanks to the literary works, culture is carried to the following generations, so that it survives for ages. But, while passing down the generations, some probable changes in culture are inevitable. However, despite the changes and difference in some aspects, culture continues its task to "limit" and "regulate" the society (228).

In terms of limiting and regulating the next generations, culture needs improvisation because the culture of the past cannot be applied to the present society most of the time. So, the society improvises the culture and keeps it alive to maintain the limits and regulations it requires. "Improvisation allows for constant change and adaptation within a predetermined structure" says Rob Wallace in his article[2], and he implies that to accomplish improvisation, societies need the pre-established culture of the past. Additionally, Greenblatt claims that "most individuals are content to improvise, and, in the West at least, a great many works of art are centrally concerned with these improvisations" (229), which means that people in society and the literature of the West support the idea of improvisation.

In addition, Greenblatt states that the literary works not only help the mobility of the culture, but also shape and regulate. He continues:

> This means that, despite our romantic cult of originality, most artists are themselves gifted creators of variations upon received themes. Even those great writers whom we regard with special awe, and whom we celebrate for their refusal to parrot the clichés of their culture, tend to be particularly brilliant improvisers rather than absolute violators or pure inventors. Thus Dickens crafted cunning adaptations of the melodramatic potboilers of his times; Shakespeare borrowed most of his plots, and many of his characters, from familiar tales or well-rehearsed historical narratives; and Spenser revised for his own culture stories first told, and told wonderfully, by the Italian poets Ariosto and Tasso. (229)

In this quotation, he clearly criticizes the very idea of originality and uniqueness, and he declares that even the greatest writers in Western Literature

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[2] Rob Wallace. "Improvisation and Literature: A Brief Guide." *Improvisation and Literature: A Brief Guide* (n.d.): n. pag. *Improvcommunity.ca*. Improvcommunity. Web. 1 June 2017. <http://www.improvcommunity.ca/research/improvisation-and-literature-brief-guide>.

got inspiration from the previous sources and they revised or reproduced them. He regards this as borrowing from the past and the mobility of the culture through literary texts.

Moreover, he declares that "This mobility is not the expression of random motion but of exchange. A culture is a particular network of negotiations for the exchange of material goods, ideas and –through institutions like enslavement, adoption or marriage – people" (229). As he calls, culture is an exchange because by communicating, people and societies get involved in each other and borrow some habits and characteristics of each other, so that because of this kind of interaction, the culture of a society or a group resemble another's. However, in spite of the exchange, the mobility and the constraint of each different culture maintain and the writers highly contribute to keep culture mobile and constrain: "Great writers are precisely masters of these codes, specialists in cultural exchange. The works they create are structures for the accumulation, transformation, representation, and communication of social energies and practices" (230). Thanks to the works of the great writers, culture keeps living and passing from generation to generation, so literature and culture have an important bound in this context.

The Sick Rose and *Porphyria's Lover*

William Blake is undoubtedly one of the major poets in the Romantic Age. He mostly writes on human nature and social issues, and he is renowned for his preeminent collection of poems *The Songs of Innocence* and *The Songs of Experience*. The most well-known poems in these collections are *The Tyger* and *The Lamb*. Tiger represents the experienced man while lamb symbolizes the inexperienced and innocent child. In addition to these famous ones, *The Sick Rose* is also one of the influential poems that *The Songs of Experience* includes. Blake includes this poem in the collection related to the dark experiences and evil side of man because the main character in the poem is a sick rose which was made sick by an invisible worm, and the dark desires of the worm destroy the rose in the end.

On the other hand, Robert Browning can be regarded as one of the leading figures in the Victorian Era. He is mostly known as an influential poet on dramatic monologue in English Literature. Most of his poems are written in monologue form and they are commonly about the psychology of the characters. It is claimed that he had a happy life with his wife Elizabeth Barrett Browning; however, generally, either the female characters in his poems are dead, or they die in the end.[3] The same issue can be found in *Porphyria's Lover* because Porphyria is strangled by her lover in the end though she loves him deeply.

It is quite interesting that there is a great resemblance between Blake's *The Sick Rose* and Browning's *Porphyria's Lover* in terms of content and theme, characters and symbols. The question whether Browning was affected by Blake's works or not is not clear yet; however, it is claimed that Browning once published Blake's *The Songs of Experience* collection and he read his poems leaving room

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[3] Cebeci, Oğuz. *Psikanalitik Edebiyat Kuramı*. İstanbul: İthaki Yayınları, 2009. Print.

for speculations that he might be influenced by Blake's ideas and techniques.[4] Beside Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning is also a famous poet in the Victorian Age and some of her poems mostly remind *The Chimney Sweepers* of Blake. No matter how they got influenced or whether they read Blake's works or not, there is an undeniable fact here: Stephen Greenblatt is right when he says literature is an accumulation, exchange and improvisation. The reader can see that Blake's poems are improvised by Browning and as this article tries to analyze, especially *The Sick Rose* is exchanged, improvised and applied in *Porphyria's Lover* with the help of adding some more details and dramatic monologue.

First of all, the content and theme of these two poems are quite alike. In *The Sick Rose* Blake speaks to a rose who is sick. Rose is sick most probably because of the invisible worm that comes out at night and in storm. Blake also implies that the worm has some dark and secret desires for the rose, and these desires will destroy the rose. This is a short but concise poem because Blake tells a situation, mentions about the time, place and weather in eight lines. Moreover, he clearly explains cause and effects and gives a direct and clear end to this love story. Indeed, he tries to warn the rose; however, the damage is done because the rose is already sick; that is why, the ultimate end is seen in the beginning.

On the other hand, Browning's *Porphyria's Lover*, which can be regarded as one of the best dramatic monologues, is also about love and its destructive power. Indeed, it is like an explanation or exemplification of *The Sick Rose* because Porphyria represents the rose and she gets destroyed by her lover. Again, the incident happens in a stormy evening. The speaker is the lover and he talks about the happenings in a detailed way. Porphyria comes to the cottage and wants to fulfill her desires for her lover. At the same time, her lover also has some dark and secret desires like the worm in *The Sick Rose*. In the end, both are satisfied with their wills; Porphyria makes love with her lover and the lover kills her.

Besides the theme and the content, the characters are similar, too. First of all, Porphyria stands for the rose because both are the innocent ones in this context. Blake's rose is sick and it is not aware of the danger mainly because it is sick and the worm is invisible. Likewise, Porphyria is also sick and weak. Her lover says that she is too weak because of the passion for him. Porphyria is sick because she is deeply in love with her lover and her love is too much for her. On the other side, worm and her lover are also alike. Blake states that the worm is invisible and it emerges at nights. Moreover, it has dark and mysterious desires and he will destroy the rose. The same situation happens in *Porphyria's Lover*. They meet at night, and the lover's real psychology and intention are invisible. While Porphyria wants to have a sexual relationship with him, he misinterprets her love and supposes that Porphyria wants the eternal peace which means death. That is why; he makes his plans secretly and destroys her in the end. Indeed, it is as if there were two lovers here: one is the one sitting in the cottage and waiting

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[4] Johnson, Hannah, Annie McCausland, and Cody Shreffler. "William Blake's Songs of Innocence and Experience." *19th-Century Research Seminar (19CRS)*. Baylor University, 02 Mar. 2017. Web. 01 June 2017. <https://blogs.baylor.edu/19crs/2017/03/02/william-blakes-songs-of-innocence-and-experience/>.

for Porphyria, and the other is the invisible one who is in the mind of the lover and arranging the murder in secret. The lover is like a body with two characters, one of them is the visible man whom Porphyria loves and the other one is the man living in his psychology and mind; indeed, the damage is done by the invisible, unseen man who has dark desires.

Additionally, symbols in both poems imply almost the same meaning. Firstly, both poets use night to define the time; however, night has more implications as a symbol. In Blake's poem, he says the worm flies at night, which means it belongs to darkness. Night keeps danger in itself; so, the worm is supposed to be dangerous, too. Moreover, because night is dark and not bright, it helps the worm to be invisible by hiding it in the darkness; so that the rose cannot notice the danger. In the second poem, night indeed warns reader against danger. It is night, the cottage is warm while outside is cold, Porphyria is full of sexual desire for her lover, and her lover is thirsty for murder. In general, night is thought as the time when the desires and feelings get intense, that is why the murder takes place at night. Again, night enables the lover to accomplish his aim easier because it hides his intention and plans.

Moreover, the storm also gives clues about the upcoming destruction. In both poems, the weather is stormy and it highly reflects the psychology of the characters. In *The Sick Rose,* Blake declares that the worm flies in the night and storm:

> The invisible worm,
> That flies in the night
> In the howling storm:
> Has found out thy bed
> [. . .] (2-5)

Storm is a strong wind and it mostly gives damage to its environment. The one who can fly in the storm would be so strong and dangerous because storm is not an appropriate place to fly. In addition, storm may inform the reader about the personality of the worm, which means the worm is not proper in mind, and it has some problems psychologically which makes it more dangerous. Indeed, it gives clues about the upcoming disaster by the worm because Blake adds "howling" to define it. Howling means making sounds like crying, and this implies that the storm tries to declare the danger to the rose. However, while storm is howling, the worm already finds the rose's bed, which means the worm is accepted by the rose with his unknown and secret plans.

Storm can be found in Browning's poem, too. It is night and the weather is both windy and rainy, Porphyria enters into the cottage and leaves it outside. The inner side of the cottage seems more secure than the outside to her; however, death is waiting for her in there. Indeed, in this poem, storm hints the broken psychology of the lover. He is waiting inside and by listening to the weather; he creates a story out of it:

> The rain set early in to-night,
> The sullen wind was soon awake,
> It tore the elm-tops down for spite,

And did its worst to vex the lake:
I listened with heart fit to break. (1-5)

Reading these lines, the reader sees that the lover is like in the storm and he experiences what the storm does. He says the storm tears the trees by purpose, and disturbs the lake deliberately. He feels the storm inside, and he has his own storm in his mind. However, unfortunately, Porphyria does not know his purpose and his desire.

His mind works like a storm, he decides to kill her and he says even Porphyria's passion cannot prevent him from achieving "tonight's gay feast" (27). He regards the murder as a feast; yet he hesitates for a moment; however, when he looks at her eyes, he determines to carry out his evil action because he justifies his deed by declaring this murder was what Porpyria wanted from him:

Be sure I looked up at her eyes
Happy and proud; at last I knew
Porphyria worshipped me; surprise
Made my heart swell, and still it grew
While I debated what to do. (31-35)

He cannot restrain the storm inside him and, like the storm outside destroying the trees, he destroys Porpyhria by strangling her with her hair. So, the invisible man inside wins in the end; yet, he says Porpyhria worshipped him to do that. What is worse, he states that Porphria is glad to die because it was her greatest desire:

The smiling rosy little head,
So glad it has its utmost will,
That all it scorned at once is fled,
And I, its love, am gained instead!
Porphyria's love: she guessed not how
Her darling one wish would be heard. (52-57)

He supposes that Porphyria should be happy now because her darling has fulfilled her desire. Indeed, the stormy psychology is felt in these lines and in the end of the poem, too. He deeply knows he has committed an offense, but he tries to comfort himself by laying the blame on Porphyria. He is like a wavy storm which is sometimes surging and sometimes calm. While choking Porphyria, he is like a surging wind; however, when the deed is done and he gets all alone and by himself, he gets calm and thinks about what he did. The only thing that he can do now is to wait for the response of God on this act. Indeed, even in the end, he has hope for the future by saying "And yet God has not said a word!" (60); and it explains how much trouble his psyche endures.

What is more, bed is also a common symbol in this context. In both poems, death or destruction happens in bed which is a very private place for an individual. And, the damage is mostly related to the sexual desires. In *The Sick Rose,* the worm's love destroys the rose's life: "And his dark and secret love / Does thy life destroy" (8). Additionally, the worm can be considered as another

sexual symbol because it may refer to the sexual organ of the male. The invisible dark desires of the worm destroy the rose's life eventually. The sexuality is an undeniable part of the damage in both poems. Like the rose, Porphyria is also in danger in bed. Her lover kills her in bed and waits to hear from God with her dead body all night. Clearly, the bed is the place of death, and her sexual passion for her lover and her lover's invisible desires are the main reasons for her end.

Interestingly, Porphyria's name also sounds symbolic. Browning does not give a name to her lover; instead, he prefers "Porphyria's" as a word that defines and qualifies him like an adjective. If the word itself is analyzed, the reader can notice that Porphyria comes from a Greek word *porphyrus* which means purple, and this word is used as a name of a disease in medicine.[5] This disease highly affects the nervous system and mostly it is not noticed till the damage happens. Additionally, it influences the system of skin, too. The Porphyria patients cannot stay under the sun for a long time because if they do, their skin gets in danger of burning. Obviously, Porphyria's lover is like a Porphyria patient. He has a mental disorder because his nervous system does not work properly. He is in a fight with himself psychologically. Though he wants Porphyria to be happy, he misinterprets the wish of happiness because of his disorder and he kills her. Again, in the end he waits for a word from God; though he strangled a human being and he is a murderer now, he has hope for salvation and mercy from God, which seems so irrational to the reader. On the other hand, like the invisible worm, the lover acts at night. As it is said before, Porphyria patients have difficulty in sun light, which means they are more comfortable in the darkness or when they are away from brightness of the sun. So does Porphyria's lover. He waits in the cottage for Porphyria to come and blaze up the "cheerless grate" (8), and kills her at night and waits all night to get a reply to his deed from God. Clearly, without giving a specific title to the lover, Browning adroitly employs a disease's name to define the man's psychological characteristics.

Conclusion

To conclude, Stephen Greenblatt writes a masterpiece on the relationship between culture and literature. He says culture in a place affects the literature there and the literature in a society represents its culture in return. In addition, literature and culture can be considered as an accumulation of values and works, which explains the similarities between the contemporary texts and the texts in the past. So, the contemporary writers get inspiration from the former works consciously or unconsciously, and by improvising them, they produce their own works. Greenblatt claims that even the greatest writers such as Shakespeare applied this technique.

The same issue can be applied to the common issues and similarity between William Blake's *The Sick Rose* and Robert Browning's *Porphyria's Lover*. There are so many common issues between these two poems that, it seems like Blake wrote in theory describing how the situation would take place and Browning wrote a scenario on it by putting an event and an action in details in it. In both

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[5] "About Porphyria." *American Porphyria Foundation*. N.p., 04 Oct. 2016. Web. 10 June 2017. <http://www.porphyriafoundation.com/about-porphyria>.

poems, there is a villain and a victim. Their destruction is caused by the sexual desires and the villains' aims are invisible, unknown to the victim. The rose is destroyed by the invisible worm who has dark and secret desires; likewise, Porphyria, who is unaware of the secret plans, is strangled by her lover. The bed plays an important role in both poems because death finds them in bed. Additionally, the weather is stormy and it is dark in both works. Both the weather and the night are the herald of the death for the rose and Porphyria.

As the reader can clearly see, there are common figures between these poems. Though the knowledge or familiarity of Browning with Blake is uncertain, Greenblatt's theory plays an important role in explaining the similarity between these poems. He explains how the contemporary writers who take their inspiration from culture and the literature of the past produce their works: "They take symbolic materials from one zone of the culture and move them to another, augmenting their emotional force, altering their significance, linking them with other materials taken from a different zone, changing their place in a larger social design" (230). Because literature is an accumulation and culture is a living and improving organism with the figures of the past and the factors in the present, to create an original text is almost impossible in literature; that is why, the produced texts are alike to the former ones.

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