FACES OF THE HUMAN CULTURE

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Faces of the Human Culture

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Contents

RESEARCH PAPERS

The Baroque - an expression of ambiguity

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Abstract

Baroque is the artistic and philosophical expression that divided the spirit of Western Europe between the Renaissance and Modern Classicism. Baroque era was the proof of the crisis of Renaissance neoclassical schemes. All attempts to save the present by means of recovering a lost time ended into conflicts that led to their failure, giving way to a terrible skepticism and to a breakdown of the European consciousness, which were close to chaos.

Under an apparent eclecticism were some characteristic issues intertwined in an inseparable manner such as the discovery of womanhood, of ambiguity and ambivalence of human action, tragedy, transience adorned with glory and splendor, day-dream and night-dream imaginary, the fascination of exotic lands, mysticism and rationalism.

The Baroque will be the fruit of this world; it will be the expression of a Renaissance exhausted in the attempt to find a principle of authority in the past, giving way to uncertainty that will lead to widespread skeptical mind. For the Baroque man, the individual emancipation, as the product of the magnificent work of Renaissance, was metamorphosed into an inheritance that became nothing else than a burden. Freedom seemed to be, in this cultural trend, a major source of human decay.

All these features will be accomplished both in the Baroque philosophy and in the field of art creations, particularly those in theater, painting, sculpture, and architecture.

In the philosophical field, some great skeptics as Pierre Charron, Michel de Montaigne, Blaise Pascal, but also some fine analysts of error and doubt, as Francis Bacon and Rene Descartes, appeared. Baroque thinkers considered that doubt was the price of the rebirth of freedom that was conquered in the Renaissance. The doubt could be ended only by choice, but any such choice would be it, inevitably would mark the end, which will be the untying solution.

Keywords: *Baroque philosophy, skepticism, ambivalence, imaginary, drama, human destiny.*

The Baroque is the artistic and philosophical expression, which structures the spirit of Western Europe between Renaissance and modern Classicism. It acts as a matrix that hides under an apparent eclecticism a way of thinking and a sensibility marking the transition from one paradigm to another, from the model of European culture, mainly oriented to the past, to the model of modernity, which makes its virtues from valorizing the present and conquering the future.

The Renaissance can be considered the end of the Middle Ages, as a time that would live at full intensity the distance from the originating time of a Christian peace. The image of the Apocalypse transcends every cultural manifestation, from the paintings of Dürer, Bosch or Breugel to Savonarola's sermons, proving the fact that we've already reached a great distance from the initial point and the retrieval of it would be virtually impossible as the world risks to collapse into chaos, into an irreversible disintegration.

What are, in fact, the manifestations of the Renaissance except for an excessive nostalgia of an archetypal era? The Kabbala sees the evil in this world as the consequence of the swerve, dislodgement from the primary meaning of the sacred word[1]; the alchemy hopes to ennoble a degraded and damned universe by discovering the philosopher's stone[2]; the Humanism discovers and exalts the antique Classicism; the Reform tends to invigorate the themes and attitudes of the first Christian communities; the Inquisition wants a *renovatio* of the universal peace, of a Golden Era, as was that of Charlemagne.

If Mannerism was the first rupture of the Renaissance spirit, the Baroque represents the proof of the crisis of Renaissance neoclassical paradigms. The attempts to save the present by the recovery of a lost time will eventually end in conflicts which will lead to their failure, making room for a terrible skepticism, for a disintegration of the European conscience bordering chaos. The Baroque will be nothing but the fruit of this world, the expression of an exhausted Renaissance due to its attempt to find a principle of authority in the past, giving in to uncertainties which will lead to a generalized skeptical spirit. Furthermore, great skeptics will appear in the domain of the philosophy, such as Pierre Charron, Michel de Montaigne, Blaise Pascal, as well as fine analysts of error and doubt, such as Francis Bacon and René Descartes.

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[1] Roland Goetschel, *Kabbala*, West Publishing House, Timişoara, 1992.
[2] Serge Hutin, *Alchimia*, West Publishing House, Timişoara, 1992.

The etymology of the word "*Baroque*" sends us to that *barroco* of the Portuguese, which denotes an asymmetrically polished, imperfect pearl. Symbol of the femininity, bearing the mark of the Moon, the pearl is the light from deep waters that appears as a result of the wound of the shell containing it. Really valuable things, bearing the sign of a sublimated suffering, can be found only in the most hidden places. The pearl becomes a symbol of the truth produced by an alchemic labor and has to be kept hidden, kept as a secret. Only what is trivial is in full sight. In the spirit of the pearl, the Baroque being is above all a *Homo absconditus*, who prefers a moonlit night to the solar daylight. It is the era of the lunatics, of the astrologist astronomers, who inquired the clear night sky looking for radiant stars.

The theme of the allegory, of the fable, that masks the meaning of the world, comes into prominence. From Descartes[3] to La Fontaine[4] everything runs its course in the register of a fable of the world, of a parallel world, similar but not identical to ours.

The pearl makes us think to the great water distances that the seventeenth century had to manage for the first time with extremely rudimentary means. So the fabulous could be found sitting side by side with extremely accurate data. The pearl had a magic effect on all those imaginations that fed on the dream of the El Dorado. The substance of the pearl captures the Baroque in its integrality, showing both its pompous brightness and its erotic, occult, feminine, lunar, fragile inner layer that send inevitably to tragic. In the nacre mirror of the pearls the dreams of modern world from utopias to voyages on distant planets, such as those of Cyrano de Bergerac[5] or Kepler[6], were awakening.

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[3] In *The Treatise of Man* (1632), Descartes insisted in specifying from the very beginning that the object of its treaty is not the real man but an imaginary one, *the man-machine.*

[4] Because in his *Fables* La Fontaine attacked everyone, including his king, he preferred to put the message through the intermediary of animal protagonists for reasons of simple caution and so he created a fabulous world where animals speak, think, get dressed, have feelings just like their human counterparts.

[5] Considered as masterpieces of Libertine art, Bergerac's *The Other World: The Comical History of the States and Empires of the Moon* and The *Comical History of the States and Empires of the Sun* present an *"upside-down world"* with the intention to satirise the philosophical, scientific, and religious certitudes of the 17th century.

[6] Johannes Kepler wrote in 1634 his last work suggestively named *Somnium (The Dream)*, in which he described an imaginary society situated on the surface of the Moon.

Chronologically, the Baroque becomes a dominant reality in the seventeenth century Europe, but its beginnings must be sought in Italy's last decades of the fifteenth century. In other regions, however, such as Germany or the Colonial America, the Baroque has only appeared in the eighteenth century.

The first seeds appeared in Rome, the artistic capital of Europe, also the papal capital, and after that the Baroque style spread rapidly throughout Europe, undergoing transformations in contact with local traditions. In the catholic Flanders, the Baroque flourished in Rubens' works, but in the Netherlands, a predominantly protestant country, the Baroque only introduced slight accents, while in England it never took any deep roots. In France, the Baroque finds its maximum of expression in the service of the monarchy rather then in that of the Church. On the other hand, absolute monarchs such as Louis XIV, Catherine the Great, Frederick the Great contributed significantly to the spread of all Baroque arts by means of their patronage of the artists, composers, painters and actors.

The Baroque is the fruit of specific political, religious and scientific contexts. Its apparition has been largely influenced by the geographical discoveries of Vasco da Gama, Magellan and Cortez. Having provided the new technologies invented during the Renaissance (gunpowder, compass, new methods of naval construction), and animated by the desire to find new commercial routes and exotic goods, the explorers have discovered previously unknown lands, different kinds of people that have led the European culture to a state of shock, such as those practicing human sacrifices or even cannibalism, but, most of all, the explorers brought to Europe lots of gold, silver and precious stones. Having available a great wealth, the man of the Baroque era developed feelings of greed and prodigality.

On the other hand, if from the Antiquity to the Middle Ages the Ptolemy's geocentric theory of the solar system had remained intact, starting with the fifteenth century, scientists such as Nicolaus Copernicus, Tycho Brache, Johannes Kepler or Galileo Galilei have proved that the Earth revolves around the Sun, that the universe is infinite and it contains a multitude of suns around which innumerable planets revolve.

In the second half of the seventeenth century, a number of thinkers realized what Giordano Bruno had suggested back in 1584: the human being is a small point in the immensity of the Universe. The concept of infinite space generated at the time huge exaltation, but also huge anxiety. Realizing that the universe is infinite, the Baroque man observed that all the certainties disappeared. People

could no longer think that the Earth is the centre of creation or to believe in a static, immobile universe, where everybody's place is defined in a strictly hierarchic order. The centre was everywhere and the borders of the world, nowhere. For the great minds of the time that had brought these changes, the attempt to establish new connections between humans and divinity represented a large part of their research. Some have appealed to the emotional and intuitive realm, others to the strictly rational method.

In the Holy Roman Empire of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the gap between the Protestants and the Catholics was irreversibly deepening with the start of the religious wars that followed the apparition of the Protestant Reformation. The monumental Baroque style would confer to the papacy a formal way of expression in order to reinforce its prestige in the symbolic moment of the Counter-Reformation.

The religious conflicts installed an atmosphere of insecurity, a climate of war and passions. No doubt that the artists of the Baroque, both Protestants and Catholics, were influenced by the political and religious tumult of their era. The Baroque starts to assert itself after the Council of Trent, where it had been decided that art had to glorify God and the Church, counteracting thereby the accusations made at that time by the Protestants against the pompous ceremonies of the Catholic Church. Many Baroque works appeared at a time when the Jesuit Counter-Reformation was already in decline. Furthermore, many of these Baroque creations have been made by the Protestants who had initially cultivated the asceticism and the simplicity by an iconoclastic reform.

After the Council of Trent, the Church started a powerful propaganda against the Protestant Reformation using all the persuasive powers at its disposal: opulent architecture, eloquent oratories, paintings and sculptures with dramatic effects. The Catholic Church demanded that the paintings and the sculptures inside the churches should address the ignorant rather than knowledgeable. Thus, the Baroque style gave up the intellectual qualities of Mannerism of the sixteenth century in favor of a visceral art addressed to senses. A direct, simple, theatrical iconography appeared, characterized by colorful and pictorial prominent effects. On the other hand, the Jesuits understood the convincing power of the stage and began to proclaim the theatre as a pedagogical tool. By a humanistic alliance between Antiquity virtues and Christian morale they created images addressing the large audience. By the force of declamation, gestures and machineries, Jesuits

succeeded to express the motion of the religious exaltation in paintings and sculptures. In the Catholic Baroque, the world appears simultaneously as God's manifestation and as an illusion. On the other hand, the Baroque is linked to the religious experience of the man who lives in an era marked by a crisis which completely overbalanced the Renaissance humanism. Troubled after the Copernican and Lutheran revolutions, the man was in search of a solid landmark. Before that, when the Universe was conceived as touched by the presence of the Creator, everything represented a sign from God to the people. In the seventeenth century, the feeling that the world of nature and that of divine grace had become disjoint makes its appearance. The Baroque man is a pessimist as he has the feeling of searching God without being able to find Him. God is present, yet inaccessible. He gives Himself away to the man only in a state of ecstasy or in a dream. Even in the state of ecstasy, God is still obscure, he becomes a *Deus absconditus*. God seems to play with the man already overbalanced by an endless series of wars.

The Renaissance inherited from the Middle Ages the vision of a hierarchy based universe in which the world was seen as an ordered structure where God governed from the heavens, the man lived on the Earth, and Hell was the underground world. The structures of the earthly hierarchy from the political and religious spheres were led by representatives bearing the divine grace and were mirroring the eternal order.

In the Baroque era, the philosophy of the theatre, as well as that of the other arts, was that of mirroring the nature. In the sixteenth century, the conception of the Catholic theology, which placed the man and the Earth in the center of God's universe, was challenged by the scientific progresses and the Protestant Reformation. The Counter-Reformation triggered by the Catholic Church hoped to restore the lost harmony and order. The Baroque artists have operated in this context by creating dynamic works of art that overlapped the concern about the disorder of the world with a traditional representation of the hierarchies both in Heaven and on the Earth.

The support accorded by the Counter-Reformation to the theatre could not entirely overrun the antagonism between pious devotion and worldly amusement as, beyond its imposition by the Counter-Reformation of a globalizing Church, the Baroque theatre represented one of the cultural strategies of the political absolutism that wanted to forestall the imagination of the audience. The absolute

monarchy created at Versailles the most spectacular and theatrical expression of power.

The Baroque theatre evoked fantasy and imagination, metaphor and allegory, miracle and artifice. The stage designers applied in theatre the rules of perspective derived from the visual arts and the theatre became a metaphor of the social life. Everything was centered on the Man, as a powerful relationship between artist and spectator. By means of the *maraviglia*, the art becomes much closer to its beneficiary, thus dissolving the cultural gap which kept the distance between the art and the consumer. Although not new, the metaphor *Theatrum mundi* or *the world as a stage* was used by the Baroque playwrights in order to highlight the close connection between stage and reality. Shakespeare exploited this metaphor in his works, especially in the famous *As you Like It,* where he introduces the idea of our lives as a kind of theatre:

"*All the world's a stage,*
And all the men and women merely players[7]".

This theme found its highest expression in Pedro Calderon de la Barca's plays. In his *El gran teatro del mundo* (*The Great Theater of the World*, c. 1645), the Spanish dramatist transforms Catholic dogma into an allegorical play as God himself is the theatre director, but also the source and creator of the elements of the play[8].

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[7] *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, "As you like it," act II, scene VII, Wordsworth Editions, Great Britain, 1996, p. 622.
[8] "*DIRECTOR. My little planet, my lovely planet,*
I made you with these two hands.
….
Your Director is calling you.
Your all-powerful Director.
I whisper – and your forest dance.
I raise my hand – your hills take shape.
WORLD. Well, what do you plan to do?
Is there anything I can do for you?
……………..
DIRECTOR. I want to make a festival
To celebrate my power …
Human life is nothing but acting, so
Let Heaven sit in the best seats
To watch a play on your stage, World.
As I'm Director and the play is mine,
It shall be acted by my company

The artists and playwrights of the Baroque era used unlimited energies and an explosive creativity to redefine the relationship between art and life. The theatre was transformed into an imaginative model for the understanding of the world in all its aspects. Playwrights used a vertical visual hierarchy: the architecture of the stage obeyed the architecture of the world. The scene was characterized by machineries, width and spectacular. The highest areas (balconies, platforms, flying machineries) signified the King, the noblemen, God or gods and other positive characters. For example, in order to create the visual magic of the play, Shakespeare highlighted the supernatural qualities of *Tempest*'s characters by using scene effects[9]. Typically, the sub-human Caliban[10], son of the witch Sycorax and of the devil, appeared from underneath the stage through a hatch and was dressed like a sea monster, while Ariel[11], a good spirit, arose from the balcony, flying on overhead cables. Thus, it emphasized the duality between the celestial and the infernal worlds.

The discovery of Aristotle's *Poetics* in the fifteenth century will draw attention to the importance of the tragedy, but only much later – in the second half of the sixteenth century and throughout the next century - the Aristotelian fragment gets the attention of the humanists. New poetics, founded on the principles of the Stagirit, showed up. The purpose of these writings seemed to be mainly *the tragedy*, their primary destination being to satisfy the interest of a tragic background, which gradually emerged, initiating the new phenomenon of the Baroque[12]. William Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, Tirso de Molina have set the foundation of modern tragedy, bringing life onto the stage, changing it into a fable.

Whether they want to act or not.
As I chose human beings to be
The most important creatures of all
They'll be the members of my company
And they shall act out, as well as they can,
The story of the play that's called The World.
I shall cast each in a suitable role". (Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *The Great Theatre of the World*, adapted by Adrian Mitchell, Dramatic Publishing, USA, 1994, pp. 9-12).
[9] Charles Boyce, *The Wordsworth Dictionary of Shakespeare*, Wordsworth Editions, Great Britain, 1996, p. 633.
[10] *Ibidem*, pp. 88-89.
[11] *Ibidem*, pp. 32-33.
[12] Edgar Papu, *Barocul ca tip de existență*, vol I, Minerva Publishing, Bucharest, 1977, p. 45.

The Baroque characters, as they appear in playwrights' works of the age, were weak and fragile (Faust, Macbeth, Hamlet, Don Juan). In order to succeed, they need help or impulse, most of the times exceptional ones, such as the case of Mephistopheles, the witches in Macbeth, or the Ghost of Hamlet's father.

The major Shakespearean tragedies (*Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth, and King Lear*) focus on a powerful central character whose personal quality is the source of his catastrophe. He is the victim of his own strength, which will not allow accommodation with his situation and which will determine the character's tragic fate. For example, *Hamlet* develops the theme that humanity's weaknesses must be recognized as our inevitable human lot, for only by accepting our destiny can we transcend our mortality[13]. Hamlet is a moral drama whose theme is the existence of both good and evil in human nature, a central concern in Shakespeare's work as a whole. Hamlet, unable to alter the evil around him because of his fixation on the uncertainties of moral judgment, falls into evil himself in killing Polonius and rejecting Ophelia but finally recovers his humanity by recognizing his ties to others[14] and blaming his madness because of which he made so much pain to others[15].

This tragedy deals with death and sex and with the psychological and social tension arising from these basic facts of life. Hamlet treats these issues without providing clear-cut resolutions, thereby leaving us with complicated, highly emotional responses that causes both satisfaction - as seeing basic elements of our own lives treated dramatically - and pain - at the nagging persistence of these difficulties, as in real life.[16]

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[13] Charles Boyce, *op. cit*., p. 652.

[14] *Ibidem*, p. 653.

[15] "Hamlet:

Give me your pardon, sir: I've done you wrong;

But pardon't, as you are a gentleman.

This presence knows, And you must needs have heard, how I am punisht

With sore distraction. What I have done,

That might your nature, honour, and exception

Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.

....

His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.

Sir, in this audience,

Let me so disclaiming from a purposed evil ...." (*The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, "Hamlet", act V, scene II, Wordsworth Editions, Great Britain, 1996, pp. 710-711).

[16] Charles Boyce, *op. cit.,* pp. 236-237.

Theatre means placing the man in time, understanding that there is always an end (*finita la comedia*). Painting or sculpture, and even music, do not imply the idea of ending in such a categorical form as tragedy. *Totus mundum agit histrionem* (*the entire world is a stage*) was the Latin *motto* embroidered on the flag fluttering above the *Shakespearean Globe Theater* and it expressed the glorious Elizabethan ambition of denying the limits of the power of imagination that the theatre used to call into play. In a culture promoting the spectacle, man could not easily make a distinction between theatre and reality. The world itself was seen as a phantasm. The world became an illusion with extremely dynamic landmarks which lost their stability thus the existence acquired tragic accents. There were tastes for nudity contemplation, and for the spectacle one's own death or that of others. Bones and skulls alongside nude contorted bodies decorated the tombstones. The frontispieces of the great baroque arcades of the access gates abounded in the images of senescence, represented by an old woman, alongside with images of youth, symbolized by the vigorous body of a young woman. Sometimes could be added the image of birth and death, represented by children and skeletons. The Counter-Reformation assumed as a symbol the pirate flag in which it saw a symbol of the fight against the savior ship of the Reform, which had to be sunk. *"We are the pirates who will sink your ark"* was the slogan that mobilized the army of the Counter-Reformation. The fight, the conflict was a consequence of the inconsistency of the man and of the nature of things. More than the Renaissance, the Baroque deepened the democratic spirit emanating from the works of the artists that abounded in nudity and death. Thus, a bizarre taste for this strange alliance of *eros* and *thanatos*, as Freud would name them later on, makes its appearance in the Baroque theatre, literature and painting.

In the case of the theatre, there were given a lot of importance to the suggestion of a loud voice, and to the alternation between the sound and the silence. The artist dies as an artist when the curtain falls; the applause represents a magical act by means of which the performer must be brought back to life and extracted from the artistic duplication trance.

Music too will be influenced by the theatre. The glitter and the ostentation become the expression of the contamination of music from the categories of the theatre, of a music that largely substitutes its penetrating character by a striking one, by a shock therapy on the audience. As a result, Baroque music became elaborated and dramatic, being able to express human emotions. The Baroque art

became significantly secular rather than to glorify the Church. Music no longer belonged to the church, but was available to all.

Baroque era lies under the mark of black and white, of the visible and the occult. The violent contrasts of the time emanated even from the clothing imposed by Spanish fashion, outlining the opposition between the white laces from the neck and wrists and the rest of the garment, which was black. The wig, which added an extra artificiality, became a personal property. Furthermore, the shaving techniques highlight the beard and the moustache. Excesses of all kinds followed by ascetic conversions into monasteries are common features of the era, and greed an prodigality followed by penance became fashionable symptoms. Every characteristic of the Baroque era reflects duality of intense emotions: love, hate, exaltation, astonishment, jealousy, hatred.

On the other hand, graphics and the printing machine create a chromatically dual universe between the black ink and the white paper, inspiring to a certain extent the *Clair - obscure* (*chiaroscuro)* of the great Dutch school painters of the time who used bold contrast of light and dark shade in order to produce a dramatic impression upon the viewer.

The Baroque art created the model of *Homo duplex*, an ambiguous being, highly contrasting, who, depending on the angle from which he is viewed, may be the exact opposite of the initial image. Faced with the infinite Universe, the man was divided between a reasonable intellect, capable of spontaneous participation to divine wisdom and volition, and a sensorial nature, which plunged humanity into all the evils of a libertine climate. *Homo duplex* is a specific way of the Baroque man to relate to oneself as a being capable of pure reasonable intuition and self-determination, but perturbed by sensorial inclinations and desires. This way of pertaining to oneself induced a strong feeling of dissatisfaction and unfulfillment.

As a *Homo duplex*, the Baroque man lived with the highest intensity the ambivalence of the power created by the conflict between Catholics and Protestants, between the national spirit assessed by the Renaissance and the universal patronage of the world by the Catholic Church. Thus, in the Baroque era, what is good for some, for the others it becomes evil. The same thing is good or evil, loved or detested, according to the angle of the view.

The Baroque stays under the mark of duality which manifests itself even in the highlighting of the opposition between God and Devil. The most profound expression of this dualism can be seen in Goethe's *Faustus*, which reflects the

spirit of the late Baroque. The seventeenth century knew a true epidemic evil manifested at the level of the European conscience. The main agent of evil, the character found at the origin of great demonic crises, is the woman, perceived as an ambivalent being, attractive and repulsive, good and bad, strong and weak at the same time. Everything that means dualism will be found in the perception of woman in this great era of transition from the Renaissance to the Modern Classicism.

The Baroque era corresponds with the most intense period of conflict between the Aristotelian ideas, which by Thomism had become official for the scholastic spirit, on one hand, and the gnosis, originating in the Platonist metaphysics, on the other hand. The Baroque era is the time of Platonist philosophy's supremacy against the Aristotelian one, for the great lesson of the Platonism, that Aristotle had tried to temper, was exactly the detection of a dual reality structuring between a sensible cosmos and an intelligible one.

Plato developed metaphysics of the Logos, of the idea as a trans-sensible reality. At the opposite pole, Aristotle – interested in the natural sciences as well – was fascinated by life, motion and individuation, in the meaning of reality subjected to the senses *(haecceitate)*[17]. In the dialogue *Republic*, Plato sends away the artists out of the ideal city, as those who would waste time copying sensitive objects would simply perform an act of *mimesis*. But, still in the *Republic*, the founder of the Academy develops a more important concept, namely that the sensations, incorporating contradictions inside of them, are eventually those opening the path to the intelligible world. Just as in *Phedon,* where he offers the example of the equal sticks that suggest to the intellect an idea of equality, Plato concludes in the *Republic* that a certain object can be both *feathery or heavy, small or big, unique or multiple*, according to one or another point of view, and all these qualities give birth to reflection by means of which the intelligence deduces the general and abstract ideas of weight, size and unit.

The idea, the ultimate truth, appears thus as a synthesis born from antinomies. This vision will come true in the *dualism* that characterizes the cultural attitudes of the Baroque. The Baroque era discovers that an antinomy is possible within the same unit and that the object is not something unique and independent, but a shadow that copied invisible models. The Baroque artists understood that a

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[17] Octavian Nistor, *Între antichitate şi renaştere. Gândirea evului mediu*, vol. II, Minerva Publishing, Bucharest, 1984, p. 214

work of art and the creation in general represent only a suggestion, a way to infer perfection, the Absolute that transcends this world. The Baroque realizes, in its essence, that the more violent an antinomy is, the more it directs to an evocation of the Absolute. Plato has offered the modernity the idea that the representation is merely an instrument and not a reality. The Baroque phenomenon is, though, much more complex to possibly be exhausted by the Neo-Platonism, even if the two currents are linked by deep connections[18].

The antinomy, the contradiction between man and the world, appears equally alive in the great myths of damnation, such as those of *Don Juan, Ahasverus* and *Don Quixote* (*Don Quijote*), who capture the interior conflict, felt at maximum intensity by the man who discovers that the world surrounding him is nothing but an illusion, a reproduction of shadows that become pretexts for awakening the nostalgia of the absolute.

The myths of the modernity hide a more profound meaning, which is the unbound, free, independent human condition, the *human release*. Don Juan undermines in every way the bond of marriage. He seduces women mostly on their wedding night, fights with all his weapons against this institution he wants to discredit and destroy. In this myth we can recognize influences of the chatare doctrine according to which this world is merely a kingdom of Satan and every bond to it, even by marriage, which gives birth to babies and establish the foundation of property, must be discarded.

Why has he to do this? Because Don Juan, the Chatar, is aiming for a reality beyond the representations, beyond the stipulations of the sensible that are nothing but betrayals of an evil genius.

Another extremely significant myth from the point of view of the human's release, but a lot more profound than the myth of Don Juan, is that of Ahasverus, the Wandering Jew, who does not break his bonds with the sensible world but distances himself even from God. He does not recognize Jesus. This breaking of the bonds with God, this non-recognition of the after-world, of the Absolute, will be the condition of his damnation. Ahasverus will wander through the world until the end of the time without a goal, like a diurnal Sisyphus. Adam was punished to death as a result of his disbelief and disobedience. Ahasverus, in his turn, expects

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[18] Al. Cioranescu, *Barocul sau descoperirea dramei*, Dacia Publishing, Cluj-Napoca, 1980, pp. 400-402.

death as a gift from God, for he possesses an Immortality that means wandering, lack of goal, a terrible curse, being rejected by the Divinity.

The myth of Don Quixote (Don Quijote) reflects the condition of a man living in a world with which he broke the ties, but that he wants to substitute by a fantastic, idealistic world, substitution that will become the condition of comic, or, in other words, of a tragicomic built by Cervantes through his famous character.

The myth of Faustus, in its original form, expresses the drama of the man whose ties with the world are broken, who can no longer find out with the help of science or magic the solution of his fulfillment, of the man who made a pact with Satan himself in order to find that moment of identification with the Universe which will produce his happiness and also will trigger his exaltation crowned by the formula: *Moment, stop!*

The enthusiasm born in the era of the Renaissance in front of the power of the man to know and to integrate himself into this world ends in breaking of the bonds, ends in defeat and doubt. We can capture this reality by studying also the ideal of the Man and the kind of the social virtue imposed by the Renaissance as opposed to what the Baroque will do to this ideal. In the Renaissance, the courtier, *il cortigiano*, *il uomo universale*, is the prototype for the confidence and the optimism felt by the human being about a possible integration in this world, integration in which the man holds a privileged status of *axis mundi*, the center of the world. The Universe of the Renaissance has a human face; thus for Leonardo da Vinci the Earth is nothing but a huge organism resembling the human body; the rocks are the bones, the ground is the flesh, the rivers represent the circulatory system and the forests are the hair. From this vision, according to which man and nature are one and the same thing, the Baroque makes the transition towards *il discreto*, *the libertine*, the incarnation of freedom, the man who no longer gets involved seriously in anything, the man that aspires, just like the courtier, to become *an universal man*, but who no longer lives with the same intensity as the first one his bond to this world. In this tearing apart of the man from the world we can find the origin of what will become later, in the modern era, the metaphysics of subjectivity, subjectivity installing itself as something of a completely different nature from the universe. The Baroque represents the moment when the feeling that the evolution of the human kind resembles the motions of a huge pendulum, always swinging back and forth, imposes itself more than ever. The religious indifference and the artistic and literary interest of the Renaissance have been followed by the artistic indifference and the religious enthusiasm of the Protestant

Reformation. Between these extremes the Jesuit Counter-Reformation is born, imposing the new Baroque spirit that will dominate Western Europe between the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries.

This oscillation will reinforce even more in the consciousness of Baroque people the complexity of the reality, its duality, its ambiguity, the fact that in life we situate ourselves on totally different positions, without losing our profound unity. Regardless of the diversity of our manifestations, there is a certain something, beyond them, on which they are based. The discovery of the antinomy, which is specific for the Baroque, ensures its originality. It is the direct consequence of the Renaissance spirit that had tried in vain to impose a certain kind of human freedom, freedom that becomes its biggest conflict. In order to understand this it is enough to remind ourselves the content of the famous fragment from Pico della Mirandola's work, written in 1486, *De hominis dignitate*, where the human being is presented just from the beginning as a stressed existence because he can assume a large range of manifestations, from the superior forms, in their most profound meaning, to the last degradation that not even an animal can reach.[19]

Pico della Mirandola states that the man is bonded neither by a place nor a special form and that happens because God had offered him a privileged status, that of rising above all other creatures, but also the risk of sinking beneath the level of any of them.[20] To Italian philosopher, the man is condemned to an

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[19] *"At man's birth the Father placed in him every sort of seed and sprouts of every kind of life. The seeds that each man cultivates will grow and bear their fruit in him. If he cultivates vegetables seeds, he will become a plant. If the seeds of sensation, he will grow into brute. If rational, he will come out a heavenly animal. If intellectual, he will be an angel, and a son of God."* (Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *On the dignity of man,* Translation by Charles Glenn Wallis, Paul JW Miller, and Douglas Charmichael, Hackett Publishing, USA, 1998, p. 5).

[20] *".... He took up man, a work of indeterminate form; and, placing him at the midpoint of the world, He spoke to him as follows:*

«We have given to thee, Adam, no fixed seat, no form of thy very own, no gift peculiarly thine, that thou mayest feel as thine own, have as thine own, possess as thine own the seat, the form, the gifts which thou thyself shalt desire. A limited nature in other creatures is confined within the laws written down by Us. In conformity with thy free judgment, in whose hands I have placed thee, Thou art confined by no bounds; and thou wilt fix limits of nature for thyself. I have placed thee at the center of the world, that from there thou mayest more conveniently look around and see whatsoever is in the world. Neither heavenly nor earthly, neither mortal nor immortal have We made thee. Thou, like a judge appointed for being honorable, art the molder and maker of thyself; thou mayest sculpt thyself into whatever shape thou dost prefer. Thou canst grow downward into the lower

existence in a dual spectrum. This antinomic consequence, that is the discovery of the duality, could be integrated by some thinkers into a genuine metaphysics that will culminate in the theory of *opposed coincidences*, crowned by the Giordano Bruno's pantheist vision of the world.

This kind of solutions is opposed by the original visions of the great modern skeptics, thinkers who could not assimilate the contradiction, preferring to remain in savant ignorance. In this respect, it is relevant to mention the conception of Michel de Montaigne who notices that the same causes can lead to different effects and that completely different causes can lead to the same effect. Contemporary both, the two thinkers use many common themes, portraying the baroque ambivalence in their works. Thus the famous formula from Bruno's *Candelaio*: *In tristitia hilaris, in hilaritate tristis*[21] reminds us of the title of the XXXVIIth Chapter of Montaigne' *Essays* entitled *How We Weep and Laugh*, in which, using several examples, the author highlights the contradiction of certain situations in which the reason for joy, in a certain sense justified, is at the same time the reason for deep suffering. Montaigne offered the example of king Xerxes who took joy in admiring his huge army, but felt sad to the tears imagining how many of the soldiers would never return home.[22]

The world of the skeptics no longer has fixed landmarks, no longer gravitates around a principle of authority, of a single reference, but sees open every possibility. Although unprepared for this situation, the Baroque man has the freedom to use his free will. In this feature of the Baroque period can be found what will be called the human tragedy in front of the uselessness of the free will, in the best case scenario, or can be found what may become the abuse of badly understood freedom, in the worst case scenario, that will throw the Baroque man in the middle of an endless chain of wars.

With bitterness, the wise man who recently left the easy optimism of the Renaissance discovers that not all people are born to be free, that not all of them

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natures which are brutes. Thou canst again grow upward from thy soul's reason into the higher natures which are divine»." (*Ibidem*, pp. 4-5).

[21] Giordano Bruno, *Lumânărarul,* Fundația Culturală Română Publishing, Bucharest, 2000, p. 17.

[22] *"Artabanus took unawares Xerxes, his nephew, and chid him for the sudden change of his countenance. He was observing the immeasurable greatness of his forces crossing the Hellespont: at first he felt a thrill of joy to see so many thousands of men in his service, and manifested it by the cheerfulness and animation of his face; and all suddenly, in one instant, as it came into his mind that all those lives would be no more in a hundred years at furthest, he knitted his brows and saddened even to tears".* (Michel de Montaigne and George B. Ives, *The Essays of Michel de Montaigne. Part One*, Kessinger Publishing, USA, 2005, p. 316).

know what they want, that not all of them are willing to command and to obey to themselves. Condemned by the evolution of the Western culture to not to be able to believe, taught by the force of the tradition not to entrust to others the difficult mission of thinking by themselves, the people of the Baroque era were left with an anxiety born by the use of the free will in an useless, and more than that, dangerous way. The drama, the conflict announced by the Baroque, marking the fate of all subsequent European cultures, is illustrated by Nietzsche when, in his book *Beyond Good and Evil*, after announcing the death of God, considers necessary the abolition of the free will.

The release of the individual by means of the great work of the Renaissance turns for the Baroque man into an inheritance resembling more a burden. The freedom, that no one understands any longer, appears to be, in this cultural current, an important source of the disintegration of the man. Most thinkers of the Baroque era understood the fact that doubt is the price of freedom that the Renaissance had conquered. Any doubt can be ended by choice, but the choice, no matter what is its nature, inevitably marks the end, the loss of freedom.

The Baroque is the era of weak people, submitted to destiny, terrified, living in cohabitation with the demon awakened after a long somnolence and which, as Luther said, was closer to man than his own shirt. The Baroque character simply throws itself to events that inevitably lead him to disaster. A threatened existence, whose tragic meaning is the fact that he understands his own despair as he knows there is no way out. The Baroque characters are in the situation of a Checkmate with the destiny. No solution, only sterile repetition of blockages that seem to be endless. The repetitiveness of the Baroque art reflects precisely this inability to overcome the crisis despite a tremendous effort. The repetition, as an artistic style of expression reflecting the contradiction that cannot be overcome, can be viewed in the creations of the philosophers from that period, from Giordano Bruno to Blaise Pascal.

The risks of choice and of laying the foundations of a new model of freedom have been exemplarily assumed by the philosophers who will impose the rational method and will open, though in a pretty ambiguous manner, the modern spirit: Bacon and Descartes, for whom *the idols* or *the hyperbolic doubt* are just the beginning of the method and not a state of facts.

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War and Peace - The Culture of Civilization

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Abstract

The paper presents, in a detailed synchronic and diachronic form, the notions of culture and civilization, the intrinsic relations they establish with one another and with the society and their main contextual features. They can be delineated along two characteristics: first after the universality, and second after meaning and value, conferred by the human behavior in different eras of the society. Although they were always together in human history, the instrumentality of civilization can, through social and cultural technology subdue the vitality of culture, which tremendous consequences for human species.

Keywords: *culture, civilization, society, human condition, civilizing process.*

The sensitivity of the subject

Since the dawn of human society, people defined themselves in terms of "We" and "Them" (or the "Others"). Every human community strives to define its particular specificity, originality, and also exceptionality. This was both a synchronic and diachronic phenomenon. The conscious appurtenance to a particular society or culture was defined both through affirmation of own specificity, in opposition with other contemporary society, and by the implicit supposition of its evolution from previous forms. And because the particular social pattern shapes the psychic structure of those who constitute it, entails that social and/or cultural differences are reflected in the psychic structure differences of its members. In consequence, to state a social or/and cultural difference, and especially a social progress, is equal to stating a different, and more often, a superior structuring way of the psychic of the involved persons. In this context, the contemporary debates, both within scholar and public discourses, concerning the

cultural differences among different parts and population from the world, get a particular meaning.

Since Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* the difference between Asiatic societies and Western societies (as *shame-based culture* and *guilt-based culture*) became a common assumption for many scholars and unleashed ardent debates. This difference was used to oppose Western society to the Eastern ones mainly as regards the controlling agency. While in the former the restraint exercised over the individuals is thought to be no longer based on social agencies – because the compliance of individual impulses and desires to the social requirements is secured by an internalized self-control–, in the latter the social control is externalized, i.e. the individual conforms to social regulations in order to avoid the public shame. And because the shame is seen in Western societies as an infantile, regressive emotion (Freud, Erikson), the Eastern societies are placed, indirectly, on a lower level of cultural and civilization advancement. This covert-sense of superiority is embedded all over the (self-)laudatory Western civilization and its cultural products. This topic is full of value, so the attempts to understand cultural differences (in terms of civilization) were for a long time (and they still are) distorted by numerous biases and they are subject to various subjective, political, and ethnic implications – even after the so-called "maturing" of social sciences.

First, the *psychological bias of prestige* prejudices the process, because of the implicit self-references of the subject: any conception about a cultural difference implies the self-image of its authors.

Second, there are the cultural *distortions due to the conceptual battery used* by the researcher. Cultural particularities defines the researchers' *Weltanschauung*, their specific mode of understanding the world, and so the scientific episteme. No matter what procedures are used for assuring the objectivity of the research and its discourse on culture, as long as in this specific topic the final relevance belongs to the meaning, or significance, of any cultural reality, and hence the cultural closure of comprehension prevails. Only the ongoing hard effort to transcend the cultural peculiarity, at the individual level, can get a chance for an inter-cultural communication and mutual understanding. "Yet knowledge as an experience is something personal and private that cannot be transferred, and that we believe to be transferable, objective knowledge, must always be created by the listener: the

listener understands, and the objective knowledge is transferred, only if he is prepared to understand."[1]

In the third place, the *ethnic commandments* rear their heads too. It is enough to mention here the long and intense contest between French and German scholars on the meaning of culture and civilization.[2]

Fourth, the underlying *political program* involved in any cultural vision. Cultural depictions and beliefs are employed as instruments of domination and control for the sake of legitimating political practices and thus they do not allow a disinterested approach of this subject; neither from those empowered by the cultural supremacy,[3] nor by those submitted to it. As Hans-Peter Duerr already warned, the Western perspective on civilization lies, all the time, under suspicion of a colonial ideology as long as it ascribes the economic, technical and military supremacy of the Western over the rest of the world to a "superiority in the modeling of drive structure". (van Krieken)

Fifth, there are *epistemological biases*, due to the peculiarity of every specialized social science which are very powerful within the cultural sciences paradigm.

Culture versus civilization

One of the tenderest issues of anthropological research and of capital importance for our subject is the existence of some common denominators for every culture. As it was already noticed, they can be found, at least, with the incest taboo which is a universally invariable standard of human cultures, as much as with the intolerance to illegitimated killing, violence, stealing or lying within the group; with suffering which is accepted or promoted only as means and never as an end in itself (neither an end of individual – it is used for purification, redemption or achievement of mystical state, nor of society – it is merely an

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[1] Humberto R. Maturana, "Biology of cognition", in Humberto R. Maturana and Francisco Varela, (1980), *Autopoiesis and Cognition: The Realization of the Living*, Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Co., pp 5-58, p. 6.

[2] See Norbert Elias, *The civilizing process: sociogenetic and psychogenetic investigations*, Dunning Eric, Goudsblom Johan and Mennell Stephen (*eds.*), second edition, Wiley-Blackwell, 2000, Vol. I, Part one. *On the Sociogenesis of the concepts of "Civilization" and "Culture"*, pp. 3-44.

[3] In English and French civilization was associated from the beginning with the task of civilizing others, and in German of eighteenth-century, it was still emphasized this meaning of spreading the State (political) development to other peoples

implement for punishment, discipline, and control); with the fear of death, unavoidable for a conscious being, and hence no culture treats unconcernedly the corpses; with the common feature of minimal communication and some measure of order that makes social life possible: "all cultures define as abnormal individuals who are permanently inaccessible to communication or who fail to maintain some degree of control over their impulse life."[4] All these minimal universal common denominators can be regarded as forming the primary civilizing infra-structure of any structure. So, we can't imagine a society without any form of civilization, but merely with a greater or lesser degree of civilization. Accordingly, all societies had to shape and transmit certain forms of restrained behavior. There are features of human relations which produce roughly similar forms of behavior in all cultural and historical contexts. The general direction of these shifting patterns throughout the course of human history could be described by "one single overarching civilizing process".[5]

This process has a two-side expression at the social and individual level. Unfortunately, these attempts to understand the civilizing process under its universal character, at individual psychic level, in such rather wide manner, as the process in which "the socio-genetic apparatus of individual self-control became more differentiated, more omnipresent and more stable" (N. Elias), "all forms of restrained behaviour" (J. Goudsblom) or "aspects of increasing foresight" (S. Mennell) partially overlap features which belong more to culture than to civilization. What is described as civilizing process, by Elias and his followers, encompasses, in fact, more than one process: *psychologization* (related with interdependence and increasing mutual identification), *rationalization*, *the advance of the shame threshold*, and *increasing self-control* (self-regulated behavior or self-restrain conduct).[6] The problem is that psychologization is just a more general process usually known under the name of socialization or enculturation; the mutual identification is also a consequence of common cultural nurturing of personality formation and is not peculiar to the civilizing process. This technical concept of the civilizing process looks like a miscellany of different ideas and thus was rightly suggested to be treated not as a concept but rather as a summary rubric (Th.

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[4] Alfred Louis Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*, Peabody Museum, 1952, p. 350.
[5] Johan Goudsblom, "The Theory of the Civilizing Process and its Discontents", at the *13th International Sociological Association Congress*, Bielefeld, July 18-23, 1994.
[6] Thomas J. Scheff, "Unpacking the Civilizing Process: Shame and Integration in Elias's Work." accessed online, June, 2007, http://www.usyd.edu.au/su/social/elias/confpap/scheff2.html.

Scheff) or as a particular pattern of regimes (F. Spier).[7] In addition, the "civilizing process" of conduct is not unitary and progressively unidirectional as results from Norbert Elias' original outline. Elias himself, in his last years, manifested a preference for the plural form, "civilizing processes" when he referred to the multilevel development of Western Europe and employed the concept of "informalization", coined by Cas Wouters, to talk about that type of development, less rigid with the behavior and psychic patterning, that is "more varied, subtle and flexible modes of interaction" adapted for a more diverse public. Although, "self-constraints have not only become more flexible, at the same time they have also become more strict."[8] Elias himself considered this process as social experiments towards "controlled decontrolling of emotional control(s)." Many of Elias' students took and developed this as an important aspect of the process, talking about "vulnerability of civilization", "breakdown" or "decay" (explicitly versus "growth"), "de-civilization processes", "regression to barbarism", etc.[9] However all of them seem to remain within the same conception which keeps the culture-civilization distinction obscure. What would be the difference between the two?

First difference: universality

First of all, we can consider the civilizing process as an establishment of common denominators and patterns of every social group which is complex enough for a conscious life to emerge (*consciousness for itself*).[10] Anytime and everywhere there is a complex culture, a civilizing process was (previously) undertaken because every culture is presumably a society civilized to at least a minimal degree. If a complex culture is to emerge, in that society previously there

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[7] "Regime" = form of behavioral regulation which exhibit some temporal stability.

[8] Cas Wouters, "Formalization and Informalization; Changing Tension Balances in Civilizing Processes", *Theory, Culture and Society,* vol. 3, no. 1, 1986, pp. 1-18, and "Social Stratification and Informalisation in Global Perspective", *Theory, Culture and Society*, vol. 7 no. 4, 1990, pp. 69-90.

[9] Jonathan Fletcher, *Violence and Civilization. An Introduction to the Work of Norbert Elias*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1997, Johan Goudsblom, *op. cit.*, Steven Mennell, "Decivilising Processes: Theoretical Significance and Some Lines of Research", *International Sociology* 5, 2, 1990, pp. 205-223, Robert van Krieken, "The Barbarism of Civilization: Cultural Genocide and the «Stolen Generations»", *British Journal of Sociology*, 50, 2, 1999, pp. 297-315, Loïc J. D. Wacqant, "Dé-civilisation et Diabolisation: la Mutation du Ghetto Noir Américain" in Christine Fauré and Tom Bishop, *L'Amérique des Français*, François Bourin, Paris, 1993, pp. 103-125, *et alibi.*

[10] Bogdan Popoveniuc, *Curs de Antropologie filosofică* (Philosophical Anthropology Course), "Ştefan cel Mare" University of Suceava Press, 2008.

has to be a minimal level of order, understanding, communication, a certain degree of integration. "No society can survive without a concentration of individual drives and affects, without a very specific control of individual behavior. No such control is possible unless people exert constraints on one another, and every constraint is converted in the person on whom it is imposed into fear of one kind or another."[11] The psychic regulation and differentiated pattern of self-restraint through fear, anguish and anxiety is indissolubly accountable with the formation of individual self-consciousness within a society. As partially Clark Wissler[12] already showed, men always and everywhere are faced with certain unavoidable problems which arise out of its "given" human condition (i.e. its biology, its social fate and the existential human situation in world), hence the broad outlines of the ground arrangement of all cultures is and has to be similar. I think that the civilization process, with the characteristics described above, can be conceived as an embodiment of these common patterns.

Clear civilizing structures emerge in all societies which evolved in a high stability of the central organs of society; relatively stable central institutions which monopolized the physical force (i.e. state-like structures). "Only with the formation of this kind of relatively stable monopolies do societies acquire those characteristics as a result of which the individuals forming them get attuned, from infancy, to a highly regulated and differentiated pattern of self-restraint; only in conjunction with these monopolies does this kind of self-restraint require a higher degree of automaticity, does become, as it were, «second nature»."[13]

As its "*civis*" Latin etymology shows, civilization is related with the complexity of human settlement; with the emergence of the Big City. The civilization is related to the complexity, hierarchy and specialization settings of the Big City. The metropolis is "the nucleus of social complexity", the first social organization homologous with the brain of *Sapiens*: "a polycentric milieu, an interpenetration of organizational complexities and random inter-communications" able to produce individualities. "The Big City is the efficient socio-cultural ecosystem of the two capital apparitions pertaining to the third birth of humanity: autonomous individual and conscience; (...) the proper event for historical societies and above all for the city is, for more or less restricted and more or less elitist populations, the relative autonomy of the individual, starting from the recognition

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[11] N. Elias, *Civilizing process…, ed.cit.*, vol. II, p. 443.

[12] Clark Wissler, *Man and Culture*, Thomas Y. Crowell, New York, 1923.

[13] N. Elias, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 369.

of individual liberties and from the existence of stochastic liberties, the possibility to develop psychological, affective complexities, the *Self* and *I* affirmation, with all the egocentrism and egoism which, after all, any of them implies."[14] The centralizing, structuring and repressive State is a way of organizing a complexity based on a central apparatus similar with the brain activity structure. *The compulsory class hierarchy* represents the general pattern of social organization comparable (and parallel) with hierarchical, specialized brain functions and the organization of the conscious (Ego) and the unconscious (Super-Ego) relationship. The major civilization's side-effect is the split of public and private sphere (private/public property, work/home) –conscious and unconscious, Ego/Super-Ego).

The second difference: meaning and value

The meanings and values form "the essence of the organization of culture". Different aspects of the same thing, meanings and value are not ends, but what shapes the ends of human actions; they are variable and relative, they are part of the nature, products of men having bodies and living in societies, they are social in their scope, parts of culture in substance and form, and they are the structural essence of the culture of these societies; "values and significances are «intangibles» which are «subjective» in that they can be internally experienced, but are also objective in their expressions, embodiments, or results."[15] In contrast, civilization is more related with human condition in society, it involves the increased control of the elementary human impulses through living among others. Culture and civilization correspond, in Weber's terms, to the two different types of rationalities which underlies the social actions: instrumental rationale and value rationale.

The instrumental rationality process (*zweckrationalität*) means the rationalization of comprehension and action in relation with a scope and it is equivalent with the practical exercise of the entire knowledge for attaining that scope; but a scope which is depleted of any (other) kind of values except domination and control, is the imposition of that individual (personal or cultural) position. Product of "scientific specialization and technological differentiation",

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[14] Edgar Morin, *Paradigma pierdută: natura umană*, "Al. I. Cuza" University Press, Iaşi, 1999, p. 195.
[15] Kroeber and Kluckhohn, *op. cit.*, p. 338.

the instrumental rationality means a continuous matching of means to the end, while the ends are usually defined exclusively in brute economic terms of constantly increasing material, as well as psychological vulgar, well-being. It leads to an increasingly coordination and control, both over the physical and social environment, with the cost of oppressive routine, secularization growing, depersonalization and *individual freedom disruption*.[16] At the individual level it sets supra-structural norms and values as individualism, efficiency, self-discipline, materialism and accountability. Not to forget the hyper-rationalization, that fusion between the company (or domain) and the individual rationality, which comes to control what they want from life, their personal stance towards work and life, etc. "Action is instrumentally rational (*zweckrational*) when the end, the means, and the secondary results are all rationally taken into account and weighed. This involves rational consideration of alternative means to the end, of the relations of the end to the secondary consequences, and finally of the relative importance of different possible ends" and it opposes both to the value-rationality (*wertrationalität*) – "that is, determined by a conscious belief in the value for its own sake of some ethical, aesthetic, religious or other form of behavior, independently of its prospects of success", and to the *traditional rationality* – "that is determined by ingrained habituation", or *affectual* (especially emotional) *rationality* – "that is, determined by the actor's specific affects and feeling states."[17]

From this perspective, civilization corresponds to the instrumental adaptation for living in high density and complex (class) hierarchical society. It is a "natural" result, of people's forced cooperation within groups.[18] And now become clear the narrowness of this version of social sciences which aims to "replicate" and to be just like the natural ones and to employ, both descriptively and explicatively, only the instrumental, mechanical, reasoning as the solely cause(s) of human actions, and remove, any explicative and/or descriptive significance for value-reasoning causation, which endorse, at the same time, with similar, if not stronger, power the human behavior.

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[16] See Julien Freund, *The Sociology of Max Weber*, Vintage Books, New York, 1968.
[17] See Max Weber, *Economy and society: an outline of interpretive sociology*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1978, pp. 24-26.
[18] William Donald Hamilton, "Innate social aptitudes of man: an approach from evolutionary genetics", in R. Fox (*ed.*), *Biosocial Anthropology*, Malaby Press, London, 1975, pp. 133-153.

Hence, the civilizing process is somewhere at the border between biology and society, it is a form of psychic structure common for all lower forms of consciousness. It provides the basic patterns for the higher modes of structuring the conscience: the value-based conscience. Being an instrumental patterning, it has no values in itself. It is obvious now how the limitation of individual (and cultural!) growing to self-control and self-retrained behavior (more differentiated, more complete and more stable) is a good account for the morbid accuracy, aesthetic and order of Nazi camps and mass-extermination programs, the high self-discipline and constitution required for concentrated actions of organized genocides in ethnic or fundamentalist wars from all over the world, all of these need a high obedience and a high level of self-control of the executants. The culture, instead, is already at the border between social and symbolic (spiritual) and it provides the patterns for higher type of consciousness. Culture is the *why*, the *how* and the *what* is appropriate to understand, and establishes a shared consciousness community, civilization is more an ideology of "Beautiful Home" and its corresponding process of "comfortable estrangement."[19]

Unfortunately, *civilization bears in its core, from the beginning, the seeds of human conflict*. It seems that on the basis of the Social Contract was a procedural flaw. Employed for solving the generalized conflict between people, the *bellum omni contra omnes*, civilization wasn't other than the transfiguration in a new more impersonal form – among statuses – and at a new level – intra-psychic – of this inter-personal conflict. The primary engine of the civilizing process was, from the beginning, the human need/desire for recognition, magnificently depicted by Hegel, as the fight for recognition of the first two people which led to the first master and servant relation, the truly founding act of human civilization. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit* it is shown how the need for recognition determined the two first men to risk their lives in a violent struggle to death to make the others "recognize" their humanness. Once the natural fear of death makes one of them to give up and surrender himself, emerge the first hierarchic, and most powerful, relationship of lordship and bondage. And if the desire for recognition is the one which defines the field of social freedom and human civilization from its origin, than the nucleus of the civilizing mechanism are the anxieties;[20] and among these,

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[19] In Peter Sloterdijk's terms.
[20] See Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*, trans. and ed. James Strachey, W. W. Norton New York, 1961.

the ones which inspire man most powerfully are those created by himself. The general organizing principle of historic society was constraining a hierarchy, which has as primary consequence the strengthening of coercive and repressive State apparatus and, in parallel, the crystallization of (hierarchized) structure of individual psychic. "Moreover – and this is of decisive importance for the standard of civilization nowadays – the restrain and self-control characteristic of all phases of the civilizing process up to now, results not merely from the necessity of each individual to cooperate constantly with many others; they are no less determined by the split of society into upper and lower classes."[21] The psychological mechanism of the civilizing process is to be found in this need to be recognized as superior, and this is equally true for individuals and societies. The concealment of the recognition need entails a "compartmentalization" both of psychic and society. This term refers to Ego's defense mechanisms which operate through the precise isolation of problematic or "dangerous" impressions and emotions,[22] but it also evokes in addition, as de Swaan noticed, along with other terms – e.g. "suppression" – social correlations at every level of the society. The intensive and extensive globalization of conduct and civilized social relations through specialization, formalization, ritualization and through social and cultural bureaucratization, support the compartmentalization of individual psychic and social space and potentially open the paths to unimaginable atrocities, in the name of civilization. "Both at the personal and group level, this compartmentalization proceeds through disidentification from the designated victim population, the withdrawal of the identification affect, the denial that the target population might be similar to oneself and the repression of emotions that result from identification, such as sympathy, pity, concern, jealousy etc."[23]

Nowadays, at personal level, the civilized conduct is still seen as the landmark of a superior being, although these feelings are well camouflaged in daily relationships.[24] An psychoanalytical look on daily intercourse shows that

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[21] Norbert Elias, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 429.

[22] Anna Freud, *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense*, International Universities Press, New York, 1966.

[23] Abram de Swaan, "Dyscivilization, Mass extermination, and the State", *Theory, Culture and Society*, 18, 2-3, April-June, 2001, see. Abram de Swaan, "Widening circles of disidentification; On the Psycho- and sociogenesis of the hatred of distant strangers - Reflections on Rwanda", *Theory, Culture and Society*, 14, 2, May, 1997, pp. 105-122.

[24] Let's think only on what was considered until recently as a common truth in social psychology, that aggressiveness is associated with a very low self esteem, i.e. lower (uncivilized) strata profile,

although the amplification of social interdependence entails a strong pressure towards growing mutual sensibility on other emotional life, which allows a wider social acceptability for alternative behaviors and for an increasing variety of emotional expression, a sort of taboo over expressions of superiority and inferiority emotions had generalized, the censorship which becomes more and more stronger. "We are in an age when people will sooner confess their sexual secrets - much sooner in many cases - than their status secrets, whether in the sense of longings and triumphs or humiliations and defeats."[25]

The real nature of the civilizing process becomes more evident if we take into account the general framework of its emergence. The aggressiveness (*aggrēdi*) is an intrinsic characteristic of the living matter, of life in general.[26] Within the already civilized human world understanding and explanation of its tolerated, organized and cultivated (!) violent manifestation can be made on three levels. At the first level, the individual one, the impulsive conduct, tolerated within the public space, can be understood as a way of relaxation or of escape, as a pressure regulating the valves used by civilized persons in a civilized society.[27] At the social level, these manifestations are "inflection points'" in which impulses and urges which were banned in the past, become acceptable and are even cultivated. This is the case of the profit motivation[28] (Weber), some sexual

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while the new studies indicate a more nuanced relationship. The high and unrealistic levels of self esteem generate easy aggressiveness when the self image is threatened. See for example, R. F. Baumeister, J. Brad, and W. K. Campbell, "Self-esteem, narcissism, and aggression: Does violence result from low self-esteem or from threatened egotism?", *Current Directions in Psychological Science,* 9, 2000, pp. 26-29, and R. F. Baumeister, L. Smart and J. Boden, "Relation of threatened egotism to violence and aggression: The dark side of high self-esteem", *Psychological Review*,103, 1996, pp. 5-33.

[25] Tom Wolfe, *Mauve Gloves and Madmen, Clutter and Vine*, New York: Farrar, Straus & Girouz, 1976, p. 189, in Cas Wouters, "On the Sociogenesis of a «Third Nature» in the Civilizing of Emotions: Developments in Dealing with Strangers and «Strangeness» and with Feelings of Superiority and Inferiority", accesed online May, 2007, http://www.usyd.edu.au/su/social/elias/confpap.html.

[26] Bogdan Popoveniuc, "Violența ca sport" (Violence as Sports) in Sorin-Tudor Maxim, Dan Ioan Dascălu, Bogdan Popoveniuc, Eusebiu Ionescu (*eds*.), *Violența în sport* (Violence in Sports), "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava Press, 2006, pp. 27-65.

[27] Bogdan Popoveniuc, "Sportul ca violență instituționalizată" (The Sports as Institutionalized Violence), in *op. cit.*, pp. 75-105.

[28] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Talcott Parsons, Courier Dover Publications, 2003.

behavior[29] (Foucault) or belligerence in the age of Crusades.[30] We can notice the same discordant tendencies, the same cleavage within the social space, which exist at the core of the civilizing process. "While the state continues to monopolize the exercise of violence and promotes and protects the civilized types of behavior and expression in society, at the same time it perpetrates massive and organized acts of extreme violence towards specific categories of its citizens."[31]

In addition, "there is, however, an even more important third level of explanation. This concerns the conditions under which the civilizing process can turn against itself, where the question is no longer simply a paradoxical compromise between the civilizing process and its opposite, the impulses set loose by a previous dissolution of order, but *where the fundamental mechanisms of the civilizing process are effectively, purposefully and explicitly undermined. It is at that level that the totalitarian movements of the twentieth century can be located*, with the important mention that they are very closely related to the previously mentioned inflections of the civilizing process, therefore they cannot be fully externalized and exorcised, restricted to the cases of Nazism and Bolshevism."[32]

These sublimate, but nonetheless concrete and painful appearances of aggressiveness in modern world, are noting but the social and cultural (transfigured) form of primary biological aggressiveness, the individuals' need for surviving and preservation, for domination of (natural) environment. The transformation of the social, the inter-relational and symbolic-informational medium, in a critical factor for human individual surviving, changed the form and consistency of primary aggressiveness. But it still can be recognized as the same fundamental process of identity preservation and imposing. At the socio-cultural level, this compound of personality which forms the ground of recognition had labelled and was acknowledged over time under different aspects. "Plato spoke of *thymos,* or «spiritedness,» Machiavelli of man's desire for glory, Hobbes of his pride or vainglory, Rousseau of his *amour-propre*, Alexander Hamilton of the love

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[29] Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, Vintage Books, 1990.

[30] See Arpád Szakolczai, "Decivilizing Processes and the Dissolution of Order; with Reference to the Case of East Europe", paper delivered at the Norbert Elias centenary conference, Bielefeld, 2-22 June in Abram de Swaan, „Dyscivilization,…".

[31] But "compartmentalization is the social arrangement and the psychic defence mechanism *par excellence* in a dyscivilizing society" and not at all of a civilized one (or being in a civilizing process). Abram de Swaan, „Dyscivilization,…".

[32] Arpád Szakolczai, *ibidem.* At this point the CIA flights scandal and Guantanamo-like American prison camps supposed to be functioned on some European countries territory is very illustrative example.

of fame and James Madison of ambition, Hegel of recognition, and Nietzsche of man as the «beast with red cheeks»."[33] All stand for the same part of the human soul which has the urge to assign a value to itself and, with this, to people, events or things which surround it. "It is the part of the personality which is the fundamental source of the emotions of pride, anger, and shame, and is not reducible to desire, on the one hand, or reason on the other. The desire for recognition is the most specifically political part of the human personality because it is what drives men to want to assert themselves over other men, and thereby into Kant's condition of «asocial sociability»"[34] Thymos is the expression of human need for inflict its social existence, it is the expression of *consciousness* to be *for itself*, as the *aggrēdi* is the need of any biological organism to put forth its organic existence. This need for recognition was the one which leads, through unimaginable violence, to the establishment of modern democracies, the noblest flower of the civilizing process.

At the individual level, "the desire for recognition arising out of *thymos* is a deeply paradoxical phenomenon because the latter is the psychological seat of justice and selflessness while at the same time it is closely related to the selfishness."[35] Given its dialectic and asocial nature, it is not wonder that the two forms in which it had been recognized, esteem and self-esteem, which are two different stems which share the same root, where often confounded. Outcome of social second, but not derivative, the human nature "*thymos* is something like an innate human sense of justice, it is rather a self-entitlement sense. "People believe that they have a certain worth, and when other people act as though they are worth less – when they do not *recognize* their worth at its correct value – then they become angry." If the thymos is that capacity of the human being to value, to "invest objects with value", the need for esteem or the "desire for recognition" is "an activity of *thymos* that demands that another consciousness share the same evaluation."[36] From this result also its megalo-thymotic forms which cause, and still generate, so much agitation and suffering in modern societies. Unfortunately,

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[33] Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, Free Press, New York, 1992, p. 162.
[34] *Ibidem*, p. 163.
[35] *Ibidem*, p. 172.
[36] *Ibidem*, p. 165.

the megalo-thymotic[37] origin of civilization itself and its anxiogenous foundation render impossible, in the absence of an iso-thymotic,[38] emphatic and tolerant culture, intra-psychic and social harmonization within any particular civilization. Tolerance as iso-thymia, and not the one founded in megalo-thymotic or fortuitous, is the only one which "makes possible the passage from autarchic culture to multi-culture and, from here, to inter-culture, the richest and most promising for the future of humanity, cultural paradigm." This is required because "we are not living in a world of certitudes: the more scientific, cultural, and even social progress we have, the more dangerous risks factors become. The future of mankind requires spirit of tolerance for the present moment. The ultimate aim of tolerance is to substitute for the intransigent attitude a veritable cultural dialogue; but for this a partner must be present another culture for dialogue."[39] To be present means to be equally entitled, recognized and accepted as different cultural existence, despite, or more correct quite *because*, it is other. But, the nurture of iso-thymia is a process beyond the civilization instrumental capacities and, as long as it supposed deep reorganizations and capitulation at the level of the comprehension of reality and the creation of the entire *Weltanschauung* insomuch that it transcends the oneness of understanding conditioning – oriented towards the preservation of symbolic and informational (cultural) identity of the conscious being – that is to say the breakaway of the individual consciousness from the autarchic conditioning of its particular culture where it happened to be formed.

The culture of civilization

If we admit the high veracity of the meaning gave to the civilizing process, such a convincing being described by Norbert Elias, it become clear why the exasperating ritualized (civilized) gentlemen' conduct was kept for so long as one of the most desirable and enviable model of personality. It wasn't accidentally that the reputed (feared, admired and envied) personality of "thoroughly knight", the ultimate manager of emotional reactions, emerged in the last, the only one actually, global empire of human history: the Cultural British Empire. As long as

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[37] From the Greek *thymos* [θυμος], and *megas-* [μέγας]. The term originated in Plato's work and denotes the human needs to be recognized as superior to other and to receive, in this way, the consequent respect, unlike isothymy which involve only the mutual recognition as equal.
[38] From the Greek [ισος (the same) + θυμος] = the need to be recognized (only) as equal.
[39] Sorin Tudor Maxim, *Toleranţa. Dreptul la diferenţă* (Tolerance. The Right to Difference), Didactică and Pedagogică Publishing House, Bucharest, 2004, p. 122.

this civilizing process was dominating, in the direction of formalizing the conduct regulation as the symbol of control for power relations, this prototype of personality was the supreme figure. But this conception on the civilizing process, as collective solution for the fundamental social human need for recognition and its reflex at individual level, through this psychological mechanism of being recognized as superior, reveals, at the same time, the fact that civilization bears in its heart the conflict between people, societies and culture.

The instrumental side of civilizing consists in the structure of patterns of conduct regulation that aims the final scope, the individual conduct regulation for the profit of collective structures stability. It implies and could employ an entire collection of values and cultural perspectives through which it calibrates individuals' conduct. This axiological liberty of the operative side of the civilizing process does not guarantee an evolution towards humanization of interpersonal relationships and individual viewpoints over others, at all. This value-neutrality of civilization is a concealed and even disavowed subject, both in common understanding and academic settings. In fact, any regulate, learned, "more differentiated, more all-round and more stable" behavior can be considered civilized. This explained the ghoulish aesthetic of Nazi extermination camps, the sardonic efficacy of soviet pogroms, and the thoroughness of national or fundamentalist war genocides or even the current "anti-terrorism" measures (Guantamo-like). Some of these require an unimaginable conduct and a regulation of social structures, an amazing rigor in execution and details. And as long as the supposition and belief of superiority and that of subordinator differentiation form the very core of the civilizing process, the civilization conditioning automatism will be impossible to be surpassed, and hence the incontrollable evolution due to the contingent conjunction of historical factors.

Now, we can become aware of the accursed side of present-day globalization. What is spreading is just the instrumental part of the Occidental culture and not the entire culture. The instrumental rationality of the civilizing process is adaptive and humanity has no future with it, other than the one reserved by the blind faith, if it is not balanced by a healthy cultural value-rationality. We meet in the end, in a different manner, the Spengler thesis that the civilization is only the marker of a declining culture. From this perspective the global civilization (both extensive – encompassing the entire globe, and intensive sense – regulating the whole aspects of human culture), or better said, *a culture of civilization*, is the

final, petrified phase of (a) dying torpid culture(s). Globalization is an original and new phenomenon. It is the first time in human history when a civilization widespread over the entire globe. This civilization grows ensuing its inner (megalo) thymotic needs and it produces its own culture. If until now civilization "entered" within the encountered cultural form, from now on it develops quasi-autonomously. It fosters its own culture and it is in quarrel with all other cultures. But the civilization is not the one which generates, in a direct manner, the conflict, but its culture is the one which contradicts dissimilar others cultures, and it starts and carries the war in the name of its culture. There is no bellicose culture, only martial civilizations (which adapted or built instrumental cultural forms up to fulfil its growth). *The cultures are the peace of the Spirit in one of its forms*, while *civilizations are the tensional equilibrium setting imposed on nature, human psychic, and society, altogether*. Globalization is only the peak of this phenomenon. When civilization at the end of its accomplishment attains to rule the World, it has only one thing to eliminate: its subordinate culture which happened to serve to its completion. A culture of civilization is lifeless, it is impersonal and artificial, and because of this it has no future. For not becoming self-destructive, it is mandatory that the culture of the globalizing civilization be tolerant in its essence. In the present situation we can only hope that a culture of civilization would form in the future. "The human culture, as it is today, is far from fulfilling its all natural potential. We don't know how «ripened» are the times, how many time the great crucible of the history has to boil until the Phoenix Bird will reborn from its own ash."[40] We don't know if the imposition of an artificial culture, as it is that of civilization, settles down to the unique aim of preservation the balance of inter-relations structure at the level of modern societies, impersonal and aseptic, des-affected and de-worlded, could be viable after all. It is possible, as *Matrix*[41] movie shows, that human brain and spirit can't be accommodated with such world as an artificial ideal system built for the satisfaction of basic needs, with a well-defined and well-regularized social structure or with a cultural (political) rational-correct world and is impossible for it to survive in a such an aseptic reality. The dismissal, in a cynical style, of the refuge, of the artificial supra-structure ("Überbau-Verweigerung") of civilization could be vital for keeping the man within the Shelter of the Being (*Haus des Seins*). The artificiality of this structure

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[40] Marius Dumitrescu, *Alchimia devenirii umane* (The alchemy of human becoming), Tipo Moldova, Iaşi, 2007, p. 352.

[41] *Matrix*, written and directed by Andy and Larry Wachowski, Warner Bros. Pictures, 1999.

results from its instrumentality. "The superstructure in this sense would be that civilization offers ways of comfortable seduction to the people to serve for its ends: ideals, ideas of duty, promises of redemption, hopes for immortality, goals for ambition, solutions of power, careers, arts, richness." From a kynical perspective, they are all compensations for something man "does not let himself be robbed of in the first place: freedom, awareness, joy in living."[42] And all these fundamental coordinates of life process require the support of a "natural" culture with pain and pleasure, winnings and defeats, apprehension and confidence and not only a comfortable "artificial" and, therefore, alienating civilization.

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Manipulation through advertising - is advertising positive or negative?

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to underline the role of advertising in the manipulation of persons. We can identify a positive (constructive) and a negative (destructive) manipulation. The subconscious is the most powerful side inside us, the side that dictates to ration (but which may also collaborate in good conditions). It considers suggestions from everywhere, it implants them deep inside and creates commands related with advertising.

Keywords: *manipulation, advertising, persuasion, behavior*

The "manipulation" concept

Manipulation is defined as: the action of determining a social actor (person, group, and collectivity) to think in a compatible manner with the initiator's interests, and not with his/her own interests, throughout the use of persuasion methods that distortion the genuine truth, leaving instead the impression of free reasoning and deciding. Unlike the influence of rational persuasion, throughout manipulation it is not pursued the correct and more profound apprehension of the situation, but the replacing of the convenient apprehension, referring both to introducing the error throughout false arguments, and to non-rational bearings. The bad intentions of the one who communicates the message remain indistinguishable to the receiver.

Some persons consider there is a clear difference between persuasion and manipulation. A difference between manipulation and persuasion is that the first one is based on persuasion, meaning the tendency of being responsive to influences. Unlike the suggestion ability, the persuasion ability implies the individual's acceptance and the internalized consciousness of the transmitted messages.

Manipulation is an instrument, its ethics are set by the person who's using it and not by the instrument itself. We may in this way distinguish between positive and negative manipulation. Let's consider the example of a knife: we may use it to prepare food, we may use it to protect ourselves, or we may use it to kill. Could we say that we are using an unethical knife? No way. The ethics are set by the one who uses it, certainly not by the knife itself. The same happens with manipulation, we cannot state in any way that this would be a good or bad thing by itself.

In a general way, manipulation may be classified as follows:

a) by the action type and characteristics of the effect:

-constructive (positive);

-destructive (negative);

b) by the level of consciousness of the source:

-conscientious

-unconscientious

For example, mass-media can easily control society's reasoning (especially of the common individual). What determines the success of a manipulation action is the receiver's will to be manipulated. No one can be influenced to have a certain behavior if he/she doesn't wish to. The one being manipulated may quietly accept or take attitude against the manipulator. Friedrich Nietzsche considered that quite frequently, the murderer is not at the altitude of its deed: he minimizes it and defames it.[1]

Manipulation in advertising

Through advertising, they aim to influence the consumer, by *triggering some conditioned reflexes* in the sense given by the one who develops advertising through suggestion. Advertising tries to create for the one to whom it's addressed a need by using some schemes of the conditioned reflexes, wisely hidden.

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[1] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Dincolo de bine şi de rău*, Humanitas Publishing, Bucharest, 1992, p. 78.

Under the mask of an informational character, advertising aims to shock more than to pursue, to suggest more than to explain. Than appears the obsession and the stringent need to have the advertised object, even if the manipulated person is not conscious of this and, especially, he/she doesn't need the respective object.

Advertising, as the political propaganda that is addressed to masses, intensely speculates the fact that the intellectual level of the masses is quite low. Consequently, it uses two main principles: through endless repetition of the same slogans, images, obsessive rhythmic sounds, is being created a mental estate of tiredness, which is favorable to submit to the will of who started this project; the second principle relays on the fact that the majority of people tend to believe in those things they wish to accomplish, even if these things do not have a real motivation, but they are based only on emotions. We are facing a genuine psychological imposture, a veritable "psychological rape" exercised upon the individuals and the masses.

Probably each of us bought at least once a product that we didn't need and this was due to the fact that advertising designers knew how to implement into our subconscious the desire to buy that product.

In order to succeed, an advert has to be created by specialists in manipulation of individuals, who know the secrets of implanting ideas in the subconscious.

As for increasing the advert efficiency, the persuasive and suggestive message has to enter the subconscious as many ways as possible. It must have a persuasive content (Buy!) and not an informative one. Only in this way the clients will buy as in trance, without thinking about the price, without thinking if the respective merchandises is necessary for them or not.

The subconscious is the most powerful side inside us, the side that dictates to ration (but with which it may also collaborate in good conditions). It considers suggestions from everywhere, it implants them deep inside and creates commands: Buy a certain thing! Do a certain job!

The message enciphered in the advert must contain two components: a logical one for the conscious, and a suggestive one for the subconscious. The two components must harmonize perfectly. Otherwise, the effect of the advert is null[2].

A quality advert is not stereotyped, weary, annoying or ridiculous. It must concentrate on the subconscious, because it is more gullible, more childish, while

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[2] Pavel Coruț, *Arta succesului la români,* Miracol Publishing, Bucharest, 1993, p. 259.

ration has criticism that judge the message in a logic manner: Should I buy this? What for? I can do very well without it!

We must remember that the advertising speech is not composed by collective information about the products for sale: it is not the case of a purely informative speech addressed to consumers in order to help them decide upon their shopping in a straight rationing, referring to their previously established needs.

Consumers' behavior indeed is established more like a complex process of social communication with the unconscious forces of individuals' imagination than with their rationality.

Advert designers concentrate on the consumers' psychology, trying to decipher the psychological phenomena determined by the receive of advertising messages in general, in order to anticipate the behavioral answer of the public regarding the advert they are conceiving.

The amazing increase of information does not make us more informed but on the contrary: it creates confusion and dependence. Advertising creates needs adapted to the offer, enabling the formation of a programmed market. Advertising shapes the needs and aspirations, which have a negative effect upon society.

Similarly to the era we are living in, the adverts change astonishing rapidly, they are hedonist, they promote ideals and they are fashion influenced; they glorify the individual, idealize the consumption as being the way in which someone can accomplish oneself and sustain the technological progress as a driving force of destiny[3].

The advert convinces people to buy things they don't need, convinces them to give up perfectly good merchandise, convinces poor people to wish for things they cannot afford, it expands a vile culture and creates exorbitant expectations that cannot be accomplished, promoting in this way a materialistic society. Unfortunately, there are adverts that encourage people's isolation, individualism, egocentrism and giving up on values in order to satisfy their own necessities (e.g. Budweiser, Twix).

The main goal of an advert is to obtain profit; serving the public becomes a second role.

In advertising, we handle many types of manipulation. Firstly, we can talk about an *emotional manipulation*, meaning that in order to influence the receiver it

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[3] *Treziți-vă! – cât de mult vă influențează publicitatea,* Watctower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 22 august 1998, p. 7.

is necessary to induce him/her a special estate, which shall resort to the feeling. Secondly, it interferes the manipulation of the public's interests, and in order to achieve the influence the interests and those things that are directly connected to the eventual satisfaction must be known. In advertising, it's usual to recur to stereotypes, as for example to suggest certain qualities, without uttering them, and associating them to some qualities of the promoted product, throughout the proximity effect. This happens in Coca-Cola light advert, whose bases are that refreshing drinks without sugar help to obtain "the desired figure".

For the "Hochland" advert, the image capital of some nice, innocent children is used to nourish the viewer curiosity, which has the tendency to transfer the positive feelings for the characters towards the product that is being advertised; in this way is being imposed an idea without being argued – Hochland is good because some nice children say it is good.

The false causality represents the mean of manipulating in the spot "Head&Shoulders": you don't have dandruff; you are lucky in love; so you are lucky in love because you don't have dandruff.

In the "Almette" advert the syntax of words and images leads towards logically relating some elements, which do not necessarily generate a conclusion. The woman in the picture is eating Almette, a pure, delicious cheese. The woman in the picture is beautiful, happy, healthy. So, she is beautiful, happy, healthy because she eats "Almette".

In only half an hour of watching TV there can be viewed adverts saying that those products are more soft, last longer, are cheaper, are better; the washed clothes are whiter, they remain fresh for a longer time. It is interesting how the rational mechanisms do not function in these cases, which should reject as being false all the advertising materials. Instead, there are functional emotional mechanisms that give the winning cause to that advert which best uses the manipulation techniques.

There are many adverts that use exaggeration in order to increase the persuasion effect.

The typical example is that of an advert for a washing carpet detergent. We are shown an extremely dirty carpet, over which they sprinkle the detergent and just with a single brush upon it the carpet becomes as clean as new. In practice, no carpet detergent creates a similar effect, but you discover this after you buy it.

Referring to the shapes that manipulation may take in advertising, there are specialists even for make-up products: specialists who varnish the fruits in order to

look shinier, more appetizing and more … natural, who add powder in the beer drafts in order to produce foam waves or who bleach chemically the laundry in order to give *"the absolute white"*.[4]

The advertisement exaggerates, deceives, appeals to sex and frivolity, presents irrational stories, creates exorbitant expectations and in general promotes a materialistic society.

There are a multitude of advertisements that teach youngsters how to have protected sex, how to keep away from AIDS, drugs, weapons. There are ecologist spots or that stimulate people to read.

Some advertisements are deceiving, gaudy and lamentable, but the big majority is not and if someone truly believes in the freedom of expression, he/she takes the good, the bad and the ugly as part of a whole, with the hope that of course, the social positive forces will reward the ones which communicate responsibly a message and will avoid the ones which are not responsible.

In advertising, you can lie once. The second time people won't believe you. That is why the accent is being set not on deceiving the consumer but on determining him/her to buy a certain product, choosing from the existing ones.

The value of advertisements mainly consists in offering the information to the consuming public. The advertisement is the way we find out about new products and services. The reasonable persons look at the advertisement someway with skepticism, due to the fact that the advertisement presents a product and there are simply too many products for us to know them, use them or afford them. We know there are many types of detergents, all of them competing to get our attention. Some of them will emphasize the low price, others the way they wipe away the stains. Probably no one agrees textually to the whole advertisement, even if it's true, because there is something called "the consumer's choice", and our choices are based upon our needs, interests, revenues and other factors.

An efficient advertisement means selling of products and services. Their selling means keeping the jobs or increasing their number. Increasing the number of jobs determines the growth of living standards for many people. This consequently determines an increase of buying capacities of good and better products that improve people's lives, although they can afford their access to

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[4] B. M. Amalancei, "Finalitatea comunicării publicitare: minciună, trădare, manipulare, seducție?," *Revista Română de Semio-Logică*, www.roslir.usv.ro.

services that make life easier, happier. They will have a better performance at their job and may be much more useful to society throughout their creative activity.

The advertisement allows the existence of television, newspapers and radio, internet and sports events, all of them offering satisfaction to people.

Only 8% out of the Egypt consumers, 40% from France and 50% from Denmark see the positive and useful effects of advertising, unlike the consumers from Norway or Bulgaria, that in 80 % appreciate communication. A big contribution to this it has the quality of messages and their frequency of transmission.[5]

For the states ranking with the greatest consumers' trust in advertising the first two, with 67% are Brazil and Philippines, on the third place with 66% is Mexico, on the fourth place with 64% -South Africa and on the fifth place with 63% -Taiwan. The ranking for the least confidence towards advertising is the following, on the first place is Denmark with 28%, and the next are Italy with 32%, Lithuania with 34% and Germany with 35%.[6]

A study realized by Leo Burnett in 1998 shows that only 7% of Romanians consider advertising as objective and providing the realistic information about the products.[7]

Conclusions

Generally, the common attitude towards manipulation could be summed up, more seriously or joking, in a phrase like "manipulation, manipulation, but let us know about it" …

Not always things are what they seem to be … There are people who are trying to guess, "what hides behind" the things they see and hear, the images and the words, and when this is or not the case. Some people state "we know that we are being manipulated, we are manipulated all the time, we don't even imagine the size of this manipulation".

In our country the slogan was launched by the information media themselves or especially by these, in the beginning '90s. Manipulation was so popular that it became almost a vital component for the post-communist collective imaginary.

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[5] H. Chee and R. Harris, "Global Marketing Strategy," Financial Times and Pitman Publishing, 1998, in N. Al. Pop, I. Dumitru, *Marketing internaţional*, Uranus Publishing, Bucharest, 2001, p. 318.
[6] www.daylybusiness.ro, 1 noiembrie, 2007.
[7] A. Stoiciu, *Cum să convingi un milion de oameni – manual de marketing şi publicitate,* Ziua Publishing House, Bucharest, 2006, p. 17.

The "wise" viewers believe they read the signs of the manipulation intention (that they baffle, of course) not only in the TV images, but also in the text, in the comments of editors and guests, either in their mimicry, gestures or the showmen's voice… ("the look he/she had!", "the way he/she said it!"…). When it comes to presenting the information about an event, in a group, invariably it gets to the statement "we are being manipulated, there is no doubt!", "all of them manipulate, all of them misinform", but also to "they don't full us anymore", "it's not so easy anymore", "we are getting wiser" (the reassuring feeling…)

What "wise" viewers see that speaking about manipulation is a certain "politic attitude" of the television channels, of the press in general, either locally, on the axes "power-opposition", or globally ("pro-Americans" – "pro-Europeans").

The connoisseur public is more and more numerous and expanded – an interested public and with great openness towards information, with judgement spirit, capable of comparing, with more and more obvious abilities for communication, that is expressing their opinions. This doesn't mean that the public is immune to manipulators' actions; although, acknowledging the existence of the phenomenon is a first important step, even if it's limited to relatively restraint segments (although not as restraint as they seem). It is for sure that the public has "to face" a growing number of images, of gathered representations about the world. The problem that shows up is: how to learn to analyze and to select the information from mass-media, how to discover reality besides the appearances?

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Foundations of the nihilism-saintliness concerning Cioran's thoughtfulness

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Abstract

1. The nihilist ascending lines of the saintliness and the emotional reorientation imposed by the divine erotica

2. An open issue: the contradiction amongst the apotheosis concerning Cioran's nihilism and the potential projection beyond Divinity and Great Inanity

Considering Cioran's point of view, the presence of Eros within the saintliness horizon has proven an especial particularity, which determined the specific of erotica's experience related to this dimension. Therefore, in contradistinction to most of neighbors and as concerns the saints, the experience of Eros hasn't just involved the relative forgetfulness of ephemeral character, imposed by the temporality dynamics, where the forgetfulness was determined by means of opening and instantaneous losing within the horizon of other human beings. On the contrary, one might talk about a reorientation of the emotional energy and of the erotica's potential towards the single presence, known by saints as absolute, meaning that of Divinity. Such a reorientation imposes not only forgetting the time's consequences, but also detaching from this, within the extra-temporal projection and towards the absolute Creature; this projection has also been supported by rejecting all valences and options of the world. In this way, as concerns Cioran's point of view, the saintliness represents the heart's genius feature, where spirits came within are the accomplished explorers of it, those that reached to and used infinite resources, so as to reject the world's judiciousness and completely devote themselves to the ecstasy of Everlastingness.

Keywords: *the temporality dynamics, Eros, emotional energy, extra-temporal, nihilism.*

1. The nihilist ascending lines of the saintliness and the emotional reorientation imposed by the divine erotica

The admiration that Cioran manifested towards the saintliness reached the arguments, according to his opinion, in the sense that wisdom is situated between mediocrity and saintliness, regarded as intermediary step when women do not know the wisdom, but intelligence; for them, in contradistinction to men, the reaching of saintliness is accomplished through a level of maximum stage-worthiness and pressure. The saint men reach gradually the horizon of saintliness, supporting their ascending line by wisdom, while saint women avoid the wisdom, by sacrificing the erotica's and mother's valences, so that their sacrifice becomes more underlying within its tragic feature. Both women and men saints proposed another world, that should come to replace the terrestrial dimension of the human beings, with a celestial one. Manifesting an extreme distance toward ideas, disaffirming the validity of dialectics and judiciousness, rejecting the structures of substance and becoming anti-philosophical, the saints have centered their beings within the heart's abstract part, learning the art of emotional deliration and calling to total renunciation of the inter-relationships to the social laws, as well as the abandon of confronting the nature with themselves, not representing *the nature*, but parts of transcendences that search for their entireness through everlastingness.

The saints know a single region where they are losing their identity and name, meaning: The Divinity. They are also aware of the fact that the only state conferring presence is related to anonymity in God. In Cioran's vision, the sights of the saints reveal a negative detaching towards the terrestrial world. These sights are established towards the sky, by a total demarche of a negative ascending line, which rejects the time and adhesion to it, thus accepting as unique aim the spiritual loss to the divine undetermined part. Concerning the saints, this supreme wish of loss, of dissolution of god is doubled by a profound shade of erotica, but it lacks any contact with sexuality. The saint women offer themselves to God and His Son, similar to *a celestial lover*, who assimilates their emotions, transforming them into sacred horizon, and opening them towards God's grace. In contradiction to saints, according to Cioran's point of view, those fallen in time suffer of *the shyness of looking to the sky*, among these the modern human being, which is prisoner of the helplessness of *peaceful looking down.* Returning the sights to Absolute needs an essential anthropological and axiological changing, a general-human resurrection, or the occurrence of The Great Inquest. This idea is often met to Pascal also,

thinker of *high spirituality,* which wanted to consecrate himself by issuing an apology to Christians' religion[1], for which he established the reasons and ecstasies of mystical level. He confessed the conviction that although forgetting the Divinity, the human beings look only to the earth, and when the earth will fall, the human beings will look to the sky[2] during their own apocalyptical fall.

What impressed Cioran as concerns the attitude of saints is related to the amazing ability of spiritual moving by means of a defiant suffering, and that of a body and soul offering, from the dark that dazzles by its own darkness, towards the light that produces the same effect, but by its brightness. This way is not a detaching from the human normal feature, but on the contrary, it represents a returning to this, where the human being is essentially created in order to stay near the equilibrium of absolute nothing, an equilibrium that Christians call the eternal peace. Returning to Divinity and to paroxysm of erotica's shapes of offering to and crossing the distance from darkness back to the lightness[3] will fall out the saint's beings, as Cioran considers, on a level specific to the transcendence hierarchy, situated higher than that belonging to philosophers or even to poets.

2. An open issue: the contradiction amongst the apotheosis concerning Cioran's nihilism and the potential projection beyond Divinity and Great Inanity

Although the moments of an open confessing are often and generate the admiration towards saints, as well as accepting the rejection coming from world, so as to deepen the total absence, there are also within Cioran's scripts some intervals that support an opposed position towards these philosophical perspectives. For instance, in the paper entitled *Tears and saints*, Cioran says: *There are moments of mine when a cosmic hate effervesces within me, against all "agents" of another world, and I do not know what tortures I would use so as to save the semblances… if I lived within saints, I would hide a dagger…*[4]

These thoughts seem to be in contradiction to the adhesion confessed by Cioran, so as to return towards the inactive part, to the peaceful Inanity and lack of impulses, but also to the admiring settlement of saints above all philosophers and

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[1] André Blanc, *Lire le Classicisme*, Dunod, Paris, 1995, pp. 182-183.
[2] Blaise Pascal, *Misterul lui Isus*, Dacia Publishing, Cluj Napoca, 1998, p. 119.
[3] Sf. Augustin, *Confesiuni,* Humanitas Publishing, Bucharest, 1998, p. 479.
[4] Emil Cioran, *Lacrimi şi sfinţi*, Humanitas Publishing, Bucharest, 2001, p. 50.

poets. What does Cioran reproach to saints? A potential answer might be deduced by means of observing the correlation of *Tears and saints* paper title.

Cioran seemed to reproach to saints what he names through and aphoristic way *the tears*, meaning the emotional state of total sadness, sadness that turns off any impulse towards life, since *all gates of the sky are closed, with the exception of tears' gate, or you cannot cry unless you're sad!*[5] In contradiction to the idea, by which the author affirmed that the end of negation is the turn off towards inanity, a dying that is explained into Christians mystic language by a symbiosis with the absolute human being, Cioran confessed in other sequences that succeeding a projection beyond Divinity might be real, a projection whose accomplishment might disaffirm the fact that dying to God's creature is the last level of the ascending line, which exceeds the time and world.

In this way, Cioran says that he cannot forgive *the saints,* for their imprudence of not being interrogated themselves: *what starts beyond God?*[6] This has remained an essential question within this context, meaning: what does Cioran reproach to God? An extremely terminative and edifying answer can be found from a writer, which Cioran saw as prototype: Lev Sestov. The latter author tried to define the life of humans as individual beings, and altogether an answer to the above mentioned question, saying that God *showed the sky to human being*s and after that He banished the beings towards corporality's limits and insufficiencies.[7] The potential contradictions met within Cioran's creation do not have a certain feature, as seen to many other thinkers, meaning that related to fractioning the general review of a writer, but contrariwise, Cioran conferred a homogeneousness character towards the constructive dialectics.

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[5] Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai and Rabbi Eleazar, *Zoharul, cartea splendorii*, Antet, Bucharest, 1997, p. 144.
[6] Emil Cioran, *Lacrimi şi sfinţi*, p. 72.
[7] Lev Şestov, *Apoteoza lipsei de temeiuri*, Humanitas Publishing, Bucharest, 1995, p. 176.

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An image of Globalisation in the Context of Interdependence of the 21th Century

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Motto: "*It starts raining over the horses' ghosts which start dancing on a nowhere's city streets*"
(Octavian Paler)

Abstract

Globalization is one of the most important phenomena of the 21th century. There are plenty of definitions and analysis of globalization, with some being critical and others praising this amazing phenomenon. This paper presents the characteristics of globalization and describes the manner in which it influences the activity of European and worldwide companies. The paper itself it's structured in 2 parts. In the first part we emphasize different theories of globalization, and its impact upon our world. In the second part we show the effects of globalization in detail.

Keywords: *globalization, dynamic economy, unique global market, global firm, transformation phenomenon.*

Speed and lack of time are characteristics of human beings, we run not knowing where to go and why we do it, we ask ourselves who's running the world, and the answers come from different sources, we admit the fact that a new global governance is on the verge of taking over both economical and political on the basis of a continuous globalization. A question we need to put to ourselves is in what measure globalization influences the transformations that take place nowadays. In the same time we should be aware of what globalization is. Is it

important or it's insignificant?[1] The answer to this question is based on the analysis of characteristics globalization has and its way of developing. It's necessary to look at the main opinions regarding this phenomenon and analyze the way it manifests. We have some theories we can treat objectively or some in which we can be trapped in different problems regarding other theories.

1. Presentation of Globalization in the 21st century

If at the European Union level we have the unique European market model, this model having reached a number of 27 states with different economic development levels, at the global level we are part of an accentuated globalization. Globalization manifests at the level of a global market, in which actors from all countries perform, only that some of them are sellers, some of them are customers, some of them win on short term, some others lose on long term, some might have more to win, some more to lose. Big games at global level relate to the future of an interconnected and in the same time dynamic economy.

In Business Dictionary, we can read that Globalization represents the "free economic, financial, commercial circulation in the entire world and the integration of communication. Globalization involves opening to everyone, beyond the local and national perspectives towards a new interconnected and interdependent world in which goods, capitals and services are free of charge". Trough these characteristics we can admit that the phenomena of Globalization requires knowledge, mutual understanding of different cultures and imposes a proper informal but in the same time a promotion of the economic and cultural collaboration worldwide. On this matter, *The Globalist* launched in 2007: *The initiative of global education*. Promoting a "open global economy"[2] sits at the basis of maintaining the right frame for running this competition at a global level, competition which generates investments and quality. There are various methods of looking at globalization. Globalization can determine changes in the paradigm of thought and action. Changes operated at the highest level made certain areas evolve unpredictably. Beyond the end there is the virtual reality, the horizon of a

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[1] Tiberiu Brăilean, *Globalizarea. Nenumele nimicului,* Institutul European, Iaşi, 2005.
[2] Robert Giplin, *Economia mondială în secolul XXI. Provocarea capitalismului global*, Polirom, Bucharest, 2004, p. 259.

programmed reality[3]. The virtual Reality evolves in the same time with globalization.

Globalization represents a way to think of categorizing the world according to the principles of the only system that has survived the Cold War, the capitalist system of producing goods. This system has as network heads the new big economic units which are after the profits, but which have to focus more and more towards investing in human capital. Tension and several issues between the plurality of cultures and the development of a commercial cosmopolitanism reveal the complexity of reactions which appear at the birth of a unique global market. Starting from geo-economy and from the technical networks of information in real time, in the 80s there is a wide spread of globalization vocabulary, term derived from English, former an Anglo-Saxon word, synonym with the French word mondialisation. Globalization represents the free movement of capital, accompanied by the world financial market domination and by the multi-national corporations, on national economies.

Globalization can be looked at from a positive angle as an important factor of interaction, competition, but also negatively as an important factor of uniformity. From the financial networks, the notion of globalization will extend to the economic and cultural networks, due to the marketing and management specialists.

Grahame Thompson and Paul Hirst in *Globalisation in Question*[4] identify 3 weak points of globalization: the absence of a common model of the new global economy, the lack of a clear model which the new economic tendencies report to and the lack of historical vision. Still, the increasing competition at a global scale implies a worldwide strategic vision for planning the markets. This tends to go towards a new universal standardization for the newly economical units. The company represents a dynamic "whole", and its globalization is both internal and external. In the context of a global company there are no rigid hierarchies, a new model of communication will be adopted, imposed by the free circulation of information.

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[3] Jean Baudrillard, *D' un millenaire à l' autre. La grande mutation*, Albin Michel, Paris, 2000, p. 284.
[4] P. Hirst and Grahame Thompson, *Globalizarea sub semnul întrebării*, Trei, Bucharest, 2002, p. 17.

Any globalised market strategy must be in the same time local and global. This project of integration of the global firm can't be dissociated from the creation of a newly formed culture, from sharing values , rituals and objectives, that have as a mission to make the global-local alliance happen and to ensure an efficient communication , the only guarantee for performance.

In the globalization field, we can affirm that the arcs of all component circles are represented by data, information and knowledge, keeping in mind that information is countless but knowledge is scarce. Investment in human resources attracts growth in profit and production within a company. Within the globalization's realm there are changes that determine global decisions and that is why an analysis of globalization regarding the transformations that are occurring faster and faster at a global level and also regarding the effects it produces on this level, is in order. Could this balloon be at any given moment ready to be broken? But even it breaks, and its interior remains hollow, there will be nothing in, though if anything remains will be available just inside the balloon for use only in the balloon, just by obeying the rules of adaptation in this new way of living?

There are many rapports regarding what is presently enfolding at a global level, everyone's positions in a well defined area and researches in different domains show that we can't know for sure if a certain opinion is better than the other one, all what is certain is that those global unfolding activities exist as long as they are well managed.

2. The effects of globalization

Are we losing our identity, does the concept of a nation still exist, do we know what it stands for?

We do not know where we are, but we know that we are, we do not know where we are heading to, but we know that we have something to seek, we do not know what we are listening to, but we know the rhythm, we are able to feel how our condition changes from one day to another. "This certain something that occurs to us and which we have called globalization firstly signifies a complex of pending wide transformations of the human condition's parameters."[5] We notice a transformation, but although we transform in a sphere that few are able to understand, if they do, they localize it through a nothing integrated in everything,

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[5] Florin Erhan, *Globalizarea. În căutarea echilibrului,* Economical Publishing House, Bucharest, 2003, p. 31.

and those who do not understand it, put it aside, forgotten in the definitions available during several years. "For hundreds of millions of people, one thing is certain: there is no such thing as a globalised process."[6]

Many people lose, but those few who are winning, have indeed a lot to win. Globalization owes much of its development to the technological process and imposes a new lifestyle, the global one, without any future and past and with an uncertain, yet satisfying present.

According to a fable written by Hannah Arendt, entitled *Heidegger The Fox*, a fox presented like a misunderstood creature, caught in a trap in the spider-web of its ideas, and most of all convinced that its ideas represented the ideas of the whole world, we could underline that we must neither fall into the trap of globalization, nor reinvent it, nor hide it, we must acknowledge it, objectively analyze it and learn something from this phenomenon. I extracted some ideas from the fable to illustrate the understanding capacity at a certain developing level: "There was once a fox so less sly, that not only it always fell into some trap, but it did not even know when it was in a trap and when not (..) It built a snare for burrow (...) *So many people visit me in my snare that I've become the slyest fox in the world.* And there is something true in all of these: no one knows better the nature of snares but he who spends all his life in one."[7] And if the fox knows how to build a trap of globalization according to its ideas, it will always catch those who would want to know what this phenomenon means, and stop only to analyze its surface.

Each stage of history has its evolution determined by certain influences, more or less necessary, therefore we could say that for globalization the following expression suites best: "nothing new under the sun."[8] Globalization is, however, in perpetual transformation, re-inventing and interpretation.

3. Conclusions

In conclusion, all the references involving the globalization fact and the manner in which it is tackled and understood, this subject attests that the

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[6] Martin Hans Peter and Harald Schumann, *Capcana globalizării. Atac la democraţie şi bunăstare,* Economical Publishing House, Bucharest, 1999, p. 22.

[7] Vulpoiul Heidegger, *apud* Mark Lilla, *Spiritul nesăbuit. Intelectualii în politică,* Polirom, Iaşi, 2005, p. 85.

[8] Eugen Ovidiu Chirovici, *Naţiunea virtuală. Eseu despre globalizare*, Polirom, Iaşi, 2001, p. 13.

globalization is not a new fact, but it has only slight differences when looking from one time frame to another. Every generation has globally lived, in different historical periods, and in this century, globalization manifests itself through symbiotic economic, social, politic relationships, between different states and companies throughout the world; we consume global products, feel its freedom of movement, freedom that is so natural. We have invented globalization because we live it, however, we should ask ourselves, what are its positive but also its negative aspects and also not to let ourselves be trapped by admitting that nothing means everything.

Presently, we could ask ourselves: what is that will come next in line?

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The theme of death in the vision of Camil Petrescu and Liviu Rebreanu

The case of the novels *The Last Night of Love, the First Night of War* and *Forest of the Hanged*

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Abstract

Seen as a challenge of the destiny, death appears in the novels, along with the experience from the front, symbolizing the transition into a world where the verticality loses its significance and where people think "horizontally", that is to say, by detaching themselves of the daily values and aspirations. Thus, the pre-figuration of Apostol Bologa's death does not stop only at the meaning given by the emphasis on the cemetery image, in those two hypostases, but proves itself through other ominous symmetries too. These are, firstly, Bologa's stop "just under the still gibbet" and then, his response to the notice that they will be moved on the Romanian front. Romania's joining the war, meeting the interests of the vein and corrupt bourgeoisie blinded by their class interests, is depicted in Camil Petrescu's novel as a betrayal of people's interests, as a tragic adventure.

Keywords: *The death, Destiny, The front, "Forest of the Hanged", "The Last Night of Love, the First Night of War", The solitude, The crisis, The drama, The war, The fear, The faculty of self-analysis.*

Seen as a challenge of the destiny, death appears in the novels, along with the experience from the front, symbolizing the transition into a world where the verticality loses its significance and where people think "horizontally", that is to say, by detaching themselves from the daily values and aspirations. Even if the theme of war, through its generality, summed up the theme of death, the latter should be separated, however, from the war, because its effects are those that

produce changes in the mental development of the heroes, encouraging them to look for another option, in the conscience, where real sentences are taken from.

"Of course, *Forest of the Hanged* is a war novel, superior, we dare say, to all other works about this event throughout the third decade (*The Last Night of Love, the First Night of War* appeared in 1930)"[1]. "All the horror of this disaster of humanity, which devours itself, lives with an impressive authenticity within the solid construction of the writer"[2].

Thus, the pre-figuration of Apostol Bologa's death does not stop only at the meaning given by the emphasis on the cemetery image, in those two hypostases, but proves itself through other ominous symmetries too. These are, firstly, Bologa's stop "just under the still gibbet" and then, his response to the notice that they will be moved on the Romanian front: "It's there that I cannot go... I feel that I will die there... And I don't want to die... I have to live!". These sketches are like some Wagnerian leitmotifs accompanying the protagonist during the tragic predestination symphony which is *Forest of the Hanged*"[3].

Within the structure of great symmetries of *Forest of the Hanged*, the symbol of light marks, in the continued deployment of Apostol Bologa's destiny, two crucial moments: that of trapping the deserter by Varga and that of Bologa's execution, which restores Svoboda's scene in gestures and meaning: "Apostol arranged himself the gibbet, with his eyes thirsty of the light of dawn".

Correspondingly to the symbolism of light, to the opposite side of beginnings of a crisis or obsession, there is a symbolism of closure, of darkness which includes the human being. The first inner confusion in the teenage years is due to the sudden death of his father, Iosif Bologa, when the consciousness of the grieving son is flashed by atheism: "I lost God [...]".

After Svoboda's execution, the impact of darkness, which overtakes the whole world, is in a range of aesthetic signs, specific to the technique of suggestions according to the tragic vision of Liviu Rebreanu. The protagonist "follows the path to the village after the others, as if he were afraid not to be caught here by the *night*". Even if he is still within normal and rational justification, that of achieving his duties towards a deserter, he has a lack of answers, showing, in fact, his inner confusion which begins its ravages: "Captain, the punishment, the crime, the law, mumbled Bologa, ...". At the end of the

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[1] Z. Ornea, *Tradiţionalism şi modernitate în deceniul al III-lea,* Eminescu, Bucharest, 1980, p. 533.
[2] *Ibidem*, p. 533.
[3] Simion Mioc, *Anamorfoză şi poetică*, Facla, Timişoara, 1988, p. 132.

chapter, the narrator thickens the symbolic veil: "The darkness strengthened around, so that it stung your eyes... On the field, as you could see, black silhouettes moved here and there, as if all people would have been turned into restless ghosts..."

Another moment of solitude and crisis, triggered by the news that they will be moved on the Romanian front, is also sealed by a symbolic invasion of darkness: "Apostol found himself alone, nailed in the same place, with his eyes staring in darkness, dazed by visions. [...] Bologa was *shaken by the darkness*, but his burnt lips persistently whispered: - That's not true".

Attaining its climax, the drama of the Romanian officer turns to opening the light in the deepest place of his soul: "The darkness and the silence covered Apostol with a harsh blanket... In the bottom of the soul he clearly felt as the love for light was flickering, gentle, comfortable..." The repetition of light attributes *gentle*, *comfortable*, has to be regarded as a return to the perimeter of "the normal phenomenon"[4] with its strong specificity printed in the author's vision.

The attempt of desertion, as in a trance, is a compelling answer of the *human* Bologa, who cannot repeat, even for "the law" or his conscience, the conviction gesture, as a member of the Martial Court. His road to the Romanian lines is an *ominous closure*[5] in darkness, fog and *death*: "but the fog swallowed the horizon and the darkness with heaven and earth". After catching Apostol Bologa by the patrol led by Varga, the prisoner "looked only forward, with his head up, with his widely open eyes drinking the darkness...".

Romania's joining the war, meeting the interests of the vein and corrupt bourgeoisie blinded by their class interests, is depicted in Camil Petrescu's novel as a betrayal of the people interests, as a tragic adventure.

The front reveals to Gheorghidiu an unknown dimension of his personality - that feeling of a "pathetic gentility of the friendship, of the community with the ordinary anonymous soldiers who were bran to the war"[6]: "When I saw the people worshiping last night, I wanted to smile, but I became suddenly serious, for these people, in a convoy with me, my comrades, are the only spirit for me now, and every their gesture smoothes my heart as the gestures of a beloved child".

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[4] *Ibidem*, p. 143.
[5] *Ibidem*, p. 143.
[6] Matei Călinescu, *Aspecte literare* (I), For literature, Bucharest, 1965, p. 133.

Thus, the individual slot of a soldier or an amputated leg counts more than the full battle plan for novelist: "If history is interested in great battles which use great armies, the novel reflects rather the overlooked and neglected aspects of the war: the cold, the stomach aches, the funny and absurd incidents"[7]. The Stendhalian origin is obvious. If in Rebreanu's work the war is still visible, in the novel *The Last Night of Love, the First Night of War* "its mythical figure is vague and divided into more small details, anonymous bodies and meaningless gestures. The war moves from the stage of History to that of individual consciousness"[8].

Camil Petrescu's novel does not sing hymns to heroism and does not combine sublime situations. "What we call a hero, in a rhetorical voice, is a poor man harassed by hunger and boredom, struck by bullets and shells, shaken by *death* fever and frozen with fear, degraded by superstitions and attacked by madness. The human character of war is sad; its morality is selfish and reduced to the present moment"[9].

Gheorghidiu captures and analyzes his fear, superstition, cowardice and panic without any hypocrisy. The superiority of the intelligent man in war consists only in the faculty of self-analysis.

The evocation of a shooting barrage, with the deafening madness of the shells, as well as the shifting of troops from Bran, is the most dramatic pages of Camil Petrescu's book. The sense the death possesses the atmosphere in these awful scenes. *The first night of war* proves to be a chaotic advance after winning the Hungarian customs station, the first dead being the colonel himself.

The *darkness*, as in *Forest of the Hanged*, increases the fear so that Gheorghidiu has the feeling that the death can come at any moment: "I know so well that I will die tonight [...]". The narration captures many details: from images of night fighting to army mess or discussions about real battle. The text communicates the *feeling of the combatant* that kills without any sense of guilt, thinking that the distance annihilates the culpability: as if "Those from 800 meters" were "lead soldiers".

Respecting the principle of authenticity, Camil Petrescu includes events and real characters, who act heroically in spite of *the fear of death*: the two Mănciulea sisters, suspected of espionage - false accusation - will guide the regiment to cross the river Olt.

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[7] N. Manolescu, *Arca lui Noe*, 100+1 Gramar, Bucharest, 2005, p. 348.
[8] *Ibidem*.
[9] P. Constantinescu, *Scrieri* (IV), Minerva, Bucharest, 1970, p. 252.

The writer focuses on the auditory element, using words with onomatopoeic value:

"Above you, the first explosion bursts your ears, bewilders you, the second covers you with earth. But even if you've heard both you are not dead. People gather like animals near each other. [...] We run because it's the same to sit in a place. The problem to know if you stop near a tuft of grass or near a heap of earth is like at the beginning of the world".	The lived experience is communicated through the semantic value of the verbs at present tense expressing a gradation caused by the sound shock: "bursts your ears", "bewilders you"… We remark the human solidarity when facing the death, defending one another instinctively.

Gheorghidiu is aware where to go, towards the village, but a new attack stops him.

"My brain seemed to liquefy; the nerves broke like rotten ropes because of so much tension. [...] I don't realize anymore if people's faces are dirty of earth or soot. I hardly understand the lament as a litany, as an apocalyptic curse coming from the deepest depths. - We are covered by the earth of God".	The introspection forwards the inner feelings of cancellation. The depreciative comparison suggests the annihilation of the individuality because of the strength test which he has to pass. The word *earth* – the key of the fragment, calls up the curse of earth, harbinger of the end.

The only chance of escape of people in this *space of death* is the "hopeless" flee which leads them towards the nearby village. The story of a soldier whose head was cut off and he was "running on, without it" is symptomatic for its absence of consciousness when only the instinct of defence matters.

In the *Forest of the Hanged*, we witness a struggle of Bologa between the two alternatives: life and death – "to one side the soldiers who escort him as an outsider, to the other the nature with "blooming trees [...] and the well sweep in the middle of the yard..."[10].

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[10] Miron Suzana and Roşca Elisabeta, *Creatorii romanului românesc modern*, All, Bucharest, 1999, p. 65.

The network of successes, the scenes and the situations that turn out to penetrate "the life truth in the artistic expression, overwhelm the pages of death expectation too, from the blind desire to prolong the life through "a kind of cunning the fear"[11]: "But the time?... Why doesn't he tell the time?" to the mechanical repetition of priest Boteanu's words: "In the middle of all the temptations of life, you remained your parent's son, Apostol!...".

The artistic intuition of the novelist is this time without fail too: priest Boteanu is rhetoric, Apostol lives the limit-situation. At such times, "in the strange play of meanings between the apparent man and the inside man"[12], Liviu Rebreanu gives privilege to the latter one.

Everything that happens during Bologa's hanging is a funeral ceremony, full of solemnity: "The courtyard was full of soldiers with torches lit, with shiny helmets, as during a torchlight procession on the eve of a major holiday", as a procession.

"It is clear that this book, which Rebreanu finished after the war, is dedicated to the Romanians from Transylvania who, through a long line of martyrdom and so much suffering, will obtain liberation from foreign yoke, especially if we tie this idea to a statement cited at the beginning"[13]: "Apostol becomes the man among the people: he finds individually his best self [...]".

Ştefan Gheorghidiu thinks in the same way. He believes that the war was probably the most difficult test because they were not prepared, but also because it was a continuous search for "the good Self": "The war drama is not just the continued threat of death, carnage and hunger, but rather this constant checking of soul, this *issue of your ego*, which knows differently what it knew in a certain way".

Thus we conclude that "the non-adapted, complex and problematic characters of Camil Petrescu often highlight, with remarkable acuity, the most difficult aspects of the apparent world they refuse. They manage to define the evil with greater lucidity, their experience having a *value of knowledge*. But they ignore the ways of removing the evil, and because of this they collapse [...]"[14].

The collapse is evident in Apostol's case because, "being classified in the typology of *the seeker of truth*, Apostol passes from general truths to *the*

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[11] Mioc, *Anamorfoză şi poetică*, p. 146.
[12] *Ibidem*, p. 147.
[13] Miron and Roşca, *Creatorii romanului românesc modern*, p. 68.
[14] Matei Călinescu, *Aspecte literare*, p. 134.

knowledge of the self, to intuition of *the intimate truths* of his being. The fragile balance proposed and maintained a while between the outside world and the inner one is broken, the inner world overwhelming the outside one"[15].

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[15] Mioc, *Anamorfoză şi poetică,* p. 145.

Living Together - Equal Opportunity and Access in Society

His Royal Highness Prince Radu of Romania,
PhD. of The National Defence College

Speech of HRH Prince Radu of Romania, Special Representative of the Romanian Government, at the International Summit of the British Council
London, March 12, 2008

Mr Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

To be here today is a pleasure indeed and a source of hope. Taking part in the launch of the British Council Living Together programme, under the auspices of the Council of Europe and during the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue is a wonderful opportunity for somebody coming from my part of the world.

It is also a perfect context to talk about the impact of migration on home and host societies, since Romania is a European space that experienced this phenomenon in about every single epoch of its history, especially in the modern and contemporary times.

A mixture of Western roots (Latin) and Eastern faith (Orthodox) makes Romania a ground of rich and complementary culture. Also, despite the overwhelming majority of Romanian ethnics (89,5%), Romania has always been a model of confluence. In the historic provinces of Banat (Western Romania) and Dobrogea (South-eastern Romania) it is common to meet local communities including up to 14 different minorities.

As a member of the Royal House of Romania and as a Special Representative of the Romanian Government, in the last seven years I have constantly been in touch with local communities at home and abroad. I developed projects such as "Local Romania", "The Europe of Regions Initiative" or "The USA Friendship Tour". I tried, throughout meetings and actions, to put together

and to encourage local economic initiative, local administration, young people's education, civil society and minorities contribution to the society.

Today, after having visited every single corner of my country, of my region and most of my continent, a few conclusions became obvious to me:

One regards the extraordinary number of people who leave Eastern Europe in search of a better paid job abroad or of a better education in Western universities. Most of these people are young. This brings to the home society the benefit of an immediate better standard of life for their families. Today, 2 million Romanians work in Spain and Italy, send money to their families and increase, on a short and medium term, their living horizon. Their children have a better school and better holidays, while adults modernize their mentality and transfer, on their return, a new standard of life onto the whole community. Into the host societies, they often bring a new energy, enthusiasm and flexibility, a plus of adaptability and motivation, beneficial to the host society. In my last visit to Spain, I was told that Romanian children in primary schools are the most active, the most motivated in their class and often they learn Spanish language quicker and better than the Spanish children.

Another conclusion is that these people become earlier Europeans than our people at home. They are obliged to speak a foreign language, a largely absent skill in Western Europe; to adapt to a different model of society, culture and traditions, which is one of the goals of the European Union (unity in diversity); to learn to have a community role, in contrast with the Oriental Europe's tradition to over-cultivate the sense of family. A simple example: in Spain, in Castilla La Mancha Region alone, a number of 84 Romanian civic associations were created in two years, composed by young people who never before performed such activities at home.

A fundamental topic of today's reality in Europe is the Intercultural dialogue. I can testimony that the gap between Eastern and Western Europe culture and traditions is still consistent. Supranational institutions, shared values and the aquis communautaire are fundamental, but do not solve the entire issue. Also, intelligence does not replace wisdom, information does not mean knowledge, mass-media cannot replace dictionaries and democracy and freedom do not bring automatically the sense of responsibility, generosity, loyalty to a cause and the power of personal example. It is sometimes amazing to see how, despite the extraordinary tools we posses today, despite the historical moment of extending the Europe Union over an important part of the geography and culture of our

continent, we still behave, on both parts, as if we were co-existing, and not living together.

Tens of thousands of young Romanians are students in foreign universities, from Britain to Japan and from Australia and Singapore to Chile. This is a blessing for the European Union, for Romania, for the international system and organizations promoting living together.

There is still so much to learn about our part of Europe: what are our needs, our fears, our energies and expectations. Europe does not exploit yet the amazing capacity of young generations of Eastern Europe to speak foreign languages, to assimilate globalization; their fantastic capacity to adapt to the new, their phenomenal skills to use technology and to transform into economic and scientific benefit information and freedom. Let us think for a moment of two young Romanian artists, who are highly appreciated in Britain: the soprano Angela Gheorghiu and the ballerina Alina Cojocaru. They are both born in modest towns of Romania, in modest families and in a type of society that usually receives lessons from everywhere. It would be so much more useful if we tried, as we do today, to consider causes and not only to analyse effects.

Those who decide to live or learn abroad will always be a step ahead the others in the intercultural dialogue; they will cultivate living together values; they will be a living bridge between Western and Eastern Europe. They will also be a source of energy, an example of flexibility and adaptability and a added value to the existing talent, intellectual capacity and knowledge of the home society. Ultimately, they will be the best advocates and the best sources of understanding of their own homeland and local cultures, traditions and societies.

Living together is putting together hope, understanding, generosity, sense of responsibility, and the power of personal example.

Rationalism from Plato to Mircea Florian

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Abstract

In everybody "sleeps a Plato"[1] and the reason becomes active trough "Plato's conception"[2], shows Mircea Florian in the theory of recessivity. So we can establish Plato's reason as a point of view. The theory of reason is related to the rationalism which is seen "in similarity with the science"[3] and the philosopher puts the equality sign between the rationalism and the science because "we must not forget that the rationalism has been patronized by the appearance of science"[4]. But the science cannot exist without a creative thought and the activity of the creative thought begins with "the legendary rationalism of… Plato"[5]. Through an incursion in the history of philosophy, Mircea Florian, also arrives to Plato by showing how the victory of the reason is nearby and Plato "gives the formula… against the scepticism"[6]. But the problem is that from Plato and Aristotle there is the reading "the philosophy was almost on the whole a continuing abuse of… the creations of the reason"[7] and then it is necessary in establishing the given in general. So M. Florian has the virtue (…) to offer the largest perspective on the philosophy"[8]. The given is seen through the rapport to "a conscience"[9] and then the notion of conscience "floats on its own… in the empire of Plato"[10] and through the recessivity (from Latin recidere – to come after) the reason arrives at "a form of knowledge"[11].

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[1] Mircea Florian, *Experiența ca principiu de reconstrucție filosofică*, 100+1 Gramar, 2002, p. 133.

[2] Mircea Florian, *Recesivitatea ca structură a lumii*, volume II, Eminescu , Bucharest, 1987, p. 103.

[3] Adrian Michiduță, *Filozofia recesivității*, doctoral dissertation, manuscript, 2008.

[4] Mircea Florian, "Ştiință şi raționalism"**,** in volume *Scrieri Alese*, Academiei Publishing House, 1968, p. 38.

[5] Mircea Florian, *Logica recesivității*, Aius, Craiova, 2006, p. 62.

[6] Florian, *Recesivitatea ca structură a lumii*, p. 224.

[7] Florian, "Ştiință şi raționalism", p. 11.

[8] Ioan N. Roşca, *Paşii ontici. Experiență şi motivație la Mircea Florian*, in Annals of University of Bucharest, Series Filosophy, XLV/1996.

[9] Florian, *Recesivitatea ca structură a lumii*, p. 73.

[10] Florian, *Logica recesivității*, p. 73.

[11] *Ibidem*, p. 107.

Keywords: *doxa, episteme, Mircea Florian, Plato, rationalism, reason, recessivity.*

I. Introduction

The point of departure in this paper consists of the philosophical typological classification of Mircea Florian. So, there are three established types:

1) "the first traditional one is the Jewish theological type expressed by the biblical myth"[12];

2) "the second type is *the human-rational* type, resumed in the idea of *homo-sapiens* (Anaxagoras, Plato, stoics, Thomas D` Aquinas etc)"[13];

3) "the third type is newer (...), the positive-naturalist type which replaces *homo-sapiens* by *homo-faber*"[14].

It results that Plato is the personification of the rational typology and then he goes far away arriving through "Plato's old procedure"[15] to two components:

1) "a sensible, irrational, inferior component"[16] and

2) "an intelligible, rational component..."[17].

Hence, "the ancient culture donated the Greek rationality to mankind....."[18] which has a foundation based "on science"[19] that is *episteme* (science from Greek Language). Through rationalism is traced the knowledge and "every knowledge intends to conquer the truth, that is a right opinion (*doxa*= opinion in Greek)"[20]. Rationality represents an important characteristic, owner of the human thought according with the laws of the reason illustrated by the laws of the logic and so the rationality is inscribed in a logic step even through the way in which it arrives from *doxa-* δόξα (*doxa* = părere) to *episteme* - επιστήμη (*episteme* = science, knowledge). In these conditions, it would although be to find an ideal model of irrationality (similar to the ideal model taken from epistemology, as an example in

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[12] Florian, *Recesivitatea ca structură a lumii*, p. 261.

[13] *Ibidem*, p. 262.

[14] *Ibidem*, p. 13.

[15] *Ibidem*, p. 11.

[16] *Ibidem*, p. 15.

[17] *Ibidem*, p. 15.

[18] *Ibidem*, p. 87.

[19] *Ibidem.*

[20] *Ibidem*, p. 121.

physics are the models of the ideal gas and of the material point etc). The ideal philosophical way is represented even by Plato's rationality and this model is even the point from which can begin the study of rationality in Mircea Florian's acceptation.

II. The Rationality from Plato to Mircea Florian

In a large acceptation, the rationality is the property of a material system or of some ideas which have intelligible functions. It can be said that it is an essential characteristic of the human nature and it represents the human behaviour which is conformed to the values of a society.

> *Rationality as an essential characteristic, specific to the human thought and action, consists of putting the laws of nature as its base, so they are personified by the logic principles. Rationality is the human behaviour which is conformed by it and its established and defended values through the different normative approaches as: political, juridical, moral ones etc. In a large sense, it is said that is has rationality and material system, the structures, essences and functions of which are intelligible.*[21]

So, rationalists implicate intelligibility, which means the referring that can be known by the reason, by the opposition between the head of the sensitive

Intelligible means that:

- it can be known with the help of the thought;

- in the idealistic philosophy, there is an ideal essence which can be known only by reason, by thought, that is independent of the sensitive knowledge, in opposition with the sensitive (which can be known by feelings).[22]

Going through this line of an intelligible application, means to also implicate the dimension of the capacity which has the source of the special creativity of humanity. So, the creativity would represent the special human capacity about developing the rationality. But the rationality is due to some reasons which although depend on:

1) the history stage of an existing society, of the date of elaborated reason and

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[21] *Dicționarul de filozofie*, Political Publishing House, Bucharest, 1978, p. 578.
[22] *Ibidem*, p. 358.

2) the creative personality that elaborates a reason in historically given conditions.

Then the rationality could be related to the creative reason of a given historical era and it could not be a universal concept which is valuated and applied in any historical time.

Retaking a still contested expression of Gilles-Gaston Granger, we shall tell that far from being an elaborated definitive form, ... the reason consists in being in every historical era a figure of provisory equilibrium of a creative imagination.[23]

Rationalism consists in an important side because Mircea Florian tells: "The man as a man is a rational being"[24]. The history of rationality begins with Plato and then Plato's model is the first ideal model which offers a base of study which has resisted in time. Plato is the one who succeeds in "a pure rational concept"[25]. So it is imposed the elaboration that the rationality of Plato implicated two aspects related to:

- its nature and

- its forms.

Plato's nature of rationality is of express dialogue, in the sense of marking out by a conceptual thought which presents the different opinions which are told by the locutions of various heroes of Plato`s writings and what confers a dynamic and original character to the philosophical notions. But a problem appears if there is or not an authentic or a hidden dialogue.

The rationality of Plato is... the expression of a dialogue thought, that is of a thought that is always opposite to various opinions. (...) There are a lot of talks... in the sense that various times, Plato's dialogues constituted an authentic and real dialogue or a masked monologue?[26]

By taking an ensemble, Plato's philosophy is of a doxography and a dialogue nature, representing an expression of a double dialectic valence:

- *the dialectics of Socrate*, from the youth, which is the way to arrive from άγνοια (*agnoia*= ignorance) to δόξα (*doxa* = opinion);

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[23] G. G. Constandache, "Pentru o teorie a raționalității," *Noema*, vol 1, no 1, 2002, "Politehnică" University, Bucharest.
[24] Florian, *Recesivitatea ca structură a lumii*, p. 263.
[25] Al. Posescu, *Introducere în filozofie*, Institutul de Artă Grafică, University Press, Bucharest, 1943, p. 59.
[26] Frédéric Cossuta, "The Dialogues` Dimiensions Of The Philosophical Discours: The Dialogues of Plato", in LUZZATI D, *Le Dialogique*, Lang, Berne, 1997, pp. 27-45.

- *the properly dialectics of Plato*, belonging to the age of maturity through which is presented the virtual world of δόξα-*doxa* and then arriving (transcending) in the unique, ideal world from επιστήμη (*episteme* = science)[27].

In *The Dialogues* of Plato are presented various persons (such as philosophers, relatives of Plato etc) with emission of some opinions (δόξ-*doxoi*) but only Socrate's opinion (δόξα - *doxa*) has the most privileged place: he is the one who provokes his interlocutors to have opinions and from these opinions it is discerned then a persuasion of the others, that is the true opinion. The process of Plato's definition is too complicated, so it results the relation between truth (*aletheia* - αλήθεια) and opinion (*doxa* - δόξα,) an so on we arrive to the true opinion - *ortho doxa, ὀρθό δόξα*. The result of the rational creative activity must go to a knowledge that is "the search of an orthodoxy"[28] which is "inherent to any thought"[29] and it must not be "confused with the dogmatism"[30]. So we arrive to Mircea Florian's idea, that is: "Any knowledge has as a finality to discover the truth, the right opinion" [31].

These forms of rationality (*episteme* and *doxa*) bring Mircea Florian to "a certain conclusion"[32] which is referred to "the moment when we realise that the individuality is imperfect because of the mortality"[33]. So, two ways are opened: either it is given up to any certain knowledge about the truth of the physical world from the Greek science it is not an object (episteme) but only a probability or an opinion (doxa) – or is searched the true reality outside or beyond the sensibility"[34], so arriving to the real science which "has as object the transcendent, that is the Idea or the Form proclaimed by Plato or Aristotle" [35].

The modern society of Florian "suffers of what Plato names *pleonexie*,... that is an abundance of the inherited or the won knowledge"[36] and so we arrive to a crisis of the brains, which means "a disappoint for the rationalism is the

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[27] Michael Frede, *Plato's Arguments And The Dialogue of The Form*, Oxford Studies In Ancient Philosophy, 1992, p. 57.
[28] Florian, *Recesivitatea ca structură a lumii*, p. 121.
[29] *Ibidem*, p. 28.
[30] *Ibidem*.
[31] *Ibidem*.
[32] Florian, *Experienţa ca principiu de reconstrucţie filosofică*, p. 236.
[33] *Ibidem*, p. 32.
[34] *Ibidem*, p. 236.
[35] *Ibidem*
[36] Florian, *Recesivitatea ca structură a lumii*, p. 120

irrationalism"[37] and then takes place "the relativity of knowledge"[38]. Being relative, the scientific knowledge is imperfect and so the principal duty of the brains is to discover "the explanation about the relativity of knowledge"[39]. Then this imperfection of the scientific knowledge "is even the richness with its endless possibilities, its unfinished character"[40]. So nobody can anticipate what Plato named *misology* in its dialogue about Phaeidon that is the hate or the dislike towards the knowledge and the thought"[41]. To mention that in Plato's acceptation, misology comes from *misos* = hate and *logos* = reason, word[42] and it has the origin in the false opposition between word, reality, sometimes life, on one hand, and on the other hand the thought and the reason seen as a conflict, fracture which gives birth to the feeling of absurd[43].

The rationalism is analyzed in Mircea Florian's philosophy, being reported to the irrationalism so going to the sophistry, where there are found the *pro* and *anti* arguments. So, Gheorge Cazan shows: "the critics of the critica irationalis conducted Florian to (...) the proposition of a rational position"[44].

But Mircea Florian wants to talk about the rationalism in philosophy and in this way he follows to establish an ontology "by asking the philosophy to begin from the given, as a science and not from an object"[45]. The reason, even being recessive, has the role of illumination"[46], the recessivity being in Florian's conception, a principle about the philosophical reconstruction. The rationalist incursion of Mircea Florian scarcely begins from the notion *of the given* which has as object the philosophy, "a rather neural significant, so easily to understand and to accept"[47]. Through the excessive recessivity, the philosopher's rationalism shows that this *neural significance of the rationalism* is "considered as a legitimate formula and so in the future is affirmed the possibility of knowing the sensible

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[37] Florian, *Recesivitatea ca structură a lumii*, p. 121.

[38] *Ibidem,* p. 37.

[39] *Ibidem.*

[40] Florian, *Experienţa ca principiu de reconstrucţie filosofică*, p. 52.

[41] *Ibidem*, p. 53.

[42] Mircea Florian, "Misologie sau Filosofia Absurdului", in vol *Scrieri Alese*, Academiei Publishing House, 1968, Bucharest, pp. 217-218.

[43] *Ibidem*, p. 42.

[44] Gh. Al. Cazan, *Fundamentul filosofiei la Mircea Florian*, Political Publishing House, Bucharest, 1971, p. 209.

[45] *Dicţionarul de filozofie*, p. 284.

[46] Florian, *Recesivitatea ca structură a lumii*, p. 107.

[47] Florian, *Reconstrucţie filosofică*, Casa Şcoalelor, Bucharest, 1944, p. 88.

world through reason, the last being seen as a possessor or a producer of the universal and necessary truths classified by the thought of the given"[48].

III. Conclusion

Through this whole step about the philosophy of recessivity, Mircea Florian makes an incursion in the history of the philosophy by showing that the philosophy has a half in the complexity of culture about taking into consideration the whole aspects of the manifestation of human life (...), indifferently of their nature and orientation "[49].

Florian`s term of recessivity can be seen as a principle or structure and, in this way, can be established a relation with it, named cybernetics thought[50] and so Mircea Florian's thought has a new valence, it is anchored in the well developed world of the present and future and it does not lose its actuality.

Florian's study is oriented to life and so appears the necessity of establishing a final point referring to the role of philosophy, then reaching the first philosophy which is the metaphysics, which in this case "means that the breakdown of philosophy will be assured only in one case: when the metaphysics concerns itself about the research of the principles"[51]. In the centre of Florian's philosophy there is "the hominization, the hominism, where through the recessive factor, the man becomes man[52], so the rationalism of this thinker cannot lose its actuality because of having a constant predilection for the anthroplogy, is an anthropological process"[53] and a thought according to which the man is always welcome.

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[48] Michiduță, *Filozofia recesivității* p. 259
[49] Cazan, *Fundamentul filosofiei la Mircea Florian*, p. 210.
[50] Vladimir Răzvan, "Recesivitate şi feedback," *Revista Contemporanul*, 32(2132), 25 septembrie 1987.
[51] Florian, *Recesivitatea ca structură a lumii*, p. 262.
[52] *Ibidem*.
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The Original Sin and Eschatology

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Abstract

The pending of humankind between sin and death represents the ontological process transposed into its expiation before mystery. The sin of the first parents was inevitable. The original sin, seen as a calamity, as a genetic pest, banishes from the traditional theology the millennial movements together with their inherent aberrations, placing them at the limit of heresy. There are two "genes" which characterize the man, one of the nostalgia for the paradise lost, and another of fear of this sacred perimeter, which becomes more and more pregnant, and rules his existence together with the consciousness of death, assimilated to the Divine Tribunal, in esse with Parousia, reminding of the flaming swords of the cherubs who were ordered to guard the path to the tree of life. The tenseness, to which Adam Kadmon is subjected to, in the period from the original fall to the end of time, is expressed through the redemption of the original sin by the existence in this transitory world.

Keywords: *eschatology*, *civitas terrena sive diaboli*, *the original sin*, *humankind*, *Dies Irae*, *Christian theology*, *mysterium tremendum*, *hortus deliciarum*, *Parousia*, *Adam Kadmon*.

The pending of humankind between sin and death represents the ontological process transposed into its expiation before mystery. Lev Sestov was right when he affirmed that "beginnings and endings mean, in other words, everything, except for the middle. We don't need the middle because it is worth nothing in itself."[1]

The sin of the first parents was inevitable. In other words, its fulfilment did not represent an act in itself, but an immanent state, residing in the corruptible animated clay. Immanuel Kant concluded, respecting the truth, that "man has a penchant for evil", but the rationalist did not separate the evil inherent to the moral

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[1] Lev Sestov, *Începuturi şi sfârşituri*, Institutul European, Iaşi, 1993.

system from the Evil, as an inherent entity of this "civitas terrena sive diaboli" (St. Augustin).

"By giving way to the tempter, Adam and Eve committed a personal sin, but this sin altered the human nature, which is consequently transmitted in a fallen state. (…) Furthermore, in *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* it is said that «The original sin is a transmissible sin for the following reason: it is a sin that was acquired, not committed, it is a state and not a deed.»"[2]

The original sin, seen as a calamity, as a genetic pest, banishes from the traditional theology the millennial movements together with their inherent aberrations, placing them at the limit of heresy. Thus, theodicy has the value of truth. In the same way as Dies Irae gave birth to chiliasm, the first disobedience involving the divine apophthegm, created a series of the initiatic quest of the lost paradise, coming from the "nostalgia of paradise" (N. Crainic), inherent to the human immanence. There have always been spiritual illuminists who have tried to imagine that it irremediably lost place, reducing it to a cognoscible level, through language, but man, "that creature, bitten by the demiurgeous snake from the heart" (N. Ionescu), is no longer capable of being master of his inner nature in order to be panenthetic to the eckhartian deity and discern truth from falsity.

In the mystical thinking, paradise has been seen in different forms. Paradise as the *oicumena* between the biblical mountains of Sion and Sinai is to be found in the Book of the Jubilees, paradise as a space bordered by the Gange, Eufrat, Tigru and Ghihon is to be found at Flavius Josephus, and later, following the same research line, at Saints Theophilus, Irineus, Hypolite, and Epiphanius. Only with Saint Ephrem the Syrian this naturalistic vision was transcended, the paradise being conceived as a cosmic temple, reflected at the terrestrial level in the Temple of Jerusalem, thus being created a sacred geography. Isidore of Seville, influenced by the Augustinian conception, identified two types of paradises, a mundane one, hortus deliciarum, where the first parents had been placed and the celestial one, where the souls of those waiting for Redemption reside. Beginning with Venerable Bede, we can observe a theologising of the concept of paradise, by representing it as a symbolic image either of the Church, or of our future country, thus framing it in a true geopolitics of the sacred. Perhaps the vision of Priest John on paradise had the most profound impact on the collective mentality. He described the terrestrial paradise as residing on the top of four Indian mountains, from each of

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[2] Walter-Jörg Langbein, *Lexiconul erorilor biblice*, Paralela 45, Piteşti, 2007, p. 104.

them springing rivers full of precious stones and scented apples with thaumaturgic effects.

A complex image of paradise is given by Thomas Aquinas, who has as models those of Saint Augustine, Isidore of Seville, Venerable Bede and John of Damascus. "Those who say that paradise lies under the equatorial circle believe that in this area the climate is completely temperate due to the equality between days and nights throughout the whole year and to the fact that the sun is never too high, causing the weather to be too cold, neither is it too warm, because, although the sun passes right over one's head, it changes position very quickly. Yet, Aristotle affirms very clearly in his Treaty on Meteors that this region is inhabitable, which seems plausible, because even where the sun does not pass right over one's head, the weather is too hot, due to the proximity of the sun. In both cases, we must assume that paradise was laid in a temperate zone, either under the equator, or in another area."[3]

Naturally, around this paradise there has been created a whole brilliant literature, from Dante to Milton, and the Flemish School, through Hieronymus Bosch and Peter Bruegel the Old, who, by the preciousness of their works, made it more approachable a vision of the ancestral land, but the one that made the best link between the original sin and Dies Irae is the modern alchemist Jean-Julien Champagne, better known under the name of Fulcanelli, who, by decrypting the occult message of the Cross of Hendaye, in the homonymous chapter of the second edition of "Mysteries of Cathedrals" indicates the refuge of the right from the apocalyptic catastrophe: "Praise thee, oh, Cross, sole Hope".

In this manner, Fulcanelli, with his illuminated hieratism, shows us the way, with the responsibility of an initiate in the sacred science. In the vision of the alchemist, we notice, that the chosen ones do not find their dwelling in a mundane paradise like the society, as one naively but beautifully described in F. Bacon's or T. Campanella's utopias.

Couldn't we extrapolate Venerable Bede's act of penitence,

> "Thus I remembered the sins I committed
> The dirtiness of life, the awful moment of death,
> The great day of the Judgment with its terrible trials,

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[3] Jean Delumeau, *Grădina desfătărilor. O istorie a raiului*, Humanitas Publishing, Bucharest, 1997, p. 45.

And the eternal wrath of the Judge for the guilty ones."[4]

to the consciousness of sin, empowering the matrices of S. Kierkegaard's anguish?

"There are two eschatological perspectives, a personal individual one and a universal historical one. The conciliation of these two perspectives, as a result of the paradox of time, is extremely difficult. In the traditional Christian theology they have never been sufficiently explained. On one hand it is affirmed the individual solution of the personal destiny. On the other hand, it is expected the solution of the humankind and of the whole world at the end of time and history. Between these two perspectives there is a void."[5]

It is from this "void time" that the anguish of the Danish thinker comes. "But the spirit bearing this anguish represents, in Kierkegaard's view, the authentic human soul, the human consciousness that looks again at its existence penetrated by and placed under the spectre of the primordial sin, but also in the sphere of a possible redemption granted by the divine grace."[6]

According to Cioran, the fall from time, the release from temporality has a granular aspect, given by the atomist vision on universe, and the supreme redemption is the passing into nothingness. Cioran's Weltanschauung is funded on the aporetic antinomies, which impart their predilection for sisifism, and the installation of humanity's paradise inscribes itself in an evolution towards descendant roots and barbarism, being marked by a personal paradise, that he had lost, once his childhood had passed. The understanding of the Romanian nihilist beauty of creation resides in perceiving the nuances that can be inferred in the palinodia that he uses iteratively in his philosophic approach. In this respect, J. J. Wunenburger, talking about the sacred dimension, considers that "it does not play the role of the mediator between man and God unless it integrates its extremes and participations to a correlation of contrary images."

The fear of transcendent, distinguishable even at the first prophets, becomes "thrill" at S. Kirkegaard, feeding itself on the "mysterium tremendum" (R. Otto), whose reflection can be viewed in "the thousand-year kingdom", which is

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[4] Bernard McGrinn, *Sfârşitul lumii şi creştinismul timpuriu - Teoria Apocalipsei şi sfârşiturile lumii*, Meridiane, Bucharest, 1999, p. 90.

[5] Nikolai Berdiaev, *Încercare de metafizică eshatologică*, Paideia, Bucharest, 1999, p. 256.

[6] Marius Cucu, *Cioran şi exodul spre veşnicie*, Junimea, Iaşi, 2007, p. 184.

accompanied by the triumph of the righteousness through the infernal ordeal suffered by the sinners, materialised at Thomas Aquinas into an anticipated joy.[7]

There are two "genes" witch characterize the man, one of the nostalgia for the paradise lost, and another of fear of this sacred perimeter, which becomes more and more pregnant, and rules his existence together with the consciousness of death, assimilated to the Divine Tribunal, in esse with Parousia, reminding of the flaming swords of the cherubs who were ordered to guard the path to the tree of life.

The tenseness, to which Adam Kadmon is subjected to, in the period stretching from the original fall to the end of time, is expressed through the redemption of the original sin by the existence in this transitory world. This incessant damnation of man longing for the primordial hearth, is expressed by V. Rozanov very suggestively: "Two angels sit on my shoulders: the angel of laugh and the angel of tears. Their incessant quarrel is my life."[8]

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[7] Berdiaev, *Încercare de metafizică eshatologică*, p. 257.
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Philosophical law in recessive theological acceptation

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Abstract

In the acceptation of Mircea Florian's recessive philosophy, "the violence-love dualism resumes the significance of human life"[1] and thus, the philosopher establishes that there are:

1) the law of love and

2) the law of violence [2] which become the key of the morality.

Through the theory of the recessivity, (from recidere= to come after), the thinker arrives at the conclusion of the good which "is positiv [3] and the bad which "is negative"[4]. Then, it results a philosophical given of the conscience through its passage from good to bad but there is an ab initio stricto-modo moral law "and in Mircea Florian's vision, the moral law is the law of love"[5] which is seen in the role of man transformation[6].

The precedent words illustrate the motivation of the chosen theme, called "philosophical law in recessive acceptation", in the conditions of "the moral crisis abdication"[7]. The modern society "appears as a shamed moral regression"[8] and then, as Mircea Florian points out, is needed "an ideal" [9], which offers a direction through which a man "can morally work"[10].

Keywords: *the Law of Love, the Law of Violence, the Dualism Love-Violence, Philosophical Law, Mircea Florian, Morality, Recessivity, Revelation*.

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[1] Mircea Florian, *Recesivitatea ca Stuctură a lumii*, Eminescu, Iaşi, 1987, p. 9.

[2] *Ibidem*.

[3] *Ibidem*, p. 9.

[4] *Ibidem*.

[5] Adrian Michiduţă, *Filosofia recesivităţii,* doctoral dissertasion, manuscript, The Library of Faculty of Philosophy, Bucharest, 2008, p. 301.

[6] Mircea Florian, *Arta de a suferi*, Garamond, Bucharest, 2000, pp. 58-59.

[7] Florian, *Recesivitatea ca Stuctură a lumii*.

[8] *Ibidem*.

[9] *Ibidem.*

[10] *Ibidem.*

I. General Presentation of the Law - From Religion to Philosophy

Dharma, *Maat*, *Me*, *Tao*, *Torah*, *Law of Christos* are seen, in the philosophy of religion as laws with divine laws (to mention that *Torah* and *Law of Christos* are, in Christian acceptations, revealed Laws and from the perspective of the philosophy of religion they are also sacred elements in other religions). These are not simple terms or words, but true concepts. From the philosophical point of view, they are processes through which the phenomenal evolution goes to the crystallized morality and the philosophy of religious and laic law.

For a better understanding of the concept, the definition of law in the acceptation of philosophy is imposed. The Law represents a needed, general, relative report, generally established between the inside parts of the same objects which belong to the same object or phenomenon or to different phenomena and objects. From the point of view of the religion, it refers to the manifestation of a divine, supra-natural and spiritual force. In science, the law represents models of studying the nature and the society. The law, in Florian`s acceptation, is inscribed in the domains of philosophy and religion because the philosopher begins from the existence of a dualism:

1) the Law of Violence and

2) the Law of Love.[11]

But there is also a philosophical classification, in function of the degree of generality:

- the objective ones which act in the whole nature (for example, the Law Of Action and Reaction, the Law of Gravity etc);

- the general ones which act and manifest thorough the specific ones but without substituting them (for example, the correlation between philosophy, theology and science;

- the particular ones, specific to a field of activity (for example, specific to geological measures).

A classification according to causal relations can also be made:

- the dynamic, causal and mechanic ones which are applied to isolated processes (for example, Kepler's Laws about the Movement of Planets in the Solar System);

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[11] *Ibidem.*

- statistics, which is applied to integrative or open systems (for example, the behaviour of micro-processes in physics, the value of the offer-request in economics.[12]

From a simple analysis which is done to the precedent definition, it results that there is a nucleus of objective, universal, valid in any times and every space laws, so in a philosophical approach it must be a point of transcendent marker which, in Mircea Florian's acceptation, is the law of love, which is the given in the philosophy of recessivity, but it does not belong to this world, so it is "a sublime law which does not emanate from our world, but is the world of the sky"[13].

II. The Recessive Law

Law has its etymology in the Latin *Lex* and can be defined from a lot of points of view:

1) in law and politics, there is a compulsory rule, which is established by the sovereign authority which governs the reports between men who are anchored in society;

2) in the philosophy the rule of action, it is needed by man for the moral god (according to Kant);

3) according to the science and epistemology, there is a report of measure which is universally and constantly established between the natural phenomena, for example, the Law of Fall of the Corps)[14].

The T Law, seen from a juridical and moral point, inaugurates an obligation and has a significance and a rule but, as a scientific acceptation is only a relation which does not allow any exception, it has a meaning of necessity. The generality of the moral law and implicitly of the juridical law exists only in the measure of being more than a simple care decree and has a character of generalization and abstraction, similar to the scientific one. In this respect, there are some examples of moral and juridical laws: do not steal or do not murder because you will suffer the punishment of the human law, but there are also more terrible punishments in religious laws of every religion in the world and penalties can go until the lost of the eternal life.

From a philosophical point of view, there are two key texts:

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[12] *Dicționar Enciclopedic de Filosofie*, All Internațional, Bucharest, 1999, p. 399.
[13] Florian, *Recesivitatea ca Stuctură a lumii*.
[14] *Ibidem*.

- the first belongs to Rousseau (the Seventh Chapter from his work called *The Social Contract*), where the law is general through its object, which is not established for an individual, and becomes generally because is it applied to everybody's social life and its source, which is neither the result of an individual, nor of a majority, but is personified by everybody's will and it does not defer to their private interests;

- the second one is Kant's work, which shows that the law has a degree of universality and it does not prescribe any particular duty and for it is the practical reason itself, in the acceptation of being imposed to the man as a principle through its form, and thus it becomes universal ("Act so that the maximum of your will can ever value in the same time as a principle of universal legislation", The First Part, *The Critics of the Practical Reason*, Book number I).[15]

It results that the degree of generality can be determined from a scientific perspective, but the generalization of the moral law cannot be determined, because it depends on people's freedom.

> *But while the universality which characterizes the law in its scientific meaning is a given universality, the universality which keeps the moral law can only be asked, containing the possibility of its transfiguration. This happens because the scientific law depends on the nature field and the human law depends on the freedom field*[16] (there is a thirst of human nature, as Mircea Florian points it).

But the pure freedom and the thirst for power of the man is, in fact, abhorrent for society and science because it often makes what it is unpleasant to the others, and the state where this happens cannot be named state of law and thus, a man is free to the extent to which he does what the law does not forbid[17].

We can go further and arrive to the free will and the original sin and then to the world not destroyed by Cain's sin and thrown into the chaos of the violence from which it can be saved, in Florian's acceptation, only by love. Following the law, the man can chose good or bad. But there are limits of the civil law in the sense that there are foresights which permit the abortion (in some countries there is even the euthanasia and the clonation), but from the point of view of the Religious Law and the philosophical principles, this is anti-ethic, but it is ethic for the civil

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[15] Rousseau and Kant *apud* Florian, *Recesivitatea ca Stuctură a lumii*.
[16] Florian, *Recesivitatea ca Stuctură a lumii*, p. 9.
[17] Rosseau and Voltaire *apud* Florian, *Recesivitatea ca Stuctură a lumii*, p. 9.

society. So, from the human point of view, neither objective laws to be respected in a state of law and nor moral laws to govern the usual life can be established. The human reasons try to make an objective character of the law and freedom which has no object. So the settlement of an absolute morality from the human point of view becomes a very difficult problem and maybe even impossible to contour, but it must be said that there are some trials in this respect.

> *There are a lot of theoreticians who continue to offer causes for what is good or bad from a moral point of view. Some of them begun with the religion; others took as basic principle human wishes and interests. Finally, others approached the things in an abstract way. Immanuel Kant, for example, was asking what maxims could admit a universal generalization for the whole people of all times. Some modern theoreticians that work with the theory of decision argued ... a mathematic theory of preference. Taken as a whole, the theories (...) of the moral judgment have difficulties (...) but none of them congregate the universal accord (...). But there is a consolation in a more optimistic sense (...), the accord of the fundamental moral affairs is large, and transmitted thanks to the natural selection.*[18]

The arguments invoked by Quine manage to establish, on the intrinsic spirit of the paper to the existence of some sources, a morality which governs the world. As regards the meaning of the precedent concept, he appears as a commentator who mentions the works about the philosophy of law in his way of establishing the human morality. Mircea Florian begins with "the dualism of violence-love"[19] which "expresses the two poles of human life"[20] and so the philosopher looks for "the deep meaning of human life or... briefly ... the key of morality"[21]. It has to be said about Florian that there are "in the same human being, who is qualified superior to the others, can cohabit the most abject starts, the sky and the hell, the light and the dark"[22]. Through this cohabitation we arrived to "the explanation fatality of the bad"[23]. In this sense is reached the finding of the Italian criminology that the normal man "is the one who occasionally commits bad

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[18] W. I. Quine, *Ţesătura opiniei*, Paralela 45, Piteşti, 2008, p. 154 .
[19] Florian, *Recesivitatea ca Stuctură a lumii*, p. 9.
[20] *Ibidem*.
[21] *Ibidem.*
[22] *Ibidem.*
[23] *Ibidem.*

actions"[24]. In society, having this marks is ascertained then "the crisis of the morality"[25], which means that life is confronted to "the crisis of morality as science"[26], because "in front of the wave of immoral contemporary morality, the ethic thought could not succeed to discover the solid fundament of Good, the moral justice of the Moral Merit"[27]. So it appears to be "a moral back formation"[28] which is anchored in the context of the modern war characterized by destructions "of the material buildings but also of the moral ones"[29]. It results that is kept "the mysticism of violence until hysteria"[30] and in this framework, "everyone looks to get rid of a bored action and to burke the germ of love as being a physical debility"[31]. In this conditions, Mircea Florian's conclusion delineates "the necessity of the morality, the need of the ideal"[32].

The following step of the philosopher is to establish a moral position which is seen as equivocal, whereas it has a double valence:

1) "firstly, the morality is the most intimate factor of the human life, it is the voice of conscience"[33] and

2) "secondly, it seems to be a factor, a superior principle of life, a transcendental imperative which does not come from our world and it is the voice of the sky"[34].

The human life, in Florian's conception, "is moved between the immoral law which is the law of the violence, and the law of love, which is recessive"[35]. To its place, the dualism of violence-love is also recessive and can be generally seen as a relation of conflict-harmony[36]. The conflict is dominant and the harmony is recessive[37].

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[24] *Ibidem.*
[25] *Ibidem.*
[26] *Ibidem.*
[27] *Ibidem*
[28] *Ibidem.*
[29] *Ibidem.*
[30] *Ibidem.*
[31] *Ibidem.*
[32] *Ibidem.*
[33] *Ibidem.*
[34] *Ibidem.*
[35] *Ibidem*, p 10.
[36] *Ibidem.*
[37] *Ibidem.*

To find how the love-violence dualism can be in the world, Mircea Florian makes an incursion in the history of philosophy by applying the old proceeding of Plato, which shows there are:

1) "a sensible, irrational, inferior component"[38] and

2) "an intelligible, rational, superior, divine component"[39].

Among all thinkers, Florian quotes Fr. Nietzsche because of "the cruel exposure of hypocrisy (…) of false devout pretences of morality and religion"[40]. But he reproaches to Nietzsche that "he did not succeed to find a formula … which explains the cohabitation of violence and love"[41]. Nietzsche considers the man as being "a brute, disgraced by Cain's sin"[42]. But Nietzsche is sustained to a violent reality to create a human hierarchy while Christos goes in the direction of love. However, Plato and Christos do not find the salvation in this world but in "other world, of perfection"[43], which is transcendent. The violence predominates in this world but the recessive world of love is flowing from the transcendent and restored the moral ideal[44].

In human life, the law of violence brings the bad and the law of love brings the good. Through the theory of recessivity, Mircea Florian notes "the theory according to which the good is positive, and the bad is negative"[45].

After preliminary concerns and incursions in the history of philosophy, Mircea Florian establishes "the clearing of the rapport of recessivity between the law of violence and the law of love, terms used by Tolstoi"[46], with the mention that he only borrowed the terms. Human life is seen as a permanent oscillation "between the law of the violence where immoral facts stay together and the law of love, the only fundament of morality"[47]. The human characters which define this oscillation proved to be the power and the love which "have been present since the

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[38] *Ibidem.*
[39] *Ibidem.*
[40] *Ibidem*, p. 11.
[41] *Ibidem.*
[42] *Ibidem.*
[43] *Ibidem.*
[44] *Ibidem.*
[45] *Ibidem*, p. 19.
[46] *Ibidem*, p. 30.
[47] *Ibidem.*

appearing of the man as rational being"[48] but self-consciousness is considered as a subject because "without self-consciousness there is no subject"[49].

So it appears, taking into consideration the law of violence and the will of power there is "the man of power" [50] that exists "in every men"[51]. This will of power has an old history being "a familiar notion for the sophists until Schopenhauer and especially Nietzsche"[52]. Thence the human existence becomes governed by some sort of thirst for power which "stays in structure of the will which actions in the name of individual self-consciousness being"[53]. This will is the cause of war and determinates the violence. Mircea Florian shows, in these meanings, that he is interested to study "the human aggressiveness…, *the war* associated with *violence*"[54]. The cardinal problem is constituted to define what is war, in its deep significance and to determine if it is a present permanent phenomenon in human history which "was, is and will be forever"[55].

Then there are different acceptations about war. The fight for existence cannot be only seldom a war because it is not a face-to-face fight but "only a fight to find food"[56]. The war is seen as a bloody fight between human groups being present in the animal world beginning "from sociable insects–some species of bees and especially ants[57]. But the war cannot be a value object in human life because "it devalues not only the personality of the man but also the life itself, because it imposes that man should kill man"[58]. The war arrives to exert a regressive influence, as Florian shows that the man goes back to "the primitive beast"[59]. It results that the violence has a negative function and then, the philosopher concludes, we must find the power to see "the violence which accepts the recessive rapport of Love and Reason"[60].

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[48] *Ibidem.*
[49] *Ibidem.*
[50] *Ibidem.*
[51] *Ibidem.*
[52] *Ibidem.*
[53] *Ibidem*, p. 2.
[54] *Ibidem*, p. 33.
[55] *Ibidem.*
[56] *Ibidem.*
[57] *Ibidem*, p. 34.
[58] *Ibidem*, p. 35.
[59] *Ibidem.*
[60] *Ibidem*, p. 38.

A historical incursion shows that the slavery is a step further in the phase of human productivity but is also an expression of dominated society. At the origin of the human being, the law of violence is predominant, but Mircea Florian shows it is recessive corrected by "the antithetical law of love"[61] and it results that the dominated society is not absolute and exclusive because "it is recessive and accompanied by the coordinative law which is the law of love"[62]. With the mention that the inside voice or the conscience and the laic and religious moralities are seen as imperatives which determine the man to go thorough the way of the love[63].

Against individual aggressiveness there is, in society, a way of pressure exerted by the upper class that is the oligarchy through which is made the social power called "the law of little number"[64] but there is also "a law of the big number"[65] composed by electors. In this respect, Mircea Florian makes an appeal to the political philosophy and shows he is the partisan of democracy and of the peaceful society where the perceptions of Machiavelli do not dominate[66].

Thus, the necessity of establishing the law of love as a predominated factor in the human society and following Florian's recessive reason, it results that the law of love is defined to be a given which is an intrinsic component of the human conscience.

III. Conclusion

The philosophy of Florian`s recessivity, applied in the domain of law establishes as a given the law of love. The demarche is realized by an incursion in the history of philosophy but also in the proper history of the humanity beginning with the primitive wildness where was imposed the law of the hardest trough the law of violence. So it is observed that together with the law of love there is also the law of violence. The conclusion is optimist because from the inside voice of the human conscience and the religious perceptions, the law of love is imperatively affirmed. But the philosopher proves to be preoccupied by the future and then he

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[61] *Ibidem*, p. 42.
[62] *Ibidem*. p. 43.
[63] *Ibidem*, pp. 44-43.
[64] *Ibidem*, p. 43.
[65] *Ibidem*.
[66] *Ibidem*.

wonders: "What will dominate in the future: the love or the violence …?"[67] As a prime condition of human progress there is the "inflorescence of an authentic morality of love"[68]. So, without the existence of love from the philosophy and religion, demonstrates Florian, the humanity would fall in the chaos of primitive wildness and the civilization would pass away.

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[67] *Ibidem*, p. 11.
[68] *Ibidem*, p. 13.

ESSAYS

PRESENTATIONS
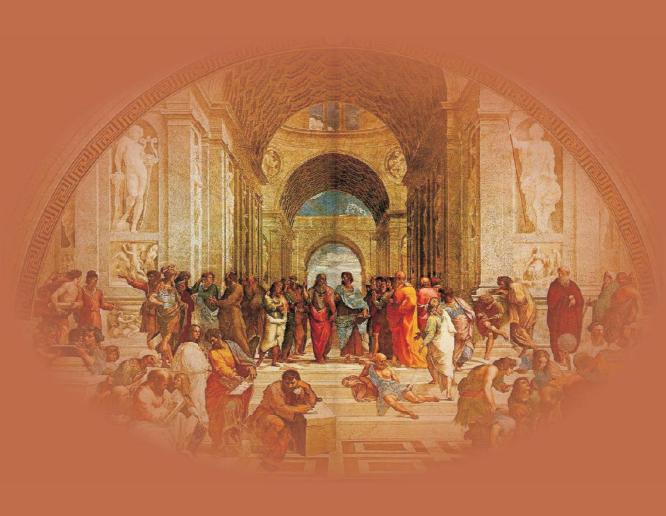
REVIEWS

The alchemy of human evolution

by Marius Dumitrescu, Iaşi, Tipo Moldova, 2007

Review

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The book entitled *The Alchemy of human evolution* proposes a throughout and analytical incursion within the dimension of an extremely inciting topic, both for the large public and for acknowledged researchers in field of occult sciences, alchemy of evolution of mystic societies. In this way, the author Marius Dumitrescu, Prof. PhD at Al. I. Cuza University of Iaşi focuses the analytical effort not only over describing the social-historical evolution of the alchemy field, but in order to understand and perceive the alchemy as a way of assuming the mystical-philosophical feature of our lives. Within this frame, the alchemists have been reminded and presented by the author, as complex personalities, which emphasized at some point the history and the development of human civilization, in different fields of both human and scientific research. These spirits that underlined the history of humanity have kept more often as secret their passion and dedication for alchemy; such a hidden aspect was determined by the persecutions of social factors, but was also cultivated as a metaphysical screen that indicated alchemy as the discipline belonging to those being initiated. The author insisted, during his entire research, over the idea that alchemy was intended at its beginning to be *an ante-science of transmutations, its aim mainly consisting in elevating the degenerated natures.* The alchemist, in accordance to the author, regards even the metals as plants that can be raised, thus reducing the defects and increasing the qualities. Considering this point of view, the alchemist has opened the universe to some possibilities near to the magic and fairytale valences of the witchery. The alchemy has been classified in various sub-fields, such as the mineral, vegetal or social alchemy; still, the basic alchemy consists in the spiritual feature. Here, the

author insisted on the correspondence between the alchemic act and the human spirit. Nothing of what has been accomplished by the alchemist by his activities has manifested such profoundness, and has not neglected or avoided the dimension of human spirit. Contrariwise, from and towards this dimension, the alchemy act and exercise has directed the energy to efforts. The author has proposed a transition of the important steps, as regards the historical evolution of Alchemy, simultaneously with the evocation of personalities that determined and affirmed this complex and hidden evolution of the social vulgus. In this way, authors as Giordano Bruno, Descartes, Kant, and Hegel are mentioned and analyzed in their correspondence with the phenomenon of alchemy, as well as modern authors, as Freud, Jung or Emil Cioran. The modernity is not seen by the authors as a space where the alchemy cannot be found anymore. Contrariwise, the alchemic processes, together with the camouflage screening, the hiding and dissimulation of the sacredness have outlined the paradigm of modernity, the dimension with *transmutation of strengths.* In conclusion, the paper *The Alchemy of human evolution* represents not only an incursion into the fascinating and magic universe of the metaphysic and alchemic transcendent, but also an invitation to rediscover a field, which far away of exhausting the valences, has always indicated us new plans of the human being and of human spirit condition.