

Rationalism from Plato to Mircea Florian

Adriana Mihaela Macsut *PhD Candidate*
University of Bucharest
Faculty of Philosophy

Abstract

*In everybody "sleeps a Plato"¹ and the reason becomes active through "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.*

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, "Știință și 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, "Știință și raționalism", p. 11.

⁸ Ioan N. Roșca, *Pașii ontici. Experiență și motivație la Mircea Florian*, in *Annals of University of Bucharest, Series Philosophy*, 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

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 acceptance.

II. The Rationality from Plato to Mircea Florian

In a large acceptance, 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

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 valued 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 *ἀγνοια* (*agnoia*= ignorance) to *δόξα* (*doxa* = opinion);

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* - ἀλήθεια) and opinion (*doxa* - δόξα,) and 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

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, *Experiența ca principiu de reconstrucție 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 acceptance, misology comes from *misos* = hate and *logos* = reason, word⁴² 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 absurd⁴³.

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

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

³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 37.

³⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁰ Florian, *Experiența ca principiu de reconstrucție 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 *Dicționarul de filozofie*, p. 284.

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

⁴⁷ Florian, *Reconstrucție filosofică*, Casa Școalelor, 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 thought⁵⁰ 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 man⁵², so the rationalism of this thinker cannot lose its actuality because of having a constant predilection for the anthropology, is an anthropological process”⁵³ and a thought according to which the man is always welcome.

Bibliography:

1. Cazan, Gh. Al., *Fundamentul filosofiei la Mircea Florian*, Political Publishing House, Bucharest, 1971.
2. Constandache, G. G., “Pentru o teorie a raționalității,” *Noema*, vol 1, no 1, 2002. “Politehnică” University, Bucharest.

⁴⁸ Michiduță, *Filozofia recesivității* p. 259

⁴⁹ Cazan, *Fundamentul filosofiei la Mircea Florian*, p. 210.

⁵⁰ Vladimir Răzvan, “Recesivitate și feedback,” *Revista Contemporanul*, 32(2132), 25 septembrie 1987.

⁵¹ Florian, *Recesivitatea ca structură a lumii*, p. 262.

⁵² *Ibidem*.

⁵³ Michiduță, *Filozofia recesivității* p. 262

3. Cossuta, Frédéric, "The Dialogues` Dimiensions Of The Philosophical Discours: The Dialogues of Plato", in LUZZATI D, *Le Dialogique*, Lang, Berne, 1997.
4. Florian, Mircea, *Experiența ca principiu de reconstrucție filosofică*, 100+1 Gramar, 2002.
5. Florian, Mircea, *Recesivitatea ca structură a lumii*, volume II, Eminescu, Bucharest, 1987.
6. Florian, Mircea, "Știință și raționalism," in vol. *Scrieri Alese*, Academiei Publishing House, 1968.
7. Florian, Mircea, "Misologie sau Filosofia Absurdului", in vol. *Scrieri Alese*, Academiei Publishing House, Bucharest.
8. Florian, Mircea, *Logica recesivității*, Aius, Craiova, 2006.
9. Frede, Michael, *Plato's Arguments And The Dialogue of The Form*, Oxford Studies In Ancient Philosophy, 1992.
10. Michiduță, Adrian, *Filozofia recesivității*, Doctoral Dissertation, Manuscript, 2008.
11. Posescu, Al., *Introducere în filozofie*, Institutul de Artă Grafică, University Press, Bucharest, 1943.
12. Roșca, N. Ioan, "Pașii ontici. Experiență și motivație la Mircea Florian," in *Annalls of University of Bucharest, Series Philosophy*, an XLV/1996.
13. Vladimir, Răzvan, "Recesivitate și feedback," *Revista Contemporanul*, 32(2132), 25 September 1987.