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RESEARCH PAPERS

On the Domestic Space for Greeks (and on other spaces)

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Abstract

The Greek is by definition a spectator, a curious one, a good observer and a talented story-teller. Homer and Herodotus answer for the Greek's quality of listener, spectator and actor. The Greek, in the end, sees more (and here Homer is not an inconvenient witness!) than he hears. The eye is facing the sun and it goes blind because of its too great brightness. Most of the Greeks are blind, their teacher – Homer – was blind and Socrates wants to educate the sight. He is an oculist handicrafts-man without workshop and without license. No wonder he falls under the incidence of "the illicit"! He does it, however, in the public space, i.e. in a place located in the open and which offers itself to the domestic sphere. This domestic sphere is inherited by Socrates from myths and rites and finds it sitting in the ideology of the polis. Socrates knows that the choice that a nation makes when representing itself may say a lot, both by what it passes over in silence, as well as by what it shows. From here begins the present text.

Keywords: *love, friendship, philosophy, wisdom, domestic space, private space.*

It's a well-known fact that the vocabulary of Greeks regarding love distinguishes four kinds of *phylia*: the natural or parental one (*physike*) by virtue of which affection goes towards the persons of the same blood, the *phylia* that concerns the importance of hospitality (*xenike*), the *phylia* between friends (*hetaïrike*), the only one, in fact, that corresponds to friendship as such and "amorous" *phylia* (*erotike*) between persons of the same sex (here we have pederasty) or of different sexes (heterosexuality). Also, to distinguish the different shades of love, the Greeks had, besides *phylia* and *eros*, the following terms: *eunoïa* (good will and devotion), *agape* (disinterested affection, but which does not cover also the Christian sense), *storge* (tenderness), *photos* (desire), *charis*

(grateful and, at the same time, indulgent love), *mania* (indecent passion)[1]. Socrates says about himself that he possesses only one science, that of love – *érotikè*, and he himself can be considered a "pimp": he delivers young people to philosophy, for his deepest love has for object the philosophy (*Gorgias*, 482a). As a pander (*mastropos*), he leads the young persons towards truth and virtue, and chastity is the indispensable condition for the freedom of spirit. Bodily love is a vice and it is definitely a sin to assign it to gods and heroes. Pure love alone is the condition of progress towards the supreme Good. The dialectics of feelings does not want to cancel bodily love, but only to change its sense from the vulgar, terrestrial Aphrodite (*Pandemos*) to celestial Aphrodite (*Ourania*). Plato, on the other hand, is not the apostle of "platonic love" and neither a pander in the sense of Socrates, on the contrary, he sees pederasty with indulgence, even with enthusiasm. Barely the *Laws* condemn, true, more formally, homosexuality. Plato agrees with the two Aphrodites, but not in the definitive way of Socrates. He is more lax, more relaxed regarding this distinction, we can easily go from one to the other, is Plato convinced. As far as love in marriage is concerned, it does not deserve the name of *eros*, and Plato is here the faithful exponent of the common idea of Greeks: the woman must do her duty and procreate for family and State. And if in the *Republic* property no longer exists, in the community of women there is no jealousy either. Plato knew well what he was saying! As far as Aristotle is concerned, he is the philosopher of friendship (*phylia hetaïrike*) more than the philosopher of love (*phylia érotikè*). Friendship is attached to virtue, love to beauty, love is a quality, yes!, however, only an accidental one.

The Greek is by definition a spectator, a curious one, a good observer and a talented story-teller. Homer and Herodotus answer for the quality of listener, spectator and actor of the Greek. The Greek, in the end, *sees* more (and here Homer is not an inconvenient witness!) than he *hears*. The eye is facing the sun and it goes blind because of its too great brightness. Most of the Greeks are blind, their teacher – Homer – was blind and Socrates wants to educate the sight. He is an oculist handicrafts-man without workshop and without license. No wonder he falls under the incidence of "the illicit"! He does it in the public space, i.e. in a place located in the open and which offers itself to the domestic sphere. This domestic sphere is inherited by Socrates from myths and rites and finds it sitting in the ideology of the polis. Socrates knows that "the choice that a nation makes when

[1] Robert Flacelière, *L'amour en Grèce*, Librairie Hachette, Paris, 1960, pp. 184-185. I have dealt, widely, with this issue in Anton Adămuț, *How Philosophers dream?*, BIC ALL Publishing House, Bucharest, 2008, pp. 13-161.

representing itself may say a lot, both by what it passes over in silence, as well as by what it shows"[2].

Because they are immortal, the sons of Greeks *live* and their daughters *get married*. And this is where the folly starts: mistakes doubly divided, at the domestic level (where they bring tragedies) and at the level of great history (bravery acts; heroes). And all is connected to the natural succession of generations and to the prevention of this succession!, which means that the succession is not so much of a legal matter, no, but one that aims at and vitiates the report established between nature and culture. Here is where Hermes intermediated, the god of trade (i.e. of words), of robbery, of founded objects. But Hermes was also the god of moving wives from the old house to the new one, and Plato does not scruple to make Glaucon talk about marriage as a form of trade (*Republic*, 362b): "on such bases, marriage is solidly placed in a male world, of public transactions, of competing for honors and earnings. As far as it is thus understood, marriage no longer has as its core the private relationship between man and woman. A consequence, one may add, is the lack of love stories"[3]. The classic Greek is not exactly a gentleman, but that does not stop him from being, from time to time, sad. Euripides seems to be, among the dramatists, the most interested in marriage. Even for him, it is only *Alcestis* who expresses a regret for the lost of blissful marriage[4]. *Alcestis* is a true innovation, in spite of the subject that had been discussed by Phrynicus which, probably, influenced Euripides. I recall, shortly, the subject of the tragedy.

The beautiful and virtuous Alcestis is married to the king Admetos, old and approaching death. Apollonius obtains a promise from Parca, the goddesses of death: the king stays alive if someone else takes the commitment to die instead of him. Of course, only Alcestis offers herself and Admetos accepts. The faithful wife dies, the husband repents, Heracles arrives, but he isn't informed about that, so he does not grieve about the death of the king's wife. The hero finds out the entire story and manages, in the end, to bring back Alcestis from Hades. There are new things to be found in Euripides' tragedy: "Admetos is a mediocre figure. Euripides surpasses tradition here as well: unlike the past, he is not ashamed of taking away people's mask, presenting them in their meanness. Admetos does not have anything heroic, he accepts in a selfish manner the sacrifice of his gentle wife, which does not stop him from complaining that he cannot live without her [...]. It

[2] James Redfield, "Man and Domestic Life", in Jean-Pierre Vernant (coordinator), *Greek Man*, Polirom Publishing House, Iaşi, 2001, p. 144.
[3] *Ibidem*, p. 147.
[4] *Ibidem*, p. 148.

is clear that Euripides applies a criticism full of irony to the state of fact of the Greek marriage, where man is everything"[5]. Euripides brings at least two innovations with *Alcestis*: for the first time in the Greek tragedy, a human being dies on stage in front of the spectators and, then, "the play's theme is weird: what kind of man is that who, being so in love with his wife, bears, without remorse, to see her die instead of him"[6]. I do not know how much, and if the Athenians have appreciated Euripides' play, I do know however that the play was good: "Aristophanes, 13 years later, will mock it in the comedy *The Acharnians* and it is known that the cruel comedian would find fault especially with the recognized values"[7].

Marriage is a well repressed subject in Greek culture, and Athens (the stronghold) wants to protect the Athenians from an excess of the intrusion of domestic into public space. Thus, the private sphere is eliminated out of the public conscience, and this makes impossible the existence of a Greek Romeo (what it means, in reality, a Greek Juliet).

From here to the exclusion of woman there is not even a step to be made. Socrates himself could not avoid the customary law (or Plato, rather). In Plato's dialogues, Socrates only mentions (here's until where caution goes!) some conversations that he "had" with two women (Aspasia, a courtesan and Diotima). Otherwise, Xanthippe is mentioned only once. Xenophanes (*Memorabilia*, III, 10-11) presents a conversation of Socrates with a courtesan[8] who visited Athens, visited it, not lived in it nor practicing it, though things were not exactly like that. It is true that Diogenes Laertius[9] mentions that two of Plato's students took then classes with a second teacher of the Academy, with Speusippus.

As far as the courtesans are concerned, I would like to add a few things. Ancient Greece was the ideal country where sacred prostitution and civil prostitution could fully manifest[10]. Solon, as a matter of fact, creates the first *dicterion* (brothel) in Athens and wanted thus to protect the chastity of young girls, of brides and also to fight against pederasty, so common during his time. Prostitution remained free in other towns. In Corinth, for example, merchants and strangers used to come to "enjoy" themselves; in Sparta, love was "freely"

[5] Liviu Rusu, *Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides*, Tineretului Publishing House, Bucharest, 1968, p. 236.
[6] Jean Defradas, *Greek Literature*, Tineretului Publishing House, Bucharest, 1968, p. 100.
[7] Liviu Rusu, *op. cit.*, p. 236.
[8] Broadly about all this in Robert Flacelière, *Daily Life in Greece at the Time of Pericles*, chapters III-IV, pp. 53-105, places where the author speaks about women, marriage, children and education.
[9] Diogenes Laertius, *On the Lives and Doctrines of Philosophers*, Polirom Publishing House, Iaşi, 1997, IV, I, 2.
[10] Robert Flacelière, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-155.

practiced, and in Athens courtesans were tolerated, though Solon's law was strict (it even imposed a special kind of clothes).

To be more explicit, courtesans' corporation included three classes: dicteriades, auletrides and hetairae.

On the lowest level we have the dicteriades; they used to populate the dicterion and they come back to what the French calls *bordelières*. They each belonged to a master (a "pimp", frankly speaking).

The auletrides had a different status, they were musicians and dancers, they had the intermediary rank in the hierarchy of courtesans, they animated the holidays and feasts of these fond of the bottle that the Greeks were. They used to give themselves, according to lechery, to those whom they attract.

Finally, the hetairae, queens of courtesans in Greece, did not give themselves unless they wanted to and usually for a great deal of money. Most of them were true beauties, educated, artists, they were honored by everyone and accessible only to the wealthy ones.

One can see, therefore, that Greek prostitution of this kind was addressed to all tastes and all pockets. They had private courts and separate neighborhoods. Basic prostitution (the one practiced by dicteriades) was frequent in Piraeus, the intermediary one, hierarchically speaking, was intensely practiced in Megara, while the hetairae occupied the most select neighborhood of Athens. A man of the world would prefer the hetaera to the wife. The wife was for him a duty, hetaera was a pleasure and the mentioned man did not believe in any way that he was mistaking by adding pleasure to duty. Hetaera is newness, ornament of the stronghold, is to be found in the elite audience of the rhetoric men and philosophers, inspires artists and writers, advices princes and people of the state. Her presence, in sum, is benefactress. Two examples:

- Aspasia, comes from Miletus to Athens, intelligent, beautiful, accompanied by a suite of charming students, all perfectly educated in the matters of spirit and love. Pericles was not just her lover (and she was his second wife, they had a son together, also called Pericles), but also her disciple. Aspasia's power was huge so it is not random the fact that she was accused of impiety and immorality. She was judged in Areopagus and Pericles' intervention can barely save her. It is not the case of Phidias and Anaxagoras, brought under the same accusation;
- Sappho, married to Cercala, a rich fellow from Andros (terrible irony!), has a daughter, Kleis. Widow, by means of a mess of her own imagination and senses, convinces herself that each sex must focus on itself. She was not

beautiful (as Laïs). She was small, brunette, with bright eyes, not tall, blonde, languishing, as we would usually imagine her. Horatius claims that she was hermaphrodite, Dionysius that she was a lesbian. In order to punish her, Venus (well, Aphrodite!) makes her fall in love with a young man – Phaon, who rejects her. Sappho commits suicide by throwing herself out of a rock in the sea.

One may read in Pseudo-Demosthenes[11], an orator from the forth century, something like this: we have the courtesans for pleasure, the concubines to acquire daily care and the brides that offer us legitimate children and are our faithful guardians. This means, directly said, that interested love was widely spread in Greek antiquity. The concubines (*pallakai*) could have been poor Athenians, slaves or free foreigners with a legal situation and publicly recognized, the brides are not included in the game. The ones left are the courtesans which, including for pederasts, satisfy all tastes and they make a living from the traffic of their own body. Hierodulism transforms the courtesans in a common good without being also common, they are sacred courtesans, numerous in Corinth and hospitable by means of their duty notebooks. The Athenians did not have from the beginning (sacred) sanctuaries for something like this. They then got used to sacred prostitution and with the first Attic temple of Aphrodite (*Pandemos*), a financed construction from the very practice of prostitution (sacred). Athenians accustomed in a difficult manner with this habit, including Socrates, and difficult does not imply temporality as much as understanding. The point is that nobody is ashamed to admire a courtesan, a hetaera, Alcibiades himself does it, it is true, after Socrates, at least this is what Xenophanes tells us in *Memorabilia*, III, 2.

In conclusion, namely always on the road, Venus' religion admits an applicable hierodulism to the two sexes. Here we can see the origin of homosexual behavior and which is previous to the feminine one, invented later by refined and bored women or dissatisfied by canonical patterns of love. Shortly, Athens was famous for its sodomites and its pedophiles, just like Corinth was for its lesbians[12].

Could it be, in all this, again, about misogyny (and Socrates did not escape from this accusation)? No, it is about tradition (even if in modern terms we

[11] *Ibidem*, pp. 139, 150.

[12] W.-J. Watson, *Le Vice Et L'Amour. Histoire anecdotique de la Prostitution et de la Dépravation à travers les âges*, Paris-Édition, 1927, pp. 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 37, 38, 49, 50, 74, 75. I also draw attention to chapter VII from this book entitled "L'agonie du Paganisme vénusien", pp. 84-90, whose central idea is that of a fight of moral chastity against one of impudicity. I send also to Serge Paul, *Le Vice Et L'Amour. Étude Médicale, Philosophique Et Sociale Des Perversions Génital*, Librairie Des Publications Populaires, Paris, f.a. The latter paper is frequently quoted by W.-J. Watson. From Serge Paul, I send to chapter VIII: "Le vice, l'amour et l'Histoire", pp. 291-320.

consider it misogynistic). *Citizens* were the free adult men (in democracy), or just some of them (in oligarchy). Children, women and slaves were excluded. "They were family members, but not of the stronghold, only in an indirect way; the stronghold was of course their country, but they were not part of the public sphere"[13]. In real terms, the issue is thus raised: is misogyny a cause of pederasty, or does homosexuality bring along with itself the contempt towards women? It is hard to decide for the antique ones. Anyhow, those who frequented the love for boys were usually misogynists, with the exception of those who were also heterosexuals or, joking, ambidextrous!

I would like to curdle things and to say that the separation from the domestic space did not imply any obligation from the man. All obligations were on the other side. The woman "was not required anything else but to spin, to weave and to insure the perpetuation of the family. For physical pleasure, the Athenian preferred the company of public prostitutes or of the prostitutes at home (*the pallaces*); if he wanted to combine the charm of discussion with bodily pleasure, he would have to go to privileged prostitutes, famous for their intelligence, as Aspasia was, Pericles' girlfriend. The wife, on the other hand, would not dare committing not even the smallest infidelity. Even if the man would have wanted to forgive any weakness of his woman, he could not have done it unless under the threat of losing the political rights, the law forcing the man of the adultery woman to repudiate her. The Greeks despised so much the woman, that they could not even imagine that she could become the object of a passion. Any man that would humiliate himself by passionately loving a woman would become «unmanly», drawing disdain on him (Paris, who kidnapped Helen, would pass as «effeminate»; he has as opposite the «virile» Achilles). The love of a man did not deserve to go elsewhere but to another man [...]. The lack of any dialogue between sexes thus facilitated in Greece the development of prostitution, of masculine homosexuality (Plato's relationship with Dion lasted for 35 years) and of female homosexuality"[14].

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[13] James Redfield, loc. cit., in *op. cit.*, p. 153.

[14] Mathilde Niel, *The Drama of the Liberation of Woman*, Politica Publishing House, Bucharest, 1974, p. 34. Homer is, above all, responsible for starting such an education. Check also the excellent paragraph entitled "The Pleasures of Love" in Félix Buffiere, *Myths of Homer and Greek Thinking*, Univers Publishing House, Bucharest, 1987, pp. 263-266, especially the analysis of the scene from Ida mountain. In this scene, Hera plays the part of the seducer, as Alcibiades will later try with Socrates in *Symposium*. Except that for Homer there is always a him and a her (Hera and Zeus, Ares and Aphrodite, Paris and Helen, and Homer despises Paris, Achilles and Briseis, Bellerophon and Antea, and Homer treasures Bellerophon for resisting to the advances of the king Proteus' wife). The rule is: "chasing pleasure brings nothing but trouble", and Pythagoras warned young people regarding debauchery and its fatal consequences. Pythagoras as well condemns Paris, because of whom two nations knew great disasters: Trojans during war, Greeks on their return from war.

In Attic jurisprudence, *atimia* was equivalent to the loss of the right to appear in public (which returned to a kind of caused inner exile, and the "atimized" citizen was "reduced", through *atimy*, to the condition of woman, child, slave). The competition of citizens was among equals, not among unequal, and it was public. The coward became *atimos*, the war was the occupation of men and even the fact of *talking* belonged to an exclusively male privilege (*Iliad*, VI, 492; *Odyssey*, I, 358). Male monopoly on intelligence (political) is easy to grasp, also after our scale of values, "the irrationality" of this claim. It must be pointed out that such an irrationality is observed (and contested!) during the time, before Socrates, by Aristophanes, in *Lysistrata*, in a play written for men, not for women! *Lysistrata* is the expression of a world upside down for Athenians, a reversed world, "upside down", just like *The gathering of women*, where Athena is given to women from the point of view of the instruments of power and decision. In *Lysistrata* (verses 638-647, a play presented in 411), women decide to have the strike of amour until men will make peace. The choir's discourse must be read in ideological key precisely because women and girls were excluded from any decision, just like strangers and slaves. The only civic obligation of the woman is to procreate under the condition of a law of Pericles in 45: the condition imposed is that of being daughter of a citizen and the mother of progenies to be daughter of citizen. Simpler: the father must be citizen, the mother must be daughter of the citizen.

Socrates develops such a theme in *Republic* – he is not against accepting women in public life. There is however a difference that makes "life separate": the political and the private sphere. The public sphere is masculine (word, idea, competition, equals). The public sphere wants to identify its own equals, case in which the body should not be covered (it is the so-called "erotic nudity"), and that means that *the person* (correctly: the citizen) is a social unit whose purpose is to affirm itself. The exigency of competition places the other one in the exact same situation and, in competition, citizens do not improve their similarities, but their differences. They are common by means of initially being similar, they are different since they improved in dissimilarity. This is the public sphere (military by excellence and so much more standard). Finally, the community of competition has as exigency the initial similitude.

The private sphere has as principle the difference man-woman. Marriage is a relation between the different, not between the similar (alike). Marriage is relationship, not competition, is cooperation of things not competition of ideas: "this is the place of origin of both production, as well as consumption, the place

where the citizen makes contact with its natural self and with earth. Socrates' imaginary hypothesis tries to cut this bound with the earth, to deny the being to the body, of the natural self"[15]. A closed society is a male society, but this does not mean that an opened one would be a female one.

The Greek is conservator: in the public sphere the man is moving, in the domestic one – the woman (as a compensation: in the public sphere there is nothing that belongs to the man directly, in the domestic one the woman owns everything in what the administration is regarded, and the keys to the pantry with supplies and to the cellar are for the woman the sign of authority, even if the man may exert some sort of extra control. Teofrast, in *Characters*, 18, shows how the man, distrustful, before bedtime, asks the wife is she had closed the chest, is she had put the seal, if she had locked the gate). Women did not travel and Greeks did not prepare themselves to receive women as guests. However, even for the Greeks, a house without a woman was an empty house. In the bedroom, there was the matrimonial bed. It belonged to the man as husband and it was for the woman as wife; the sexual liberty of man was total; the sexual liberty of woman would limit exclusively to her man and only when he thought it was appropriate. All women had to get married and their moment of perfection is the virgin/virginity – *parthenos*. The father enjoys the daughter not because she is his, but because he can give her to someone else: "the more wanted she is, the "more desired for marriage" and, thus, he will lose her even more secure and faster. For the woman, the moment of maximum ambiguity is, at the same time, that of maximum accomplishment, to be more precise the moment when she becomes wife"[16], wife by excellence (Pandora, Penelope), abandoned wife (Hera)[17]. Pandora is the first woman (she brings on the world death, but also life), Hera is the last woman (sterile marriage is the sign of eternal reign, but of course, only in Olympus).

In the sublunary space, however, things do not take place exactly the same. For them not to happen on the contrary, there is the need of an intermediary; the intermediary is not a man but a woman – Aphrodite. She is *paraitios* ("participant") at the marriage she makes with the earth. She is, somehow, accomplice at this marriage, she encourages it and transforms an entire story into a half one: the man enjoys the public space and there thus appears a dichotomy. From it he can only turn out mediated, but the mediation is not in him. Whether the Greek likes it or not, the mediation is in the woman. When he does not like it,

[15] James Redfield, loc. cit., in *op. cit.*, p. 158.
[16] *Ibidem*, p. 164. For the Greek, marriage is, however, a "tragical institution".
[17] James Redfield, loc. cit., *op. cit.*, pp. 165-171.

the mediation can be found in some sort of substitute which must respect a rule: temporal difference and sexual homology. It is in fact about a "rite of transition" (about hair, veil, special languages, sexual rites and so on)[18]. The exigency of the substitute is an ontological commandment, because to love yourself by yourself means, in reality, to cease existing. There is the need of certain availability in the fact of wanting to become childish again, case in which eros (ironically) is a demonic creature[19].

In *Poetics*, 1454 a 20, Aristotle says that even a woman can be good, a slave can also be good. However, the woman is rather an inferior being, the slave is a completely worthless human being. Aristotle's expression is not contradictory for a Greek. A relatively late myth, that's true, tells us what and how about the origin of masculine democracy and the origin of the Athenian marriage: "at the time of the conflict between Athena and Poseidon for the protection over the stronghold of Kekrops, the king would have received, says Varro, an oracle that demanded him to ask, regarding the choice of the polyadic divinity, all Athenians, including women; since women exceeded by one the number of men, Athena was chosen. Men took revenge, deciding that «from now on, the Athenian women will no longer vote, the children will not bear anymore the mother's name and no one will call Athenian the women»"[20]. And things happened just like that: in Athens we no longer speak of Athenian women, but of wives and daughters of Athenians, and this is valid even in comedy (Aristophanes himself does not speak of "the gathering of Athenian women", but of "the gathering of women"!).

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Something about Feminism(s)

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Abstract

There is an undeniable relation between sex and gender although overwhelming material of social structures and experiences could cover and diminish it. The contemporary divided epistemology of various sciences, related more or less with the issue of feminine, feminism and femininity, are based on a bogus and deficient concept of person. Their representation on this concept occults the non-generic tri-unity (between its biological, social and ideal sides) – of the human person, and hence the womanhood and manhood, femininity and masculinity, can't find their proper places and are dismissed. Woman's natural reality manifests itself through feminism at the level of social reality and is revealed through femininity at the level of cultural reality. These three aspects could be noticed throughout the history of humanity, women's situation being intrinsically related to their position towards the natural world, society and the intelligibility. Each epoch had its own way of manifesting and perceiving them. The non-generic tri-unity representation on human sheds a different light on the understanding of the phenomenon. New meanings are to be grasped in order to understand the dialectical unity present among its three aspects, starting from the real difference between women and men, by re-balancing such relations at a social level through feminism and re-thinking their echoes and ideatic foundation, in femininity.

Keywords: *feminism, femininity, human person, non-generic tri-unity, social evolution, humanism, ideology*.

As it is the case with other perspectives on human reality which have become (in addition) "isms", what we today call feminism plays host to an elaborated system of manifestations which cover different aspects of the social system and human being. Although closely connected or, better said, inseparable in reality, these aspects which form the complexly dynamical and heterogeneous environment in which the human being is created and growing, must be

dissociated to understand the human reality and through this more general frame of the human being the complexity of what is called feminism. The non-generic unity of the human can shed a different light on the understanding of the phenomenon. *Woman*'s natural reality manifests itself through *feminism* at the level of social reality and is revealed through *femininity* at the level of cultural reality[1]. This model is based on the idea that what is called human being is in a fact a permanently recalibrated balance between three components from different ontological natures: bio-physical, social, and cultural one. All of them have their own structure and law of development and what we call human reality is just a fragile *compositum* of these. That means the human being is living simultaneously on three different ontological levels and because of this there arises the entire problem related to its study and to its understanding encountered in every unilaterally approaches. This is one of the main reasons of controversies about what human being is in general and gender studies in particular and especially the major cause of mutual misunderstanding of different standpoints. This article will try to sketch the framework for an integral approach.

The reality of feminist social phenomenon is ontologically grounded in the very existence of *women*. This is the main reason for not trying to understand it together with, for different reasons, similar phenomena, because we risk overlooking it. Although on a social level the discriminatory treatment was applied for both women and homosexuals for their sexuality, and the fact that the both views are intersecting in many points and sustain each other, the reasons for this is different. If the basis of the former was some sexual-gender cultural misconceptions, for the latter the discriminatory persecution lies in a narrow and, at the same time, different sexual-sexuality understandings.[2] If the former arise from the very (biological) nature of the woman, the latter are related with already social influenced personal choice behavior. The former is a natural biological

[1] What culture is and how it could be differentiated from other social aspects is a complex and debated issue. This article will consider culture something like Popper's "third world", which interacts and is in the core of any reality where the humans are implied but is different from its social manifestation, technologies (see John Tomlinson, *Globalization and Culture*, Polity Press & Blackwell Publisher, 1999), and so on.

[2] The reason these two phenomena are treated together is not just a "cultural mistake". All these three elements find themselves in "dialectical" dynamic interrelations. The social reality of sexual movements (feminist and queer) creates the common perspective of their cause while the contemporary emergence of these ideas shapes and contributes to the materialization of the former.

given; the latter already supposes the social elements in its structure.[3] This claim seems to say the opposite to Simone de Beauvoire general accepted thesis "we are not born women (or men), we become women (or men)", but only in appearance. Because the body reality, its physiology, already suppose some "natural pattern" participating, together with the social forces, on the building of the future of a specific human being. (The cultural information could sustain or act oppositely, as well). But if we don't fall for extreme sociologic theories which allege the human being is only what the social forces make it, and accept the three-complex natural, social and cultural forces role in this nurturing, we will not only avoid the destructive rationalistic disembodiment of modern era, but also restore the lost human-nature nexus. There is an undeniable relation between sex and gender[4] although overwhelming material of social structures and experiences could cover and diminish it. The scientists have already gathered a large collection of evidence that some psychological sex differences are biologically grounded (sex hormones, for example, have major organizational and triggering effects on the human brain). The anatomical facts foster the social gender relations in a more important degree than physical similarities could cover them, because of the biological necessity of reproduction. But, this does not mean the dualistic structure of gender domination should forever perpetuate, as Jeanne Flax wants to suggest.[5] Women are not condemned to be forever the symbol of the body (and consequently the men symbol of the mind) just because of their different biological function.

This view over the gender relation was maintained by the *sociobiology*, *evolutionary biology* or *psychology* that share the same *biological essentialism's* supposition: the belief that sexual difference is inherent in women's and men's biological constitution, and so "massively underestimate the contribution of culture and history to this interaction."[6] Nowadays, more and more biologists have

[3] Of course someone who follows only the contemporary fashion paradigm (every way to understand the things, including the inanimate things, is a social construct) could object that this "natural biological" reality of the woman contains already a social element, but we must take care not to mistaken the way things are for the way they are given (although it is possible to not be able to see them how they really are).

[4] See, for example, Mary Daly *Gyn/Ecology. The Metaethics of Radical Feminism*, The Women's Press, London, 1979, p. 31.

[5] Jeanne Flax, "Postmodernism and Gender Relations in feminist Theory," in *Feminism/Postmodernism*, ed. Linda Nicholson, Routledge, New York, 1990, p. 82.

[6] Sandra Lipsitz Bem, *The Lenses of Gender: Transforming the Debate on Sexual Inequality*, Yale University Press, 1993, p. 22.

already recognized the power of social systems. "Our behavior is caused neither by biology nor by culture, because we are a product of both."[7]

The overlapping between these two phenomenon was naturally possible for two main reasons: on a social level because of the persecution and the discriminatory treatment of homosexuals and on an understanding level because, the difference between sex (sexual behavior) and gender (biological body pattern) was blurred by the modern transformation of sexuality (and the body has always been the sexuality domain): plastic sexuality.[8]

The changes in intimate relations such as instability of marriage, prevalence of divorce and remarriage, separation between sexuality and reproduction which entails the fertility decline and freedom from heterosexuality, women's and homosexuals' struggles for sexual freedom, and the growth in the number of step and blended-families or headed by women, and other "alternative life styles" or household arrangements reshape the peoples attitude and understanding about sexuality. The more "democratic" and "desirable alternatives" replaced the "old-fashioned" ones: "plastic sexuality" replaced sexuality harnessed to reproduction, "confluent love", love based on addictive or co-dependent relationships and the "pure relationship" substitute the rights and obligations of traditional marriage, as Giddens claims. The changes in the "social realities" reshape themselves the biological base of sexuality. Its claim is partially correct because is underlain by the "plastic sexuality" thesis, in the larger frame of the postmodern hypothesis of the self that is creating itself and by itself using its very own narratives. But although the discourse becomes constitutive part of the social reality depicted by it and the self is continuously creating by itself, this does not mean it can create itself in *any manner* it wants, especially because it has no control over the circumstances and the material (bio-physical, social and ideatic which affected its own creation). As Marx noticed, human beings could make their history (and in extension, their own history of the self, which, in fact is what the self is), but they do not make it under conditions of their own choosing. We author our own destiny, but never fulfill our visions because we are cultural beings caught in the middle of forces that exceed us at the same time they foster us. So, if the self is a ceaselessly fluctuating process, forever in a state of becoming we are following Lacan and negate the Cartesian certitude because "our sense of subjectivity, our sense of what it means to be human, is necessarily troubled, as one cannot step outside of oneself

[7] R. Hinde, "A biologist looks at anthropology," *Man* (now *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*) 26, 1991, p. 604.

[8] The meaning and political significance was always close related.

or one's time and state with an unquestioning sense of certainty «I am that.» To this effect, (...): «I think where I am not, therefore I am where I do not think.»"[9]; or accept the weak version "I think somewhere therefore I think where I am" that means my thinking will never be pure think because I will never be *only* thinking. The ontological presuppositions are encapsulated in the language from the beginning. The self-consciousness is initially neither abstract nor plastic (and maybe never in totality).

Plastic sexuality emerged from the separation of sexuality from procreation and, as any individual attribute, is a part of its changing definition of the self. That means it is something that individuals can change, develop, or project at the same time with its changing self, which has broken the bounds of traditional institutional expectations. "At a more personal level, however, the term «gay» brought an ever-wider reference to sexuality as to a quality or property of the self. The person «has» its own sexuality, gay or of other nature, which can be perceived and developed reflexively. Thus, sexuality goes into a state of free floating; at the same time in which «gay» is something you can «be» and can «find out to be», sexuality opens itself to more objects."[10]

As the transcendental view teaches us, what we think is not what it is but just what we could think about what it is. Thus, the "plastic sexuality" is our own mode of conceiving it and is not the sexuality in itself. The distance between what we think about something and what it is remains and it is a mistake to overlap them arbitrarily. The result could be only a perpetual unhappy consciousness because of this discrepancy between what it is and what we consider it to be. Moreover, the triumph of individualism and pursuit of self-centered aims to the detriment of responsibility towards one's children, spouse, parents, and the community has affected men and women in different manners**.** Men become single, while women become single mothers.[11] The fight against what we are is lost from the beginning.

Secondly, on a social level, this reality of women is manifested in the form of feminism. Like any other social ideation-process this is an "-ism". For any social *status quo* an "-ism" means two complementary things – an ideology and a utopia. Usually, the studies on this issue consider these two forms of social

[9] Peter Hobbs, "The Image Before Me", *Invisible Culture - An Electronic Journal for Visual Culture*, Issue 7: Casting Doubt, 2004, http://www.rochester.edu/in_visible_culture/Issue_7/hobbs/ .

[10] Anthony Giddens, *Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love, and Eroticism in Modern Societies* (Transformarea intimității), Antet Publ. House, Bucharest, 2000, p. 18.

[11] Barbara Ehrenreich, *The Hearts of Men*. *American Dreams of the Flight from Commitment*, Anchor Books, New York, 1983, p. 199.

imagery only in their totalitarian form, but every social group develops different forms more or less noticeably and could be characterized by its own ideology and utopia. Equally they are necessary both for maintaining their identity and developing their potential social being.

This becomes obvious if we surpass the Mannheim view over ideology and utopia. The main problem in understanding their place and role in society is the social misconception about them. Most people on most occasions (we could say always) are on the grip of ideological and utopian distortions.[12] These natural tendencies of defending the *status quo* and contesting it are described as dire distortions of reality. But, distorted experience is not equivalent to total error or nonsense. It is just the historically form of people understanding using values and knowledge from partial and particular positions.

On the most general level, every period in history was characterized by ideas, which, even if transcending the existing order, in the sense they are pure ideas and not just depiction or reflection of social reality, they shape, and form the social *weltanschauung* of that Age. "In the course of history, man has occupied himself more frequently with objects transcending his scope of existence than with those immanent in his existence and, despite this, actual and concrete forms of social life have been built upon the basis of such «ideological» states of mind which were incongruent with reality."[13] They are the ideology of that epoch. Simultaneously, part of these ideas could have crystallized in a system of understanding, a possible alternative Weltanschauung tends to shatter, either partially or wholly, the order of things prevailing at the time. "Every age allows to arise (in differently located social groups) those ideas and values in which are contained in condensed form the unrealized and the unfulfilled tendencies which represent the needs of each age. These intellectual elements then become the explosive material for bursting the limits of the existing order. The existing order gives birth to utopias which in turn break the bonds of the existing order, leaving it free to develop in the direction of the next order of existence."[14] They form the utopia of this epoch. The ideology is the one which gives stability and coherence for any existent social system or group, while the utopia is the one which challenges it to change and develop. Usually, within the social dynamics the ideology characterizes the dominant group, while the utopian the dominated

[12] Vincent Geoghegan, "Ideology and Utopia", *Journal of Political Ideologies*, Vol. 9, No. 2, June 2004, pp. 123-138.

[13] Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia. An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, Lund Humphries, London · Bradford, 1954, p. 173.

[14] *Ibidem*, p. 179.

one/ones. "What in a given case appears as utopian, and what as ideological, is dependent, essentially, on the stage and degree of reality to which one applies this standard. It is clear that those social strata which represent the prevailing social and intellectual order will experience as reality that structure of relationships of which they are the bearers, while the groups driven into opposition to the present order will be oriented towards the first stirrings of the social order for which they are striving and which is being realized through them."[15] In parallel both ideological and utopian elements underlie any political social phenomenon whichever is a movement of rising social strata or the preservation of the social establishment. *Any social group* distinguishes through its own ideology (identity of its being) and utopia (its desired being). The attempt to distinguish what is utopian and what ideological in contemporary conjunctions is extremely difficult, because of their dialectical interplay and their functions[16]: the distortion – dissimulation function (identified by Marx): any ideology produces an overturned image of reality[17]; legitimacy – the particular ideology of a group has this propriety to legitimate its existent power relations; and, the third deeper function which, in fact, underlays the first two – integration function. It is the ground of the maintaining, actualization and even structuring the specific identity of that collectivity.

Unlike ideology, the utopia questions over the very reason of the reality. If the ideology is defending the *status quo*, the utopia is "the expression of all potentialities of a group which are repressed by the existent order."[18] Unlike ideology, utopia questions the very reason of being of reality. If ideology is the one defending the existing *status quo*, utopia is the contention. While ideology integrates, utopia does exactly the opposite, if ideology legitimates (the existing) authority, utopia doubts each and every possibility of power manifestation, and if ideology reinforces real life through dissimulation and lie, utopia leads to the loss of the very reality in favor of perfectionist schemes.[19]

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[15] *Ibidem*, p. 176.

[16] Paul Ricoeur, *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics, II*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 1995, pp. 274-286.

[17] Overturned doesn't mean wrong while there is and could not be a "true", accurate imagine of reality. This first level of ideology is contradictory since it admits the existence, in an absolute manner, of social *praxis*, a kind of "real life of the people" previous to human conscious and its representations "a reflection of this life in their imagination". It is not possible for real life to produce any imagine at all, let alone an overturned one. The action in itself it is infiltrated more or less by the imaginariness from the beginning

[18] Paul Ricoeur, *op. cit.*, p. 282.

[19] *Ibidem*, pp. 282-285.

Any social group of any nature would be having its own ideology and utopia within the frame of the meta-ideologies and meta-utopias that history recognizes as such. The "microphysics of the power" is stronger and lasts more than its form at the macro levels, and at the same time the power is intimately related with knowledge. It seems that an ideology, unless some catastrophic phenomena happen, is not changed by any of the utopias which blossom within it, until it exhausts all its possibilities and becomes ossified, unable to incorporate and fostering those in its proper way. So, the main problem of any political consistent movement, – any "-ism" – is the attitude of the dominant group, because it does not adopt, in all cases, an open hostile attitude towards these orientations. Because "they have always aimed to control those situational transcendent ideas and interests which cannot be realized within the bounds of the present order, and thereby to render them socially impotent, so that such ideas would be confined to a world beyond history and society, where they could not affect the *status quo*".[20] Or, they make them appropriate to the present ideology of social stage, reshape and integrate them "organically" and harmoniously into the world-view characteristic of the period, hence canceling their revolutionary possibilities.

That means feminism, as social movement, is watched by two different dangers that threaten the manifested goal. As any situational transcendent ideas that aim to break the bonds of the existing order it is regarded as utopia from the dominant group. So from outside feminism as a whole must defeat the dominant ideology. From inside, because there is no totally homogenous social group, it must go beyond the conflict between the inner ideologies and the utopias of the sub-groups, which simultaneously share other common identity marks with the feminine identity. On the one hand, the main ideology of feminism is weakened by the interaction between diverse types of ideologies, shared by women (many women consider more important their appurtenance to other official recognize "prestigious" class marked by race, profession, wealth or political status[21], on the other hand by the specific of its own goal, it is changed in the achievable social utopia.

The overwhelming nowadays-social reality, prevails over the others sides of human being, and obliterates the present understanding of what it really is. The necessity of "surviving" in the social environments becomes more important for the modern individual than its life in natural one. Thus, it sacrifices the nature and

[20] Karl Mannheim, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

[21] See, for example, Bell Hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*, South End Press, 2000.

the transcendent for the social comfort. The social turns into the foundation and guides any perspective of the understanding of the human world. So, the social values and goals subdue the others. The feminist movements are gripped in this matrix, too, when it is limited, under the dominant paradigm, to the achievement of political equality.[22] "Why must feminists substitute for the glorious hierarchical vision of blessedness a ramshackle and incoherent ideal that flattens all human beings to a single level---a faceless, colorless, sexless wasteland where rule and submission are regarded as a curse, where the roles of men and women are treated like machine parts that are interchangeable, replaceable, and adjustable, and where fulfillment is a matter of pure politics, things like equality and rights?[23] This state of affaires constrains the human being to one of its multiple facets and so mutilates the whole of the human person. These will become clearer in the following.

The present time is characterized by an unprecedented increasing of social environmental effects over human being. It is itself deeply and intrinsically sociological. It is associated with the socializing of the natural world – progressive replacement of structures and events that were external parameters of the human activity with social level organized processes. Not only the social life in itself, but also what usually was seen as "natural" (and, as we will see, cultural) becomes dominated by socially structured systems.[24] Because of this, the entire evolution of human sciences begins to overlook or diminish the importance of non-social nature in human construction, the balance between the human reality and its environment and over-emphasizes the human-social axis-point. Consequently the epistemological autonomy of nature, language, and culture was enfolded by the "anthropological sleep", mainly in its form of sociologism.[25] This approach fails to give a complete explanation about the human being because it does not comprise an explanation about life and culture. And if we regard the human being as merely a *blank paper* on which infinitely diverse meanings can be (only socially)

[22] It doesn't matter if it is conceived as equality or difference as long as it is limited on political achievement - as Mary Wollstonecraft, Simone de Beauvoir, or Juliette Mitchel imagined it.

[23] Elisabeth Elliot, "The Essence of Femininity. A Personal Perspective," in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood. A Response to Evangelical Feminism*, eds. John Piper and Wayne Grudem,Crossway Books Wheaton, Illinois, http://www.leaderu.com/orgs/cbmw/rbmw/, 14 July 2002.

[24] Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991.

[25] See Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, cap. 10. I. "The Three faces of knowledge," Vintage Books Edition, New York, 1994.

inscribed,[26] and also as a culturally informed organism which is constructing itself in large measure, we fall for the famous vicious sociocentric circle in which ultimately all that can explain the dynamism of culture is culture itself.[27]

In this paper culture is not seen in the broader anthropological sense, but only as structure of ideas, qualitatively different from physical structures – nature – or interpersonal structure – societies, like Popper's "third world"[28]. From the positivist (scientific) standpoint culture as such is almost nothing because it couldn't be touched, controlled, subjected to repeatable experiments and so on.[29] "Culture is thus a complex illusion: it is never permanent, never finally accomplished, because its meanings have to be affirmed and reaffirmed in the lives of individuals. It has no objective reality because it cannot be encompassed by a single mind; its constituents have only a partial existence in the mind of any individual, and many understandings of each fragment of culture may pass through that individual's mind during his or her lifetime."[30] But nevertheless it has the most concrete effects. It is a very strange illusion, which can be discovered at the basis of any human action or creation. The culture is the third ontological-environment, which underpins the human being, and its role is as important as the others' two: the social and biological parts.

The discussion about the Femininity Category (or Idea) is very difficult nowadays, quite because of this overpowering "sociological hermeneutics" that

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[26] M. Midgley, *Beast and man: the roots of human nature* (rev. edn), Routledge, London, 1995, pp. 3-4.

[27] P. Boyer, *The naturalness of religious ideas: a cognitive theory of religion*, Berkeley/Los Angeles, Univ. of California Press, 1994, p. 296.

[28] Which is not necessary limited to scientific knowledge but contains the arts, ethics, so-called practical pursuits and all forms of practice and institutions as well, which form what might be called the cultural inheritance. "By «world 3» I mean the world of the products of the human mind. Although I include works of art in world 3 and also ethical values and social institutions (and this, one might say, societies), I shall confine myself largely to the world of scientific libraries, to books, to scientific problems, and to theories, including mistaken theories." Karl R. Popper, "Indeterminism is not Enough", *Encounter*, 40(4), 20-26, 1973.

[29] This is so, because of the modern western (especially, Anglo-Saxon paradigm) way of understanding the reality. In this pattern the reality is confounded with the actuality, the contemporary usage of English "reality" has, indeed this meaning "actually being the case". The reality has a modal meaning and not a qualitative one. So, the culture is real (has reality), above all, because it makes the things to be what they are and determines their what – content, while, which is totally different from the reality of the social and physical/biological realm which have actual reality, actuality, they are because they are conspicuous and sensitive manifesting.

[30] A. F. Robertson, "The development of meaning: ontogeny and culture", *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. 2, 1996.

tends to reduce every part of human culture to its "primary" social origin. "In politics, in big business, in higher education, feminism is frequently discussed. But femininity? Never. Perhaps it should not surprise us that secular higher education has long since discarded the image of femininity as utterly irrelevant to anything that really matters."[31] Your social appurtenance is more important and explains better than you what you are intended, and ultimately what you effectively could say. This over-subjectivization of ideas-realms, its harnessed to individual, the personalization of language acts are the direct effects of contemporary "anthropological sleep". This is a reiteration, or better, the ultimate accomplishment of ancient Socrates' act of bringing philosophy from heavens to earth. The realm of true culture is reduced, by the sleepwalkers' humanity, to a sum-total of ideas from our subjective minds (the second world, in Popper's terms) or communities (if we consider some exaggerate consequences conclusions arise from standpoint knowledge epistemology[32]).

The individualism and anthropologism infiltrated the entire modern *episteme* (conceived triadically by Foucault[33]). The well-established modern paradigm is infused and threatened by this phenomenon: "For the slightest deviation from these rigorously defined planes sends thought tumbling over into the domain occupied by the human sciences: hence the danger of «psychologism», of «sociologism», – of what we might term, in a word, «anthropologism» – which becomes a threat as soon as the relations of thought to formalization are not reflected upon correctly, for example, or as soon as the modes of being of life, labour, and language are incorrectly analyzed. «Anthropologization» is the great internal threat to knowledge in our day."[34] This particular (major) stream within the human sciences

[31] E. Elliot, *op. cit*.

[32] Although the social position(s) of the knower influence the knowledge social world and, therefore, its understanding of that world will be a particular one, that not means it have to be partial or wrong. It is hard to understand what they mean through that Archimedian perspective outside of one's socially constituted standpoint. The consequence of General Theory of Relativity wasn't that (laws of) Physics depends on observer's location, but this not means it is subjective. And, even though, some constants (cultural, in the case of social sciences?) remain for orienting the comprehension of the phenomena. Alternative, different, not means wrong or limited. It is an interesting issue to see if these concurrent "discovers" in natural and social sciences are related with the human race growth.

[33] The three dimensions are: the mathematical and physical (deductive) sciences, the life sciences - linguistic, biology and economy -, and the philosophy.

[34] M. Foucault, *op. cit*., p. 348. As I already said, these considerations not regard the general developmental human sciences process, but just a trend inside them, a trend encouraged by their "cloudy distribution" within the three-dimensional space of modern episteme.

are infiltrated within the other sciences and deflect them towards human's subjectivity while it is pretending to reveal and denounce their ideological origin. If the entire western philosophy is just a footnote to Plato's work, it is a very heavy one, for sure, one who succeeds to bring beyond the sky World of pure Ideas on the quite real earth.[35] But for human beings, at least as they are and not as they want or ought to be, the ideatic-oriented view, is their way of being. For this reason, even the critics of this blamable essentialism – allege that dichotomous gender differences that are transcultural and transhistorical – come to an end in the same way. "Feminist standpoint theory, which is highly attuned to reification committed by mainstream sociologists, cannot avoid reifying the genders. While Smith and Collins explicitly recognize considerable variation among women (and presumably men) in their experiences and consciousness, their own logics, and many times wording, make it clear that they assume that there are overarching, gender-specific standpoints; they could not otherwise talk about a «masculine» form of discourse. In addition, Collins explicitly cites such feminist theorists as Carol Gilligan[36] and Nancy Chodorow[37], who argue that the genders are fundamentally different in their moral reasoning and capacities for/commitments to interpersonal relationships."[38] Although there is some attempt to avoid this sort of thinking[39], precisely because is thinking it cannot be circumvented. This is the case, for example, with the various categories of differences employed by many feminist theorists, especially "patriarchy," "exploitation," and "oppression".[40]

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[35] This is close related with the general trend of contemporary western society loss of belief in transcendent and no palpable realities because of ever increasing faith spending in the quotidian day to day realities (complex technological products with unknown working machinery, the hidden mechanisms of economic system which assure the products presence in markets, the general trust in as a more generalized trust in abstract systems development. See Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1991, p. 80.

[36] C. Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, Harvard Univ. Press, Cambridge, MA, 1982.

[37] N. Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender*, Univ. Calif. Press, Berkeley, CA, 1978, also N. Chodorow, "Family structure and feminine personality", 1974, http://www.soc.washington.edu/users/brines/chodorow.pdf

[38] Janet Saltzman Chafetz, "Feminist theory and sociology: underutilized contributions for mainstream theory", *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 23, 1997.

[39] J. Lorber, R. Coser, A. Rossi, N. Chodorow, "On the reproduction of mothering: a methodological debate," *Signs* 6, 1981; Rose Laub Coser, "Reflections on feminist theory", in *Feminism and Sociological Theory*, ed. R. Wallace, Newbury Park, CA, Sage, 1989; Cynthia Fuchs Epstein, *Deceptive Distinctions: Sex, Gender, and the Social Order*, Yale Univ. Press, New Haven, 1988.

[40] Even with the postmodern meta-concepts like "trace", "presence", "difference", "pharmakon" as so on (*peace* Derrida).

This *earthization* of the cultural level, especially within anthropology, "succeeded to deconstruct" the entire third world meaning of femininity and masculinity and *demystify* their mundane origin. The explanation is extremely simple: women become identify with the nature and domesticity because of their reproductive functions (birth and lactation, and gender division of labor, both at household and social level. Contrasting men was mostly identified with the culture and public sphere. In consequences, the entire western philosophy is seen as "men business", as their way to handle with the (psychoanalytical?) gender relation. It is responsible and ought to be blamed for its matricide, its idiosyncrasy about feminine. "Unfortunately entailed in the traditional philosophers' disavowal of «the mother,» entailed in their philosophical matricide, is their own undoing. In western metaphysics, which Martin Heidegger observed to be synonymous with Platonism, woman *qua* mother is unformed matter. She is emotional and hence mercurial and chaotic. As a body not properly restrained by reason, she is helpless to both her emotional nature as well as to her undisciplined body. To oppose themselves to her, men set a higher ideal for themselves: a rationally restrained body. Kelly Oliver characterizes masculinity as disembodied rationality. Male authority derives from their habituated immunity to the chaos of their bodies and emotions. Men tame nature through the exercise of reason. Men retreat from the material world into a more manageable world of pure forms."[41] In the same time it is both is exclusive and monopolistic. "The «subject of philosophy» is narcissistic, closed to the encounter with the Other, while the Other (woman) has not yet acceded to subjectivity"[42], because the philosophy is the continuously thinking of the sameness.

The rejections of the Other, the Different, no matter in which form it is made – rejection of the other view or overbid of a particular side of human person –, entails the losing of a part of what is and could be, the human being. Moreover, this "invidious comparison"[43] widespread in the modern society find in the gender relation a suitable place for re-actualize, over and over again, in daily life and intercourse. Nevertheless, "we cannot ask ourselves whether «woman» is superior or inferior to «man,» any more than we can ask ourselves whether water is

[41] Jennifer L. Hansen, "Our «Salvation»: Women's Intervention in Philosophy," *Journal for the Psychoanalysis of Culture & Society*, Vol. 5, 2000.

[42] Margaret Whitford, *Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the Feminine*, Routledge, London, 1990, p. 33.

[43] Term used by Marcelo Dascal to describe our tendency to think that we/the subjects are the representatives of Reason, of Science, of Progress; whereas "they"/ the others are poor "primitives" or dangerous "barbarians".

superior or inferior to fire. Thus the standard of measurement for either of the sexes can be provided not by the opposite sex, but only by the «idea» of the same sex."[44] The very act of compare and valorize is rooted and guided within and from our ideas, and for this reason, we could say with Jeann-Marie Benoist, that nature-culture opposition remains "the very matrix of Western metaphysics."[45]

But how could be create and strengthened a place for women specific, how could be defeated the men's ideas world? If the symbolic is men creation, and it is imposed necessary from the beginning and foster the future person, either man or woman, how it could be avoid this monopole of the patriarchic view? *If* we follow the psychoanalysis, the role of the symbolic is to protect us from psychosis and this entails a strict denial body pleasures. The most important moment in building our identity is when sexual division is produced within society: the moment of the castration complex. Then the free heterogeneously identity of the child conscious falls under the control of the law of patriarchy, the divisions of "the law". Then the two sexes are psychologically created. "In Lacanian thinking this is called the moment of the symbolic. The symbolic is the point of organization, the point where sexuality is constructed as meaning, where what was heterogeneous, what was not symbolized, becomes organized, becomes created round these two poles, masculine and not-masculine: feminine."[46] Mitchell's ideas about novel narrative become more relevant if we transfer them within the postmodern conception of self-identity as ceaselessly narrative. The relation between the two stages in child development to sexuality, the understanding of the ontogeny of the self, is trapped in a dichotomy: either the pre-oedipal stage has its own structure, a polyphonic one (although is almost impossible to comprehend because we are under the censorship of the law), or it is just the other face of the same law, being provided by the symbolic law itself. "The question to me has a political dimension to it. If you think that the heterogeneous pre-Oedipal polyvalent world is a separate structure in its own right, then the law is disruptable, the carnival can be held on the church steps. But if this is not the case, if the carnival and the church do not exist independently of each other, the pre-Oedipal and the Oedipal are not separate, discrete states -- if, instead, the Oedipal with the castration complex is what defines the pre-Oedipal, then the only way you can challenge the church, challenge

[44] Julius Evola, *The Metaphysics of Sex* (Metafizica sexului), Humanitas, Bucharest, 1994, p. 73.

[45] Jeann-Marie Benoist, "Classicism revisited: human nature and structure in Levi-Strauss and Chomsky," in *The limits of human nature*, ed. J. Benthall, Allen Lane, London, 1973, p. 20.

[46] Juliet Mitchell, "Femininity, narrative and psychoanalysis," in *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader*, eds. David Lodge and Nigel Wood, Pearson Education, 2000, p. 389.

both the Oedipal and its pre-Oedipal, is from within an *alternative symbolic universe*."[47]

But when we are talking about "alternative symbolic universe"[48] we are talking about a realms whit a high level of autonomy. My question is, why, if our approaches to nature-culture relation lead us, sooner or later, in the same point, the presence of a distinct this world three reality, why obstinately trying to negate it in the name of such tricky ideal of individual freedom? Absolute freedom of thought is a contradiction of terms. The absolutely freedom of choosing our own condition of what and how will be is a myth. We are not free ourselves from cultural forces because we are, in part this forces. The paradox become visible when we are trying to think what is happening with us within this hypothetical process of alternative self-fostering: what we are becoming and what we are in this process of becoming?

The most powerful blame bring for the mode of conceiving femininity was that "men was those who created what is call femininity. This is nothing but a phantom projection of the woman. It was easier for them, using this femininity idea, to occupy, invade, poses and lobotomize women, like nobody's territory."[49] The femininity is just a derivative concept constructed from men perspectives and as an accessory to this central concept of masculinity. For understanding and set up the real concept of femininity, is necessary to deconstruct the masculinity. But if "it is not masculinity *per se* which is valorized in our culture but the masculine male"?[50]

This so valorized "democratic right"[51] of any idea to be true, which facilitates the rise of marginal voices to be heard, has, in the same time, unexpected contrary results. It lead in the same time with the strengthened the "weak voices" to their contempt, quite for of its "democratic" principle embodied in it. A feminine epistemology, from postmodern perspective, seems to be

[47] *Ibidem*, p. 390.

[48] I wonder if it isn't better to speak about a poly-verse, a poly-verse which now is covered by the dominant paradigme and we cannot see us such.

[49] Mihaela Miroiu, *Gândul umbrei*. *Abordări feministe în filosofia contemporană* (*The Thought of the Shadow. Feminist Approaches in Contemporary Philosophy*), Alternative Publ. House, Bucharest, 1995, p. 107.

[50] Moira Gatens, "A Critique of the Sex/Gender Distinction," in *A Reader in Feminist Knowledge*, ed. Sneja Gunew, Routledge, London, 1991, p. 152.

[51] We could notice the manner in which the reality from the world of ideas is conceived in the some way as the social reality. This proofs, once again, the close (dialectical, organic?) relation between these environments. Not only the ideas fostered the social relations realm, but, on its turn, its shaped and influenced by the later.

"ultimately self-destructive because it reifies the Enlightenment epistemology that it seeks to overcome."[52] Devaluation is in the core of the postmodern thought, and any effort made for evaluate the feminine is useless, no matter how hard the feminisms are trying to do this. Moreover, if notion of "sexuality" is just a modern category of self-understanding, as Foucault suggested, and it "has no essence", than theorists cannot consider "its repression or its liberation."[53]

We must stay aware to not confound the conventional and artificial status of the person as it was brought by the modern thought: a pure political, "civilized", juridical or/and economic reality with the real one. As the Right was sacrificed on the altar of Legality, the Righteousness for Justice, the Ethics for Deontology, so the Human was submitted to Person (as Citizen). "For years I have watched with growing dismay, even anguish, what has been happening in our society, in our educational system, in our churches, in our homes, and on the deepest level of personality, as a result of a movement called feminism, a movement that gives a great deal of consideration to something called personhood but very little to womanhood, and hardly a nod to femininity. Words like *manhood* and *masculinity* have been expunged from our vocabulary, and we have been told in no uncertain terms that we ought to forget about such things, which amount to nothing more than biology, and concentrate on what it means to be "persons."[54] Within this false concept of person, brought by the increasing social system, and not the real one – the non-generic unity (between its biological, social and ideal sides) – of the human person, the womanhood and manhood, femininity and masculinity, can't find their proper places and are dismissed.

These three scrutinized aspects existed and manifested themselves throughout the history of humanity, women's situation being intrinsically related to their position towards the natural world, society and the intelligibility. Each epoch had its own way of manifesting and perceiving them. Nowadays there are new meanings to be grasped in order to understand the dialectical unity present among its three aspects, starting from the real difference between women and men, by re-balancing such relations at a social level through feminism and re-thinking their echoes and ideatic foundation, in femininity.

[52] Susan J. Hekman, *Gender and Knowledge: Elements of a Postmodern Feminism,* Northeastern University Press, Boston, 1990, pp. 5-6.
[53] *Ibidem*, p. 71.
[54] E. Elliot, *op. cit.*

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The inside barbarism, a contemporary axiological mutation

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Abstract

Away from any appearances there is a series of subtleties. For culture and its conceptual ensemble, we have to distinguish what it opposes to it, and a majority would agree that it is about barbarism. Actually barbarism doesn't oppose to culture, but to its result, maybe the most refined one and the civilization. Culture and barbarism are like twins that have the same origin, they are complementary and they don't annihilate each other. One's eradication, for example the barbarism, would make an attempt to the culture. The organized form of culture, the civilization, bureaucratized, more and over disciplined, allows the barbarism to manifest in the culture through its breaches.

Considering the barbarism an inner phenomena of the human individuality, could permit the identification of these breaches of manifestation in the culture, and in this way we could conclude the civilization.

Keywords: *culture, civilization, the barbarism concept, inside and outside barbarism, axiological mutation.*

Two assertions guide me in understanding the inside barbarism like an axiological mutation. The first one: if we talk about an inside barbarism, this happens because of the existence of a cultural conflict with what we can call an outside barbarism; and the second one: if we consider this conflict of cultural origin as a result of a permanent fight between the terms of a relationship, that described the whole history of the civilization, in this case it is about us on one side and about others on the other side, and if we think about globalization, of its ancient form from history: the colonialism, and also about what we can call the principle of universality, then this conflict could only be the expression of an axiological mutation.

We deal with a series of concepts, that all together describe the way a mutation at an axiological level of the concept of barbarism took place, and to understand this situation we have to deal with two thesis, one of French origin and one of Italian inspiration, Jean-François Mattéi's in his book The Inside Barbarism – Essay about the modern *imund*, Michael Henry's, The Barbarism and Alessandro Baricco's, The Barbarians- Essay about mutation.

If Mattéi takes a step and recommends to his lectors the concept of inside barbarism, Henry looks into the method of introspection on our contemporaneous culture practiced by Mattéi, invoking the subjective feature of the human action, or distinguishing the tendency of retrenchment of the objective model of interpreting the barbarism. If Henry proposes three concepts that define the culture: religion, ethics and art, configuring a way of interpreting the culture, Baricco, when he talks about the mutation of barbarism, he distinguishes some situations that lead to religion, ethics and art, pointing out barbaric characters.

The inside barbarism does not actually suppose an outside barbarism. The first one is a conceptual construction used by Jean-François Mattéi, which states the fact that the origin of the barbarian behaviour and of the phenomena that entertains it, has its root in ourselves. To put it up in another way, these are intrinsic to us. The barbarian character of the human being is an a priori one, if we appeal to the anthropological and naturalistic theories, what's left of the animal origin is the human being, and if we look at it from a religious perspective, where the religious systems propose specific ways of interpreting the human origin and its rapport with the divinity on a different scale of creation, the barbarian character can be identified with the terms of negative origin between good and bad, or yin and yang etc.

The outside barbarism is a personal conception through which I did not want to find something that may oppose to the inside barbarism. Outside barbarism means the primary object for interpreting the concept of barbarism. This conception was made once with the first attempt of making a difference at the cultural level and it means the whole assembly the civilization was born in, as an alternative to what was visibly seen that was not respecting the norm, the laws, the costumes, the communions and the habits of a culture. If it does not oppose to the inside barbarism, it means that it is not part of it, but it derives from it. Barbarism has this adjective "outside" because it means a relationship between individuals: on one side the ones that in the sphere of what I have called previously, the own culture deposited and formed in time, which established in the collective memory of the society that posses it, and on the other side the ones that are outside of this

culture, from where it comes the division within the sphere of barbarism of the second society. However, this distinction does not oppose totally, because this way we would eliminate the possibility that the society that is called barbarian, not be like that, even if it is a distinct culture at a lower level. The opposition terms appear when between the two cultures interferes the level of civilization that is part of a great tradition of the technological progress and of the systems of communication of that society. Barbarism is outside only between the terms of a relationship, that generate conflict between "some" and "others", the outside denoting the place where they are placed by the civilized barbarians.

"Some and others" become a dialect of the civilization and barbarism once we frequently use the ancient Greek culture, when the Greek civilization reaches the maximum height. E. R. Dodds in The Greeks and the irrational frequently uses the idiom: the Greeks and the others, making a difference between the achievements of the Greek culture and other cultures, without making of this difference a pattern that will show up the superiority of the Greek civilization instead of another one. The pattern subsequently generated "we and the others", just to show up a "we", that represents the superior society that acknowledges its level of civilization and an "others" that means the inferior society from a legal point of view of the civilization level, during the history it became one of the main scheme of construction of the differences. Just like any conflict starts because of some differences, we could say that along this distinction the history of the civilization was created. The great movements took place in the history because of a…

Here are some examples that could show the conflict between the terms of the relationship "we and others"[1]. In The Ancient Greece, the barbarians were the ones that couldn't speak Greek, they did not worship the Olympian gods and they did not had the Greek costumes or traditions, those that were on the outside of the Greek colonial empire, and later those that were on the outside of the Greek world, of the culture and of their civilization. During the Roman World, the barbarians, excepting the Greeks, that contributed a lot through their culture and civilization, to the Romans culture and civilization, they were the ones that were on the outside of The Roman Empire, they did not speak their language, did not have their religion or traditions, culture and civilization, and also their own organizing manner. In the history of the Christianity, paradoxically (the paradox comes from the word "we" that is used as belonging to the roman polytheistic civilization), the

[1] This relation reflects all the external history of the barbarism concept and all distinctive forms of *we* and *others* terms that the conflicts between them have generated barbarity.

barbarians were the followers of the new religion that began within the borders of the Roman Empire and that split like a hegemony till Rome, and then worldwide. Afterwards, the barbarians accepted the Christianity as the official religion of the Empire, after the crush of the roman Empire and during the entire Medieval Era, get the meaning of pagan (unbeliever), also given to the migratory nations, that became Christian along the time, Muslim nations, that were always in real danger at the borders of The Christian Europe, and later during colonialism, this meaning was given only to the new nations discovered in Asia, Africa and America. Recently, for the Occident, the name "barbarians", was given in the context of the colonialism, to all the lethal enemies of the Old Europe, on one side, the ones that were opposing Europe's expansion and force, because of the technical and cultural command (taking into account the Occidental Civilizations development), we're talking here about the new nations that were discovered in the New World, in Africa and in the surroundings of Asia, and on the other side, the ones that were ignoring these aspects, the Muslim nations that were attacking Europe.

Therefore, outside barbarism does not come under a necessity of opposing something to the conceptual ensemble of inside barbarism, but to the necessity of explaining the origin of the civilization and of the conflict between civilizations. The outer side of the barbarism comes from the tendency of one that defines barbarism and through its culture perspectives and from its superior level of civilization, identifying itself with a "we" different from "ours". This perspective of making the difference denotes the fact that "we" represents a society that first performs introspectively, analyzing itself, looking at itself, admiring itself and being proud of its culture. Having these analogy parameters, this society is reporting to the ones around it, classifying, cataloguing or naming them as different.

The direction towards interior is an action that does not operate with oppositions, but with distinctions, that allow us to say, through analogy, but not to moving away from what I have mentioned above, that between culture and barbarism we deal with a distinction, the opposition is only between barbarism and civilization, if we consider that it precedes praxeologically from what we call culture. To put it differently, civilization comes under the technological progress, of complex and understandable systems of communication, by a superior financial and social-economical development etc. and it is a permanent construct, that started because of the need of competition between societies, heavily trained in endless traces of overtaking and crossing out the adversary.

The concept of civilization is an artificial construct, specially created to

illustrate the necessary conflict between "us" and "others", and to substitute the axiological character of the concept of culture. Civilization is a praxeologically ersatz that has the role of bonding material between culture and barbarism and between the deteriorated elements of culture, that could easily lead to some aspects of barbarism.

Jean-François Mattéi uses the inside barbarism not because it is a caprice or because it sounds good but because it shows the real character of the barbarism. It is inside because, as I have said before it is the summary of an introspection. Even though he did not mention on purpose in his essay "about the modern"[2] imund[3], the inside barbarism is an axiological ensemble that illustrates the true source of the barbarism.

Many years before him (1977, Paris), Bernard-Henri Lévy, in *The Barbarism with Human Face* (*La barbarie à visage humain*) makes a reference about the same introspection, but in a more ironical way about the degrading contemporary society. The social, political and economical theme of his adventure novel (as it was dedicated by Bernard Henri-Lévy for Justin-Juliette at the beginning of the book) leads to the ways of barbarism as masks of civilization, represented by everything that progress means, and by all the ways of manifestation of the technical life and any kind of power. For Lévy, barbarism is the result of an introspection because "it exists from the beginning, the origin itself", it means that, to be able to find out where violence, cruelty, volcanically nature and aggressive temper begins, we only need to find the origin, the first moment of creation, because "barbarism is the way the origin develops."[4]

With such a precedent, Mattéi has to be remarked, especially because he makes an enormous step from the social, political and economical theme to the cultural one, that leads to the identification of some grave aspects of the everyday life. Critically, he has the courage to formulate some paradoxical idioms like: the barbarism of the culture, the barbarism of the education, the barbarism of the politics; adding the "barbarism" to culture and education makes it look like barbarism but it does not oppose to culture, they go hand in hand. Both barbarism and culture have the same origin and they are complementary through their way of manifestation. If barbarism overflows by energy and if it runs counter to the behaviours asked by the politics and education, two of the legislative systems of

[2] The book subtitle of Jean-François Mattéi, *Barbaria interioară*, trans. Valentina Bumbaş-Vorobiov, Paralela 45, Piteşti, 2005.
[3] *Cf.* DEX: very dirty, desgusting.
[4] Bernard Henri-Lévy, *Barbaria cu chip uman* (The Barbarism with Human Face), trans. Irina Bădescu, Humanitas, Bucharest, 1992, p. 112.

the cultural phenomenon destined to temper it, the culture seems to be more comfortable and calm, making an appeal to the comfort of the laws, having a normative behaviour, excepting the genius manifestations. If barbarism was abolished forever, which is a Utopian desideratum, then neither culture nor civilization would not have any value. Moreover, the sluggish of the cultural actions, mixed by the legislation of the politic and hereditary overwhelmed by an educational system dependent by the humans' development in time, allow gaps through which barbarism could manifest.

Michael Henry identifies three kinds of gaps in the cultural assembly[5]. He proposed a quite delicate problem. First of all, he had to know what culture is, but he noticed that he could not make a definition out of such an immense domain, so he gave up on using definitions and he made his own system of defining through concepts. Concepts also needed to be explained, each of them with all their meanings and agreements so his steps were difficult to be made. Finally, Henry proposes three large concepts that include the other ones after the principle of the continuous generalization, so all of them should define a great part of the cultural domain. He decided that religion, ethics and art define the culture.

Henry uses for the three concepts the expression "cultural ways", through which culture manifests in the society. Both religion and ethics, from a minimal point of view, they have the same ending as their purpose, because being a religious men, like respecting an hereditary traditional faith of free chosen, it is actually the equivalent of the ethical principles (maybe not a total obedience to it, because the morality that is built on religious imperatives, is somehow a part integrated in the ethic's large sense). Looking at a cultural community from the perspective of a tradition, with the above mentioned meaning, as a civilization (Samuel P. Huntington, The collision of the civilizations), for example the Christian civilization whose population respects the institutions and the cult it belongs to, we could say that the religious activities (the mass, the mission, the vespers, the sermon etc,) and also the cult objects that they use and also the patrimony that the religious authority of the community has, they all constitute the elements of the Christian cultural civilization. We notice the connection between religion and ethics in their system of values, where the axiological system of the ethics is not too different from the religious one; they are actually complementary. The basic idea of each religion and of each ethical and axiological system is one of good behaviour, and of the respect between others. That is why religion and ethics

[5] Michael Henry, *Barbaria*, trans. Irina Scurtu, Institutul European, Iaşi, 2008.

participate to the ensemble of the culture because on the whole they are valuable systems.

Art, as a human activity is a cultural act, not just because it puts at a higher level the "cultural essence" of the "human nature", but in a special way because through art man represents and reproduces what delights the human soul and ennobles his spirit for a long period of time according to the way of artistic manifestation. Art refers through manifestation, at an aesthetic exercise of manifestation that is built on the following system: artist, art object, and art's audience.

We could say that we take part of one way of seeing the truth, taking into account the recommendation of understanding the culture. We could also see these three concepts as major values of the culture, but Henry emphasis not only this solution, but also its reverse[6]. Restraining the fundamental concepts or the domain of the culture to only three of them, the most important ones, takes place as a process of universalism, and in this way, what was meant to make it easy through the fusion of defining the culture and activating the cultural ensemble, seems to become a slow bureaucratic instrument. The process of universalism always means an outside one, for example: defining the culture through art, religion and ethics, that means to know the three domains objectively and also the normative systems of understanding them. Respecting the laws of interpretation, comprehension, the quality and authenticity of the indicators and also the ones of procedure and eligibility, all of these are elements that make the cultural act harder to be performed.

The universality leads to a high level of objectivity, which means precision and power of maximizing the cultural act, even though, on the other side, this only leads to a bureaucratic system that is easy to be corrupted and unbalanced. Michael Henry suggests for this an alternative that is called life. As I stated before, barbarism is more volcanic and more energetic than culture, so what Harry suggests seems to be a solution. The system of the three concepts has to be completed with the one of "life" for steam and brightness. This system is not made by the French author, that read the essay, but only after he tried to describe the barbarism and the way it manifests nowadays.

For him barbarism takes place only because there is a crisis that the culture confronts with. The culture never stops being in crises because it always wanted to be separated from barbarism, while barbarism only did the contrary. Crises lead to changes in the axiological systems of those that feel it. If the cultural ensemble is

[6] *Ibidem*, pp. 55-60.

always in crises where values change, than barbarism is in the same situation.

Alessandro Baricco explains more things pointing towards the barbarians[7]. If Mattéi makes a reference about the common origin of the barbarism and culture, he is trying to make us understand that we should not blame barbarism, and we should understand its inner source and this way we can stop it. Harry finds a solution where culture is separated from barbarism, and Barrico is using his idea bringing clear and contemporary examples of how to externalize the barbarism.

Samuel P. Huntington in The collision of the civilization, writes on almost 100 pages about a fundamental severe problem of the humankind, which is the decadent society and an overreacted demographic explosion[8]. Starting from this point and also from the recent studies about the demographic extinction, Baricco explains barbarism as a phenomena that extents in the societies that are dependent by technology and where technology is expanded.

The violent manifestation of any level of the societies that have a high technology is reflected in the excessive way of using it. So the main characteristic of Borrico's criticism[9] aims to the ones that use the virtual services mainly. Starting from Google, that gives everyone the opportunity of finding any information and even connecting to the internet all over the world, this made him criticize the mutation that people suffer from by transforming the reality, because behind any virtual identity could be a demon. Barrico also stated that the societies and the violent groups of people that willingly destroy everything wear a mask of civilization[10]. This clearly exemplifies the barbarians from the football fields. We could compare this to the roman stadiums where gladiators were fighting just to catch the audience's attention, so the fights would be the football game. This game was called the king's game because it was very important for the audience. In the Medieval Era, people were told that they would get "bread and circus" just to forget about the social problems, the violence from the arena was a way of exteriorizing the latent violence in the human's subconscious, so today football games have the same purpose, to make the human individual forget about his problems, giving him the chance to act violently, curse, yell, scream, whistle, sing and in an organized way he releases the beast from him, that the civilization is holding. The violence from the arena has moved in the football's yard. This is a mutation. If the satisfaction in the past was to kill the other gladiator, today the

[7] Alessandro Baricco, *Barbarii – Eseu despre mutație*, trans. Dragoş Cojocaru, Humanitas, Bucharest, 2009, pp. 51-55.
[8] Samuel P. Huntington, *Ciocnirea civilizațiilor*, trans. Radu Carp, Antet, Bucharest, pp. 210-230.
[9] Alessandro Baricco, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-20.
[10] *Ibidem*, p. 42.

murder turned into points and victories, money and higher levels of graduation, but the violence also moved in the audience where we deal with hooliganism, fanaticism and any kind of aggression.

Any kind of aggression means above everything modifying the structure. If we take into account the phenomena of barbarism, then we have to consider some examples that have to confirm the fact that: nowadays we assist to the reconfiguration of this point of view and of the values that take place close to their conceptual sphere. What we used to call barbarism it's gone now. The cultural values were not complied because of excessive globalization, that is not the worst thing for the civilization but we should re-evaluate it constructively because of the society that is constantly changing its technology and the way of manifesting its activities[11]. Once we change the cultural system of values we should also reconfigure the barbarism values. As I have previously say, the externalized barbarism depends on a permanent construction of the civilization, as a way for a culture to relate to another one and to borrow elements of the technological progress, creating and enriching civilizations. The barbarism has to be changed from the inside of the human being, because there is where we get our instincts from and where our natural instincts are crowded by the elements of civilization

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Branding a nation – Romania and Simon Anholt

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Abstract

This paper is devoted to the branding literature on the Romanian image and identity. The aim of this paper is to modestly contribute to the challenging process already begun there: branding Romania. It deals with concretely defining the ways in which the Romanian image can be brought as close as possible to the Romanian reality. This is an attempt to de-falsify an existing image for the mutual benefit of both Romanian and the global community. It also deals with how a "road map" is to be designed in order to reach the minimal level of fairness in Romanian labeling.

Keywords: *Romanian image, national identity, global community, brand.*

The early 2000s and the globalized business environment imposed the necessity of looking at the image of a country in a very pragmatic way: *What can we sell?* The process of selling the best image got the name of *branding nation* and the result of this process – *nation brand*. Therefore, according to this perspective there are images of nations that are selling more than others.

In the following years, this became an independent domain, separating itself from marketing and becoming part of what we now call *Public Diplomacy*. In this new perspective, the concept of the *branding nation* expanded to *nation brand* and *nation branding*. The interest for this domain became recognized and imposed in the Anglo-Saxon environment, and then became rapidly a global concept guided by Simon Anholt.[1] *Branding a Nation* is a complex process to gain a good

[1]The inventor and the promoter of the concept of *"Nation Branding"* is Simon Anholt. It was in 1998**,** when Simon Anholt used firstly the phrase in an article in the *Journal of Brand Management* entitled "Nation Brands of the 21st Century" Vol. 5 No 6, July. In 2002, a Special Issue on Nation Branding in the same journal, *Journal of Brand Management* (Vol 9 No.s 4-5, April 2002), specified the concept. The year 2004 – gave a new horizon in branding studies, by launching a new quarterly journal, *"Place Branding"* originally published by Henry Stewart and now by Palgrave

reputation for a country. It is Anholt that created, imposed and defined the strategy for branding a nation.

The present paper tries to briefly explore the literature on branding and on the Romanian image.

The reviewed literature used for Branding Romania has been divided into four sections.

I. Section I is devoted to finding a way to define a general theoretical concept of Branding a Nation.

II. Section II explores the meaning of Romania as an abstract concept, beyond the geographic and political reality. In addition, it also refers to nurturing the attachments and the feelings of Romanians to their symbolic and perennial ideal country.

III. Section III is dedicated to discovering valuable published contributions in transforming the general theoretical concept of Branding Romania to an empirical one useful for measuring the obvious dimensions of what Romanian Brand is, and should be, in order to ensure a better status for Romanians in a cohesive Europe in a globalized world.

IV. Section IV is concerned with the presentation of the Simon Anholt model and how to use this model for understanding the reality of a nation from different perspectives, but based on objective references for comparing nations' brands.

In conclusion, Section V is dedicated to legitimize an attempt to transfer Anholt's Hexagon for measuring the results of branding to the promoters of Romanian branding. This hexagon comprises 6 perspectives: export, governance, investment and immigration, culture and heritage, people and tourism.

1. General concept of Branding a Nation

Section I of this chapter is devoted to finding a way to define a general theoretical concept of Branding a Nation.

The major texts used were those of Simon Anholt. There are books, articles, interviews and comments on Anholt's works, namely: Anholt, Simon – "The role of the culture in national branding" in the volume *** *Heritage and Identity*

Macmillan under Andolt's direction as editor. From 2006, Anholt launched and currently edits the *"Anholt Nation Brands Index"* and *"Anholt City Brands Index"*, two surveys based on data provided by Global Market Insite, Inc, of Seattle, WA, which provide a ranking by brand value of a number of cities and countries, based on his Nation Branding Hexagon. He is the British Government's advisor on Public Diplomacy and advises a number of other governments on their branding strategies.

(2002), edited by Flamark, M., Donhead Publishing, Shaftesfury, UK,Anholt, Simon – *Brand New Justice: the upside of global branding*, Butterworth Heinemann, Oxford, 2003, Anholt, Simon with Jeremy Hildreth – *Brand America: The Mother of All Brands*, London: Cyan Books, 2004, Anholt, Simon with Jeremy Hildreth – *Brand America: The Mother of All Brands*, London: Cyan Books, 2004, Anholt, Simon – *Special Report on Denmark's National Image*, Q1, 2006, *Special Issue on Nation Branding* with Anholt, Simon (Guest editor) of "*Journal of Brand Management"*, 9(4-5).

According to these, branding is a concept that has more than one meaning. It depends on what perspective one uses to define and implement it. When it comes to branding a nation, the concept has very little to do with advertising, public relations or marketing techniques, although it is composed of all of them. It involves much more then attempting to "sell" a country. It entails the construction of a good, prestigious name for a nation. As an old proverb says, *'Public Relations start at home!'* In explicit terms, branding is the strategy to earn a reputation[2] for the country and to make all its citizens want to behave in a way that the world recognizes and believes.

The reputation is highly dependent of the process of its transmission[3]. The relationships between the *reputation of a country* – as the central concept in branding - and *image* – as the traditional view on how a country is viewed in Anholt perspectives, are closely related. The reputation is a social concept, anonymous and socially constructed and propagated, and finally retransmitted to the individual level. While image is a product constructed by individuals, it is transmitted from one individual cognition to another.

A country's reputation – as one could infer from Anholt's theory – is contradicting the social cliché on a single aspect of mentalities: their striking

[2] *Reputation* is a socially transmitted belief about belief. It concerns properties of agents, namely their attitudes towards some socially desirable behaviors: *cooperation, reciprocity, or norm-compliance*. It also encompasses the concern of the agent for transmission and the expanding of socially desirable behavior.

[3] Reputation transmission is a communication of an evaluation without the evaluator's specification. Reputation is a believed, social, meta-evaluation; it is built upon three distinct but interrelated objects:

1) a cognitive representation, or more precisely a *believed evaluation* - this could be somebody's image, but it is enough that this consists of a communicated evaluation;

2) a population object, i.e., a *propagating believed evaluation*;

3) an objective emergent property at the agent level, i.e., what *the agent is believed to be*.

Reputation is a highly dynamic phenomenon in two distinct senses: it is subject to change, especially as an effect of corruption, errors, deception, etc.; and it emerges as an effect of a multi-level bidirectional process. Briefly speaking, reputation is hardly to be earned, and easy to be loosed.

conservative tendency.

2. Romanian literature on what Romania is and could be

Section II is exploring, within Anholt's suggestions, the meaning of Romania. But, despite its continuity with Anholt, it does not look to documented results abroad, but to the internal sources. It is looking to the cultural roots of Romania's image, as a self-collective image, to its sources, to its peculiarities and to its problems. The attempt goes in the direction of reaching an abstract and symbolic concept, going beyond the geographic, economic or political reality, *hic et nunc*. It is to reach a philosophical, realistic, large, general, essential, and clear concept for and about all Romanian citizens, for all ex-citizens and for their descendents. This concept is meant to describe the attachments and the feelings of Romanians[4] to their symbolic and perennial collective being, toward their ideal of their country. In terms of branding, this self-image is the ground for creating a strategy intended to gain reputation. The hypothesis takes into consideration that the self-image of Romanians, at the starting point, is not anonymous and not without political target. It was culturally constructed and educationally transmitted.

The inquiry into the Romanian culture is an attempt to understand the evolution of Romania's self-image, as well as to understand the characteristics and structure of the current one.

Romania's construction and promotion of self-image, has a five stage dynamic:

I. This is the stage of the unique image of the *idealistic nation and ideal Romanianhood*[5] – historically known by the literature published from 1830 to 1918.

II. This is the stage of *multiple and adversary images*[6] . It is historically identifiable in the writings issued from 1918- 1945.

III. This stage is of the *single and controlled image* of the *anti-national and pro soviets* (pro-Moscow) communists' image; the image forged in a totalitarian

[4] Here, Romanians are considered in cultural terms: as citizens, ex-citizens, the Romanian language speakers, the descendents of Romanians - in all these senses - and the other people that like to identify themselves as Romanians, by origins and/or by interests.

[5] T*he idealistic nation and ideal Romanianhood* were done and popularized as the single image by nation's builder of modernizers, unionists and nation defenders – where nation was tacked as an ethnical, orthodox and moral entity

[6] The *stage of multiple and adversary images* is the most creative stage in Romanian culture. A lot of images fighting bitterly one against the other, at home and in the European perimeter of cultures, ranking from these grounded in the nationalist xenophobic currents until the liberal and internationalists ones, with some critical figures characterize the period.

atmosphere, for its sake and goals.[7] It is historically known under the name "socialist realism," and it encompasses writings issued from 1945 to1965. It was the black period of Romanian culture because it remains in the collective memory by the cleansing[8] of Romanian culture by the nationalist and non-communist figures (social democrats, liberals, populars, and rightists) and by promoting prolet-cultists bureaucrats instead of creators.

IV. This is the stage of the *new nationalists*, *nationalist-communists*[9] *nationalist- communists*[10]. In historical terms from 1965 to 1989, but it has some echoes to the present.[11]

V. This is the stage of the *new multiple images* – rooted in very diverse philosophical grounds, connected with different stages of nation-image construction, and aimed to diverse goals – political, cultural or economical. Historically, this stage begins in 1990, celebrating the cultural communism collapse, and welcoming multiculturalism.

Looking for the characteristics of Romania and Romanians' contemporary image, culturally projected and socially reaccepted, we must say that it is a mixture of the images from very different stages, from very different political and philosophical perspectives. In addition, we must understand that the race among the images lacks the philosophy of welcoming the diversity. The race is still searching for unity and social diversity.

The main characteristics of the results of image promotion are their internal incongruence and their unprofessional branding and branding management.

The main components of this image are three. The first is the ridiculous claim, constantly and implicitly reinforced, that Romania is the center of world,

[7] The stage of *single image* of the *anti-national and pro soviets* (pro Moscow) communists' image, the image forged in a totalitarian atmosphere, for its sake and goals. It was hardly controlled by the communist orthodoxy incumbents and continually censored.

[8] That means that they expulse all the national culture. They cleaned the culture of his national accent. They expelled from culture Eminescu / the poet asserted as National Poet –, Goga, a poet, Eliade, Blaga, Cioran, (the Romanian philosophers of the interwar period –). Even the communist philosophers Lucretiu Pătrășcanu – the first Communist Minister of Justice – was persecuted and finally executed in 1954, and sent into prisons the majority of the members of Romanian Academy.

[9] This is not a very orthodox communist image (The censorship was abolished in 1970.) as it was not a single image. A current of socio-democratic views is hosted by the literature of translations. The Publishing House working under the name EDITURA POLITICA Publishing Company for Political Literature, in his division called IDEI CONTEMPRANE (Contemporary Ideas) had published more then 200 titles in contemporary philosophy, sociology, economy or even political non communist theory.

[10] This is not a very orthodox communist image (The censorship was abolished in 1970.) as it was not a single image. A current of socio-democratic views /hosted by the translated socio-political literature.

[11] Corneliu Vadim Tudor, Adrian Paunescu and Gigi Becali are its best exponents.

the *self-flattering image***.** It is nurtured by the conservative nationalists, but influences citizens unfamiliar with the critical thinking developed in the perimeter of social sciences. Second, it concerns Romania learning to accept its global insignificance, the political rudeness and the immoral practices toward some of its citizens: *the nihilist image***.** It is nurtured by the internationalist figures connected with Romania, and works among the cultural elite, sensitive to the ridiculousness of nationalists' claims and desiring to disclaim any relation to such claims. Third is Romania's image: Romania and Romanians have to review their own clichés about themselves, to analyze them, to come to an understanding of the structural incongruence and their political immaturity. It goes further requiring the design of a strategy for re-branding the country and the people. This is *the realist image***.** It is supported by the pragmatic intellectual and is urging an audience among the intellectuals and young students in political science, journalism, sociology, communication or marketing.

The target of a coherent strategy could be designed as follows: understanding the importance of branding and identifying the real images of Romania today – inside and outside of the country – and working at their sources to de-stigmatize Romania and Romanians.

3. Re-branding Romania into a credible image of a country.

This is the main goal. Romania has to have the potential to contribute to the global effort of building a global society of prosperity, international justice, harmony and peace, with only peripheral and controlled anti-social or corruptive phenomenon.

The first essay drawing on an inventory of the contributions of various writers reflecting upon Romanianness/Romanianhood belongs to Mircea Vulcănescu in his article *Romanian Man*[12]. A new revised bibliography of the topic concerning the identifying of the cultural sources of Romanians nationalistic views is credited to Andrei Marga's, *Ethnical Identification to the Romanians* (1995)[13].

After reading some of the most notable books on identity the picture of the literature on Romanian's identity gets its own contour and complex profile. The

[12] Mircea Vulcănescu, "Omul Românesc", in *Dimensiunea românească a existenței* ("Romanian Man", in *Romanian Dimension of Beeing*) (1943), Fundația Culturală Română, Bucharest, 1991, pp. 16-18.

[13] Andrei Marga, "Identificare etnică la români" (Ethnical Identification to the Romanians), in A. Marga *Filosofia Unificării Europene* **(**The Philosophy of Europe' Unifing**),** Biblioteca Apostrof Publishing House, Cluj Napoca, 1995, pp. 226-238.

Romanian identity is constructed from three different perspectives: apologetic literature; the rejective; and the neutral or critical one. Therefore, the contributors could be called apologists, rejecters and analysts, and, consequently, the types of identity promoted are: an empathic one; a self-humiliating one; and a realistic one.

Despite an apparent contradiction between the three types of identity, the real traditional image of culturally constructed Romania makes sense only together. It is impossible to understand the self-humiliating views of Romanian promoters without some knowledge of the ridiculous presumptions of the apologists. It is also difficult to evaluate the injuries credited to the rejecters without data about how deeply they attack the bases of beliefs in an ideal Romania.

4. Anholt's Hexagon in Branding a Nation

This section is concerned with the presentation of Simon Anholt's Hexagon[14]. It is a pattern of measuring a country's good reputation and in establishing its place in nation brands index. The Anholt's theory is known as the Hexagon of branding. It consists in the representations, preferences and synthetic views that occur to an individual when he/she thinks of a specific nation. It is composed of the areas: 1. *Exports* **–** products put under the labels such as *Made in…***;** 2. *Governance* **–** the image of the political life[15]; 3. *Investments and Immigration***, --** the views of how attractive a specific country is**;** 4. *Culture and heritage* **–** the cultural legacy of a country; 5. *People* **–** the notorious persons from a country and their popularity abroad; 6**.** *Tourism* **–** the attractions for the foreign tourist of a specific country.

This model aims to register knowledge, preferences and evaluations in every area of research noted on the hexagon.

1. According to Anholt's Hexagon, *Exports* consists of the consumer seeking a specific product *"Made in …"* and in the consumers' expectations to find a specific kind of product – at a specific standard - only under the label *"Made in…*"

2. *Governance* is referring to the public image of the political life. The respondents are asked to rank countries regarding their trust in their government, and the competence and fairness of the governance. (The political competence is

[14] Simon Anholt is credited as a pioneer in the field. But there are also prestigious practitioners such as Wally Olins, Dr Nikolaus Eberl and numerous branding and public affairs agencies. There is one professional/academic journal in the field, Place Branding, published by Palgrave Macmillan.

[15] How trustworthy is the life in the nation under the current government? How responsible is the government toward poverty and international peace and security?

about how responsible are the incumbents of power towards poverty reduction, global peace and global environment preservation). Adjectives used to describe political life in a country are a synthetic indicator of the image of political life.

3. *Investments and Immigration* is measuring the attractiveness of a country. The respondents are asked about their knowledge, and their willingness to live and work in a country for a substantial period; about their desire for a diploma issued in a specific country, and finally for an adjective describing how attractive or unattractive a country appears to be.

4. *Culture and heritage* is the section where respondents' perceptions and knowledge of the cultural heritage (including sports) of a specific country are measured. The middle part of the questionnaire covers the expectations of respondents regarding the accomplishments of a specific country. Finally, it requests an adjective to describe the cultural heritage of a country.

5. *People* category registers the responses of respondents on the popularity of some exponents of a specific country; their preferences for particular people; and the synthetic adjective describing a specific population.

6. *Tourism* is registering the data provided by the tourist agencies and accepted by the respondents of the studied country. It also asks for comparisons of noted preferences. Finally, an adjective is requested to summarize the views of a country.

5. An attempt to transfer Anholt's Hexagon to capture insiders' views

Could Anholt's Hexagon be helpful in acquiring the good reputation of a country as the project of the country's own representatives?

Here, the answer is YES. The structure of the Hexagon does not differ when we look at it from the inside of a particular country. Anholt's Hexagon, with his intention to understand a country through marketed products; under the cognitive, evaluative and synthetic perspectives it is perfectly workable, from inside as well as from the outside.

But there are three types of difficulties that may interfere when one tries to use the model as an empirical tool to gather from the insiders, data related to their country brand. The first is: the brand of a country from outside is a fact outside of common experience, but inside is an elite concern. The second difficulty is: outside, the cognitive, evaluative and synthetic elements reported are direct incentives to "buy" the country, but for the insiders the elements selected are only subjective views or propaganda attempts. The third difficulty to be taken into consideration is with outside data the numbers are speaking directly and correct —

not so for the insiders. The insiders' answers are influenced by their current position (responsibility and power influences the nation- branding process); by their personal values and cultural heritage (sophistication to synchronize the branding of their country with the contemporary solution working globally in the world market); and their political experience (capacity of overlooking their personal sufferings and ambitions for their party's interests).

In the research process, the first difficulty can be surpassed by constructing the sample with elites only. In addition, it is important that the respondents are interested in every field of the Hexagon. The second one is to use two different methods: diversity of respondents in the sample; and corroboration of data collected with official and independent data. The third difficulty can be overcome by detailed commentary on every report.

Working with insiders in data gathering could turn into a major advantage in implementation of a branding strategy. The insiders' sensitivity to the effects of the brand; their involvements in the process of exploring ways to gain this good reputation increase their responsibility in creating a brand and popularizing it among their fellow citizens.

The components of this approach are the same for the insiders as for their buyers from outside. Unfortunately, to identify these components is much more difficult from inside because of the great amount of detail which influence the insiders' views. Anholt's Hexagon is just the theoretical tool to separate the significant from the insignificant areas, and to find a hierarchy among the data gathered in each field.

To respond to the challenge of constructing an instrument workable with the insiders as respondents we used the Anholt suggestions. We projected a sample with Romanian elites and designed a specific guide[16].

The data of the respondents are meant to prevent the third difficulty indicated by the researcher in the influence of the position of the report.

The structure of the Guide is an Anholt structure including each of his sections, but we decided for a different hierarchy of fields. The hierarchy is connected with elite concern in building a brand. It ranks from 1 to 6, the exports, investment potential, outside culture promotion, governance, politicians' image, tourism attractions, description of Romanians *using* two adjectives.

[16] The guide is not exactly in Anholt's style. That is because it has to be as short as possible. Therefore, not included in the guide are questions to capture knowledge, preferences and adjectives for every item. It has to be non-directive, to allow respondents to respond freely. It has to include the categories and the elements that relate to the promotion of a Romanian brand, as well as including that which could lead to stigmatizing the country in the eyes of others.

The structures of any question, and consequently, the answers may be polarized therefore both on the positive side of an area means juxtaposition with the negative one.

Having this option, we have five of the most frequently mentioned elements of branding in each field designed by Anholt; and the five most stigmatizing elements regarding the image and perception of Romania.

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Niccolo Machiavelli and the general interest politics

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Abstract

Machiavelli's political thought puts the state's interests before those of the individual seeking to end the unification of Italy. Currently understood as a policy without any scruples, Machiavelli's doctrine authorizes the use of any means including deception, violence and murder to achieve the political goal- the unification of Italy, giving up the moral and religious considerations in political activity. For the Florentine thinker the purposes of the prince (politician in general) are supporting the government with the acquisition of glory, honor and wealth for himself, but also for the state leaders and the people. Preserving freedom and glory in the name of the state is acquiring the primary role of the prince.

Keywords: *Niccolo Machiavelli, machiavelism, interest policy, political realism.*

Introduction

Machiavelli's thinking has at its base the background of the medieval political systems collapse and the transformation of feudal theocratic state in a pre-modern secular state. The divine origin of the state must be overcome in Machiavelli's opinion through political realism with an admiration trend for the violence model in political pagan systems, generating reform and historic renewal[1]. Machiavelli's political thought puts the state's interests before those of the individual seeking to end the unification of Italy. Currently understood as a policy without any scruples, Machiavelli's doctrine authorizes the use of any means including deception, violence and murder to achieve the political goal- the unification of Italy, giving up the moral and religious considerations in political

[1] M. V. Antonescu, *Doctrina neomachiavellistică în contextul provocărilor globaliste*, Lumen Publishing House, Iaşi, 2005, p. 102.

activity[2]. For the Florentine thinker the purposes of the prince (politician in general) are supporting the government with the acquisition of glory, honor and wealth for himself, but also for the state leaders and the people. Preserving freedom and glory in the name of the state is acquiring the primary role of the prince.

In the philosopher's opinion, the world is mean and distorted. Political prudence prevents the prince to act under conventional Christian morality[3]. Machiavelli authorizes the use of religion as a political tool in fulfilling the purposes of the secular sovereignty. The Machiavellian State is released from the bonds of religion and thus the philosopher is the forerunner of the modern theories of the state, based on realism and political pragmatism.

Niccolo Machiavelli and the political realism

It is interesting to see to what extent Machiavelli truly influenced the conceptual frameworks of realistic theory in International Relations. Researcher Ioana Petre[4] conducted a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between Machiavellianism and political realism starting from the analysis of contemporary political systems and realistic ideology in international relations summarized as follows:

- States are characterized by rationality, thus being the most important actors in the international arena;

- The international environment penalizes states that fail to protect their interests or those which incorrectly follow their objectives;

- Anarchy in international relations is the primary force that motivates the political actions of the states;

- States in anarchy have concerns particularly in the area of power and security being prone to conflict and they are often reluctant to cooperation;

- The international institutions affect only marginally the cooperation processes;

- There are no universal moral principles that can be applied in international relations[5].

The principles set forth by the author are increasingly less valid in our view

[2] *Ibidem*, p. 151

[3] Iain McLean (*coord.*), *Dicţionar de politică Oxford***,** Univers Enciclopedic Publishing House, Bucharest, 2001, pp. 263-264.

[4] Ioana Petre, *Machiavelli and the Legitimization of Realism in International Relations*, Lumen Publishing House, Iaşi, 2009.

[5] *Ibidem*, p. 17.

regarding the evolution of international relations, respectively the transition from bipolarism to unipolarism, the establishment of collective security strategies, the globalization of communications and the role of transnational economical actors becoming more active in the relocation of policy, the globalization of terrorism and the terrorist threat in line with a terrorist war. In essence, sovereign states are no longer major actors on the international arena, their place being taken over gradually by supranational unions such as the European Union. The political rationality of national interest is transferred to a transnational construct through a voluntary limitation of sovereignty in order to ensure a collective security.

Neo-machiavellist ideology and the establishment of transnational political institutions

International institutions are central actors in the reconfiguration of politics, but together with them, other important actors in international politics can be large organizations, whether with a licit character as is the case of NATO, OPEC, or even illicit as the international terrorist group ALCAIDA. Although the latter is not a subject of international law the U.S. has managed to raise a significant coalition of states involving them in the war against terror. Other significant actors in international relations are global financial institutions such as IMF, World Bank etc. institutions able to influence national and international policies of sovereign states.

Civil society through its transnational bodies is becoming an increasingly active subject in international relations especially in areas such as human rights, ecology etc. In our opinion, besides globalization, we are also witnessing a process of corporatisation of the social environment signifying a shift from a society model based on extended family and subsequently the mononuclear family model to corporate the responsibility model, where the social is analogically operating to corporate the environment. We are witnessing the transformation of the individual into personal brand, of the cohesive family into a functional one etc.

Neo-machiavellism and trans-modernity

The sociologist Daniela Cojocaru[6] draws attention to phenomena specific to postmodern and transmodern such as: "deprivatization of family life", "peripheral centrality of the child", "parenting resignation" etc. The above mentioned aspects illustrate the transformation of family life in a cvasi-corporatist one – the deprivatization of family life. All these changes both to individual level and

[6] Daniela Cojocaru, *Copilăria şi construcţia parentalităţii*, Polirom Publishing House, Iaşi, 2008.

society as a whole do not bring a withdrawal from social and political realism centered on the concept of interest and especially its legitimate interest and its tracking. On the other hand, interest in the machiavelist sense is at the origin of the social and political actor. Post and transmodern transformations diminish the role of individualism with organic universalism of collective interest type. We speak now of a fractal holism in the sense of keeping the individual within the new frames which incorporate him together with his direct alterity and represent him in relations with second-order alterity. The national state is thus integrated keeping its structural individuality in a transnational system such as the European Union. It is mandated to represent all citizens of Europe, including those of the national state in question, in relations with international organizations and power structures. But national sovereignty is not canceled, as it accomplishes its own foreign policy and remains an international subject, but with the correlation of its own policies with the common ones.

In the new framework the political realism involves both the pursuing of legitimate interests and the correlation with significant alterity. The new realism maintains the idea of pursuing the interest, but within globalizing interdependence, social solidarism does not contrast the individualism no longer, thus outlining a new model of corporate and social solidarity and responsibility. Corporation can not be understood as an economic organization designed to pursue the interests of a particular employer, but an independent actor in the social and economic space. A corporation represents the interests of shareholders divided as opinions, points of view and weight. The organization develops its own culture but that generates a sense of belonging, no longer being representative of shareholders, but an independently social construct, controlled by them. In the same way the state is a social construct independent of its citizens, partly controlled by them and also binding besides the instruments they have.

A criticism on the machiavellic vision

The first certainty of Machiavelli sent to Prince - Laurentium Medicem to whom is dedicated the book - is that the role of the Prince is to govern. For this he must have an adequate education and counseling[7]. Sovereigns must know how to treat their subjects, allies and enemies. An important role in political life is the luck, the fate[8]. In his time as a legacy of Roman law there is absolutely no

[7] Ioana Petre, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
[8] *Ibidem*, p. 41.

separation between law, religion and morality[9]. Machiavelli's novelty lies in the theoretical distinction between ethics and other aspects of everyday life[10]. The role of policy to self-perpetuate and the transformation of virtue into trickery and force introduce in the vision the Florentine philosopher, as Parvulescu states, the understanding of politics through the dialectics of power and fear[11].

Handling fear transforms power from leading to dominating. Parvulescu realized even the transforming of the medieval concept "reger" (royalty) / royal power / dominus / dominating power[12]. The distinction between political and moral means for the Florentine philosopher to apply a completely different set of values to the politician compared to the mere citizen[13]. The interest, the political purpose pursued prevails in the political human activity. This interest is not his personal interest as an individual but of the state he represents and embodies[14]. The political realism should not be considered evil in itself, but rather a separation of rational and effective governance from sentimentality moralist that may appear in some politicians' attitude. Professional politicians should act detaching themselves from their feelings, just listening to the voice of reason which dictates those policies that will be most beneficial for the state and for most citizens. Even if some people will suffer only temporarily only in this way it can reach to strengthen the state and society in general. In current theories, the exposed idea generates the concept of "collateral damage" that is regrettable but necessary in a conflict. It would be a mistake to criticize Machiavelli's theory standing in an "ethical" position because this mere position is rejected by the Florentine philosopher in his construction of an early pragmatism. We can judge the Machiavellian thinking on the consequences of social development itself acknowledging on one hand that underlies any modern policies, especially liberals, thus being a precursor of modernity, but also a precursor of totalitarianism, centered on the slogan "purpose justifies means".

Totalitarianism and the new man. Social interest theory as a justification of social inequality

Totalitarian experience has shown that in the name of creating a new man,

[9] E. Molcuț, *Drept privat român*, Universul Juridic Publ. House, Bucharest, 2005, p. 29.
[10] I. Petre, *op. cit.*, p. 51.
[11] Constantin Pârvulescu, *Politici şi instituţii politice*, Trei Publishing House, Bucharest 2000, pp. 24-25.
[12] *Ibidem*, p. 23.
[13] *Ibidem*, p. 52.
[14] *Ibidem*, p. 53.

that is a noble goal in itself, were destroyed numerous material, spiritual and human values that have been transformed into collateral damages because of ambitions, most of them being personal.

The philosopher and politician Gabriela Cretu makes in the book "I hate political realism" a critique of contemporary European and Romanian politics from the perspective of uncritically application of political realism where, the author says, appear dangerous subversions of the democratic spirit[15]. "The political realism says the author cited - is becoming more common in the world of politics: she is skillfully translating a phrase which for some sounds more meaningful in English «real politics». It is about the extremely conservative vision in which political, military or economic interest of the strongest replaces the principle of law: (...) Idealists still cling to the idea that the principles and values of international law must be defended (...). There are no sui generis events in the history. Everything is a result of past and changes the future. (...) I hate political realism and I have no satisfaction when I say: Have I not told you that this would happen? (...) In politics, between love and hate always lies great indifference"[16].

Conclusions

Transformation of power into domination and the leading strategy using fear originated in the royal power justify their existence nowadays by the general interest of political discourse. The interest, the political purpose prevails in political human activity. This interest, although should not even be his own personal interest but the states he represents, is shifted in practice by pursuing personal, party or group interests. Political realism should not be considered an evil in itself, but rather a separation between rational and effective governance and moralistic sentimentality that may appear in some politicians' behaviour. Professional politicians should act with detachment from their feelings just listening to the voice of reason which dictates those policies that will be most beneficial for the state and for most citizens. General interest politics legitimize abuse by social pressure and general welfare. Social interest prevails illegitimately from the individual one, generating a political philosophy of force law pursuing compromise in prejudice of particular interest of individuals.

[15] G. Crețu, *Urăsc realismul politic*, Lumen Publishing House, Iaşi, 2009, p. 93.
[16] *Ibidem*, pp. 95-97.

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Post-Communism and the Stereotypes of Deconstruction

About undoing and redoing the myth of the past

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Abstract

This paper tries to talk about the communist party in a philosophical way. The totalitarian regimes of Eastern Europe fall at the beginning of the 90`s years. It is still present the specter of the communism: totalitarianism represented a major experiment regarding the concentration, control, essentialism and deformation of the primary structures of imagination. But the communism also represents a utopia and a myth so to talk about it means to tell about undoing and redoing the myth of the past. So what is the cure to escape from the specter of communism? The political philosophy of The Post Decembrist Society analyses the communism as a part of the dictatorial specters but also as a myth. The possible therapy is to integrate into the collective conscience the terrifying image of certain specters, which will only cease to haunt us the moment they are crucified in the historic frame.

Keywords: *Communism, Specters Of The Past, Deconstruction, Reconstruction, Undoing and Redoing The Past, The Post Decembrist Society, The mythology about communism, The Therapy Of Acknowledgement.*

The present filtrated through past spectres

The fall of the totalitarian regimes in Eastern Europe at the beginning of the 90's determined the analysis of a series of structural elements of the latter, which couldn't be accessed previously as a result of the political and ideological barriers. The symbolic and imaginary dimensions of the communist phenomenon became the object of debate recently, a debate that is sometimes too close to involve a perspective from the objective point of view. Communism was stated to have represented a project with a universalist vocation in rethinking the world – however, this thesis was mainly assumed from the historical and material point of view, and less in the field of value-related and symbolic issues. By extension, we

may say that communist totalitarianism represented a major experiment regarding the concentration, control, essentialism and deformation of the primary structures of imagination.

The interactions between the field of collective representations and that of political reality were subject to numerous definition attempts. The major ideas within this debate refer to two antagonist theses: the first approach focuses on treating the political imagination as a derivate, immanent, residual and secondary form of the political space, while the second approach relates the collective imagination to a totalising and coercive vocation over the palpable area of politics[1]. The two argumentation lines may not be subject to an absolute approval or rejection, but the mediation thereof may lead to the acceptance of the essential presupposition based on which the imagination field has real valences related to the modification, adaptation and granting of sense to politics. The application of this analysis framework to the complex imagination generated by the fall of recent totalitarian regimes may emphasize a part of its coercive potential over present guiding marks, therewith explaining the derivation and historical after-effect of certain symbolic structures, connected to dead political bodies[2].

The idealised imaginary of the communist project generated several attempts of organisation, definition and classification, but its heterogeneous substance constantly refused to subject to a univocal analysis spectre. Based on a simplification and essence granting process, the totalitarian system vision may be regarded as an acute and ideologically infiltrated form of certain primary collective narrations, both assumed and devoured by the ideological project[3]. Further to the collapse of the system itself, the spectres of its mythology continued to populate the social mentality of the societies previously governed by the ideological project. A secondary vision was generated in time, implied by the semantic substance of the first one, but adapted to the new historical and value-related realities. Metaphorically speaking, we may state that the communist utopia has conquered a new paradigm, by insinuating itself in the profound spaces of its own vision. The myths of post-communism, regarded as an area of confluence of several historical periods, both ideological and political, may not be separated from the fundamental substance of the totalitarian project. Although they are not narrations of the system

[1] Jean-Jeaques Wunenburger, *Politics Imageries*, Paideia Publishing House, Bucharest, 2005, p. 38.
[2] Katherine Verdery**,** *The Political Life of Dead Bodies*, Vremea Publishing House, Bucharest, 2006, pp. 7-10.
[3] Lucian Boia, *The Scientific Mythology of Communism*, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2005, pp. 5-7.

as such, they project the latter beyond the historical barrier, generating a complicated myth and anti-myth synthesis, having modelled and given the sense of the present.

The case of Romanian communism remains paradigmatic in terms of the violence and ideological concentration having invaded the social mentality spaces based on imagination. The local totalitarianism was characterised by the singularity and acute specification of the communist project, which reached its final morbid stage by materialising a primitive dynastic dictatorship, where the ideological element was overrun by the delirium generated by the overestimation of the leader figure. This individualisation of the Romanian communism vision managed to involve a complicate posthumous career of its fundamental myths, which also settled in time a derivate position within the collective mentality

The secondary mythology may be treated as a complex historical artefact, generated by two opposed force lines. The first source of this new vision derives from the reconversion and derivation tendency of the initial totalitarian mythology, forced to identify new manifestation niches within the present geography, while the second source refers relates to the mere attempt to contest the primary communist vision. In time, the two antagonist sources of this new derived mythology implied a set of symbolic narrations with major influence in modelling and sometimes dislocating the guidelines of social mentality.

A de- (re-) composing world

The post-Decembrist Romanian society was confronted with a series of recurrent themes, which tended to monopolise all statements and opinions in relation to the recent past. Generically named the new transition mythology, this set of theses related to the sense, force and finality of the local totalitarian project, is hiding the initial archetypes of the typology beneath its profound layers. Although such a hypothesis may seem surprising in the first instance, the representational totalitarianism generated by the communist dictatorship couldn't be guillotined the moment its political and systemic staging was destroyed. The sphere of fundamental images of the ideology continued to populate the public space, generating hybrid constructions, whose origin seemed radically opposed to the real genesis point. In other words, the communist myths have transmuted in the species of a formal contestation, hiding in fact a reaffirmation of the primary presuppositions of the system.

Among the most influencing axes of development of the new vision, although apparently opposed, we remark the existence of an intersection and

mediation area, the latter finally managing to form a coherent system with major influence over the value sphere. Concretely, the anti-myth and the old mythology reached a symbolic armistice within the new vision, thus propagating a series of narrations having an extreme influence in the construction and deconstruction of the new social universe. As a result of the multiple forms of the images, structurally opposed value scales have been assumed and rendered coherent by the requirements of the new vision[4], the two genesis areas of the present collective mythology thus implying reciprocally and generating a justifying chain subject to circular argumentation.

The Romanian post-communist myths regard two major construction directions. The first symbolic area is dedicated to the exorcism, delegitimation and perceptive reconstruction o the totalitarian phenomenon, while the second one regards the edification of a new world, more or less projected in the imaginary area. At a first sight the two fundamental lines for structuring the debate seem to be coherent and non-exclusive. However, the research of their profound presuppositions is doubled by the emphasis of a series of latent structural oppositions. The debate regarding the totalitarian phenomenon monopolised the Romanian public space the moment the system itself collapsed. However, the results of this attempt to assume and decipher the collective meanings imposed by the communist project proved to be a road to nowhere. We may say that this war meant to destroy the myths resulted in fact in a rethinking of the totalitarian vision[5]. The most influent theses of the attempt for the deconstruction of local totalitarianism are related to the myth of dissidence, regarded as a form of real contestation of the system, with militant features, the theme of guilt, dually analysed and oscillating between general culpability and the annulment of any responsibility and the thesis of the natural collapse of the system. In the other genesis area of the new vision, the most powerful myths triggered the idea of a new world, the challenge of the past, the theme of forgetting and last but not least, the morganatic image of the future democratic Eden.

The two visions of the myth were in fact reiterating the utopian frame of the totalitarian project. Thus the new world continues to resemble the old one in an imperceptible way, the thesis of the reloaded eternity being in fact an unacknowledged assumption of the totalitarian idea of escaping history, and the idea of the future paradise, this time governed by the democracy sign, may have

[4] Jean-Jeaques Wunenburger, *op. cit*., pp. 10-20.
[5] Daniel Barbu, *The Absent Republic*, Nemira Publishing House, Bucharest, 1999, pp. 83-89.

also been regarded as derived from the "golden age[6]" of communism. Within the deconstruction, the myth of dissidence represented a copy of the ancestral theme of social class fight, drawn by communism from the primary vision of the Conflict myth, the thesis of general (non)culpability proved to be a form of manifestation of unit mythology, while the idea of the natural collapse (thus non-responsible) of the system may be correlated to the vision of historical determinism.

Paradoxically, the Romanian post-communism mythology thus represented an exact recovery of the former system image – which was visible not only in the attempts to imagine a new world, but especially in the attempts to deconstruct the old one. Thus, the system and anti-system myths fuse within the social mentality of a world in search for guidelines. The collapse of communism granted the chance to annul a troubled collective vocation, but it didn't also grant the framework necessary for the construction of a new value sphere. The historical break generated by this legitimacy and sense void may not be overcome by the annulment mechanism, or by appealing to historical oblivion. This way, the result is the necessity of a complex duty – the abolishment of communism and its former values, of the ideological vision, may be accomplished only by means of an acknowledgement exercise and not by mirroring its symbolic coercive structure.

The stereotypes of deconstruction – the mythology of undoing the myths

The first frame of the post-communist vision is concentrated on the complicated task to exorcise the system – as it was still a menace in governing the vision structures; its death was symbolically proclaimed, as a natural consequence of history dynamics. This time annulment of an epoch aimed the creation of a necessary fracture. The social mentality was avoiding the acceptance of a responsibility which may have been generically imputed to the collective nation. The myth of historical determinism did not represent a recent vision creation, as it outlived its deriving source, the communist ideology. Surprisingly, in order to collapse the absent statue of totalitarianism, the social mentality was invoking one of its fundamental myths[7]. This temptation of the after-effect thus proved to increase its power, the more inaccessible the profound vision layers were.

The second myth having a major influence in the post-Decembrist collective mentality was related to the theme of general de-culpability – the collapse of communism had revealed a troubled social structure, which had become ageless by acceptance. The responsibility for this strengthening of the system had to be

[6] Lucian Boia, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-140.
[7] Daniel Barbu, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-104.

eliminated from the immediate space, as it may have generated a collective consciousness process. The social mentality was defending against this possible value fracture by invoking the magic myth remedy – the past became the prisoner of impersonal instances, while the present was the source of a historical leap. The collective culpability theme also generated two formulas of vision escape. The first one is related to the silent opposition myth, while the second one materialises in the posterior contestation of the totalitarian project.

These narrations derived from the historical context of post-communism reveal the existence of an internal malady of non-acknowledgement. The collapse of local communism was determined neither by the mechanisms of historical determinism, nor in the framework of a posthumously imagined generalised dissidence – the destructuring of the totalitarian phenomenon was the result of several combined factors. However, the fact which is still relevant for the value-related guidelines of the post-totalitarian world relates to its necessity to free itself from a representational universe still contaminated by the force of the idealised myth.

The second frame of the post-Decembrist vision also suffered a major infusion of significations recovered from the semantic sphere of the recently annulled former epoch. The new myths founding the democratic society were mere copies of the substance and for of the ideological project of local communism[8]. Although they have been set free from the terror of the system, individuals continue to reason based on its major argumentative lines and to see the world filtered by the lingering vision. This paradoxical escape in the future, hiding in fact the refuge to the past, generated the reiteration of several former myths, in hybrid forms, though maintaining their primary argumentative structure.

The first themes invoked after the collapse of the communist totalitarianism were the ones related to the new world and the perfect society. A regressive mental experiment revealed an amazing resemblance between these apparently revolutionary forms of collective will and the historical beginning of the phenomenon they were trying to cancel. This way, Romanians were restoring the archetypal dreams and hopes specific to any form of collective society, but they were creating hybrids including certain elements of representational totalitarianism – communism was still functioning in a limited and coercive way, in the spaces of decisive guidelines. Thus the myth of a democratic society, where individuals would have found the absolute social harmony and where all oppositions would

[8] Lucian Boia, *op. cit.*, pp. 220-225.

have been dissolved, was actually a secular copy of the communist mythology. The terrestrial paradise, envisaged either as the class free society or as the perfect democratic world, remains in fact equally inaccessible. The narrative structure was the same, and its results were becoming dangerously similar, generating over time an acceptance of the issues meant to be initially denied.

Another myth which manifested a sinuous evolution within the Romanian post-communist vision was that of the Leader. Under the monstrous sign of personal dictatorship, the last decade of local communism seemed to have healed the collective mentality of the constant need for "saviours[9]", at least for a while. Surprisingly, the collapse of the system and of its absolute and terrifying personalisation, the Leader, did not also involve the accusation of its specific vision. The myth of the democratic reconstruction of the new world could not be saved against the complicated mechanisms of the vision, as the new universe also had an uninspired set of providential leaders as assembly point.

A general view over the post-totalitarian vision and over the two deriver symbolic axes, namely contestation and reconstruction, reveals a surprising dictatorship of the stereotype. The two major frames of development of the new world – one of them focusing on the deconstruction and annulment of the past and the other one being responsible for the generation of the symbolic staging of the future, were paying a symbolic posthumous tribute to the totalitarian project. The dependence of the vision on the significant frames of recent history may not be accused or annulled – this is part of the series of the natural phenomena of remaining values. However, this chain of the past may not be the object of a mere ascertainment, as it requires a complicate exercise of acknowledgement.

The philosophical exercise task – a therapy of acknowledgement

If the theme of general culpability or the one of collective unconsciousness have generated a separation of the representation universe, which couldn't be settled without marking the exclusion of a certain sphere, the acknowledgement exercise doesn't imply the absolute acceptance or the denying exclusion of the symbolic force of the past. The vision may not be brought to justice – its immanent structures may not be judged within an exclusive and extreme binomial, such as good – evil, as it implies the presence of numerous meaning nuances. One of the possible tasks of the philosophical exercise ad of the contemporary conscience relates to the inauguration of an exercise of non-vindictive acknowledgement of

[9] *Ibidem.*

the past. The totalitarianism mythology conquered the abysmal spaces of the collective mentality by means of a simulation trick – the communism confiscated the primary archetypes of the social vision and infested them with the ideology drug. Its terrible syncretic vocation provided the totalitarian project with the opportunity to create a complex representational space and with a morbid persuasion force. The absolution from myth dictatorship may not be accomplished by a simple and antagonist deconstruction, as it requires a separation from the ideated instruments of the past. The new world can only be created by rethinking and granting ever new meanings to the former world. The contemporary collective conscience acutely reclaims the suspension of this accusing illusion over the past in favour of an attempt to overcome.

The rejection of recent history may generate three types of posthumous maladies of representational totalitarianism: irresponsible denial, as an instrument of renouncement and time expulsion of the past, the ideological hybridisation of the present, as a method to survive a totalitarian crypto-mythology and historical reversibility, generated by the collective disillusionment and disappointment. Each of the three morbid derivations of the totalitarian vision may deform and dislocate the evolution of the present. Their symbolic force may burst, overcoming the register of primary representations and becoming the assembly points of a new collective memory.

The only possible therapy against the ménage of this internal revolt of the vision relates to the exercise of acknowledgement, as the ultimate method to integrate into the collective conscience the terrifying image of certain spectres, which will only cease to haunt us the moment they are crucified in the historic frame.

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Rococo and Art Nouveau

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Abstract

We proposed ourselves, in this article, the "reading" of two moments of the European civilization through art: the XVIII Century and the art Rococo, the year of 1900 and Art Nouveau. The civilization and mentality for each of them, the dreams and the anguish of those historic ages are revealed in art. I have analyzed those two historical periods in this article because of a common characteristic: the predominant of the decorative arts.

Keywords: *Art, civilization, decorative art, Rococo, Art Nouveau.*

Two major moments in the history of art, the artistic currents Rococo and Art Nouveau, started from new ways of decorating usual objects. The applied arts were the ones that begin and sustain the change.

The new status of the object is mirroring a new way of life and a new kind of civilization. The embellished of the daily life in XVIII century, the century of Rococo, is obvious in the way that objects, the house, the comfort are growing in importance. "Rococo was, in the first place, a decorative style which found the ideal application in numerous pieces of furniture, porcelains and silver ware needed for the decoration of Court of Versailles."[1] J. Philippe Minguet pointed out that in XVIII century a series of new models of furniture – like the "causeuses", "vis-à-vis", "bergeres" chairs, "en corbeille", "a confident", "en tete-a-tete" sofas and more of that – is produced. The "boudoir" appears and the architects are dealing with the heating and distribution of water. That reflects "the unanimous concern for comfort". Rococo, the style of applied arts, reflects a way of life and an attitude which will expand in all major arts, and it is the expression of a new

[1] Mary Hollingsworth, *Arta în istoria umanităţii*, Enciclopedia RAO Publishing House, 2004, p. 356.

culture. The emphasis of the object, that means private life and intimacy, is the beginning of re-evaluating the person, the individual, the beginning of the interest for personal taste, originality, social and quotidian manifestation of man. The state room became the place where the taste, the conversation, the originality is revealed; the XVIII century is the one of rising up of intellectuals, women, crackpots, and of the individual. After J. Philippe Minguet, "the courtier was replaced by the commoner"[2]. The decorated object is lovely, its value consisted in its beauty and not in the material it is made of. Accordingly, the collection of many objects, furniture, porcelain, silver ware became not only the sign of comfort, of the embellishment of the daily life, but the reflection of a new value of life; not only for the social one, but also for the private life. A new value of "the usual" – through the decoration of the useful object – brought a new conception and a new way of making life worth in all respects: the gallantly scenes appear in paintings, the conversation appear in drawing rooms, vast erudition, and also a new theme in philosophy and intellectual concern of the XVIII century – the happiness ("the theme of happiness gains till the end of that century an almost obsessive value"[3]). The happiness is not a social value; it is an individual fulfilment in all the aspects (but not religious or connected to the public life). The man reveals himself as an universe of feelings, ideals, passion. The value of life depends on all that: the joy became the purpose and the motivation of individual life. While in ancient times the theme of happiness was taken in consideration exclusively as an intellectual and moral matter or as a way of overcame the grief and wise accept of the destiny, the XVIII century discovered the happiness as a feeling: joy, fulfilment, the manifestation of the individual.

Another artistic age in which applied arts created a style is in 1900. Its name is Art Nouveau. Objects made of glass, wood, porcelain or metal became little works of art through decorations. There are useful objects that underline once again the issue of the private space and life ideal associated with objects and there value. This time Art Nouveau is creating objects destined to the inner space. Being objects created in series or as unique, they are the testimony of a desire for stability, family, order – threatened by the changes of the year 1900. Art Nouveau is not handing down the feeling of happiness, comfort and joy of living as does the Rococo. The anguish of the 1900 is obvious in Klimt`s paintings, Lalique`s jewelry and in the vegetal and asymmetric ornaments that seize the objects. The same feeling of fatigue and sadness (but not anguish) appears sometimes in

[2] J. Philippe Minguet, *Estetica rococoului*, Meridiane Publishing House, Bucharest, 1973, p. 188.
[3] *Ibidem*, p. 216

Rococo works, in the pictures of Watteau, where the joy, the moment, the excitement and brilliancy are overcoming but without a fundament and a strong ideal. The society will rediscover them along with the Neoclassicism and the French Revolution. The anguish and the threatening mystery in some of the Art Nouveau works, reveal a world that precedes the Freudian researches about the subliminal and of what this psychoanalyst was calling, in a famous article, "anguish in civilization".

The general liberation of the comportment, of art, ways of life following the World War I was revealed in 1900 only under some aspects associated with the industrialization and the social aspects derivate from it.

Woman's image in the European culture and civilization, reflected in Rococo and Art Nouveau, is also different. In XVIII century she became the moderator of the illuminist intellectual debates and part of them. In Art Nouveau women are mirroring the fear and the psychical abyss of a new world about to come to light. In both cases, the woman is for artists a person and not only an aesthetic object; she is an active subject of civilization.

The Art is the mirror of the cultural phenomena, of the civilization and dreams of a world. In Rococo and Art Nouveau I have seen two worlds, two civilizations, each with a strong and distinct figure.

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Democracy as a System of Government

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Abstract

The democracy is as a system of government. Democracy is found under various forms, more or less pure, as defined in theory, there are three of them: direct democracy where the people itself exerts the power, the indirect democracy that is as a sovereignty no longer exercised directly by the people and the semi-direct democracy that is representative by the involvement of the electorate in the Parliament's legislative activity.

Keywords: *democracy, government, direct democracy, indirect democracy, semi-direct democracy, electorate, social group, legislative activity.*

Paul Negulescu starts to describe democracy with the essential elements of an organized state. Thus, besides population and territory, the state is defined by the right to command "which is considered to be the expression of collective will of all the citizens and which is called national sovereignty."[1] The collective will is superior to the individual will of every member of the social group, in this case the state. The author presents the two types of democracy, from the greatest thinkers of the XVIIth century, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Montesquieu.

Claudia Gilia's assertion is also inspired by Jean-Jacques Rousseau: "If there were a people of gods, it would be governed democratically. People don't fit such a perfect government", the author quotes.[2] She considers democracy to be a form of moral perfection. Democracy sizes both the power's organization and operation in order to humanize it, and the citizens' lifestyle to shape it. The pure essence of democratic government is the absolute domination of the majority because, besides majority, nothing else resists in a democracy. As well as the other powers, and

[1] Paul Negulescu, *Curs de drept constituțional român*, Bucharest, 1928, p. 60.
[2] Claudia Gilia, "Regimul constituțional şi democrația – premise fundamentale ale statului de drept", *Studii de drept românesc*, no. 3-4, 2005, p. 405.

perhaps more than any of them, the majority's power must last to seem legitimate. Modern democracies are based on the limited majority's domination, electoral procedures and the representative transmission of power. Although elections and representation are tools necessary to democracy, they are "Achilles' heel". The one who delegates the power can also lose it, the elections are not necessarily free, and the representation is not necessarily real.

To preserve democracy as an ongoing process, we have to ensure that all citizens have the necessary rights for the good administration of democracy.[3]

Alexis de Toqueville thought the principle of majority was an egalitarian principle, because it tends to give more importance to the numeric force than to individuality. The principle of majority is based on the argument that "more people gathered together are brighter and wiser than one only, that number prevails over quality. It is the equality theory applied to intelligence."[4]

Tudor Dragasanu defines democracy as a regime that "implies vote participation of all mature, capable and worthy citizens".[5] The concept according to which the author defines democracy turns out to be that of the citizen. Therefore democracy cannot exist outside the state and does not include the entire population of that state: stateless persons, minors, unworthy, banned… those who do not have a voting right. Democracy is found under various forms, more or less pure, as defined in theory.

1. Direct democracy

Thus, Tudor Drăganu believed that direct democracy was characterized by the fact that "the people itself exerts the power, without resorting to the medium of an individual or a group of individuals, such as the Parliament"[6]. As the author admits, it is a definition with a rather theoretical value than a practical one. It is more than difficult for all the state's attributions to be exercised by people permanently. Generally, these democracies delegate the functions to some magistrates during the time when the assembly of the people is not gathered. There are, therefore, periods of time when the citizens of direct democracy are not governors, because when all the functions are fulfilled by the united congregation, the people just govern.

The classical examples of direct democracies are the antiques one, but considering that the slaves did not take part in the city's life, although they

[3] *Idem*, p. 408.
[4] Alexis Toqueville, *Despre democrație în America*, vol. I, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2005, pp. 282-291.

outnumbered the citizens, it is to say that those democracies were transformed in aristocracies. Nowadays, we can apply this type of democracy to some Swiss cantons with very little population: Glaris, the two Unterwald cantons and the two Appenzell cantons.

Direct democracy implies a few conditions: little population, a very small territory, people with a serious civic education and a bright spirit regarding justice and moderation.

Paul Negulescu builds the theory of direct democracy on the doctrine developed by Jean-Jacques Rousseau[5]. According to this thinker, the people's right of sovereignty must be developed directly by every citizen and, therefore, this right cannot be alienated. Only achieving everybody's will could be an act of sovereignty.

Ioan Muraru and Elena Simina Tănăsescu believe that direct democracy of ancient cities have at least two big disadvantages: "on the one hand, not the entire population of the ancient cities could take part in exerting the power, but only the citizens (free men), with the exclusion of slaves, women; on the other hand, the direct exertion of the entire power permanently supposes the entire population to participate at first hand at the concrete realization of all the state's functions, which, taking into consideration large territorial states, with large population, as most of the states known in modern times are, would be extremely difficult, if not impossible."[6].

Switzerland states only exercise state power in the legislative field, the other state functions being delegated to bodies denoted by elections or by designation. The authors describe the use of direct democracy through general gatherings of the Swiss cantons citizens during springtime, when decisions regarding the entire community are taken. It must be add that, even though it is called democracy, the principle of universality of the right to vote was introduced in these cantons only in 1971, as well as women's voting rights.

2. Indirect democracy

Indirect democracy is characterized by Tudor Draganu as a "sovereignty no longer exercised directly by the people, but by the means of a Parliament elected on a limited time"[7]. The author also adds that not all the sovereignty's attributions

[5] Paul Negulescu, *op. cit.*, p. 60.
[6] Ioan Muraru and Elena Simina Tănăsescu, *Drept constituțional şi instituțiile politice*, vol II, C.H.Beck, Bucharest, 2006, p. 132.
[7] Tudor Drăganu, *Drept constituțional şi instituții politice, Tratat elementar*, vol I, Lumina Lex, Bucharest, 1998, p. 236.

are exerted by chosen representatives, because the executive and the judicial function are exerted by bodies formed on other basis.

To determine the nature of legal relations between people and the elect, several theories have been set forth:

- The imperative mandate theory, which is explained by the fact that the nation does not alienate the sovereignty of his elect, but gives them a delegation to represent it; the elected is a simple agent bound to comply with the nation's will, and who can be revoked at any time during the mandate
- The representative mandate theory established that the election in a certain district gives the elect a social function, based on which he is called to express the general will of the nation
- The election theory, that considers being elected in function as a simple process of designation, and the elected enjoy full liberty in their legislative activity

The current Constitution repudiates the imperative mandate and establishes the representative mandate as a fundamental method.

Indirect democracy is analysed by Paul Negulescu starting with Montesquieu's theory. He sustains that the nation cannot evince its will directly and that this manifestation must be made by means of delegation, representation. The people send delegates, representatives and these representatives assembly and decide on behalf of the people. In many states, Montesquieu's theory prevails because the people's representatives give orders and make laws on behalf of the nation. Therefore the sovereignty is not evinced directly, but by delegation, a principle that was introduced in the Romanian Constitution in 1923.

Representative democracy is defined by Ioan Muraru and Elena Simina Tănăsescu as the electoral system according to which citizens can participate "directly at exerting the state power by designating some representatives who, once chosen, during the mandate that they have been given, will exert the power in the name and on behalf of the entire nation." [8]

The idea that the people have direct access to state power encounters the fact that, even though they exert it on behalf of the people, the elected are a stage of the nation's exercise. This government procedure is the most common nowadays, being "a viable model of political regime".

The authors point out that representative democracy is not without drawbacks, the most obvious being the fact that the governors distance themselves so much from the ones they govern that they end up exerting the state power for themselves and not for the nation. Multiple mechanisms have been established in

[8] Ioan Muraru and Elena Simina Tănăsescu, *op. cit.,* p. 132.

order to limit such failures: separation of powers, forms of control of the people on their representatives, such as liability in public law.

3. Semi-direct democracy

Tudor Drăganu denotes two forms of semi-direct democracy: by the involvement of the electorate in the Parliament's legislative activity and by establishing a law-making process exercised by the President of the Republic in competition with the electorate.[9]

The first method of exerting the semi-direct system implies the use of a collective that, in some cases, would make the direct participation of the nation to the process of government possible. Even though there is a Parliament which exerts the legislative function, previous consult or ulterior vote of acceptance is required. The consultation is made by a vote introduced in an urn. The procedures of direct involvement are: referendum, popular veto, popular initiative, option, recalling court decisions. [10]

The second semi-direct democracy means described by Tudor Drăganu is achieved by introducing a regulation process by which the President should enact legislation on the proposal of the Government and overpassing the power of the Parliament, through a direct consultation of the electorate. It is a method introduced in France, from General de Gaulle's conceptions, and put in practice by presidential or governmental referendum.

Paul Negulescu describes the semi-direct government as a compromise, which consists in the fact that the political organization implies a representance, a Parliament, but also the nation's intervention in the process of government by exerting the right to referendum, to veto or to initiative. It applies only to ratify laws already voted by the representatives.[11]

According to Dan Claudiu Dănişor, the semi-direct government's objective is bringing democracy closer to perfection, by transforming the liberty of participation from an utopia or a desideratum into reality. The foundation of the semi-direct government must therefore be searched in the deficiencies of the representative system. This is a "correlative of these deficiencies"[12].

[9] Tudor Drăganu, *op. cit.*, p. 243.
[10] *Ibidem*, p. 245.
[11] Paul Negulescu, *op. cit.*, p. 61.
[12] Dan Claudiu Danisor, *Drept constituțional şi instituții politice*, Curs de bază, Universitaria, Craiova, 1999, p. 261.

Ioan Muraru and Elena Simina Tănăsescu believe that "in an attempt to remove the drawbacks of the two systems of government[13] and to emphasize their positive aspects, especially after World War II, along with the traditional rules of representative democracy, some specific instruments of direct democracy were registered in Constitutions."[14]

The democracy's most used tool was and still is the referendum, because it is the most efficient and the clearest way of directly consulting the people's will, the authors also quoting other instruments: the plebiscite and the popular initiative.

"The governmental system born out of the combination of representative democracy with some instruments of direct democracy received its name of semi-direct democracy in the doctrine, or participatory democracy, in the case that direct participation of the people is done not only through legal instruments, but also by some evident politically-based ones (public discussion of draft laws, popular veto etc.)"[15]

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[13] The two systems of government referred to the authors are direct democracy and representative democracy.
[14] Ioan Muraru and Elena Simina Tanasescu, *op. cit.*, p. 133.
[15] *Ibidem*.

ESSAYS

PRESENTATIONS

REVIEWS

Why isn't there a Feasible Alternative to the Democratic System?

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Mottoes:

Faust: "Und sehe, dass wir nichts wissen können! / [...]
Bilde mir nicht ein, was Rechts zu wissen"

(**Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Faust***, lines 364 and 371).

Polonius: "Give every man thy ear, […] / Take each man's censure"
(**William Shakespeare, *Hamlet***, I, 3, 68-69).

This is a paper on the epistemological foundations of political doctrines. The central thesis – for which I propose my own argumentation – is that specific epistemological views have political implications.[1] In particular, there are significant correlations between fallibilism[2] and absolutism,[3] on the one hand, and democratic and totalitarian doctrines, respectively, on the other hand (schematically: fallibilism ► democracy; absolutism ► tyranny). Within this framework, one of my goals is to argue that a fallibilist position has substantial

[*] I delivered the *full paper* corresponding to the *present abstract* on September 18, 2004, in England, at a conference entitled *Philosophy: Problems, Aims, Responsibilities*. This particular conference was held at the University of Warwick (Coventry).

[1] Here I use the key term "implications" in the broadest sense of this word, that is to say, not in the restricted and technical sense used in logic. It is the sense in which the generation of some facts makes plausible the conclusion that other facts will (or will not) occur.

[2] Obviously, fallibilism designates here a point of view about human knowledge. It maintains that we cannot know anything *for certain* about the facts of the world we live in.

[3] Naturally, absolutism claims that we are able to attain apodictic certainty in our beliefs about the world. E.g.: we can be apodictically certain that particular statements, principles, or theories are true. Consequently, absolutism is opposed to fallibilism.

consequences not only for the philosophy of science and for everyday life, but also for political *thought*.

A second key thesis that I advance is that David Hume's view on this score is indeed utterly wrong. This could be an extremely irreverent assertion, but it is one for which I do not apologise. In his *magnum opus, A Treatise of Human Nature*[4] – among other of his works – Hume maintained a position opposed to the first thesis above, or at least so I argue. Precisely because of this opposition, I believe that Hume is completely mistaken.

I advance – *among other arguments* –the following line of reasoning for both of the above theses. I have not found this in any previous author. In the briefest way possible, my argument is as follows. Autocratic systems of government always legitimise themselves through ideologies. All ideologies, in their turn – as *political* beliefs – rest on significant *epistemological* presuppositions. This is especially so to the extent that they are deemed to be entirely assured, and hence to be *knowledge* beyond *experience* (e.g. the National Socialist and Marxist-Leninist ideologies). Can the pre-eminence of a particular race, of a specific nation, or of an economy that eradicates private property be upheld by reference to experience? Obviously, they cannot. Therefore, such ideologies are dogmatically maintained as a result of an irrational creed, supported by propaganda promulgated by state institutions.

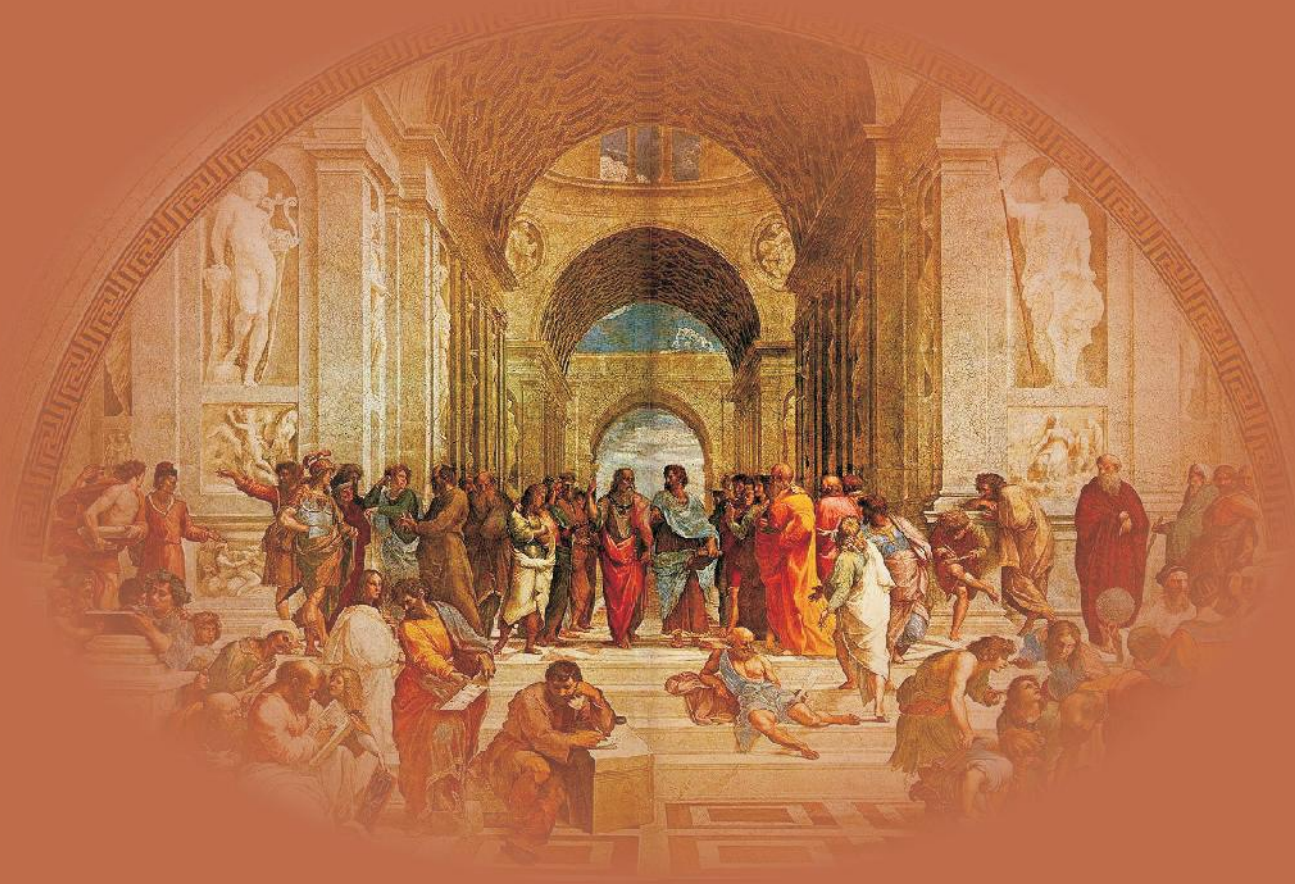
On the other hand, the case for the superiority of the democratic system rests on *knowledge* gained from *experience*, viewed as the single source and the only basis of rational opinions. Even when rulers make mistakes, we are all (more or less) able to learn from the experience. This is why we can detect and correct such mistakes, so long as freedom of opinion and the possibility of exerting the pressure of public opinion on political leaders exist. Therefore my conclusion is that if we admit – in the *epistemological* realm – that little can be known other than what can be learned from experience, then it follows – in the *political* sphere – that there is no *feasible* alternative to the democratic system.

The upshot of my arguments is that fallibilist beliefs and attitudes shared (usually unconsciously) by politicians represent a necessary condition – although not a sufficient one – for the preservation and development of a democratic

[4] See especially the "Conclusion" to Book I. For other somewhat related passages, see also Book I, Part IV, the last paragraph of Section II, and the "Introduction", and also the "Abstract" of the *Treatise*, as well as some of Hume's correspondence. Specifically, for *merely* a very few examples, see the Humean letters of 13 February 1739 and 01 June 1739 to Henry Home (better known as Lord Kames). There are some more moderate reflections on this stance in the first section of Hume's masterpiece *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* etc.

system. Further, I argue that a *theoretical* substantiation of democracy is interdependent with assuming a fallibilist outlook.

On the other hand, I develop the thesis that a consistent absolutist view adopted (usually instinctively) on the part of a ruler *can* pave the way for despotism. In the latter part of my paper, I argue comprehensively that totalitarian ideologies have started out – at all times – from absolutist assumptions. I conclude that an absolutist outlook *seems to be* a necessary – even if not sufficient – condition for the *justification* of an authoritarian policy.



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