Annals of "Ştefan cel Mare" University of Suceava

Philosophy, Social and Human Disciplines

2014

Volume II

SPECULATIVE TRUTH
FANTASY AND REALITY

USV

ISSN 2069 – 4008 (online: ISSN 2069 – 4016)

Annals of "Ştefan cel Mare" University of Suceava

PHILOSOPHY, SOCIAL AND HUMAN DISCIPLINES SERIES

2014

VOLUME II

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Annals of "Ştefan cel Mare" University of Suceava
Philosophy, Social and Human Disciplines Series

Bogdan Popoveniuc; Sorin-Tudor Maxim; Marius Cucu;
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ISSN 2069 – 4008 (online: ISSN 2069 – 4016)

Analele Universităţii "Ştefan cel Mare" din Suceava
Seria Filosofie şi Discipline Socio-umane

Bogdan Popoveniuc; Sorin-Tudor Maxim; Marius Cucu;
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ISSN 2069 – 4008 (online: ISSN 2069 – 4016)

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RESEARCH PAPERS

Why Meillassoux's Speculative Materialism Struggles with Ancestrality

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Abstract

This paper shows that Quentin Meillassoux's speculative materialism doesn't offer us the means to account for the ancestral statements that the modern sciences produce, i.e. for the scientific statements about events preceding all forms of life. An analysis of the reasons why Meillassoux thinks that the problem of ancestrality problematizes the contemporary self-evidence of correlationism is first offered. The results of this analysis are then applied to speculative materialism itself and the consequences are not very promising: very much like correlationism, speculative materialism explicitly denies what I call the "generalized version of the realistic assumption of science" and, in so doing, renders scientific ancestral statements de jure unverifiable. Therefore, if correlationism is rendered suspicious by the issue of ancestrality, the same can be said of speculative materialism.

Keywords: *Meillassoux, speculative materialism, correlationism, ancestral statements.*

This paper shows that Quentin Meillassoux's speculative materialism doesn't offer us the means to account for the types of ancestral statements that the modern sciences produce. In other words, as far as their way of handling ancestrality is concerned, speculative materialism and correlationism do not seem to be all that different. However, since Meillassoux uses the problem of ancestrality precisely as a means "to problematize the contemporary self-evidence of correlationism,"[1] this similarity in the handling of ancestral statements might raise difficulties for the speculative materialism itself.

[1] Quentin Meillassoux, "Iteration, Reiteration, Repetition: A Speculative Analysis of the Meaningless Sign," trans. R. Mackay, April 20, 2012, forthcoming, accessed June 25, 2014, https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/0069/6232/files/Meillassoux_Workshop_Berlin.pdf.

I don't intend to show that speculative materialism is incapable of accounting for the general ability of mathematized sciences to identify the properties of a world that exists independently of the thinking. Indeed, I couldn't claim such a thing since the derivation of this ability of mathematized science from the guiding principle of speculative materialism (i.e. from the principle of factiality which states that the necessary contingency of beings is the *sole* necessity the world can be characterized by) has not yet been offered by Meillassoux, even though the first steps taken towards achieving this goal look promising.[2] But one cannot criticize an author's intentions or goals, one can only criticize the positions and arguments he or she has clearly articulated. Therefore, my aim here is not to show that speculative materialism cannot account for science's ability to know or think – in general – a world independent of thought, but only that it cannot account for the ability of science to produce ancestral statements, i.e. to describe "independent of thought" properties of beings belonging to a world anterior to man or to life in general. Out of all the "facts" that sciences can identify and treat, I only focus here on the ancestral ones.

Presuppositions

In order to spare the reader's patience here, I will assume that the main lines of Meillassoux's arguments are well known, and I will simply indicate here which of them are necessary for the aim of my paper. I will mainly make use here of two of his beautiful demonstrations.

a) The first necessary element is the proof given in chapter III of *After finitude*[3] (and even more clearly re-stated in "Iteration, Reiteration, Repetition") as to why a correlationist (defined as every philosophy that maintains the impossibility of acceding through thought to a being *independent* of thought) that wants to distinguish himself or herself from subjectalism[4] will necessarily fall back on a speculative materialist position, i.e. he / she will be forced to assume the principle of factiality. Obviously, the distinction between what Meillassoux calls

[2] I'm hinting here at Meillassoux's proof that our ability to use meaningless signs stems from the necessary contingency of all beings (cf. "Iteration, Reiteration, Repetition," where Meillassoux's earlier considerations about identity – from his thesis *L'inexistence divine* – are adapted to serve this new purpose).

[3] trans. R. Brassier (London: Continuum, 2008, ebook version).

[4] In *After Finitude*, "subjectalism" is referred to by different names (absolute idealism, subjectivist metaphysics, etc.). In order to avoid any possible misunderstandings, in "Iteration, Reiteration, Repetition," Meillassoux coins the term subjectalism to refer to the type of absolutism (whether idealist or vitalist) that "survived the correlationist critique, for it consisted not in disputing the closure of thought upon itself, but in confirming it, in the name of the absoluteness of thought itself (or certain of its characteristics)".

strong correlationism and subjectalism might be difficult to operate historically: in the works of many philosophers casted by Meillassoux in one or the other category, one might actually find statements that seem to indicate that the respective philosophers actually belong to the other category, and so on. However, the role of this distinction is precisely that of making us look past isolated *statements*: it forces us to *decide* to which category this or that philosopher belongs, and anyone who would contest this decision would be forced to resort to something more than simple statements of the respective author in order to state his claim (i.e. he would have to appeal to the guiding principles of that philosophy and to *deduce* from it the positioning of the author in one of the two categories).[5] For simplicity, I will call this "the argument of the impossibility of correlationism", because its fundamental significance resides in the fact that it effectively *dissolves* one of these categories: strong correlationism has no choice but to recognize that it is, in fact, either a subjectalism or a speculative materialism. Strong correlationism is thus pushed into extinction: it is forced to choose in which of the two remaining fortresses – subjectalism or speculative materialism – it will henceforth camp its troops.

Obviously, with respect to this argument, one could take a different line of attack. One could thus not contest the introduction of this or that author in this or that category, but one would contest the categories themselves that Meillassoux proposes (subjectalism, correlationism, etc.)[6] This, of course, can always be done, but that is beyond the scope of this paper. For my aims here, I can simply assume Meillassoux's categories, and see where they lead us with respect to ancestrality.

b) The second of Meillassoux's demonstrations that I will assume (and assume as known) here is that of the non-totalizability of the possible, provided in Chapter IV of *After Finitude*. This demonstration makes use of Cantor's notion of the transfinite in order to show that one cannot reasonably claim that a world (or Universe) whose entire set of laws and constants *could* change at any moment is also a world in which those laws and constants *would in fact, in all sane probability*, change frequently. Meillassoux shows that such a probabilistic

[5] This deduction has its limits, of course: as Meillasoux states (*After Finitude*, 109), Kant only *postulates* the existence and the non-contradictory nature of things-in-themselves; therefore, when we say that Kant belongs to the "weak correlationism" category we are ultimately relying on simple statements. This is why, in what follows, I will pay little attention to the distinction between weak and strong correlationism.

[6] Or one could even contest Meillassoux's ability to *conceive*, at the same time, these categories in the context of his own argument, as Josef Moshe has done in a very interesting paper ("Correlationism reconsidered. On the «Possibility of Ignorance» in Meillassoux," *Speculations: A Journal of Speculative Realism*, II, May (2011):187-206).

reasoning is impossible to apply to the world or universe as a whole, because this sort of reasoning would imply (i.e. suppose) our access to a totality of Universe-Cases in which probabilistic calculations could operate, while the notion of the transfinite indicates that such a totality – or totalization – of Universe-Cases is impossible.

Of course, Meillassoux admits that this demonstration is itself based on a particular mathematical axiomatic (i.e. the standard axiomatization of set-theory, itself an intra-wordly and therefore non-necessary mathematical theory), and other axiomatics might allow for the totalizability of the possible. In other words, the argument given in *After Finitude* does not yet prove that the non-totalizability of the possible necessarily follows from the principle of factiality, but only that this non-totalizability is possible. In this respect, Meillassoux's demonstration is only partial or unfinished, for the time being, and it should be complemented – or, better yet, replaced – by a derivation of the non-totalizability of the possible from the principle of factiality itself. But, again, for my aim here the partial nature of this argument is less important,[7] and my point would remain unchanged even if a complete derivation of non-totalizability were already in place.

However, it should be noted that the non-totalizability argument does not prove the stability of the laws of our universe. Meillassoux is a bit ambiguous on this point, and dispelling this ambiguity is necessary for my own argument here. The ambiguity appears in statements like the following: "Thus, a genuinely satisfactory speculative resolution of Hume's problem should explain what could constitute *a precise condition for the manifest stability of chaos.*"[8] From such statements, one might understand that a factial derivation of the non-totalizability of the possible would *prove* the stability of the laws of nature. However, one should not be led to that conclusion. Instead, let's see how Meillassoux details what this factial derivation would in fact achieve:

> *the resolution of Kant's problem presupposes that we have achieved* a speculative rather than merely hypothetical *resolution of Hume's problem. For it is also necessary to establish the legitimacy of the assumption that the stability of natural laws, which is the condition for every science of nature, can be* absolutized. *If empirical science is actually possible, we said, this is on account of the actual stability of the laws of nature. But it is now clear that this stability must be established as a mind-independent fact if we want to achieve a decisive break with contemporary Ptolemaism. Thus, it is a question of establishing that the laws of nature derive their factual stability from a*

[7] As is its validity. I personally don't think the argument of the non-totalizability is a valid one, but proving this claim would mean going beyond the scope of this paper.

[8] Meillassoux, *After Finitude*, 163.

property of temporality that is itself absolute, which is to say, from a property of time that is indifferent to our existence, viz., that of the non-totalizability of its possibilities.[9]

Here is how I think Meillassoux's point should be understood. The argument of non-totalizability based on Cantor's transfinite only establishes that there is at least one mathematical axiomatic that allows *us* to think that the stability of the laws of nature is *possible*. But this possibility is not yet ontologically grounded as long as it is not derived from the principle of factiality. In other words, only such a derivation would establish the ontological possibility of the stability, and not merely a "mathematical" possibility of this stability for-us. But, by the same token, the factial derivation of the non-totalizability would *certainly not* prove that laws of nature are stable, that they don't change; it would only prove that it is possible – and this is an ontological possibility, one independent of us – that they are stable or that they don't change. We would thus move from a stability that is "possibly possible", to one that is simply possible. But this in no way proves that the stability is the only possibility, it only proves that this stability is possible, and possible as a fact, not as a necessity. It would indeed be difficult – to say the least – to imagine how Meillassoux could possibly attempt to derive from the principle of factiality (i.e. from the idea that everything can change for no reason) the fact that there are some things – the laws of nature – that never change. Of course, apparently impossible tasks have already been accomplished in Meillassoux's thought, but I don't think that the one I'm talking about here is a task he has set for himself.

Correlationism and ancestral statements

Having indicated my assumptions, I can now make my way towards the main claim of this paper: when faced with the type of statements that modern science produces about events preceding all forms of life – the age of the universe, the formation of the Earth, etc. – speculative materialism doesn't seem to fare better than correlationism.

In order to make sense of this claim, we need to get down to the details of how correlationism fails to account for ancestral statements. Meillassoux is uncharacteristically ambiguous about this particular "failure", because in a number of places he lets us believe that a correlationist philosopher's claim with respect to a given ancestral statement could take the following form: "The statement «The event X took place Y years ago» is false". This ambiguity has already led to some misunderstandings in certain commentaries, such as the following:

[9] *Ibidem*, 205.

> *However, it should be the cause of extreme astonishment if the philosophers referred to as correlationists by Meillassoux, such as Kant, Husserl, and Heidegger were not capable of understanding that the sun has existed before man. Neither idealism nor phenomenology is an ontic theory according to which the existence of human beings is the efficient cause of the existence of particular objects such as the sun, the Milky Way, or Niagara Falls.*[10]

Obviously, objecting this to Meillassoux is unfair. If Meillassoux's notion of correlationism implied that the existence of the sun or the Earth etc. was dependent on the existence of human beings, then there would be no possible distinction to be made between correlationism and subjectalism (or, more precisely here, subjective idealism). Or, Meillassoux's entire argument of the "impossibility of correlationism" rests on the distinction he draws between these two philosophical positions. But, as I said, Meillassoux seems to encourage this misleading reading himself in *After Finitude*. He says, for example, that, for a correlationist, the ancestral statement is "*one whose referent cannot possibly have actually existed in the way this truth* [the objective truth of the ancestral statement] *describes it.*"[11] And we are lead to believe that this impossibility of the actual existence of the referent of the ancestral statement stems from the fact that a correlationist must claim, with respect to an ancestral statement, that "its referent, taken literally, is unthinkable."[12] But, of course, later on in the same book, Meillassoux will state that the main thing that differentiates a correlationist from a subjectalist is precisely the fact that, according to the former, "everything is possible, even the unthinkable."[13] The correlationist cannot therefore be assumed to claim that the ancestral event is *impossible*: if one assumes this, the entire edifice of *After Finitude* crumbles. The fact that Meillassoux seems to make this assumption in the first chapter of his book has to be written off as nothing more than an inconsistency (or insufficient precision) on his part. Therefore, the correlationist's position with respect to ancestral statements certainly can not be summarized in the form: "The statement «Event X took place Y years ago» is false".

Instead, the correlationist transforms the ancestral statement into something like this: "The event X took place Y years ago, for us (or for humans or even for the human scientist.")[14] This correlationist modification of the ancestral statement

[10] Markus Gabriel, "The Mythological Being of Reflection – An Essay on Hegel, Schelling, and the Contingency of Necessity," in *Mythology, Madness and Laughter*, Markus Gabriel and Slavoj Žižek (New York: Continuum, 2009), 86-87.
[11] Meillassoux, *After Finitude*, 32.
[12] *Ibidem*, 30.
[13] *Ibidem*, 106.
[14] *Ibidem*, 27.

plays two different, yet interrelated roles. First of all, the small "codicil" added at the end introduces the distinction between the "in-itself" and the "for us". This basically splits the event X in two asymmetrical halves: the "manifestation" of the event X or the way in which it appears to us, on one hand; and, on the other hand, the event X in-itself, as it might have taken place in the absence of any manifestation of it for us. The two "halves" are asymmetrical because one of them is unique, while the other is always potentially plural: we have no doubts about the way in which any event presents itself to us, the "presentation" itself already determines the "for us" part of the event; however, on the other side, the event itself (or in-itself) is a wholly different affair, because there is nothing to determine it (the manifestation only determining the "for us" side of it, like the visible part of the moon). In other words, the event X itself *might* not have taken place at all, or it *might* have taken place differently than we picture it (i.e. event X might actually have been event Z) *or it might even have taken place in the exact way in which (and at the exact date at which) we describe it*. The point is that all of these possibilities of the "event in-itself" are open as soon as the distinction for-us/in-itself comes into play, and *one* of these *multiple* possibilities is precisely that the ancestral statement be *purely and simply true*. Far from stating that the ancestral statement is false, the first role of the correlationist's codicil indicates that the truth of the statement is one possibility among others.

Its second role – tightly related to the first – is that of demanding, by its simple presence, *proofs* as to how we could access the "in-itself" in order to reduce (to just one) the plurality of possibilities characterizing the "in-itself" side of the ancestral event. Obviously, providing *proofs* for our actual access to the in-itself means using thought in order to gain access to what is independent of thought and, therefore, falling inevitably prey to the correlationist circle. Even more so when the object of discussion is ancestrality, where the only signs we have about the existence of these *past* events are nothing more than *present* traces. To the general "horizontal" obstacle posed by the for-us / in-itself distinction, a "temporal" obstacle is added, that of having to somehow directly access a past event (that no longer exists) without using the present traces (and sole remains) of its past occurrence. Obviously, there is no way to circumvent this double obstacle; consequently, the conclusion of this second moment or role of the correlationist's "codicil" is that there is no way to access the "in-itself" without transforming it into a for-us. Therefore, the correlationist himself could not claim that the ancestral statement is purely and simply false, because that would be tantamount to *claiming that he actually has access to the in-itself* (in order to know that the event

X itself didn't take place, or it took place differently or at a different moment, etc.), and it is precisely the possibility of this access that he denies. Consequently, the multiple positions opened by the first role of the codicil are to remain *forever* open from the correlationist's perspective.[15]

To sum up, there are two moments in the correlationist's take on ancestral statements. The first one consists in stating that the truth of the ancestral statement is only one possibility among others; and the second one is that of stating that it is forever impossible to determine whether this possibility is more justified than the others. The correlationist's position could therefore be synthetically expressed in the form of the following syllogism:

> *The statement "The event X took place Y years ago" is true if and only if* the ancestral event X itself really did take place and, moreover, it took place precisely as (and when) our current theory (and dating methods) assert.
> *But such a correspondence between our theory and the in-itself is impossible to prove.*
> *Consequently, it is impossible to determine whether the statement "The event X took place Y years ago" is true or false.*

Let us face it: there is nothing nonsensical about this syllogism, and Meillassoux's conclusion in *After Finitude* about the correlationist's take on ancestral statements – "*it is a nonsense*"[16] – is unjustifiably harsh. Meillassoux himself is well aware of this. In a later conference he states that the problem of ancestrality lays out "an aporia, rather than a refutation"[17] of correlationism. Of course, by most standards, any philosophical theory that is proven nonsensical is thereby refuted, so, when Meillassoux maintains that ancestrality does not refute correlationism, he is implicitly stating that there is no nonsense in the correlationist position regarding ancestrality.

But it is important to try to understand why Meillassoux thinks that, while the problem of ancestrality does not refute correlationism, it is still important

[15] In Meillassoux's account of this, another ambiguity – but tightly related to the one already indicated – is generated by the fact that he doesn't fully explain his claim regarding "the replacement [operated by correlationism] of adequation by intersubjectivity in the redefinition of scientific objectivity" (Meillassoux, *After Finitude*, 19). While it is true that correlationism does operate such a replacement, this doesn't mean that correspondence-truth is completely erased or eliminated from the correlationist position. Rather, it is "suspended" or "bracketed", since intersubjective-truth becomes all we can strive for, while correspondence-truth becomes impossible to express. What defines correlationism is precisely this way of keeping the options open as far as the in-itself is concerned. The pertinence of Meillassoux's argument of the impossibility of correlationism rests entirely on this way of interpreting the correlationist's position.

[16] *Ibidem*, 32.

[17] "Time without Becoming," conference given at Middlesex University (London, May 8, 2008), accessed June 25, 2014, http://speculativeheresy.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/3729-time_without_becoming.pdf.

enough to be considered an aporia. In order to see why, first of all, we must refrain from unflinchingly accepting all of Meillassoux's statements on the subject: indeed, every time Meillassoux deals with ancestrality – and its relationship with correlationism –, many of his statements seem to become problematic, if not outright self-contradictory.[18] Secondly, we need to connect some of the disparate elements that Meillassoux provides in support of his claim, and the remainder of this section aims to connect the disparate remarks that Meillassoux's work offers us. This will lead us to identify what I think is the core of Meillassoux's position on this subject: brutally told, Meillassoux argues that correlationism renders science meaningless, and this is because it refuses what Meillassoux calls "the spontaneous realism"[19] of science (or, in other words, because it restricts what I will call "the realistic assumption of science").

Before we attempt to clarify the meaning of this "realistic assumption of science", a few remarks need to be made. First of all, we should note that the following considerations will certainly seem overly naïve to a contemporary philosopher of science. Undoubtedly, Meillassoux should be viewed as advocating a form of "scientific realism", as philosophers of science would put it.[20] However,

[18] Here are a couple of examples. In "Time without Becoming," Meillassoux states that correlationists claim that "there has never existed anything like a Universe preceding humanity with such and such determinations *we could effectively know* – this is just nonsense – but only an agreement between scientists which legitimates the theory in question. One maintains in the same sentence that scientists have solid reasons for accepting a theory, and that this theory describes an object – the field of pre-terrestrial life – *which can't exist as described*, because it is a nonsense". I have emphasized the problematic points in this passage: either the correlationist claims that we can't know the pre-life universe (but this doesn't mean that it couldn't have existed) or he claims that it couldn't have existed. One cannot maintain both descriptions of the correlationist's claims at the same time, at least not if one wants to be fair towards correlationism. Here is another example, this time from "Iteration, Reiteration, Repetition." Correlationism is initially defined as "every philosophy that maintains the impossibility of acceding through thought to a being *independent* of thought". But, as soon as ancestrality enters into the picture, Meillassoux states: "In this way, we would no longer, like the correlationist (whether Kantian or not), who affirms that the world is but the obverse of human (or animal) representation, have to perform more and more intellectual acrobatics to account for the scientific description of the Universe anterior to the appearance of terrestrial life." Again, either the correlationist claims that there is no *knowable* world independent of thought or that there *simply is no world* independent of thought. We cannot define correlationism in two ways that contradict each other and then claim that it is the correlationist that contradicts himself.

[19] Meillassoux, *After Finitude*, 26.

[20] Anjan Chakravartty, "Scientific Realism," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2014 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/scientific-realism/, describes scientific realism as a commitment to three dimensions: a metaphysical one ("the mind-independent existence of the world investigated by the sciences"), a semantic one (commitment to the "literal interpretation of scientific claims about the world") and an epistemological one (commitment to the idea that the theoretical claims of the sciences "constitute

he does not go through the trouble of satisfyingly spelling out his realism: he does not, for example, try to refute anti-realist positions about science in order to strengthen his position, nor does he try to refute any of the famous anti-realist arguments. This is why Meillassoux's realism, detailed below, will necessarily seem naïve and insufficiently grounded. However, I think there are two important and interrelated points to make here, and they will hopefully avert us from dismissing Meillassoux's realism as being naïve. First of all, thus far Meillassoux did not need to defend his scientific realism as a philosopher of science would have, since his main goal has been ontological, and not epistemological. His goal, for the time being, has been that of creating an ontology – speculative materialism –, and it is on the basis of the main principle of this ontology – the principle of factiality – that Meillassoux intends to show exactly how the sciences can reach the in-itself (the mind-independent properties of the world). If Meillassoux's latter goal is achieved, then his naïve realism will certainly have been vindicated (therefore, dismissing it as naïve will prove to have been overhasty). Second, I think it is safe to say that Meillassoux does not need to explicitly defend his scientific realism from anti-realist arguments precisely because his philosophy is directed against correlationism. Arguably, all anti-realist positions about science (instrumentalism, pragmatism, social constructivism, etc.) are in fact tributary to correlationism. Consequently, Meillassoux's critique of correlationism and his scientific realism go hand in hand: one can only accuse his realism of "naïveté" by situating oneself on correlationist positions. In other words, if Meillasoux's critique of correlationism is successful, his scientific realism follows almost automatically: take away the arguments of correlationism, and the anti-realist arguments are also swept up.

Now, let us try to spell out what "the realistic assumption of science" might mean in the context of Meillassoux's philosophy. An example will clarify this. Let's imagine that we have two competing scientific theories that explain *equally well* a given set of phenomena. How do we decide which of the two theories is better? A scientist or a philosopher of science would probably tell us that this sort of problem can be easily settled[21] by identifying some predictions of previously unnoticed phenomena that *only one* of the two theories makes possible – the "bending" of the light around massive objects, for example – and then testing or experimenting in order to see whether these predictions are confirmed or not. If

knowledge" of both observable and unobservable aspects of the world). Meillassoux's position with respect to the mathematized sciences perfectly illustrates the commitment to all these three dimensions.

[21] Even if this "easy" settlement might require billions of dollars and fantastic ingeniousness.

they are confirmed, then the theory that predicted those phenomena (that were unconceivable in the framework of the other theory) is the better one. The point is that we do not *decide* which of the two theories is better based on their own inherent properties, but we have to *discover* which of the two theories is better, and this discovery is made precisely by putting them to the test against something like "reality". But in order to arrive at this "discovery", we must assume that each of the particular predictions made by our theories *can be confirmed or infirmed*. By this I do not mean that we must have the technical ability to produce the test or the experiment that could confirm a particular prediction, but simply that we must assume that that prediction really talks about something like "reality" and it is that reality that can prove it right or wrong. By supposing that, based on one theory, we predict that a certain sub-atomic particle exists and behaves in a specific way: this prediction cannot be confirmed or infirmed if we also suppose, for example, that it is impossible to know whether there are such things as "particles in themselves", independent of the thought that conceives them or of the experiment that isolates them. In other words, scientists supporting the competing theory – the one that didn't predict the particle – will simply reply: since we don't know whether particles in general exist "in themselves", all you have proven is that you can *produce* a particle in your experiments or, more precisely, all you've proven is that that particle exists *in your experiments*; but that does not prove that your theory is better than ours, just as we do not claim that a civilization is better than others because it produced Van Gogh or Scott Fitzgerald.[22] Scientists can therefore always reply this: but the important point is that at the precise moment when they utter this reply, *they will have stopped doing science*.

In other words, in order for science in general – as an activity or, if one prefers, as a "discourse" – to work, we need to assume that its statements have an attached truth value, i.e. they are either true or false with respect to something like "reality". We could never compare two scientific theories unless we assume that their statements have the ability to be confirmed or infirmed by something exterior to them.[23] The functioning itself of scientific activity is impossible without this.

[22] Note that this is not the same thing as objecting that an error in the setting of the experiment or the insufficient precision of the instruments used might have given us the false impression that we'd found a new particle.

[23] This does not mean that scientists consider their theories as being absolutely and forever true. It simply means that there could be no "science" in general unless we consider as provisorily true the theory that has been confirmed. In Meillassoux's words, the fact that a theory is always susceptible to being refuted by a new, more appropriate theory "will not prevent the scientist from considering that it makes sense to *suppose* that her statement is true: that things could actually have happened the way she has described them and that so long as her description has not been supplanted by

While Meillassoux is pretty elliptical about this in *After Finitude*,[24] he does state it pretty clearly in his conference "Time without Becoming":

> *Truth, and truth considered as something like a correspondence with reality, is a condition of the meaning of theories, as hypotheses one can prefer to other ones.*

In order for science to "work", it has to be spontaneously realist. This realism is therefore a fundamental assumption of science, and as soon as we refuse this assumption all scientific theories become equally valid – which is tantamount to saying that they become equally invalid.

But the most important point is that there are two possible attitudes with respect to this realistic assumption of science. One can accept it in a *restricted* sense, or one can accept it in a *generalized* sense. Accepting it in a restricted sense means admitting that it is indeed a fundamental condition for the functioning of science, but also that there is no reason why it should not remain confined to science. Scientists have to assume it in order to do science, but that does not mean that the realism they are adhering to is valid in general or should be accepted by other types of human activities or discourses (like philosophy, religion, etc.). This restricted sense of the realist assumption of science is the one Meillassoux attributes to correlationism:

> *A [correlationist] philosopher will generally begin with an assurance to the effect that his theories in no way interfere with the work of the scientist, and that the manner in which the latter understands her own research is perfectly legitimate. But he will immediately add (or say to himself): legitimate, as* far as it goes.[25]

One should note that the "as far as it goes" translates here the French "*dans son ordre*", which indicates the restriction of the domain of applicability of the realistic assumption. It is "within science's own discursive regime" that the realistic assumption is legitimate, but, the correlationist adds, there is nothing that could coerce us to adhere to the assumptions of that regime. Now, the correlationist's point is correct, insofar as I cannot think of a type of argument that

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another theory, it is legitimate to assume the existence of the event such as she has reconstructed it. And in any case, even if her theory is falsified, this can only be done by another theory which will also be about ancestral events, and which will also be supposed to be true" (Meillassoux, *After Finitude*, 25). The realistic assumption is thus always present; it is coextensive to science itself.

[24] There are hints towards this in *After Finitude*. Here is an example (182-183) in which the notion of "discovery" is connected to that of "confirmability": "For the fundamental point is this: even if science had discovered this synchronicity, this would still have been a *discovery* – which is to say that it is precisely insofar as modern science is mathematized that it is capable of *raising* the question of a possible temporal hiatus between thinking and being – of construing the latter as a meaningful hypothesis, of giving it meaning, of rendering it tractable – whether in order to refute it or confirm it."

[25] Meillassoux, *After Finitude*, 26.

would render it necessary for all types of discourses (philosophy, religion, etc.) to adhere to the fundamental presuppositions of one of these discourses (in this case, science). This is why it is, in my view, impossible to actually prove correlationism wrong on this front, and this is why Meillassoux says that the problem of ancestrality does not amount to a refutation.

However, the problem with this restricted version of the realistic assumption of science is that it renders science meaningless, *when the latter is seen from outside the confines of its own discursive regime*. Suppose two scientific theories are competing for the description of the accretion of the Earth. One of them claims that it took place Y years ago, the other one claims that it took place W years ago. For a correlationist, it is this "competing" itself that becomes useless: for him, both positions could be right or wrong only if there were a way to prove that the in-itself really did behave (if it existed at all) as we describe it, but, as the syllogism above showed, this possibility is forever refused to us. Both theories become equally impossible to prove, and the whole fuss is in fact about nothing. Exchanging arguments and proofs, making experiments to corroborate this or that theory – it all becomes futile. Science keeps making sense, *but only for scientists*; meanwhile, seen from outside, from the "vantage point" of other discourses, it is utterly meaningless.[26]

If a restricted version of the realistic assumption of science renders the latter meaningless, then the only way to hold on to the meaning of science is *to share* its realistic assumption. This is why, as we have seen above, Meillassoux claims that the realistic assumption is "a condition of the meaning of [scientific] theories"; or, as he states in *After Finitude*:

> *Science does not experiment with a view to validating the universality of its experiments; it carries out repeatable experiments with a view to external referents which endow these experiments with meaning.*[27]

If we want to hold on to a meaningful science, we need to defend a *generalized* version of the realistic assumption of science. In other words, we need to assume that this assumption, *internal to science* as it is, is valid *in general*. How is this possible? Simply by accepting the fact that science has the necessary "protocol" (i.e. experiments, measurements, etc.) that allow it to decide *on its own* if and when a statement or a theory is confirmed or infirmed. In other words, we need to acknowledge that science, and science *alone*, is sufficiently well equipped

[26] At least meaningless with respect to its cognitive capacities. Pragmatic capacities might be a different matter, even though it is not always easy to imagine what the pragmatic virtues of an ancestral theory might be…

[27] Meillassoux, *After Finitude*, 32.

to decide when a statement describing mathematizable properties of beings is to be considered true or false.[28] This, I think, indicates the most serious discomfort that Meillassoux has with respect to the correlationism-ancestrality issue: the fact that correlationists do claim that science has "good reasons" to consider that an ancestral statement is correct, and yet that very statement is declared, by the correlationists, completely and forever unverifiable.[29] Science thus becomes a sort of empty game, where huge amounts of intelligence and resources are expended for endeavors that finally have no cognitive value. This is why Meillassoux can consider that the problem of ancestrality is an "aporia", though this last word might itself be too strong, and he later reformulates it in a much more appropriate manner by saying that the problem of ancestrality is only meant "to problematize the contemporary self-evidence of correlationism".[30]

I should add here that the generalized version of the realistic assumption of science might seem like a particularly strong assumption, but only if one places oneself outside the framework of speculative materialism. As soon as we view it from the larger perspective of Meillassoux's philosophy, it certainly becomes much more sensible, as my remarks above on the "naïveté" of his scientific realism have indicated.

To sum up, Meillassoux accuses correlationism of rendering science meaningless. In order for science to keep its meaning, we need not only to assume that scientific statements can be confirmed or infirmed (the realistic assumption of science), but also that it is science alone that can infirm or confirm them (generalized version of the realistic assumption). In order for science to keep being meaningful for us, we need to also assume that science has *the first and the last word* with respect to the mathematizable properties of beings. But this, as will be shown below, puts speculative materialism into a less convincing light.

[28] Again, this doesn't mean that a statement is considered forever true: it is only considered true as long as another *scientific* theory doesn't come along to invalidate it or to replace it. Also, when we assume that science has the necessary protocol for the validation of its statements, this doesn't mean that this protocol itself is forever fixed: but its possible modification would itself be the work of science, in the sense that it would stem from a debate internal to science.

[29] As he says in "Time without Becoming", "one maintains in the same sentence that scientists have solid reasons for accepting a theory, and that this theory describes an object – the field of pre-terrestrial life – which can't exist as described". I've show above why the latter part this phrase needs to be slightly – but significantly – modified.

[30] Meillassoux, "Iteration, Reiteration, Repetition."

Speculative materialism and ancestrality

When raising the issue of ancestrality against correlationism, Meillassoux might have raised the bar a bit too high for his own liking. We've already seen how the correlationist position with respect to ancestrality can be "syllogistically" expressed. But my discussion above regarding the realistic assumption of science shows that the already provided syllogism can be reformulated in the following manner:

The statement "The event X took place Y years ago" is true if and only if one accepts the generalized version of the realistic assumption of science.
We, correlationists, refuse this generalized version of the assumption.
Consequently, it is impossible to determine whether the statement "The event X took place Y years ago" is true or false.

However, if we were to construct a syllogism representing speculative materialism's position with respect to ancestral statements, would it be much different? Here is how such a syllogism would sound:

The statement "The event X took place Y years ago" is true if and only if the present laws of nature of our world have been the same for the past Y years.
But such a constancy of the laws of nature is impossible to prove.
Consequently, it is impossible to determine whether the statement "The event X took place Y years ago" is true or false.

In order to clarify this, let us assume we use radioactive decay rates in order to date the event X. In order to date it, we need to assume that the decay rates have themselves remained constant from the time of the event until our present. However, making such an assumption is precisely what speculative materialism forbids. The principle of factiality forbids us *to assume* the constancy of things, natural laws and natural constants alike.[31] Of course, the principle of factiality doesn't tell us that the radioactive decay rates *really did change* in the last Y years, but it tells us that it is *impossible* to assume that they didn't.

But, one could ask, is it *absolutely* and *forever* impossible to assume that constants haven't changed in the past Y years? Could we not, for example, use dating techniques that have a built-in corroboration, like the uranium-lead technique that actually analyzes two decaying processes within the same sample, thus providing us – by the corroboration of the two results – with further guarantee that our dating is satisfyingly accurate? Or could we not go even further and apply, say, 20 dating methods or more – whether extant or not yet invented, whether

[31] "For the truth is that there is no reason for anything to be or to remain thus and so rather than otherwise, and this applies as much to the laws that govern the world as to the things of the world." (Meillassoux, *After finitude*, 88-89).

based on radioactive decay or not – on the same sample? If numerous methods point to a unique date – Y years ago – then it is surely very likely that our dating is right, isn't it? Well, actually it isn't. When we claim that multiple methods pointing to a unique date make it *most likely* that our date is correct, we are obviously making a probabilistic inference. We are actually saying that, even though all the constants involved might theoretically have changed in the past, it is very unlikely that they would have all changed in such a coordinated manner as to point, at present, to the exact same date. If all constants can change for no reason – as the principle of factiality states –, it is more probable, the reasoning goes, that each of the 20 or more constants will have changed in its own way and at its own intervals, and this would – with an overwhelming probability – have lead to highly divergent readings in our present measurements: each method would, in all probability, have indicated a different date for the event X. In other words, if we assume that all the constants did change, the probability that they will have changed in such a manner as to unanimously point to a unique date – Y years ago – is extremely small.

This argument might seem convincing, but in the light of speculative materialism it is invalid. It basically asserts that a Universe with coordinated changes of its constants and laws is more improbable – or even incalculably less probable – than a Universe with erratic changes in its laws and constants. But this is precisely the type of inference that the argument of the non-totalizability of the possible forbids us to do, since it would imply a probabilistic reasoning operated on our universe itself, i.e. operated "to our universe itself considered as merely one among a totality of possible universes."[32] It consists, basically, in claiming that a universe with coordinated changes in laws and constants – such as our own – has such a small probability among the totality of universes with changing laws and constants, that we might just consider the actualization of this incalculably small possibility as impossible. But, according to Meillassoux's argument of the non-totalizability, assuming such a "totality" of possible universes is a theoretically unjustified move, and, consequently, applying this type of probabilistic reasoning to the universe itself is wrong. Therefore, we might use as many dating methods as we like in order to situate the event X, but the corroboration of these dating methods will never prove anything with respect to the actual date at which the event X took place. They can all point to the same date – Y years go – but, in a speculative materialist framework, this will not modify in any way the fact that it

[32] Meillassoux, *After Finitude*, 158.

is *de jure* impossible to determine whether the statement "The event X took place Y years ago" is true or false.

Let us state this in a different way. Meillassoux's argument of the non-totalizability of the possible makes it impossible for us to infer the necessity of the laws of nature from their *manifest* stability.[33] But, *the very same argument*, makes it impossible to infer the constancy of these laws *beyond their manifest stability*: while we, humans, are here now to *attest* to the stability of *contemporary* laws of nature, this does not allow us to infer that the same stability characterized our world *before* we were here to attest to this stability. One could, of course, say that inferring necessity from the improbability of (manifest) stability is not the same thing as inferring constancy from the improbability of coordinated changes. This is true, but the point I wish to make here is that both of these "implications" are relying on *the very same* totalization of the possible, on the very same idea – criticized by Meillassoux – that the "Universe of all Universes" is thinkable as a totality.

Let us take an example in order to make this point more obvious. Meillassoux compares the "frequentialist implication" that infers necessity from the improbability of stability with the inference made by a gambler (when he observes that the dice he plays with always lands the same face up) concluding that the dice is most probably loaded.[34] Now, for the purpose of my own comparison, let us assume that the gambler uses two dices instead of one. When he notices that the two dices always land the same face up (say, at each throw, each dice gives us a three), the player reasons in the following manner: there are 36 possible combinations that we could get by throwing the two dices, but we repeatedly get only one of these 36 combinations (namely, three-three). That the same one of 36 combinations be actualized at each throw is such an improbable result, that the dices must be loaded. The point is that the gambler's inference is

[33] Indeed, the only reason why we even have the idea that laws might be necessary is the fact that we are here to experience their stability. It is the *manifest* stability – the stability that we experience constantly all around us – that Meillassoux has to account for, and this is the whole point of the argument of the non-tatalizability of the possible. Meillassoux makes no secret of this, and in *After Finitude* he repeatedly points to the experienced – by us – nature of this stability: "the manifest stability of our world*"* (136), "the manifest stability of physical laws" (148), "the (manifest) stability of nature" (152), "the manifest stability of Chaos" (163), "the impeccable stability of the visible world" (179).

[34] "What is it that allows us to claim that the constancy of experience opens onto a genuine necessity, whereas the *a priori* does not open onto a veritable contingency? The answer is that our assumption in this case is exactly the same as that which would lead a gambler to suspect (at the very least) that a die that always lands the same face up is *very probably* loaded" (*After Finitude*, 155).

based on the totality of 36 combinations. And Meillassoux's entire argument against the "frequentialist implication" is that such a totality is unthinkable – and therefore unusable in an argument – for the universe itself.

But the argument that would infer that the event X is likely to have taken place Y years ago because of the corroboration of different dating techniques would also appeal to the same unthinkable totality. In order to simplify my point, I will use an example in which we only use 2 different dating techniques for the event X. Each technique represents one dice in my previous example; but this time, it is not the ratio between the (unique) face that comes up and the totality of possible combinations that is pertinent. What is pertinent is to calculate the probability that the two dices' results will always give us the same total sum. What does this mean? It means that, even though each dice does not always land with the same face up, the added results of the two dices will always amount to the same thing. This is precisely the case of two dating methods pointing to the same date for event X: each of the two constants involved might have changed, but we have to calculate the probability that they would have changed in such a coordinated manner that *both* of them will still point to a *unique* date for our event. Likewise, in the dice example, each of the two dices can give a different result, but we have to calculate the probability that, together, they end up giving the same total. For example, let's assume that the sought sum of the results of the two dices is 5. This means that we have 4 possible combinations that give us this total (one-four, two-three, three-two, four-one) *out of the same total of 36 possible combinations*.[35] Whereas in the first case above (rendering Meillassoux's own reasoning) we were dealing with the ratio of 1 combination for 36 possibilities, here we are dealing with 4 combinations out of the very same "totality" of 36 possibilities.[36] This is the type of reasoning we make when we say that it is "unlikely" that, if the decay rates have changed, all the dating techniques would still point to a unique date: we are basically saying that there is only 1 in 9 chances that such a coordinated change could have taken place, and each new dating

[35] A different – and probably more appropriate – manner to construct this example could have been used. In this more complicated version, a set of two or more successive throws would have had to give the same sum for *each* dice, and the sums for the two dices would also have had to be equal. But that would only have complicated matters without modifying in any way the conclusion we can draw from the simpler version of the example.

[36] And, just to indicate how my argument can be further unfolded, with each new dating method used for the event X, we are basically adding a new dice to my second example. But the first example with a unique combination works with as many dices as we want, so the totality of possible combinations will remain the same for both examples, irrespective of how many dices we use.

technique we add (i.e. each new dice we add to the example) will only lower the chances even further. But the point is that, *in both examples*, we are operating with the same notion of "totality" of possibilities, or the same totality of the "Universe of all universes", and, according to Meillassoux's argument of the non-totalizability, this is an unjustified move.

This drives home my point, namely that the argument of the non-totatlizability of the possible makes it absolutely impossible for us to claim that the stable laws that are manifest to us now were also in place in ancestral times. It is therefore impossible for us to infer (or assume) that the present stability has been in place for the past Y years. Therefore, the speculative materialist syllogism with respect to ancestral statements given above is the right one, and it can be reformulated as follows:

> *The statement "The event X took place Y years ago" is true if and only if one accepts the generalized version of the realistic assumption of science.*
> *We, speculative materialists, deny that the generalized version of the realistic assumption of science* can cover ancestral statements.
> *Consequently, it is impossible to determine whether the statement "The event X took place Y years ago" is true or false.*

We are thus led into the following "aporia": science has *the last word* about the mathematizable properties of beings (generalized version of the realistic assumption of science), but this last word is *meaningless* with respect to ancestral statements. Therefore speculative materialism and correlationism both restrict the realistic assumption of science. But they restrict it in different manners. Correlationism operates a logical restriction of the assumption, by saying that this assumption can only be made within the confines of science's "discursive regime": the realistic assumption is therefore never valid – or, in any case, its validity is never provable – outside the discourse of science. On the other hand, speculative materialism operates a chronological restriction of the realistic assumption, by saying that we are justified to make this assumption for present or contemporary phenomena, but that it is impossible to make the same assumption as far as ancestral phenomena are concerned.

This point is somewhat overlooked by Meillassoux, and signs of this omission are clearly visible in his work. For example, in "Iteration, Reiteration, Repetition," Meillassoux states that "physics (or any other science of nature) must be based upon this absoluteness of the void sign in order to produce hypothetical (revisable) descriptions of the *present* world, capable, in turn, of being true in an absolute sense – that is to say, independently of our existence." I've emphasized the word "present" here because, on the very next page, Meillassoux states that, if

a factial derivation of Galilean science is reached, "we will have arrived at an understanding of the remarkable capacity of sciences to describe the Universe as it existed *anterior* [my emphasis] to man and to the living, and, doubtless, will exist after they have gone." However, as shown above, this leap from the present world to the ancestral one is impossible to make within the framework of speculative materialism.[37] Even if a factial derivation of the absolutizing properties of mathematized sciences is achieved, this will *de jure* tell us nothing about ancestral phenomena.

We are thus lead into the following paradoxical situation: if the factial derivation of Galilean science is achieved, the principle of factiality will have allowed us to prove the ability of mathematized science to identify true properties of the present world in-itself, of the present world as it is, independently of our existence or of the existence of thought; however, *the very same principle* will limit this ability of science to the present, making it forever impossible for science to identify true properties of a world anterior – or ulterior – to our existence or to the existence of thought. With respect to ancestral statements therefore, a speculative materialist will have to take a similar position with that of a correlationist: for both, the truth of ancestral statements is certainly possible, but forever – or *de jure* – unprovable. Scientists will have "solid reasons" to place the event X Y years ago, but the truth value of this dating is *de jure* unassertable. Two competing theories placing the event X at different dates – Y years ago and W years ago, respectively – thus become, again, equally valid, i.e. equally invalid.[38]

[37] I am only dealing here with the question of ancestrality, so I do not tackle the problem of knowing what extension the "present world" could have in a speculative materialist setting. In such a setting, the chronological extension of the "present world" that science can accurately treat might be significantly smaller than the total duration of the existence of man (or of life) so far, but I cannot deal with this problem here.

[38] I have challenged here the idea that the dating of the ancestral event X can be declared correct or incorrect in a speculative materialist setting. But, as we have seen, for a correlationist it is even impossible to declare whether the event X has taken place or not. Is it the same for a speculative materialist? I think it is safe to say that for a speculative materialist, the Earth, for example, has certainly appeared, but it is impossible to state whether it was formed by accretion or not. When he states that, instead of obeying the laws of impact, two billiard-balls could in fact be "flying off into the air, or fusing together, or turning into two immaculate but rather grumpy mares, or into two maroon but rather affable lilies, etc." (*After Finitude*, 147), Meillassoux means what he says. This means that there is nothing that prevents us from claiming that the Earth has appeared due to two billiard-balls colliding, since claiming one or the other assumes that we know what laws of nature were in place at that time *and since speculative materialism prevents us to use probabilistic reasoning in order to asses that the laws at that time were probably the same as the present ones*. In other words, when Meillassoux mocks correlationists for being dangerously close to the creationists that claim that "God also created at the same time as the earth 6,000 years ago those radioactive compounds that seem to indicate that the earth is much older than it is" (*After Finitude*,

As a conclusion, it seems fair to say that speculative materialism faces the following alternative. On one hand, it can claim that restricting the realistic assumption of science is not such a bad thing after all, and that a generalized version of the realistic assumption is not a necessary desideratum for a philosophy. But this is tantamount to admitting that the problem of ancestrality does not discredit correlationism *in any way*. Or, on the second branch of the alternative, speculative materialism can hang on to the assumption that a generalized version of the realistic assumption is a necessary requirement for a philosophy worthy of its name. But this would purely and simply imply giving up the principle of factiality;[39] that is, it would imply no more and no less than reverting back to correlationism. Undoubtedly, it is the first branch of the alternative that seems less costly for speculative materialism.

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34), there is nothing in speculative materialism that makes it impossible *or even unlikely* that the hyper-Chaos did *the exact same thing* (without, it should be said, the help of God). So, to *both* questions that Meillassoux addresses correlationists: "*what is it that happened 4.56 billion years ago?* Did the accretion of the earth happen, *yes or no?"* (*ibidem*, 31), speculative materialists have to reply in the exact same manner as correlationists: "We don't know, and it is impossible to know." However, this point is only mentioned in this long footnote and it will not be further developed here since continuing, even for a short while, this line of reasoning will rapidly lead us to contesting the validity of the non-totalizability argument; and this, as I said, is not within the scope of this paper.

[39] Not directly, but *via* the following chain: first, one would give up the argument of the non-totalizability of the possible, but that would entail admitting some sort of necessity for the laws of nature (either metaphysical – i.e. real –, or one pertaining to the conditions of possibility of experience – i.e. correlationist); and, as speculative materialism shares the anti-metaphysical character of correlationism, the last step in this cascade would entail choosing the correlationist's kind of necessity and, consequently, giving up the principle of factiality altogether.

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Education for and as philosophy – a didacticist approach

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Abstract

The current perspective on philosophy shows that in everyday life and thus the specific literature one no longer attaches importance to the role of philosophy regarding the issue of what is meant to be education for the society. In this context, we see that the philosophical paradigm has entirely disappeared. On the other hand, in the cases where the desire to support it is still maintained, we can note attempts to analyse and explain the themes it approaches from the perspective of social pragmatism. Maybe we should not relate such remarks only to the purely theoretical value of philosophy, which is often abstract, but rather have in view an equilibrated didacticism of what philosophy itself represents for the society. In other words, the benefit of education for philosophy becomes obvious to the extent to which, in terms of social pragmatism, there is a certain methodological value which is somewhat responsible for the quantification of what today's society calls tangible results. Therefore, in today's society, philosophical education and education for *and* as philosophy *involve an axiological reassessment in relation to the needs and requirements of the present.*

Keywords: *education* for *and* as *philosophy, philosophy didactics, equilibrated didacticism, philosophy of education.*

Introduction

The possibilities of presenting education for philosophy reflect a number of meanings and values that translate the ethical and meta-ethical values into a purely applicative approach. Being open to a new kind of education does not justify the purely didacticist approach of the relationship between pragmatism and ethics every time. Moreover, we believe that universalizing the teaching methods to the dimension of an education for philosophy reflects the ongoing transformation of the society.

However, a specific typology of the teaching activities leads to the idea of cultural consciousness coupled with the idea of philosophical consciousness.

Moreover, the functionality of a teaching methodology for the philosophical disciplines is possible to the extent to which setting a value frame involves didactic spontaneity and equilibrium. In this context, we note that such a perspective does not exclude the idea of generalization; on the contrary, it supports the idea of equilibrated didacticism.

Didactic rationality may generate different ways of approaching the scientific content. Rational reflection and emotional experiences are specific to the one who pursues philosophy. In this context, the question whether the one who pursues philosophy didactics can also relate to such features is raised.

In our opinion, the need for teaching philosophical disciplines should reflect a number of attitudes of the socio-educational actors, which can enable the materialization of the communication process. In other words, as a structural entity of the teaching-learning-assessment process, philosophy must also reflect the materialization / manifestation of a whole process of valorization. In terms of the human consciousness, this way of approaching generates a range of meanings and significances which are meant to reveal a special view of how education for philosophy materializes within the teaching process.

Philosophy and didactics

The didactic approach of philosophy (philosophy is itself its own pedagogy[1] or has a purely pedagogical character)[2] can be considered interdisciplinary. Thus, the teaching strategies are based on the need for socio-economic pragmatism in the development of the teaching activity. Moreover, besides eliminating the didactic obstacle,[3] the efficiency of such a didactic approach involves taking into consideration a whole process of pragmatic operationalization of the assumed operational objectives. However, the axiological frames that should underlie the main coordinates of strategic action represent a relevant indicator in terms of assuming a pragmatic educational reality.

[1] Bermejo Victor Santiuste and Francisco Gomez de Velasco, *Didáctica de Ia filosofia - teoria, métodos, programas, evaluación* (Didactics of philosophy: methods, curriculum and assessment) (Madrid: Narcea, 1984), 11.

[2] João Boavida, "Por uma didáctica para a filosofia análise de algumas razões" (For an educational philosophy concerning the analysis of some reasons), *Revista Filosófica de Coimbra* 9 (1996): 91-110.

[3] Guy Brousseau, "Les obstacles épistémologiques, problèmes et ingénierie didactique" (Epistemological obstacles, problems and didactics engineering), in *Théorie des situations didactiques* (Theory of didactic situations), ed. Guy Brousseau (Grenoble La Pensée Sauvage, 1998), 115-160.

In this context, we can mention the fact that the stratification of the teaching-learning-assessment process is precisely what determines an axiological balance regarding the use of didactic means and methods. The assumed educational context simply supports the requirements of a didactic model of the philosophical dimension. However, the pragmatic criterion cannot be fully validated in the case of philosophy.

The situation that we are bringing into question refers to abstract thinking. Education for philosophy also involves organizing the competencies towards a certain system of values that correspond to such an approach. For example, the explanatory didactic discourse which is centered on the student[4] requires the involvement of the socio-educational actors in the proper development of the teaching activities. This situation can generate a number of effects which can be explained in relation to the concept of pedagogical/didactic innovation. Therefore, the issue of education for philosophy is a social aspect that highlights a series of didactic / scientific models.

In the context of certain social, political or economic changes, the dimension of the philosophical discipline has also undergone a number of metamorphoses itself in terms of introducing it as a discipline in the (inter)national educational systems. In most cases, the interdisciplinary valences it involves at social level are highlighted. In this context, the study of the discipline of philosophy must regard particularly the development of those competencies that refer to the idea of rigor, systemicity, scientific openness, methodology, etc.

Seen in particular, education for philosophy is a special kind of education, in the sense that it involves re-associating certain epistemic correspondences, through which the learning contents can be explained. From the methodological point of view, analyzing some specific forms of teaching strategies involves defining the context where the teaching activity itself takes place. Moreover, the current educational society shows certain social/economic/political connections. Thus, we can place the idea of education for philosophy amongst the disciplinary fields.

It refers to adopting the teaching strategies assumed in relation to the economic market requirements. Perhaps not coincidentally, we can note the emergence and development of certain disciplines such as philosophical economics or economic philosophy/epistemology or philosophical psychology, etc. We can also note that the normative and methodological reality indicates the

[4] Elena Calistru, "Limbajul nonverbal în procesul didactic" (Nonverbal language in the didactic process), in *Symposion* (The Romanian Academy, Iaşi Branch, „Gh. Zane" Institute for Economic and Social Research Iaşi) 2 (16) 2010, 471-475.

possibility of an efficient instructive approach in the educational activity. Therefore, a didactic methodology covering the field of philosophical disciplines proves to be more than welcome in the educational practice.

The existence of educational (didactic / pedagogical) models in the knowledge society illustrates a relevant image whose defining aspects are given precisely by the elements related to the innovation of the teaching process. In other words, philosophy didactics involve methodological differences and the translation of some experiences of the human thought at didactic level. The dimension of educational pragmatism related to philosophy didactics can be validated according tp the way the involvement of the educational actors in the teaching activity materializes.

Improving the didactic activity and implicitly the social norms requires an explanatory dimension of the learning contents. Therefore, a discipline such as philosophy didactics is more than necessary, because such an explanatory dimension highlights a number of (in)formative/forming meanings regarding the assumption of an educational paradigm. This perspective requires new conceptual and theoretical approaches in terms of understanding and explaining the need for philosophy didactics.

However, (beyond a series of epistemological / ontogenetic / psychogenetic obstacles)[5] the didacticist approach of philosophy reflects a number of phrases that can be subjected to a judicious analysis. Among them we can mention: *the philosophy as education, education as philosophy, philosophy through education, education through philosophy, etc.* Therefore, we can see that their existence within the conceptual-theoretical field generates different meanings and significances that are susceptible of any absolutist interpretations. Thus, we believe that it might be much more efficient to analyze the applicability of the phrases that define the actual disciplinary dimension in relation to which they occur.

Philosophical pragmatism and didactic pragmatism

Layering the significances as ways of representing the socio-educational aspect reveals the unique understanding of the conceptual dimension of the

[5] Guy Brousseau, "Les obstacles épistémologiques et les problèmes en mathématiques" (Epistemological obstacles and issues in mathematics) (Texte d'une conférence exposée lors de la XXVIIIe rencontre organisée en 1976 par la CIEAEM), Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgique, 1976), 101-117; and in Guy Brousseau, "Les obstacles épistémologiques et les problèmes en mathématiques," *Recherches en Didactique des Mathématiques* (Researches to Didactics of Mathematics) 4 (2) (Université Bordeaux I, 1983), 165-198.

scientific contents. Thus, a scientific analysis of the discursive forms shows us that the specific understanding of didactic communication is possible only to the extent to which the aim of the teaching-educational activity expresses a number of subjective and objective opinions which essentially relate to the idea of pedagogical practice. Furthermore, supporting and promoting quality within the didactic activity should also be based on the psychological context assumed by the socio-educational actors.

In other words, the observational dimension of the didactic aim reflects a different way of approaching *education for and as philosophy*. Such methodological correspondences show that the possibilities for the educational act to occur refer to certain social models translated into a praxiological reality. Therefore, setting a theoretical and practical framework within a teaching-educational approach simply expresses the fact that any didactic activity must aim at achieving performance.

This way, e*ducation for and as philosophy* can entail a didactic approach which should focus, in our opinion, on the one hand, on the idea of performance, and on the other hand, on the idea of competitiveness of the didactic process. In this context, we are considering the concept of "didactic transposition" (explained by Michel Develay[6] through two complementary processes – *didacticization* and *axiologization*, which are synchronically analyzed, together with the aim, by Michel Minder),[7] which is responsible for the way a number of issues that allow the exploitation of knowledge by redeveloping the learning contents are understood and put into practice.

Thus, we can identify a number of approaches which are specific to the didactic methodology (the heuristic approach, discovery learning, collective discussion, group work), which facilitate the materialization of the objectives set by the educational decision makers.[8] Moreover, the existence of a didactic methodology in the teaching-learning-assessment process supports the theoretical-actional approach, which enables the achievement of maximum efficiency in terms of knowledge acquisition.[9] When we talk about philosophy didactics, we must relate to the ways of efficiently coordinating the pedagogical practice based on an

[6] Michel Develay, *De l'apprentissage à l'enseignement* (Learning to teaching), (Paris, ESF, 1992).
[7] Michel Minder, *Didactique fonctionnelle: objectifs, stratégies, evaluation* (Functional Didactics: objectives, strategies, evaluation), (Paris / Bruxelles: Département De Boeck Université, 1999), 31-34.
[8] Ion Albulescu and Mirela Albulescu, *Didactica disciplinelor socio-umane* (Didactics of social and humanistic disciplines) (Cluj-Napoca: Napoca Star, 1999), 72-71.
[9] Ioan Cerghit, *Metode de învăţământ* (Teaching methods) (Iaşi: Polirom, 2006), 17.

entire conceptual and methodological system.[10] Moreover, when the philosophical dimension is approached in this way, the presuppositions of the pedagogical practice are legitimate and even criticized by didactics (in our case, philosophy didactics.)[11] Therefore, the didactic approach that is specific to the field of philosophy must be outlined by taking into account the epistemological / methodological status of the concerned discipline.

Moreover, the effect of operationalizing certain objectives indicates a number of multiple interpretations regarding the didactic approach of the learning contents. Talking about philosophy didactics also involves taking into account the social functions that performance generally depends on. Thus, the prospective nature of philosophy didactics involves analyzing the eligibility criteria based on which the teaching-educational activity can be validated.

Thus, we believe that the reassessment of the teaching-learning-assessment activity of philosophy is required. This analysis requires a whole process of reorganization of the didactic activity, a process which enables the validation of the strategies assumed by the educational actors. Thus, the theoretical and practical share of the axiological approaches found in the didactic activity, within the philosophy classes, indicates a degree of complexity which arises precisely from the attempt of laying the bases of an applied philosophy. However, such applicability is also found in the dimension of ethics in general.

In our view, an analysis of education for and as philosophy also requires an approach in terms of the levels of reality / organization. We particularly have in mind a new kind of view based on which in the "possible worlds" a new didacticist paradigm can be legitimized. In these circumstances, we can admit that an effective didactic communication between the educational actors is only possible to the extent to which the meanings of the social reality show the pragmatic dimension of the assumed objectives / strategies. At the same time, we believe that, in this context, one must also take into consideration the integrative dimension, together with understanding the meanings through social relations.

The idea of philosophy didactics (and the interrogations regarding whether such a dimension is possible)[12] is an educational issue which highlights the ways

[10] Aurel Cazacu, *Didactica filosofiei (Philosophy didactics)* (Bucharest: The Publishing House of ,,România de Mâine" Foundation, 2006).

[11] Gheorghe Clitan, *Didactica filosofiei. Ghid practic. Structuri argumentative în predarea-învăţarea sistematică a filosofiei în liceu* (Philosophy didactics. Practical Guide. Argumentative structures in systematic teaching and learning high school philosophy) (Timişoara: Eurobit, 2003), 9.

[12] Miguel Ángel Gómez Mendoza, *Introducción a la didáctica de la filosofía* (Introduction to didactics of philosophy), (Editorial Papiro, 2003), 17-20.

of implementing didactic strategies in the relationship between philosophical pragmatism and didactic pragmatism. In these circumstances, we find justifiable the assumption that philosophy didactics (whose naturalness[13] generates new forms of organization that enable the shaping of specific educational strategies) and hence *education **for** and **as** philosophy* requires a real potential regarding the teaching-learning-assessment process. Therefore, accepting that education is a particular form of human practice[14] only confirms the fact that there can be established a methodological connection between *philosophy didactics* and *philosophy of education.*[15] In other words, based on a systematic analysis of philosophy and the history of philosophy implicitly, some authors have pointed out that there is a strong connection between philosophy and didactics,[16] regardless of the learning cycles (primary, secondary, etc.[17]) Moreover, the correlation that has been acknowledged and scientifically explained between the dialogical-pragmatic method and the epistemological and pedagogical criteria[18] makes us accept the fact that *philosophy also means didactics* or that philosophy can also be seen as didactic research[19], keeping the extensional conceptual/theoretical dimensions.

The priority attached to didactics philosophy becomes paradigmatic to the extent to which educational pragmatism, respectively philosophical pragmatism, illustrates a model that can be scientifically legitimated. Moreover, the architecture of such a model indicates an educational context that meets the social needs and requirements. The scientific interpretations resulting from assuming such a model at educational level only show the need for the rehabilitation and re-evaluation of the idea of pragmatic philosophy and philosophy didactics. In other words, from

[13] Amado Ezequiel Osorio Valencia, *Filosofía, filosofía de la educación y didáctica de la filosofía* (Philosophy, philosophy of education and didactics of philosophy), (Universidad de Caldas, ASEUC, 2006), 315.

[14] Salazar Bondy Augusto, *Didáctica de la filosofía* (Didactics of philosophy) (Facultad de Letras y Cinecias Humanas, Lima, UNMSM, 1995), 15.

[15] João Boavida, "De una didáctica de la filosofía a una filosofía de la educación" (From Didactics of Philosophy to philosophy of education), *Revista Española de pedagogia* (Spanish Review of Pedagogy) LXIV, 234 (2006): 205-226.

[16] Ekkehard Martens, *Dialogisch-pragmatische Philosophiedidaktik* (Dialogue and pragmatic philosophy didactics) (Hannover: Schroedel, 1979).

[17] Luis Maria Cifuentes, *Didactica de la filosofia: formacion del profesorado educacion secundaria* (Didactics of philosophy: teacher training of second level) (Grao, 2010).

[18] Sebastia Trias Mercant, "Tendencias actuales de la didactica de la filosofia" (Current trends in didactics of philosophy), *Quaderns de Pensament*, 6 (Universitat de les Illes Balears, 1986), 141-150.

[19] Michel Tozzi, "Vers una didactique de la philosophie" (To the Didactics of philosophy), *Cahiers pédagogiques* (Pedagogique Notebook) 270 (1989), 18-19.

our point of view, *education for and as philosophy* requires a series of axiological coordinates corresponding to the society where its existence is felt.

Conclusions

The expression of educational pragmatism results precisely from the theoretical and applicative connections that are specific to didactics, philosophy and the areas to which they relate. In other words, in this context, coordinating and implementing the didactic strategies at educational level reflects precisely the particularity of such pragmatism. Therefore, approaching the dimension of philosophy didactics from a scientific perspective involves a number of aspects related to the idea of improvement and social development.

Therefore, we can note the dynamics specific to a didacticist approach of the disciplinary fields. Furthermore, attaching a series of socio-educational responsibilities to the aims involves a whole process of scientific reassessment of the teaching and learning contents. One such effort of scientific reassessment also involves assuming certain didactic strategies that are supposed to support the teaching-learning-assessment process. In this context, we are also taking into consideration what the specific literature calls competitive strategies.

The analysis of the issue of e*ducation for and as philosophy* highlights different ways of approaching an educational reality which is meant to support the didacticist paradigm of the teaching-learning-assessment process. This approach reflects a number of issues based on which the socio-educational criteria can be validated in the field of scientific knowledge. The assumed objectives of such an approach also involve the achievement of the methodological correspondences that are specific to the educational process.

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An Axiological Perspective in Understanding Truth

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Abstract

The present study is intended as an analysis of the concept of truth starting from its classical definitions. The axiological perspective on truth – unlike the realistic, logical and utilitarian ones – opens the path towards new significances of this concept/ value: truth depends on the norms of subjectivity, which are the result of the community desire, and is not too different chronologically-wise.

Keywords: *truth, value, axiology*.

On the time scale, truth has robustly edified its theoretical understanding: in any presentation on the topic, one meets almost identical paragraphs and references: the concept of truth, types of truth, theories and criteria of truth, etc. The one who advances the thesis acknowledges its gnoseological-epistemological nature, and from the way in which the topic is approached, it results that he / she considers the *concept* of truth. Notwithstanding, isn't truth a human *value* presiding over theoretical activities, in the way in which other values preside over social behaviour or human sensitivity?

The axiological approach to truth seems to impinge on a fundamental feature of the latter, that is, objectivity. The objectivity requirement, as a warrant of the manifestation of truth, claims the elimination, as much as possible, of the researcher's subjectivity in his/ her theoretical act. However, when construed as a value, truth is in conflict with objectivity, which is the reason why epistemologists rather prefer a conceptual approach.

First and foremost, truth is a value. The Neo-Kantian trend of the School of Baden, through Windelband and Rickert, indicates that values do not pertain to reality, but to norm (*sollen*), by valorising the Kantian distinction between norm and existence. The essence, the significance of the value lies in validity (*Geltung*). What exactly makes up validity in the case of truth as theoretical value? The

classical answer has led to the theory of truth-correspondence: in order to be true, what one says *must* correspond to reality. In other words, one deals with the truth every time one subjects to the imperative of this norm. Charles S. Peirce, who was not afraid of the subjectivist approach to truth, with his consensus theory, develops, in *The Fixation of Belief* (1877), the idea that, when compared to other subjective methods, the scientific one has the advantage that the authority that a belief is confronted with in view of its "fixation" is reality. Reality, through *confrontation* with itself, founds consensus among us and constitutes validity.

This situation is functional for judgments or logical propositions. However, what happens at the level of the theoretical systems, in which any new enounce must be confronted with the totality of the existing enounces? Validity results, in this case, from the imposition of coherence as criterion of truth. One may easily note, in this case, that truth as value is under the imperative of norms, of *what should be and not what is.*

This idea may seem shocking, perhaps even due to incoherence, judging by the above claims.

At the level of coherence, of confrontation of the propositions, the correspondence to reality becomes inoperable. This situation, reflected by the positive experiences of the Sophists, led to the discovery of the empire of normativity in the rationality order. This discovery, which meant the emergence of logic, was made by Aristotle. The laws of logical thinking – the non-contradiction principle, of excluded middle and of identity – represent the *sollen*, in reference to which the validity of reasons is confronted.

What should we note up to this point? It seems obvious that all the requirements – either of the so-called truth-correspondence or of that represented by coherence – are the result of a subjective consensus, of a unanimous desire of men to coincide in their aspiration to truth, or, ultimately, to understanding, which provides a generous outlining for the pragmatist theory of truth. At the ideal level of a general survey, it is not credible that a man would want his dialogue partners to respond with affirmations non-conforming with reality. It would be as if, in a general survey, one would interrogate all people whether they wanted to be always treated as people and never as confined people, and discovered that there existed irrational individuals as well.

Man never assumes such irrationality individually, Kant asserts, which is the reason why, in the moral plane, the subjective and categorical imperative that it should be always treated as ends and never as means is possible and becomes *objective*. In the case of knowledge, conformity to reality is an objective

categorical imperative, precisely thanks to the fact that us, people (from all ages) *want* to relate to what it is precisely how it is what it is. Mankind have made a norm out of this desire, theoretically promoted by Aristotle, mediaeval philosophers and other contemporary epistemologists. The subjective wish of every man to aspire to truth, the banal wish to not be lied to, become norm and acquiring validity status (*Geltung*), seems to become, at the same time, an exigency towards objectivity, misconstrued by the knowledge theorists as a total war against subjective implications in the epistemic act. Thus, it is easily forgotten that truth, as a value, is primarily under the imperative of the norms, of *what should be and not what is*. Notwithstanding, the primordial exigency of *what should be* fatally coincides with the request to precisely designate *what is*, thus giving birth to a new meaning of validity, as theoretical objectivity, accompanied by the imperative of the total exclusion of subjectivity. This aspect has led to the approach to truth from the perspective of the concept, and not that of the value, of the human desire to record exactly what is. What we note, however, is that the entire human subjectivity is involved in revealing truth, and that it is this normative involvement what gives us the truth.

If the confrontation with reality becomes a categorical imperative in the order of judgment, then what happens at the level of reasoning and argumentation? It is there where coherence becomes operational. Aristotle also discovered reasonable norms, the logical principles which, in light of a thorough analysis, reveal as expressions of some generic desires of the human nature. People are mistaken in their argumentation when they disregard the identity of the terms, or when, due to a pathetic urge or intention to capture and benumb the spirit of the interlocutor, insert contradictory statements in their discourse. The exigency of identity and non-contradiction is rooted in the desire (essentially natural) for people not to alter the identity of things and not to contradict their properties. Instead, people, in their discursive urge, alter the identity of things, whereas the expression of their properties leaves, most often, much to be desired.

The natural need for coherence led to the birth of Eleatic philosophy. Anticipating the Aristotelian logic, Parmenides dares to metaphorically define the norms reasonably acceptable for thinking the being: the being can be thought but through its characteristic: *the being is*. The contradictory *the being is not* is rationally unacceptable. When Parmenides asserts that the being is one, that is, it does not know multiplicity, becoming, or movement, he asserts the identity of the meaning of *to be*: this meaning cannot become, if it became, it would receive the attribute of nothingness, which is contradictory. It would be like I would say this

text *is read by you*, while you would understand that it *is not read*, which is absurd. This childish example may be excelled by another one, precisely by virtue of consequences: if *to be* alters its identity by receiving the contradictory tone of *to be not*, then everyone understand whatever s/he wants from the sentence *The star war is in full progress*. Nonetheless, we do not understand whatever, but the exact meaning of the events, because our discourse is controlled by the norms that impose coherence. It seems impossible for many people to understand why Zeno's arrow in flight does not move: in truth, in the timeframe in which it aims to the target, it does not change its identity ("it is motionless", it flies as an arrow, without any metamorphosis), except for the case of some magical scripts worthy of Hollywood.

Once again, we note the case in which the involvement of *what should be* must coincide with *what is* in order to acquire the authentic value of truth. This apparent want in dichotomy between norm and existence allowed for approaching the truth only conceptually, and not from the perspective of the value and of human desirability. When there are no intentions to recover the subjective plane, it is not about a gnoseological truth, but an existential one. What matters is not the theoretical truth of what it is, but the truth about the validity (*Geltung*) of the unique existence of the human person. This latter truth escapes the logical and gnoseological norms of generic mankind; its sphere of understanding is related to revelations that imply enchainment to the entire system of values and to the option for a certain hierarchy of values.

The gateway that the axiological perspective opens to the understanding of truth is the re-evaluation of human subjectivity in the cognitive act. The value, as expression of a subjective wish, acquires its general validity in an *imperative requirement* which brings people together in collective aspirations or adhesions. What determines people have the same axiological experiences, founding and unworn out by time? Let us discuss two classical explicative solutions in moral experience, and then we shall return to suggestions based on analogies to the inquiry into the cognitive experience.

The former solution belongs to Rousseau. He considers that the principles that lie at the foundation of human actions and by which they are judged as either good or bad are rooted in the conscious urges of the soul. Good and, respectively, evil, are grounded in love and hate. If one believes that justice or kindness are abstract concepts, constructs of the thought, then one could not be more wrong, as these two concepts are the result of an alignment of our primary processes. *Reason cannot* construct a natural law through itself, without relying on our natural

sentiments. The love for people, derived from the love for one's self, is a principle of human justice. If the precept to the treat one's peer the way one wishes to be treated is valid, then it derives from the desire of one's own well-being. In order not to suffer, I want that the other does not suffer; *I am interested in him out of love for myself.* As a value, the good is grounded in the innate sense of self-compassion, which is also mediated by the repulsion of the suffering of the sensible beings.

Therefore, human nature is predisposed to the aspiration to the values of good or justice and to the conversation of this aspiration, through the constitutional act of coincidence, in moral or juridical norms of intercommunity, with its inherent responsibilities. This is a very old theory. In Platonisms, the disposition of moral behaviour was embedded by the way in which the soul had contemplated Ideas, and, implicitly, the Idea of Good, before taint; whilst in Christianity, the predisposition depended on the theanthropic nature, on the man's resemblance to divinity.

As far as the latter solution is concerned, we have already hinted at it – the Kantian moral paradigm. The German philosopher, aiming to postulate an ideal norm of human behaviour, notes that *the intentions* of the sensible beings fall in two categories:

- targeted at material goods, they are defined as relative means or ends, as they are the object of our own will. It results that the norms that satisfy our understanding in relation to various things are based on hypothetical imperatives. This is the reason why, in the case of economic, vital and political values, normativity is not constraining, but conditioned, that is to say, beneficiary of incontrollable freedoms that do not stringently impose people's coincidence, as in the following examples: "*if* you want the x goods, *then* you must work/save this much" or "*if* you want to reduce cholesterol, *then* you should not eat…", or "*if* you want a tax cut, *then* vote…"

- targeted at people, whose value is absolute, and who determine an understanding based on categorical imperatives, on the unconditioned *must* that confers noblesse to the human being through the free assumption of constraint and responsibility.

After the vivid demonstration of Socrates, who exclaimed in the bazar: *Look! how many things I don't need!*, Kant does not invite us to free ourselves from those goods that are relative means or ends in order to acquire authentic freedom, unconstrained by our relative inclinations and judgements. He simply forbids us to want these goods when our aspiration to them tramples on the human person. The

desire of any sensible man is to be always cherished as an end, and never as a means. Provided that everybody has this desire, then the sensible nature of the man aware of this becomes the founder of the value of good or justice, with consideration to the categorical imperative. To put it otherwise, people are alike just as sensible beings, in formulating some norms of an undisputed validity in promoting day-by-day behavior.

The two situations concerning the normalisation of the human behavior have underlined the subjective source of the normative act, which gains legitimacy (that is to say, a constraining validity) either through a natural predisposition of men to coincide in aspirations, or through a power of reason to generalize the collective aspirations and impose them on enlightened beings.

In the cognitive experience, there is the illusion that man is not constrained by man in the normalisation of his words on reality, but by the reality itself, which, in turn, induced an illusion of objectivity. The constraint encountered in this experience is also human, the result of the collective desire for understanding, a founder of logical rules and principles. From this perspective, one should rethink Parmenides's poem, *On Nature*.

The two ways of investigation one could think of are an allegory in which the exegetes of Parmenides's text read the unique and authentic way in which one may think and speak of what exists. These exegetes have been surprised by the change in accent that Parmenides introduced in philosophy, and have allowed to be mesmerised by the mysterious being and its qualities. However, in light of axiology, it is worth interpreting his words about the way of Belief (which accompanies Truth) not as a discourse on to be, on the fact that something exists, but rather as a discourse on the *normal* way of thinking and speaking, which excludes the thought of nothingness from the very beginning.

Parts of the poem seem to be titanic struggles to make us follow the normal way of searching for the truth, under Law and Justice, and far from the usual ways of the humanity. We read about the unknowing mortals that they *fumble*, that they are carried along the way *like deaf and dumb people, disoriented, a crowd without judgment, in whose eyes* ***to be or not to be is and is not the same, to whom there is a way back in everything***. However, once you are on the right and righteous way, with a guiding lighthouse ahead (to think and to be is the same thing), you cannot take the other way, where "the norm" is given by *an eye that does not see*, by *an ear full of noise*; you must sensibly judge this *much-contested rejection that we have preferred*. In his time, Parmenides did not possess either a clear vision on the things he wanted to express (although it was clear to him what he had to

confute, that is, *the fake way of investigation*), or a conceptual apparatus to help him in this respect. Axiology helps us remark that he wanted to set up the norms of rational thinking which all people should follow to speak rightly and righteously. As mentioned above, a wave of Sophist thinking had to pass before this generally human desideratum to be accomplished by Aristotle. Parmenides's reasons to speak this way about the being and its determinations are related to the norms of rational thinking. At the risk of repetition, we note in ourselves the desire to speak about things without altering their meaning (identity) during the debate: in point of meaning, it is one, the meaning is eternal, unborn, undying, continuous, indivisible, motionless and limited. What if, during a speech on the arrow, the latter would alter its meaning, would divide into multiple, contradictory, vacillating and unlimited meanings? It is obvious that there would not remain any bridge for mutual understanding. It is what Parmenides wanted to illustrate through his not-at-all mysterious being.

If we are sensible, when we want to take the path of Belief that accompanies Truth in the investigation of things, we must subject to norms (to our rational beliefs), a coercion that belongs to human subjectivity, and not in the least to the nature of the things. Truth is related to this subjective adventure, inasmuch as lie is related to the same adventure, only in a more perceivable way. That truth has often been associated with objectivity and that it is, somehow, in the power of the things, and not that of subjectivity to reason is, in fact, secondary – a new, epistemological (and not logical) subjective desire not to insert in research other interests than the ones of the pure (neutral) thinking on the object. All these logical and epistemological norms lead us on the path of truth, and the spirit that takes this path cannot disregard them, it wilfully subjects to their guiding coercion, which leads, in turn, to the prosperity of the human collectivity.

Collectivity, in the axiological acception, designates not only the today and yesterday dwellers of the planet, but also those virtual inhabitants, who must equally benefit from the fruitful field of satisfactions. However, nowadays, the cultivation of the excessive individual liberties (in want of the singular meaning of this value), as means to accede to political power, has led, on the one hand, to the supremacy of money as economic value and means for acquiring libertine satisfactions, and, on the other hand, to the extermination of the constraints emanating from every man's desire not to be murdered, robbed, lied to, lapsed into illness, terrified, terrorized, wronged, etc. This is possible, with all the rational gain, precisely due to the dismayed errancy of the helpless mortals, *crowds without*

judgement who think that to be or not to be is and is not the same, and to whom there is a way back in everything.

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The Plurivocal Character of Hermeneutics – Moving beyond the Quest for Objectivity•

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Abstract

As a science, hermeneutics started out in the area of theology. Dealing with revealed texts, the interpreters would be interested in searching out for the authorial intent. Therefore, one could say that, at its beginnings, the interpretation was concerned with discovering the meaning that was already there, namely the meaning intended by the author. However, the history of Christian thoughts reveals that the schools of interpretations did not agree on the methods of hermeneutics. Things are not different now, except for the fact that it is much harder for the interpreter to reach the authorial intent due to the time gap.

Though objectivity in interpretation is desirable, as it keeps the interpreters away from far off interpretations, it is impossible to achieve. In this article I underline the plurivocal character of hermeneutics as a result of interactions among the participants in the act of interpretation: the author, the text and the reader. While the first two keep the interpreter within some objective perimeters, the reader would never be a passive recipient of a text. The goal of hermeneutics is transformational rather than informational. Thus, the interpreter moves from the quest for objectivity to ontology.

Keywords: *plurivocal, interpreter, author, text, presuppositions.*

Moises Silva considers that the term "hermeneutics" became very widely used in the last decades. Consequently, it came to be used in many different possible ways. Since many writers use this term, it seems that it became a moveable target.[1] The meaning of the word "hermeneutics" is quite simple, denoting the science and the art of interpretation of old texts, especially the

• **Acknowledgement:** in partial fulfillment of the doctoral thesis in the project *Cercetători competitivi pe plan european în domeniul ştiinţelor umaniste şi socio-economice. Reţea de cercetare multiregională (CCPE)* - POSDRU/159/1.5/S/140863.

[1] Moises Silva and Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *Introducere în Hermeneutică* (Introduction to Hermeneutics) (Cluj-Napoca: Logos, 2006), 18.

biblical document or the science of interpretation of spiritual culture. Gadamer agrees with this understanding of the term, if the origin of the term is taken into consideration. However, he suggests that this word "covers different levels of reflections, a phenomenon that happens with these kind of words that come from Greek and found their ways into our common scientifically language".[2]

Consequently, the interpretation is a very complex task; one of the problems raised by scholars is that of meaning: how could an interpreter determine the meaning of the text? Are there multiple valid interpretations? How could one determine what is a valid interpretation? Different answers were given to these questions throughout the history of hermeneutics. Though, in this article, I don't answer these questions directly, I do address them in an indirect way. First, I want the reader to understand that during the hermeneutical process there is a permanent re-codification among the three participants in the interpretation process: the author, the text and the reader. The author produces the text and the reader studies it. Which of these three factors plays the most important role in the significance of the text? Since the author is no longer present in order to explain the meaning of his text, is the text independent of its author? On the other hand, if the reader is the one that sets up the working method, then, what is the role of the text in establishing the meaning? Also, it is widely accepted that the interpreters bring meaning in the text and they approach it with all kinds of presuppositions and pre-understandings.

So, the answer to the question of meaning should be found out in these interactions. Therefore, I suggest that, while the element of objectivity is important, the focus of interpretation should be on the reception of the text. What follows is an attempt to show that the interpreters were always concerned with how text was received and how it should have influenced someone's life. First, I would point out that even in the theological phase of hermeneutics, even though the school of interpretations differed in their approaches, they agreed on the final goal. Then, I consider separately the hermeneutical approach, namely from the point of view of the author, of the text and of the reader. In doing this I point out the strengths, as well as the weaknesses, of each approach, showing that meaning should be the result of the interactions of these three methods.

[2] Hans G. Gadamer, *Adevăr şi metodă* (Truth and Method) (Bucharest: Teora, 2001), 433. Gadamer speaks about this ancient hermeneutics, which is not as scientific as it was more interested in the practical behavior of the judge or of the priest. Thus, Gadamer shows that the quest for truth depends not so much on the method as it does on the understanding of this phenomenon in a given context.

Traditional approaches to hermeneutics

Two schools of interpretations singled out through their approach and influence on the development of hermeneutics. The first is the alexandrine school with its allegorical system. According to this approach the text is like a human body. So it has a body, which is the literal sense and a soul, which corresponds to the allegorical sense. So the text should have a twofold interpretation: literal and spiritual.[3] Origen believed that just as man is body, the soul and spirit the interpretation of Scripture should address these three entities. For him, the allegorical sense would have a practical implication. So, the interpreter was always persuaded to move to action.

Later, with Augustine and Cassian, the spiritual sense came to have a threefold structure. The first sense is allegorical, which would explain the historical information through spiritual lens. Then comes the tropological or the moral sense with practical features for the life of the interpreter and lastly, the anagogical sense, which explains things from an eternal point of view. Even though the literal sense is important, it is for beginners. The more advanced in faith an intepreter is, the more he should move to the spiritual sense, which was: allegorical, then tropological and lastly, anagogical. The goal of interpretation was the maturing of the interpreter as he moves from historical sense to the anagogical one.

The second school is the alexandrine one. Its focus was on the letter or "theoria". The representatives of this school believed that the spiritual sense could not be separated from the literal one. An event has just one meaning, which is, in the same time, literal and spiritual, historical and typological. While the alexandrine school questioned some historical events, this school believed that history was the means of God's communication to people. Therefore, history must always be accurate. Thus, the goal of the Antiochian exegesis was equally literal and spiritual. This means that the interpreter should be concerned with gathering information as well as spiritual and doctrinal illumination.

Even though there were significant differences between them, one could find similar approaches for the final goal in the interpretation proposed by the two schools. In spite of the differences in methods, their goal was the same, namely that of revealing the truth and explaining the way Christians were to interpret the Old Testament. John Breck considers that both schools share two hermeneutic principles: first, the Scripture is an inspired text and second that Christ is the

[3] William W. Klein, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (W Publishing Group, Nashville, 1993), 38.

fulfillment of the prophecies. On the other hand, the differences between the schools addressed the form and not the content. It consists in the method of interpretation but not in soteriology.

Thus, even in its beginnings, hermeneutics was not about objectivity as it was concerned about the transformation that needs to take place in the interpreter's life. This would be the case when hermeneutics leaves the theological background as it did with Schleiermacher in the 18th century.

The interpreters disagree on who determines the meaning of a text, depending, among many other variables, on the role they give to three participants in the hermeneutic process: the author, the text and the reader. As we shall see, different authors side with one of these three positions, while others prefer a combination of them. The most important aspect one can notice while analyzing each of these three approaches is that they all have their strengths and weaknesses, which leads to the conclusion that, within certain boundaries, there is not a single correct method of interpretation. So, the interpreter moves beyond objectivity to reach for the meaning.

The Auctorial Intention

According to this paradigm, interpretation is concerned with what the text meant in a specific time, area and culture. It is a research detached from the personal life of the interpreter and it takes into account the grammar and historical setting; it is a pure exegesis.[4] Very often, the authors make unclear statements and ellipsis, supposing that the referent is being known but it is not specifically mentioned. When the author is no longer present, the interpreter needs to study the context to find hints in order to help him understand the intention of the author.

Emilio Betti considers that both the text and the conversation are objective representations of human intentions. Thus, the interpretation would mean the understanding of people's intentions, which is the reconstruction of the original context. The stress is not, however, among the emotional conditions of the author at the moment of writing but rather in the meaning of the text.[5] Eric Hirsch, like Betti, criticizes the gamadamerian fusion of the horizons. From his point of view, the meaning of a literary text is determined by the intention of the author.[6] This is the only way to differentiate between the valid interpretations and those which are not acceptable or even false.

[4] Klein, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 36-37.
[5] "Hermeneutics," *On-line Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hermeneutics/
[6] Eric Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976).

Hirsch distinguishes between the concepts of "meaning" and "significance". Thus, the first objective goal of hermeneutics is to clarify its meaning and not its significance. The meaning is what the text represents and what the author meant through the linguistic signs. Significance, as opposed to meaning, refers to a relationship between meaning and a person, a concept or any other category of things. The meaning cannot change while the significance not only can but it actually does change. If the meaning had not been determined then it would have been no norm to evaluate if an interpretation is valid.

The authorial intention is interested in the historical and cultural context. This implies taking in consideration the elements from the author's context, things that could decisively influence the significance of a text and especially its relevance for today. One can include here political, geographical, economical, legal, agricultural, military, family, food, architectural, social, religious factors. In addition, there are information about the author, the date of writing, the circumstances of writing, and the events that happened in the moment of writing.

However, since the author is no longer present, how could the interpreter be sure about the author's intention? Paul Ricouer believes that the meaning should be found somewhere at the intersection of the author's intention, the text and the reader. The hermeneutical circle is not the interpretation of the author or of the reader, but rather "a dialect between the discovery of the world and the self-understanding in the light of this world."[7] He believes that even in biblical interpretation, the knowledge of the author and of the context are not critical:

> *Regarding the Hebrew Scriptures, the literary stage was not conceived in order to put an end to its significance. This textual dynamism is revealed in almost all the representative biblical genres. The anonymity itself of the biblical texts could be interpreted from this point of view, the original authors being aware from the beginning about the incompleteness of their works.*[8]

However, in the case of biblical interpretation, the stress in not so much on identifying the human author(s) but rather on recognizing their divine origins. This is extremely important because the goal of the interpreter is to find the meaning of the divine author.

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[7] Grant R. Osborne, *The hermeneutical spiral: A comprehensive introduction to biblical interpretation* (InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, 2006), 491.

[8] Andre La Cocque and Paul Ricoeur, *Cum să înțelegem Biblia* (How to understand the Bible) (Iași: Polirom, 2002). In this book Ricoeur and La Coque interpret different biblical texts having both a theological and a philosophical perspective. In the introduction, Ricoeur justifies the using of the interpretative triangle in the interpretation of the divine texts as one of the goals of the Scripture is to create significance for the modern reader.

So, the intention of the author cannot be identified completely. However, there is a big difference in saying that the author's intention is secondary and saying that the reader could ignore it. Moises Silva said: „although in some cases the task of finding the meaning of the author in not the only legitimate way of action, such a task is always legitimate and should always be an essential purpose".[9]

Autonomy of the Text

Beginning with the modern era, the hermeneutics has been considered as an „ontological turn."[10] The first who made this transition was Wilhelm Dilthey. His contribution to hermeneutics consists in relating it with human sciences. For Dilthey, the interpretation means the unification of subject and object in a single historical act of understanding. The reader is in a more privileged position than the author because he can deal both with the mind of the author and bring more techniques in interpretation. The consequence is that he could create meanings that may be more profound than what the authors might have created.[11]

The text makes sense only when the interpreters approach it and could find significance for life and thus limit the meaning of the text to what corresponds to personal experience. The "new hermeneutics", a term used in American literature, turns its attention to how could the ancient texts communicate with today's power. It studies everything through the lens of contemporaneity. Since the reality is fluctuating, the meaning of a text could neither be a fixed one nor an authoritative one. The stress is put on the interpreter's creative capacity to deal with a text, since it is not limited by the rules of the traditional and dogmatic hermeneutics.

The characteristic of this hermeneutics is the weakening of the distinction between subject and object. The interpreter brings a whole baggage of pre-understanding to the text. "Even the questions that the interpreter is asking (or fails to ask) reflect the limitations determined by that baggage. These pre-understandings would determine the answers that come from the text and also the way they are interpreted."[12]

Thus, a dialogue is needed between the subject and the object, so that the questions that are being asked and answered determine him to see things

[9] Silva and Kaiser, *Introducere în hermeneutică*, 280.
[10] Bjørn Ramberg and Kristin Gjesdal, "Hermeneutics," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2013 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, accessed April 20, 2013, http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2013/entries/hermeneutics/.
[11] Osborne, *The hermeneutical spiral*, 468.
[12] Don A. Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, 2nd edition (Baker Books, Grand Rapids, 1996), 126.

differently; this interaction determines a process through which the hermeneutical circle is being shaped. Some authors prefer the phrase „hermeneutical spiral"[13], in order to show that the interpreter is not taking a vicious circle. Thus, the interpreter interacts more and more with the text and his understanding aligns with that of the author.

Even if the distinction between the subject and the object of hermeneutics is not total, the interpreter could always ask what the intention of the author was. The role of this hermeneutics is that of emphasizing the distinction between the understanding and the text itself. This teaches us that we are limited and that we need to be aware of our pre-understandings when dealing with the text.

For Gadamer the process of interpretation is taking place now and could not be controlled by the subjective issues of the author's intention, an aspect that has to do with the past. The world of the text opens up and the dialogue that follows reorients the thoughts of the interpreter. In Gadamer's opinion this is the hermeneutical circle, which is also known as the fusion of the horizons. There is an overlapping of the past (text) and the present (interpreter).

The central idea of the book *Truth and Method* is that truth could not be properly explained through a scientific method and that the real sense of the language transcends the limits of the methodological interpretation. Gadamer argues that hermeneutics is not just a method for determining the truth, but also an activity that proposes to understand the conditions in which the truth is possible.

The reconstruction of the world of a written text could be a method in order to understand its purpose or sense. However, Gadamer criticizes this approach in interpretation. He considers it an attempt to rediscover a sense that no longer exists. He explains that our understanding of the purpose and sense of the art is always influenced by our historical condition. In order to experience a piece of art in the way it was originally interpreted is a useless attempt to place us in the past and a denial of the influence of our present situation on our understanding of the goal and the sense. Truth does not reside in the attempt of the reader to return to the original meaning of the author; this goal cannot be reached, because each interpreter has a different way of knowing the text, depending on his historical time.

[13] Osborne, *The hermeneutical spiral*... This author believes that hermeneutics is a spiral from text to context - a move between the horizon of the text to that of the reader and which draws closer to the intention of the text and its significance for today. Osborne develops his argument in each of the three sections of his books: general hermeneutics (grammar, semantics, syntax and context), genres and applied hermeneutics.

Ricoeur also believed that the first element an exegete needs to take into consideration is the autonomy of the text, which is open to further development and enrichment. Gregory the Great said: "Holy Scripture grows with its readers."[14] Thus, the goal of discovering the human intentions is left out and this does overarch the methods of interpretation.

Ricoeur distinguishes between the two types of relationships: "spoken-heard" and "written-read". In the written discourse, the intention of the author and the meaning of the text do not overlap. What the text currently means counts more than it meant when it was written.[15] The significance of a text is always given by an event that comes to life where two things meet up: on one hand the compulsion of the text, which depend on its *Sitz im Leben*and, on the other hand, the different expectation of the community, or series of communities of lecture and interpretation, which the authors of the text could not even anticipate.

Ricoeur said that a metaphor "breaks" the literal sense of a term as it forces the listener or the reader to take a detour in the understanding of the word or expression and takes him to a new textual world created by that very metaphor. The text does not need to be tied to what the original recipient understood. The interpretations do not need to be contrary to the understanding of the original recipient.[16]

A second significant fact in interpretation is the literary genre. This refers to the form of a text. Many errors of interpretations could be made if this element is not taken into account. The narration should be interpreted different from poetry and the wisdom literature could not be interpreted in the same way as the epistolary genre. So, the interpreter needs to be familiarized with the characteristics of the different genres in order to catch the meaning of the text.

The interpreter should analyze a text in its context. This means that the expressions and the words have significance only in certain constructions, such as: sentences, paragraphs, etc. The interpretation of a text should be in harmony with the idea transmitted by the immediate context as well as the whole book. The near context is the passage just before and after. The meaning should be in harmony with the main idea of the author; it needs to follow the flow of the thinking.

[14] La Cocque and Ricoeur, *Cum să înțelegem Biblia*, 6.
[15] Paul Ricouer, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus Meaning* (Texas Christian University, Forth Worth, 1976), 29-30.
[16] Osborne, *Hermeneutical Spiral,* 491.

The Role of the Reader

The third element of the interpretative triangle is the reader. Ricoeur said: "in the end, the text exists because of a community, to be used in a community and to shape that community. If we consider that the relation with the author is the background of the text, then the relation with the reader is the foreground. In this case we firmly consider that the foreground is more important than the background."[17]

For this component two things are worth taking into consideration: placing the text within a tradition and its relationship with the living community. For the first aspect, it is relevant what the wise emperor Solomon once said: "nothing new under the sun".[18] Applied in the area of hermeneutics, it means there is no singular interpretation. Anything that is being said today, all interpretations have been also done in the past, too. Thus, the interpreter is dependent on the work of his forerunners, even though there are some naïve interpreters, who believe they could interpret a text without help from others. Don Carson believes that the "exegesis could never be done in a vacuum."[19] It is absurd to believe that one's background does not influence their exegesis. We definitely could not establish a certain pattern for the influences, but one can be sure that his community irrevocably determines the way he views and interprets the texts.

Also, the interpretation of a text could not be separated from the contemporary community. The interpreter cannot ignore the world he lives in. One would always compare the results of his interpretation with the reality of the community he lives in. In this way, a symbiosis is created between the world of the text and that of the community. Ricoeur believes that "a text separated from its ties with the community is as good as a corpse."[20] This principle could be also observed in the Jewish tradition. In Judaism there is a written Torah but also one that is orally transmitted. There is no break between them as the latter is considered an extension of the former, of its vitality and capacity of filling the temporal horizon.

[17] Paul Ricoeur, *Eseuri de hermeneutică* (Essays in Hermeneutics) (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1995), 11.
[18] Bible, Ecclesiastes 1:9.
[19] Don A. Carson, "Unity and Diversity in the New Testament: the Possibility of the Systematic Theology," in *Scripture and Truth*, ed. D. A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983), 92.
[20] La Cocque and Ricoeur, *Cum să înțelegem Biblia*, 7.

Conclusion

How objective could a interpreter be? Some authors,[21] dealing with the role of the presuppositions in interpretation, state that a person cannot reach total objectivity. Simply one has no access to what the text absolutely says. There is just one truth, the one that is interpreted. The meaning of the text has nothing to do with what the author says, but with one the subject sees or understands. Thus, both the distinction subject / object and the quest for certainty, precision and historical knowledge of the objective truth disappeared.

Ricoeur stated: "just as a hermeneutics that stresses out the intention of the author tends to give a statute of uniqueness for the sense of a text, as it tends to reduce the meaning of the author to a unique intention, in the same way a hermeneutics that is interested in the history of reception would take into account the irreducible plurivocity of the text."[22]

The interpreter does not need to have as his goal perfect objectivity but rather objectivity within the limits of some essential presuppositions. This is a challenge, but it is the call of the interpreter. Thus, the interpretation is text oriented rather than author oriented. Even though the relationship speaker-listener is lost in the text, the latter could share the world of the text. So, while the objectivity of the author's goal is always a theoretical construction, the referent world, created by the author includes the reader.[23]

The text in not linear (authorial intention), but is multidimensional, as it does not offer itself to reading on a single level but on more levels at the same time to a historical community that has heterogeneous goals. Thus, the reader is included in the text; he is part of the text.

When the interpreter studies a text he interprets himself. A kind of mutual choice takes place between the text and the interpreter and this process in known as "hermeneutical circle". This is not a vicious circle, only when the text under study is considered as sacred and the interpreter refers to an authority. Thus, the text and the interpreter could not change places, which in the words of Ricoeur, show a difference of "altitude".[24]

Plurivocal hermeneutics is thus possible. However, not all interpretations are valid, but only those that take into consideration the goal of hermeneutics: "to find in the text, on one hand the internal dynamic that governs the structure of the text,

[21] William W. Klein, Craig Blomberg and Robert L. Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Thomas Nelson, Nashville, 2004), 91.
[22] La Cocque and Ricoeur, *Cum să înțelegem Biblia*, 6.
[23] Paul Ricoeur, "The Hermeneutical Function of Distanciation," *Philosophy Today* 17 (1973).
[24] *Ibidem.*

and on the other hand, the possibility that that the work could be projected outside of it and to give birth to a world that represents the work of the text. The internal dynamic and the external projection constitute what I call the labor of the text. Hermeneutics need to reconstruct this double labor of the text."[25]

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The American "You Probably Know": On Chomsky, United States, and the Failed States•

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Abstract

Alleged by his detractors "Cold War Geopolitics" was verily a formative ground of Chomsky's analyses, nevertheless, his work is a recycling of a set historical methodology, which has yet to be fully understood. It is characteristically convenient to perceive Chomsky's contribution to the American Empire Project as being in succession to the American legacy of dissension to and distanciation from political and cultural hegemony. It is ironic that such a stance of subversion of hegemonic laws and the natural universal exceptionalism of America comes from the chief positivist of linguistics. In other words, reading Chomsky will be more challenging once his oeuvre is classified under modern 'integralist' history, furthermore even as postcolonial theory. Neither has Noam Chomsky nor his activities in the recent American Empire Project enabled policy advisers to ascertain methods to democratically sustain a "political system made up of subcultures." While both The American Empire Project and Chomsky seek to restore the Edenic veneer to America the latter's discipline ranges to far beyond the borders of his nation. It is this fibre of individualism and universalism that makes him only more American. Several writings by Chomsky begin by reaffirm the idyllic and unprecedented American influence of the post-War era, and ending in the wake of changing world demography of political alignments the American Gestalt history reflects in the psychic anxiety of the American Empire Project of the expanding frontiers America is faced with as an outcome of its own political misdemeanour. Failed States and the Chomskyan American Empire Project domesticate U.S. politics, infusing its blood-ridden history into the (collective) political

• The title borrowed from the heading of a letter by Eliot Abrams, the Assistant Secretary of State at Washington DC. The letter was provoked by Chomsky's first article on the Index of Censorship. It contained as follows:
You probably know about Chomsky: he is a fanatical defender of the PLO who has set new standards for intellectual dishonesty and personal vindictiveness in his writings about the Middle East. There really isn't anyone left in the U.S.—without regard to politics—who takes Chomsky seriously in view of his astonishing record. I therefore find it inexplicable that he is given fully three pages to go on with his attack on one of the freest presses in the world (See Noam Chomsky, *Pirates and Emperors, Old and New: International Terrorism in the Real World* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2002), 104.

unconscious of the middle class urbanite's brunch-settee ethic, with the refurbishment of American innocence in a natural teleology. It is the catalyst to ignite civil leisure with social revolution.

Keywords: *Noam Chomsky, Daedalus, Failed States, Jacques Derrida, Homi Bhabha, US Geopolitics, Iraq, Afghanistan, Vietnam, American Empire Project*.

It might arguably be one's own oblique impression that the only images of huge crowds of American civilians that readily attract our memory are those from during years of American crises. Mario Savio courting arrest in front of ten thousand students at Berkeley in June of 1964, and Philp Ochs singing "Oh I marched to the Battle of New Orleans / And the end of the early British War," (both from the documentary film *Berkeley in the Sixties*) are possibly the signature signs in that chain. The welcoming back of Vietnam War soldiers in front of the Empire State Building (in a scene from the film *Forrest Gump*) was yet another. In each case it was an anti-U.S. campaign. Reading *Failed States* clarifies these initial reflections not be that oblique after all.

Pondering over the labeling of Noam Chomsky's political dissidence by his critics as an "out-dated Geopolitics of the Cold War" [1] I discovered a certain issue, from during the Cold War years, of *Daedalus.*[2] Subtitled as "Dialogues," the issue began with the transcripts of a session on New Historical Trends from a conference held at the Boston House of the Academy. Participants to the dialogue were seventeen professors, chiefly from European and American Universities. Not long before this conference had the U.S. witnessed large-scale anti-Vietnam War demonstrations, the Berkeley and the Hippie counter-culture movements, the Black Panthers, the Civil Rights and the Feminist Movements. It will be a matter of some time before I fully draw the connection between Chomsky's *Failed States* and the said conference. Presently I shall only surmise that the alleged "Cold War Geopolitics" was verily a formative ground of Chomsky's analyses, nevertheless, his work is a recycling of a set historical methodology, which has yet to be fully understood.

It is characteristically convenient to perceive Chomsky's contribution to the American Empire Project as being in succession to the American legacy of dissension to and distanciation from political and cultural hegemony. It is ironic that such a stance of subversion of hegemonic laws and the natural universal

[1] Stephen McCloskey, "Military Humanism," *Fortnight* 393 (2001): 21.
[2] *Daedalus, Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, "Dialogues" 98, 4, Fall (1969).

exceptionalism of America comes from the chief positivist of linguistics. Whether this formulaic premise is reductive of Chomsky's stature as a policy scientist is not as significant a concern as how little this adds to an understanding of alternate trends in history as policy science. In other words, reading Chomsky will be more challenging once his oeuvre is classified under modern 'integralist' (to use Charles Tilly's phrase)[3] history, furthermore even as postcolonial theory. In doing so I have kept from Chomsky the customary designation of social scientist, for I believe his writings pay only a minor fealty to social theory. In a way I am presupposing that criticizing the American Empire does not reduce Americanism, if not reinforce it. However, what passes off under the rubric of a *U. S. Foreign Policy Critique* is essentially one

> *…history (in) unity. Everything that happens affects everything in some infinitesimal way… It is a kind of a Gestalt — everything is related to everything else and you cannot understand anything unless you understand everything and see the total configuration. Separating something out from the totality necessarily distorts this Gestalt.*[4]

Needless to say this *Gestalt* history ostensibly qualifies as American history. Take for instance the blurbs on the covers of *Failed States*. One illustrates Chomsky as "America's most useful citizen, while the very first blurb quotes *The New York Times* Book Review as: "It's hard to imagine any American reading this book and not seeing his country in a new and deeply troubling light." Let us here examine what Cold War research, or more specifically, what Chomskian theses on U. S. policies have enabled. Both, to our understanding, have not revealed any recurrent lifestyle patterns of peoples within the ambit of the civil, poetic or libidinal, nor have they generated resolutions toward ending of inter-state differences in adherence to International Law. Neither has the recent American Empire Project enabled policy advisers to ascertain methods to democratically sustain a "political system made up of subcultures."[5] The Cold War is extremely significant in the global arena, even in embryo nations of Eastern Europe and Africa. However the research emanating out of it can be of no more use than evincing a sense of their being proxy-war spaces, among the likes of Guantanamo, Afghanistan, Iraq, East Timor, Lebanon, Chile or Palestine. It is worth asking how different these common battlegrounds are from British India which was covertly made the site of The Great Game between England and Russia. As Kim learns in Rudyard Kipling's eponymous novel, "the Great Game is so large that one sees but

[3] Its validity in contemporary historiography was emphasized by Lee Benson during the conference. The term is taken from Charles Tilly memorandum to the *Daedalus* conference.
[4] Lee Benson, in *Daedalus,* 891.
[5] *Daedalus,* 902.

a little at a time."[6] This is where Chomsky becomes so momentous in his indiscriminate cataloguing of America's frontier playfields. Consider the case of Princeton mathematician John Nash, whose extraordinary career suffers due to his schizophrenia, contracted in being caught in the state's overarching surveillance and desiring machinery.

Beginning with President Carter's infamous denial of any moral debt to Vietnam (a site which formatively inspired Chomsky's theses) owing to America's "being on the losing side,"[7] and Zbigniew Brzezinski's condemning of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan as the fourth greatest social holocaust, Chomsky goes on to expose American foreign policy as a tradition of alibi politics, and false-flag to soft-target operations.[8] He then quotes bathetically, one senior fellow at the Council of Foreign Relations, Max Boot:

> *Europe has been driven by avarice and the cynical Europeans cannot comprehend the strain of idealism that animates U.S. foreign policy. After 200 years Europe still hasn't figured what makes America tick.* [9]

Although facetious, the question that puzzles Europe, as Boot considers, is a very interesting one, within the methodology I have adopted in reading *Failed States*. Before asking whether The American Empire Project or Chomsky *are* in favour of this ticking or against it, other fundamental questions arise. For instance what does the phrase "failed states" imply? Chomsky borrows the term from contemporary political parlance. "Failed States" is a modification of "outlaw states" which was coined by John Rawls, in his description of spaces outside of the "society of democratic peoples" which do not subscribe to the "Law of Peoples," which involves commitments "to observe treaties and undertakings, to recognize all are equal and parties to the agreements that bind them, to reject the use of force for reasons other than self defense, and to honour human rights."[10] "Failed States" now generally refers to those regimes which U.S.A. has (or seeks to) re(dis)place with puppet rulers functioning under its own aegis. However, Chomsky easily inverts the implication of the phrase to a referent, that is, the (Failed) States of America.

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[6] Rudyard Kipling, *Kim* (New Delhi: Penguin, 1987), 217.
[7] Noam Chomsky, "Visions of Righteousness," *Cultural Critique* 3, American Representations of Vietnam (1986): 11.
[8] An argument further qualified by David Ray Griffin in his essay "9/11" earlier deivered as a lecture was on March 30, 2006, at Grand Lake Theater in Oakland for Progressive Democrats of the East Bay.
[9] Noam Chomsky, *Failed States* (New York: Owl Books, Henry & Holt Co. 2007), 35.
[10] *Ibidem*, 39.

While the Act III of Nuremberg Tribunal required the execution of German foreign ministers for the preemptive attacks on Germany, U.S. blueprints of staged self-immolations, such as the plan to perform a marine explosion of U.S. warships near Nicaragua, by president Kennedy's adviser, as an alibi to initiate attack from its bases in Honduras, pass palpably unnoticed. Further, having enforced with its allies a no-fly-zone over northern Iraq to protect the Kurdish population from Saddam Hussein, U.S.A. supplied jets and attack helicopters to target the same population. The list goes on to include extradition refusals by United States and hiring of the very convicts of international crimes (Luis Posada and Emmanuel Constant), arbitrary pardons granted to international criminals (Orlando Bosch exempted by Bush II), detention of Haitian refugees and Cuban prisoners in Egypt and Guantanamo instead of cellars of New York or Sweden, U.S. sponsored violence in Lebanon, East Timor and Chile, and Bill Clinton's breach of U.S. pact with Mikhail Gorbachev in extending NATO to former members of Warsaw pact, east of reunited Germany, thereby compelling East-Europe to nuclear abolition. Chomsky is quick to discern farce in talks of a "New World Order," which presupposes the existence of an "Old World Order,"[11] which began with the end of World War II. The latter ended with America emerging as world superpower "without a historical precedent," in possession of over fifty per cent of the world's wealth. Reiterating Walter Lippman, Chomsky notes that everything that moderates violence in defence of the elite and consenting to state authority leads to newer techniques of "manufacture of consent." In the face of state policies turning indefensible proper indoctrination of the metropolitan inhabitants is left to the "historical engineering" of American historians and media. Although the U.S. News media is usually antagonistic to U.S. foreign policy "institutional filters operate to ensure that the criticisms made generally stay with" a desired insular reach of political elites and academicians who "buttress" American cultural elitism.[12] Arif Dirlik marks the *Harvard Business Review* as the foremost

[11] Chomsky continues, " Political and economic elites were well aware of these facts, and, not surprisingly, set about to organize a world system favorable to their interests-although they also recognized, quite explicitly, that more noble rhetoric would be useful for propaganda purposes." Noam Chomsky, "After the Cold War: U. S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East," *Cultural Critique*, 19, *The Economies of War* (1991): 16.

[12] Eric Herring and Piers Robinson, "Too Polemical or Too Critical? Chomsky on the Study of the News Media and US Foreign Policy," *Review of International Studies* 29 (2003): 533. Also see Chomsky's "Scolarship and Ideology: American Historians as «Experts in Legitimation»," *Social Scientist* 1, 7 (1973): 21.

advocates of transnationalism and multiculturalism in the United States.[13] What his discipline does not record is the paranoia of Third World nationalism[14] behind the façade of a celebration of transculturalism in First World academia. Reported as a benign history and Newspeak is America's peace process in Palestine which Chomsky likens to Hitler's peace pursuits of 1939.[15] He begins his 1972 talk (delivered at Jawaharlal Nehru University) "Scholarship and Ideology: American Historians as «Experts in Legitimation»" with an episode of the President of American Historical Association urging the audience to abandon "«dispassionate behaviourism» and «the liberal neutral attitude» in research and to accept their «social responsibilities» as historians."[16] Here I must make a disclaimer, regarding the *Daedalus* historians mentioned earlier, that whether they belonged to the complicit orthodoxy from which America sought historical revisionism is a matter of little consequence in my paper. The methodologies handed down from that conference alone are of significance to us. Let us go back, hence, to the concept of *Gestalt* history which I had tacitly suspected Mr. Chomsky to be consolidating through his writings. What possibilities can the reproduction of a vast database from post-World War II U.S. politics suggest to a Third World civilian or (as the covers address) the American citizen?

On the face of it, Chomsky's scheme appears as a *denunciation* of antique foundational myths of capitalism and imperialism, which have acquired postmodern dimensions of internationalism, humanist interventionism, military humanism and globalization in U.S. policies. Such a documenting according to postcolonial historian Gyan Prakash, is "disposable fiction" for postcolonial history cannot afford to repeat "the (very) history we seek to displace."[17] During my assessment of *Failed States* I had been reading Homi Bhabha's essay *Signs Taken for Wonders: Questions of Ambivalence and Authority under a Tree outside Delhi, May 1817*, that led me to an interesting problem. Chomsky's *denunciation* of U.S. Governance that I have spoken of could be complicated into a deferral of *enunciation* within a "(neo) colonial articulation… and a dis-play of *différance.*"[18]

[13] Arif Dirlik, "The Postcolonial Aura: Third World Criticism in the Age of Global Capitalism," in *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory,* ed. Padmini Mongiaed, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997), 314.
[14] Chomsky, "After the Cold War," 28.
[15] Noam Chomsky, "Thought Control in the US: The Media and the «Peace Process»" *MERIP Middle East Report*, 143, *Nuclear Shadow over the Middle East* (1986): 25.
[16] Chomsky, "Scholarship and Ideology," 20.
[17] Gyan Prakash, "Postcolonial Criticism and Indian Historiography," *Social Text*, 31/32, *Third World and Post-Colonial Issues* (1992): 13.
[18] Homi K. Bhabha, "Signs Taken for Wonders: Questions of Ambivalence and Authority under a Tree outside Delhi, May 1817," *Critical Inquiry* 12, 1, *Race* (1985): 150.

Such an articulation is obviously different from the classical Hegelian master / slave dialectic. However it is very possibly, apropos the socio-cultural consequences and responses that Chomsky's political writings elicit, a double inscription of imperial authority, be it "hallowed" or "hollowed." Chomsky can be read, although in a meretricious way, to be not just in dialogue with American self-consolidation but also in correspondence with it, that is, not merely antagonistic but agonistic to U.S. policy. The high ambivalence of this principle will be clearer on conflating the following hypotheses:

> *whenever any writing both marks and goes back over its mark with an undecidable stroke ... [this] double mark escapes the pertinence or authority of truth: it does not overturn it but rather inscribes it within its play as one of its functions or parts. This displacement does not take place, has not taken place once as an event. It does not occupy a simple place. It does not take place in writing. This dis-location (is what) writes/is written*[19]

> *after two hijacked jets slammed into New York's Twin Towers on September 11 2001. Chomsky wrote that although the Al Qaeda assaults on America were atrocities they were not on the same scale of Bill Clinton's bombing of a Sudanese pharmaceutical factory at the height of the Lewinsky scandal… What is certain is that on Planet Chomsky the Iranian Mullahs would have the bomb; East Timor would still be under Indonesian rule; the Taliban would be imposing the most insane form of Sharia law on Afghanistan, Saddam Hussein and his extended criminal family would be in charge of Iraq and the clear truths about the genocides in Cambodia and China would be blurred and twisted.*[20]

One may derive here that U.S. power politics and Chomsky's censure of it are not separate discourses; they do not constitute two worldviews but are essentially comprised by one unfinished (and deferred) event. Although this is the direction I had myself taken, I now hold it as a populist recourse, arrived at through circuitous deconstruction, thus meretricious, as observed before.

What Bhabha and Derrida were trying to expose was the ambivalence of colonial history codified and modified by the invader's interpolations of new myths, in non-metropolitan tracts of history. Chomsky, on the other hand makes a series of uncivil disclosures to the metropolitan reader; a representment of the Kurtzian horror within the drawing rooms of the Intended average citizen of America. With this realization Tilly and Benson's notions seemed all the more crucial now. By and large I had to suspend my prior suspicions. Chomsky's complicity in U.S. affairs is only partially and subliminally true. Partially, because Chomsky, not alone but under the canon of The American Empire Project,

[19] Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*, trans. Barbara Johnson (Chicago: Continuum, 1981), 190.
[20] Henry McDonald, "The Chomsky File," *Fortnight* 441 (2006): 14.

becomes institutionalized into a guild of writers. A major alteration of Chomsky owing to this is an apparent homogenization of his inconsistencies.[21] For example, even until 1980s he disputed claims of over a million deaths under an atrocious Pol Pot regime in Cambodia, and approved instead of the vindictive evacuation of Phnom Penh during 1975, for he believed it kept the refugees away from 1976 rice crop failure. Chomsky remained opposed to military intervention against Khmer Rouge's autocracy in Cambodia, as he was to the military interventions in East Timor which had been subject to a death toll of 75000 plus in 1975 at the hands of Indonesians sponsored by Ford Administration. What I am arguing is that in being part of The American Empire Project Chomsky is not bereft of the paradoxes that besot its very nomenclature. Does the Project at all intend to do away with the appellation of Empire, or in doing so seek to broadcast its insignia? Or to euphemize or expurgate? Let us see how Project defines itself.

> *The American Empire Project is a response to the changes that have occurred in America's strategic thinking as well as in its military and economic posture. Empire, long considered an offense against America's democratic heritage, now threatens to define relationship between our country and the rest of the world.*[22]

The Project aspires to be the locus of dissents raging from within America and thus is a framework internal to the U.S. Clearly, it is inward looking, and does not make any pretence of internationalism. One may even make a case of the Project though visibly a *post of* a non-existent Empire is also a *post* to the same idea of Empire. Chomsky's concern, I believe, lies elsewhere. As regards the subliminal (again involuntary) complicity, it can be easily seen how the U.S. media can utilize Chomsky both favourably and unfavourably to neutralize the sweeping clash of civilization theories of Samuel Huntington.

Before the collapse of Soviet Russia Huntington explained its threat to the U.S. by endorsing intervention or other military action "in such a way as to create the misimpression that it is the Soviet Union you are fighting."[23] By the mid-1990s he conjectured the impending "Clash of Civilizations" primarily between Christian and Islamic orders. Chomsky comes nearly as a saving grace with his alternate viewpoint, and cold rationalistic reliance on facts, which lead to his thesis: radicalization of Islam owes more to America than to Osama bin Laden. American

[21] The representative US anger against Chomsky is poignant in "Noam Chomsky during last month's visit to the Irish Republic was reported to have said that Iran would be «crazy» if it didn't try and acquire nuclear weapons. To which those still on the side of the Enlightenment might reply: the western world would be equally «crazy» to listen to Chomsky and to let the Mullahs in Tehran obtain the Bomb" (*Ibidem*).

[22] Chomsky, *Failed States*, 314.

[23] *Ibidem*, 103.

exceptionalism is the obverse behind which lurk its dangerous ambitions of forging democracy from "outside" in states it perceives as failed. Is it not rather relieving for U.S. about the way its politics is perceived by its citizenry and the Third World intellectuals that "the Great Satan in Chomsky's eyes remains his native country"?[24] The "dispassionate behaviourism" that American history has lacked abounds in Chomsky's political writings. It was yet a final re-assessment he needed. Frequently, Chomsky tempts the reader to think that his catalogues of U.S. offense are a source of a childlike delight to him, especially when his expression grow as effortless as

> *In December 2002, Jack Straw, then foreign minister, released a dossier of Saddam's crimes. It was drawn almost entirely from the period of firm U.S.-U.K. support, a fact over looked with the usual display of moral integrity.*[25]

Surprisingly, this is the most serious and innocent aspect of Mr. Chomsky. He begins one of his essays on U.S. policies quite wittily detaching himself from all "isms" except truism. As a matter of fact all of Chomsky's linguistic and political writings originate from a simple yet elegant root of the ability to "generate sentences from a grammar" and articulate awareness that is intrinsic to humans. According to him the radical theory is a "misnomer."[26] Chomsky revisions it as a truism which does not mean extremism but an action that returns one to the "roots of human experience."[27] This in the American experience stands for the myth of the fecund garden and its idealized "frontier farmers" toiling in "blissful labour."[28] This is what is also witnessed in the construction of the People's Park (the communal Eden of 1968) during the Civil Rights Movement.

While both The American Empire Project and Chomsky seek to restore the Edenic veneer to America the latter's discipline ranges to far beyond the borders of his nation. It is this fibre of individualism and universalism that makes him only more American. The founding of America was preceded by the foundering of the Indian civilization. It is this collective national guilt that vents itself in bifurcated streams of George W. Bush's cowboyism[29] in frontier landscapes of western genre

[24] McDonald, "The Chomsky File," 14.
[25] Noam Chomsky, "Invasion as Marketing Problem: The Iraq War and Contempt for Democracy," *Mississippi Review* 32, 3 (2004): 89.
[26] Robert F. Barsky, *Noam Chomsky: A Life of Dissent* (Massachussets Institute of Technology Press, 1998), 96.
[27] *Ibidem*.
[28] Gaylord C. LeRoy, "American Innocence Reconsidered," *The Massachusetts Review* 4, 4 (1963): 625.
[29] See Robert Kagan's dismissive reference to Europeans as being from Venus and Americans from Mars, in *Failed States*. He adds, "The soft Europeans believe in old fashioned notions like criminal

and Noam Chomsky's re-cognition of the inescapable fall(s) of orphaned Adam(s) in quest of phalluses for its widowed motherland.

The paranoia of Third World nationalism in the case of one translates as a shivering delight in fostering the same in another. Present America exists in an interstice between these two articulations of anxiety.

> *The anxiety of displacement that troubles national rootedness transforms ethnicity or cultural difference into an ethical relation that serves as a subtle corrective to valiant attempts to achieve representativeness and moral equivalence in the matter of minorities.*[30]

This representativeness of Chomsky in voicing the rights of the silenced failed states in the middle and far-east takes the form of even hastening the Adamic fall thereby approximating resurrection. There is a definite tension in his Afterword to *Failed States* in examining Third World developments such as Iran turning into an anti-West Asian Energy Security Grid, the Venezuela funded large Cuban medical assistance to Pakistan following the 2005 earthquake, when the U.S. displayed relative coolness, and elsewhere where he notes the growing technological sophistry of Asia weaponry and industry in a century which is maturing into an Asian Century.[31] Undoubtedly, therefore, the American history has assumed global proportions. The question now is: what was the beginning of this history?; when was Eden? For American Civil War historians this Eden was certainly the American Declaration of Human Rights of 1776; for Cold War researchers it was the end of World War II. And this is where Tilly and Benson come in.

> *One of the main things that has happened methodologically since World War II has been the application of the simple notion that important collective effects can appear in the accumulated experience of considerable numbers of people who themselves do not experience those collective effects as events.*[32]

Several writings by Chomsky begin by reaffirm the idyllic and unprecedented American influence of the post-War era, and ending in the wake of changing world demography of political alignments the American Gestalt history reflects in the psychic anxiety of the American Empire Project of the expanding frontiers America is faced with as an outcome of its own political misdemeanour.

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justice and law. The tough Americas just go ahead and get the job done, as in cowboy movies" (42).

[30] Homi K. Bhabha, "On the Irremovable Strangeness of Being Different," *PMLA*, 113, 1, *Ethnicity* (1998): 34.

[31] Chomsky here supplies theories of Indian political scientist Aijaz Ahmad, and quotes reports from *The Hindu* and *The Frontline*. See in *Failed States*, 256-60.

[32] Charles Tilly, in *Daedalus*, 960.

This when felt against the raw chords of an "archaic stability of ontology,"[33] the memory of cultural displacement and cultural difference induces an "archaic cathexis of longing… a defensive reaction to the felt loss (or displacement of) the (othered) object."[34] Out of this anxiety is born the quintessential American writer, historian, philosopher, and Chomsky who, as Leslie Fiedler says, is the recorder "of the encounter of the dream of innocence and the fact of guilt, in the only part of the world where the reality of that conflict can still be recognized."[35]

Failed States and the Chomskyan American Empire Project domesticate U.S. politics, infusing its blood-ridden history into the (collective) political unconscious of the middle class urbanite's brunch-settee ethic, with the refurbishment of American innocence in a natural teleology. It is the catalyst to ignite civil leisure with social revolution. Chomsky looks far outward his nation's boundaries, stretching the frontiers of dissent and freedom of expression in reply to the U.S. hunt for new frontiers of domination. In this integralism he is more American than the American Project itself. Perhaps this is the real answer to Boot's question as to what keeps America ticking.

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[33] Bhabha, "On the Irremovable Strangeness," 35.
[34] Sigmund Freud, *Inhibitions, Symptoms, and Anxiety*, trans. Alix Strachey (New York: Norton, 1989), 66.
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The Migration in and from the Community in the Knowledge-based Society

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Abstract

The epistemic approach towards the knowledge-based society referred to notional level, is an approach that explains it within theSocial Philosophy. Moreover, the knowledge-based society diversifies the forms of knowledge, highlighting not only the ones left out, but also the interconnection and interdependence among them. Thus, the present article analyses the available researches in order to reveal what was conceptualized as the knowledge-based society. Also, it points out the differences between the knowledge-based society and the contemporary society in order to see the deep changes that has been faced. Among these changesis the migration as an intensified phenomenon that starting with 90s of the last century became characterized by a different framework, especially in European area. These changes were because of the knowledge-based society that facilitates the employment thanks to the information technology. Additionally, the article emphasises the European policy measures for the knowledge based society and how these policies influence the neighbouring partner countries, like the Republic of Moldova.

Keywords: *Knowledge, migration, community, knowledge based society*

Nearly a decade and a half ago, from the beginning of the IIIrd millennium (XXI century), the variety of the multiple crises that the society is facing have not changed essentially. These highlight the shortcomings / delays, in some way, of the guidelines directing the accumulations and emphasize the need to identify their sources that appeared before the end of the XX century. The accumulation's similarities comprise a diverse/divergent/specific set, which reflected in the transformation of the deep changes and that requires to find the opportunities that would enhance the pillars of the society and would facilitate the identification of sources responsible for feeding the causes - effects - consequences of the ongoing actions in the community.

A hermeneutical overview of the triad causes - effects – consequences, emphasizes that the developing community environments usually is distorted.

Distortions, which development, are frequently difficult to identify, because the sources that generate them are constantly changing. However, in a developing society, the transformation occurs as a whole, connecting all society components and shaping the society's organizational model. A specific model of the society organization is whether from the post-soviet, Yugoslav or Czechoslovak area in Europe. And because the socio-economic, socio-cultural and last, but not least, the socio-political transition remains a difficult one, beyond the political statements, and being frequently distorted, have an artificial character, but formally supported by external sources they manage easily to keep the community away from the real problems. The effects of the distortions go beyond the limits of the established societies, despite their attempts to protect themselves. Therefore, understanding the impact of the community on the actions that they undertake during the pathway of becoming a complete entity is a stability indicator and a recognition by the civilization. In the same time, the developed societies face some difficulties to understand the multiculturalism as a reality and which recognition depends the security of future of the civilization.

From epistemic point of view, the multiple controversies of the contemporary society, at the first site, are influenced by the openings of the knowledge based society. Influences, which facilitates the re-dimensioning of the experiences, the transition from the closed to the open experience, ready to receive everything that can be known. It has to be mentioned that the world (society) is prepared not only to value what can be known, but to assist new processes by the creating favorable conditions. This it, in general, largely emphasized in philosophy and particularly in the social philosophy, through its own renewal. The renewal, recognition of which, by M. Florian[1] means accepting the role of coordinator of philosophy in relation to the other sciences in building the world understanding. Moreover, through the concept of recessively, he sees a profound asymmetry of the structure of the world (*global society*), that means world has a recessive structure, and its' understanding can only be achieved through complex inter and multidisciplinary analysis. In this context, the renewal of the relations between science and philosophy, recognizing the role of the latter, becomes the *sine qua non* of the contribution that are brought to assure the profound security dissymmetry in the structure of the world. However, the disregard of one aspect in the condition of profound dissymmetry can lead to breaks and the formation of

[1] M. Florian, *Recesivitatea ca structură a lumii* (Recessiveness structure of the world) (Bucharest: Pro, Vol. 1, 2003, Vol. II, 2004).

vacuums inside different social realities, which in the Era of Information increase the unknown then the known.

Thus, it is the time when the amplification of changes (the expression of deep changes) all over society actions' was catalyzed, also, by the obtained scientific results, opening new horizons in the community area, and including development components. These results value increased in time the impact of science on the development components, particularly the social aspect. Thus, it is not only the question of perpetuation of the development of social component happening, but also multiplying the fructification of them in all society levels, bringing on the top the issue of diversity. Alternatively, opening new horizons is faster than the Community environment preparation to value objectively and it leads to the alienation of general human values, among which are the attempts to change the human condition.[2] In addition, it can be added that the effects of changes in the field of science are becoming genuine opportunities that open in time, materialized either by establishing new research directions, or by modifying the available ones at the crossroads of several disciplines. Thus, it becomes necessary not only the emergence of new directions and disciplines, but also the ability of researchers to acknowledge the responsibility for the obtained results[3] and the public role of science in contemporary society. Moreover, it is assumed that the community is heading towards knowledge, while knowledge based society concept is used only on regards to unlimited access to scientific and media information.[4]

The opening to scientific and media information presented as undeniable achievements of the contemporary world, leaves out the consequences of facilitating unlimited access to these products in all levels of social life. On one hand, it is not sufficiently clear the character of the available products, which are beyond the scientific framework, and institutions prepared to use them accordingly with the existing rules and regulations. On the other hand, the opening means not only access of individuals with different training backgrounds, but also to un-

[2] M. Conovan, *Hannah Arendt. A reinterpretation of her political thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge Press University, 1992); F. Fukuyama, "Second thoughts. The last man in a bottle," *The National Interest*, Summer (1999): 1-20.

[3] R. K**.** Merton, *Social theory and social structure* (New York: Free Press, 1949); M. Foucault *Cuvintele și lucrurile* (Bucharest: Rao, 2008).

[4] M. Drăgănescu, "Societatea informațională și a cunoașterii. Vectorul societății cunoașterii" (Information and knowledge-society. The Vector of Knowledge Society), in *Societatea informațională- societatea cunoașterii. Concepte, soluții și strategii pentru societatea cunoașterii* (Information society - knowledge society. Concepts, solutions and strategies for the knowledge society), coord. F. Gh. Filip (Bucharest: Editura Academia Română, 2002), 43-11.

orthodox informal structures. At the same time, the public opinion, since the 60s of the XX century, is frequently overwhelmed by many statements on regards to the development of products derived from researches. However, these products are used by individuals, informal and illegal, and virtual structures in order to meet their goals frequently threaten the state and life of their peers.

Obviously, the effects of transformation, even if they are sustained by science, are not excluded from being influenced. Why? Because the complexity of transformations, attracts the totality of the society's actions, including science. Consequently, the opportunities that the science fields have brought to other areas become genuine for their own perpetuation, and the axiological decentralization is among them. Thus, the opportunities for decentralization diversify the research, establish new research directions, modify the outlines from the crossroads of several disciplines, as well as decentralize / multiply the centres of the values. The meaning of decentralization, in terms of axiological decentralization, is changing, and unlike, its usual meaning, like decentralization of central power or public services, it includes the emerging new value-centres, whose employees do not belong to the same geographical area. More exactly, it refers to the possibility of creation and establishment of value-centres inside social environments, with modest evolutionary and virtual backgrounds. On this basis, according with M. Foucault on regards to the most harmful traditions of human experience,[5] we try through axiological decentralization to point out the need to identify the components to escape from the actual real system. For this purpose, the transparency in counting the programs is developed in order to build a society with a different way of thinking, with a different culture, and with a higher vision of the world. In addition, monitoring the use of experiences, including the negative ones, and how the growing tendency to diminish the values can be reduced, abandoning the *Earth's environment* heritage, from which humans are the main part.

Due to this, the epistemic approach of the knowledge based society is oriented also towards notional level, which is less emphasized. This incursion tries to clarify the notional concept of the knowledge based society inside social philosophy. Moreover, the knowledge based society diversifies the forms of knowledge, highlighting not only the ones left out, but also the interconnection / interdependence among them. Thus, in addition to explicit and tacit knowledge, which are usually used in scientific knowledge, there is a need to be completed with the everyday language that answers such questions as: do you know that? do you know where?, do you know why?, what if?, do you know how?, do you know

[5] M. Foucault, *Arheologia cunoașterii* (Archaeology of Knowledge), (Bucharest: Rao, 2011).

when?[6] Meanwhile, the meaning of the knowledge based society continues to be sensitized/understood fragmentally rather than as a whole. Analysing the available researches, from the second half of the twentieth century, it reveals the appearance of *a new thinking age* or what was called later – the knowledge based society and which had little connection with the social reality. Thus, according with the representatives of postmodern constructivism approaches, like G-F. Lyotard, L.Hutcheon,[7] etc., introducing the term *new thinking age* and by the return to pre-modernism we ignore the reality changes.[8] In this context, according to P. Drucker[9] the knowledge based society / knowledge society is a stage of *new thinking age*, or a new stage of the informational era, while according with M. Drăgănescu[10] the information society is a knowledge society through the philosophical concept of the laws of trends and transformations. According with R. Mansell[11] it is a new potential of combination of ICT information systems with the creative potential of people to develop knowledge, and finally yet importantly, the knowledge society is an abbreviation of the knowledge-based society.

Indeed, the emphasize of differences between the knowledge based society and the contemporary society was highlighted due to the researches made during last two decades on the deep changes that this faces. Thus, it has been underlined that the deep changes analyzed separately and pictured only inside the post-communist society's area, contrary to the reality, had left behind the causes that produced these changes in both the developing social environments and the developed ones. Both are emphasized thanks to the deep changes reflected through the transformations and the social relationships evolution within societies. These mutual relations, which usually were oriented from inside to outside of the community framework had to deal with the outside to inside dimension, changing the concept of neighbourhood, and *vice versa* from inside to outside. Thus, being transformed the intra and extra changes comprise the area of challenging the

[6] Iancu Șt. "Societatea cunoașterii necesită gândire" (The Knowledge Society Requires Thinking), *Cogito* 2(1999), www.cogito.ucdc.ro/.

[7] J-F. Lyotard, *Condiția postmodernă. Raport asupra cunoasterii* (Postmodern Condition. Report on Knowledge), (Bucharest: Babel, 1993); L. Hutcheon, *Politica postmodernă* (Postmodern Politics), (Bucharest: Univers, 1998).

[8] A. Pascaru, *Societatea între conflict și conciliere: cazul Republicii Moldova* (Society between conflict and conciliation : the Republic of Moldova Case), (Chișinău: Tipogr.-Sirius, 2012), 34-35, 43-68, 117-131.

[9] P. Drucker, "The Age of social transformation," *The Atlantic Monthly* 274, 5(1994): 53-80.

[10] Drăgănescu, "Societatea informațională și a cunoașterii."

[11] Mansell R., Steinmuller W.E. and Montalvo U.D.d. "Opportunities for knowledge-bazed development: capabilities, infrastructure, investments and policy," *Science and public policy* 26(2) (1998): 91-100.

borders of developed / stable societies, the inclusion of the manifested realities, the formation of interconnections / interdependencies / interactions within and outside the society, up to the facilitation or marginalization of the societies raze on the civilization arena. In this context, it is highlighted the contribution of the knowledge based society in changing the neighborhood meaning – from the surrounding, sub-region or continent society to another continent and the interconnection, interdependence of relationships and the interaction between societies lay the foundations for the multiple processes, which balance between the limit of predictable and unpredictable, polarization, etc. The costs of such a level of reality through openings (by opportunities of the knowledge based society) increases the level of influence, even of those not involved, thus finding themselves inside the problem that only yesterday was just of their neighbours, and that was not possible to avoid although there were some attempts to solve this problem by protectionist or prohibition laws.

In this context, the reality level includes the migration as well, which starting with the 90s of the XX century, is characterized by a different framework than before. Firstly, the mass migration comes from developing societies, not just from Eastern Europe, but it only complements the existing one. Secondly, a big part of the migrants, having undergraduate and graduate education, accept jobs net inferior to their status of education on labor market. Thirdly, the opportunities of the knowledge based society facilitate the understanding of the migration not only as a problem that has to be solved exclusively by the receiving communities, but highlights the need to raise awareness among the migrant communities of the contribution to the development of arrival society. Fourthly, the knowledge based society facilitates the employment even remotely, thank to information technology. Thus, through the state of migrants we see both their backgrounds as well as the local environment that capitalize on new opportunities. Due to this, further we will concentrate on the particularities that characterize the migration from the Republic of Moldova.

The mass migration of Moldovans started in 1998 and it continued intensively until 2007 and it was conditioned by a combination of economic factors and a series of internal and external shocks. These shocks, similarly to the cases of other states from the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the transition which had as objectives the macro-economic stabilization, liberalization and restructuration of the economy, became a severe long-term economic crisis, causing recession, high unemployment rates, inflation and deindustrialization. These factors contributed to the increase of the number of Moldovans that

migrated to knowledge based societies or developed ones, thus transforming the Republic of Moldova in a migrant exporting society. Although, in the recent years the number of migrants stabilized the migration flow from the Moldovan society continues to have a constant trend.

According to the official estimation of the Government of Republic of Moldova, more that 25% of the workforce of Moldova, lives and works abroad at the moment. However, the numbers vary from source to source and represent about 345,000 people.[12] Another research[13] estimates the number of 411,000 or 12.4% of the total population belong to long term international migrants, which mean that they stay abroad more the 12 month. Out of this number – 370,000 are migrant workers or 11% of the total population. Thus, 23% of Moldovan households have at least one member that works abroad for a long term. Fifty-six percent (or 206,000) of migrant workers are in Russia, 22% (or 81,000) are in Italy, and between 2% and 3% (or 8,000-10,000) in each of the following countries – France, Turkey and Portugal. In addition, 18,400 Moldovans are studying abroad. The number of Moldovan students abroad has a positive trend since the year 2000. This increase of Moldovans that study abroad was leaded by their will to access the knowledge and also by the changes in the European framework of education.

More exactly, at the European Union Lisbon Summit in March 2000, the European Union embarked on a strategy to make Europe the most competitive knowledge based economy in the world by 2010. The summit called for a new method of "open coordination" to promote sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. Circumnavigating traditional forms of EU policy formulation, this approach called for setting targets and benchmarking progress, primarily through the EU Council and the Council met every spring to follow progress and determine new targets for the Lisbon Strategy. At the Stockholm European Council in March 2001 sustainable development policy was added to economic and social policy as a third area for coordination through the Lisbon Process.

Thus, the Lisbon Summit plan "turning Europe into the world's most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion" had the following main aims:

[12] http://iom.md/index.php/ro/rograme/migratia-si-dezvoltarea

[13] *Sondajul gospodăriilor și migranților*, Centrul de Analiză și Investigații Sociologice, Politologice și Psihologice CIVIS și IASCI în cadrul NEXUS Moldova. (The Survey of Households and Immigrants. Center for Analysis and Sociological, Political and Psychological).

– a transition to a knowledge-based economy by improving policies for the information society and R&D, pursuing structural reform for competitiveness and completing the internal market;

– a modernization of the European social model by investing in people and combating social exclusion;

– sustaining the economic outlook and favorable growth perspective by applying an appropriate macro-economic policy mix;

– quantifiable targets in a variety of areas (R&D, education, employment, etc.);

– making use of existing processes and reporting instruments: the BEPG (Stability Pact), the Employment Guidelines (the Luxemburg process) and structural reform (the Cardiff process);

– governance based on the Community method, the Open Method of Co-ordination and political commitment.

Many elements of the Lisbon Strategy affect the EEA Agreement, so it is therefore a high priority for EEA EFTA States to participate in the relevant parts of the process. In October 2000, the Standing Committee of the EFTA States established an ad hoc group on the follow-up to the Lisbon Summit. This group coordinated EEA EFTA comments to the Stockholm (2001), Barcelona (2002) and Brussels (2003 and 2004) summits.[14]

Thus, the Lisbon Strategy made a strong emphasize towards a knowledge-based society.[15] The target towards a knowledge based society means first that if people arriving on the labor market, among which migrants as well, are to participate in the knowledge economy, their level of education must be sufficiently high. In this context the inverse relationship between level of education and rate of unemployment is becoming more pronounced.

On the other hand, teaching and research should be better coordinated at European level. This can be achieved by creating networks of national and joint research programmes.

Additionally, only by making the resources available will Europe be able to develop the job creation opportunities offered by ICT. It has been estimated that, between 2000 and 2010, half of all new jobs in Europe will be related directly or

[14] http://lifelonglearning-observatory.eucen.eu/lisbon-process-0.

[15] The Lisbon Special European Council (March 2000): *Towards a Europe of Innovation and Knowledge*, http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/general_framework/c10241_en.htm 15.

indirectly to information technologies, like those jobs already created by the EU's comparative advantage in mobile telephony.

Thus, the Lisbon Strategy has proved to be the European Union's most relevant strategic action and development plan. Although its ambitious goals are far from being fully achieved in its ten-year life cycle, its contribution to progress in different areas of EU economic development and social cohesion is considered to be relevant and there is no doubt that Lisbon-type reforms need to be continued. The importance of constructing a new economic model for the EU has become evident following the economic crisis, which pointed towards numerous structural weaknesses in the member state economies. Therefore the new "Europe 2020" project, launched in March 2010, focused particularly on finding an adequate response to the ongoing challenges by assigning greater value to themes such as knowledge and innovation, low carbon economies, higher growth, employment and social cohesion.[16]

The Europe 2020 strategy has emerged with three principle tasks, while the central ideas of the Lisbon Strategy have been kept. Firstly, the EU has to continue with the Lisbon-type reforms. Secondly, on top of the existing Lisbon framework, Europe 2020 needs to develop new instruments of economic governance which should bring more policy convergence and better overall results. These new governance instruments could prove crucial in overcoming the effects of the crisis in Europe. Finally, Europe 2020 has to build its profile externally, by proving its relevance globally. The external dimension of Europe 2020 is of particular importance to the EU candidate, potential candidate and neighbouring countries, which are expected to be more closely associated with this agenda.

In this context, the National Development Strategy "Moldova 2020"[17] comes to articulate a vision of cohesive long-term sustainable economic growth, based on a diagnostic study of constraints to growth and comes into play to adjust the national strategies towards European ones.

Moldova as a neighboring country of EU is among the first countries from ex-soviet area to have secured full access to the European Union's new seven-year research and innovation programme, Horizon 2020. In addition, Moldova has signed the association agreement. As stated by the European Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science Máire Geoghegan-Quinn said: "The agreements signed are good for these countries and good for the European Union. Increased

[16] Višnja Samardžija and Hrvoje Butković, eds., *From the Lisbon Strategy to Europe 2020* (Institute for International Relations - IMO, Zagreb, 2010), ww1.zagreb.hr/euzg/eu_publikacije/From_the_lisbon_strategy_to_europe_2020.pdf.

[17] Moldova 2020, National Development Strategy of the Republic of Moldova for 2012-2020.

cooperation in research and innovation will create new opportunities for growth, competitiveness and jobs in all our economies. Association to Horizon 2020 will facilitate the mobility of excellent scientists, strengthen national research systems, and help the countries integrate into the European Research Area."[18] The access to this program might serve as a tool for many Moldovan researches to not only learn from the experience of the knowledge based societies but also stop the brain drain from the country and might serve as a tool to bring back the Moldovan researchers that migrated abroad.

The main factors that motivated Moldovans to migrate were the economic factors, among which low living standards, the lack of a job and/or the lack of adequate income, consequently migration was an opportunity to obtain the know-how and to benefit from the advanced technology in the countries where they migrated. Now with the available funding opportunities and with the experience that Moldovan migrants gained abroad can serve as a opportunity for return.

More exactly, Moldovans that moved abroad, once arrived in the knowledge based societies obtained the access to new knowledge, technology and the internet. The internet represents for them a mean to access information, to improve their professional and personal skills and to maintain the connection with their families. These new possibilities of the society based on knowledge eventually arrived in their homeland. The global network of internet helped the Moldovan migrants to keep the connection with their country, their families, friends and colleagues. Moreover, the on-line space offered the opportunity to get involved in the social, economic, political life of their country. This involvement grew gradually and now, we observe a quite active implication, especially in the area of the democratic pursuit and the European vector of the country. Moldovans that live abroad are using the internet as a trans-national public space where they can express and debate their visions, ideas, hypothesis about various topics, like history, culture, democracy and identity. Through the internet the Moldovan diaspora mobilizes itself and organizes events, demonstrations, gathers money for supporting families in need from Moldova, discuss the new laws and rules, as well as, participate at political debates that influences the decisions that the Government of Republic of Moldova is taking. This virtual participation has a big impact in Republic of Moldova – a country that is facing multiple social, political, economic and demographic crises. On the other hand, this contribution of the diaspora represents an important cause of the development of the country, thanks to the transfer of the

[18] European Commission, Press release, Brussels, 1 July 2014, Western Balkans countries, Moldova sign up to Horizon 2020, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-746_en.htm.

knowledge and the innovation of the host knowledge-based society to the country of origin.

Undoubtedly, the internet is not only a tool to discuss and debate for the diaspora, but it is a tool for criticizing the public policies, promoting diverse values and creating new communities. Consequently, the internet is not only a source of information, but it become as well, a space for emotion and creativity. In this context, the representatives of the diaspora in the virtual environment represent more than a simple immigrant or a simple worker from abroad, but he is an active member of the society of origin and it has the potential to create new forms of citizenship, communities and public policies.

The analysis of Moldovan migrants denotes the major influence of the host knowledge-based society. This influence is indicated primarily by the increase of the usage of new technologies, as well as, the transfer of innovation from these societies. Numerous Moldovans that return home and open their business choose to put into practice the knowledge they obtained abroad, and behave the way they got used in the knowledge-based societies. It is certain the fact that these changes happening on a personal level has an impact on the change of the local society as well.

Therefore, we can state that the impact of the knowledge-based societies has a direct effect on the migrant and indirectly on their society of origin. But this influence and know how transfer from the knowledge based society back home is small and rest insignificant, that's why additional measures are necessary in order to enforce and encourage the know how transfer, as well as develop synergies with the available funding opportunities and develop inclusive policies of the returnees.

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Teaching a Foreign Language Focused on the Student as the Main Pillar of the Didactic Process

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Abstract

The student is considered to be the main pillar, when activities become tasks and where collaborative work is done on a daily basis and not sporadically.

Capturing the attention of the students is one of the greatest challenges for a teacher. In the so called Internet era, the ability of a student to concentrate has decreased considerably, but there is an effective formula that can be summarized as "The student, not the teacher, should be the centre of the class."[1]

A comprehensive training of teachers of foreign languages, in our case Spanish, would be considered of major importance not only in linguistic aspects but also in methodology; therefore it implies passing from the old to the new, to implement a more suitable method in order to reach the goal of creating communicatively competent students.

Keywords: *student, teaching, teacher, pillar, motivation, objectives, autonomy.*

Introduction

This study addresses in its first two sections the management of teaching as a process where the teacher must play the role of guide to the students. It also focuses on the linguistic and pragmatic goals of education management where the main objective is to show what happens when the role of the teacher fades and the student becomes a passive receiver of information rather than a producer of it.

The third section argues the implementation of a meaningful education taking into account students' interests and motivations.

With all the training that a teacher receives nowadays, the concept of teaching has changed, and it focuses on two important aspects: teaching focused on the student, where the students become aware of their own learning in order to

[1] Tracey Tokuhama Espinosa quoted by Julieta Paci in *La Nacion*, 17 Feb. 2012, http://www.lanacion.com.ar/1449413-contel-alumno-debe-ser-protagonista.

promote their autonomy in the classroom; and teaching focused on the process where the main task in class will no longer be producing correct sentences, but the correct and proper communication considering the context and the situation in which the speaker is involved.

The last section of this study focuses on increasing students' motivation. One of the most common challenges for teachers is to find the formula for motivating students to learn. With motivation everything becomes easier in the classroom. It is important to discuss with the students during class activities about your own learning style, for better using strategies that presuppose an increase of their autonomy as learners.

The Principles of Teaching Management

This aspect of teaching management considers the teacher as a reference point of the class, as they are responsible for representing the language to study and train students in the field of ethics and moral. The teacher, while imparting linguistic substances, he or she should play the role of guidance for students. Therefore, a teacher's responsibilities are:

- To address both specialty knowledge and ethics, to care about students' improvements in learning.
- To be strict in respect of all the educational activities, to have positive influence on them.
- To accommodate the students in the classroom and make lessons as attractive as possible.
- To help the students in finding the best way to achieve their learning goals.
- To maintain the contact with students and give them continuous support in their university career.

Aquilino Sánchez Pérez, a Spanish professor, notes that language teachers tend to perceive their teaching from two different aspects, that of theory and that of practice. The theory-practice opposition can become an error when viewed as contraries. This error is often the subject of language teaching and it becomes more obvious when you hear statements like: "Ok, this works in theory, but in practice it is completely different." A statement like this is common among language teachers. But such an adversarial relationship between theory and practice should not exist, and there should be a complementary relationship between them.[2]

[2] Aquilino Sánchez Pérez, *Los métodos en la enseñanza de idiomas Evolución histórica y análisis didáctico* (The methods of teaching and learning foreign languages. Historical evolution and didactic analysis) (Madrid S.A. SGEL, Sociedad General Español de Librería, 1997).

Linguistic and Pragmatic Objectives of Teaching Management.

The aim of this section is to determine the teacher's role and to turn the student into a passive entity which receives information rather than produces it. Through the classroom observations, we have proved that teachers sometimes follow the patterns used by their former teacher, as they do not know how to manage the time, the language, the classroom and the students themselves. Moreover, it is also important for teachers to promote self-learning, including strategies for both learning and communicating and activities between teachers and students.

(LINGUISTIC OBJECTIVES)

According to Chang:

> *"Considering that the language is the tool of communication, we must continue to demand instructing students in higher grades. We must introduce them into the art of communication."*[3]

Therefore, it is imperative to develop and promote linguistic objectives in the teaching of foreign languages, in our case in teaching Spanish. Some of them may be:

- Being able to read sentences with the correct pronunciation and texts learned at a pace corresponding to the language level.
- Being able to talk about everyday issues and monologues prepared beforehand. Talk to Spanish speakers about everyday topics.
- Being able to understand common phrases and oral texts, similar to those existing in the manuals, according to a certain pattern of pronunciation of words per minute.
- Being able to write compositions correctly, according to a certain pattern of writing.
- Being able to translate texts from the target language to the source language and vice versa.

(PRAGMATIC OBJECTIVES)

In the current teaching era, defending inter-culturalism is essential, taking into account both social and technological developments. Multiculturalism among our students must be promoted and the interest that Albanian students have in the Spanish speaking world, due to both physical and cultural distance that separates the two worlds, must also be valued. This premise is being carried out gradually by various cultural activities organized in our countries like the weeks of Spanish

[3] Fuliang Chang, "?Que estudian alumnos de español en China?" (Studying Spanish in China). The first meeting of Spanish teachers of Asia – Pacific (Manila 2004), organised by the Instituto Cervantes in Manila. Virtual Library RedEle. http://www.mec.es/redele/biblioteca/ele_asiapacifico.shtml.

culture, organized by the Spanish Embassy here in Tirana, or language courses at Casa de España, or seminars and projects meant to improve the teaching of Spanish language and culture, offered by the AECID agency (Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo), but universities should also take this aspect into consideration while teaching a foreign language.

Germany Patricia and Ferreira Cabrera assume that:

> *The process of teaching and learning of languages is justified in terms of two educational perspectives: idealistic and pragmatic. The idealistic view of language emphasizes the affective aspects of language, while the pragmatic view emphasizes the functionality of a language. On the other hand, considering that the student must get the most out of a language taught, the learning experience must be further anchored on a solid cultural base.*[4]

Teachers are aware of the pragmatic and socio-cultural elements implied by learning a foreign language, therefore they should search for information on the Internet about current issues, in order to show their students real everyday life issues. But there is still a long way to improve the learning of a foreign language and such practices and methods should be developed at all levels.

Implementation of a Meaningful Teaching, Taking into Consideration Students' Interests and Motivations.

With all the professional training that a teacher has been going through, nowadays the concept of teaching has changed, and it focuses on two important aspects: a) teaching focused on the student and b) teaching focused on the process.

a) In the teaching focused on the student, the teacher will no longer be the protagonist of the class, becoming instead a guide that will help students in the learning process. The students will become aware of their own learning, so it will be important to promote the autonomy in the classroom. To achieve this, the teacher will begin to include activities and practices related to the use of learning strategies, so that each student becomes aware of what their style of learning is and learn not only the language, but also learn how to learn the language. All this is achieved through an analysis of the context and the students' needs. Thus, the objectives of the education will no longer be based on external elements, but will depend on the target group in question, their needs, their interests and their educational context.

[4] Patricia Germany and Ferreira Cabrera Anita, *Evaluación de Competencia Comunicativa en Español como Lengua Extranjera* (Evaluation of Communicative Competence in Spanishas a Foreign Language) (Concepción: Editorial Direction of Teaching, University of Concepción, 1999), 1.

b) As far as teaching focused on the process is concerned, the main task in class will no longer be that of producing correct sentences, but the correct and proper communication, taking into consideration the context and situation in which the speaker is engaged. Therefore, the activities are no longer mechanical and repetitive and turn into more free activities where the construction is creative and personal, and for that negotiation and error handling will be essential. The messages are constructed from the negotiation between speakers involved in a conversation. For this negotiation are needed not only language skills, but also a comprehensive knowledge, as well as communication strategies. On the other hand, the treatment of the error evolves towards an acceptance and allows to positively tackling it in the classroom; we must give up relying on the contrastive analysis between the language and the negative connotation given to the error in the classroom. This brings about an analysis of the inter-language. The error is part of the learning process and it is necessary, it should be an element of analysis and evaluation, showing each student's language level and inter-language level. In order to apply this new approach in the classroom, the element of integrating communication skills should be applied: the four traditional skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) should be used in a comprehensive way and adapted to the communication needs. Students are familiarized with activities that should be practiced more often, as they give a feeling of truthfulness to activities. You will no longer be requested to complete activities like: *Read this article and summarize it*, because in real life we do not usually do this kind of homework; instead, students will be asked, for example: *Read the article and then discuss it with your class mates*, since in everyday life we often watch and share with others what we read.

Increasing Students' Motivation

One of the elements that we identify in our students' attitude is the lack of motivation. On the one hand there is the stress generated by tests, with students only interested in taking the exams, not in learning; and on the other hand the routine and monotony in which classes are dipping, guided by a bothersome pattern. It is also important to discover students' preferences in learning, their personal interests, in order to be able to create engaging activities and increase their interest in getting to learn Spanish. We often see our students pretending to be bored and have little or no desire to follow the explanations given during the class. In the digital era we are living in, it is not enough to teach using the same method year after year. One of the most common challenges for teachers is to find

the formula to motivate students to learn. With a certain degree of motivation, everything becomes much easier in the classroom.

The Albanian education system is basically a closed system, in which students are used to get most of the information from the teacher, listening and taking notes throughout the class, intervening modestly or not at all in it. That is because most of students lack autonomy and personal initiative. It is important to discuss with the students during the activities and interventions in class about their own learning style, for a better use of strategies which improve their autonomy as learners. Autonomy also implies the fact that not everyone learns in the same way. We can guide them to a variety of content in various formats: multimedia, YouTube content for online lessons, books, newspapers, blogs and even social networks. In the same way, students can use what they have learned, showing it through oral presentations to the class, by setting pencil to paper, through a post on a blog, a discussion with an expert via video-conference etc. The possibilities are endless and they always find a favourite field of study.

In this way, students develop their creativity and may test new things out of curiosity or amusement. This might be considered as a waste of time, a lack of progress or evolution in learning, but researches contradict this theory. Technologies available today offer us even more ways to provide this autonomy to students. Properly used, they can be very useful to increase motivation for learning.

It can also be argued that the teachers themselves as persons have an important contribution in motivating students. A teacher who has a great impact on students must have a special personality. They are guides helping students by sharing their own cumulative lifetime experience with them. For example, a pessimist teacher, who always sees the negative side of things or who transmits little or no energy at all is going to have a hard time to motivate students, regardless of the techniques that he might use. Not everyone can become an excellent teacher. Most of them lack basic emotional qualities. This does not mean that these qualities cannot be acquired or developed, but this should start somewhere. Teachers need to know and develop their personality. Then, they can identify the best teaching practices.

Self-Taught Learners. Autonomy

Autonomy in learning is expressed as the ability to take responsibilities for the development of the learning process. Autonomy as part of the learning process

is characterized by four properties: it is intentional, conscious, explicit and analytical.

The psychologist and educator J. Bruner[5] relies on the theory of the constructivist psychology, and he proposes learning through discoveries[6] and the development of cognitive strategies and methods of learning how to learn. Thus, the student is no longer seen as a passive recipient of knowledge, but becomes the main protagonist and an agent of the learning process. In the field of language teaching-learning, H. Holec defines autonomy as *"the ability to manage one's own learning."*[7] This ability is available through the development of meta-cognitive strategies.

Dickinson advocates for independent learning for five reasons:

1. Practical reasons (inability for a large number of students to attend classes on a regular basis);
2. Individual differences between learners (concerning not only their attitude, but also their learning styles and different strategies);
3. Educational purposes (fosters independent learning and develops the characteristics of a good learner);
4. The motivation (autonomy encourages students, allowing freedom of movement and choice as far as their learning is concerned);
5. The objective of learning how to learn (autonomy promotes reflection on their own learning, on processes and strategies used).[8]

According to Little, the importance of learners' autonomy can be explained in terms of present and future learning: *students who accept responsibility for their own learning are more likely to achieve their goals, and once achieved, they're more able to maintain a positive attitude to future learning*. The acceptance of responsibility by the student implies a willingness to reflect on the content and the process of learning and to integrate what they learn with what they already know.[9]

The exercise of the learner's autonomy involves the fact of determining the time to make personal decisions about their learning, and a willingness to participate along with teachers and other learners, negotiating aspects as: identifying the learning needs and defining its objectives; planning classes; selecting the content and establishing the sequencing; selecting the appropriate

[5] J.S. Bruner, *"El proceso mental en el aprendizaje* (The mental process on learning) (Barcelona: Narcea, 1978).
[6] Learning by discovery or holistic. Learning where the student acquires the knowledge itself, in order to discover himself what is he learning.
[7] H. Holec, *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1981).
[8] L. Dickinson, *Self-Instruction in Language Learner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
[9] D. Little, *Learner autonomy 1: Definitions, issues and Problems* (Dublín: Authentik, 1991).

didactic materials; training while using various techniques and strategies, but especially the meta-cognitive learning and the ability to self-assess.

Autonomy can be developed through experience during the learning process. It represents the effort to learn languages and to learn how languages are learned. The development of the autonomy fosters the ability to make decisions, the independence and the personal responsibility of the learners. During the learning process we have to create situations where students can experience various learning strategies and skills, reflecting on the effectiveness of these ones, in order to keep improving the way in which people get to learn. In this way, we can help students to become aware of their own resources and strategies.

The responsibility which we are talking about involves willingness and ability to make decisions, related to their own learning. Students must be able to make choices which meet their needs and interests; they should have the opportunity to discuss and reflect on certain issues during the class, as problems related to the process of learning, on the corresponding system, its form, use and operation, so that the degree of involvement depend on their will and collaboration with the group. Self-responsibility leads students to be honest in learning, to care about what they have learned, to self-assess and even see where they can apply what they learned. In this way, the learner will develop an active and participatory learning.

In this regard, students should be at the core of the didactic considerations of any publisher, responsible editor, institution, language school or teacher. As learning professionals, we need to facilitate and promote learning autonomy; let students see their own responsibility in their own learning process; create situations in which they exchange and compare their learning experiences with the others for a cooperative learning; help them actively participate in class lessons, reflect on the language and the learning process and develop the ability to assess the process, the strategies and the results, drawing conclusions which they may apply in the future.

Conclusions

Teaching a language is much more than teaching students to learn, to produce grammatical structures, as more factors ought to be taken into consideration. Besides the technical difficulties involved in the acquisition of skills in Spanish learned as a foreign language, there are a lot of barriers that need to be considered as well: emotional barriers, such as lack of confidence; physical barriers due to a limited contact with Spanish speakers. I would like to conclude

that the study of the content through the target language not only allows students to develop intellectually, but also to further broaden their language skills in a context of high motivation. It is impossible to motivate a group of students if teachers are the first to be unmotivated. The guidelines to increase motivation are applicable to anyone and if work does not motivate the teacher, the first thing to do is to think about finding that will that can change everything.

The paper suggests to teachers that they should use more autonomy in the form and content of their classes, while being aware of the fact that every day they learn new skills that might make them better teachers, proud of their efforts.

The new teaching methods lead towards an increasing interest on the students, and their needs, towards the respect for differences, multiculturalism and methodological adequacy considering the group with which we are faced in each particular situation.

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Don Quixote, Figures and Philosophical Journey of Cervante's Masterpiece in Albania

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Abstract

The term quixotism has its origins in the famous novel of Miguel Cervantes. This study will show the meaning that this term has gained in Albania and the reasons behind its usage. Moreover, it will present the different approaches of the book on Don Quixote of La Mancha. Throughout the 20th century, the literary criticism directed towards Quixote has been influenced by various social and political events in Albania. In the current Albanian literary space, the philosophy of Quixotism and its meaning have evolved since the country's initial transition to democracy.

Keywords: *Quixotism, translation, philosophy, culture, influence.*

Introduction

In 1933, Miguel de Cervantes de Saavedra was presented to the Albanian reader with Don Quixote of la Mancha, thus opening a new Spanish cultural space which never existed before in Albania. In fact, even today it continues to provide new dimensions, from a literary perspective.

The writer, academic and diplomat Fan Noli, an important personality of the Albanian culture, was the translator of the first part of Cervantes's novel.

The publication of this particular translation was made in America between 1932 and 1933 through Mass Publications. As a significant detail to the full understanding of the novel, Noli gave it a title which is similar to the original one, without getting away from its core: *Sojliu mëndje-mprehtë Don Kishoti I Mançës*.

Don Quixote knows two "routes" in Albania. The first one took place in 1933 and the second one in 1977. The latter arose when Petro Zheji, translator and philologist, translated the second part of the book. The term "route", used by the Albanian cervantista (Cervantes scholar) Alfred Uçi, professor, is attributed to the periods in which the readers will be offered the opportunity to read the book. The

first period took place during King Zog's reign, and the second one during Enver Hoxha's dictatorship.

The translation of the second part of the novel in Albanian had the same success as the first part. Don Quixote is the most reissued book in Albania, enjoying an outstanding success among the Albanian readers, with the particularity that the reader still reads Fan Noli and Petro Zheji's translations. After 1990, with the arrival of democracy, the novel was republished in five new editions, the last in 2014, at Onufri Publishing House.

Cervantes is the most widely read Spanish author among Albanians and Quixote is the only work of Spanish literature studied in schools in Albania. Also, it is the most talked-about book by the Albanian literary criticism, since its first publication until now. We reached this conclusion after having studied with great interest the investigations of different specialists, who have analyzed from different perspectives, the reception, the influence and the transcendence of Cervantes's novel in Albania. Still, there are few studies that pretend to have found the traces that this novel has left in the literature or culture of our country. However, there is a huge amount of traces and influences of Don Quixote in Albania waiting to be discovered and analyzed.

How was the term "quixotism" born and which was its meaning?

The term quixotism / quixotic originates from the famous novel of Miguel de Cervantes de Saavedra, *El ingenioso hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha*, edited in 1605, as regards the first part and in 1615, as regards the second one.

In the 12th century, the term quixote / quixotism was used to define a person who does not differentiate reality from fantasy. The book was considered highly humorous as the aim of Cervantes was mocking chivalry novels prevailing at that time. For this reason, his errant knight, Alonso Quijano, was actually a common man who loses his head reading stories of chivalry, a true madman who travels the roads in search of adventure. He is accompanied, of course, by his faithful squire, Sancho Panza, who actually is a poor peasant. However, over the years, reading the Quixote has changed, as the English, since the eighteenth century, understood that the term Quixote / quixotism was not just a simple mock attack on the books of chivalry, but had to dig under that first humorous layer to find other meanings of the novel. With this new interpretation, the English Romantic movement provided the Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance the opportunity to stop being a parody and to become a tragic hero, that is, a victim of the conflict between the dreams of the individual and society which is hostile to him. In the same century, it

is intended to give an explanation of a philosophical nature, trying to unravel the ideological content of the work.

In the 19th century, the German Romantics show us the great performances of the play, the way they understand Don Quixote, not as regards the madness of the character, but the fact of seeing him as a hero, by refusing to interpret the book as a satire and finding in it an attitude regarding the adventurous visionary zeal of the gentleman. As a consequence, the term Quixote / quixotism acquires the proportions of a hero who has the idealistic spirit and continually sees his hopes being frustrated as he faces the mediocre and petty world around him. In essence, the harsh reality that he cannot stand.

At the time when he was writing his play, Cervantes hid the essence of his creation, and wanted readers to find it themselves. The meaning conceals not only the history of Spain, but also his personal history. And as he reads his text, the reader can see that Don Quixote is full of life experiences, such as the ones Cervantes found in his own existence. He transmits these life experiences under a hidden meaning with the intention that his characters be not only Dantesque or victims of compassion even though Cervantes was a master of simplicity.

Ortega and Gasset in his Meditations of Quixote (1924-1925), wrote: "Will there be a deeper book than this humble burlesque novel?"[1]

Cervantes' motto in his Don Quixote was "Freedom is the most important gift that God gave man".[2] Undoubtedly, behind this statement lies a whole latent philosophy that announces that his work is not meant only to entertain the public. Each reader gives his own interpretation taking into account what they have experienced before opening "Don Quixote", as the author did.

Why was Don Quixote translated into Albanian?

There is no document showing the presence of Spanish literature in Albanian before the 19th century. According to the documents found in the National Central File (folder 10, page 11), the first novel translated into Albanian dates back to the 19th century. This translation has a certain religious character as it was translated by a clergyman and poet, called Andre Mjeda, educated in the Jesuit school, Society of Jesus, at the Monastery of the Carthusian of Porta Coeli, Valencia.

Don Quixote is the second Spanish book that was presented in Albanian, translated from Spanish, as we said above, by Fan Noli after *The Shack* of Vicente

[1] J. Ortega y Gasset, *Meditaciones de Quijote (Meditations of Quixote)* (Madrid: Espasa, 1982), 90-91.
[2] Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quijote de la Mancha* (Don Quixote of La Mancha), ed. Dir. Francisco Rico (Barcelona: Critica (Instituto Cervantes), 1998, II, cap. LVIII), 1195.

Blasco Ibañez in the 20th century. Noli had ended his political activities and devoted himself to the ecclesiastical function, to his historical and literary studies and to translations. Even in the early 20th century, he had translated Ibsen and Shakespeare's works.

Don Quixote did not arrive by chance to the Albanian lands. In the introduction to the novel, Noli says: "In Albania, this novel will be understood better than in any other country because there, at every turn, one can find Don Quixotes and Sancho Panzas".[3] According to Noli, the monarchical Albania, with its population battered by the feudal class of the early 20th century, was much alike to the medieval Spain. On the other hand, the translator himself encourages readers with these words:" No one dies without reading Don Quixote, because it is a good gift for the reader. It is impossible to read Don Quixote and to remain dissatisfied or bored".[4]

We wanted to emphasize that this introduction is like a letter of justification, where the translator clearly offers all the reasons to focus on the Albanian language. The main reason is to culturally emancipate the Albanian reader by reading a novel which was popular worldwide. Also, Noli intends to guide the intelligentsia by providing tools of how to react to the bad political and social situation in Albania, that is, seeks to give appropriate instructions to the Albanian intellectuals of how to interpret the example of medieval Spain. Noli offers the reader his personal model of reading, his analysis and his point of view. Don Quixote, according to Noli, was a man of lost ideals, representing the social decay, fighting against the logic and the possibility of carrying on his shoulders the destiny to change the world and find the essence of what was lost. Briefly, he adapts the work to the Albanian reality of the beginnings of the century.

This introduction continued to provide the Albanian reader with the reading model until the 20th century. Over time, the reading of Quixote evolved and the comic aspect was left aside in favour of many other elements where is identified the depth of the work. Thus, Don Quixote needs a deeper approach, like the surface of a lake hiding a surprising deepness.

What does quixotism mean in the Albanian context?

In Albania, Don Quixote was considered a reading for young people, given the burlesque nature of the work of Cervantes. This is not surprising since the first

[3] Fan Noli, "Introdukta" (Introduction), *Don Kishoti I Mançës* (Don Quixote of La Mancha), (Tirana: Naim Frashëri, 1975), 5.
[4] *Ibidem.*

intention of the author in writing this novel was to parody the novel of chivalry, prevailing at that time. The reader only saw the ridiculous characters that commuted burlesque actions in real contexts. The story mentioned many times an old gentleman upset by his uninterrupted reading of chivalric romances, unaware of his strength or the sense of the ridiculous, decides to impose his chivalric ideals in a world that had already outgrown those codes and survived only in the pages of books. However, Alonso Quijano insists that his fantasies come true. However, this was not the only reading of Don Quixote, as we already mentioned above.

A year after the publication of the book in America, and a few months after it was available in Albania in 1934, in the most popular newspapers in the country, two groups of intellectuals – political opponents – wrote some articles where they presented their political, ideological and social views. Albania was a monarchal country which had ended the Republican regime since 1924. For the first time, the terms quixotism, quixotic were used in newspaper articles. Republicans paved the way of the Albanian political monarchal class towards progress. Accordingly, the interpretation of Cervantes' work is required in terms of whether Quixote is the symbol of decadence.[5] The Albanian intelligentsia had begun a major political debate focusing on the best democratic ideal for the future of the country.[6]

In different historical and political moments of Albania, Quixote has been read, has been assessed, has been seen and has been treated from different perspectives. To illustrate this, we can say that until the 1990s, as we lived under a dictatorship, Don Quixote was read as the regime commanded, without any possibility for the readers to think by themselves.

The story began with the interpretations of the translator of Noli's book, in which he looked as Quixote did, to all of the representatives of the feudal class of the country, by identifying them with the misadventures of Cervantes' antihero. Next, the communists called the foreign Democrats "Quixote" and thus, their actions were branded as "quixotic".

After World War II, Albania was for 45 years under the Communist dictatorship. The regime imposed its will, the main feature of which is the lack of the freedom of expression. Literary criticism was fragile, standardised and too controlled. Its voice was insecure and self-conscious. So, we usually saw that the updates of Cervantes' work were dependent of the reality of Albania. Quixote's character represented the social class that had lost power and wanted to return to

[5] T. Zavalani, "Don Kishotë apo pionierë?" (Don Quixotes or pioneers?), *Illyria*, June 24, 1934.
[6] Alfred Uçi, *Filozofia e Donkishotizmit* (The philosophy of Donquixotism), (Tirana: Akademia e Shkencave, 2010), 334.

reoccupy their political position or their status of international bourgeoisie. The philosophy of Don Quixote has been interpreted and misinterpreted, simplified and complicated according to the political moment until the end of the dictatorship of Hoxha.

Kadare, the Albanian writer who won the Prince of Asturias Award for 2009, said in the same year that Don Quixote "was the only one that communist regime failed to stop; for the easiest thing in the world was just stopping, prohibiting. Don Quixote, as a book and as a living character, was so popular in Albania as if it had engendered him itself. Don Quixote pierced the Albanian border because it was, among other things, independent".[7]

We have carefully selected some definitions made by personalities of the Albanian literary criticism in the season of the dictatorship, to create the aesthetic thought of the moment and thus, to better understand the vision of that period.

In 1955, Androkli Kostallari, a great personality of the Albanian language, states that "the quixotic philosophy, has become synonymous with crazy dreams, with the inability to orient in the historical background and with the political blindness".[8]

In 1966, Myzafer Xhaxhiu, an Albanian philologist and writer, states that "as Cervantes was an idealist, he could not understand the role of revolution. It is the only way that can change political systems. Cervantes does not understand the revolution as an instrument. He believes that in every complicated situation, there is a positive solution to be found, in the presence of honest and energetic people".[9] Without a doubt, his analysis is consistent with the ideology of that historical period in Albania.

In 1977 is to be found the first statement which puts into question the above-mentioned definition. Perikli Jorgoni, a philologist, poet and translator, is the first to disagree: "We always say the same phrases: it is cartoon, it is quixotic, it is utopia. But these claims have to do with the aesthetic value of the figure of Don Quixote. Yes, his dreams are funny and burlesque, but you have to think through what Unamuno says: if life is a dream, let me live it as if I were immortal".[10]

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[7] Ismail Kadare, "Don Kishoti në politikën e shekullit të XX. Fjala e shkrimtarit në Bibliotekën Kombëtare të Madritit 1994" (Don Quixote in the politics of the XXth Century. The speech given by the writer at the Madrid National library in 1994), *Unaza me kthetra* (Tirana: Onufri, 2004), 43.

[8] Androkli Kostallari, "Miguel Servantes" (Miguel Cervantes), *Zëri i popullit*, April 27, 1955, 7.

[9] Myzafer Xhaxhiu, "Demaskonjës i reaksionit feudalo- katolik" (Revealer of the feudal-catholic reaction), *Drita*, Octobre 16, 1966.

[10] Pericli Jorgoni, "Një monument i letërsisë botërore" (A monument of the global literature), *Revista Nëntori*, XI (1977), 158.

In 1990, Aurel Plasari, a literary scholar, translator and literary critic commented that "...we can deduce that in the interpretation of Noli there is a lack of analysis of the work". Plasari tried to extend the aesthetic frame of the novel, introducing the reader to the aesthetic thinking of Ortega y Gasset, Unamuno, and many others.[11]

In a few studies or trials of the 1980s and 1990s, it was mentioned that the book did not only represent the decline of the Spanish society, but that idea was not deepened enough. Truthfully, it did not cause any debate about it but for the first time, and, 50 years later, Don Quixote began to change in appearance.

After the 1990s, in Don Quixote and his philosophy we do not see just the humour, irony, burlesque or the Spanish decadence. No one tries to extract Don Quixote of its historical and cultural context, but the biggest concern was how to understand this profound philosophy which had already appeared since the 17th century. We can therefore say that the novel has a new interpretation: for some it will remain just a piece of entertainment highlighting the insanity of the protagonist while for others the errant knight became a hero for his visionary attitude is directly related to the adventurous eagerness, if the man's idealistic spirit kept on thwarting his hopes.

In the late 20th century new attitudes appear as regards Cervantes' character, with critics seeing in Don Quixote the reflection of the patriotic ideal which lifts the spirits of a country in crisis and in full post-dictatorial democratic transition, which seems to be too long. Some people find in this book, and they are right, a plea of personal freedom and an attack on conventional authority. On the other hand, we also found a tendency for a more personal reading.

Somehow, the errant knight and the readers are not that different. The Albanian literary criticism strives to give the explanation of a philosophically calm nature unravelling the ideological content of the work, the significance of its main characters, the value of their symbols and a thousand possible implications with various themes of culture and literature itself.

Professor Uçi says what the word quixotism means to him. According to him, Cervantes materialized the "quixotism" in both characters. Don Quixote becomes ridiculous and comic for failing to adapt to the reality around him, touching the border of insanity. Cervantes is intelligent and human, this is the main reason why he does not leave his main hero at the mercy of loneliness. Therefore,

[11] Aurel Plasari, *Don Kishotit zbret në Shqipëri, dhe vepra të tjera të letësisë së krahasuar* (Don Quixote comes to Albania and other pieces of comparative lierature), (Tirana: Naim Frasheri, 1990), 80.

the errant Knight always accompanies Sancho Panza, which is a variant of the quixotism. At the beginning, Sancho mocks and laughs at the follies of his master. However, he ends up being "quixotised", transformed to the point of wanting to be the ruler of an island.[12] According to professor Uçi, "No one can escape from the influence of quixotism... The quixotism means a combination of intelligence, wisdom and folly. The quixotism is the understanding of the visionary, the dreamer, the idealist".[13]

Professor Ali Aliu, an Albanian from Macedonia, scholar of the Albanian literature, supports the idea that Don Quixote is a literary work in which the philosophical content is vital, insisting on the presence of embryos of the existentialist philosophy throughout the novel of Cervantes. The existential philosophical theme concerning the problems of life and death, the social moral responsibility and social indifference of the human being, guilt and innocence, the earthly and heavenly world, conviction and truth are reflected in the heroes' attitudes and behaviours.[14]

Which is the actual reading of Quixote?

By now, the reader makes his own reading of Don Quixote. The character also has a wealth of information on his philosophy: studies, workshops, publications. There are no ideological constraints, the state no longer imposes its official release, the freedom of speech allows us to find and expand the most qualified and scientific thinking that the Albanian literary criticism benefits of lately.

Nevertheless, Don Quixote has become a great hero who does not have "compassion" for his own creator because he is now able to live apart from him. Elapsing the season when he is a comic and laughable character, the genius of the novel is exactly this one: we are not dealing with a crazy zany, but with a wise and discrete man of good speech. This dual perspective of the character is the major contribution to the creation of Cervantes, even to the point that "Don Quixote", as a character or a work of art, lives without the help of his creator.

Don Quixote is so popular that he is known as a figure and as a character by each and every Albanian. Don Quixote is known without being read, exists independently of the book which he used to live through.

[12] Uçi, *Filozofia e Donkishotizmit*, 334.
[13] *Ibidem.*
[14] Ali Aliu, *Don Kishoti shqiptar, Një histori ndryshe e letërsisë shqipe* (The Albanian Don Quixote, a different story of the Albanian Literature), (Tirana: Toena, 2010), 19.

However, the politics continues to have a negative view of him, as when a politician is labeled "Quixote", his image is automatically denigrated, humiliated. On the other hand, the Albanian intelligentsia is proud to label the Albanian literary figures as "Don Quixotes" of the Albanian culture.

Kadare feels a great swell of pity to see the name of Don Quixote mentioned by politicians, and being given a pejorative sense. "The politicians who mention his name have neither his level nor his nobility".[15] "There are a lot of Don Quixotes in the Balcans," said Kadare. "Our character is quixotic, in the best sense of the term because I, as a writer, appreciate in Don Quixote not only his madness, but the phantasmagoria, that beautiful delusion that has to do with freedom".[16]

In 1993, Jorgo Bllaci, a translator and writer, wrote:" If someone encouraged me to choose between Quixote and Sancho, I would say Quixote without hesitation".[17]

Kim Mehmeti, a renowned novelist, essayist and translator, wrote a wonderful essay on the researcher in Albanian literature, describing him as "Ali Aliu, the Don Quixote of the Albanians in Macedonia".[18]

The writer and literary scholar Ali Aliu published in Macedonian and later in Albanian an anthology where have been included the best internationally known authors of Albanian literature of the last two centuries. The work is entitled *"Don Kishoti shqiptar. Një historical ndryshe e letërsisë shqipe", (The Albanian Don Quixote. A history of the Albanian literature counted differently).* Ali Aliu considered as being heroes the Albanian writers that lived in Albania, Kosovo and Macedonia such as Kadare, Agolli, Poradeci, De Rada, Frashri, Azem Shkreli, Ali Podrimja, Noli, Konica, Arapi, Luan Starova, Spahiu, Kim Mehmeti. They are the genius part of our nation, like Don Quixote presented the great creativity of Cervantes.[19]

The footprints of Don Quixote in the Albanian literature

The history of the Spanish literature in Albania is not very old, and started from the powerful influence exerted by Cervantes' literature on the writers and translators of the twentieth century.

[15] Kadare, "Don Kishoti në politikën e shekullit të XX," 43.
[16] Ismail Kadare, "Don Kishoti në Ballkan" (Don Quixote in the Balkans), *Shekulli*, March 2, 2005, 18.
[17] Jorgo Bllaci, "Midis Sanços dhe Kishotit do të zgjidhja pa ngurim këtë të fundit," (Between Sancho and Quixote I would choose without hesitation the later), *Drita*, May 9, 1993, 12.
[18] Kim Mehmeti and Ali Aliu, "Don Kishoti i shqiptarëve të Maqedonisë" (The Don Quixote of the Albanians in Macedonia), *Gazeta Shqiptare*, January 28, 2007, 24, 25.
[19] Aliu, *Don Kishoti shqiptar*, 14, 15, 19.

The presence of Don Quixote in Albania is notable in the works of Kadare, Dritëro Agolli, Bonds Bulka, Q. Buxheli, M. Kallamata, K. Kosta, Niko Nikolla and B. Bubani. Cervantes' burlesque and grotesque were so favoured by Albanian authors because they covered through them some truths which were impossible to report during the years of the dictatorship.

The Albanian literary criticism encounters in the characters of Agolli's novel, *Shkëlqimi dhe rënia e shikut Zylo*, the updating and matching of the two archetypal characters of Cervantes' work in the Albanian literature. Don Quixote can be considered one of the models and one of the most important sources of this author's narrative technique. In his analysis, the philologist, aesthetician and cervantista Uçi establishes a significant link between the two novels which connects them in terms of content and aesthetic values and also in terms of the effect they have on the Albanian reader. Similarly, in his study he comments Cervantes' influence and the quixotic reminiscences.[20]

In Kadare's works, *The General of the Dead Army, The Monster and The Palace of Dreams* (by now translated into Spanish by Ramon Sanchez Lizarralde) we can notice the burlesque and the grotesque concepts of life according to Cervantes' model.

Don Quixote, as a character, is part of some novels, poems and plays written in Albanian by authors from Albania, Kosovo and Macedonia. These are literary creations that have a humorous and clever sense for children and young people (see bibliography).

The legend of Cervantes in Albania

Albanians like to believe in the legend according to which Cervantes spent several years of his captivity in an Albanian town called Ulqin, where he fell in love with an inland young girl. Although this legend has been passed down from generation to generation, there is no historical document that can confirm it, although it already has the support of many personalities of the Albanian literature and culture. Many myths have been fruits of archaeological findings and of cultures that were considered mere fables, without a real support. Nevertheless, this particular legend has found a place of prestige in the collective memory of the community.

Kadare, the Albanian writer the most translated into Spanish, personally stated more than once that Cervantes spent some time in Ulqin, an Albanian city

[20] Alfred Uçi, "Shtegtimi i Don Kishotit në Shqipëri" (The journey of Don Quixote in Albania), *Zëri i popullit*, January 14, 1995, 3, 4.

that after World War II became part of Montenegro, but which has always been inhabited by Albanian communities. What is proven is the fact that Cervantes was taken prisoner by the pirate called Arnaut Miami, in 1575. "Arnaut" means Albanian, in Turkish. At that time, the Turkish Empire was very large and Albania was part of it, but not much is known about Miami, neither of his piratical activity.

Kadare, in his essay dating back to 2001, *Quixote in his double life*, states he has chosen to believe in the legend, trying to find the root of the truth,[21] while Moikom Zeqo, a folklorist, writer and philologist, reminds us that the old name of Ulqin was Dulqin, very close to the name of Dulcinea,[22] and Servet or Sarvet is also very close to that of Cervantes. The population of the city called the captive Sarvet or Sevet.[23] In the 12th, 16th and 17th centuries, the city of Ulqin was on all maps called Dulchinio, Dulchin, very close to Dulqin Dulcinea (As d- preposition meant direction). Perhaps, says the folklorist, Cervantes' novel used these names in memory of these difficult years spent in prison.

The people of Ulqin told the story of Cervantes' life before the book was translated and read into Albanian. The elders of the city of Ulqin tell many stories about an educated man called Sarvet or Servet, a Spanish who had important friends in his country and who loved to write. This Spanish fell in love with a young girl from this city and it was a mutual love. The historian and philologist from Ulqin, professor Ruzhdi Ushanaku, in his book *Ulqini në gjurmët e shekujve,* supports the thesis that Cervantes was imprisoned in Ulqin.[24]

Cervantes himself, in his novel Don Quixote, Chapter XLI of the first book, mentions Arnaut Miami, besides telling the love story of one of his prisoners.[25] In the same issue, it is clarified that Arnaut Miami was an Albanian renegade, a corsair that seized the galley Sol in 1575, a galley in which Cervantes and his brother Rodrigo were travelling to Spain.

Ramon Sanchez Lizarralde, an Albanian translator and writer wrote: "The paths travelled by Don Quixote were, and are, as we know, sometimes surprising and even devious. That began with the invented captivity of Cervantes on the

[21] Ismail Kadare, "Don Kishoti në jetën e dyfishtë" (Don Quixote and its double life), *Albania*, February 25, 2001.
[22] Moikom Zeqo, "Servantesi rob e dhëndër i piratëve Ulqinakë" (Cervantes prisoner and groom of the pirates), *Metropo*l, November 13, 2004, 6.
[23] Moikom Zeqo, "Nje emër i njohur shqiptar në veprën e Servantesit" (A well-known Albanian name in the work of Cervantes), *Koha Jonë*, September 18, 1993, 6.
[24] Ruzhdi Ushanaku, *Ulqini në gjurmët e shekujve* (Ulcin in the centuries), (Ulcinj: Art Klub, 1991), 25-26.
[25] Miguel De Cervantes, *Don Quijote de la Mancha* (Don Quixote of La Mancha), ed. Manuel Fernandez Nieto (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva S. L., 2006), 475.

Adriatic coasts concluded with the Albanian naturalization of the nobleman and his squire".[26]

Conclusion

The presence of Spanish literature in Albania is not very old since it starts from the powerful influence exerted by the literature of the Golden Age, especially by Cervantes with *Don Quixote de la Mancha,* on the writers and translators as Fan Noli in the early 20th century.

Thanks to this translator, the Albanians were able to learn, read and appreciate Cervantes. Nowadays, we investigate and discuss its literary influences on the trail of the footprints of Cervantes' work to see them reflected in our own literature, that is, we are talking about the possibility of a significant influence of Spanish culture in Albania, about intercultural relations and the literary reception from critics and the reading public.

It is funny how in 1977, for the first time, the two parts of Don Quixote were published in Albania with a circulation of twenty thousand copies sold in just a few months. Albanians have always enjoyed reading the Quixote while Cervantes still is the most famous Spanish author, thus converting Don Quixote into a myth.

The reading of Don Quixote has varied depending on the political, ideological moment of Albania and its philosophy has been interpreted in different perspectives, political, literary, social, etc. The quixotism, as a philosophy of the hero character, of the novel and of Cervantes himself, acquires in the 21st century some new perspectives.

In the World Book Day, April 23rd, we have seen in Tirana many Albanian personalities, students, intellectuals reading and even reciting with passion El Quixote. The enchanting spirit of Don Quixote joins in such a remarkable manner the Spanish and Albanian cultural world.

Don Quixote is not only a myth in Albanian, but a universal myth.

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Paul Goma. The Novel Sabina: The Phenomenology of Eros and the Autonomous Game of Writing in Romantic Arts

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Abstract

By making complex associations through the whole paper, the study aimed to reconstruct the elements of Paul Goma's poetics, through a careful analysis of the novel "Sabina". Writing his story from a now that relates to a then, on the path of the Communist System, the narrator mixed Eros with history, starting from a predetermined route, which he did not follow exactly. However, the macro-narrative structure took shape, denoting a deep essence through the visible connection with many related spheres: psychological, ontological, philosophical, social, topological, historical, linguistic, concentrating religious allusions dissipated throughout the book and staging the irresistible fascination of women.

Material at first, Sabina emerged from the carnal content and, since she was cut from Adam's rib, merged with the narrator, becoming an immaterial and weightless part of him. Putting a history in the background of the writing, longing for the perpetual nostalgia of a new inventive, ironic, playful phrase, inclined to self-analysis, the narrator set out to reveal the whole charm of the voluptuousness and the erotic nudity. Thus, the relationship with the Other is established through a third party that he finds in his inner self. By drawing his strength from the realm of authenticity and literality as from a cosmos of expanding rest, he ended up merging with the world, with the life, embracing images and ideas, contemplations and experiences, in the service of beauty and coveted perfection.

Keywords: *Paul Goma, Sabina, literality, authenticity, poetics, Eros, history*

Introduction

Being able to get out from the fluidity of "the daily life" by attacking violently the linearity and uniformity, eager to perfect the art of writing, Paul Goma defies the rules, and structures his novel according to a sui-generis law of selection and order. Without writing in accordance with generally accepted rules

of literature, in a language and style expressing "the deviation", "the deformation", "the distance" as a sign of literary customization,[1] in a writing set under the pressure of history, the writer initiates a game where playfulness, fairy tale and fiction, as main actors, will complete and light up the other half located "in the shade of Sabina in bloom". Proving that he masters the *technique of quiproquo* and using the olfactory memory, the narrator builds images, feelings and atmospheres, linking the biography of the work to his own autobiography. Figuring out Sabina's taste, he makes us feel the taste of art, exploring the personal identity of the subject, in an aesthetic contemplation, in which "the verb is conceived in the flesh, leaving its virginity untouched".[2]

Starting from an initial reading which seems to favor the romance, the writing slips easily into a meta-textual dimension: it identifies the elements of a poetry that began in his novel *The Calidor*, which is truly legitimated only in the last text of the autobiographical booklet, *Intimate-Novel*. However, we can already reconstruct the novelist's conception about writing: the more he manages to infect the entire textual journey, the clearer it becomes. He creates a world with a unique identity, different from the writings of that time.

Since he is a storyteller and not a writer, for he lives together with his characters or follows them up, for eventually expressing "what he understood from what he had seen, heard, smelled", what had happened or, "and not quite happened," Paul Goma builds his plot on the bases of recorded historical events, to which he gives, through fiction, unexpected proportions in a combination of poeticism, irony, playfulness, fairy tale and humor. This construction, mixing the Eros with history, with a rich instrumentation in both spheres, draws the mechanism of writing in a lexical delight in contravention of all norms, illustrating the deviation and serving it. To understand, however, how this system operates, we should have an exhaustive view, without neglecting the first level of the novel that became a perception footing for the textual poetics. In this regard, we can analyze the writing style, by using – as a support in order to explain and demonstrate the above-mentioned issue – authors like Emmanuel Lévinas,[3] Martin Buber,[4] but also Michel Serres[5] or Ion Caraion,[6] and other names that we will quote in this paper.

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[1] Adrian Marino, *Hermeneutica ideii de literatură* (Hermeneutics of literature's ideea) (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 1987), 267.

[2] Michel Serres, *Cele cinci simţuri. Filosofia corpurilor amestecate I* (The five senses. Philosophy of mixed bodies), trans. Marie-Jeanne Vasiloiu (Târgovişte: Pandora –M, 2003), 201.

[3] *Totalitate şi infinit. Eseu despre exterioritate* (Totality and infinity. Essay on exteriority), trans. Marius Lazurca, afterword by Virgil Ciomoş (Iaşi: Polirom, 1999).

[4] *Eu şi Tu* (Me and You), trans. Ştefan Aug. Doinaş (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1992).

[5] Serres, *Cele cinci simţuri.*

Reconstruction of the Textual Poetics

As a matter of fact, we can seen that after introducing the reader to the subject of the novel, the narrator emphasizes, through moments of separation, masterfully described at the beginning of the story, the three different sides of Sabina, with which he achieves a reverse manner of reconstruction. According to these trajectories, the initial separation of the upper Justice emphasizes the narrator's power of decision, amid the insertion of a true picture of snow in which the purity of the immaculate white reflects the feminine innocence of "the first" Sabina. Managing to update, through smell, personal experiences and biographical episodes, *the smells recording memories in the subject's memory*,[7] the narrator reveals the textual stake, from which we learn that he does not necessarily want to comply with the patterns of a romance novel, but to *re-make* this moment, to build it within its own original and authentic characteristics:

> *and it's not at all true that the new, the unknown is absolutely love, or salt and pepper. The gesture for repetition of a gesture for repetition, finally, a re-creation, a blunt, a walk, a so near far away seem to me more discovery like, newer… And if you don't discover through it something dazzling new, gnashing fresh, then you find something else more valuable, deeper, beyond the edge of the bridge: the ascertainment that this girl is yours [...]*[8]

Paying attention to details, having the ability to investigate Sabina's transformation through the series of events of an experienced observer, the writer considers her retrospectively and duplicates her in the state of *the other*, "in a luminosity converted into longing and darkness"[9]: "Whenever, ever, it was. In addition, it was cut. In two - not as a whole in halves, but like a pair of legs; like divided Siamese. Because one was Sabina that I left at the corner of Justice the next day in the evening, for wood and coal; and another one, the third day from the recovery."[10]

Recalling, on this background, the time during, and after saving, "the Blaga Fund", by inserting narrative "jewellery", able to "resuscitate" the character exposed to cold, suffering from hunger and exhaustion, the narrator situates himself, having the pleasure to protect the woman, under the symbol of the

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[6] *Tristeţe şi cărţi. Eseuri* (Sadness and books. Essays) (Bucharest: Romanian Cultural Foundation Publishing, 1995).
[7] Mădălina Diaconu, *Despre miresme și duhori. O interpretare fenomenologică a olfacției* (About scents and smells. A phenomenological interpretation of olfaction) (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2007), 94.
[8] Paul Goma, *Sabina* (Bucharest: Universal Dalsi, 2005), 120-122.
[9] Lévinas, *Totalitate și infinit*, 235.
[10] Paul Goma, *Sabina* (Cluj: Biblioteca Apostrof, 1991), 147.

protective womb, which suggests the existence of several types of love. At the same time, he enhances the fictional nature of the work and proposes a reading which favors the processes of text production and reception, in a game with the reader's expectations, making use of transposition and deconstructing the constructive codes of the language:

> *The grammatical incorrectness and the lexical indulgence didn't matter, what mattered was the warmth this girl needed, the one we could produce, spread, deliver by many means and ways [...]. For the second time in one lifetime we see how terribly easy she is [...]: even if Sabina didn't have substance, she had, in return... also substance, but how to say: immaterial, rather imponderable (s.n.) [...] The words did not matter any more – what mattered was their sonority and I also understood: their endlessness mattered, so it could be kept under spell, stopped somehow on the edge of the gap in which it should have bent, straight, vertical like a tree – into death.*[11]

Similarly to this structure, starting with the reflections on art and acting in relation to the realistic nature that he reveals, Paul Goma restores the original route according to *the real truth*, in order to modify it later, at the level of the logical perception. Thus, he breaks the linearity and makes the textual map difficult to understand. Choosing an explicit poetics, the narrator reveals the power of the Logos, of the written or spoken word, as a direct link with God. He presents the writing, if we take into account Nicoleta Sălcudeanu's opinion,[12] like a therapy and a self-reconstruction.

If at the beginning the first writer describes in detail the narrator's return to the boarding school at a late hour, seriously ill and at risk of being expelled from school, directed by the principal Iorgu and his wife – "father and mother", throughout the epic he contradicts this "truth", true in the meaning of performing the narrative scenario and inserts fictional dialogues in the text, which allow him to shape the reality according to his own will. Stuck in an imaginary world as an impossibility to accept the tragedy referred to, the narrator gives up the initial version and reduces its intensity through negation. However, a careful reading makes the epic reconstruction easier to understand and facilitates not only the perception of the central message, but also of the entire textual structure, built on it: "I had lost the battle, I had lost the war. I thought then: if I had not been so sick, I would have killed myself. But I had no hint of life in my body, once so sporty ...; as I was getting crazy when I was unlacing my boots… "I recover, I come to power – and after that I kill myself! I put an end to my vain life. I interrupt my

[11] *Ibidem*, 177-179.
[12] Nicoleta Sălcudeanu, "Sabina-Albertina-libertina," in *Graffiti* (Bucharest: Cartea Românească, 1999), 44.

destiny – let her find out, the beast with human face, what she has done! Let her be sorry, but it will be too late!"[13]

Although it offers the possibility of anticipation and the capacity of fragmenting the harsh reality, Paul Goma's novel does not bear the opposite sign of life, "but the same one – slightly out of place; slightly offset".[14] Being unable to change his destiny, having a mature and serious attitude to life, the writer discovers through writing, how to *master* and *anticipate* it, considering that only by "telling them (the failures, s.n.), they are bearable, because telling them you make them *tell-able*".[15] Therefore emerges the wish to become a narrator and to live, together with the characters, in a peaceful, far away from the obsessive presence of authorial instances:

> I also said: if I become a writer, then I'll be a storyteller, not a writer – it means not a teacher, principal of boarding school, with the characters; *the writer imagines that he came into the world to know, at every moment, what the pupils from the novel do, and if they don't what the rules say, and not exactly, and not there, in space, his unhappy mission of writer-educator is to call to order; to put them back in front. While the storyteller... He lets the people do what they want, do what is human, undisturbed, unconstrained; he comes after the student-characters: he watches, listens, smells (especially) - and tells what he has understood from what he had seen, heard, smelled* (s.n.)[16]

Even if it starts from a recorded historical event, perceived as "a mortar between bricks" which "makes or des-makes a novel, makes a novel be, or not be and not according to the true-truth, but according to the truth-that-would-be-true – somehow like this,"[17] tragic par excellence, the generating point is attenuated by playful insertions that improve the textual comprehension and turn the eventful "failure", as a plot, into a source of reflections creating special effects, identified throughout the novel. In this respect, Schiller's statement on the relationship between art and game is significant: "Schiller said somewhere that the human would not be entirely human unless he plays. When he reasons delighting and delights reasoning, the individual fulfils his mission. [...] When he delights reasoning, the individual perceives the artwork."[18]

In an Ion Creanga kind of world, focusing on the meaning of words, Paul

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[13] *Ibidem*, 249-250.
[14] Goma, *Sabina* (2005), 245-246.
[15] Goma, *Sabina* (1991), 162.
[16] *Ibidem*, 39.
[17] *Ibidem*, 103.
[18] Schiller, *apud* Silviana Simona Grando and Adriana Gaiţă, *De la simțuri la rafinament* (From senses to refinement) (Timişoara: Brumar, 2008), 65.

Goma projects his imaginary structures in a mixture of phrases which, free of any danger, are meant to keep the game alive, balancing the perception and transposing the reader in a world of all possibilities.

After having tasted the tree of knowledge by acquiring material things with the money she earned by selling books, Sabina turns into a woman, with her body becoming flesh, when in contact with silk: "if the clothes make the man, then the silk underwear makes the woman, overnight: it flourish her, it bursts her, it fructifies her, making her from a child a woman…"[19]

In a *fearful reality*, the epiphany of worldliness is consumed – with the loss of innocence – at the sensory level of the touching,[20] "because that is what you feel when you touch the silk: the thrill!, then on the leg, [...] but they are not necessarily perceived, felt with the legs, but with the inside, with the guts, with the heart, with the soul, with the depths of her body that has not known the silk but knows it as her mother, and her mother's mother and the whole nation of women knew it, as on their own skin."[21] And also at the level of the skin – continues Nicoleta Sălcudeanu – we perceive the cruelty of times, the sharp cold, arrived from the east, the source of all evil.[22]

Without invoking randomly the sense of touch, as long as the touching always provokes a reaction and completes the picture of the world insufficiently represented by the vision, by taking possession of surrounding objects as an active sense,[23] the writer illustrates the force of the touching as a means of *making* the creation, touching it: "with the fingertips of the right hand, I touched, I touched it, the canvas made a décolletage sufficiently low-cut to arouse the desire to enter the thicket of the flower of flowers in bloom."[24]

In this regard, it is relevant to mention Michel Serres's statement that reflects the relationship between Creator and Creation:

> *Before any form, before the colour and the tone, the support must necessarily be achieved. [...] the writer sacrifices or marks the paper, presses on it, presses it, and prints it, the moment when the sight is lost… Nobody has ever moulded, ever fought, if he refused the touch, nobody has ever loved nor known. The eye, remotely, is passively loafing. There is no impressionism without a printed force, without the pressure of the touch.*[25]

[19] Goma, *Sabina* (1991), 238.
[20] Sălcudeanu, "Sabina-Albertina-libertina," 44.
[21] Goma, *Sabina* (1991), 234.
[22] Sălcudeanu, "Sabina-Albertina-libertina," 44.
[23] Grando and Gaiță, *De la simțuri la rafinament*, 35-37.
[24] Goma, *Sabina* (1991), 184.
[25] Serres, *Cele cinci simțuri*, 25.

Conclusions

Transposing *only fragments of smell, splinters of sound, views of views*,[26] Paul Goma finds shelter in the sanctuary of the perfect shape, revealing the mechanism of Genesis. While the eyes know (from) the outside, the smell penetrates the inside, as a direct link with God, the ear perceives the pulse of the place, the touching takes possession of it, and the taste retains and appreciates, however, the most powerful weapon remains the word. As he is figuring out the meaning of life, it is expected to be perfect due to its divine origin, received at the very beginning, waiting to be born and ruling through its lyrical, epical or dramatic vibration, as Ion Caraion evokes it:

> *The Word? It doesn't hinder, I heard it shouting. I want to be born! Cut my ropes! Cut the ropes that bound me! I need space! [...] I need space, open sea, floating! I'm not a boat ashore! I must be stroke by the waves of the boundlessness, of the vastness! To float! To fight! To risk! I need my identity!*
>
> *And it was born. And… in the beginning was the word.*[27]

Responding to this call and severely sanctioning those who "prostitute their art" with the writer's material, the word, a friend of poetry, philosophy and fiction, through the trio represented by Octavian (poetry), Septimius (philosophy), and *the over-storyteller* (novel), in an inseparable unity with a trinity symbol – ("It was hot, sheltering – and unifying, being convinced at that time that no one, nothing, no way shall separate us, we will remain forever as the fingers, three to make the sign of the cross, named after the shepherds from "Miorita": "the thumb: the Transylvanian - Octavian, the middle one: the inhabitant of the kingdom - Septimius, the forefinger: the Bessarabian – me…"),[28] the narrator, in "the impossibility to accurately copy the prose", in order to "recue" books from the fire of cleansing, creates it under the sign of an *occupied consciousness* that remains at the worktable until the last breath.[29]

Hardly deciphered on the background of the narrative structure, although it gives the impression of willing to build a romance novel, the creative self emerges in the second part of the writing, letting us understand that Sabina is only a gateway to reconstitute the elements of a poetics. Having turned from a girl to a woman, from material into imponderable, she surpasses the function of character, by identifying herself with the narrator, under the circular shape of perfection,

[26] Goma, *Sabina* (2005), 222.
[27] Caraion, *Tristețe și cărți*, 18.
[28] Goma, *Sabina* (2005), 286.
[29] Gaston Bachelard, *Poetica reveriei* (The poetics of reverie), trans. Luminița Brăileanu (Pitești: Paralela 45, 2005), 62.

becoming a part of him, while still remaining authentic and original. Freed from the function of reality and sheltered, as a result of transposition, within the creative identity, she represents the very act of creating "in two", under the immutable sign of the Genesis.

Thus, seeking "how infinite the future is, what should be born, [...] pleasure and selfishness in two" as shown by Emmanuel Lévinas,[30] the love is situated, for Paul Goma too, under the binomial sign, favouring the opening of the novelist's work towards innovation and lyricism, under the indelible sign of literariness: "I don't love fully only if the other one loves me, not because I need the recognition of the Other, but because his lust feeds mine and because in this situation [...], in this *trans-substantiation*, the Same and the Other are not the same, but – beyond any possible project – beyond any power with meaning and intelligence – I give birth to a child"[31]: "and (I remembered!): if we had been together, it would have been easier for us to pull the sled, to load-unload bags, it would have been easier for us to sweat – not to mention the labours of birth: arithmetic shows us that they fall in equal portions. If I had received my share of creation, not just from obligation but with pleasure: finally, I will learn how: maybe I will even manage to transpose myself: not into a horse's head, but into the belly of a woman – into the body, as they says, or; into the groin. Or even more poetically: into the womb. Or, as the Bible indirectly says: into the breast. The woman has breast, the man thigh – the baby appears from their collision."[32]

In the musical rhythm of vowels and consonants, the narrator meets the emotional and visual memory, and, without hiding behind the mask of others, he transposes himself into the other and perceives him "through the collaboration of the deliberate act of the will with the grace."[33] It follows, therefore, a unique phenomenon in which "The other is present in front of I, as a You that addresses it specifically, not as a creation of its imagination, neither as a simple sense of its appearance, the less as an object of knowledge; but as a term of a state of grace in which, at the same time with the outpouring of the itself of I, at the same time with its essential mystery, the person learns the full mystery of You that greets him."[34] Managing to conceive the body in a state of language, the protagonist shapes it until he discovers it "up to the bone" and places it in the circular symbol of all beginnings:

[30] Lévinas, *Totalitate şi infinit*, 238.
[31] *Ibidem.*
[32] Goma, *Sabina* (2005), 286.
[33] Ştefan Augustin Doinaş, "Prefaţă" (Foreword), in *Eu şi Tu*, 19.
[34] *Ibidem*, 21.

I stretch my hands, I grab her glasses, and I take them off. I uncovered her eyes, I discover her up to the bone. Today she has big eyes. Today she has blue eyes, not green, like last winter, like the last winters – is the change proposed by silk? [...] However, I feel her womb with my belly; her legs with my thighs. I feel my belly becoming concave and at the same time, increasing in parts, up, down, welcoming, wrapping her evening womb and more convex, more belly like: and my thighs becoming concave and long, like gutters, like women where the man enters and stays there, between her legs…[35]

After revealing Sabina's eyes and destroying her masks, "the unfinished erotic act sublimates in word, this one inconsistency taking the hot shortness and the self-forgetfulness, the sweet abandon transferred to the shake of syllables"[36]: "Sabina, the recipe, and after she was dissolved, after I always invariably made her well, and I dropped her, and almost at the same time my mother, the mother made sabina sabina sabi after the recipe I wanted, I never wanted my love on my peeled forehead in flames; she didn't want, she screamed that no no no and then I wanted to bow the horn and then Sabina turned away and then yelled at me: why do you, why do you; I despised Sabina because she is much weaker than herself; however she denied…"[37]

Turning the words all around the calidor, co-working with *Eros* by rejecting the possession, "an ordinary man and maker of men", the writer carves the image of the *Feminine Eternity*, according to Victor Hugo's principle: "fall right into my eyes so that I remember you". Uniting all the present and past egos into an *ego extenso*[38] that has a woman shape, touching her with the fingers and studying her "sensitive map,"[39] he depicts the world using a hot verbal "live steam," in a symphony of sounds gracefully plunged into the foamy chaos of the unknown:

Sabina said and I also said and she didn't say any more and I honestly admit that I wanted to see how she is made from the inside, made by me with my right hand, but she denied and then I found that I couldn't control her any more and divorced… the autonomy of the character… If I had great friends, they would tell me what is the situation with Proust, the one who collected all the fragrances in the world into a cake called woman, and what woman Mary Magdalene; I manipulate more modestly the fragrances around Sabina, the one, the most true, more true than the truth which where Sabina is

she comes with a recipe, but she doesn't make a hole as in the life that runs steaming

alive and

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[35] Goma, *Sabina* (2005), 270.
[36] Sălcudeanu, "Sabina-Albertina-libertina," 52.
[37] Goma, *Sabina* (2005), 305
[38] Mădălina Diaconu, *Despre miresme și duhori,* 97.
[39] Phrase taken from Serres, *Cele cinci simţuri,* 24.

Sabina was on a Tuesday and I was reading the novel with
Sabina was on a next Tuesday and I was reading the novel made with
Sabina and then we would have made children of paper and would have lived even today if

Sabina – I am waiting for her
Sabina – I am reading
but first I am writing it.[40]

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[40] Goma, *Sabina* (2005), 305-306.

ESSAYS

PRESENTATIONS

REVIEWS

The Philosophy after "Philosophy"

Review
Nader N. Chokr – 'Philosophy' – After the End of Philosophy in a Globalizing and Glocalizing World
Cambridge: Cambridge Scholar Publishing, 2014

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Through a collage of essays Nader N. Chokr illustrates his divorce from academic philosophy, philosophy understood as theoretical discipline. He illustrates the truth of this paradoxical statement about the status of Philosophy as being both the most useless of all human endeavors and the worthiest undertaking precisely because it is useless. In a very truly philosophical perspective, encompassing multiple areas of social, moral, and political philosophy, Chokr's nine essays address particular questions related to Culture, Bullshit, Cognition, Capabilities Approach, Morality, Human Rights, Justice, and Philosophy.

The first essay is concerned with the consequences of recognizing the *complex* nature of culture in a world undergoing simultaneous globalization and glocalization. In other words, the author attempts a better understanding of the manifold content of Culture, which takes into account the very internal dynamics, of Culture and last, but not the least, he tries to articulate a future "pluralistic, historically enlightened ethical universalism".

The second essay focuses on the peril of the inconsistent, self-defeating and misguided "cultural relativism" under its both descriptive and normative aspects. The futility of cultural relativism stems from its uselessness because it is either too early or too late, warns on a general moral problem, and is accompanied, from an ethical and political point of view, only by dangerous consequences. The same "pluralistic, historically enlightened ethical universalism" as opposed to the epistemological unworthiness of "cultural relativism" is seen as the most promising perspective to address the moral questions of our times.

The third essay deals with "one of the most salient features of our culture" today: the "bullshit" (humbug). Drawing on the works by H. Frankfurt and G. A. Cohen, respectively, Chokr investigates further this pervasive phenomenon which lacks a consistent analysis so far. Chokr finds an unusually general significance for the bullshit as being the *untrustworthy philosophical otherness* (with various names such as the irrational, the nonsense, the meaningless, the unclear, the incomprehensible, the unsubstantiated / unsubstantiable, the untrue, the neither false or true, the outright false, the untenable or as the too speculative, the metaphysical, the far-fetched, the unrealistic or merely as the practically irrelevant to human life). Thus, he plunges deeper in the comprehension of this readily metaphysical but neglected concept. Instead of getting lost in an endless dispute to which an internal point of view would lead him (the produce-process understanding of bullshit), he argues for a more pragmatic external point of view, namely the impact of bullshit (either as process or produce) over individuals, groups, communities, and ultimately over the society as a whole, or over culture, normative practices, values and ideals.

The fourth essay uncovers the fundamental contrasts and prospective advantages between the "embodied and situated cognition" (ESC) research program and the classical Cartesian paradigm of "cognitivist framework" in light of some empirical works. Chokr finds at least five tenets of the ESC programs which, on the one hand, are incompatible with the cognitivist framework and, on the other hand, seem more plausible, empirically and theoretically compelling. The five tenets are: (1) the favored approach to analysis is essentially rational, interactional and even transactional; (2) cognition consists of the interplay between mind, body and environment; (3) cognition consists mainly of active contraction based on embodied goal-directed actions of organism; (4) representations are considered to be sensori-motor representations; (5) primacy is given to goal-directed actions unfolding in real time and practical activities in context. The complexity of human mind is due to the intricate dialectics of life and environment, culture and organism, and this very dialectics makes inappropriate the computer metaphor of mind rule-based and logic-driven. Alternatively, the author envisages a more appropriate coupling metaphor of the mind as a mixture of constraints on cognitive processes involving a tripartite form of embodiment, environment and action.

The fifth essay brings to the fore the debate on Pogge's perspective on Capability Approach and its supposedly inferior plausibility and workable public

criterion for social justice compared with the "Rawlsian Resourcist" Approach. Although it isn't yet a fully-fledged theory of justice that doesn't aim to compete with the more rigorous, consistent and complete Rawslian theory, the Capability Approach proves to be a viable and justifiable explanatory and even promising normative perspective. Its moral fundamental institution, compatible with the Rawlsian one, leads to a totally different conception and characterization of the scope of social justice. The author's thesis is that even if this perspective is still incomplete and is met with outstanding problems and difficulties, there are very good and strong reasons for advocating the epistemic accomplishments of Capability Approach: the comprehensive conceptualization of capabilities, development and flourishing; the metric for assessing well-being, inequality, and poverty; and signs of a trustworthy investment of energy and resources in articulating a fully-fledge theory of social and global justice.

The sixth essay reveals the insufficiency and out-datedness of the classical approach and conceptualization of the social and moral philosophy for addressing the critical issues of modern interconnectedness and interdependence state of global world. It is advocated the idea that, although paradoxically at the first sight, a properly conceived notion of "international pluralism" or "plural universalism" is more appropriate for a realistic description of present-day global solidarity and justice and can prescribe suitable norms required to accommodate the necesary cosmopolitanism. This alternative seems more proper for the constitution of a trans-national civil society, the guarantee for an international system of solidarities, which requires not only the acceptance of a plurality of principles and norms required by a strong articulated global justice but also the tolerance of a plurality of international agents and institutions allocating among them the right of sovereignty.

The same fully philosophical motive of "trans-ness" of a perspective beyond the classical static dichotomic conundrum between universalism and relativism in comprehending cultural phenomena is applied to human rights issue in the seventh essay of the book. The present wide spreading of "globalized human rights culture" asks for a new and more potentially prolific conceptual framework for integrating the real and symbolic dimensions of current human rights practices. This is compulsory for drawing the discourse out of the current impasse. In this respect, the author previously proposed a broader conceptual framework for understanding the cultural complexity of a "post-cultural, global and glocal world", i.e. culture understood as a dynamic, open-ended, a crosscut of convergent

and divergent processes rather than enclosed, unitary and determinant entity). He considers that only by integrating the human rights issue in the aforementioned perspective, this matter could acquire a proper understanding as "cultural practices" always "at work" "in the process of constituting, reconstituting and reformulating themselves".

The eighth essay starts from what the author characterizes as the fundamental dilemma of liberalism understood as moral and political philosophy, which becomes manifest when one expands his/her understanding of and application to the global and international realm. Henceforth the problem of the moral status of states, nation-states or national-boundaries, together with the international justice becomes obvious. After revealing the shortcomings and limitations of traditional approaches and social justice theories (nationalists-partialists-particularists-cultural perfectionists, Rawls' political liberalism, cosmopolitanism) on this issue, the author calls for a solution stemming from a "rooted cosmopolitan pluralism under rigorous normative constraints". This is consonant with the author's expression of his general „plural universalism" view on the present global state. He believes that such *rooted cosmopolitan pluralism under rigorous normative constraints* could remain focused enough on the non-ideal conditions we live by most of our life, even when we engage in the great but necessary amount of abstraction and idealization required for its proper understanding and development. This subsequently enables us to achieve even a more "realistic utopia" in Rawls' expression.

The last essay proposes a Decalogue for a New Philosophy if it could be one after the postmodern extensive acclamation of the death of Philosophy. Following the harsh, various and continuing critiques concerning all aspects of traditional Philosophy (its tasks, goals, claims, methods and methodologies, public image, and self-image), the next question arises: Should the Philosophy's dearest aspects – the quest for Certainty and the long for Absolute in Reason and thinking – be preserved, or should they have to be abandoned forever? This dire situation allows for a positive, daring and imaginative alternative of a new informed Philosophy, strengthened even by these latter critiques. This new Philosophy "can only be a new kind of Critical Theory". The fundamental requirements which form the Decalogue of the new Philosophy encompass:

- the addressability to the real problems of Human beings;
- the acceptation of a role of tribunal or guardian over the other forms of rationality;

- the binding matter for critical alliances across Disciplinary Boundaries;
- the swift from metaphysics to ethics as First Philosophy;
- the advance of naturalism and anti-transcendentalism;
- promoting fallibilism and experimentalism;
- inhabiting time and space;
- articulating a pluralistic, historical and enlightened universalism;
- an integrated, holistic and comprehensive approach;
- a clear emancipator thrust.

Consonant with the author's "anti-scholastic" (or "anti-scholarly") and non-disciplinary perspective, the entire book and its approach are made from a contemporary philosophical perspective, but the foundational ideas of traditional philosophical minds and systems are still reflected indirectly within the discourse. Sometimes this approach conceals and disregards the meaningful truth and perspective of classical philosophy rather than provide a totally new and evolved argument.

The work expresses the thinking of a person who understands to reject Philosophy as a formal endeavor, as a profession, and who dedicates himself to Philosophy in its pristine form as practice, *as a way of life*, Philosophy as life itself. Deeply philosophical, the author proves a sharp social critical thinking with a high sense of inequity and inequality and is a fervent detractor of an obsolete and oppressing system such is that of political capitalism that undermines the very fabric of democracy due its very internal logic. Accordingly, the book represents the author's confession of faith in the fundamental role of Philosophy which at the same time is both full of intrinsic limitations, blind spots, and constitutive tensions, and also constitutes the essential "ladder which has served its limited purpose - enabling us then to rise to the next level in our understanding of the world, and our place in it." I share the same (or at least similar) creed that postmodernism was a necessary footstep for the authentic resurrection of Philosophy in the modern Scientific and Technological Age:

Philosophy is dead, long live Philosophy!