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e-mails: filosofie_craiova@yahoo.com; aneacsu1961@yahoo.com

webpage: http://cis01.central.ucv.ro/analele_universitatii/filosofie/

Tel./Fax: +40-(0)-251-418515

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OTTO FRIEDRICH BOLLNOW: SEARCH FOR THE FUNDAMENTALS OF EXISTENTIAL PHILOSOPHY

Oleg BAZALUK¹
Tetiana MATUSEVYCH²

***Abstract:** Existential philosophy consists of many ideas, which are related closely to the concepts of "philosophy of life" and replace them. In this article we have analyzed key provisions of the O. F. Bollnow's philosophy of life concept. Our analyze shows that O. F. Bollnow's concept, from one hand, discovers and investigates an important succession between concepts of "philosophy of life" and existentialism, on the other hand, it specifies and tries comprehend critically the contents of the basic problematic ideas of the concepts of existentialism – the problem of human being.*

***Keywords:** O.F. Bollnow, existential philosophy, "philosophy of life", existentialism, being.*

Existential philosophy concepts by many ideas are related to the concepts of "philosophy of life" and succeed them. Otto Bollnow makes analysis of dominant philosophies' change at the beginning of XX century, deep for that time, in his concept, which is documented by him, mainly, in his work "Philosophy of existentialism"³.

Let's note number of key statements of O. Bollnow's philosophy of life concept. First, in O. Bollnow's opinion "philosophy of life" as a direction in Western-European philosophy means the turn from the objective to the subjective, from the thinking not associated with the subjective aspect, to the thinking associated with the latter⁴.

Originally, phenomena of life, this multifaceted and far from apodictic basis was laid in the foundation of the "philosophy of life". But what should one understand under notion "life"? First, it can be the existence of a single person or existence of universal - *human*. Second, it is, perhaps, individual lives of biological organisms or, perhaps, an existence of all "biological" (or "organic") matter as a single organism.

¹ Pereyaslav-Khmelnytsky State Pedagogical University, Ukraine.

² Kyiv University of Tourism, Economic and Law, Ukraine.

³ Bollnow O. F. *Existenzphilosophie*, 5th ed. Stuttgart, 1955

⁴ Bollnow O. F. [in Russian] *The philosophy of existentialism*/ translated in Russian by S.E.Nikulina. - St. Petersburg: Publishing house "Lan", 1999, p. 18

Third, under the concept of life we can understand, for instance, connection of the individual or universal "human" with individual or universal "biological". Finally, forth, we can find the supra-individual, cosmic, universal in notion of life.

We have listed only a small part of all that variety of aspects, which a priori can be derived from the phenomenon of life as a possible foundation for a philosophical system. Infinite variety and wide range of meanings of the aspects of the phenomenon of life almost do not admit defining that doubtless and reliable basis for further contemplations on life, which one can use in the built-up of a *sustainable* philosophic system of life.

While developing as a philosophical school the "philosophy of life", according to O. F. Bollnow, has accumulated more and more the general, superficial statements, threatening to abolish completely the ultimate absoluteness in philosophy. In practice it turned out to be so that in "philosophy of life" one could not establish the reliability of this or that statement since it was impossible to attach criteria of the "true" and "false" ideas to anything. One could say anything about "Life" and nobody could refute or criticize it. O. F. Bollnow has specified that it was not haphazardly that philosophy of life with special disposition has been united with historical consciousness generated from variety of any life manifestations with different nations in different times¹. As O. F. Bollnow specifies, at the beginning of XX century relativism ceased to be destiny of lonely thinkers. It acquired mass, epidemic features threatening to destroy the objective life style.

In this concept O. F. Bollnow specified that the philosophy of existentialism appeared in the result of the deeper rethinking of the framework of the philosophy of life. Unlike "relativistic dissolution and decay", appeared as a consequence in the philosophy of life, the philosophy of existentialism "... once again tried to find solid framework, something absolute and unconditional, which would exist beyond any possible variability².

According to O. Bollnow, existentialism as rationality became vital need of *qualitative* analysis of this direction at the beginning of XX century. It is a kind of hope for a compromise: to abandon all discovered and investigated, namely this life as a "continuous flow", having rethought simultaneously fundamental and backbone things which rescues any

¹ Bollnow O. F. [in Russian] The philosophy of existentialism/ translated in Russian by S.E.Nikulina. - St. Petersburg: Publishing house "Lan", 1999, p. 18

² Ibid, p. 19

contemplations from destruction and rethinking. "Philosophy of Life" as a system, according to O. Bollnow, due to multi-meanings of its framework was too vulnerable and unstable¹².

O. F. Bollnow's thesis "existentialism as rationality" becomes more acceptable for the perception if we will set apart from its literal understanding. In its turn, in his thesis "existentialism as rationality" O. F. Bollnow understood another rationality, i.e. relativistic, relative, discovered by A. Einstein and unknown to classics of philosophy.

It is that rationality which fairly suits for consideration of notion "existence" as a methodological principle. "The incomprehensibility of existence", in fact, is incomprehensible to the rationality in the classical sense, since classical rationality considers only the statistical objects, or so called materialized (objectified, available) phenomena. Rationality in its relativistic understanding (after confirmation of A. Einstein's relativity theory), which is meant by O. F. Bollnow, describes phenomena *in motion, in flow*.

That is "rationality" of quantum physics, which deals with the discrete-continuum environment (i.e. *the motion* of particles and waves). Such rationality, as a methodological principle, can fully deal with the contents of the human life and existentia.

Fear for the collapse of the objective life principles, the need for the apodictic criteria, not subject to the elements of the universal decay made many thinkers to ponder over the search for unconditional criteria in phenomenon of life. Not having found the support in the existence of life, the philosophy of XX century concentrated on analysis of more accessible and doubtless things for interpretation of "inherent internal", i.e. on the analysis of *human factor*. Human existence, (Dasein) had become the subject for research of philosophy at the beginning of XX century.

What had been found in the result of the analysis of the "inherent internal" (that is human)? In O. Bollnow's opinion, the ultimate, deep core of a human being was discovered. This core K. Jaspers has denoted as notion "existence", which had been used by S. Kierkegor in his concept of the "philosophy of life".

¹ Bollnow O. F. Studien zur Hermeneutik. Zur hermeneutische Logik von G. Milch und H. Lipps. – Freiburg; München: Alber-Brochur, 1983. – Bd. 2. – 295 p

² Bollnow O. F. Philosophische Anthropologie und ihre methodologischen Prinzipien// Philosophische Anthropologie heute. – München, 1972

In opinion of O. F. Bollnow, existential and philosophical concept existence in the final run ascends to old distinction between the concepts of *essentia* and *existentia* of things in existence. *Essentia* is something, i.e. what makes rich in contents definitions of these things in existence. Otherwise, it is *Dasein*, or, what is more accurate is substantial *Dasein* which remains only as a result of exception of all haphazard definitions of *Dasein*. In two words, *essentia* is essence of a thing. *Existentia*, according to Bollnow, as opposed to the previous, is oriented to the thing that something exists and is really available, created or otherwise present in existence. *Existentia* is (*Dasein*), reality of these things in existence/matter.

According to O. Bollnow, a concept "existence" changes considerably in existential philosophy. Foremost, it is reduced on a large scale and it is applied exclusively to a human being. In existential philosophy existence is exceptionally human existence, taking its origin from existential experience. Search for original things in existence generated philosophical systems of S. Kierkegor, K. Yaspers, M. Heidegger. And as opposed to Parmenid or Aristotel which longed for comprehension of existence itself, i.e. existence as reality which exists objectively close to a human being and irrespective of a human being, existential philosophy is aimed not at existence as existence in itself and supra-human existence. Existential existence in concept of philosophy of life of O. F. Bollnow has nothing in common with external existence. Existential existence is a specific internal kernel of human, apodeictic basis, compared to which statements of "philosophy of life" on a human look external and attributive. Existential existence – is something final, ultimate in an analysis which goes deep into human nature. In existential philosophy it is an object, thing, something final. Although as an object and as a thing it is immaterial. It is unsteady and dynamic. It is a core inside which activity bubbles.

Considering existential existence we must take into account that powerful religious layer which via S.Kierkegor was contributed to this concept. Religious constituent of concept "existence" strongly sets it off from the concept of life. In opinion of O. F. Bollnow, life can be stronger or weaker, richer or poorer, nobler or more rough, it can change, grow or fade. Existence lies on the other side of these definitions. It can be only wholly found or wholly lost. It is in essential nature indivisible and halted only when a man is dead or completely mentally ill"¹.

¹ Bollnow O. F. [in Russian] *The philosophy of existentialism/ translated in Russian by S.E.Nikulina. - St. Petersburg: Publishing house "Lan", 1999, p. 37*

So, coming from the concept of philosophy of life of O. F. Bollnow, fundamental principle of human life is existential existence. By O. F. Bollnow it is the final ultimate condition in "human aspect". It is initial discrete unit everything is built of. One can rely on it, one can attach the criteria of "truth" and "falseness", as it exists. It is the fact. The framework is being build after the initial unit is defined . The result is the system.

Thirdly, as O. F. Bollnow considers, universal initial position of existential philosophy is:

- 1) inferiority of thinking/cogitation in face of contradictions of reality;
- 2) relatedness (соотнесенность) of thinking" with tasks that sprout from own life experience of a thinker¹.

O. F. Bollnow in his concept of "philosophy of life" underlines that an assertion on inferiority of thinking compared to existence of life considerably brings together existential philosophy with "philosophy of life". "Philosophy of life", in opinion of O. F. Bollnow, tries to understand thinking/cogitation relying on its result for life practically by the same method, underlining here insufficiency of any notion- based understanding in the face of its inexhaustibility ². Thus, O. Bollnow summarizes, origin both of "philosophy of life" and existential philosophy is very close in nature and interchangeable, it is a motion beginning by the same way.

However, characteristic distinction oozes subsequently. In opinion of O. F. Bollnow, it consists in "...by what method human existence is interpreted in them and how does it find its expression in the inherent to them fundamental concepts of life and existence"³. If in a concept "life" an accent is done on the variety of sense-bearing definitions, on the moment of flow, on universal character of life, in a concept "existence" ascetic "what" of existence remains. It exists, and it is perceived as the fact, as obviousness, in its true colures and without epatage.

This ascetic "what" of existence opposes existential philosophy to the "philosophy of life" in terms of inferiority of thinking as well. "Philosophy of life", as O. F. Bollnow considers, generally believed that cogitation with its universal concepts was a "rough instrument" for the exhaustive understanding of reality in completeness of its subjective and specific definitions and in its constantly alive motion. "Philosophy of life" was more tolerant, sociable to different philosophical opinions.

¹ Ibid, p. 32

² Ibid, p. 33

³ Ibid, p. 33

Existential philosophy, like "a new type of rationality"(in terminology of O. F. Bollnow), became more principal and judgmental. It claimed, according to O. F. Bollnow, to apodicticity, actuality of its conclusions. The smallest hints on relativism and uncertainty were removed for this purpose. To avoid possibility of re-thinking of key statements, it was initially assumed to question the process of re-thinking itself as the act of thinking. Exactly for this purpose thinking was presented as the "dead-end motion" which is unable, under no circumstances, to clear up the existential existence and a number of other important concepts for philosophy of existentialism.

Fourth, analysing fundamental principle of existential philosophy, O. F. Bollnow in his concept of "philosophy of life", finally, comes to a conclusion important for our research: in existentialism understanding of the phenomenon of life has been changed radically. This change follows from attitude towards the world in "philosophy of life" and existential philosophy.

Thus, under concept "world" not only external reality where a human being is but also realities of human life itself are understood. The world – is all that, that a human sets for himself as factualness and all the things he objectifies. The world is objectified existence; it is all that is revealed in contents, that one managed to establish in a flow, elusive motion of life.

According to the definition of K. Jaspers, a concept the "world" covers aggregate of subjective life and objective reality¹. So, in "philosophy of life", as O. F. Bollnow marks, we see the following attitude toward the world: by virtue of that the basic framework of the system of "philosophy of life" is built on that separate lives are inlaid in uniform all-embracing life, confiding attitude of a human toward the world is clearly traced, his closeness to the things, support on the part of superior unity. In «philosophy of life», in opinion of O. Bollnow, a human is in a "maternal" environment, and it depends only on him to what an extent harmoniously he will "blend" in this environment². He can oppose his activity to the "flow" of life, but it will turn against him in the form of destructive manifestations, negative things in the everyday way of life. He can "listen to" this flow, succumb to it, not to resist the flow of life, and in this case his existence will be harmonious to existence of life. All are in hands of a human being. The choice is within him.

¹ Jaspers K. Einführung in die Philosophen. München, 1971

² Bollnow O. F. Philosophische Anthropologie und ihre methodologischen Prinzipien// Philosophische Anthropologie heute. – München, 1972

Existential philosophy gives completely another attitude to the world (reality). According to O. Bollnow remarks, the reality is independent of a human being and that's why it resists him in many cases. It itself is like a monster, alien for others. In no way it allows thinking to conquer itself. A human being and life is independent from each other, therefore they do not have chances to find harmony in coexistence. Life doesn't need it, while human thinking/cogitation can't do this. Instead of confidence, hope for life as on base of support, the «world» seems to a human "... in a form of quite unknown before anxiety and alienations, threat and danger which attack him and which he must survive"¹. Illusive and iridescent attitude towards the flow of life as to the "maternal" principality, able to protect and help, in existential philosophy is replaced by utilitarian, sober, rational attitude. Life is perceived without illusions, hopes and faith.

It is the severe and uncompromising reality, which we need to fight with in order to exist to the utmost. In existential philosophy, as follows from the concept of O. F. Bollnow, life for the first time appears in front of a human being as the stranger and gloomy phenomenon one needs to fight with rather than coexist. Life, which is like an enemy, is a new image, which started to be observed in existential philosophy. An enemy is strong and cruel, knowing no pity and mercy. A human has no chances practically to win it, as O. F. Bollnow remarks. So, basically, irreparableness of human existence and passim is men chaining the internal gusts for creativity derives from it.

Thus, not phenomenon of life is the subject of research in the concept of existentialism, but "life as the existence of a human being". Having taken out human aspect from life, the authors of the concepts of existentialism began studying the fundamentals of human existence. Generally, philosophy of the beginning of XX century had set two types of contents in the phenomenon of life: "life" according to understanding of existence of the organized matter (or live substance, like scientific constituent part of life according to the terminology of V. Vernadsky), and "being", like life-existence in understanding of human existence, or rational matter (anthroposphere – as a sphere of existence of human brain), if it is said on space scale. Let's try to consider an issue: to what extent term "being" is in compliance with the definition of existence of life like a rational matter or, what can be compared to human existence in the cosmic space scale? In

¹ Bollnow O. F. [in Russian] The philosophy of existentialism/ translated in Russian by S.E.Nikulina. - St. Petersburg: Publishing house "Lan", 1999, p. 59

philosophy "being" designates a category, fixing basis of existence: both world as a whole and any kind of existing thing.

Variety of things was understood under "being" as a backbone of everything: water, fire and air, uncertain things or atoms. It was asserted that life was the first "being", and all the lifeless things means only falling off from it. At times a spirit was considered for the first "being" for which things are its manifestations. K. Jaspers, on the basis of all ideas of being, singled out a number of the world views shaped in history: "materialism (everything is matter and natural, mechanical event), spiritualism (everything is spirit), hylozoism (everything is the living matter)"¹.

From one hand, "being" like existence of "human aspect" corresponds to generally accepted understanding of existence in philosophy, from the other hand, "being" in understanding of the existential philosophy restricts and narrows this notion. Until recent times one can speak of "being" of matter, as well as on "being" of living matter, and on "being" of Macrocosm as a whole.

In concepts of existentialism it is suggested to use the notion "being", mainly in relation to the human existence or, if we consider the large space scale, to the existence of life-like-rational-matter. Non-classical philosophy, according to the researches of I. Kant, on one hand, begins to cut out a human factor from a concept "life", passing to the analysis of being in understanding of Dasein (human objective reality, or human existence) rather than life, on the other hand – non-classical philosophy passes from the search of the essence of life to consideration of existence of life (through existence to essences). As a basic problematics, the phenomenon of life in non-classical philosophy regresses on the back burner, giving a place to deeper analysis of "being" in its extrapolation to transcendental and human aspects.

Undoubtedly, one can assume that emphasizing of concepts of existentialism as to disclosure of the contents of "being" is caused by the wish of the authors to cognate the essence of the Macrocosm (cosmic space), first principle of the world, which will entail disclosure both being of matter and living matter, as well as being as "life-like-living-matter". One can suppose that conceptualizing "being", the authors of the concepts of existentialism were searching fundamental existing principle.

Actually, as it appears from concepts of existentialism of O. Bollnow, K. Jaspers and other, it is not quite so. Yes, quite often, analyzing being, the

¹ Jaspers K. Einführung in die Philosophen. München, 1971.

philosophers of the beginning of XX century recollected on the fundamentals of existent Macrocosm. However, mainly, speaking about being, the question was about the fundamentals of existence of a human being. Being in concepts of existentialism is existence of a human nature, extrapolating to transcendental thing (to space). It is Dasein in the traditionally German understanding of this word. M. Heidegger, as one of key researchers of concept "being" in XX century, unequivocally binds this term to the human origin.

For concepts of philosophy of life of XX century "being" – it is, mainly, the search of apodictic basis of existence of human aspect. In concepts of existentialism in the center the problem of being there is a collision of self-identification of a human, findings himself, or in other words, achievement of such organization of human existence, where essence and existence of human would make indissoluble unity.

Self identification of a human being converse into a complicated ontological problem due to specifics of the method of human existence itself. Specific feature of this method is that a human makes self-identification in horizon of the world. Therefore, a human is universal due to the method of his existence. And a human, by virtue of this, cannot be expressed and defined by the number of fixed properties, on the contrary, his own properties of a human turn out to be derivatives from his vital functions. In this sense the only permanent and fixed property of human existence is a category of freedom. Depending on the degree of freedom of a human his self-identification becomes a problem and task of creation of his own destiny.

Thus, as it follows from concepts of existentialism of O. F. Bollnow, K. Jaspers, M. Heidegger, J.-P. Sartre and others, a human finds himself, makes self-identification not in the form of manifestation and finalizing of the available properties, but making self-identification in the world, i.e. disclosing for himself the world order and finding the place in it. A human finds himself to the extent, to which he/she discovers the world.

Besides, the world is not only in the variety of reality that surrounds it, and in meaningful content integrity of all that exists; world is in its fundamental grounds. In opinion of O. F. Bollnow, concept of absolute or "absolute origins" of existence serve as expression of such backbones of the world. The absolute is the «last» backbone of the world and, at the same time, universal basis of all that exists. It expresses by itself an ontological limit, which, at the same time, is universal expression of all that can be. Absolute, in other words, is nothing else than ultimate possibility of being.

Therefore, understanding of human existence as a self-identification of a human in the world with a necessity brings to the conclusion that identities with his own self a human being reaches in the form of discovering of absolute original backbones of being. In its absolute meaning these or those origins of an existence is discovered by a human being; and discovering them, a human being makes specific connection with absolute aspect. A human becomes the one having connection to the absolute, not just defined by it. Freedom as a property of his existence is expressed in the fact that a human being discovers absolute origins of all that exists and explains his own existence by that. According to that what a human discovers as a absolute aspects a human being himself can be characterized. This gives the basis to consider discovering of absolutes as a method of self-identification of a human being, his identity with himself.

Deriving from this point, talking about "being" exclusively like on existence of a human aspect, as it follows from O. F. Bollnow's concept, we are in some way contradict to a tradition of Antique philosophy and philosophy of the Middle ages. But instead we follow the tradition, beginning with philosophy of the New times.

So, "being" – it is first of all existence of human aspect, search for the first principles of human existence in integral connection with transcendental, as a specific manifestation of a human aspect.

Dynamic connection (unity) between space and time of a human aspect existence is being formed in human existence, as O. F. Bollnow notes in his concept. For a specific, peculiar human "being", experience and expectation of an individual, this unity embodies the whole hierarchy and multi-layer structure, which, in spite of its ramified structure and complexity must provide judicious residency in the horizon of the world, i.e. residency which is always mobile, existing in a flow of time, nevertheless, ensuring constant countdown point for a variety of methods for human's attitude to the world, to set initial perspective which allows meaningful perception the variety of the surrounding us world out of a local point of a personal life activity. Location of a human in the world is not absolute; it is always within time, within businesses and actions of a human, within his work with senses and cultural characters.

K. Jaspers considered, analyzing works of F. Nietzsche, that his "will to power" is the basis of "being". Although in general, such assertion is disputable, because F. Nietzsche through the "will to gain power and authority" defined not the contents of "being" as the fundamental principles of human existence, but rather the contents of the world. Therefore, in the

concept of philosophy of life of O. F. Bollnow attributed concept of F. Nietzsche to so-called specific transitional period, when a philosophical idea was just preparing soil for the final division of life into two principally different notions: life as existence of the living matter, and "being" as existence of "a human aspect". M. Sheller in the concept of philosophy of life for the first time truly set apart those two concepts. But even earlier, along with transcendental phenomenology of Husserl, new direction in philosophy of life, which is existentialism, was under development and was growing in strength, which via K. Jaspers, psychologist by education, irrespective of any traditions, began to examine being only through the prism of the human factor, extrapolating to transcendental¹².

Existential philosophy demonstrated its inexhaustibility in the act of transcendental approach to the traditional metaphysics. Heidegger's orientation originates from the Christian dogmatic, under influence of which, understanding that a man is always greater, than one who is just gifted with ability to be conscious and cognate, took root in the European ideology. Except for the knowledge about the essence, a man is spiritually directed further - to transcendental aspects. Life of a human being is initially involved into the divine, which supports him transcendental nature.

Considering primary sources of the Christian understanding of a connection of finiteness of mind of a human being with the endless the Divine, we find antique traditions as well. New Platon's followers claim that intellect of a human is equated with the metaphor of light: "mental light". In course of time "mental light" of new Platon's followers was replaced by "Divine light" in Christian philosophy, by "enlightenment". Thus, in opinion of O. F. Bollnow, human transcendentality from the very beginning was connected with the specific enlightenment of the human mind.

Every philosophy from the beginning of its own way, as O. F. Bollnow remarks in his concept of philosophy of life, must have as its origin an act of self-renunciation, self-refuse, which requires considerable will and courage.

Thus, we can conclude that concept of philosophy of life of O. F. Bollnow, from one hand, discovers and investigates an important succession between concepts of "philosophy of life" and existentialism, on the other hand, it specifies and tries comprehend critically the contents of the basic

¹ Jaspers K. *The Origin and Goal of History*. translated by Michael Bullock. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1953.

² Jaspers K. *Einführung in die Philosophen*. München, 1971.

problematic ideas of the concepts of existentialism – the problem of the human “being” (existence of “human aspect”).

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**„TERAPIE INTELCTUALĂ”, CONVERSAȚIE ȘI SCHIMBARE
SOCIALĂ. RICHARD RORTY DESPRE FILOSOFIE
CA ANALIZĂ CONCEPTUALĂ¹**

Cătălin STĂNCIULESCU²

***Abstract:** For Rorty, Wittgenstein is a theorist of language as social practice, that is, a philosopher for whom, as Rorty interprets Wittgenstein's critique of ostensive definition, an object is what we say about it, rather than what it is independent of what can be said about it. This paper examines the philosophical and practical arguments raised by Rorty against the idea of philosophy as conceptual analysis based on the notion of grammatical rules, conceptual confusion and nonsense in terms of the notion of language as social practice.*

***Keywords:** grammatical rules, inferentialism, conceptual confusion, performative auto-contradiction.*

Rorty îl consideră pe Wittgenstein un teoretician al limbajului ca practică socială, adică un filosof pentru care - așa cum interpretează Rorty critica wittgensteiniană la adresa definiției ostensive -, un obiect este ceea ce putem spune despre el, mai curând decât ceea ce este independent de ceea ce poate fi spus despre el. O astfel de interpretare contrastează destul de mult cu aceea potrivit căreia Wittgenstein este un filosof pentru care activitatea filosofică constă în mod esențial în cercetarea conceptuală înțeleasă ca analiză transcendențială, ca o cercetare a condițiilor de posibilitate a folosirii expresiilor lingvistice. Orice astfel de cercetare ar fi, pentru Rorty, o “versiune revizuită a «logicii transcendente» a lui Kant”.³ Din punctul lui Rorty de vedere, “noi îi suntem recunoscători lui Wittgenstein pentru că a luat în derâdere ideea kantiano-fregeană că, așa cum s-a exprimat el, «logica este ceva sublim». Noi îl citim pe Wittgenstein ca pe un filosof terapeutic, a cărui importanță constă în faptul că ne ajută să scăpăm de acele moduri de a folosi cuvintele care generează pseudo-probleme”⁴ și astfel ne ajută să “ne târâm în afara sticlei, cenușii, triste, de

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²University of Craiova, Romania.

³Rorty, Richard, *Adevăr și progres. Eseuri filosofice 3*, traducere de Mihaela Căbulea, Editura Univers, București, 2003, p. 246.

⁴*Ibidem*, p. 247.

prins muște”.¹ Prin “noi” Rorty înțelege filosofii nominaliști, adică “oameni care nu vor avea nicio legătură cu filosofia transcendentă – cu descoperirea condițiilor de posibilitate (a conștiinței sau a limbajului sau a *Dasein*-ului sau a oricărui altceva)”², și astfel cu ideea că “ne putem angaja în două tipuri distincte de activitate: cercetarea empirică a condițiilor cauzale ale realității și cercetarea filosofică a condițiilor transcendente ale posibilității”.³ De aceea, Rorty este reținut în privința acelei sugestii a lui Wittgenstein că “scopul filosofiei este «claritatea completă» - o înțelegere neproblematică a modului în care sunt lucrurile într-adevăr, una care va da filosofiei pacea eternă”.⁴ Așa cum este rezervat și în privința “folosirii imprudente de către Wittgenstein a termenului «nonsens»”.⁵ Pentru Rorty, contribuția lui Wittgenstein constă în “sugestia sa alternativă că orice are un sens dacă îi dai unul”, și astfel că sarcina filosofiei “nu este aceea de a înlocui nonsensul cu sens, ci mai curând aceea de a înlocui o folosire sensibilă și coerentă a anumitor termeni cu ceva mai bun”.⁶ Această sarcină apropie modul în care Wittgenstein a înțeles filosofia de sensul hegelian potrivit căruia filosofia este timpul său prins în gândire, și modul în care a înțeles progresul filosofiei de ideea că acesta constă în “înlocuirea problemelor vechi cu unele noi – probleme create de o anumită folosire a cuvintelor cu probleme create de o altă folosire a cuvintelor”.⁷

Unul din motivele pentru care Rorty consideră neproductivă noțiunea de analiză critică bazată pe cercetarea gramaticală este acela că ea pare să nu țină seama de specificul disputelor dintre filosofi:

dacă utilizarea propriei cuvintelor, care interesează filosofii este întotdeauna o chestiune controversată, nu este clar că «analiza» este un termen potrivit pentru ceea ce fac filosofii... Diagnosticul filosofilor de «confuzie conceptuală» sau pretenția lor că au obținut «claritatea conceptuală» sunt, din punctul de vedere al lui Wittgenstein, moduri nu prea inspirate de a

¹*Ibidem*, p. 250.

²*Ibidem*, p. 246.

³*Ibidem*, p. 246.

⁴Rorty, Richard, “Analytic and conversational philosophy”, *Philosophy as Cultural Politics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, Sao Paulo, 2007, p. 127.

⁵*Idem*.

⁶*Idem*.

⁷*Idem*.

sugera cum poate fi transformată cultura, mai curând decât moduri de a face clar ceea ce s-a întâmplat mai înainte.¹

Un alt motiv este acela că diagnosticul de confuzie conceptuală s-ar putea să nu fie prea eficient în practică. În continuare, aş vrea să ilustrez atitudinea lui Rorty față de noțiunea de cercetare gramaticală încercând să redau modul în care Rorty ar răspunde încercării lui Adrian-Paul Iliescu de a aplica analiza filosofică bazată pe cercetarea gramaticală ca un tip de terapie intelectuală în cartea sa *Anatomia răului politic*.

Exercițiul terapeutic sugerat de Wittgenstein este îndreptat aici împotriva acelor „mitologii politice” care țin sau au ținut captivă mintea unor figuri politice și intelectuali români influenți, mitologii care alimentează două dintre „mentalitățile maligne care nu au încetat niciodată să-și exercite fascinația la noi: *maniheismul și aversiunea față de democrație*”.² Caracterul mai curând aplicativ decât explicativ sau clarificator al folosirii de către A.-P. Iliescu a noțiunilor, în special metafilosofice, ale lui Wittgenstein, face ca unele formulări să fie ușor diferite față de cele din studiul său sistematic despre Wittgenstein, „Filosofia târzie a lui Ludwig Wittgenstein. Dificultăți și provocări”³. Spre exemplu, aici este poate mai evident că regulile gramaticale au un caracter istoric. Astfel, regulile gramaticale sau convențiile, care pot constitui sursa captivității gândirii „n-au nimic inexorabil; ele pot fi schimbate”.⁴ Rezistența față de schimbarea unor astfel de convenții sau cadre de convenții, precum și „tendința de a folosi și extinde unele analogii convingătoare” sunt surse ale confuziilor conceptuale, ceea ce justifică funcția terapeutică a filosofiei ca cercetare conceptuală:

Este limpede că aceste confuzii sunt, într-un anumit sens, inevitabile, pentru că nu putem prevedea limita de la care analogiile noastre descriu nonsensuri și pentru că limbajul ne întinde la tot pasul capcane noi; ca atare, evitarea acestora, denunțarea confuziilor care apar mereu prin intermediul structurilor limbii nu este o simplă sarcină preliminară, temporară, ci, în

¹Richard Rorty, “Holism and historicism”, *Philosophy as Cultural Politics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, Sao Paulo, 2007, pp. 180-181.

²Adrian-Paul Iliescu, *Anatomia răului politic*, Fundația Culturală *Ideea Europeană*, București, 2005, p. 21.

³Iliescu, Adrian-Paul, “Filosofia târzie a lui Ludwig Wittgenstein. Dificultăți și provocări”, Studiu introductiv la Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Cercetări filosofice*, traducere din germană de Mircea Dumitru și Mircea Flonta, în colaborare cu Adrian-Paul Iliescu, Humanitas, București, 2004, pp. 21-82.

⁴*Ibidem*, p. 24.

fond, menirea însăși a exercițiului filosofic etern, înțeles ca terapie permanentă împotriva captivității gândirii” (ARP, p. 27).¹

Dar, în același timp, este parcă mai evident că cercetarea gramaticală urmărește dobândirea unei „vederi de ansamblu corecte” asupra lucrurilor: „captivitatea gândirii se datorează și multiplelor feluri de a eșua în a vedea lucrurile așa cum sunt” (p. 27). Însă, A.-P. Iliescu pare să confere un sens mai istorist noțiunii de „a vedea lucrurile așa cum sunt”, și un sens definit mai curând în termeni negativi, ca fiind ceea ce se obține prin distanțarea față de unele moduri de gândire specifice tradiției metafizice occidentale, sau prin îndepărtarea a ceea ce „ne împiedică să vedem ceea ce se află în fața noastră: a aspectelor care ne rămân ascunse tocmai datorită caracterului lor simplu și familiar – căci nu reușești să observi ceea ce stă tot timpul sub ochii tăi” (p. 28). Sau, în studiul istoriei ideilor și al mentalităților, ceea ce se obține prin „eliberarea din captivitatea abstracțiilor, fie ele imagini abstracte și schematice asupra unor teme intelectuale (necesitatea, raționalitatea etc.), sau instrumente de analiză a căror adecvare nu este deocamdată recunoscută (o idee specializată, tehnică îngustă despre *sens*, *intelect* etc.)” (pp. 36-37). Ceea ce împiedică obținerea unui astfel de mod de a vedea „lucrurile așa cum sunt” sunt confuziile pe care aceste surse le generează.

A.-P. Iliescu descrie și critică rezistența, în cultura română actuală, față de valorile democrației, a unora dintre intelectuali, în termeni ai unor astfel de confuzii. Un exemplu se referă la un anumit tip de atitudine critică la adresa democrației care este un rezultat al insatisfacției față de un anumit tip de relație între democrație și adevăr. Concret, unul dintre argumentele analizate de A.-P. Iliescu poate fi reformulat astfel (p. 312 și urm.): dacă democrația presupune alegerea celor mai buni, atunci ea se confruntă cu problema adevărului; problema adevărului se rezolvă „fie prin demonstrație fie prin revelație”, adică „prin tehnici care exclud marele număr și presupun modalități de selecționare bazate pe excelență”, și nu prin tehnici electorale de supunere la vot; democrația se definește în mod esențial prin aceste proceduri de supunere la vot; prin urmare, democrația nu poate rezolva problema adevărului.

A.-P. Iliescu respinge argumentul, respingând toate premisele sale. El respinge primele două premise arătând că dacă adevărul așteptat de la procedurile democratice de vot este factual sau empiric, mai curând decât a priori, atunci democrația fie nu se confruntă cu, fie rezolvă problema adevărului. De asemenea, el respinge a treia premisă, subliniind că

¹ Ibidem, p. 27.

democrația este mai mult decât procedurile sale electorale. Din punct de vedere al cercetării gramaticale ca terapie intelectuală, sursa „falsității” acestor premise este un set de „confuzii conceptuale”, dintre care unele provin din „impunerea unei proiecții interpretative greșite asupra democrației”, cum este aceea, subînțeleasă, „că mecanismul democratic ar fi un sistem de descoperire sau validare a Adevărului privitor la Binele general” (p. 312). Altele provin din considerarea procedurilor electorale ca fiind oarecum coextensive cu „substanța” însăși a democrației, și respingerea democrației pe temeuri de „irelevanță epistemică, morală sau politică” (p. 315). În fine, altele provin din credința că procedurile democratice nu pot conduce la adevăr pentru că prin ele nu sunt „niciodată aleși cei mai buni”.

A.-P. Iliescu respinge unele tipuri de argumentare bazate pe acest din urmă gen de confuzii pe motivul că ele nu au „valoare cognitivă” sau „autoritate rațională”, având în unele cazuri, atunci când sunt însoțite, spre exemplu, de ilustrări ale unor convingeri religioase, doar „o valoare simbolică”. Iar pe cele care se bazează pe celelalte tipuri de confuzii, A.-P. Iliescu le respinge arătând că procedurile democratice nu pot conduce la un Adevăr unic, cum nu pot oferi nici adevăruri formale sau revelate. Singurul tip de adevăruri pe care le pot produce astfel de proceduri sunt, în spiritul și substanța empiristă a gândirii politice a lui Mill, adevărurile factuale.

Cum ar răspunde Rorty argumentelor lui A.-P. Iliescu? Pentru că, în privința noțiunii de autoritate epistemică sau rațională, Rorty este de acord cu holismul și pragmatismul lui Brandom sugerat de afirmația acestuia că „toate problemele legate de autoritate și privilegiu, în particular de *autoritate epistemică*, sunt chestiuni legate de practica socială și nu chestiuni obiective de fapt”¹, iar în privința noțiunii de adevăr el consideră o consecință a criticii lui Wittgenstein la adresa definiției ostensive, sugestia, de inspirație davidsoniană, că propoziții ca „«Perseverența dă strălucire onoarei»” sunt adevărate „în același fel în care «Pisica este pe preș», «F=MA», și orice altă propoziție adevărată este adevărată”², Rorty ar răspunde în două moduri, în funcție de preferințele sau înclinațiile interlocutorului, moduri pe care, cred, A.-P. Iliescu, de asemenea, le folosește.

Primul s-ar adresa unui interlocutor care este familiarizat cu argumentele filosofice. Al doilea s-ar adresa unui interlocutor care este mai

¹Robert Brandom, „Heidegger's Categories in Being and Time”, *The Monist* 66, 1983, pp. 389-390; citat de Rorty, *Philosophy as Cultural Politics*, p. 7.

²Rorty, R., „A pragmatist view of contemporary analytic philosophy”, *Philosophy as Cultural Politics*, p. 138.

puțin familiarizat cu argumentarea și disputele dintre filosofi. În spatele acestei distincții dintre cele două tipuri de răspunsuri se află convingerea metafilosofică a lui Rorty că filosofia nu este în mod special o activitate în care cineva, mai ales dacă este metafizician, ajunge să fie prins în confuzii, ci un lucru care, așa cum spune Rorty, este interesant pentru unii și lipsit de importanță pentru alții.¹ Această strategie constă, în ceea ce îl privește pe A.-P. Iliescu, în a-i oferi interlocutorului motive practice referitoare la avantajele relative ale democrației în raport cu alte moduri de organizare socială și politică pentru cineva care crede în excelența culturală și profesională, dar are îndoieli, poate chiar îndoieli radicale, în privința modului în care democrația poate contribui la stimularea, întreținerea și dezvoltarea acesteia. Acestea sunt argumente referitoare la consecințele acceptării presupuzițiilor politice ale democrației, argumente care fac apel la „exemple de succese ale democrației, atât în rezolvarea problemelor interne, cât și în soluționarea crizelor internaționale“, la „corelații pozitive între democrație și dezvoltarea economică“ și, în mod special, argumente referitoare la „faptul că imensa majoritate a performanțelor culturale (științifice, filosofice, artistice sau tehnice) vine tot din Occidentul democratic“.² Astfel de argumente constau, în general, în a oferi interlocutorului ceea ce își dorește, încercând să-l convingă de faptul că ceea ce trebuie să schimbe în propriile credințe ar fi oarecum neesențial.

A.-P. Iliescu face apel la prima strategie atunci când încearcă să convingă interlocutorul că multe din lucrurile pe care le spune sau presupuzițiile unora dintre lucrurile pe care le spune, sunt consecințe ale unor confuzii conceptuale, în particular, ale unor confuzii epistemice sau semantice, cum sunt cele dintre adevărurile formale sau revelate, pe de o parte, și cele factuale, pe de altă parte, sau dintre credințele cu valoare cognitivă sau autoritate rațională, și cele cu valoare doar simbolică.

Dacă am avea de ales între adevărurile a priori și cele factuale, ar spune Rorty, adevărurile factuale ar fi într-adevăr modalitatea potrivită de a descrie relația dintre adevăr și democrație. El ar spune, mai departe, că aceasta este o modalitate de a folosi partea epistemologică a argumentelor politice ale lui Mill pentru a-i susține partea lor politică. Însă Rorty ar vedea probabil puțin diferit lucrurile. El ar încerca, așa cum sugerează Brandom, să vadă adevărul, și în general noțiunile epistemice sau semantice, din punct de vedere al politicilor democratice. În privința lui Mill, el ar păstra tot ceea ce

¹*Ibidem*, p. 139.

²Adrian-Paul Iliescu, *Anatomia răului politic*, Fundația Culturală *Ideea Europeană*, București, 2005, p. 322.

susține tipul de argumentare politică și ar adapta acele noțiuni la acest tip de argumentare. Căci, ar spune Rorty, atâta timp cât nu renunțăm la noțiunea de fapte care „pot vorbi de la sine, fără niciun comentariu care să scoată în evidență înțelesul lor”, nu este sigur că ceea ce Mill numește „[o]biceiul statornic de a corecta și completa propriile opinii prin confruntarea lor cu opinia altora” va deveni într-adevăr, așa cum ar vrea, desigur, atât Mill cât și A.-P. Iliescu, „singurul fundament stabil al încrederii noastre îndreptățite în ele”.¹ Căci a spune acest din urmă lucru înseamnă a accepta sugestia afirmațiilor lui Brandom că autoritatea, și în particular, autoritatea epistemică, este o chestiune de practică socială, mai curând decât una de obiectivitate, dacă prin obiectivitate se înțelege ceva distinct de practicile sociale. Iar din punct de vedere al unei abordări lingvistice, pentru a folosi expresia lui A.-P. Iliescu, aceasta înseamnă a vedea, așa cum face Brandom, „asertiunile ca asumptii ale responsabilității față de ceilalți membri ai societății, mai curând decât față de «lume» sau de «adevăr»”.²

Dezvoltarea filosofică a lui Rorty a acestei sugestii este aceea de a încerca să înlocuiască adevărul cu justificarea, arătând că putem contrasta aceste două noțiuni („adevărul” și „justificarea”), folosind, în acest caz, termenul „adevărat” într-un sens „prevenitor (*cautionary*)”, spunând „că o credință poate fi justificată dar nu și adevărată”.³ Cu acest sens, arată Rorty, termenul este folosit, „în afara filosofiei, pentru a contrasta audiențele mai puțin informate și audiențele mai bine informate, audiențele din trecut și audiențele viitoare. În contexte nonfilosofice, scopul contrastării adevărului și justificării este acela de a ne aminti că ar putea exista obiecții (care apar din date recent descoperite, sau ipoteze explicative mai ingenioase, sau o schimbare a vocabularului folosit pentru descrierea obiectelor discutate) pe care nu le-a formulat nimeni”.⁴

Din punctul de vedere pragmatist al lui Rorty, „singura diferență dintre adevăr și justificare care face diferența în practică este... diferența dintre audiențe vechi și audiențe noi”. Astfel, din punct de vedere pragmatist, „nu este mai important să avem o teorie filosofică despre natura adevărului sau despre înțelesul cuvântului «adevărat», decât este să avem una despre natura pericolului, sau despre înțelesul cuvântului «pericol».

¹J. St. Mill, *Despre libertate*, Humanitas, 1994, pp. 29-30, cit. de A.P. Iliescu, *lucr. cit.*, p. 318.

²Richard Rorty, *Philosophy as Cultural Politics*, p. 7.

³Rorty, Richard, „Universality and Truth”, in Robert B. Brandom (editor), *Rorty and His Critics*, Blackwell Publishers, Malden, Massachusetts, Oxford, 2000, p. 4.

⁴*Idem.*

Principalul motiv pentru care avem un cuvânt ca «pericol» în limbajul nostru este să avertizăm pe ceilalți: să-i avertizăm că s-ar putea să nu fi prevăzut toate consecințele acțiunilor pe care le propun”.¹

Pentru Rorty, o astfel de abordare, failibilistă, a adevărului oferă tot ce poate fi necesar în privința adevărului pentru susținerea democrației. Și ea este cel mai des întâlnită „printre locuitorii societăților bogate, sigure, tolerante”.² Cu siguranță, argumentele lui A.-P. Iliescu bazate pe adevărurile factuale ca tip de adevăr potrivit pentru modul de viață democratice favorizează acest tip de abordare. Prin urmare, diferența dintre A.-P. Iliescu și Rorty este, dacă putem spune așa, doar filosofică.

De aceea, contribuția lui Rorty la răspunsurile date de A.-P. Iliescu interlocutorului său, pentru care presupuzițiile (sau implicațiile) exclusiviste ale argumentului său, mai curând decât natura adevărului, par să fie importante, s-ar îndrepta fie către astfel de presupuziții, fie spre modalitatea specific metafilosofică constând în detectarea confuziilor conceptuale, evaluând-o din punct de vedere al eficienței ei argumentative și retorice. Pentru că în primul caz, o astfel de contribuție nu ar fi diferită de ceea ce oferă A.-P. Iliescu – constând fie în sublinierea importanței valorilor democratice, cum ar fi libertatea individuală, toleranța și inclusivismul, fie în sublinierea consecințelor negative ale exclusivismului pentru modul de viață și valorile preferate de interlocutor -, voi formula cealaltă contribuție – atitudinea lui Rorty față de cercetarea gramaticală ca detectare a confuziilor conceptuale ale interlocutorului, folosindu-mă de răspunsul lui Rorty la adresa strategiei argumentative și retorice a lui Habermas de a acuza interlocutorul de comiterea a ceea ce Habermas numește „auto-contradicție performativă” (*performative self-contradiction*), strategie care nu diferă prea mult de strategia wittgensteiniană a lui A.-P. Iliescu de a atribui interlocutorului comiterea unor confuzii conceptuale. Pentru că, argumentează Rorty, așa cum Habermas „crede că «discursul universal al unei comunități nelimitate a interpretării» este «inevitabil asumat» de oricine”, pentru că „pentru el «[c]hiar dacă aceste presupuziții au un conținut *ideal* care poate fi doar aproximativ satisfăcut, toți participanții trebuie să le accepte *de facto* [presupuzițiile comunicării] ori de câte ori ei asertează sau neagă adevărul unui enunț în orice fel și ar vrea să ia parte la argumentarea care țintește la justificarea acestei pretenții de validitate”³, și astfel că oricine poate recunoaște o auto-contradicție performativă, pentru că

¹ *Idem.*

² *Idem.*

³ *Ibidem*, p. 8.

poate recunoaște adevărul, A.-P. Iliescu pare să fie de acord că oricine ar putea în principiu să recunoască o confuzie conceptuală și să recunoască faptul că propria gândire este o „gândire captivă, și anume captivă în primul rând în limbaj”¹, pentru că în cele din urmă poate îndepărta „dificultatea de a vedea ceea ce pur și simplu se află în fața noastră: aspectele care ne rămân ascunse tocmai datorită caracterului lor simplu și familiar”.² Dar, s-ar întreaba Rorty, care ar fi utilitatea diagnosticului de auto-contradicție, dacă el poate fi stabilit în cazuri oarecum contradictorii? Spre exemplu, să luăm cazul unei persoane

care este deranjată (așa cum sunt mulți manageri ai universităților americane) de convențiile sociale ale celor mai bune părți ale celor mai bune universități – locuri unde chiar și cele mai paradoxale și lipsite de perspective pretenții sunt discutate în mod serios și în care feministele, ateii, negrii... sunt luați în serios ca egali din punct de vedere moral și ca parteneri conversaționali.³

Atunci când o astfel de persoană argumentează că astfel de convenții „ar trebui înlocuite cu altele, mai exclusiviste” comite, în termenii lui Habermas, o autocontradicție performativă. Dacă unei astfel de persoane, argumentează Rorty, i se spune că ceea ce face ea este să „formuleze pretenții de validitate care se află deasupra oricărui context, că țintește către adevăr, ea ar fi probabil de acord că este exact ceea ce face”. Dar,

[d]acă i se spune că nu poate formula astfel de pretenții și în același timp să evite paradoxurile pe care vrea să le evite și oamenii pe care vrea să îi evite, probabil nu va înțelege. Ea va spune că oamenii care propun astfel de paradoxuri sunt prea nebuni pentru a se discuta cu ei sau despre ei, că femeile au o concepție distorsionată despre realitate, și alte lucruri asemănătoare. Ea va considera irațional sau imoral, sau ambele, ca astfel de paradoxuri și astfel oameni să fie luați în serios.⁴

Astfel, persoana în cauză poate avea același tip de reacție ca și cel care este îndreptat împotriva sa. Ea poate acuza pe cineva de autocontradicție performativă, în aceeași măsură în care este poate fi acuzată. Atunci, se întreabă Rorty, de ce „rațiunea comunicativă” a lui

¹Adrian-Paul Iliescu, *Anatomia răului politic*, Fundația Culturală Ideea Europeană, București, 2005, p. 27.

²*Ibidem*, p. 28.

³Rorty, Richard, „Universality and Truth”, in Robert B. Brandom (editor), *Rorty and His Critics*, Blackwell Publishers, Malden, Massachusetts, Oxford, 2000, p. 8.

⁴*Idem*.

Habermas ar trebui să „favorizeze” ultima reacție mai curând decât pe prima? „De ce termenul «rațiune» nu este la fel de înțeles ca expresia «libertate academică» sau «moralitate», și de ce ar trebui să folosim „o noțiune non-contextualizabilă, non-relativizabilă, o piedică în calea conversației cum este «auto-contradicția performativă»”?¹ Ceea ce fac cele două persoane angajate în conversație, arată Rorty, „ceea ce ar trebui să facă, când li se spune că au încălcat presupuzițiile comunicării este să evalueze sensurile termenilor folosiri în formularea presupuzițiilor respective – termeni ca «adevăr», «rațiune», «comunicare», «dominație» etc.” (*Idem.*). Rezultatul, „norocos”, al acestei evaluări ar putea fi „o conversație reciproc profitabilă despre utopiile” celor două persoane – ideile lor „despre cum ar arăta o societate ideală, care favorizează o audiență ideală. Dar această conversație nu se încheie cu acceptarea de către persoana care apără convențiile exclusiviste că a fost prinsă într-o contradicție”.² Dacă totuși se întâmplă ca ea să fie convinsă de „utopia” opusă, inclusivistă, democratică, „reacția sa va fi aceea de a regreta propria sa lipsă anterioară de curiozitate și imaginație, mai curând decât de a regreta propriul eșec în a identifica propriile presupuziții”³ și a realiza că a comis o auto-contradicție performativă.

În mod corespunzător, s-ar întreba Rorty, de ce ar accepta interlocutorul lui A.-P. Iliescu că a căzut pradă unui „ghem” de confuzii? De ce nu ar răspunde și el în aceiași termeni, considerând atitudinea inclusivistă, tolerantă ca o sursă de confuzii conceptuale? De ce ar ajunge el să vadă „mecanismul electoral... [ca] mecanism de căutare a unui *modus vivendi*”⁴, „idealul toleranței” sau „votul, cu toate relativitățile sale, și cu inevitabilul său pluralism”⁵, ca pe niște lucruri care „pur și simplu se află în fața noastră”, dar care nu sunt întotdeauna accesibile „tocmai datorită caracterului lor simplu și familiar”⁶? Pentru că va realiza că făcea confuzii conceptuale, dar că acum a ajuns să vadă lucrurile așa cum sunt? De ce ar fi familiaritatea și simplitatea anumitor stări de lucruri, faptul că ele sunt lucruri din categoria celor care sunt „așa cum sunt”, mai ușor de înțeles decât noțiunea de pluralitate ireductibilă de păreri, sau de ideal al toleranței sau de inclusivism? Ar putea fi convins să accepte toate aceste atunci când i

¹*Idem.*

²*Idem.*

³*Idem.*

⁴Adrian-Paul Iliescu, *Anatomia răului politic*, Fundația Culturală Ideea Europeană, București, 2005, p. 313.

⁵*Ibidem*, p. 314.

⁶*Ibidem*, p. 28.

se va spune că dacă va recunoaște „marea de confuzii” în care se află, va ajunge să vadă lucrurile așa cum sunt? Sau, ar spune Rorty, aceste expresii ar putea să fie exact genul de lucruri care pot bloca o conversație? Aceasta este una din temerile cele mai acute ale lui Rorty, că filosofia ar putea fi uneori o sursă de blocaje conversaționale, în loc să fie un mijloc de continuare a conversației, și astfel un mijloc de a favoriza schimbarea socială și culturală.

O consecință a acestui mod de a vedea lucrurile este - și acesta este un alt motiv pentru care Rorty ar considera neproductivă noțiunea de cercetare gramaticală - că s-ar putea ca „înțelegerea corectă a lucrurilor” să nu fie tocmai un țel potrivit al cercetării filosofice. Pentru că un astfel de țel ar fi echivalent cu acceptarea faptului că

înțelesurile și conceptele sunt văzute independent de practicile sociale și de istorie. Pentru că numai dacă conceptele și înțelesurile pot fi izolate am putea identifica părți atomare ale ideilor sau gândurilor sau limbajului ale căror relații unele cu altele ar rămâne constante indiferent de cum sunt folosite așa cum relațiile între biții de hardware rămân constante indiferent ce program este rulat.¹

Pentru Rorty, Wittgenstein din perioada târzie a fost mai curând suspicios față de astfel de încercări atunci când a sugerat să înlocuim căutarea înțelesului cu cea a folosirii expresiilor. Astfel de sugestii au încurajat, arată Rorty, noțiunea de filosofie nu ca “o chestiune de potrivire a unor piese într-un joc de puzzle, ci ca o chestiune de reinterpretare și recontextualizare continuă a trecutului”.² Rorty îl consideră pe Wittgenstein un moment esențial în schimbarea atitudinii specifice filosofiei analitice timpurii față de concepte, pe care o întâlnim la Russell, într-una mai istorică și hegeliană, de tipul celei a lui Robert Brandom:

Brandom ne-a arătat că Hegel ne-a învățat cum să considerăm conceptele după modelul persoanelor - ca un tip de lucru care poate fi înțeles numai când îi înțelegem istoria. Cel mai bun răspuns la întrebarea: cine este într-adevăr o anumită persoană, este o narațiune despre trecutul său care ne ajută să explicăm comportamentul său recent. Cel mai util răspuns la întrebările referitoare la un concept este acela de a spune o narațiune despre modurile în care utilizarea unui anumit grup de cuvinte s-a schimbat în trecut, ca o pregătire pentru a descrie diferitele moduri în care aceste cuvinte sunt folosite acum. Claritatea care este obținută atunci când aceste

¹Richard Rorty, “Holism and historicism”, *Philosophy as Cultural Politics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, Sao Paulo, 2007, pp. 182.

²*Idem.*

moduri diferite sunt distinse unul de altul și când fiecare este interpretat inteligibil prin plasarea lui într-o narațiune despre folosirea trecută, este analoagă simpatiei crescute pe care o avem față de o persoană a cărei viață o cunoaștem.¹

Claritatea conceptuală pe care o presupune cercetarea gramaticală este însă dferită de acest tip de claritate, iar acesta este un alt motiv pentru care Rorty privește cu suspiciune noțiunea de cercetare gramaticală. Este vorba de “claritatea completă” ca scop al cercetării, un scop asemănător și înrudit cu cel al dobândirii unei “înțelegeri corecte și definitive a lucrurilor” și cu acela al dobândirii unei viziuni neutre, din perspectiva unui “fundal imuabil, anistoric” asupra lucrurilor.

Toate aceste motive sunt trăsături ale înțelegerii filosofiei ca analiză transcendențială, ca o cercetare a condițiilor de posibilitate în genere. Totuși, modul în care A.-P. Iliescu înțelege noțiunea wittgensteiniană de cercetare gramaticală nu se potrivește în întregime acestei descrieri. Este probabil adevărat că A.-P. Iliescu vorbește uneori ca și cum scopul filosofiei ar fi acela al identificării unor astfel de condiții. El vede în cercetarea gramaticală o analiză a “structurilor conceptuale existente” și “obținerea unei vederi de ansamblu corecte asupra acestor structuri și articulațiilor lor”.² Însă, în același timp, aceste structuri și aceste articulații au un caracter “local” și “contextual”, și au rolul de “criterii de aplicare cu sens a expresiilor”.³ De asemenea, atunci când interpretează noțiunea wittgensteiniană de condiții de posibilitate A.-P. Iliescu subliniază mai curând un fel de dependență de mediu, de ceva exterior jocurilor de limbaj (“univers de viață”, “forme de viață”), mai curând decât de ceea ce filosofii înțeleg în mod tipic prin condiții de posibilitate, adică sensul logic sau metafizic al acestora. În măsura în care sunt condiții de posibilitate ale folosirii expresiilor, regulile gramaticale sunt înțelese ca precondiții ale “oricărei «comparări» cu realitatea”⁴, ale oricărei descrieri, ele sunt “convenții lingvistice fundamentale”, care au de asemenea un caracter local și pot fi modificate (p. 60).⁵

¹*Idem.*

²Iliescu, Adrian-Paul, “Filosofia târzie a lui Ludwig Wittgenstein. Dificultăți și provocări”, Studiu introductiv la Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Cercetări filosofice*, traducere din germană de Mircea Dumitru și Mircea Flonta, în colaborare cu Adrian-Paul Iliescu, Humanitas, București, 2004, p. 28.

³*Ibidem*, p. 72

⁴*Ibidem*, p. 59.

⁵*Ibidem*, p. 60.

Cu greu am putea spune că o astfel de încercare nu are ceva în comun cu sugestia hegeliană a lui Brandom, subliniată de Rorty, de a trata conceptele așa cum tratăm uneori persoanele. Diferențele, pe de altă parte, provin din miza filosofică a interpretării textelor lui Wittgenstein de către cei doi filosofi. În ciuda aceluiași imbold spre claritate ca scop al cercetării filosofice, A.P. Iliescu îi conferă uneori acestora o importanță socială, mai curând decât individuală. Ca “terapie intelectuală”, filosofia reprezintă întotdeauna contrapartea eforturilor teoretice și filosofice constructive. Ea are un caracter pragmatist destul de evident, contribuind la evitarea “riscului” permanent de a rămâne “captivi” ai “unor «tablouri» sugerate de limbaj sau de interpretări teoretice influente”.¹

¹*Ibidem*, p. 54.

THE AESTHETIC LIFE OF POWER: AN OVERVIEW

James GARRISON¹

Abstract: *Subjectivation, the post-structuralist notion that contingency compels normative subjects to perform ritual norms in order to acquire recognition, autonomy and the means for survival, is a compelling theory for describing the relational bodily self. However, this notion advanced by Michel Foucault and Judith Butler focuses on the psychic life of power at the expense of its creative side, of exploring aesthetic bodily practice. Though lacking a modern critical sensibility, Classical Confucianism speaks in similar terms about ritual (lǐ) in everyday life, in its discursive, aesthetic, and normative aspects. The contemporary thinker Lǐ Zéhòu takes this basic vocabulary and expands it with his notion of subjectality, where early rituals are taken as artistic tools for the Marxian material economy of human survival, formalized in Confucianism, and sedimented with an internal structure of freedom in society's collective unconsciousness as a quasi-Kantian "noumenal humanity." All of this is to say that, society, much like the subject, is itself contingent. Subjectality and similar approaches (like that of Bernard Stiegler) can provide complementary symmetry to subjectivation by showing how conscious attention to social formation in self-disciplined practices like tàijí quán and the martial arts can lead the body to take on a life of its own, as a different type of Other, with novel modes of self-recognition not beset by unconscious social demands. Engaging subjectivation and subjectality in a comprehensive framework advances intercultural philosophy by showing not just the nature of the relational and ritually performative self, but the possibilities for growth.*

Keywords: *Post-Structuralism, Confucianism, Subjectivation, Subjectality, Subject, Power, Discourse, Ritual, Lǐ, Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, G.W.F. Hegel, Friedrich Nietzsche, Louis Althusser, Confucius, Lǐ Zéhòu, Karl Marx, Immanuel Kant, Bernard Stiegler.*

¹ University of Vienna, Austria.

It must cease forever describing the effects of power in negative terms: it “excludes,” it “represses,” it “suppresses,” it “censors,” it “abstracts,” it “masks,” it “conceals.” In fact power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. – Michel Foucault¹

Introduction

The task of accounting for how persons, how subjects are made is one where the traditional Western divisions of ethics and aesthetics merge, and it is in this regard that non-Western, particularly Chinese, and even more particularly Confucian, insights have a distinct advantage. Having dealt with ritual ethically and aesthetically over such a long history on its own terms, Confucianism can address aspects of person-making in ways that the best, though still ultimately tradition-bound efforts from Euro-American critical theory cannot.

Here the path is six fold, going through the critical post-structuralist notion of I) becoming subject, subjectivation, and the accompanying idea of II) autonomy alongside (III) the classical Confucian idea of ritual, *lǐ*, as well as contemporary notions of IV) subjectivity, a Confucian/Marxian-materialist approach to collective unconsciousness in social ritual, V) technique, and VI) somaesthetic (bodily) practice. This results in an intercultural account of how two traditions, one newer and reactionary and the other older and speaking more on its own terms, converge on an important issue for philosophy generally—understanding and broadening the radically A) relational, B) discursive, C) bodily, D) ritually-impelled self.

I. Subjectivation

The first key word here is subjectivation. Judith Butler follows Michel Foucault in using this term in describing how melancholy defines the emergence of subjects as they are induced to perform rituals in order to gain recognition from broader social forces. Butler specifically breaks her account down in terms of five key paradigms—Hegel’s Unhappy Consciousness, Nietzsche’s Bad Conscience, Freud’s Ego, Althusser’s Interpellation, and Foucault’s Power-Resistance Dynamic. All of these sources form her narrative of the body being turned on itself and trapped in a skin-tight

¹Foucault, Michel. *Surveiller et Punir: Naissance de la Prison*. Paris: Gallimard, 1975. p. 196.

prison, sentenced to go through ritual motions in order to get through the day, with the repetition itself bringing a meager measure of freedom in the form of rage re-appropriating the terms of the ritual/symbolic field.

Butler holds that a subject's identity arises from external normativity, which initiates and takes up residence within the inner sphere of self-consciousness.¹ In her view, what Hegel sees as the split between recognized master and recognizing slave internalized in Unhappy Consciousness, Nietzsche rearticulates in his notion of the Bad Conscience as a socially driven split of the self into tormenter and tormented, creditor and debtor.² Working from this convergence, Butler reasons that melancholy occurs as social forces form the psyche, with the social regulating the psychic sphere so that the subject's conduct occurs within social norms.³ In both cases, social forces establish the layout of the mind, regulating it and foreclosing socially unacceptable behavior. Therefore, in Butler's reading of Hegel and Nietzsche, the social regulates the psychic, leading to an internalizing of society's values. This enables the will to be tame enough to get by in society. The self, being so constituted, does not really possess its own will, but is formed in relation to others. Hence, in explaining the relational self, Butler writes, "the 'will' is not...the will of a subject, nor is it an effect fully cultivated by and through social norms."⁴ She suggests instead that the will is "the site at which the social implicates the psychic in its very formation—or, to be more precise, as its very formation and formativity."⁵ This signals that the subject is A) deeply relational.

Butler distills her notion of a will that formatively turns on itself with the help of Louis Althusser. Althusser sets a scene where a police officer yells "Hey, you there!" "You" turn around, recognizing yourself in this hail in a literal turn on self.⁶ The self, so recognized, guiltily submits before the law without reason. This plays out thousands times in the subject's life, where direct hails like "man," "woman," "white," "black," "straight," and "gay" and indirect cultural messages hail the subject into being, into acting out a certain role, thus enacting and enabling the psychic constitution of

¹Butler, Judith. *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997. p. 3.

² Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. *Phänomenologie des Geistes. Werke. Band 3*. Edited by Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970. p. 163.

³Butler, Judith. *The Psychic Life of Power* p. 171.

⁴*ibid.* p. 66.

⁵*ibid.*

⁶Althusser, Louis. "Idéologie et appareils idéologiques d'État. (Notes pour une recherche)." *La Pensée*. No.151. June 1970. p. 208.

particular subjects, all highlighting B) the discursive character of subjectivation.

This scene, like Hegel's Master-Slave antagonism and the imposition of Bad Conscience in Nietzsche's Creditor-Debtor model, greatly influence the subjectivation model, but the scene is seldom reducible to two parties. Indeed, for Foucault, those granting recognition are themselves subjects, watching and surveilling each other in society's grand, self-regulating, panoptical prison. In any case similarly pernicious effects result. The subject body unthinkingly turns on itself, disciplined and preternaturally ready to submit, be it to Althusser's singular authority or that of innumerable, invisible, displaced, and paradoxically ubiquitous "Others." The body that matters is the body that betrays itself for continued subject life. This body, ready to turn on itself, is initially inchoate and silent in a way that Butler likens to Aristotelian prime matter. It then becomes recognized and stamped over and over, leaving a discursive social form. The impressions form a subject, where the subject *is* a body that matters and betrays itself for continued subject life.¹ This calls attention to C) the bodily nature of subjectivation.

Before long, the subject ego is continually comporting the body to in order to achieve a dubious form social recognition. Taking up Foucault's language, repetition becomes the basis for discipline, whether it be within physical prison walls or those figuratively built by society as a means of control. With this repetition, behavior thus becomes patterned and conduct becomes a type of ritual performance driven by a need to maintain a level of recognition and legitimacy. This shows subjectivation to have D) a profoundly ritualistic character.

This turning of the self back upon the self occurs in such a way that there is no inside or outside prior to the formative turn, because that barrier is precisely what is being formed.² There is no core, no eternal soul that comes prior to the social implication of the psyche. Peeling back the onion only gets more onion and sifting through the sediment of past social relationships only yields more sediment. There is no redemption, in the sense of recovery of original essence or original soul, precisely because the soul is not a pre-given quantity, being instead always in the making. This marks a break with conventional notions of the soul, and in this the project becomes less about redemption and more about rehabilitation. Though

¹Butler, Judith. *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex."* New York: Routledge, 1993. p. 34; Butler, Judith. *The Psychic Life of Power.* p. 91.

²Butler, Judith. *The Psychic Life of Power.* p. 67.

Butler does not put it this way in her reading of Nietzsche and the imposition of slave morality, the implication is there—the challenge here is gaining, or perhaps regaining, a sense of nobility for this A) relational, B) discursive, C) bodily, and D) ritually-impelled subject.

In any event, Butler looks to Nietzsche's Bad Conscience and Freud's Superego dynamic for inspiration here, particularly as concerns the former's remark "that bad conscience *fabricates* the soul."¹ For both Nietzsche and Butler this fabrication is "artistic" in nature. This means that the subject, the co-articulation of psychic form and somatic matter, is itself a work of art created by our moral life. In appropriating Nietzsche, Butler describes the subject "as a kind of necessary fiction, [being] also one of the first artistic accomplishments presupposed by morality."² Following Nietzsche, Butler describes Bad Conscience as "the instinct for freedom made latent."³ She continues and, reminiscent of Nietzsche, claims that this form of self-consciousness is "a peculiar deformation of artistry" and that "the soul is precisely what a certain violent artistry produces when it takes itself as its own object."⁴

However, Butler does not follow up on the link between art and freedom, neither within the context of her analysis of Nietzsche, nor within the broader scope of her general project. Regarding Nietzsche, it is almost as if her appropriation stops precisely at the second stage of what his Zarathustra calls the metamorphoses of spirit.

Put another way, Butler follows much of Nietzsche's template regarding the assumption of society's burdensome norms in the first "camel" stage and the subsequent contrarian denial of those values in the second "lion" stage, but that she disregards the third stage—the child stage.⁵ Read in terms of Nietzsche's Zarathustra, this means that after saying yes to morality, and saying no to morality, there is no room in Butler's view for a different type of redemption, a joy of saying yes to oneself, to non-violent artistry, to constructive artistry, to *moral* artistry, to spontaneity, and to the creation of new values for the self. Now, it may well be the case that Zarathustra's particular *deus ex machina* resolution would ill serve the more

¹*ibid.* (emphasis preserved from the original text)

²*ibid.*

³ Butler, Judith. *The Psychic Life of Power*. p. 75; Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Jenseits von Gute und Böse. Sämtliche Werke. Kritische Studienausgabe in 15 Einzelbänden*. Ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari. Vol 5. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1988. ¶17.

⁴*ibid.* pp. 75-76.

⁵Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Also Sprach Zarathustra. Sämtliche Werke: Kritische Studienausgabe in 15 Einzelbänden*. Ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari. Vol 4. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1988. pp. 29-31.

sober work by Foucault and Butler on subjectivation. But putting the eccentricities of Nietzsche's project aside, there still remains the challenge set forth by him of *affirming* A) relational, B) discursive, C) bodily, and D) ritually-impelled subject life in a way that links artistry and autonomy.

II. Autonomy

And so, the second key word here is autonomy. Butler's account is all about how the subject is recognized and gains a very costly autonomy from the Other. And so, subjectivation, especially as presented by Butler, seems not just serious, but grim. For her, the subject has no real resources except those problematically granted by power structures and thus no way out, leaving only creative metonymy in the form of enraged resistance to twist already pre-given terms of discourse in order to expose the absurdity of social constructions like pink being for girls and blue being for boys or of race being presented as an objective fact.

Therefore in order to supplement, and not undermine, subjectivation theory, I propose looking at another possibility—an intercultural approach. Subjectivation is all about a body turning on itself in order gain recognition and status through embodying social norms and roles ritually performed in everyday life. Why not then look at a philosophical tradition, which is sensitive to A) the relational self, to B) discursively-formed roles, to C) the body, and to D) ritual performance *and* which has the added benefit of being more attuned to the artful side of subject life than post-structuralism? Why not look to other sources? Why not look at Confucianism?

Stemming from the so-called “axial age,” the rough time period in which Plato and Aristotle were active, the still-living tradition of Confucianism set the stage for ensuing East Asian philosophical schools, furnishing much of the basic vocabulary, with its notions of role-based ethics, ritual, and family proving particularly influential up into the present day.

The benefit of Confucianism, spanning the classic and the contemporary, is that here it can do what the largely reactionary enterprise of critical theory cannot—that is, speak in its own voice about person-making. This sort of paradigm allows for looking at the relational self in terms beyond endless struggle and points to real autonomy.

Therefore, a historical reading of the key Confucian terminology relating to society and self will drive the first part of the investigation here, allowing for evaluation of the major debates within the Chinese tradition. Confucians have dealt with the issues at play here in fights with Mohists and Daoists as well as in quarrels within the tradition like the clash between

Mencius and Xún Zǐ on human nature. Parsing these arguments with respect to the historical development of Confucianism can help anticipate major topics only recently emerging for critical theorists and point to novel senses of autonomy not determined by prevailing power structures.

III. Ritual Propriety - *Lǐ*

And so, perhaps unexpectedly, the third key word is *lǐ*. Unlike post-structuralism, which, as a new field, seeks to *re-define* terms like “body,” “power,” “subject” and so on, Confucian philosophy has developed on its own terms and has its own vocabulary for dealing with many of these issues, with *lǐ* being perhaps the most important here because of its A) relational, B) discursive, C) bodily, and D) ritualistic senses.

Lǐ means ritual propriety,¹ broadly connoting everything from the subtly ritual-habitual to grandiose formalities. *Lǐ* is social grammar.²

Lǐ, as Confucius puns, provides knowledge of where to stand.³ *Lǐ* coordinates the where and when of social comings and goings. *Lǐ* attends to gesture and comportment. *Lǐ* describes how the players and the audience each take their various places, and act just so at just the right time. *Lǐ* forms a pair with *yuè*, music, or more precisely musical theatre, with connections to all arts.⁴ *Lǐ* bring a convergence of bodily movement and moral excellence.⁵ *Lǐ* is both a social grammar and a social choreography. *Lǐ* encompasses the ethical and the aesthetic nature of A) the relational self.

Lǐ speaks to how language stands in society. *Lǐ* connects the regulation of cultural expression and of society. *Lǐ* sets up codes of difference and deferral in the basic historical movement of discourse. *Lǐ* addresses much of what Derrida does with *différance*.⁶ *Lǐ* expresses how B) the discursive climate defines how people live up (or down) to social role archetypes.⁷

¹Ames, Roger T. & Rosemont, Henry Jr. “Introduction.” *The Analects of Confucius*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1998. p. 51.

²*ibid.*

³Confucius. *Lúnyǔ yìzhù*. Edited by Jīn Liáng Nián. Shanghai: Shànghǎi Gǔjí Chūbǎnshè, 2004. §8.8, §16.13, §20.3.

⁴*ibid.* §16.5, §17.11; Ames, Roger T. *Confucian Role Ethics: A Vocabulary*. p. 74.

⁵Mencius. *Mèngzǐ Jīn Zhù Jīnyì*. 3rd Edition. Edited by Wáng Yún Wǔ. Taipei: Táiwān Shāngwù Yīnhūguǎn, 1978. p. 410 [§7.79].

⁶Hall, David L. & Ames, Roger T. *Thinking Through Confucius*. Albany: State University of New York, 1987. pp. 292-293; cf. Derrida, Jacques. *Marges de la Philosophie*, Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1972. pp. 8-9, 12-13.

⁷Confucius. *Lúnyǔ yìzhù*. §13.3.

Lǐ describes the body that stands. *Lǐ* relates linguistically to *tǐ*, the corpus, with a sense surpassing simple physical matter, pointing to the dynamic, ongoing arrangement of bodies.¹*Lǐ* grounds self-cultivation, *xiūshēn* in Chinese, literally habilitating the person, the body. *Lǐ* addresses the role of ritual in physical growth, coordination, and habituation. *Lǐ* works in relational processes. *Lǐ* thus deals with both C) “individual” human bodies and common bodies politic.

Lǐ provides knowledge of when to make a stand. *Lǐ* conditions social relations. *Lǐ* establishes bounds and bidirectional demands between ruler and advisor, parent and child. *Lǐ* refers to D) a ritual-based sense of appropriateness, including knowing when and how to call out inappropriate failure to fulfill a name or role.²

In sum, *lǐ* points to the thread running through it all, and through the work of Butler and Foucault as well—the artful process of cultural sedimentation and normative subjectivation.

This similar, though distinct, vocabulary opens up a new avenue for dealing with the A) relational, B) discursive, C) bodily, and D) ritually-impelled self of subjectivation, showing how society’s grand apparatus of normative rites, what Foucault might call power, might enable as well as constrain. Though Foucault and Butler do make this point themselves, their political commitments lead them to focus on the latter as expressed in notions like bodily subject life being a prison or discourse being composed of sign chains. Could there be perhaps another side to things here? Could rites, could *lǐ*, taken with a bodily and artistic sense, serve not just as a tool of power against the subject, but perhaps a tool for the subject’s self-cultivation? Might *lǐ* help not only to empower the subject, but to subject power to reappraisal, especially as regards the basic dynamic of contingency, necessity, and autonomy underlying subjectivation?

IV. Subjectality

Subjectality is the fourth term here, and this neologism speaks to the historical roots of subject life and the use of collective cultural psychology as a tool to define human society. Subjectality is the term that contemporary philosopher Lǐ Zéhòu crafts to translate the phrase *zhǔtǐxìng*, literally “subject-body nature,” in describing ritual’s formative role in human social life and its artful use as a tool for human survival. Post-structural

¹Ames, Roger T. *Confucian Role Ethics: A Vocabulary*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2011. p. 109.

²Xúnzi. *Xunzi* (2 vols.). Translated by John Knoblock and Zhang Jue. Changsha: Hunan People’s Publishing House, 1999. §13.5, §19.3 & §19.9. cf. Confucius. *Lúnyǔ yìzhù*. §12.11.

subjectivation does well in talking about technologies of the self, but subjectivity gets at the root *tekhnē* with its blend of premises from Marx, Confucius, and Kant.

Briefly, Li uses Marx's statements on the "humanization of nature" and the "naturalization of humanity" to explain how shamanistic art, music, and rituals were tools for social cohesion operating in the early material economy of human survival.¹ Moving forward historically, Li Zéhòu sees Confucianism as being particularly apt (but not exclusively so) at describing and formalizing that cultural/psychological edifice sedimented in subject rationality.² Finally, Li turns to Kant and Marx in reconsidering the Confucian framework of "being inspired by poetry, taking a stand with *lǐ* [rites], and finding perfection in music"³ to describe how tools like ritual artifice form humankind's supra-biological body, thus allowing for labor on an object, on a "noumenal humanity" akin to "Jung's collective unconsciousness," to provide an aesthetically structured source of internal freedom.⁴

Here rather than just observing the sprawling artwork called society, the subject also participates, furthering the prevailing ritualized cultural psychology and thereby grounding recognition and social legitimacy. The ground being, for Li Zéhòu, that humans naturally excel at artifice,⁵ at the art and craft of building society and culture in the deployment of labor and material. This approach gives hope that, if the species is naturally capable of the sometimes dark artistry behind the social formation of ritual normativity, individuals might then rehabilitate this prior, though often concealed form of creativity and put it to work in daily subject life.

Subjectivation, while being useful in talking about the machinery of person-making, can lose sight of what can be termed the *tekhnē* behind the machine. Li Zéhòu looks to this oversight with his notion of subjectivity and the formation of collective ritual normative structures.⁶ Subjectivity extends subjectivation by showing the constitutive role of artistic creativity in the unconscious rhythm of the everyday. This rhythm, this background hum of

¹Li Zéhòu. *Huáxià měixué*. Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2001. pp. 67-71; cf. Marx, K. & Engels. F. *Werke*. Vol. 1. Berlin: Dietz, 1956. pp. 537-546.

²Li Zéhòu. *Huáxià měixué*. pp. 67-69.

³*ibid.* p. 67; Confucius. *Lúnyǔ yìzhù*. §8.8.

⁴Li Zéhòu. *Huáxià měixué*. p. 69; Li Zéhòu. *Měixué Sì Jiǎng*. Beijing: Sānlián Shūdiàn, 1989. p. 109; Li Zehou. "Subjectivity and 'Subjectivity': A Response". *Philosophy East and West*. Vol. 49, No. 2. Apr 1999. pp. 174-175; cf. Jung, C.G. *Gesammelte Werke Band 9: Die Archetypen und das Kollektive Unbewusstsein*. Zürich: Rascher, 1976. pp. 13-17.

⁵Li Zéhòu. *Měixué Sì Jiǎng*. p. 75.

⁶*ibid.* p. 109.

ritual practice, can become a symphony when properly attuned. This is what it means to refine *lǐ* in practices like *t'ai chi ch'uan* and the martial arts, where the body takes on a *life of its own*, as a different type of Other.

These practices thus transform rigid, regular, and sometimes punishing discipline into a type of learned and practiced spontaneity. This phrasing might seem counterintuitive if not outright contradictory, but such disciplined spontaneity accords well common phenomena. Take, for example, the way in which in the arts, in music, training is necessary for genuine, skillful improvisation. Confucianism, starting from well before Lǐ Zéhòu, has understood this and addressed the nature of practiced spontaneity in subject life more generally. To wit:

The Master said: "At fifteen, I was determined to learn; at thirty I took my stand; at forty there was no longer any doubt; at fifty I realized the propensities of the heavens; at sixty my ear was attuned; at seventy I could follow my heart-and-mind freely without going too far."¹

In short, discipline gives way to mastery gives way to autonomy and spontaneity. The twist here is bringing improvisation and a measure of unanticipated and unregulated autonomy to the discipline meted out in the course of the subject's psychic life. In this manner, self-disciplined self-cultivation opens up novel modes of self-recognition that outstrip any founding disciplinary power, thereby changing the basic stakes for subject autonomy.

Lǐ Zéhòu's work on subjectivity shows the need for subjectivation theorists to better address the aesthetic side of subject life in the ongoing creation of the social field. Though he is not directly addressing subjectivation theorists, Lǐ perhaps nonetheless surpasses the post-structuralists in responding to the following gauntlet thrown by Foucault:

It must cease forever describing the effects of power in negative terms: it "excludes," it "represses," it "suppresses," it "censors," it "abstracts," it "masks," it "conceals." In fact power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth.²

Lǐ Zéhòu does precisely this in describing the historical material roots of subjectivity. What is the upshot of this, then? Nietzsche anticipates the benefit of an approach like Lǐ Zéhòu's. Though the bolder statements of Zarathustra on creativity as an ineffable, child-like, yes-saying spontaneity pose difficulties, Nietzsche points to how understanding the formation of

¹Confucius. *Lúnyǔ yìzhù*. §2.4.

²Foucault, Michel. *Surveiller et Punir*. p. 196.

social custom can bring a realistic, plausible possibility of self-growth. On the confinement of thought by language and social habit, Nietzsche writes:

Only by forgetting this primitive metaphor-world...only through the undefeatable belief that this sun, window, and table might have a truth in itself, in short, that one forgets oneself as a subject, and indeed an artistically creating subject, does one live with any calm, security, and consistency: if one could get out of the prison walls of this belief for a moment, then "self-consciousness" would immediately be gone.¹

And here, the language of subjectivation, particularly the voice of Judith Butler comes back into the conversation. What Nietzsche is pointing to, much like *Lǐ Zéhòu*, is a dynamic of foreclosure. Here the idea is that forgetfulness sets in as habits sediment in the most basic use of religious-cultural-aesthetic-normative technologies, forming something akin to what Jung means when he speaks of collective unconsciousness.

V. Technique

The fifth key word here is "technique," referring particularly to French phenomenologist Bernard Stiegler's work, which has a great number of interesting connections to the discussion here. Of interest is his description of how the proliferation of "technization" leads humanity to a profound forgetfulness, where access to origins is lost and remembering original, authentic temporality occurs through attention not to organic or inorganic matter, but to how we organize matter, *i.e.* how techniques temporalize existence.² Though Stiegler's work represents a somewhat anthropological approach to *Dasein* that might upset chapter-and-verse Heideggerians, it excels in showing how the development of humanity and futural care for being, borne of anticipation and ultimately being-toward-death, occurs neither through the subject (who?) nor the object (what?) of primeval techniques, but with "*différance*...below and beyond the who and the what."³ And so, humans invent techniques *and* techniques invent humanity, both on a macro-level of ongoing, continual human *epigenesis* and on the micro-level of the human individual and "the accents of his speech, the style of his gait, the force of his gesture, the unity of his world."⁴

¹Nietzsche, Friedrich. "Über Wahrheit und Lüge im außermoralischen Sinne." *Sämtliche Werke. Kritische Studienausgabe in 15 Einzelbänden*. Ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari. Vol 1. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1988. pp. 883-884.

²Stiegler, Bernard. *La technique et le temps: La faute d'Epiméthée*. Paris: Galilée/Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie, 1994. p. 31.

³*ibid.* pp. 151-152.

⁴*ibid.* pp. 150-153.

Stiegler defines techniques (*tekhnē*) in terms of savoir-faire, skill, pointing to “politeness, elegance, and cuisine” as techniques, and observing that only with the latter being the kind of overtly material “productive” technique that forms the traditional understanding of techniques where an artisan serves as the efficient cause of *poiēsis*.¹

Here, we have a concise, though dense, statement of Stiegler’s view, whereby the same forces that prompt Heidegger’s *Being and Time*, the loss of the question of the meaning of Being, are those that lead to the subject-who overshadowing the object-what, with the world set apart in parentheses from other egos who happen to meet inside it.² In Stiegler’s view something is lost when attention turns away from somewhat more subtle techniques like “politeness” and “elegance” (with their clear resonance with Confucian ritual *lǐ*, and which Stiegler intriguingly and similarly links to dance) and toward technical activities where the calculable element conceals “the *différance* that *Dasein* is” with it being “*tekhnē* that gives *différance*, that gives time.”³

For Stiegler, following Marx and detouring through evolutionary anthropology, this means the humanization of nature and the naturalization of humanity whereby the question of the meaning of being emerges. Stiegler, addressing what he sees as shortcomings in Heidegger’s account vis-à-vis the “dynamic of *organization*,” maintains that this occurs through techniques that themselves are the constitutive organon of the interior and exterior, of the who and the what, of the subject and the object, of the technician and the material.⁴ With historical, cultural, and economical forces sedimenting and concealing the temporality of techniques, the interior/who/subject/technician/Aristotelian efficient cause becomes the star of a narrative where human subjects stand over objects and master more and more banal technology at the expense of authentic technique.⁵

Now, in terms of his greater phenomenological project, Stiegler is calling for a reconsideration of *tekhnē* with regard to the meaning of being. However, within the space of *this* project and *its* theme of normative subject life, that call echoes with a similar appeal to return attention to the finer technologies of ritual, of *lǐ*. And so, despite the complexity of their works and their varying theoretical commitments, there is a convergence in how Bernard Stiegler and Li Zéhòu frame the issue of how finer techniques with

¹*ibid.* pp. 105-106 (emphasis preserved from original text).

²*ibid.* p. 257.

³*ibid.* pp. 227, 240.

⁴*ibid.* pp. 151, 248-249 (emphasis preserved from original text).

⁵*ibid.* pp. 248-249 (emphasis preserved from original text).

a ritual basis lie at the root of human life (with whatever scope or definition) and how such techniques become covered over and lost with the passage of time. Though the idioms differ and perfect translation remains elusive, the conversation ultimately has great bearing on the main topic here—that of something being lost and foreclosed in becoming a normative subject and the possibility of recovery through artful ritual technique.

The point common to Nietzsche, Stiegler, and Li is that the human, cultural, traditional, political animal has always had an aesthetic bearing rooted in the ritualized organization of labor and material and that there are structural reasons why human subjects work ceaselessly to forget this. But is this forgetfulness a foreclosure? An *ur*-foreclosure? What would an *ur*-foreclosure be? How can this forgetfulness be understood not just as a memory lapse, but as having the specific structure of “never, never” and ungrieved grief so crucial to Butler’s account? How can Stiegler’s language of forgetfulness of authentic temporality and Li’s of the sedimentation of collective unconsciousness connect to the terminology for foreclosure set out by Butler? And most importantly, how does any of this help with the question of the subject’s plight?

Recall that for Butler subjectivation on an individual level occurs through the foreclosure of certain possibilities for attachment. Foreclosure here has the specific meaning of “never loved, never lost” such that subject life occurs as a type of melancholy, a pre-empted mourning, a grief that can never be grieved because what is lost, even in the subtle losses of what Freud terms “setbacks and disappointments,” is an “object-loss [is] withdrawn from consciousness” for subjects intent on and *dependent* on self-monitoring and self-punishment.¹ The subject stays intact as a subject through disciplinary power, as internalized in the watching, surveilling super-ego, closing off the possibility of even thinking about certain forms of attachment (*e.g.* queer and interracial, to give a few specific examples from Butler’s work on contemporary power structures).

The *ur*-foreclosure is the such that, to use Nietzsche’s words, “one forgets oneself as a subject, and indeed an artistically creating subject.” The “never, never” structure occurs in the subject never being attached to something other than the necessity-contingency dynamic of subjectivation, such that the very idea of indeed being an artistically creating subject becomes lost. The word “subject” itself and the confining notion of being

¹Butler, Judith. *The Psychic Life of Power*. p. 23; Freud, Sigmund. “Trauer und Melancholie.” *Gesammelte Werke. chronologisch geordnet. Zehnter Band Werke aus den Jahren 1913-1917*. Edited by Anna Freud. London: Imago, 1940. pp. 431, 437.

“thrown under” indicates the extent of not only what has been lost, but of what has been foreclosed *as* lost. The artful side of subject life is what is lost and never properly grieved in an *ur*-foreclosure stretching back to the very formation of early human ritual life in what Nietzsche calls “this primitive metaphor-world.”¹ Though not directly responding to Nietzsche, the point that both Stiegler and Li end up making in varying ways to his dilemma is that attunement to this *ur*-foreclosure, occurring through real material work, can help to recover what has been lost. Putting it all together and responding to the issues highlighted by Foucault and Butler, this means making the bodily ritual material of subject life artful.

And so, thinking in terms of subjectivity opens up the possibility of attuning oneself to the artistic fashioning of the long-sedimented and often unconsciously neglected world of signs, gestures, rituals, and cultural productions in and through which subjects emerge. If the sign chains of discourse and the skin-tight prison of the subject’s body are themselves understood as having been built, as a sort of artistic achievement of social technology, then society appears contingent, much like the self. The basis of power is recognition, and recognition requires repetition, and repetition requires a ritual performance so that the power structure of recognition might be embodied and internalized. If all of that is a human invention, what Foucault might call a technology of self, why then be limited to the unconscious, sometimes slavish performance of everyday normative rituals? Why not then explore the possibility of empowering subjects, especially in the bodily dimension, through consciously self-directed ritual?

These questions point the way to the response. It is aesthetic because of its attunement to the body. It is artful insofar as it reveals and thrusts the contingent technology of subjectivation into unconcealment. It is, simply, ritual attention to the body, or to borrow a somewhat recently coined word it lies in “somaesthetics.”

VI. Somaesthetics

Somaesthetics is the sixth and final key word here, and it refers to a pragmatic, intercultural approach to conscious bodily/somatic cultivation with the aim of broadening subject life. Somaesthetics is the signature paradigm of Richard Shusterman, an American pragmatist and intercultural philosopher. Shusterman resists using the term “body” for its connection to oppositional mind/body dualism, opting instead to use the term “soma” to refer to what he calls “a living, feeling, sentient body rather than a mere

¹Nietzsche, Friedrich. “Über Wahrheit und Lüge im außermoralischen Sinne.” pp. 883-884.

physical body that could be devoid of life and sensation.”¹ Though he does not present himself as a China expert as such, he quite aptly points out the way in which core Confucian vocabulary takes the integral role of somaesthetics as a basic premise, leading him to describe his own usage of “soma” in terms of the Chinese word for body, *shēntǐ*, where he writes:

If the *ti* body in classical thought is closely associated with generative powers of physical life and growth and the multiplicity of parts (such as the bodies four limbs), the *shen* body is closely identified with the person’s ethical, perceptive, purposive body that one cultivates and so it even serves as a term for self. The concept of *shenti* thus suggests the soma’s double status as living thing and perceiving subjectivity.²

Likewise in his use of the term “aesthetics,” Shusterman simultaneously emphasizes soma as both perceiving as self-fashioning, as observer and artist, as it were. “I thus both am body and have a body,” as Shusterman says.³

When it comes to artistically cultivating the soma, Shusterman is interested in many practices including “various diets, forms of grooming and decoration (including body painting, piercing, and scarification as well as more familiar modes of cosmetics, jewelry, and clothing fashions), dance, yoga, massage, aerobics, bodybuilding, calisthenics, martial and erotic arts, and modern psychosomatic disciplines like Alexander Technique and Feldenkrais Method.”⁴ The connections here to *lǐ* are obvious, as all of these approaches bring together ritual and self-cultivation, as are the connections to Foucault’s work on care for the self, both of which Shusterman references. The practices of interest to Shusterman all can provoke somatic awareness, albeit in different ways, but for him a similar effect obtains in a kind of family resemblance, namely a new sense of self in everyday relations. The thinking here is that as one is more attuned to the soma, unconscious habit becomes conscious practice. An example of this familiar to many can be found in the focus that many disciplines place on breathing and awareness of breathing. This is supposed to spill over to everyday life, allowing for conscious reflection on typically unconscious changes in breathing, say in

¹Shusterman, Richard. *Body Consciousness: A Philosophy of Mindfulness and Somaesthetics*. New York: Cambridge, 2008. p. 1

²Shusterman, Richard. “Somaesthetics and the Utopian Body.” *International Yearbook of Aesthetics: Volume 14, 2010*. Ed. Wang Keping. Beijing: International Association for Aesthetics, 2010. p. 85.

³Shusterman, Richard. *Body Consciousness*. p. 3.

⁴*ibid.* p. 24.

states of agitation, arousal, etc., including those arising from latent feelings about race, sex, gender, and the like.¹

When conscious ritual bodily practice takes on a life of its own, genuine autonomy becomes possible with self-recognition not being wholly determined by the Master, the creditor, the power structures of the day, or the pejorative Other. And so, much like subjectivation, somaesthetic practice takes repetition and turns it into autonomy, though the mode of self-recognition here brings a measure of freedom from outside norms unlike the quasi-autonomy promised by subjectivation and the recognition of others and the Other. Looking at somaesthetic practice with subjectivation in mind, it is thus possible to see how the basic stakes of contingency, necessity, and autonomy can undergo a definite shift *and* how this can change subject life for the better. While superficially similar, this is unlike Zarathustra finding grand spontaneity in embracing the eternal return of the same, as this program of somaesthetic self-cultivation points to perhaps a more realistic notion of free growth modeled on the social, affective, and cognitive play that recurring experiences of art, artistry, and artfulness generally bring.

Considering the aesthetic life of power in terms of subjectality and somaesthetics in this way is not meant to counter the observations made by Foucault on subjectivation and Butler's extension of that work in her *Psychic Life of Power*. In that book, Butler sets out a strategy for resistance against harmful, life-threatening power structures using the weakness inherent in what Nietzsche calls "sign chains." As Butler explains, as time passes and historical accidents occur "a sign is bound to signify in ways that estrange the sign from the originating intentions by which it is mobilized."² Since it is impossible for one person alone to simply "invent" discourse without using material at hand, since it is impossible to invent out of nothing the terms whereby society recognizes self and self recognizes self, the strategy is to exploit the weakness of terms given by power for the initial purposes of subjectivation, subjugation, and subjection through re-signification. A common, if somewhat prosaic, example can be found in the subcultural re-appropriation of words like "nigger" and "queer." Perhaps a better example, and Butler's own, is the hyperbolic re-appropriation of conventional gender norms in drag performance, allegorizing heterosexual melancholy and the way in which those norms are formed through the loss of a loss, through the foreclosure of certain socially dangerous possibilities.³ Put roughly, this

¹ *ibid.* p. 131.

² Butler, Judith. *The Psychic Life of Power*. p. 72.

³ *ibid.* p. 146.

approach does not promise freedom from the sign chains of subjectivation, but it suggests that some small freedom of movement might be possible as those chains rust.

The assertion here is somewhat different. The claim is that it is possible to use the sign chains of power to chain power, that it is possible to tie power in knots. With subjectivity theory and somaesthetic practice drawing attention to the contingency of entrenched power structures, there exists the possibility of new forms of self-recognition not fixed by the terribly sublime necessity of the powers that be. This is to say that, by feeding the basic premises of a system back upon itself, paradoxes unanticipated by that system result. Here, somaesthetic practice informed by subjectivity takes one of the major “rules” for subject life, that it be ritually regulated, and it uses ritual self-regulation to expose the contingency of those originally given rules. And so, in keeping with Butler’s approach to resistance, this approach does not posit the use of anything beyond the sign chains already there, nor does it depend on miraculous redemption. But going beyond her approach and the negativity and rage to which it necessarily and with good right leads, the claim here is that turning attention to the aesthetic life of power can open up some minor possibility for affirmation and hope.

To take what might be a more familiar and pleasantly accessible example, consider the Wizard of Oz. Seeing past the simulacrum of the Wizard of Oz to the pasty old man at the machine does not change the circumstances for Dorothy and the rest, but knowing that his “power” is similarly contingent allows the heroes to realize that they have been able to face those circumstances with this sort of less grandiose power all along.¹ Now, nothing so dramatic as an all-revealing curtain pull is possible in the case of the subject, for subjectivation takes place through a multitude of encounters where countless different rituals are enacted with a variety of other subjects. But just as subjectivation occurs from a thousand different points, so too can a thousand tiny curtains be pulled back in a thousand particular contexts, all aggregating into burgeoning recognition of the ultimate contingency of subjectivation’s rites and rituals. The material, bodily, somaesthetic work of realizing this contingency takes place across a manifold of settings and it does not erase the subject’s basic needs, meaning that there is no easy answer like that of Dorothy tapping her heels together three times and chanting “There’s no place like home.” Home does not even

¹ Baum, L. Frank. *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1999. p. 128; *The Wizard of Oz*. Directed by Victor Fleming. 1939. Beverly Hills, CA: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1997. DVD.

make sense for this kind of relational subject, this kind of soul in the making, if only because the fragmented discipline of subject life proves so far from home, so uncanny, so *unheimlich*, that it precludes any simple A-to-B-and-back-again narrative. Nonetheless, even if nothing like Zarathustra's redemption of the will or a ruby-slipper returntrip to Kansas is in the offing, exposing the contingency of subjectivation can bring genuine improvement to the subject's situation.

Conclusion

To sum up, this approach does not completely solve the problems of I) subjectivation, but by providing a new sense of II) autonomy through conscious attention to how III) *li*, in the process of IV) subjectivity, a sedimentation of V) techniques in collective unconsciousness occurs, VI) somaesthetic practices can ameliorate the dilemma bit by bit and that this can supplement rather than supplant resistance strategies exploiting sign chain rust by also creating tension with sign chain knots.

The claim being advanced in this project is that by confronting the effects of I) subjectivation and obtaining II) newfound autonomy with conscious attention to III) *li*, IV) subjectivity, V) technique, and VI) somaesthetic feeling, the subject goes past what Slavoj Žižek terms Butler's "mere 'performative reconfiguration'...within the hegemonic field"¹ in appropriating the technologies of the self for use on the self, thereby restructuring the hegemonic symbolic order in something like the way that Žižek is after and setting a new direction for critical theory (one hopes).

Moreover, a framework so built on the notions of subjectivation, autonomy, *li*, subjectivity, technique, and somaesthetics furthers the enterprise of intercultural philosophy. This approach advances intercultural thinking by pointing to a fruitful convergence being possible amidst supposedly disparate bodies of thought, and it does so, not out of intellectual vanity, but in its response to the genuine philosophical call to think through how the A) relational, B) discursive, C) bodily, D) ritualistic self might encounter itself anew as a work of art hewn in the medium of everyday practice.

¹ Žižek, Slavoj. *The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Centre of Political Ontology*. London: Verso, 1999. p. 264.

ON THE RELATION HUMAN BEING – NATURE. FROM ZOON POLITIKON TO THE JURIDICAL FORMS OF ASSOCIATION

Gabriela VASILESCU¹

Abstract: *In our times the human being has a clear status from the one the foremodern human being had. If the ration was the normative element and the developed culture was for foremodern human beings one of the duty, with the modernism the task was replaced with the rights's culture. The human being's status with the nature was settled through a series of normative laws covering a huge area of actions. The human being's relation with the nature will remain controversial and any excessive way will lead to lack of poise for both parts. The article is meant to reflect the partnership's need between human being and nature, the legal regulations having the role to protect both actors of the relationship.*

Keywords: *nature, human condition, international conventions, environmental law.*

La nature n'a fait ni serviteurs, ni maître.
Denis Diderot

The evolution of ancient rationality towards the freedoms and the rights of the modern man

Man was and remains a social being, meaning the open-mindedness manifested by his structure towards the social context which offers him the possibility to affirm his identity against the background of sociability indicated by thought and language. Human behaviour is engraved in a familial structure and then extended to the organisation of the state which functions through the institutions that sustain its activity. The political and social geography creates constantly new reference points in the dynamics of social individuals. The alternation of the social environment between mutual consent and reification represents the expression of the stages covered in organising the social context. The process of Structuring the human relations is influenced by the power of action of the moral values that generates moral feelings in the collective mind. A similar thesis concerning the sociability of the human being belongs to Aristotle, according to whom the human being

¹ Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiesti, Romania.

can't manifest unless he is oriented / guided by norms, by moral and juridical values, which are present beyond the natural environment. Such norms and principles do not operate against nature, providing bridges towards it and regulating the social context. "The city is nothing more than the association of equal beings seeking for the best way of life. [...] Every nation, pursuing happiness and virtue in special ways, it also organises its life as well as the State on special bases"¹. If we take into account the structure of the state and its institutions we must consider the administration of the State "which will provide the greatest amount of happiness for all its citizens"². In order to create such a city it was and it still is required for a sovereign government of the city to pursue the public interest. Science of government (politics) seems to remain an ideal to fulfil since Aristotle's time to the present day, constantly reminding us that good government implies a permanent agreement between the individual and the other social individuals, including the natural environment that he occupies temporarily.

Irrespective of the form and the dynamics of the government, human being was conditioned by his settlement in a natural space. If the possession of the space was an initial gesture gradually man desires to become the owner of that environment, his connection with nature orienting him more and more. There appear a series of abuses of power that proves the weakness of the political institutions playing a major role in governing any community. The so-called human superiority in relation to nature led to many forms of alienation that create difficulties for the human being. In this sense Schopenhauer characterized man as "the shameful stain of nature", "a monster by his abuses in clothing, in eating meat, in drinking spirits, in tobacco, with his white skin, with his vices and diseases"³.

The idea of the relationship between human being and nature represents the major ontological problem in philosophy, the foundations of the world being illustrated in natural factors such as water, air, fire, earth, explanatory principles for everything that has the property of being. The void and the full as structures of everything that has durability constitutes

¹ Aristotel, 2008, *Politica*, Semne, București, 161/ Aristotle in 23 Volumes, Vol. 21, translated by H. Rackham. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd. 1944.

² Aristotel, 2008, 172.

³ Schopenhauer, Arthur, *Parerga et Paralipomena* cap. XXVI, 305 Schopenhauer, Arthur, *Parerga and Paralipomena: Short Philosophical Essays*, Volume I, Oxford University Press, USA, 2000/Schopenhauer, Arthur, *Sämmtliche Werke*, tom II, *Parerga und Paralipomena*, Verlag von Philipp Reclam, Leipzig.

the bases of Chinese philosophy and they are also to be found in the perspective of understanding the earth's crust, the energies that this is developing.

The call to nature is to be found during the Greek -Roman period – a stage of perceiving the world and of understanding the human being as a particle of the universe, subject to the same rules and obeying the same principles. That is the reason why man is held responsible for his actions and is the master of his life. As we notice, this period anticipates the free will promoted by Christianity, holding the man responsible for all his deeds. Man must assume the existential interval between birth and death, according to human thinking, arising from the universal reason. Each one of us is the owner of his life, as described by Epictetus in his work “69. The greatest achievement of nature is to combine and harmonise desire with decorum and with usefulness”¹ and human behaviour should follow the laws of nature “88. As the sun does not wait for imprecations, or for magic formula to arise, but settles at once, directly, being welcomed with delight by everyone, the same way you should not wait for applause, praise, sound of trumpets in order to commit a good deed, but you should do good out of your will own and you will be loved like the sun”².

Seneca was the one who considered that the very wisdom “means not to deviate from nature, to educate yourself following its laws and its example. Therefore a happy life is the one in accordance with nature”³. A happy life is ‘sure when judgment is right and steady’⁴. All these exhortations imply harmony with one’s own life, with the lives of others and with the environment in which one lives. The environment can never be ignored and the human existential status knew different perspectives of interpretation during the eras that followed, depending on how life was appropriate to nature and the disturbances occurred when the damage was directed on the natural environment.

The vision of Stoic philosophers on the relationship between man and nature will see a new image in modern philosophy, Rousseau creating the model of the natural human being and offering a first explanation for

¹ Epictet, Marcus Aurelius, 1977, *Manualul.către sine*, traducere D.Burtea, Editura Minerva, București, 48) Epictetus, 1995, *The Art of Living, The classic Manual on Virtue, Happiness and Effectiveness*; a new interpretation by Sharon Lebell, Harper Collins Publishers.Inc.

² Epictet, 1977, 51.

³ Seneca, 1981, *Scrieri filosofice alese*, traducere Svetlana Sterescu, Editura Minerva, București,132/ Seneca, *Selected Philosophical Letters*, Translated with an Introduction and Commentary by Brad Inwood, Oxford University Press Inc., New York, 2007

⁴ Seneca, 1981,134.

human alienation, integrated in the artificial of the social context. All the vices and evils arise once the natural environment is counterfeited resulting in a social environment friendly or hostile to life in general and to human individuals in particular. The natural man fights against the lost nature hidden in every individual, a natural tendency that can not be destroyed by any social context. The natural man is illustrated by every person and it is enough to be yourself in order to become again what you were initially. The whole harm brought about by the contrivances of history and society can not alter the essence of the individual. This hope animates any search on the decipherment of the human condition.

The natural man, the model offered by Rousseau, is the main actor of the origin myth, the archetype that represented the ideal model, the eternal, the constant return in order to withstand the becoming and the degradation. All life on earth receives that original kindness in order to preserve and to unify:

”Je ne vois dans tout animal qu’une machine ingénieuse, à qui la nature a donné des sens pour se remonter elle-même, et pour se grandir, jusqu’à un certain point, de tout ce qui tend à la détruite, ou à la déranger [...]

La nature commande à tout animal, et la bête obéit. L’homme éprouve la même impression, mais il se reconnaît libre d’acquiescer, ou de résister; et c’est surtout dans la conscience de cette liberté que se montre la spiritualité de son âme: car la physique explique en quelque manière le mécanisme des sens et la formation des idées; mais dans la puissance de vouloir ou plutôt de choisir, et dans le sentiment de cette puissance on ne trouve que des actes purement spirituels, dont on n’explique rien par les lois de la mécanique.”¹

From that original kindness that is subject to the laws of mechanics, the man is aware of his freedom, of his power to choose and of other spiritual acts which go beyond the mechanical determination, giving it a different status, a different way of being in which any course of action chosen implies at the same time an assumed responsibility as well. This new position of the human being means an assumed configuration of the context of social life, a new map of coordination of the environment proper to living in a community. Finding a form of association was initiated by the sophist Lycophron but it was disregarded by the science of government offered by Aristotle. It had existed as the principle of justice in Plato’s works, which meant to respect the laws established by the political power, to pay what you owe (Cephalos), to fulfil that duty that is suited (oikeiopraxia). This abstract model of the city stated the supremacy of the general interest in

¹ Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 1971, *Discours sur l’origine et les fondements de l’inégalité parmi les hommes. Discours sur les sciences et les arts*, G.F.-Flammarion, Paris, 170-171.

relation to individual selfishness and cherished the good and rational life to those who ran after money and false distinctions.

“...the intention of the legislator, who did not aim at making any one class in the State happy above the rest; the happiness was to be in the whole State, and he held the citizens together by persuasion and necessity, making them benefactors of the State, and therefore benefactors of one another; to this end he created them, not to please themselves, but to be his instruments in binding up the Stat”¹.

Justice and laws later represented the normative feature of modern philosophy, its interest residing in finding a form of association to harmonise the interests of the members of the city:

“The natural condition of the individuals can not depart from anything else than from their equality in relation to their rights and obligations ‘nature made men so equal in the faculties of body and mind that, even if we can sometimes find a man visibly stronger or wiser than another, when we put these together, the difference between these persons is so great that one can claim for himself, on this ground, an advantage that the other is not able to claim to the same extent’².

The constant ‘state of war’ in which the persons with sovereign authority find themselves generates the fact that the notions ‘right and wrong’, ‘justice and injustice’ lose their meaning. The solution could reside in finding a way to diminish the obstacles that lie in the way of using one’s own original right. This is the natural right by which one preserves his life by obeying to *lex naturalis* - a general rule that commands man to defend and to be willing to make peace.

“One can do without a right simply by giving it up or by transferring it to another person. By simply renouncing when he does not care about who receives the benefit of his giving up the right. By transfer when this benefit is intended by him to a certain person or certain people”³.

Any social contract meets the conditions of transfer and states the obligations of the parties. A treatise on government was written by John Locke in order to describe how the natural power is entrusted to the

¹ Platon, 1986, *Republica*, Partea a III-a, 520 a; în *Opere*, vol. V, Ed. Științifică și Enciclopedică, București, 319/ Plato, *Republic*, Translated by G.M.A. Grube, Revised C.D.C. Reeve, Hackett Publishing Company, 1992, P.O., Box 44937, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46244-09371.

² Thomas Hobbes, 2011, *Despre om și societate, Leviatanul*, traducere Mona Mamulea, Ovidiu Grama, All, p.9/ Hobbes, Thomas, 2010, *Leviathan*. Revised Edition, eds. A.P. Martinich and Brian Battiste. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press.

³Hobbes, Thomas, 2011, *Despre om și societate, Leviatanul*, 22.

community and sets out rules allowing free expression and complete equality of the civil society.

“Those who are united into one body with a common established law and judiciary to appeal to, with authority to decide controversies and punish offenders, are in civil society with one another; whereas those who have no such common appeal (I mean: no such appeal here on earth) are still in the state of nature, each having to judge and to carry out the sentence, because there isn’t anyone else to do those things for him”¹.

Another perspective was developed by Jean Jacques Rousseau, the one who proposed saving the natural human condition through the social contract, an act of rational will, able to harmonise human nature with the human condition and which transforms human nature into a victim and responsible for the whole procession social evils. Passions and pleasures are the ones that impose the reunion of the people in society. Such emotional states generate hostility in interpersonal relationships. The social pact is that form of association “qui défende et protège la force commun, la personne et les biens de chaque associé, et par laquelle chacun s’unissant à tous n’obéisse puortant qu’à lui-même et reste aussi libre qu’auparavant”². Such an association maintains the equality of its members guided by the general will: “Chacun de nous met en commun sa personne et toute sa pouissance sous la suprême direction de la volonté générale; et nous recevons en corps chaque membre comme partie indivisible du tout”³. The pact reinforces cohesion among the associates and orientates their action towards the public good. It is an ideal found also in the ideas presented by Plato on his Republic.

Human rights will be developed in an abstract model to cover various aspects of the life and forms of activity: civil and criminal law, accompanied by their procedures, family law, labour law, social security, financial law, administrative law and a series of Humanities which directs the analysis towards the changes and events that occur in society with the purpose of regulating the relations between man and society.

¹ Locke, John, 1999, *Al doilea tratat despre cârmuire*, traducere Silviu Culea, Nemira, București, / Locke, John Second Treatise of Government, <http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/pdfs/locke1689a.pdf>, 28

² Rousseau, Jean Jacques, 2001, *Du contract social. Discours sur l’origine et les fondements de l’inégalité*, Maxi-Livres, Paris, 28.

³ Rousseau, Jean Jacques, 2001, 29.

From human rights to environmental law

"By nature men are similar; by practice men are wide apart".
Confucius

Normative aspects of partnership with nature

If the modern age showed interest in organising the social life so that the general will was the one that harmonised the interests of all social individuals and that protected their goods, the relation between man and the natural environment and human generates efforts to understand and search for solutions to protect both parties involved. In this relation between man and nature, protecting the environment represents a priority, due to imbalances that occur in human life and in the climate events. The difficulty of the existence and the forgery of human living generated efforts to find suitable rules in order to regulate the abuses that man takes on nature. And these abuses diversified, perverting the taste and the human behaviour, destroying the boundaries between good and evil, between justice and injustice.

If justice was an ancient value that guided the public behaviour, representing one of 'the assets that deserve to be acquired, not only for their results , but much more for themselves', the importance of morality is diminished in the profile of the contemporary man who is influenced by the "hostility towards the spirit and the fall into barbarism"¹. The rationalism of thinking emerges victorious, proving that the normative aspect lies beyond the individual and that 'humanity must be declined at plural². Man is forced to adopt a different behaviour, to drop the arrogance of superiority in his relation with nature and this new state of affairs can only take the form of partnership, harmonising all human actions with the register of natural regularities.

The harmony with nature preached by the Stoics seem to have difficulties to be accomplished nowadays, knowing the nature assuming a self-reflexive effort initiated by Socrates but rejected by today's motivational options. In this formative process a special part is held by philosophy which makes possible 'the research without any prejudice or predetermination and which "focuses its attention on the fundamental notions of the real -

¹ Husserl, Edmund, 1992, *Meditații carteziene*, Humanitas, București,15/Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditation*, Kluwer Academic Publishers,Translator Dorion Cairns, Dordrecht/Boston/London.

² Finkielkraut, Alain, 1992, *Înfrângerea gândirii*, Humanitas, 19/ Finkielkraut, Alain, 1995, *The Defeat of the Mind*, translation and introduction by Judith Friedlander, New York Columbia University Press.

sensitive or oversensitive, natural or supernatural – and on the fundamental notions of the ideal - unreal or fictional”¹. The role of the debates initiated by philosophy is to eliminate any form of dogmatism and intolerance from the analysis of the relationship between man and nature, to overcome the limits of common sense and also the fragmentation that characterises the natural science, and to offer freedom of expression in the analysis of issues concerning the universe of the most affected inhabitant on Earth – man.

The status of man in his relationship with nature was regulated by a series of normative acts which cover a large area of actions:

- legal regulations that must be observed related to nature and the structure of earth;
- ethical norms that regulate human behaviour in relation to actions of exploration and exploitation of natural resources;
- correlation between human needs and the conventional and unconventional fuel;
- the application of the best practices and standards to limit the imbalances in the human actions over the natural environment;
- the identification of alternative resources that can reduce the disruptive effects on the soil resources.

To these requirements we can add a series of international conventions - laws, regulations, measures, norms, procedures and practices - which are designed to harmonise the national policies with the international ones. We enumerate a few of them, their succession being imposed by the imbalances manifested on the different levels of natural environment: the International Conference from 1960 in London for the protection of human life on sea; then a series of normative acts regarding the protection of seas and oceans, the 1972 Stockholm Convention concerning marine and earthly pollution; the 1974 Paris Convention on marine pollution of earthly origin. After these discussions and protection measures of the marine habitat, the focus is on all the structures of the earth : the earth Summit from Rio de Janeiro in 1992, materialised in Agenda 21 which includes measures of economic growth, social equity and environmental protection; the 1994 United Nations Convention to Fight Desertification, followed by the Basel Convention on the reduction of the transfer of dangerous substances between countries and a special convention in Vienna debating the transfer of nuclear materials. Then the 1997 Kyoto Protocol that was meant to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, followed in 1998 by a series of measures to protect the quality of the soil, the 1998 Aarhus Convention on access to

¹ Florian, Mircea, 1993, *Misticism și credință*, Minerva, București, 10.

information on environmental matters and still in 1998 the World Congress of Soil Science took place in Montpellier, a congress that stresses the fact the pedosphere represents the planetary interface which accounts for the existence of life on the earth's crust.

The Budapest Summit of 11 October 2013 highlights the role of water in contemporaneity updating the perspective of the School of Miletus, mainly Thales' conception (640-550 BC) considering that the unifying principle of the world is water, the beginning and the basis of everything. Water is the matter from which Earth solidified. All things come and go back in the water, while it remains eternal. The ideas from the pre-Socratic ancient Greek are updated by debating the issue of water as "central factor of shaping the earth system and the human history. Therefore, water carries the collective memory of humanity. Water has had a main role within our development.; " factor shaping both earth system history and human history. Therefore, water carries the collective memory of humanity. Water has been instrumental in our past development.1.)" . The document states that: "2. Water unites. It unites people among and across generations, nations and cultures and is a source of cooperation."¹ In this respect, water management is essential for the sustainable development and poverty eradication . The policies and the strategies of management are conceived to provide the necessary water resources to the communities and to ensure food security. This imperative takes into consideration the fact that water connects several important socio-economic sectors of life in society : health, nutrition and energy.

An important message of the Summit refers to the need of global solidarity for the proper management of water resources. All countries are invited to ratify the UN Convention on the waterways from 1997 and the UNECE Convention from 1992. To achieve the objectives there is sustained the idea of intergovernmental organizations which should deal with and manage the global water issues . To this proposal which unifies thought and action in the world it can be added a fundamental psychological factor for the human attitude in relation to water , that of changing the human behavior concerning the use of water in everyday life . The relationship between man and water must be a partnership for each generation , a relationship that also means the way in which man relates to all the natural

¹http://budapestwatersummit.hu/data/images/Budapest_Water_Summit_Statement_Final__11_October_2013.pdf

structures . Any excess rate affects during different periods the rhythm and the human life expectancy. Factors contributing to the awareness of the partnership between man and water are education , the local and central administration and the scientific personalities who capture attention and public confidence through competence. To achieve this goal there should be achieved a closer relationship between laboratory research and public life to provide information needed by the public space in order to use new technologies .

All these forums for debate and decision demonstrated the obligations of the world states to protect Earth as the owner of the natural resources that make human life possible. At the same time the necessary distinctions between terrestrial and Planetary Ocean were made to highlight the particularities of each structure and the regulation of human behaviour in relation to them to avoid natural disasters.

A common problem in today's debate which remains on the agenda of the 21st century is that of shale gas.

The shale gas issue between profit and public enemy

The epistemological aspect of the shale gas issue

The shale gas is a natural gas trapped inside the shale formations, in the pores of hard rocks with low porosity and permeability and which lie at depths of 3-5 km in relation to the earth's crust. If the conventional natural gas is compact, the shale gas is spread and for this fact it is considered an unconventional gas. The first aspect that arises is that of the need for unconventional gas. Can we meet our current need for fuel by the conventional one or our need goes beyond this sphere? Perhaps the answer could lie in the field of scientific interest, providing new cognitive horizons.

The second aspect concerns the location of the shale gas in the rock, specifically the location in the cracks of the rocks, and the process by which it can be brought up to the surface is the release from the cracks of the rocks that hold it. This is where, from what we know so far, a series of procedures called high-volume hydraulic fracturing is applied, a process performed by vertical drilling to the shale layer followed by a horizontal action. Then in the horizontal well apertures are made by detonation of explosives. Next a quantity of water, sand and chemical additives is injected. The method is applied according to each operator, without having a general picture of the effects for each geographical area in which they were applied.

The third aspect resides in the resources consumed. The amount of water injected is huge estimated at 20-30 million litres, a fact that

substantially changes the structure of the ground in an unnatural way. From the experience so far, the average fracture for a well is 18 times and 150 tons of chemicals substances are used per fracturing.

The polluting aspect of fracking

A part of the quantity of methane is released in the atmosphere, polluting the air. The methane is accompanied by toxic volatile substances under the form of powders which aggravate the air pollution. In the same time the substances used in hydraulic fracturing added in the water get through the cracks of rocks to the groundwater which is thus contaminated by them. The energies unleashed from the shale layer cause certain movements with surface effects. Fractures occur in the earth's crust followed by a rearrangement of the soil.

The informational aspect of hydraulic fracturing

Information concerning this subject of fracturing should form a separate chapter of the measures taken to protect the environment and the human life. To exemplify we mention the fact that the European Commission issued a recommendation aimed at establishing adequate guarantees for the environment and the climate when it comes to fracking, this technique of hydraulic fracturing of high-volume hydraulic fracturing used on shale gas operations. Any state using this technique should have clarified the practices applicable in order to manage the risks to public health and to the environment; moreover this information should be public. The experts will decipher the information and the general population will trust their professional performance. As a result the precedent will represent an argument for the unity of the voice of the community. The effect on the community members is due to the practices and the results obtained in other geographic areas where shale gas exploitation has been applied and the population of the area suffered the consequences. A complete account of the situation is planned to be drawn up for the public information in order to mention the situation of the European countries that apply this method of unconventional fuel exploitation. The effects will be reviewed after 18 months starting with December 2014, and the result will become the reference system for future action in the European Union.

Conclusion

The considerations on human condition have been and remained present in the international philosophical debates. A series of trends and tendencies were noticed, all meaning to decipher the possible reactions of the human being in his relation to nature and to his fellows. If norms and moral values seem to be the most influential on human behaviour, then the institutional constraints seem to discipline the man in his actions with effects on the change of the natural or social environment. That is the reason why we need a set of rules, norms and principles to regulate such actions and to set the boundary between allowed and forbidden. The responsibility belongs to the human being and assuming it is quite a difficult thing. Man desires power without knowing how he will manage it. We take a Romanian perspective on the existential status of man considered as “the certified of a Sunday order”¹ by the “mode of existence in the horizon of mystery and for its revelation”², an exceptional order which guides the evolution of all of us who “are a part of the Planetary family”³ and the thinkers ought to shed light on issues that “serve humanity” (Diderot). We all want the responsibility for the actions to be assumed for each project and communicated transparently to the population dwelling in the area involved in the project. The relationship between man and nature are as important as the relationship between people because man remains “the measure of all things” (Protagoras).

¹ Blaga, Lucian, 1987, *Artă și valoare*, în *Opere vol.10*, Minerva, București, 510-511.

² Blaga, Lucian, 1977, *Ființa istorică*, Dacia, Cluj-Napoca, 216.

³ *Codul etic al amerindienilor*, art.11.

CONCEPT OF UNIVERSAL RELIGION IN SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND MAHATMA GANDHI – AN INTROSPECTION

Harsha BADKAR¹

***Abstract:** The purpose of this paper is to put forth the basic similarity between the religious views of Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi and suggest that their approach to religion has the potential to bring about peace and harmony in the world which is torn apart due to the dogmatic approach towards Religion. Through this paper I also want to suggest that Gandhi's concept of *Sarva dharma sama bhava* (equal respect for all religions) was influenced by Vivekananda's concept of Universal religion and that his interpretation of the word Secularism guided by Vivekananda is the only solution to the problems created by fundamentalist approach to religion.*

***Keywords:** Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Secular Religion, Spiritualism, social philosophy, political philosophy.*

Introduction: The purpose of my paper is to put forth the basic similarity between the religious views of Swami Vivekananda and Mahatma Gandhi and suggest that their approach to religion has the potential to bring about peace and harmony in the world which is torn apart due to the dogmatic approach towards religion. Through this paper I also want to suggest that Gandhi's concept of *Sarva dharma sama bhava* was influenced by Vivekananda's concept of Universal religion and that his interpretation of the word Secularism is the only solution to the problems created by fanatic and fundamentalist approach to religion.

As early as in the 1890s, Vivekananda was the first to talk about interfaith harmony, peace and universal spiritual brotherhood, far before it became absolutely necessary for the survival of humankind in the 20th and 21st centuries. It was Vivekananda who impressed the whole world with his views on religion and influenced majority of the social leaders of his time including Gandhi. Gandhi himself acknowledged the impact Vivekananda had on his life by confessing that his love for India became a thousand-fold after reading Vivekananda's work. At the Belur Math, Gandhi was heard saying that his whole life was an effort to bring into actions the ideas of Vivekananda.

¹ Wilson College, Mumbai, India.

Thus it is pertinent to say that “Gandhi was the most charismatic Indian leader of the twentieth century as Vivekananda was of the nineteenth¹.” Both of them faced the problem of communalism which they tried to tackle in their own way. Vivekananda chose the spiritual path to bring harmony in the society whereas Gandhi combined the spiritual journey with the political movement as he believed that spiritual emancipation cannot occur without socio-economic equality and political freedom. Thus the major difference between the two was that Vivekananda rejected politics, while Gandhi believed that religion could not be separated from politics and suggested the novel concept of spiritualisation of politics through which he attempted to develop the political theory and strategy on the strong foundation of religion. He was greatly influenced by his political mentor Gokhale who believed that it is only when truly spiritually oriented people get actively involved in politics that it will be possible to find some effective solution to the problem of religious conflict. Following this view, Gandhi believed that religion has tremendous impact on each and every aspect of human life and therefore it cannot be separated from politics. He equated God with Truth and believed that it was his devotion to The Truth that had drawn him to politics. According to him, ‘those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means².’

Through this paper I am trying to suggest that in spite of the fact that Vivekananda always tried to stay away from the politics whereas Gandhi was totally engrossed in the political movement, there is a close affinity between the two and that the spiritual leadership provided by Vivekananda served as the base for Gandhi’s political movement. Therefore it is pertinent to assess the striking similarities between Vivekananda and Gandhi which are both interesting and instructive to reflect upon the bond that existed between two of them.

1. Inspired by Indian philosophy: The first important common factor between the two is their contribution of putting the Indian philosophy at the centre-stage of world thought through its spiritual and religious treasure. They refused to blindly follow any of the western models and made attempts to develop a unique model suitable to Indian society based on the unique heritage of ancient Indian culture. Both of them had original and powerful minds and an innate faith in the inherent strength of Indian culture. They took inspiration from Indian Philosophical traditions,

¹ Nanda, B. R., 2002, In Search of Gandhi: Essays and Reflections, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 68

² Parekh Bhikhu, 2005, Gandhi: A very short introduction, Oxford Uni. Press, 45

especially *Vedanta*, on the basis of which they presented a new design for life which stressed upon contentment and compassion.

Vivekananda believed that religious harmony and tolerance to different viewpoints is engraved in Indian culture ever since *Vedic* times. As he declared, "In the *Vedantic* ocean a real *Yogi* can be by the side of an idolater or even an atheist. What is more, in the *Vedantic* ocean, the Hindu, Mohammedan, Christian, and Parsee are all one, all children of the Almighty God¹."

Even Gandhi was greatly influenced by the teachings of the *Bhagwad Gita* and developed its concept of non-possession and *Nishkamakarma* into a full-fledged political and economic theory. Like Vivekananda even he believed in the *Vedantic* doctrine of *Advaita* (Non-duality or Oneness) which suggests that in spite of different forms there is one spirit that pervades all and which, according to him, implied that all human beings are equal as they have the same soul. The final goal of all religion is to realise this essential oneness. This goal is known as *Moksha* or Self-realisation. As he wrote, "If all that there is in the Universe is pervaded by God... there is none that is high and none that is low, all are absolutely equal because all are the creatures of that Creator²." (Harijan, 30-01-1937) Thus, according to Gandhi, "the spirit of the *Vedas* is purity, truth, innocence, chastity, humanity, simplicity, forgiveness, godliness, and all that makes a man or woman noble and brave³." Following Indian philosophical tradition he used the term Truth or *Satya* as the ultimate ground for everything that exists.

Thus both Vivekananda and Gandhi had tremendous faith in Indian traditional values and believed that India has the capacity to lead the world. They attempted to create an Indian nation that could teach the world tolerance and gentleness and believed that the goal of contentment of soul and universal love can be achieved through religion.

2. Indispensability of Religion: Both of them considered religion as the bed-rock of human survival. According to Vivekananda, religion is conserved as a pivotal force as it plays a very important role in the life of every individual, especially in the country like India.

According to Vivekananda religion has both positive as well as negative influence on the society. It can serve to be most useful means to

¹Vivekananda, Complete Work of Swami Vivekananda, E-book Vol. V (http://www.ramakrishnavivekananda.info/vivekananda/complete_works.htm)

²Gandhi M K, 1955, My Religion, Navjivan Trust, Pg.131

³ Gandhi, 1955,155

bring about unity and harmony in the society if used conscientiously but at the same time it is capable of being the most harmful factor bringing about violence and chaos if misinterpreted and misused. As he declared, "Religion is the highest plane of human thought and life... The intensest love that humanity has ever known has come from religion, and the most diabolical hatred that humanity has known has also come from religion. The noblest words of peace that the world has ever heard have come from men on the religious plane, and the bitterest denunciation that the world has ever known has been uttered by religious men... No other human motive has deluged the world with blood so much as religion; at the same time, nothing has brought into existence so many hospitals and asylums for the poor; no other human influence has taken such care, not only of humanity, but also of the lowest of animals, as religion has done. Nothing makes us so cruel as religion, and nothing makes us so tender as religion¹." Religion, therefore, is like a double-edged sword that can both save and kill and what purpose will it serve solely depends upon the wisdom of its followers. It is therefore necessary that the real essence of religion is understood by them so that it can serve its true and positive purpose in human life.

Even Gandhi declared that religion serves as the integral part of society and therefore it cannot be separated from human life. In fact he suggested that it is impossible to even imagine human life without some form of religion. It is not possible to divide social, economic, political and purely religious activities into watertight compartments. Hence, the religious activities cannot be separated from other human activities.

Thus both of them regarded religion as a positive and elevating force of the society and considered religion to be an indispensable aspect of society.

3. Critical or rational approach to Hinduism: Both of them had a very high respect for Hinduism but neither of them advocated the following of Hinduism blindly. Born into Hindu family, both remained within their tradition but only as "critical traditionalists²", who rejected whatever was irrational, inhuman or obsolete in Hinduism, such as fatalism, ritualism, sectarianism, rigid caste rules, outdated customs and superstitious beliefs or practices. As Vivekananda suggested "The first test of true teaching must be, that the teaching should not contradict reason³" He thus applied rational scrutiny to Hinduism and declared Hinduism as a religion which has taught

¹ Vivekananda, E-book, Vol.II

² Parekh Bhikhu, 1989, Colonialism, Tradition and Reform, Sage Publ pvt Ltd, p.23

³ Vivekananda, E-book, Vol.II

the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. He took pride in being a citizen of the nation which has sheltered the refugees of all religions of the earth. As he declared at the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago on 11th September, 1893, "I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance¹."

Like Vivekananda, even Gandhi suggested the application of rational scrutiny to Hinduism. As he wrote, "I exercise my judgement about every scripture, including the Gita. I cannot let a scriptural text supersede my Reason²." (Young India, 27-08-1925) He also suggested Truth and Non-violence as the test to decide whether a particular text is acceptable or not. "I reject what is inconsistent with that test and I appreciate all that is consistent with it³." In Young India (21 October 1927), Gandhi gave specific reasons why he chose to remain a Hindu. He studied the original scriptures of almost all major religions of the world. It was after scrutinising the tenets of different religions that he concluded that Hinduism is best suited for his own spiritual aspirations. Thus, his was a thoroughly rational approach to Hinduism. He considered Hinduism as the most tolerant of all religions. Being undogmatic, Hinduism leaves a lot of scope for self-expression. It teaches its followers not merely to respect all the other religions, but also to admire and assimilate whatever may be good in the other faiths. Gandhi observed that though the spirit of non-violence is common to all religions, it has found the highest expression and application in Hinduism as it believes in the oneness not merely of all human life but in the oneness of all that lives.

Thus, both Vivekananda and Gandhi rethought and revitalized Hinduism to purify it from within. They also attempted to make it more contemporary so that it can withstand and cope with the new challenges of a changing world.

4. Rejection of religious Fanaticism or Fundamentalism: The highest respect for Hinduism did not make them fanatic or fundamentalist in their approach towards religion as according to them the essence of Hinduism lies in morality and spirituality and not in blind ritualism. Both of them interpreted Hinduism as spiritual secularism rejecting mechanical ritualism. In fact they considered Hinduism not as a religion but as a way of life. According to them, there is room for worship of all the prophets of the world within Hinduism. It allows everyone to worship God according to

¹ Vivekananda, E-book, Vol.I

² Gandhi, 1955, Pg.21

³ Gandhi, 1955, Pg.21

one's own faith or dharma, and so it teaches its followers to live at peace with people from all religions.

Vivekananda severely criticised sectarianism and fanaticism in the following words. "Sectarianism, bigotry, and its horrible descendant, fanaticism, have long possessed this beautiful earth. They have filled the earth with violence, drenched it often and often with human blood, destroyed civilisation and sent whole nations to despair. Had it not been for these horrible demons, human society would be far more advanced than it is now¹." Thus he considered religious fanaticism as the most dreaded enemy of humanity which must be dealt with through the rational approach to religion. He went to the extent of calling fanaticism a disease and said that "This disease of fanaticism is one of the most dangerous of all diseases. All the wickedness of human nature is roused by it. Anger is stirred up, nerves are strung high, and human beings become like tigers²."

Even Gandhi considered fanaticism as a tendency that is poles apart from the spirit of religious tolerance. He therefore suggested that religion needs to be tackled rationally if one wants to save humanity from the monster of fanaticism. Blind faith necessarily gives rise to fanatic approach due to which religion turns out to be a harmful activity.

5. Dogmatism as the root cause of the problem: Both of them realised that the real problem actually lies in the dogmatic approach that is held by religious believers while adopting their respective religious beliefs. The religious beliefs that are accepted without applying reason turn out to be the dogmas which are harmful. Dogmatism is the tendency to lay down principles as incontrovertibly true, without consideration of the evidence or of the opinions of others. The dogmatic people accept a point of view as if it is an established fact without asking for any kind of rational scrutiny. They hold on to their views so stubbornly that they are unwilling to even listen to the opposing views. Such a dogmatic approach adheres to the spirit of intolerance and prejudice. It represents unwillingness to recognize or respect differences in opinions and beliefs. It is so much authoritative that it cannot be disputed, doubted, or diverged from. It emphasizes rigid adherence to a particular doctrine which does not allow rational and enlightened inquiry.

Such a dogmatic approach leads to fundamentalism due to which the follower of a particular religion accepts only one's own religion to be true and not only rejects but also dislikes or hates all other religions. He believes that his own religion is superior to all other religions and therefore,

¹ Vivekananda, E-book, Vol.I

² Vivekananda, E-book, Vol.II

everyone should leave their respective religions and start following his religion. He accepts scriptures of his religion to be the inspiration and final authority. He believes in the truth of each and every word written in the scriptures irrespective of the evidences. He accepts the unquestioning faith as virtue and claims his religion to have monopoly over truth and is extremely intolerant toward dissent. At times he also makes an attempt to get the political power so that the state can be remodelled to achieve the objectives stated in his religion. Very often the movement to do so is initiated by the charismatic leadership of various religious backgrounds.

The fundamentalist religious believer is never ready to accept the fact that he can be wrong in accepting his views. Such a faith thus leads to absolutism which is a potent source of evil in the world. It can become such a strong force that it can motivate utter madness even in man who is otherwise sane and decent. It is this irrational approach to religion that tends to be destructive and dangerous. The fundamentalists consider it to be their duty to pursue blindly whatever their religion suggests, without raising any doubt against it. Such a blind faith or superstition is harmful not only to the society but also to the religion itself. Majority of interreligious as well as intra-religious conflicts are given rise by such a dogmatic approach of religious believers.

These conflicts often give rise to anti-religious movements. Especially today, with the development of science and technology that has brought about an era of materialism and scepticism, a very bleak scenario for religion has been created. Humanity today is oscillating between two opposing extremes of religious dogmatism on one hand and atheism on the other. Dogmatism, being irrational, breeds intolerance due to which there has been a considerable increase in violence and terrorism in the name of religion in present times. Materialistic atheism on the other hand vehemently rejects religion altogether on the basis of reason and suggests science as an alternative to religion. The atheists consider all religious beliefs as necessarily irrational and all religious activities as harmful. They therefore suggest the total eradication of religion from human life. They equate religion with dogmatism or fundamentalism having an approach that contradicts the scientific approach. According to them, the religious approach is totally unscientific and irrational. One of the well-known atheists of today's times, Richard Dawkins, points out in his famous book 'The God Delusion' that the religious people claim the supremacy of scriptures and follow them blindly. They claim to know the Truth on the basis of their scriptures in such a way that they reject even the possibility of

any other contrary views. Their belief is so much unshakable that not even the strongest negative evidence can count against it. So much so that if the evidences contradict the suggestions given in the scriptures then the evidence will be rejected but the so called Truth of the scriptures will be preserved intact. He, therefore, suggests that such an approach is not only irrational but also unscientific and hence it must be rejected.

He and the atheists like him believe that the relation between Science and Religion is that of contradiction and therefore the adherents of one always tend to reject the other. The scientific minded atheists thus reject any kind of affiliation with religion while providing purely mechanical and materialistic explanation to everything. Religious people on the other hand perceive scientific developments as a threat to its existence and therefore oppose science and scientific attitude. Whenever science came into conflict with religious beliefs, the believers thus resisted scientific development in order to protect the monopoly of religious beliefs.

In this situation the suggestion given by Vivekananda and Gandhi can prove to be of tremendous worth with their novel and harmonising approach. In place of dogmatism and fundamentalism, it is the spirit of co-existence and collective survival that can lead the religions forward and protect it from being eradicated by the atheistic movements. As against the attempts to reject religion they prescribed the path of acceptance of different religions with equal respect. They were convinced that the total rejection of religion is neither possible nor desirable. Both of them perfectly understood the significant contribution the great religions of the world have made in the development of society.

They suggested that even the modern reformists and champions of rationalist thinking cannot ignore the all-pervading existence of religion and showed how it will be naïve to undermine the great role religions have played in sustaining the complex nature of human lives. Religion has played a very creative role in knitting humanity to its present condition through moral and spiritual regeneration. Thus the right approach will be the purification of religion by rational scrutiny. Rather than blindly accepting or dogmatically rejecting religion, it is better to judge religion and apply rational scrutiny so that religion is understood and accepted rationally and not dogmatically.

If blind acceptance of religion has proved to be harmful, its blind rejection may also lead to disastrous consequences. The need of the day is to foster mutual respect and understanding of each other's religious sentiments which can challenge the worldwide tide of fanaticism leading to violence.

6. Essential unity of all religions: Both of them believed that in spite of the apparent difference between different religions, there is a common thread that passes through all of them that has the capacity to unite the whole of humanity. While explaining the essential unity of different religions, Vivekananda used to cite a few lines from a hymn which is every day repeated by many of the Indians: "As the different streams having their sources in different places all mingle their water in the sea, so, O Lord, the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee¹." He also referred to the wonderful doctrine preached in the Gita: "Whosoever comes to Me, through whatsoever form, I reach him; all men are struggling through paths which in the end lead to me²." He thus elaborated the possibility of different religions as different paths ultimately leading to a common Truth.

Explaining the unity underlying various religions, he wrote, "Suppose we all go with vessels in our hands to fetch water from a lake. One has a cup, another a jar, another a bucket, and so forth, and we all fill our vessels. The water in each case naturally takes the form of the vessel carried by each of us. He who brought the cup has the water in the form of a cup; he who brought the jar — his water is in the shape of a jar, and so forth; but, in every case, water, and nothing but water, is in the vessel. So it is in the case of religion; our minds are like these vessels, and each one of us is trying to arrive at the realisation of the God. God is like that water filling these different vessels, and in each vessel the vision of God comes in the form of the vessel. Yet He is One³."

In his famous address to the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago on 11th September, 1893 he also used the analogy of the frog in the well to put forth the same view where he compared different religions with different wells and suggested that if one remains in one's own well, it is not possible to appreciate the value of other religions. Explaining the apparent difference between various religions he suggested that though the colour appears to be different in reality it is the same light coming through glasses of different colours. Similarly, it is the same truth that takes different forms in various religions. These little variations are necessary for purposes of adaptation, but in the heart of everything the same truth reigns.

He also suggested that like every science even religion has its own unique method. According to him, the method through which one may try

¹ Vivekananda, E-book, Vol.I

² Vivekananda, E-book, Vol.I

³ Vivekananda, E-book, Vol.II

to attain the ultimate goal of life is called *Yoga*. It is by following the method of *Yoga* that an individual may realise one's own inherent divinity. He classified *Yoga* under four heads: (1) *Karma-Yoga* — Through *Karma-yoga* the individuals are expected to work or perform one's duty without any expectations in order to realise the ultimate goal of life. (2) *Bhakti-Yoga* — In *Bhakti-yoga* the devotee who has tremendous love for the ultimate and is ready to surrender oneself totally to the divine will and thereby achieve the ultimate goal of life, (3) *Raja-Yoga* — In *Raja-yoga* total self-control is considered as the key to self-realisation as the ultimate goal of life and (4) *Jnana-Yoga* — The ultimate goal of self-realisation can also be achieved by the removal of ignorance with the help of knowledge. The relation between ignorance and knowledge is like that of darkness and light. Just as darkness vanishes in the presence of light, even ignorance is destroyed in the presence of knowledge. Thus in *Jnana-yoga*, the ultimate goal of life is achieved through Knowledge.

Now, from these four methods of religion or the form of *Yoga* as the paths to achieve the ultimate goal of life, the individuals may choose whichever path suits their natures and temperaments which may differ from person to person and time to time. These different forms of *Yoga* are nothing but different paths leading to a common goal. Similarly, even different religions are different paths to achieve the common goal, and therefore every individual should be given freedom to follow the path most suitable to oneself.

Thus Vivekananda develops the concept of Universal Religion through which he prescribed the acceptance of religious diversity as an unavoidable fact. He suggests that every religion has three integral parts: 1.Philosophy, 2.Mythology and 3.Rituals. The first part presents the scope of a particular religion and sets forth its basic principles and goal. In the second part the philosophy is made concrete in the more or less imaginary lives of men and supernatural beings. Finally, the third part is still more concrete which is made up of forms and ceremonies, various physical attitudes that appeal to the senses. According to him, these three parts are common to all religions. As he puts it, "You will find that all recognised religions have these three elements. Some lay more stress on one, some on another¹." Thus, through his concept of Universal Religion, Vivekananda made an attempt to establish basic unity that exists between different religions in spite of the apparent differences. By propagating Universal religion Vivekananda

¹ Vivekananda, E-book, Vol.II

clarified that, "What I want to propagate is a religion that will be equally acceptable to all minds; it must be equally philosophic, equally emotional, equally mystic, and equally conducive to action¹."

A very similar approach is found also in Gandhi who referred to *Anekantavada* of Jainism to explain the unity of different religions. According to *Anekantavada*, the ultimate reality is so complex that it is not possible to have its comprehensive knowledge. It is the same Truth that appears to be different from different view-points. In other words, it is One reality that appears to be many or diverse. The story of five blind men viewing the same elephant partially and thereby arriving at conflicting conclusion regarding its true nature explains very clearly how there can be unity within diversity. Gandhi used this concept of Jainism to explain the plurality of religions. He suggested that each religion tries to explain the ultimate truth in its own way but none by itself can claim the final truth as each one has the knowledge of the part and not the whole. The proper approach towards plurality of religion is that of mutual understanding and respect. Rather than coming into conflict with each other, people of different religions should try to understand each other's religious view and learn from each other.

Thus, Vivekananda's the Concept of Universal religion was further developed by Gandhi through the spirit of *Sarva dharma sama bhav* as a positive approach to deal with religious diversity. Like Vivekananda, even his intention was not just to eliminate the religious differences but it was to initiate a life-long appreciation of one another's faith and practice leading to cooperation in the moral and social spheres. It may be remembered that they did not ever advocate uniform religious practices. Nor did they like the idea of religious conversion. Both of them propagated ecumenism under which all religions are accepted to be equally true. Vivekananda clarified in the world parliament of religion that it is wrong to hope for the victory of one's own religion by destroying other religions and declared that, "The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, nor a Hindu or a Buddhist to become a Christian. But each must assimilate the spirit of the others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to his own law of growth²." Even Gandhi declared in one of the issues of *Young India* that "I came to the conclusion long ago ... that all religions were true and also that all had some error in them, and whilst I hold by my own, I should hold others as dear as Hinduism. So we can only pray, if we are Hindus, not that a Christian should become a Hindu ... But our innermost prayer should be a Hindu

¹ Vivekananda, E-book, Vol.II

² Vivekananda, E-book, Vol.I

should be a better Hindu, a Muslim a better Muslim, a Christian a better Christian¹."

Thus, both of them advanced genuine religious diversity for they believed that it is these diverse streams which enrich human lives. For them the real issue before each of us is the right understanding of one's own religion as well as that of other's. It is therefore necessary to have a dialogue with the people from other religions. The right approach to religion is that of assimilation rather than confrontation. Each religion has to understand and accommodate the views of the other religions with admiration and respect so that the others may also do the same, thereby giving rise to religious harmony.

7. Rejection of blind ritualism: The essence of each religion lies in spirituality and morality. It teaches human beings to serve, to love, to give, to purify, to meditate, to realize, to be good, to do good, to be kind and compassionate. The customs, conventions, ceremonies etc that form the ritualistic aspect of religion is not its essence and therefore though they vary from religion to religion, there is no point fighting over such petty non-essential aspects of religion. As Vivekananda puts it, "I have nothing whatever to do with ritual or dogma²;" Neither Vivekananda nor Gandhi ever got involved with the ritualistic aspect of religion. They never encouraged the practice of visiting religious places of pilgrimage or performance of religious rites and rituals. Gandhi went to the extent of equating religion with morality when he asserted that for him to be religious is not to follow the rituals but it is to be moral. Regarding the endeavour to search for God he said, "He cannot be found in temples or idols or places of worship built by man's hands, nor can He be found by abstinences. God can be found only through Love, not earthly, but Divine³." (Harijan 23-11-1947) He also suggested to leave the rituals as dogmas as they do not form the essential part of religion in following words, "Leave the outward expression, the doctrine, the dogma and the form and behold the unity and oneness of spirit⁴."

Thus, both of them realised that rituals that vary from religion to religion do not form the essential aspect of religion. Rather, they stressed upon the moral and spiritual aspects of religion which are common to all

¹ Gandhi, Young India, 19 January 1928

² Vivekananda, E-book, Vol.V

³ Gandhi, 1955, 48

⁴ Gandhi, Young India, February 9, 1928.

religions and have the capacity to harmonise the whole of humanity into one whole.

8. Religion and Human Service: Both Vivekananda and Gandhi were passionate about serving the needy and the poor. They tried to set an example by going into the villages to feed, clothe and educate the needy and the hungry. As Vivekananda said, "I believe in God, and I believe in man. I believe in helping the miserable;" and he added even more emphatically that, "I believe in going even to hell to save others¹." and that "I do not believe in a God or religion which cannot wipe the widow's tears or bring a piece of bread to the orphan's mouth²."

That Vivekananda and Gandhi were on the same wavelength regarding human service is evident from what Gandhi said, "For me the road to salvation lies through incessant toil in the service of my country and through that of humanity³." The very reason why he joined politics was to be better equipped to serve the suffering masses of India. It was the concern for the masses that is reflected in his concept of *Sarvodaya* (socio-economic upliftment of all) which he developed on the basis of Ruskin's book 'Unto this Last'. Gandhi was always concerned with the poor, (whom he fondly called *Daridranarayan*) and the other weaker sections of the society including the people from lower caste (whom he called *Harijan*) and women.

Both of them viewed Hinduism as a service-oriented way of life based upon the highest principles of morality and believed that the essence of religion is to be found in the service of the helpless and the weaker section of the society.

The above mentioned similarities suggest that Ecumenism as a movement promoting worldwide unity among religions through greater cooperation and improved understanding began in India much before its significance was realised in the western world. As early as in the 1890s, Vivekananda was the first to talk about interfaith harmony, peace and universal spiritual brotherhood, and in the same spirit Gandhi in the 20th century struggled very hard to bring about communal harmony by inculcating the spirit of religious tolerance which according to him is a necessary ingredient of non-violent political movement.

Thus, far before it became absolutely necessary to avoid religious conflict and establish peace and harmony in the world for the survival of humanity in the 21st century, both these thinkers have provided us with an

¹ Vivekananda, E-book, Vol.I

² Vivekananda, E-book, Vol.V

³ Gandhi, Young India, April 3, 1924

approach to religion through which rather than being the dividing factor religion can become a uniting force of the society. The path shown by Vivekananda and Gandhi seems to be the only alternative in today's world. If Vivekananda was the spiritio-religious emancipator, Gandhi was the socio-political emancipator of India. Though the realms of both the stalwarts remained different, the crux of their ideology remains same and i.e. secular religion. The term secular according to their interpretation does not mean rejection religion as understood in the western world. As Gandhi pointed out, the true meaning of the word Secularism is not to reject religion but it is to accept all religions as different paths leading to a common goal of morality and spirituality deserving equal respect. He thus translated the word as *Sarva Dharma Sam Bhava* (equal respect to all religions) and not as *Sarva Dharma Abhav* (absence of all religions). Secularism, therefore, has a positive connotation as it prescribes the acceptance of religious diversity with peaceful coexistence.

As 'reason' played a pivotal role in both their philosophies of human life guided by religious ideology, both of them are accepted as the contemporary Indian philosophers who can be most influential not only in India but in every part of the world where the religious conflicts need to be resolved. Till date both serve as powerful guiding force to young India and have the potentiality to be so for the whole world. The time is not far when the whole of humanity will follow the declaration of Vivekananda which he made in the concluding lines of his address at the final session of the world Parliament of religions held on 27th Sept 1893, "upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in spite of resistance: "Help and not Fight," "Assimilation and not Destruction," "Harmony and Peace and not Dissension."¹

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¹ Vivekananda, E-book, Vol. I.

RELIGIOUS PLURALISM : CONFLICTS & CHALLENGES

Uma Maheswari SHANKAR¹

Abstract: *Religious pluralism is a belief that one can overcome religious differences between different religions and conflicts within the same religion. The existence of religious pluralism depends on the existence of freedom of religion which is when we see that different religions of a particular region possess the same rights of worship and public expression. Freedom of religion is weakened when one religion is given rights or privileges and the same is denied to others. Conflicts and challenges in religions are multifaceted and complex in many ways. In India the conflicts and challenges come when there are frictions among the people on many issues. The poverty, unemployment, illiteracy are just few to name which have been haunting the developing countries like India for decades. The violence and hostility that have surfaced in the last few years have set many men and women to rethink on the role of religion. The need is to redefine and reform religion and to accommodate liberal attitude.*

Keywords: *religion, pluralism, moral values, violence, Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, truth, interfaith dialogue, tolerance, politics, society, progress.*

Religion in general is defined by taking the roots from Latin as *religio*, which was originally used to mean only "reverence for God or the gods, careful pondering of divine things, piety. Also we have re-ligare, i.e. "to reconnect," It is a cementing force connecting people belonging to various cultures. Thus we can simply put it as Religion is a collection of cultural systems, belief systems, and worldviews that establishes symbols that relate humanity to spirituality and moral values. In today's context the word religion comes with huge baggage. It evokes powerful emotions and commitments. Religion has been among the most powerful agents for changing human attitudes and behavior for time immemorial. It denotes way of life, duty, good conduct, right living, ethics and so and so forth.

Among many definitions of religion, H. L. Mencken characterizes religion as ".....single function is to give man access to the powers which seem to control his destiny, and its single purpose is to induce those powers

¹ SIES College of Arts, Science & Commerce, Mumbai, India.

to be friendly to him." Something more promising we have which is central to religion as that, which relieves anxiety, fretfulness and enhances social integration. At one side religions of the world have acted as anchors for the troubled hearts and disturbed minds of millions for centuries. Yet much mess in the form of crusades, wars, conflicts have taken place by the same name.

Religions are all legitimate and valid, they teach multiple truths and thus they are relative. They converge on one truth; hence religious diversity must be valued. Religious pluralism is a commonly used term with several distinct meaning. Depending on the context it offers various theological and philosophical discussions. One of the argument that religious pluralism states is that if all religions spring from same source then all must speak of the same truth. This is based on the similarities with respect to stories, figures and doctrines. Problem arises when religions speak about their exclusive ideas. Some will claim that their way of practice is the only way. In the last century we have seen the colonial governments expanded their policy of religious toleration. This led to a new concept of religious liberty. Thus religious pluralism involves religious diversity. Through census and public polling system one can check the people and their faiths. Religious pluralism in its very definition includes the idea of inter religious dialogue. Without the dialogue and meaningful discourse multiple faiths cannot coexist.

Is there a problem with plurality of religions? Or is there inbuilt crisis in every religion?

Historically speaking we have seen in each religion there is plurality of tradition and plurality of variation within. This is usually apprehended in an exclusive sense and inclusive sense. Exclusivists are of the view that one particular tradition alone teaches the truth. They have an exclusive claim to truth and salvation. We have many examples to illustrate this point. Christians have claimed that there is no salvation outside the church. Hindus have revered Vedas as eternal truth and absolute. Buddhists have alleged that Buuddha's teaching has ultimate answer for pain and suffering. Muslims have also exhibited exclusive outlook based on the Quran. From each of the standpoint of respective religion, it does appear to be true and convincing but will they accommodate similar thoughts into their relevant doctrines?

Inclusivists accepted not just one final truth but are ready to hold other traditions and approaches as worthwhile too. For example Hinduism in its broad sense accepts varied path to same truth and also accommodates

various stages and steps in spiritual development. Buddhists too see the essential teachings of Buddha and his Dhamma in other traditions. So all speak the same yet they appear different and interpreted very differently from time to time. This kind of essences and messages of religions spilling over other cultures and traditions have been the result of change in social and political environment. Rumi the mystic says “the lamps are different, but the light is the same, it comes from beyond.”¹

Religious pluralism is a belief that one can overcome religious differences between different religions and conflicts within the same religion. For most religious traditions religious pluralism is based on non literal view of one’s religious traditions allowing for respect to be followed between different traditions on core principles rather than on marginal issues. It is an attitude which rejects focus on immaterial differences such as language, attire, mode of rituals and so on and instead gives respect to those principles held in common. It is but natural to have variety in the attire, tradition, culture in different countries of the world. The activities of the people in general have centered on religious interventions. The fervor of religions has added much colour and beauty when it takes the form of art, dance music and so on. But religious pluralism has its philosophy rooted in cherishing the unity in diversity.

It is possible to seek the highest truth which is the goal of every religion amidst such diversities. But the natural outcome is the changing features of religious due to social and Cultural Revolution from time to time. The existence of religious pluralism depends on the existence of freedom of religion which is when we see that different religions of a particular region possess the same rights of worship and public expression. Freedom of religion is weakened when one religion is given rights or privileges and the same is denied to others. Conflicts and challenges in religions are multifaceted and complex in many ways. We still believe that religion offers spirit to public life and at the same time it is guiding light for moral order in any society. But today it is society that blames the role of religion for bringing about violence and hostility in the minds of people. Mark Juergensmeyer in his book “says ‘the vast time lines of religious struggles also set them apart from secular conflicts. Most social and political struggles have sought conclusion within the lifetimes of their participants. But religious struggles have taken generations to succeed.’²

¹ Rumi: Poet and Mystic- translated by R.A. Nicholson

² Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the mind of God*, p. 220.

More the religions more have been the complexity in understanding and comprehending the religious practices. In India the conflicts and challenges come when there are frictions among the people on many issues. The poverty, unemployment, illiteracy are just few to name which have been haunting the developing countries like India for decades. At one side, the major religious philosophies preach that all are one and there shouldn't be distinctions among people in the name of class, creed, gender age etc. on the other side the political parties in many countries are thriving on the support of many religious groups. But after many struggles taken up many leaders and reformers like Ram Mohan Roy, Gandhi, Ambedkar and others, spread over centuries, some of the class struggles have come down. Nothing can be achieved without bloodshed, it looks like!

The Hindu religion is naturally pluralistic. A well-known Rig Vedic hymn says that "Truth is One, though the sages know it variously." (*Ēkam sat vipra bahudā vadanti*). The Hindu religion has no theological difficulties in accepting degrees of truth in other religions. It emphasizes that everyone actually worships the same God, whether one knows it or not.

Just as Hindus worshiping Ganesh is seen as valid by those worshiping Vishnu, so someone worshiping Jesus or Allah is accepted. India's long history is a testimony to its tolerance of religious diversity.

Christianity came to India with St. Thomas in the first century A.D., long before it became popular in the West. Judaism came to India after the Jewish temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D. and the Jews were expelled from their homeland. Both Christians and Jews have existed in a predominant Hindu India for centuries without being persecuted. India has been plagued with incidents of religious violence from the time of its freedom from the British. Communal tension continued even after the independence at regular intervals till date. The demolition of a mosque in Ayodhya, had triggered violence across the country two decade back. Similarly many killings in Gujarat and the perennial struggle of Kashmiris are examples of such turbulence in the religious ocean. A country likes this which is multilingual and multi religious is struggling to keep the unity within diversity. The platform laid for religious diversity and the need to evolve and be in tune with nature and harmony has been the main agenda. Religious pluralism at all times made room for communal harmony and peace. As it said that war emerges in the mind of men, so too peace shall emerge from the same mind alone.

The violence and hostility that have surfaced in the last few years have set many men and women to rethink on the role of religion. The people

from all corners are perplexed and confused with growing number of fierce attacks and violence on human kind carried out by humans themselves. Why should anyone be so violent towards one's fellow beings? The idea of Religious pluralism is not very new. Man has always remained in search of a method to express religiosity from ancient times.

While remarking on various religious movements, Mark Juergensmeyer says,

“In my view, it is not their spirituality that is unusual, but their religious ideas, cultural contexts and world views- perspectives shaped by the sociopolitical forces of their times. These movements are not simply aberrations but religious responses to social situations and expressions of deeply held convictions.”¹

Many of World leaders in general and Indians political leaders in particular have been brutally murdered in the name of religious fanaticism. Also the victims have been innocent worshippers at Mosques, temples & churches. There have been not just incidents of violence but have been undermined by religious extremism. The struggle for religious identity has been vehement but the love of religious message has taken the back seat. The values in all religions practiced in any land have emphasized tolerance, love, compassion, kindness and peaceful co existence. But strangely religion which values them and imparts the same for binding people in the society has also been the factor for instigating violence and disintegrate societal force. When an act is violent, then it induces fear and thereby results in terrorism. But the same act when done under the banner of religion becomes sacred and its 'just war'. The meaning and connotation of just and unjust wars, good and bad have been interpreted and reinterpreted according to the need of society and those in power. The concern today is how do we tackle then?

Interfaith dialogue, community services, humanitarian approach, and many such can be recommended. The need is to redefine and reform religion and to accommodate liberal attitude. If every religion sees god in every being or see divinity in all this must be taken with faith and apply the same in social interaction. What we lack is the connection and commitment to a religious ideal. The history speaks loud that maximum men have lost their lives in crusades, *jehads* and *dharnma yudh*. Some believe that the

¹ Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the mind of God*, p. 225-226.

tendency to turn human judgments into divine commands has made religion one of the most dangerous forces in the world.

One thing is certain, India has not waged a war with any country in its history. But there are enough internal strife, conflicts and fights to keep all engaged. The main Purport of religion must include Values Ethics, Moral order, Altruism, and Philanthropy. Every religion traces its source to 'The Text' which may undergo various interpretations and re understanding of the content. Readings that highlight and deliberate on the various dimensions are very important regarding the Methodology – content analysis of the various texts in a linear and functional mode Little do we realize that we have just enough religion to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one another. It has been observed that when we blindly adopt a religion, a political system, a literary dogma, we become automations. We cease to grow. Religion has been a dynamic, changing yet a complex phenomenon. Dalai Lama echoes that all major religious traditions carry basically the same message, that is love, compassion and forgiveness ... the important thing is they should be part of our daily lives.

Institutions with religion like church, synagogue, pilgrimage, liturgies, fasting and so on provide system of transmission that preserve identity and stability. Many have tried to equate religion with religious practices alone. We infer from Kant's writings that Religion is in subjective sense, a recognition of all our duties as divine commands. However it is considered that most religions derive ethical implications from the nature of god for their daily conduct.

Das observes,

"Interculturalism and blending of different religious traditions have given rise to trans-cultural syncretism. The sociologists and anthropologists have thrown much light on the variety of religious forms through their studies of diverse belief systems, rituals, symbols and meaning all over the world but they have not paid much attention to the phenomena of syncretism, which represents a blend of multiple religions, beliefs in variegated degrees."¹

Religion is addressed at both individual & social levels. Even the most intensively subjective mystical experience is given meaning through socially available symbols and has value partly because of culturally established interpretations of such experiences. Much of our personal

¹ Culture, Religion and Philosophy. N.K. Das. p. 11.

experiences in the name of religion or religious experience is placed in social situations and derives meaning in social conventions. It is amazing to see the relation between Society and religion. Everything which are interpreted and conveyed is socially determined.

The very definition of religion implies its role in society. Hence we find the definitions are very complex, dynamic and multifarious. In Indian context this seems all the more relevant. Are we to interpret religion in political language or polity in religious terms? We have learnt through the history of man that religion and politics have hardly remained separate in peaceful compartments. Religion is used as a measure usually to fill the vote banks by the politicians. The brutal murders of men and women in highest office in state have been result of this religiozisation of politics.

The amount of bloodshed in the name of religion has always been highest. The Growth of religious organizations – can be traced to the 18th and 19th century socio - religious reform movements showed the interface between religion, society and institutionalized authority.

The role of pluralism in religions must maintain the conventional functional distinction between the sacred and the profane. It is well agreed that Spirituality embraces all the world religions, but at the same time, is not constrained by any religious dogmas or forms. Sri Aurobindo declares:

"All fanaticism is false, because it is a contradiction of the very nature of God and of Truth. Truth cannot be shut up in a single book, Bible or Veda or Koran, or in a single religion. We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true. As different streams having different sources all mingle their waters in the sea, so different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to God."¹

It is opined by many thinkers of the world the need to assess the religious influence on the minds of people and to check on its role to cement the society. John Hick says,

"Our present question is whether the great religious systems of the world can all have been formed in response to the same divine Reality. Initial appearances were against this, As we know intentional objects are so different of various traditions."²

¹ The Life Divine, Sri Aurobindo.

² Readings in philosophy of Religion, east meets west, p. 365.

How do we respond to the transcendent? With plurality of religions we cannot simply identify distinctly Christians, Buddhists, and Hindus And to affirm the ultimate Is beyond their divine personalities embedded in every religion is metaphysical reality claimed by them makes it obvious that they are not just human imaginations or projections. It is our awareness of that supreme reality that shapes and forms our understanding of the divine. In this very perspective we see distinctions that lead to conflicts in its approach, methodology and theories culminating in challenges and troubles in the name of religion. The question whether religion in its traditional form will survive the ongoing cultural changes of modern times is often discussed. Without asserting a religious instinct in mankind it may perhaps be said that man is incurably religious in one way or other and that the human situation and human values make it inevitably so.

The pluralistic nature of religion as we have seen seems to be growing wider and deeper in much sense. Yet the main burning inquiry and need to unfold the mysteries will help man to continue his religious quest. Does the role of religion begins and ends with the individual or does it have any function to check the tensions in society?

Many religious movements have mushroomed which cater to many responsibilities. Religious pluralism helps to see the variations in the content of religions, their rituals and practices. It must provide a rational understanding of theology and furnish intellectual elucidation. Religions have a mighty role to bring about social change.

The role of religion lies in providing positive social transformation through advocacy. It ought to act as motivation for social change. Across the globe we have seen the active role of Faith-based groups who are involved in community development. Religion possesses a strong associational structure which includes community groups, health clinics or hospitals, schools, vocational training units and other community-based projects. It is observed that

“At least three difficulties have been noticed in late modernity and in post modern thought. One factor has been a growing understanding of diversity and pluralism and a reaction against generalization. Second difficulty arises from the recognition that it is difficult to go as far as the need in terms of supposedly value-neutral knowledge, let alone value-neutral understanding. Hermeneutical approach may help. Thirdly especially in post modern thought the view that religious with vested interests of social

power has led some to substitute a sociological or ideological criticism approach for more philosophical and theological approaches.”¹

It is time to check what the pivotal role of religion is. Is it to show the path of liberation or to aid in leading life sans pain and suffering or transform society or bring global peace and universal harmony? While globalization is having its firm foot in the century and people are representing different faiths move from one place to another, most of the nations of the world turned multi cultural and multi religious. This had certainly opened wider gates in the level of tolerance and accommodation of many faiths in the minds of believers or religious people. Desmond Tutu rants

“To ignore people of other faiths and ideologies in an increasingly plural society is to be willfully blind to what the scriptures say about Christian witness. We are severely impoverished if we do not encounter people of other faiths with reverence and respect for their belief and integrity.”²

In India Swami Vivekananda’s central project was to work out what all religions of the world had in common, valid and acceptable to modern scientific understanding. He tried much to bring eastern and western religions & faiths together. He felt it was necessary to check what should be preserved and continued and what should be weeded out in every religion as times change. He recognized the significant contributions made by world religious messengers.

What is needed today is a theory that fully acknowledges the vast range and complexity of differences apparent in the phenomenology of religion while at the same time enables us to understand the major streams of religious experiences and thoughts as embodying different awareness of the one ultimate reality. Pluralistic hypothesis may conflict with the absolute claims made by every religion time and again. For genuine pluralism is incompatible with any claim such as outside Church, beyond Vedas or outside samgha or. It is therefore imperative to have wider acceptance and strong conviction regarding a pluralistic view of religious life of humanity. This must involve self understanding of each and every tradition, not claiming any superiority over other faiths, have an inclusive approach and value humanism at large. We may expect the different world faiths to

¹ *A concise encyclopedia of Philosophy of religion.* Anthony & L. Thiselton.

² *The words of Desmond Tutu,* selected by Naomi Tutu, p. 25.

continue as religio-cultural phenomena though phenomena which are increasingly influencing one another's development. Ninian Smart opines

“We must accept that every religion has a given starting point, each unique. The picture in the gallery are different have different atmosphere and messages, they cannot be aligned in the same pictorial perspective. And for most men only one picture can be area focus or loyalty.”¹

From individual endeavors like attainment of salvation, obliteration of misery, elimination of anguish are the very core goals of people who are believers and followers of any religious sect or faith. Can it move beyond any of these inbuilt agenda and provide greater solace in the long run? The future of religion lies in its becoming more pluralistic or to reform the existing religious practices with scientific temperament and making it a meaningful exercise.

It is time to ponder whether the progress of any society or people is due to their repudiation of religion. Can we easily draw conclusion that the progress of the west is due to their integration and incorporation of the principles of Christianity within their society? It is imperative to feel and comprehend this essential truth about varied religions of the world that the effectiveness of any religion has to be judged by the development of religious qualities and virtues such as inner calm, compassion, mercy to all, aspiration for spiritual freedom, non avariciousness, love of neighbour, obliteration of tyrannous desires.

As Dr. Radhkrishnan, remarks, “The world can be saved only if men and women develop a heart that will make it impossible for them to witness with equanimity mutual slaughter and suffering of people.”² Religion has two sides, individual and social, lets remember neglecting any one shall make it defective and futile. Ultimately the need of the hour is to bring in humanism as an important aspect of religious pluralism. This would be the only way to retain unity in diversity. Amidst changing social scenario, environmental concerns, political revolutions and economic instability across countries, will religions and religious practices provide solutions in future is much to be contemplated in the coming days. So long as humans walk on this planet, it is certain to rethink on the relevance of religious diversity in spite of conflicts and challenges. There is fear that it may make the people more superstitious and conservative, as their desperations and

¹ *Contemporary philosophy of religion*, edited by Steven Cahn & David Statz, p. 300.

² Dr. Radhkrishnan, *Eastern religions and western thought*, p. 113.

anxiety swell. Social reformers, environmentalists, mystics and ordinary people who are more spiritual and less religious are striving towards the core purpose of religious pluralism. Will their efforts make religions reformative or revive the messages of prophets and messiahs or will it make the believers more dogmatic and fanatic? Time will have to answer.

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DISPOSSESSION(S) AND JUDITH BUTLER'S ETHICS OF HUMANIZATION

Hülya ŞİMGA¹

Abstract: *This paper takes up the question of the “human” as Butler discusses this in its relation to “intelligibility,” “critique,” “the opacity of the subject” and “dispossession.” I believe that Butler’s perspective helps us not only to understand the terms of dehumanization but also offers ways of conceptualizing a more humane world. I argue that a major concern for Butler is a sort of humanism arising from the awareness of the primordial relationality of our existence and of our lives, which we pursue in a primary sociality as interdependent embodied beings.*

Keywords: *dispossession, intelligibility, opacity, undoing, ethics, politics, responsibility, human condition, human life, humanization, dehumanization.*

In a very recent book, *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political* (2013), Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou explore the concept of *dispossession* in its relation to the ethical and the political. Accordingly, the two senses of dispossession—as a term “establishing the human beings as relational as well as interdependent beings” and as “a condition painfully imposed by the normative and normalizing violence”—bring the ethical and political domains together in terms of the question “what makes political responsiveness possible?” Another question intimately related with the latter is the question of the ethical responsibility that has been a major concern in Butler’s works on ethics and politics. I believe that both questions having ethical and political implications are rooted in Butler’s concern for a human condition where a collectively inhabitable world becomes possible. This paper takes up the question of the “human” as Butler discusses this in its relation to “intelligibility,” “critique,” “the opacity of the subject” and “dispossession.” I believe that Butler’s perspective helps us not only to understand the terms of dehumanization but also offers ways of conceptualizing a more humane world. I argue that a major concern for Butler is a sort of humanism arising from the awareness of the primordial relationality of our existence and of our lives, which we pursue in a primary sociality as interdependent embodied beings.

¹ Koç University of Istanbul, Turkey.

In the preface of *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political*, Butler and Athanasiou write that in their conversations about politics, theory, embodiment and new formations of left politics, they found themselves “returning to the question ‘what makes political responsiveness possible?’” (Butler and Athanasiou 2013, xi) This question is not only an inquiry into the necessity and the conditions of political responsiveness, but is also linked to an important concern, one that is grounded in the ethical dimension of the political. They write:

The predicament of being moved by what one sees, feels and comes to know is always one in which one finds oneself transported elsewhere, into another scene, or into a social world in which one is not at the center. And this form of dispossession is constituted as a form of responsiveness that gives rise to action and resistance, to appearing together with others, in an effort to demand the end of injustice. (Butler and Athanasiou 2013, xi)

Similarly, in “What is Critique? An Essay of Foucault’s Virtue,” Butler says: “Moral experience has to do with a self-transformation prompted by a form of knowledge that is foreign to one’s own” (Butler 2003b, 308).

The question “what makes political responsiveness possible?” is very much related to political responsibility in the sense that when they are thought together in terms of ethics, political responsiveness requires a sort of responsibility arising in the recognition of the demand the other makes on us; a demand that compels us to give an account of our actions. As Butler and Athanasiou say, one most important precondition of the possibility of political responsiveness is acknowledging that we are bound to dwell in a social world where none of us is at the center. Moreover, a just and livable world for all of us requires that we understand what constitutes the distinctive human life to which we are all entitled to. Justice is required for this in the sense that what we owe to one another is the sort of treatment that we are entitled to as human beings. That is to say, none of us are “at the center” in the privileged position to determine whose life counts as a human life. We all pursue our lives in the primary sociality as interdependent embodied beings. Indeed, we can say that Butler invites us to think about the primordial relationality of our existence and our lives. She writes:

What makes for a livable world ... becomes a question of ethics, I think not only when we ask the personal question, what makes my own life bearable, but when we ask, from a position of power, and from the point of view of distributive justice, what makes, or ought to make, the lives of others bearable? Somewhere in the answer we find ourselves not only committed to a certain view of what life

is, and what it should be, but also what constitutes the human, the distinctive human life, and what does not. (Butler 2004a, 17)

Injustice as a state of affairs becomes the subject of ethical inquiry only when we realize that injustice cannot be justified and defended, at least in philosophical terms. However, as we know, there are various attempts to justify acts of injustice, justifying them even as acts to restore justice as in the rhetoric of the *realpolitik*. Philosophically speaking, this misconception seems to arise from the ambiguity of the concepts of justice and injustice. As the history of humanity testifies, the instrumental use of these concepts in the political paradigm proves to be very dangerous when abused to make “the weaker argument appear to be stronger” as Socrates would have it.

As we shall see in the discussion of the sense of “dispossession” denoting the primordial relationality and interdependence of human existence, this primordial human condition is an essential component not only in order to ground the responsiveness and the ethical responsibility as conditions of a livable life to which we are all entitled as human beings but also to dispel the “myth” of the independent and absolute subject “determining” the terms of this entitlement. It seems that, according to Butler, because we suffer dehumanization due to the present norms of the human, we should ponder the question of “the human” in terms of “humanization” as an ethical and political aspiration. In the *Precarious Life*, Butler writes:

I propose to start, and to end, with the question of the human (as if there were any other way for us to start or end!). We start here not because there is a human condition that is universally shared—this is surely not yet the case. The question that preoccupies me in the light of recent global violence is, who counts as human? Whose lives count as lives? (Butler 2006, 20)

In order to show the centrality of “the question of the human” in Butler’s ethico-political stance, I propose that we start with situating it within the paradigm whereby dispossession—as denoting the state resulting from the “normative and normalizing violence”—makes itself manifest.

Dispossession and Intelligibility

Since conflicting interpretations of what the human is and what it ought to be generate a site of contestation, “intelligibility” seems to be where we need to begin. In *Undoing Gender*, Butler writes: “The relation between intelligibility and the human is an urgent one; it carries a certain theoretical urgency, precisely

at those points where the human is encountered at the limits of intelligibility itself" (Butler 2004a, 57–8). I believe that it would be accurate to claim that the questions preoccupying her—namely, "who counts as human?" and "whose lives count as lives?"—would not have arisen if there were no discourses (always operating within the opposition between the human and the inhuman) giving generalized descriptions of what "human" is and what counts as human life. As one realizes that certain lives, certain identities, certain humans are not accounted for—are "unspeakable"; are not considered "real" in the dominant discourse—one also comes to realize that there is a discursive impasse that is produced by reigning discourses. (Butler 2003b, 308)

These "entire realms of unspeakability" present a problem for Butler because what is unspeakable is also in a sense "not real" and "inhuman." The discursive impasse happens when the reigning discourse cannot account for that which it leaves out. "Intelligibility" discloses the mode of operation of the reigning discourse only when one looks at it with a critical eye in terms of the criterion of "humanness." As the human is made over against the "unreal," the less-than-human, the inhuman as a border "securing the human in its ostensible reality" (Butler 2004a, 218), the conditions of intelligibility for the genesis of the human mark the ontological status of any person as a human being. Being unintelligible—meaning that "the laws of culture and of language find one to be an impossibility" (ibid.), hence unrecognized (since one is "outside" the norms of recognition)—is an exclusion of a peculiar sort: an exclusion from the domain of the human.

To critically think on the question of whether we have already known the human is crucial for Butler since ethics and any social transformation depends upon how we respond to this. In other words, according to Butler, the humanly intelligible is circumscribed through the norms of the "human" and this has consequences for ethics as well as for any conception of social and political transformation. When we suppose that we already know the "human," this taking for granted forecloses the critical and ethical inquiry which seeks to understand how the human is produced, reproduced, and deproduced. Referring to the question "whether we have already known the human" Butler says: "This latter inquiry does not exhaust the field of ethics, but I cannot imagine a responsible ethics or theory of social transformation operating without it" (Butler 2004a, 36).

Since to be human means, in a sense, to be intelligible as such, and to be unintelligible is to be excluded from the domain of the human, a primary question seems to be: "how is intelligibility defined?" Following Foucault, for Butler, the field of intelligible things is determined by the nexus of power-

knowledge constituting a regime of truth that sets the limits and meanings for me, who as a subject, is formed by being subjected to those limits and meanings. What I may become is already set by what I must be in accordance with this regime of truth. In line with the Foucauldian understanding of subjection, Butler maintains that when we speak of the subject we are talking about a model of intelligibility. The existing norms of recognition of the reigning discourse produce subjects through subjection to the norms of intelligibility. In our primordial sociality, we are all fundamentally constituted in and conditioned by the cultural norms and the field of power into which we are born, and which we cannot control. We are dispossessed in the sense that the norms of intelligibility turn us into subjects through subjection (to the norms of intelligibility) from which there is no escape but which, at least most of the time, engenders “a condition painfully imposed by the normative and normalizing violence” for the disenfranchised and the marginal.

If we take the subject as a model of intelligibility shaped by and shaping itself through a kind of “internalization” of the accepted norms of knowledge-power, it follows that the one who says “I” within this system says so by excluding any “you” who does not conform to it—the latter become the unintelligible, the unspeakable, those who are not “worth” mourning for, whose deaths are ungrievable and whose life is no human life, whose bodies are “abject,”¹ and, finally, who are not “human.” In such a world—which is, to a great extent, our world—our primordial relationality and interdependence become a “shadow,” the discourse of humanism becomes a joke, egalitarian democracy becomes impossible, and our hope for a humanized world is “suspended” forever. According to Butler, considering the present state of our world, the ethical and political urgency of “humanization” seems overriding. Butler says: “we must learn to live and to embrace the destruction and the rearticulation of the human in the name of a more capacious and, finally, less violent world, not knowing in advance what precise form our humanness does and will take” (Butler 2004a, 35). We must destroy “human” in the sense of what is intelligible in terms of the regime of the knowledge-power system and rearticulate it in terms of our primordial vulnerability and interdependence, through questions such as “whose lives count as lives?” “who counts as a human being?” “whose/which lives are grievable?” and so on. The matter of violence and whether there are ever situations in which it is justified to do violence to another human being is a serious philosophical question that opens up a space in

¹ Meaning all kinds of bodies whose lives are not considered to be “lives” and whose materiality is understood not to “matter” (Butler 1998).

which we can ponder the question of obligation to people that we know as well as those we do not and cannot ever know.

Dispossession, Opacity, Undoing

Although there is no “outside” of subjugation, it is possible to contemplate a more humanized world where the dehumanizing effects of subjugation are minimized as we become aware of our common vulnerability and the responsibility that arise from this human condition. This brings us to the second sense of *dispossession*, namely, “establishing the human beings as relational as well as independent beings.” Butler thinks that we definitely do have a primordial responsibility towards others. I believe that according to her the question of “what are our obligations to people we do not know?”—in the sense of our primordial responsibility towards other individuals—is a question that frames the philosophical perspective in which to anchor the question of humanization. This “to know” seems to exceed the sense of “being acquainted with.” People whom we do not know are, in a more fundamental sense, the ones rendered unintelligible. To limit responsibility in terms of the people who are “like us” (where this “like us” is determined by the norms of intelligibility) presupposes that we are self-knowing, self-transparent, and autonomous subjects. However, according to Butler, the subject is neither self-transparent nor autonomous but opaque to itself. That our primordial sociality determines us as beings who live in an interdependent world is a point that Butler makes over and over again, especially in her more recent books, articles, and interviews including *Dispossession*. However, by virtue of our primordial sociality, our interdependence acquires an ontologico-ethical sense since it exceeds the limits of the interdependence required for survival. At the same time, responsibility towards others comes to denote the obligation to respond to the demand that the other makes on me before any social contract where survival is secured in a community, a nation, a legal framework, and so on.

According to Butler, it is *opacity* that is the source of our ethical responsibility. Although one becomes intelligible and recognized within a particular regime of truth, it is also the site where one relates to oneself. As what “I am” is in a sense produced but not deterministically set by the norms, I can challenge the norms and transform myself by questioning these norms that produce me. In terms of this ethics, self-transformation of the subject is made possible through resistance to obedience, through “the right that the subject gives herself to question truth on its effects of power and question power on its discourses of truth” (Butler 2003b, 314), that is to say through the right of critique

that the subject gives to herself. This does not mean however that moral action is completely outside the “reality” in which one lives. All moral action involves a relationship not only with the reality but with the self. The realization of oneself as an ethical agent involves a decision to pursue a certain mode of being, which one chooses (for oneself) insofar as one finds oneself questioning the existing moral precepts. Hence even though the ethical subject always forms herself in relation to a reality where there are rules to be obeyed, she “chooses” her own ethical code in terms of a self-formation that will issue from the interrogating attitude, i.e., critique in the sense of virtue. The interrogation that makes self-transformation possible operates in relation to the set of norms. As Butler says: “the subject is not fully free to disregard the norm that inaugurates its reflexivity; one invariably struggles with the conditions of one’s own life that one could not have chosen” (Butler 2005, 19). This account of “coming to be” of the subject by way of the productive effect of power but at the same time by resistance to it, makes it that the conditions of the emergence of the subject can never be fully accounted for, and this is why “the subject is opaque to itself, not fully translucent and knowable to itself” (Butler 2005, 19). Accordingly, Butler strongly believes that the opacity of the subject can serve the humanization of our world. Explaining opacity, Butler writes:

Moments of unknowingness about oneself tend to emerge in the contexts of relations to others, suggesting that these relations call upon primary forms of relationality that are not always available to explicit and reflective thematization. If we are formed in the context of relations that become partially irrecoverable to us, then the opacity seems built into our formation and follows from our status as beings who are formed in relation to dependency. The postulation of a primary opacity to the self that follows from formative relations has a specific implication for an ethical bearing toward the other. Indeed, if it is precisely by virtue of one’s relation to others that one is opaque to oneself, and if those relationships are the venue for one’s ethical responsibility, then it may well follow that it is precisely by virtue of one’s opacity to itself that it incurs and sustains some of its most important ethical bonds. (Butler 2005, 20)

The ethical consequence of critique is the self-questioning whereby the very norms of recognizability are thereby put into question. In the earlier pages of *Giving an Account of Oneself* (Butler 2005), through a dialogue with Foucault, Butler is discussing the questioning of a regime of truth in so far as it amounts to “giving an account of oneself,” in order to suggest that (and this is something she thinks is missing in Foucault’s analysis) the desire to recognize and be recognized by the other, when found to be impossible in a regime of truth (since

oneself and/or the other does not conform to the norms of intelligibility), equally compels me to adopt a critical attitude towards these norms (Butler 2005, 22–6). For Butler, it is the realization that we are interdependent creatures desiring to be recognized and the awareness succeeding it that open up the possibility for a more humanized world.

Accordingly, by questioning the norms through which my being is given, I question them in relation to my own being in the sense of my own recognizability as a person. Moreover, this questioning also involves a questioning of the other, as well as the role of the other in terms of the possibility of my becoming a recognizable subject. Butler takes on the task of showing that—as we have previously indicated—the opacity of the subject has a greater potential to give rise to a more humanized ethics. For Butler, we need to understand that the “I” and the “you” can never be reduced to oneness or sameness. Radical otherness marks the scene of sociality. Accordingly, it is by virtue of our common condition of bodily singularity that it is also possible to acknowledge a “you” even when our (again common) primordial opacity makes it impossible to address another in terms of “knowing.” We *do* have a responsibility towards the other we cannot fully know, and also we expect that the other will be responsible towards us because we are exposed to each other and this is something that we cannot control or will away. No one can avoid the contiguity of the *you* by reducing the other to the *I* or to a collective *we*.

Now, what ethical implications does this opacity have in terms of our responsibilities towards each other? According to Butler, not being able to give a full account of oneself does not amount to ethical failure, but rather, as curious as it seems, “is an indispensable resource for ethics” (Cavarero 2000, 90–1; cited in Butler 2005, 40). Earlier in the paper, we analyzed the relation of intelligibility and the “human.” In what follows, we will think this relation in terms of a humanizing ethics. Butler writes:

If one is to respond ethically to a human face, there must first be a frame for the human, one that can include any variations as ready instances. But given how contested the visual representation of the ‘human’ is, it would appear that our capacity to respond to a face as a human face is conditioned and mediated by frames of reference that are variably humanizing and dehumanizing.” (Butler 2005, 29)

As the subject emerges in subjection to the norms of intelligibility of the regime of truth, it may also look as if this foreclosure does not leave any room for the individual to challenge these norms of intelligibility—for the norms of intelligibility of the regime of truth also determine the norms of

acknowledgment. The “I” who is acknowledged as a subject by conforming to the norms is so acknowledged by virtue of being intelligible, and acknowledges as subjects only those who conform to the same norms of intelligibility. As the norms of intelligibility are the norms of the “human,” those who are unintelligible are not acknowledged or recognized as human. This is the social domain upon which ethical responsibility is understood to be founded. Accordingly, one only feels ethically responsible towards the others acknowledged to be “human.” One does not care for, mourn, or grieve for the ones who are unintelligible, due to their thus-unintelligible gender, sexual desire, ethnicity, religious belief, nationality and so on. The norms of intelligibility make it appear as if the subject is fully transparent to itself in the sense of knowing itself, as this knowing is determined by these very norms. This illusion of the self-sufficient and autonomous subject also sets the limits for the human. However, according to Butler, “a new sense of ethics” can emerge from “a certain willingness to acknowledge the limits of acknowledgment” (Butler 2005, 42). To be able to acknowledge the limits of acknowledgment, we need to interrogate the “transparent subject” and show that the subject is never transparent but opaque to itself.

For a Humanizing Ethics and Politics

Butler claims that it is “my own opacity to myself [that] occasions my capacity to confer a certain recognition on others. It would be, perhaps, an ethics based on our shared, invariable, and partial blindness about ourselves” (Butler 2005, 41). I think that we can substantiate the argument for the opacity of the subject as we think it together with Butler’s claim that “we are undone by each other,” where “undone” implies opacity and the state of being dispossessed. As social beings “destined” to relationality, we demand of and impose upon others recognition since, as we come to realize that it is impossible to fully recognize and be recognized by others, this “apprehension of epistemic limits” (Butler 2005, p. 43) brings about a more ethical and humanized world. We are interdependent beings and this primary relationality is a condition that none of us escape from, as much as we sometimes will to do so. The discussion of the opacity of the subject shows us that we are never “isolated islands” but that we are always affected by others in ways that we cannot control or will away. We are undone by one another. She writes:

I think we are affected by others in all kinds of ways. I do understand what it’s like to wish to control the conditions under which we can be affected by other

human beings, but none of us really are [...] It just seems to me that there are ways in which we have to accept something like our own permeability to other people. We are affected by others. (Butler 2003c)

According to Butler, “any discourse, any regime of intelligibility, constitutes us *at a cost*. Our capacity to reflect upon ourselves, to tell the truth about ourselves, is correspondingly limited by what the discourse [...] cannot allow into speakability” (Butler 2005, 121). This cost opens up a new way to think about ethics. The subject cannot be fully recognized; nor is full narration possible: the subject is undeniably opaque to itself. Butler turns this into a benefit as she claims “the acceptance of the limits of knowability in oneself and others” to be the ultimate “ethical resource” (Butler 2005, 63). However, this primordial relationality and affectability is ignored when we uncritically suppose that we can delineate the borders of the human in terms of the norms of intelligibility, so creating a domain of the inhuman that can be omitted. This is the question of humanization and dehumanization. Butler is asking: “How do people become humanized, how do we come to understand them to be human beings rather than some distant entity we could never hope or desire to understand?” (ibid.) The question of “who counts as human?” in terms of the cultural contours that outline the human can be scrutinized in terms of doing violence and responding to violence, as well as in terms of what is avowed as “loss” and whose lives are mourned. To wit, the person will not be mourned if she or he is not avowed as a loss. The conception of the human that Butler is critical of is one that is based upon the exclusion of humans who, in a way, are not humans. They have no place in the established ontology of the normative human morphologies and capacities. According to Butler, the prevailing assumptions on gender, race, citizenship, ethnicity, belief, and so on cast those who don’t fit into our preconceived idea (l)s of those categories into a no-man’s land, such that their humanity is left unacknowledged. They constantly suffer the violence of de-realization and dehumanization. She asks: “What are the conditions under which we find that we are responsive to other human beings?” (Butler 2003c) As she simultaneously explains, becoming responsive is “seeing or sensing suffering, responding to it.” We need to realize that violence done under the pretext of responding to injury has the effect of hindering—even prohibiting—responding to the suffering of “others.” The ones who “deserve” to be injured, as in revenge or retribution, don’t have a “face” (in the Levinasian sense). It is as if their suffering and omission is justified. They do not deserve to be grieved for, to be mourned, for it is as if no life has been lost.

This public dimension makes us all vulnerable to the violence of others. As Butler says, we are “touched” by the others. We are affected by the others in ways we cannot control. But not all “touches” are welcome. She says: “Violence is surely a touch of the worst order, a way a primary human vulnerability to other humans is exposed in its most terrifying way, a way in which we are given over, without control, to the will of another, a way in which life itself can be expunged by the willful action of another” (Butler 2006, 28–9). To recall, according to Butler, our common corporeal vulnerability can be a new basis for humanism, on the condition that this be recognized as vulnerability—where “vulnerability” is understood in terms of a fundamental dependence on existing norms of recognition.

As was explained, within Butler’s thought, it is our primordial common vulnerability to loss that is the source of ethical and political actions. The discussion on the ethical value of mourning shows that our duty to the dead and lost implies our duty to the living (Butler 2006, 30). Butler writes: “For if I am confounded by you, then you are already of me, and I am nowhere without you. You are what I gain through this disorientation and loss [that comes from trying to speak to an Other]. This is how the human comes into being, again and again, as that which we have yet to know” (Butler 2006, 49). According to Butler, “all faces”—not only those that we know but also those that we do not or cannot know—present us with a demand. Realizing that we are interdependent beings living precarious lives in a state of inescapable affectivity, we are driven to take an ethico-political stance where we feel responsible also for the lives of people we do not know.

I would like to end with a quote taken from the talk Butler gave in Ankara in May, 2010, that bring the two senses of dispossession together in terms of the ethico-political aspect of democracy, the desired kind of democracy, in which the world becomes a “livable world” for all of us:

To be a subject at all requires first complying with certain norms that govern recognition – that make a person recognizable. And so, non-compliance calls into question the viability of one’s life, the ontological conditions of one’s persistence. We think of subjects as the kind of beings who ask for recognition in the law or in political life; but perhaps the more important issue is how the terms of recognition condition in advance who will count as a subject, and who will not [...] To affirm radical democracy is to be open to a future of what is not yet fully known about the other and perhaps never can be. Perhaps if there is an ethics to democracy, it is one in which I never fully capture or know another who is unlike me, but I commit myself to honoring that life, and to insisting on

the value of that life, which is the life of embodied freedom and its permanent claim to equality and justice. (Butler, 2010)

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PORFIR – DESPRE REFUZUL HRANEI ANIMALE CA SEMN AL DEMNITAȚII OMULUI¹

Adriana NEACȘU²

***Abstract:** In this article, the author presents Porphyry's position on the need for man to give up animal food, as it is shown in his treatise *On Abstinence From Animal Food*. The author outlines briefly the philosophy on which Porphyry bases, which is that of Neoplatonism and claims that man is related both to animals by soul and gods, and if he wants to return to the stage of pure spiritual being he must abandon all the habits that subordinate him to the body. Since Porphyry's treatise is written in a polemic manner against the followers of animal food, the author presents successively, in a systematic way, the arguments of the followers of animal food, Porphyry's arguments for abandoning animal food as well as Porphyry's rejections of the arguments of his opponents. The author points out that for Porphyry, giving up to animal food is essential that man reached his true dignity of human condition.*

***Keywords:** man, soul, body, animal, god, food, ethics, dignity, Neoplatonism, Porphyry.*

Introducere

Omul, cea mai complexă ființă cunoscută din univers, singura, se pare, dotată cu un nivel de conștiință din care celelalte ființe nu posedă decât rudimente, nu s-a constituit ca atare decât pe baza unei componente biologice, pe care nu o poate repudia decât cu riscul cert al neantizării sale. Apărut pe baza unor mutații ontologice al căror mecanism nu este încă foarte clar, dar și a legii evoluției speciilor, el și-a dezvoltat mediul propriu de existență – societatea cu diversele forme de cultură și civilizație – prin anexarea și exploatarea din ce în ce mai intensă a mediului natural.

Un rol capital în această cruciadă a supraviețuirii, dar și a dominării, l-a avut modul de dobândire a hranei și caracterul ei. În acest sens, este de domeniul evidenței că animalele reprezintă o sursă de hrană de cea mai

¹ Acest text face parte din Grantul intern nr. 5 C/27.01.2014 al Universității din Craiova, cu tema: „Paradigma demnității umane, între simplificare și mistificare: analiză teologică, filosofică și juridică.”

² University of Craiova, Romania.

mare importanță pentru om, chiar dacă ea nu este exclusivă. În calitate de omnivor, adică de ființă care mănâncă de toate, pe lângă vegetalele pe care inițial le-a găsit în natură, iar apoi a început să le cultive, omul a fost, fie de la început, fie pe parcursul evoluției sale, un prădător asemenea multor specii, iar, ulterior, crescător de animale pentru consum. Sunt voci autorizate care susțin că hrana animală, în forma ei gătită mai ales, a avut un rol esențial în creșterea creierului hominizilor și transformarea lor în *homo sapiens*, și că vânarea și creșterea animalelor au fost determinante pentru punerea bazelor civilizației umane.¹

Astăzi, însă, din considerente etice și religioase, dar, din ce în ce mai mult, și economice, se pune întrebarea dacă omul este justificat să ucidă animale pentru a le mânca, și dacă acest tip de hrană, pe lângă faptul că nu concordă cu statutul de ființă rațională, superioară brutei inconștiente, este ceva natural și indispensabil omului sau, dimpotrivă, o sursă permanentă de boli și sărăcie. De fapt, întrebarea nu este nouă, ea a apărut odată cu dezvoltarea conștiinței de sine a omului și a sentimentului său de responsabilitate față de lume, iar formulări explicite ale ei și răspunsuri clare le găsim în diverse contexte religioase și filosofice ale antichității.

Unul din aceste răspunsuri s-a conturat în mediul neoplatonismului, curent filosofic legat de tradițiile Greciei, care implicau sacrificii de animale către zei, dar care, prin Porfir, elevul lui Plotin, se exprimă hotărât împotriva lor și, mai ales, a hranei de tip animal. Lucrarea în care Porfir își prezintă poziția este *Despre abținerea de la hrana animală*, care cuprinde patru cărți relativ ample, ceea ce arată importanța pe care autorul o acorda acestui subiect, dar și faptul că el avea rezonanță în epocă.

De altfel, Porfir ne atrage atenția că abținerea de la carne este o dogmă veche, susținută, printre alții, de Pitagora și Empedocle, și, mai mult, aprobată de zei, ceea ce pledează în favoarea corectitudinii acesteia. Însă el își dă seama că argumentul autorității nu este infailibil, de vreme ce împotriva abstenenței au argumentat o mulțime de alți filosofi, printre care peripateticii, stoicii și cea mai mare parte dintre epicurieni. Prin urmare, Porfir își propune să prezinte argumentele acestora, pe care le împrumută de la peripateticul Heraclides Ponticus și de la epicureanul Hermarchus, dar și pe cele întâlnite la oamenii obișnuiți, pentru a le demonstra inconsistența.²

¹ Vezi: Marylè Patou-Mathis, *Mangeurs de viande. De la préhistoire à nos jours*, Editions Perrin, 2005.

² Porphyry, *On Abstinence from Animal Food*, in Thomas Rodd (ed.). *Select Works of Porphyry*, Translated by Thomas Taylor, London, 1823, Book the first, par. 1-3, pp. 1-3.

Mergând pe urmele lui Porfir, am identificat zece argumente ale adeptilor hranei animale, pe care acum doar le vom enunța, concentrându-ne, ulterior, atenția asupra respingerii lor de către filosoful nostru:

1. *Argumentul superiorității omului ca specie.*
2. *Argumentul stării de fapt.*
3. *Argumentul folosului mâncării cărnii.*
4. *Argumentul pericolului creșterii numărului de animale.*
5. *Argumentul tratamentului reciproc.*
6. *Argumentul autoapărării.*
7. *Argumentul beneficiilor pentru animale.*
8. *Argumentul hranei vegetale.*
9. *Argumentul antropocentric.*
10. *Argumentul autorității.*

După cum observăm din simpla lor enunțare, pozițiile apărătorilor consumului de carne sunt asemănătoare cu cele susținute în zilele noastre, dar vom vedea că nici argumentele lui Porfir, dincolo de cadrul filosofic pe care se întemeiază, nu și-au pierdut greutatea odată cu trecerea timpului, și că, prin urmare, ele pot constitui un motiv serios de reflecție chiar și astăzi.

I. Orizontul filosofic al poziției lui Porfir

Luând act de argumentele adeptilor hranei animale, Porfir afirmă că-i va combate pe terenul ferm al rațiunii, singura care trebuie să-i ghideze pe toți aceia care vor să își afle rostul vieții și cum să acționeze conform lui. El ne previne că punctele de vedere avansate de oamenii practici sau de sofști nu sunt în acord cu rațiunea deoarece ei nu urmăresc decât plăcerea, bunăstarea și confortul, socotind că astfel vor dobândi fericirea. Or, deși majoritatea oamenilor aderă la acest tip de viață, el este inferior, nedemn de condiția umană.¹ Din păcate însă, legiuitorii au stabilit legile ținând cont de viața oamenilor obișnuiți, și de aceea ei nu au interzis mâncatul cărnii.²

Prin urmare, ca să răspundem corect la întrebarea dacă putem sau nu să folosim hrana animală, trebuie să știm mai întâi care este natura omului și ce tip de viață este în acord cu aceasta, astfel încât, prin practicarea lui, să fim cu adevărat fericiți. În felul acesta noi ne ridicăm de la legile omenești la legea divină nescrisă, aflată deasupra tuturor, deoarece este făcută din perspectiva celei mai înalte perfecțiuni. Or, în ceea ce privește omul, Porfir susține, asemenea tuturor neoplatonicilor, că el este în mod originar suflet,

¹ Ibidem, par. 27, pp. 18-20.

² Ibidem, par. 28, p. 20.

adică o substanță inteligibilă, fără legătură cu nimic sensibil, dar care, fiindcă nu are forța de a-și păstra la infinit starea de puritate absolută, s-a unit, la un moment dat, cu un corp material. Această asociere degradează, însă, sufletul, care astfel se depărtează de starea sa naturală, ducând o existență neautentică, precară.

„...noi am fost naturi intelectuale și suntem încă esențe purificate de toate simțurile și de iraționalitate dar suntem asociați cu lucruri sensibile, datorită incapacității noastre de veșnică asociere cu inteligibilul și prin capacitatea de a fi familiarizați cu preocupări pământești. Pentru că toate forțele stimulate în asociere cu simțurile și corpul sunt vătămate, sufletul nu locuiește în inteligibil; (...) iar acest lucru se întâmplă printr-o anumită decădere a sufletului, care, într-adevăr, nu-și distruge esența prin generarea de iraționalitate, dar prin asta este unit cu o natură muritoare și este tras în jos din ceea ce îi este lui caracteristic spre o condiție de existență străină de a sa proprie.”¹

Pentru a-și redobândi condiția originală, reluându-și locul de drept în sfera inteligibilă, sufletul trebuie să respingă orice este sensibil, material și muritor în viața omului, care, astfel, va deveni fericit. Căci fericirea este faptul de a fi pur, adică de a duce o viață spirituală, conformă cu natura noastră.² Calea spre puritate implică separarea de tot ce este contrar rațiunii, alungarea, pe cât posibil, a pasiunilor și dorințelor, care sunt cauzele acțiunilor și ne îndepărtează de viața contemplativă. Căci dacă vrem să devenim asemenea divinului, așa cum ne îndreptățește autentică noastră natură, trebuie să ne gândim doar la perfecțiunea sufletului, să ducem o viață strict spirituală și să ne eliberăm de orice înveliș terestru.

„Așa încât, dacă suntem dornici de a reveni la acele naturi la care ne-am asociat anterior, trebuie să ne străduim cu toată puterea să ne îndepărtăm de simțuri și imaginație, și de iraționalitatea la care ele participă, precum și, de asemenea, de pasiunile legate de ele, în măsura în care necesitatea condiției noastre în această viață ne-o va permite (...) și, plasați într-o natură incorporeală, putem trăi prin intelect în mod veritabil, și nu în mod fals, în conexiune cu lucrurile legate de corpuri.”³

În schimb, sufletul care se îndreaptă spre obiectele receptate de simțuri se tulbură alungând rațiunea, determinând omul la acte nepotrivite, iar exercitarea continuă a văzului, mirosului, gustului, leagă sufletul de corp. Prin urmare, Porfir îi dă dreptate medicului care consideră că alimentele și

¹ Ibidem, par. 30, pp. 20-21.

² Ibidem, par. 29, pp. 22-23.

³ Ibidem, par. 31, p. 23.

băutura ce constituie hrana obișnuită reprezintă otrăvuri mai periculoase pentru suflet decât sunt otrăvurile făcute pentru corp.¹ Dar cum noi nu putem să renunțăm cu totul la hrană, este imperios necesar ca măcar hrana animală, care are o consistență deosebită, s-o refuzăm, dacă vrem să slăbim legătura dintre suflet și corp. Pe de altă parte, interdicția de a mânca hrană animală se sprijină și pe argumentul, la fel de important, că animalele au și ele un suflet, care are aceeași natură cu cea a sufletului uman, chiar dacă animalele realizează performanțe mult mai modeste în raport cu oamenii, nu doar din punct de vedere strict rațional ci și practic. Însă Porfir ne asigură că acest lucru se datorează doar însoțirii sufletului animal cu un corp dotat cu însușiri mai puțin complexe decât corpul omului.

„...nu se poate deduce că, dacă noi avem mai multă inteligență decât alte animale, din această cauză ele trebuie să fie lipsite de inteligență. (...) dar dacă sufletul este doar co-pasiv în raport cu corpul și folosește corpul ca pe un instrument, el poate fi în măsură să efectueze multe lucruri prin intermediul corpului, ceea ce noi nu putem face atunci când corpul este organizat în mod diferit decât corpul nostru; iar atunci când corpul este afectat într-o anumită manieră, sufletul poate simpatiza cu el, și totuși nu își poate schimba natura proprie.”²

II. Argumentele lui Porfir împotriva hranei animale

Porfir ne asigură că toate aceste lucruri sunt binecunoscute de filosofi, care nu au nicio problemă să renunțe la carne, fiindcă ei vor să se asemene cât pot de mult cu divinul și astfel să fie fericiți.³ Însă cine nu se poate abține de la hrana animală nu se poate considera filosof. Așadar, argumentele care urmează sunt menite să-i convingă în primul rând pe aceia care aspiră la condiția de filosof, omul care, prin efortul său către perfecțiune, întruchipează cea mai înaltă formă a împlinirii umane. Dar vom vedea că, în virtutea statutului acestuia de maximă reprezentativitate, Porfir va extinde exemplul filosofului la toți oamenii.

1. Argumentul asemănării cu zeii

Am văzut deja că asemănarea originară cu zeii și necesitatea de a o redobândi sunt elemente principale ale cadrului filosofic în interiorul căruia se construiește poziția lui Porfir. Ca argumente efective, ele sunt invocate în

¹ Ibidem, par. 34, pp. 25-26.

² Porphyry, *On Abstinence...*, op. cit., Book 3, par. 8, pp. 103-104.

³ Porphyry, *On Abstinence...*, op. cit., Book the first, par. 37, pp. 27-28.

diverse modalități. Astfel, ni se spune că, datorită faptului că își este sieși suficient, divinul nu are dorințe. Prin urmare, limitarea dorințelor noastre în general, dar cu atât mai mult a celor care se referă la hrana animală, ne face asemănători zeilor.¹ De asemenea, Zeul care domină asupra a tot, numit și Tată, este foarte simplu, foarte pur, suficient lui însuși și degajat de orice materie. Prin urmare, a respinge materialitatea grosieră a hranei animale este absolut necesar pentru a fi asemenea lui. De altfel, nu ne putem uni cu nici un zeu dacă nu renunțăm la carne, căci nu doar sufletul nostru, ci și corpul trebuie să fie pur pentru ca noi să putem sta în preajma divinului.

„Dar așa cum nu este posibil prin nici un fel de regim alimentar, și, pe scurt, prin hrănirea cu carne, să devii capabil de o uniune chiar cu unele divinități parțiale, cu atât mai mult nu este posibil acest lucru cu Zeul care este dincolo de toate lucrurile și deasupra unei naturi pur și simplu încorporale. (...) Astfel încât, cu cât Tatăl tuturor lucrurilor excelează în simplitate, puritate și autosuficiență, deoarece el este dincolo de orice reprezentare materială, cu atât mai mult este necesar ca cel care se apropie de el să fie din toate punctele de vedere curat și sfânt, începând de la corp și terminând cu interiorul său.”²

2. *Argumentul înrudirii omului cu animalele*

Așa după cum am văzut, omul este, în esență, suflet, aflat în combinație cu un anume corp, iar animalul este și el tot suflet, care are exact aceeași natură cu cea a sufletului nostru. Diferența este că sufletul animalului locuiește într-un trup de o factură inferioară, deși chiar și acesta prezintă o mulțime de asemănări cu trupul nostru. În aceste condiții, este ceva natural ca, după moarte, sufletul omului să treacă într-un corp de animal și viceversa. Ca atare, omului nu-i este permis să le facă rău animalelor, nici să le omoare, nici să le mănânce, fiindcă ele sunt rudele sale.

„Prin urmare, dacă animalele sunt înrudite cu noi, din moment ce, după spusele lui Pitagora, ele au același suflet ca și noi, cel care nu se abține să acționeze nedrept față de rudele lui poate fi pe bună dreptate considerat ca lipsit de evlavie. Și nici pentru că unele animale sunt sălbatice, înrudirea lor cu noi nu trebuie să fie trecută sub tăcere.”³

¹ Ibidem, par. 54, p. 41.

² Ibidem, par. 57, pp. 43-44.

³ Porphyry, *On Abstinence...*, op. cit., Book 3, par. 26, p. 126.

3. *Argumentul opoziției dintre intelect și simțuri*

Acest argument îi vizează pe aceia care cred că poți îmbina simțurile și intelectul fără să-i acorzi nici unuia preeminența, practicând deopotrivă satisfacerea dorințelor materiale și contemplația intelectuală. Dar Porfir califică această atitudine drept greșită, răspunzătoare de degradarea sufletului, care nu mai este capabil să facă ierarhii valorice, socotind că ambele atitudini sunt egal de îndreptățite.¹ Din punctul său de vedere, simțurile și intelectul sunt în opoziție, așa încât simțurile nu sunt satisfăcute decât prin prejudicierea părții intelectuale. În schimb, cine vrea o viață pură, în care intelectul să ocupe locul central, trebuie să se abțină de la multe lucruri care satisfac simțurile.

„Pentru că, acolo unde simțul și sensibilul sunt puternice, are loc o îndepărtare și o separare de locul inteligibil; și cu cât este mai puternică excitația părții iraționale, cu atât mai mare este îndepărtarea de rațiune. Pentru că nu este posibil pentru noi să ținem deopotrivă de acest loc și de acela, și în timp ce suntem aici, să fim totuși și acolo [adică să fim prezenți la o esență inteligibilă]. Pentru că atenția pe care noi o acordăm lucrurilor nu se realizează printr-o parte a noastră ci prin întregul nostru.”²

4. *Argumentul afectării sufletului de către corp*

Acest argument îl continuă pe cel precedent, evidențiind faptul că, deși în sine sufletul este imposibil, când este asociat corpului el este afectat de tot ceea ce se întâmplă cu acesta.³ Astfel, atunci când corpul este mișcat de obiecte exterioare, imediat apare în om pasiunea, care mișcă partea irațională a sufletului său. Iar dacă această parte nu este condusă de rațiune, atunci se deschide calea pentru toate viciile în viața omului. Dar cel condus de rațiune face doar ceea ce este înțelept.

„...omul care este prudent și suspicios față de farmecele naturii, care a cercetat proprietățile esențiale ale corpului și știe că acesta a fost adaptat ca un instrument la puterile sufletului, va ști și cât de ușor se acordă pasiunea cu corpul, atunci când ceva extern îl impresionează, fie că noi suntem dispuși la asta fie că nu. (...) Dar cine înlătură stăpânirea rațiunii asupra părții iraționale (...), un astfel de om, acceptând să dorească și să se înfurie, le va suporta pe acestea după bunul lor plac. Dimpotrivă, omul vrednic va

¹ Porphyry, *On Abstinence...*, op. cit., Book the first, par. 42, pp. 31-32.

² Ibidem, par. 41, p. 31.

³ Ibidem, par. 39, p. 29.

acționa în așa fel încât faptele sale să poată fi conforme cu rațiunea conducătoare, chiar și în energiile părții iraționale.”¹

De aceea, pentru a fi cât mai puțin afectat de corp, omul, ghidat de rațiune, trebuie să evite pasiunea, trezită în el de hrana animală.

4. *Argumentul subordonării față de rațiune*

Omul care nu ascultă de rațiune este vicios, nedemn de statutul său uman. Numai cel guvernat de rațiune este virtuos. Oamenii virtuoși se abțin de la mâncare și, în general, de la plăcerile simțurilor pentru că ele nu sunt în acord cu rațiunea.² Este firesc acest lucru, deoarece, în cazul unei vieți bogate și voluptuoase, este dificil să îți păstrezi mereu spiritul treaz și rațiunea.³ Ca atare, Porfir declară că, dacă am putea să nu mâncăm, am ajunge mai repede la perfecțiune, recucerindu-ne condiția nemuritoare.

„Dar, în ceea ce privește hrana, dacă ar fi posibil să fim eliberați de aceasta în același mod ca și de obiectele vizibile, atunci când acestea sunt scoase din raza privirii (...) nu ar fi o realizare nemaipomenită să fim imediat eliberați de necesitatea naturii muritoare, prin depășirea acesteia.”⁴

Dar cum acest lucru nu este posibil pentru om, măcar să ne abținem de la hrana animală, căci faptul este perfect posibil.

5. *Argumentul minimei subzistențe*

Din punctul de vedere al lui Porfir, adepții hranei animale sunt sclavi ai pasiunilor stârnite de simțuri, acordându-i corpului prea mult, pe când filozofii trebuie să-i acorde naturii doar strictul necesar, mâncând ceva ușor. Or, așa după cum am văzut, sufletul care nu cedează corpului și nu-l hrănește cu ceva consistent corporal, este la adăpost de dorințele trezite de lucrurile corporale și se poate mai ușor desprinde de corporalitate.

„Prin urmare, atâta timp cât cineva este lipsit de echilibru cu privire la mâncare și susține că acest lucru sau acela ar trebui consumate dar nu concepe că, dacă ar fi posibil, ar trebui să se abțină de la toate produsele alimentare, aprobându-și prin această convingere pasiunile, un astfel de om exprimă o opinie vană. (...) Cel care filosofează (...) acordând naturii numai ceea ce este necesar și de o calitate ușoară, precum și prin alimente mai frugale, va respinge orice depășește acest lucru (...) convins de adevărul

¹ Ibidem, par. 43, pp. 32-33.

² Ibidem, par. 44-45, pp. 33-34.

³ Ibidem, par. 50, pp. 37.

⁴ Ibidem, par. 45, p. 34.

spuselor lui Platon, că simțul este un cui prin care sufletul este fixat de corpuri, prin pasiuni și bucuria plăcerilor trupești.”¹

6. *Argumentul caracterului nenecesar al hranei animale*

Din faptul că a existat o perioadă în care oamenii nu au apelat la hrana animală, lucru recunoscut chiar de adepții acesteia, rezultă că mâncatul cărnii nu este o necesitate pentru om; el se poate lipsi de acest obicei, care a fost introdus doar pentru a varia plăcerile. Or, omul (și în primul rând filosoful) nu trebuie să fie rob plăcerilor, căci ceea ce îi este cu adevărat necesar se reduce la puțin, este ușor de găsit și se poate folosi fără ca sufletul să-și piardă liniștea și dreptatea. Așadar, urmând exemplul filosofului, noi cu toții trebuie să ne abținem de la carne pentru că hrana vegetală ne este de ajuns și, fiind ușoară, nu întărește lanțurile sufletului, așa cum se întâmplă cu cea animală, care favorizează dezordinea acestuia, nechibzuința, îndepărtându-l de la scopul esențial al trecerii lui prin lume: revenirea la starea de puritate inițială.

„Însă filosoful contemplativ va adopta invariabil o dietă frugală. Pentru că el știe în ce constau obligațiile sale, astfel că nu este capabil să dorească articole de lux. Prin urmare, fiind încântat cu alimente simple el nu va căuta hrana animală, așa cum s-ar întâmpla dacă nu ar fi mulțumit cu o dietă de legume. Dar dacă natura trupului unui filosof nu este așa (...) de adaptată pentru ca dorințele să îi fie satisfăcute prin lucruri ușor de procurat, iar de dragul mântuirii adevărate ar fi necesar să suporte unele dureri și agresioni, ar trebui să nu-i dăm [voie] să le suporte? (...) Prin urmare, prin nici un mijloc noi nu ar trebui să urmăm legile corpului, care sunt violente și contrare legilor intelectului, precum și căilor care duc la mântuire.”²

7. *Argumentul beneficiilor pentru viața cotidiană*

Dar abținerea de la carne este un lucru benefic nu doar pentru viața orientată către desăvârșirea spirituală, ci și pentru desfășurarea activității noastre de zi cu zi. Fiindcă cei care au stomacul plin de hrană grea, animală, au digestia lentă, corpul gras, sunt înclinați spre somn și nu-și pot realiza sarcinile specifice. În schimb, cei care se hrănesc cu fructe și legume au stomacul ușor, digestie rapidă, sunt lucizi, pot acționa rapid și eficient. Cu atât mai mult sunt ei capabili să se concentreze asupra lucrurilor intelectuale, desfășurând activități specifice sufletului.

¹ Ibidem, par. 38, p. 28.

² Ibidem, par. 56, pp. 42-43.

„Prin urmare, rațiunea, respingând foarte corect ceea ce este mult și de prisos, va circumscrie ceea ce este necesar în limite înguste.”¹ „...îndepărtând de ființa noastră dorința multor lucruri și mulțimea hranei introdusă în corp și, de asemenea, greutatea substanțelor digerabile fiind ușurată, ochiul sufletului va deveni liber și se va stabili, ca într-un port, dincolo de fumul și valurile naturii corporale.”²

Avantajele vegetarienilor în viața obișnuită vizează și faptul că hrana lor este mai ușor de obținut și de preparat în raport cu cea animală.³ În plus, aceștia, având mai puține nevoi, pot să facă economie de bunuri de lux, ceea ce este benefic nu doar pentru situația lor materială, ci și pentru echilibrul lor sufletească. Căci cel care se mulțumește cu puțin are sentimentul că nu-i lipsește nimic, dar cel bogat simte că, oricând, poate pierde tot. Astfel, toate bogățiile din lume nu pot înlătura tulburarea sufletului, dar cel care nu se teme de moarte, ci, dimpotrivă, este preocupat doar de a muri, își satisface nevoile cu lucruri nepretențioase, și nu va suferi dacă le va pierde.⁴ Așadar, cea mai pură bucurie în viață este când constăți că ai nevoi puține și le poți satisface ușor. Căci noi suntem bogați prin raportare la nevoi reale, nu la opinii fără teme, iar nevoile noastre profunde sunt cele spirituale, nu cele care se referă la corp și la bogățiile materiale.

„...cine se teme să se abțină de la hrana animală (...) crede că de îndată, împreună cu lipsa de astfel de alimente, va fi prezent ceva îngrozitor, nedefinit, a cărui consecință va fi moartea. (...) cel care își supune trupul privațiunilor va primi tot binele posibil, fiindu-și sieși suficient și fiind asimilat divinității. Și, de asemenea, el nu va dori o extindere a timpului, ca și cum aceasta ar aduce cu ea o creștere a binelui. El va fi astfel cu adevărat bogat, măsurând bogăția cu o limită naturală, și nu cu opinii deșarte.”⁵

III. Respingerea de către Porfir a argumentelor adeptilor hranei animale

Din perspectiva concepției sale filosofice despre natura omului și a sensului existenței lui, și în virtutea argumentelor dezvoltate pe această bază teoretică, Porfir este capabil să respingă raționamentele adeptilor hranei animale, pe care le-am enunțat anterior. În continuare, vom încerca să facem

¹ Ibidem, par. 46, p. 34.

² Ibidem, par. 47, pp. 35-36.

³ Ibidem, par. 46, p. 34-35.

⁴ Ibidem, par. 51, p. 37-39.

⁵ Ibidem, par. 54, p. 41-42.

o prezentare sistematică a acestor respingeri, fie că Porfir le expune în mod explicit, fie că ele rezultă în mod firesc din diversele sale aserțiuni.

1. *Respingerea argumentului superiorității omului ca specie*

Argumentul superiorității omului se bazează pe postulatul diferenței ontologice radicale dintre el și animale, în virtutea căreia se afirmă dreptul lui de a dispune cum dorește de acestea, pentru realizarea scopurilor sale legitime. Astfel, animalele nu sunt ființe raționale, nu fac parte din societatea oamenilor, deci nu trebuie menajate privind munca acestora sau hrănirea cu ele. De vreme ce animalele nu au aceeași natură ca și noi, adică sunt iraționale, ele nu înțeleg legile justiției; de aceea noi nu putem fi nedreți cu ele, indiferent cât le-am exploata. Cu alte cuvinte, noțiunea de justiție nu se aplică decât la oameni și la zei, nu și la animale.¹

Poziția aceasta se regăsește astăzi în așa-numitul *speciism*, adică atitudinea care justifică relele tratamente aplicate de oameni altor specii, pe motiv că ele sunt inferioare speciei noastre. De asemenea, aserțiunea că animalele nu pot înțelege legile dreptății și de aceea nici nu pot beneficia de ele rezonază cu ideea, de proveniență kantiană, a respingerii animalelor din sfera comunității morale, de vreme ce acestea, lipsite fiind de rațiune, nu pot fi agenți ai acțiunilor morale ci doar, cel mult, pacienți.

Porfir respinge pe larg și în multe locuri acest argument, arătând că superioritatea omului față de animale nu este una de substanță, ci doar de grad, datorată asocierii sufletului animalelor cu un corp care are mai puține calități și că, în fond, omul și animalul sunt înrudiți prin aceeași esență inteligibilă care le constituie adevărata natură. Practic, această respingere este conținută în mod implicit de întregul viziune filosofică a lui Porfir despre ființa umană și este exprimată în mod direct de *Argumentul înrudirii omului cu animalele* (vezi partea I. 2. a articolului de față).

2. *Respingerea argumentului stării de fapt*

Din faptul că oamenii mănâncă astăzi aproape unanim animale, nu este logic să deducem că acest lucru este specific naturii lor. După cum știm, oamenii nu au mâncat de la început carne, iar asta nu se datorează repulsiei lor față de carnea crudă, așa cum susțin adepții hranei animale, ci faptului că, pentru a putea să supraviețuiască și să ducă o viață bună, conformă cu propria lor natură, ei au nevoie de o hrană puțin consistentă, reprezentată exclusiv de vegetale. Inspirându-se din Teofrast, Porfir afirmă că recursul la

¹ Ibidem, par. 4, pp. 3-4.

hrana animală a fost posibil în condiții de foamete, datorată penuriei de hrană vegetală sau războaielor.¹ El aduce, în plus, exemple care ilustrează faptul că, în anumite cazuri, sacrificarea animalelor pentru hrană s-a produs mai întâi accidental și apoi s-a extins în întreaga comunitate în virtutea obiceiului, fiindcă cei îndreptățiți să o interzică nu au făcut-o din ignoranță.

„Pentru sacrificarea porcului este atribuită o eroare involuntară a lui Clymene, care, neintenționat, a ucis animalul. (...) o capră a fost ucisă pentru prima dată în Icar, un munte din Attica, pentru că a retezat o viță de vie. Iar Diomus, un preot al lui Jupiter Polieus, a fost primul care a ucis un bou; pentru că atunci când s-a celebrat festivalul sacru al lui Jupiter (...), un bou care s-a apropiat a gustat din turta sacră.”²

Alte cauze care au dus la sacrificii de animale au fost teama sau furia, care nu sunt emoții pozitive ci estompează glasul rațiunii.

3. *Respingerea argumentului folosului mâncării cărnii*

Acest argument pune accent pe beneficiile multiple ale hranei animale, evidențiate în decursul experienței istorice. Astfel, s-a constatat că mâncatul cărnii nu face rău nici corpului nici sufletului. Dimpotrivă, atât animalele cât și oamenii care consumă carne au mai multă forță, sunt mai inteligenți, iar medicii recomandă carne bolnavilor pentru a-i întări. În plus, animalele îi ajută pe oameni să se vindece de boli; prin urmare, dacă nu le-ar mai ucide, oamenii nu ar mai beneficia de numeroase remedii, care le-ar salva viața.³ Dar beneficiile nu vizează numai viața fiecărui individ, ci și integritatea colectivității organizate, deci cea a statului, iar aici argumentul face apel la raționamentul strict logic: dacă toți cetățenii unui stat ar repudia sângele, acel stat n-ar mai avea capacitatea de a-și respinge dușmanii.⁴

Porfir răspunde că, de fapt, mâncatul cărnii îi dăunează grav omului, fiindcă sufletul său este agresat de dorințele astfel generate, iar el devine fragil, subordonat corpului. Consumul cărnii este periculos pentru sănătatea noastră, care se menține mai bine cu o hrană frugală. Și chiar dacă prin hrana vegetariană nu s-ar obține forță fizică, ea nu este necesară unui filosof îndreptat spre viața contemplativă, nu spre acțiuni violente.

„...hrana animală nu contribuie, ci este mai degrabă un impediment pentru sănătate. Pentru că sănătatea este păstrată prin acele lucruri prin care este redobândită. Dar este redobândită prin dieta cea mai slabă și fără carne;

¹ Porphyry, *On Abstinence...*, op. cit., Book 2, par. 12, p. 52.

² Ibidem, par. 9-10, pp. 50-51.

³ Porphyry, *On Abstinence...*, op. cit., Book the first, par. 15-17, pp.13-14.

⁴ Ibidem, par. 26, p.18.

astfel încât ea este păstrată tot prin aceasta. Dacă, totuși, hrana vegetală nu contribuie la forța unui Milo, nici, pe scurt, la o creștere de forță, nici un filosof nu are nevoie de forță sau de o creștere a acesteia, în cazul în care intenționează să își acorde o viață de contemplație, și nu una activă și necumpătată.”¹

De fapt, renunțând la carne scăpăm de multe boli, deoarece stomacul va avea nevoi mai puține, va lucra mai puțin, spiritul va fi mai liber, neîngreunat de efectele cărnii sau de mișcările corpului.² De asemenea, nu vom mai fi înclinați așa de mult spre plăcerea iubirii, care tulbură sufletul.³ Or, păstrarea sănătății se face nu prin teama de moarte ci prin liniștea sufletului și orientarea lui către adevăr. Oricum, este recunoscut faptul că starea sufletului influențează sănătatea în aceeași măsură ca și dieta.⁴

În ceea ce privește ideea folosului hranei animale pentru capacitatea de apărare a statului, Porfir, într-adevăr, nu îl respinge. El admite că soldații și sportivii, care își supun corpul unui efort deosebit, pot să mănânce carne. Dar consideră că este greșit ca din faptul că unii pot să mănânce carne, să deducem că toți oamenii, inclusiv filosofii, au dreptul să mănânce carne.⁵ Așadar, Porfir afirmă că abținerea de la carne nu se impune tuturor ci doar filosofilor, mai ales acelor care își dobândesc fericirea prin imitarea celei mai înalte divinități. Iar lucrul acesta i se pare firesc, de vreme ce și preoții sunt supuși aceluiași tip de tratament, bazat pe înfrânare. Căci este o practică binecunoscută ca legiuitorii să interzică preoților mănucarea unor lucruri pe care le permit oamenilor obișnuiți.

„...abținerea de la hrana animală (...) nu este recomandată pur și simplu pentru toți oamenii, ci pentru filosofi, și mai ales acelor care își leagă fericirea de Zeu și de imitarea lui. Căci nici în viața politică legiuitorii nu ordonă ca aceleași lucruri să fie realizate de persoane fizice și de preoți, ci, permițând mulțimii anumite lucruri referitoare la alimente și alte lucruri necesare vieții, ei interzic preoților să le folosească, pedepsind încălcarea dispozițiilor lor cu moartea sau cu o amendă mare.”⁶

Observăm că Porfir face anumite concesii, acceptând hrana animală pentru toți cei angajați într-o activitate războinică sau competițională. Căci în aceste cazuri nu se mai pune problema sănătății, și cu atât mai puțin a

¹ Ibidem, par. 52, p. 39.

² Ibidem, par. 51-51, pp. 37-38.

³ Ibidem, par. 47, pp. 35-36.

⁴ Ibidem, par. 53, p. 40.

⁵ Porphyry, *On Abstinence...*, op. cit., Book 2, par. 4, p. 45-46.

⁶ Ibidem, par. 3, p. 45.

înălțării sufletului spre divin, ci doar a victoriei asupra unor adversari care, într-adevăr, ar putea amenința integritatea statului. Mergând însă mai departe în spiritul argumentației lui Porfir, am putea spune că, într-o lume ideală, în care flagelul războiului a fost eradicat, hrana animală nu s-ar mai justifica. Iar sportivii, a căror activitate nu vizează chestiuni de viață și de moarte, nu sunt îndreptățiți, dacă beneficiază cu toții de aceleași avantaje privind hrana, să aspire la o forță fizică superioară obținută într-o manieră care lezează, practic, demnitatea omului.

4. *Respingerea argumentului pericolului creșterii numărului de animale*

Este absurd să crezi că, dacă nu ar fi ucise și mâncate, animalele s-ar înmulți exagerat și ar pune în pericol bunăstarea și chiar viața oamenilor. Nu este necesar ca aceștia să controleze numărul animalelor prin uciderea lor. Controlul se realizează deja în mod firesc, prin uciderea animalelor între ele, căci acestea, într-adevăr, supraviețuiesc unele pe seama altora.

„Dacă toți oamenii ar gândi problema în mod corect, nu ar mai fi nevoie de păsărari, vânători, pescari sau porcari. Căci animalele își reglează singure numărul, iar cele care nu au paznic și conducător ar pieri repede, fiind distruse de altele, care le-ar ataca și le-ar împrăștia, așa cum se dovedește a fi cazul cu zecile de mii de animale pe care oamenii nu le mănâncă.”¹

5. *Respingerea argumentului tratamentului reciproc*

Este adevărat că unele animaleucid oamenii, dar asta nu ne îndreptățește să le ucidem pe toate. Iar din faptul că este necesar să ucizi animale în diverse situații, nu rezultă că poți să le și mănânci.² De asemenea, din ideea că avem dreptul să ucidem animalele sălbatice, nu putem concluziona că avem dreptul să ucidem și animalele domestice, cu atât mai puțin să le mănâncăm.

„...argumentele opuse vor fi dovedite a fi fără sens. Pentru că cea mai mare parte a lor se străduiesc să arate fie că este necesar să omorâm animalele din cauza vătămarilor suferite din partea lor și, ca o consecință a acestui lucru, că se cuvine să le și mănâncăm; fie că, deoarece animalele sunt ucise în sacrificii, ele pot fi consumate de oameni. Și iar, din faptul că e necesar să omori anumite animale, datorită ferocității lor, se deduce că și animalele domestice ar trebui ucise.”³

¹ Porphyry, *On Abstinence...*, op. cit., Book the first, par. 53, pp. 39-40.

² Porphyry, *On Abstinence...*, op. cit., Book 2, par. 2, p. 45.

³ Ibidem, par. 4, p. 45.

De altfel, faptul că diversele popoare ucid și mănâncă alte specii, în funcție de nevoile fiecăruia, este o dovadă că e nedrept să omori animale, și nu că este drept să faci acest lucru.¹

6. *Respingerea argumentului autoapărării*

Noi avem dreptul să ucidem animalele sălbatice atunci când ele ne fac rău. Dar trebuie să înțelegem că acestea ne atacă doar pentru că nu sunt conștiente și pentru a-și potoli foamea, pe când oamenii le ucid de multe ori pentru a-și asigura luxul, plăcerile nenesesare sau pentru a-și satisface o cruzime gratuită.² Oricum, din faptul uciderii lor nu rezultă că le putem și mânca. Fiindcă noi ucidem și oamenii răi și periculoși, dar nu-i putem mânca. Prin urmare, dacă putem ucide animalele feroce, nu suntem îndreptățiți să le mâncăm.

„...unii oameni nu sunt mai puțin dăunători pentru vecinii lor decât animalele sălbatice. (...) De aceea noi ucidem astfel de oameni. (...) Prin urmare, unele animalele care sunt sălbatice trebuie să fie ucise în același mod ca și oamenii care sunt sălbatice; dar obișnuința sau alianța noastră cu alte animale sălbatice nu trebuie să fie abandonată. Și nici animalele domestice nici cele sălbatice să nu fie mâncate, așa cum nu sunt mâncați nici oamenii nedrepti.”³

7. *Respingerea argumentului beneficiilor pentru animale*

Argumentul acesta părăsește chestiunea din punctul de vedere al omului și o tratează din perspectiva animalului. Astfel, celor care interzic uciderea animalelor pe motiv că ele au un suflet iar sufletul lor este asemănător cu cel al omului, li se răspunde că prin ucidere i se face un bine aceluia suflet, căci este scos dintr-un corp inferior, dându-i-se posibilitatea să se încarneze ca om, care este o ființă superioară și domină animalele. De altfel, prin uciderea animalului și prin mâncarea cărnii acestuia, sufletul lui nu este afectat, căci el este oricum separat de corp, fie că este nemuritor, asemenea celui al omului, fie că este muritor.⁴

Dar Porfir susține că animalele, ca și oamenii, au rațiune, iar ceea ce i se întâmplă corpului lor le afectează sufletul. Animalele au sentimente, simt, suferă, iar dacă le ucidem le facem rău deci comitem o nedreptate. Așadar,

¹ Ibidem, par. 11, p. 52.

² Porphyry, *On Abstinence...*, op. cit., Book 3, par. 20, p. 116.

³ Ibidem, par. 26, pp. 125-126.

⁴ Porphyry, *On Abstinence...*, op. cit., Book the first, par. 19, p.14.

nu e corect să provoci suferință animalului pentru a-i elibera forțat sufletul de corpul pe care temporar îl are în grijă, sub pretextul că îi faci un bine.

„...noi nu ar trebui să folosim carnea de vită ca mâncare (...) Pentru că <animalele> sunt în mod natural sensibile și capabile să simtă durere, să fie îngrozite și rănite, și din acest motiv ele pot fi vătămate.”¹

Așadar, din perspectiva lui Porfir, nu suntem îndreptățiți să provocăm durere și suferință unor ființe capabile să le resimtă, ceea ce este un punct de vedere ce rezonază în mod frapant cu poziția utilitaristă.

8. *Respingerea argumentului hranei vegetale*

Argumentul pretinde că, dacă animalele au suflet, trebuie să extindem această însușire și asupra plantelor, căci și ele sunt ființe vii. Însă dacă plantele au suflet, iar tot ce are suflet trebuie menajat de om, atunci trebuie să ne abținem să le mâncăm și pe ele. Dar noi mâncăm zilnic plante fără să ne facem nici un fel de proces de conștiință. Prin urmare, dacă mâncăm plante, suntem perfect îndreptățiți să mâncăm și animale.²

Porfir admite, într-adevăr, că și plantele au suflet, dar susține că ele nu simt nimic atunci când sunt tăiate și mâncate. De obicei omul nici nu le mănâncă în întregime ci le taie doar frunzele sau le culege fructele, lucru benefic pentru plante, care astfel devin mai viguroase. Iar din faptul că omul este îndreptățit să mănânce plante, pentru că altfel nu ar putea supraviețui, nu rezultă că el poate să mănânce și animale.

„Noi nu extindem dreptatea la plante, pentru că pare să fie mult în ele fără legătură cu rațiunea; deși de la acestea suntem obișnuiți să folosim fructele dar nu să tăiem și trunchiurile împreună cu fructele. Noi culegem toate acestea, substanțele de porumb și leguminoase, atunci când, după ce au înflorit, au căzut pe pământ și au murit. Dar nimeni nu folosește pentru mâncare carnea animalelor moarte.”³

9. *Respingerea argumentului antropocentric*

Porfir respinge hotărât ideea că totul în lume s-ar petrece în vederea satisfacerii nevoilor umane, subliniind faptul că fiecare lucru își are rostul său propriu, rațiunea de existență internă, integrată în cea a ansamblului

¹ Porphyry, *On Abstinence...*, op. cit., Book 3, par. 19, pp. 113-114.

² Porphyry, *On Abstinence...*, op. cit., Book the first, par. 18, p.14.

³ Porphyry, *On Abstinence...*, op. cit., Book 3, par. 18, pp. 112.

universal. Așa încât, de multe ori, modul de a fi al lucrurilor nu este direct în acord cu folosul omului, care are același statut subordonat ca și ele.

„Dar dacă Zeul a modelat animalele pentru a fi folosite de oameni, în ce fel ne folosim noi de muște, păduchi, lilieci, gândaci, scorpioni, și vipere? (...) Iar dacă (...) nu toate lucrurile au fost generate pentru noi și în avantajul nostru, vom acționa pe nedrept și nociv folosindu-ne de acele animalele care nu au fost produse de dragul nostru ci în conformitate cu natura [adică pentru binele universului], așa cum am fost și noi produși. (...) dacă definim prin utilitate lucrurile care ne slujesc, trebuie să admitem că noi am fost generați spre binele animalelor cele mai distructive, cum ar fi crocodilii, balenele și dragonii. Căci noi nu beneficiem deloc de acestea, dar ele capturează și omoară oamenii care le ies în cale, folosindu-i ca hrană.”¹

Este adevărat că filosoful nostru susține superioritatea omului în raport cu animalele însă din aceasta nu deduce faptul că el trebuie să se comporte în mod discreționar față de celelalte viețuitoare. Dimpotrivă, mai ales că sufletul omului, al animalelor și chiar al plantelor au aceeași natură, iar între om și animale sunt o mulțime de asemănări. În plus, în calitate de ființă rațională, cumpătată, omul trebuie să își asume responsabilități atât față de sine cât și de tot ceea ce se află în această lume, procedând întotdeauna conform dreptății. Aceasta presupune să nu faci rău nici unei ființe care nu-ți face rău, și să faci ca rațiunea să domine iraționalul. Fiind drept, te apropii de perfecțiune, iar cine este perfect nu are nevoie de nimic, nu face rău nimănui, ci își folosește puterile pentru a conserva celelalte ființe și a le face numai bine.²

10. Respingerea argumentului autorității

Pentru cei care sunt mai puțini sensibili la forța argumentelor raționale dar respectă religia, tradițiile și chiar exemplul diverselor personalități, argumentul autorității nu este deloc de neglijat. Din perspectiva acestuia, atunci când ucidem și mâncăm animale noi imităm zeii și eroii, care fac la fel.³ Prin urmare, sacrificarea animalelor este plăcută zeilor, de vreme ce chiar ei sunt aceia care au ordonat-o oamenilor.⁴

De altfel, nu numai la zei trebuie să apelăm ci și la oamenii exemplari. Iar tradiția ne spune că nici cei șapte înțelepți, nici „fizicienii” de după ei, nici Socrate, nici discipolii săi nu s-au abținut de la carne, și că, prin

¹ Ibidem, par. 20, pp. 115-116.

² Ibidem, par. 26, p. 126.

³ Ibidem, par. 22, pp.15-16.

⁴ Ibidem, par. 25, p.16-17.

urmare, Pitagora, care a susținut acest lucru, s-a înșelat.¹ Adevărul este că nici Pitagora nu a fost împotriva tăierii și mâncării animalelor, de vreme ce el le-a recomandat în mod expres sportivilor un regim bazat pe carne iar unii pitagorici chiar au sacrificat animale.²

Porfir însă nu admite că sacrificiile sângeroase au fost impuse de zei. El argumentează că la început oamenii au sacrificat doar plantele culese sau cultivate, precum și hrana pregătită din ele.³ În acest sens, el aduce argumentul că, potrivit mărturiei lui Xenocrate, Triptoleme, cel mai vechi legislator al atenienilor, a stabilit regula că nu trebuie făcut nici un rău animalelor.⁴ Doar în momentul în care au apărut sacrificiile sângeroase, datorate întâmplării sau unor decizii nefericite, actul sacrificiului a degenerat, iar oameni, după cum ne spune Teofrast, confrunțați cu războaie și foamete, au început să mănânce animalele.

„Iar aceste lucruri par a fi dovedite de splendida procesiune în onoarea Soarelui și a Orelor, care chiar și acum are loc la Atena, și în care există, în afară de iarbă, și alte plante. (...) Însă acest mod de a oferi primele roade în cadrul sacrificiilor s-a transformat treptat într-o mare nelegiuire, fiindcă s-a introdus actul înjunghierii, cel mai grav și plin de cruzime; astfel încât (...) oamenii au sacrificat animalele și au profanat altarele cu sânge (...); iar aceasta a început în perioada în care omenirea a simțit gustul sângelui, prin care a experimentat relele foametei și războiului.”⁵

Prin urmare, sacrificarea animalelor nu este plăcută zeilor, mai ales că ea conține pericolul sacrificării oamenilor. Dar Porfir ne asigură că popoarele care au extins astfel violența în mod nelegiuit au fost exterminate de Jupiter ori s-au exterminat singure.⁶ În ceea ce privește comportamentul oamenilor celebri, pe care ar trebui să-i urmărim, Porfir aduce contraexemple la exemplele evocate de adepții hranei animale. Astfel, el arată faptul că Pitagora face distincție între filosofi, oamenii obișnuiți și cei a căror profesie le impune un efort fizic deosebit. Cei dintâi, dacă vor să-și respecte condiția, trebuie să se rezume la hrana vegetală. Oamenii obișnuiți nu au nici un motiv să recurgă la hrana animală, și doar sportivii și soldații pot fi îndreptățiți să o folosească. În plus, Porfir subliniază că până și epicurienii, teoreticienii plăcerii, se mulțumeau cu hrană puțină, simplă, ușor de

¹ Ibidem, par. 15, p.13.

² Ibidem, par. 26, p. 18.

³ Porphyry, *On Abstinence...*, op. cit., Book 2, par. 5-6, pp. 47-49.

⁴ Porphyry, *On Abstinence...*, op. cit., Book 4, par. 22, p. 168.

⁵ Porphyry, *On Abstinence...*, op. cit., Book 2, par. 7, p. 49.

⁶ Ibidem, par. 8, pp. 50.

procurat, și susțineau că vegetarienii au nevoi mai puține și le satisfac mai ușor, deci sunt mai fericiți, căci sunt scutiți de multe inconveniente.

„Pentru că cei mai mulți dintre epicurieni (...) par să fi fost mulțumiți cu porumb și fructe, și și-au umplut scrierile arătând cât de puțin cere natura și că necesitățile sale pot fi satisfăcute suficient cu hrană puțină și ușor de procurat. Pentru că, spun ei, bogăția naturală este limitată și ușor de obținut; dar cea care provine din opinii deșarte este nelimitată și obținută cu dificultate. (...) Și, într-adevăr, cine se hrănește cu carne, are nevoie și de lucruri neînsuflețite; dar cine este mulțumit cu lucruri neînsuflețite, este ușor de alimentat cu jumătate din ceea ce vrea celălalt și are nevoie de o cheltuială mică pentru prepararea hranei sale.”¹

În sfârșit, pentru a-și întări poziția, Porfir recurge la argumentele lui Teofrast, care susține că:

- trebuie să oferim celor ce ne fac bine ceea ce avem mai bun, mai prețios, mai frumos, iar acestea sunt roadele pământului, căci ele ne mențin viața;
- nu trebuie să oferim zeilor decât ceea ce putem sacrifica fără violență; sacrificarea animalelor le ia acestora viața, deci le face rău; și este profund incorect ca noi să aducem mulțumiri zeilor în detrimentul altor ființe;
- nici măcar plantele nu trebuie sacrificate în paguba celor cărora acestea le aparțin; or, sufletul animalelor este mai prețios decât plantele, deci noi nu trebuie să le ucidem, și, cu atât mai mult, să le mâncăm.²

Concluzii

Poziția pe care Porfir o dezvoltă în tratatul său despre respingerea hranei animale reprezintă un tablou sintetic al argumentelor pe care o parte a filosofilor și, în general, a intelectualilor Greciei antice, dar și tradiția originată în legendarul Orfeu le opuneau în mod constant unor cutume sângheroase în raport cu animalele, care își reclamau statut de maximă reprezentativitate privind condiția umană și care, de-a lungul timpului, și-au construit un aspect de legitimitate prin antrenarea unor minți suficient de speculative. Meritul lui Porfir este acela de a le prezenta metodic și într-o manieră extrem de persuasivă, îmbinând derivarea lor strict rațională dintr-o concepție filosofică foarte bine conturată, cu apelul la experiența comună și la un amplu material factual, deosebit de ilustrativ pentru o antropologie culturală a lumii antice. În plus, argumentația lui Porfir este clară, precisă, el având grijă să expună cu maximă rigoare punctele de vedere ale adeptilor

¹ Porphyry, *On Abstinence...*, op. cit., Book the first, par. 48-49, pp. 36-37.

² Porphyry, *On Abstinence...*, op. cit., Book 2, par. 12, pp. 52-53.

hranei animale, pentru a le putea apoi combate în mod aplicat, evidențiindu-le aspectele nevralgice și subminându-le astfel temeiurile.

Este interesant, totuși, că, în ciuda forței discursului său, precum și a faptului că Porfir vorbește în numele unei comunități filosofice întemeiată pe aceeași doctrină și care pare să fi aderat deja în mod firesc la principiile vieții vegetariene, următorii reprezentanți de seamă ai neoplatonismului, Iamblichos și Proclus, se situează la polul opus față de Porfir în problema sacrificiului animalelor. De altfel, Iamblichos, care i-a fost elev lui Porfir, este întemeietorul teurgiei, o practică filosofico-religioasă bazată în mod esențial pe raporturile cu zeii intermediare de jertfe (inclusiv animale), și își critică neîncetat maestrul în celebra sa carte *Misteriile egiptenilor*.¹ Acest lucru demonstrează bogăția doctrinară a neoplatonismului și diversitatea punctelor de vedere în cadrul aceleiași direcții de gândire, care a reușit să își păstreze, de-a lungul câtorva secole, unitatea specifică.

Indiferent însă de dezacordul stârnit în rândul adepților aceluiași tip de filosofie, argumentele lui Porfir împotriva uciderii animalelor și a transformării acestora în hrană au fost apreciate în epocă și chiar dincolo de ea, exercitând de-a lungul timpului o influență reală asupra unor importanți gânditori. Unul dintre cei mai celebri este Voltaire, care a adoptat, se pare, vegetarianismul, cel puțin în ultima parte a vieții, și în a cărui operă regăsim ecouri clare din tratatul porfirian, pe care l-a folosit, printre altele, pentru a-și întări critica asupra Bisericii.²

De altfel, independent de cadrul filosofic puternic speculativ, argumentația porfiriană își păstrează până astăzi intactă vigoarea, căci ea se sprijină pe ideea omului ca ființă rațională, etică prin natură și, ca atare, responsabilă nu doar față de sine ci și față de întregul său mediu de existență, în care animalele ocupă un loc extrem de important. Or, a depăși atitudinea de simplu profitor, exploatator nemilos al acestor ființe capabile de durere și suferință, devenind un protector al lor și concentrându-și atenția exclusiv asupra plantelor pentru satisfacerea nevoilor de hrană, înseamnă, în primul rând, a atinge un nivel superior al demnității umane.

¹ Iamblichos, *Misteriile egiptenilor*, trad. din lba greacă de Tudor Dinu, Iași, Polirom, 2003.

² „Voltaire pare să vadă în vegetarianismul lui Porfir o nouă sursă de inspirație anticreștină. El găsește în teologia lui un alt mod de a denunța violențele comise în numele divinității. Cu Porfir, el înțelege să critice puterile pe care oamenii și le arogă sub pretextul religiei. (...) Se înțelege aproape de la sine că Voltaire face Biserica singura responsabilă de nenorocirea animalelor. Căci, după el, triumful creștinismului este acela care a șters în Occident ultimele scrupule carnivore.” (Larue Renan, « Le végétarisme dans l’oeuvre de Voltaire (1762-1778) », *Dix-huitième siècle*, 2010/1 n° 42, pp. 31-32).

Că lucrul acesta ar putea fi o salvare din criza alimentară globală, pe care mulți o prefigurează pentru un viitor nu foarte îndepărtat, este o altă problemă, de natură strict economică, deși nu mai puțin importantă. Iar faptul că regimul vegetarian ar putea prelungi în mod semnificativ viața oamenilor nu este nici el un argument de neglijat, deși rămâne, deocamdată, tot ca o ipoteză. Desigur, există numeroși vegetarieni în lume dar ei nu sunt, totuși, atât de mulți încât obiceiurile culinare ale omenirii să sufere o transformare radicală. Și, de altfel, nu știm exact ce efecte ar avea aceasta nu numai asupra vieții dar și a structurii fizice și psihice a omului.

În orice caz, în calitate de parte a lumii vii, integrat în procesul schimburilor permanente de substanțe cu mediul înconjurător, posesor al unui corp material care trebuie permanent hrănit, omul nu va putea niciodată uita de acesta, oricât de „spiritual” ar putea deveni vreodată. Dar el trebuie să fie mereu atent, ceea ce nu a făcut întotdeauna, ca preocuparea pentru trup să nu-i știrbească în nici un fel demnitatea umană. Acesta este lucrul pentru care Porfir pledează, în mod extrem de pertinent și plin de profunzime, în tratatul său care ne îndeamnă să abandonăm hrana animală.

În același timp, din perspectiva adepților drepturilor animalelor, o asemenea decizie ar însemna autentică eliberare a acestora de sub intolerabila teroare exercitată astăzi asupra lor de către oameni.

„Eliberarea animalelor va necesita mai mult altruism din partea umanității decât orice altă mișcare de eliberare: căci animalele însele sunt incapabile să o revendice sau să protesteze împotriva exploatării lor prin voturi, demonstrații sau bombe. Este omul capabil de un asemenea altruism autentic? Cine știe?”¹

¹ Peter Singer, „Eliberarea animalelor”, în Adrian Miroiu (editor), *Etica aplicată*, București, Editura Alternative, 1995, p. 159.

ANIMAL RIGHTS

Jayanty JAGATDEB¹

***Abstract:** Some thinkers brush aside the question of animal rights as a non-issue. Those who deny animal rights should note that the denial of rights to non-human animals does no more than place animals in the same moral category as human infants. Some people argue that only rational autonomous and self-conscious beings deserve full and equal moral status. However, lacking rights does not entail lacking direct moral status, although rights entails duties it does not follow that duties entail rights. Although animals may have no rights we still have duties towards them.*

***Keywords:** animal, human being, person, personhood, animal rights, ethics, moral status, moral duties*

Animal Rights would entitle certain nonhuman animals to respectful treatment by moral agents. As far as is known at present, human beings alone are capable of understanding and acting on moral principles i.e. of being moral agents- so it is they who would be obligated to treat, and refrain from treating nonhumans in specifiable ways.

In recent years the doctrine of animal rights has found champions in important circles where the general doctrine of rights is itself well respected. Peter Singer had argued that the principle of equal consideration of interests should be extended to animals that the animal interest should be weighed equally with human interests in our moral deliberations. Other moral philosophers have put the point in terms of rights, arguing that animals have certain basic moral rights that humans must respect. St. Thomas Aquinas taught that animals acted purely on instinct while human beings engaged in rational thought. The distinction provided the frontier between human beings and animals, and was regarded as a suitable criterion for assessing a being's moral status. Rene Descartes was of the view that animals were not the sort of thing that was entitled to have any rights or indeed any moral consideration at all.

What place should non-human animals have in an acceptable moral system? These animals exist on the borderline of our moral concepts, the

¹ Uktal University, India.

result is that we sometimes find ourselves according them a strong moral status, while at other times denying them any kind of moral status at all. Philosophical thinking on the moral standing of animals is diverse and can be generally grouped into three general categories: Indirect theories, direct but unequal theories, and moral equality theories. Indirect theories deny animals moral status or equal consideration with humans due to a lack of consciousness, reason or autonomy. Direct but unequal theories accord some moral consideration to animals, but deny them a fuller moral status due to their inability to respect another agent's rights or display moral reciprocity within a community of equal agents. Moral equality theories extend equal consideration and moral status to animals by refuting the supposed moral relevance of the aforementioned special properties of human beings.

The principle of equal consideration and the indefensibility of limiting this principle to members of our own species mean that we cannot deny, as Aquinas and Kant denied that we have direct duties to members of other species. In one sense of 'right' we may say that it follows immediately from the fact that animals come within the scope of the principle of equal consideration of interests that they have, at best one right, namely the right to equal consideration. It is really a necessary foundation for having rights, rather than a right in itself. There is however another sense of 'right' according to which rights exist only among those who are part of a community, all members of whom have rights and in turn are capable of respecting the rights of others.

On this view, rights are essentially contractual and cannot exist unless both parties are capable of honoring this contract. It would follow that most if not all, non-human animals have no rights. It is a narrower notion of rights for it follows from this notion that not only non-human animals but also human infants and young children as well as mentally retarded humans have no rights. More generally, it has been argued that if we wish to deny animal rights and claim that only human beings have rights, then we must not focus so much on rights, but rather what grounds them. For this reason, much of the recent literature concerning animals and ethics focuses not so much on rights, but rather on whether or not animals have certain other properties and whether the possession of those properties is a necessary condition of equal consideration.

Some thinkers brush aside the question of animal rights as a non-issue. Since nonhumans do not have moral sense neither do they have duty for others nor can they be said to have right. One who has duty can only

have right and vice-versa. Animals do not possess right nor do they have duty. Recognition of right stems from our unique human nature as moral agents. Animals are devoid of moral sense. What matters for animals is survival and fulfillment of their instinctive drives. Animal existence is pre-dominantly physical whereas human existence is pre-dominantly psychic. Hence man has moral sense, right and wrong and duties and rights, etc. Those who deny animal rights should note that the denial of rights to non-human animals does no more than place animals in the same moral category as human infants.

Some people argue that only rational autonomous and self-conscious beings deserve full and equal moral status; since only human beings are rational, autonomous and self conscious it follows that only human beings deserve full and equal moral status. It is also not claimed that we can do whatever we like to animals, rather the very fact that animals are sentient gives us enough reason to avoid causing unnecessary pain and suffering to them. When the interests of animals and human beings conflict, we are required to give greater weight to the interest of human beings. This also has been used to justify such practices as experimentation on animals, raising animals for food and using animals in such places as zoos and other entertainments. Those who deny rights to animals, argue that there is nothing unethical about use of animals as food. There are two alternatives - animal welfare and animal rights. Animal welfarists accept the permissibility of human use of non human animals as food and biomedical research, for example, provided such use is carried out humanly. Animal rightists, by contrast, deny the permissibility of such use, however humanely it is done.

Proponents of animal welfare and animal rights have different views about the moral significance of human psychological kinship with other animals. Animal welfarists have two options. First, they can argue that we ought to treat animals humanely because this will lead us to treat one another with greater kindness and less cruelty. On this view we have no duties to animals, only duties involving them and all those duties involving them turn out to be indirect duties to mankind. 'Kant, Aquinas and John Rawls favour an indirect duty account of the moral status of non human animals'.¹

Secondly, animal welfarists can maintain that some of our duties are owed directly to animals. This is the alternative favoured by utilitarians,

¹ Encyclopedia of philosophy, Animal Rights and Welfare, p. 208.

beginning with Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill and culminating in the work of Peter Singer. Animal pain and pleasure count morally in their own right, not only indirectly through the filter of the human interest in having humans treated better. The duty not to cause animals to suffer unnecessarily is a duty owed directly to animals.

Of the two main options-animal welfare and animal rights- it is the latter that attempts to offer a basis for a radical reassessment of how animals are treated. Animal welfare, provided the calculations work out a certain way, enables one to call for reforms in human institutions that routinely utilize nonhuman animals. But animal rights, independent of such calculations, enables one to call for the abolition of all forms of institutional exploitation. If it is the case that all sentient beings have basic moral rights, many standard human practices are morally unjustifiable. More fundamentally we would not be entitled to treat any sentient being no matter how humanly, as a mere commodity.

There is nothing unnatural since living beings show hierarchical order in which higher survives at the cost of the lower. The attributes of rationality, autonomy and self-consciousness confer a full and equal moral status to those that possess them because these beings are the only ones capable of attaining certain values. Some philosophers argue that only human beings are rational, autonomous and self-conscious, they can only act morally and only human beings are a part of moral community.

However, lacking rights does not entail lacking direct moral status, although rights entails duties it does not follow that duties entail rights. Although animals may have no rights we still have duties towards them. I am not permitted to harm animals without good reason: if greater overall results will come about from such harm, then it is justified to harm animals. This sort of reasoning has been used to justify such practices as experimentation and other uses. Singer condemns most experiments in which animals are used. Singer condemns the use of such animals in experiments. He points out that 'it would be better from a scientific point of view to use human subjects instead, for there would be no question of cross species comparisons when interpreting the data'¹. If we believe that benefits outweigh the harms, then instead of using animals, we should instead use orphaned infants that are severely cognitively disabled. If we believe that such a suggestion is morally repugnant when human beings are used, but morally innocuous when animals are to be used, then we are guilty of

¹ Peter Singer, *Practical Ethics*, Cambridge University Press, p. 57.

specisism. Likewise use of animals for any other human purpose are all condemned by the use of the principle of the equal consideration of interests.

Tom Regan's seminal work, 'The case for Animal Rights' is one of the most influential works on the topic of animals and ethics. Regan argues for the claim that animals have rights in just the same way that human beings do. According to Regan, 'we must conclude that animals have the same moral status as human beings. Furthermore, the moral status is grounded on rights, not on utilitarian principles'.¹ Regan argues for his case by relying on the concept of inherent value. According to Regan any being that is a subject-of-a-life is a being that has inherent value. A being that has inherent value is a being towards which we must show respect. In order to show respect to such a being, we cannot use it merely as a means to our ends, instead each being must be treated as an end in itself. In other words, a being with inherent value has rights, and these rights act as trumps against the promotion of the overall good. Regan relies on a version of the argument from marginal cases in arguing for this conclusion. He begins by asking what grounds human rights. He rejects views that claim that a being must be capable of representing itself as legitimately pursuing the furtherance of its interests on the grounds that this conception of rights implies that the marginal cases of humanity do not have rights. However, since we think that these beings do have moral rights there must be some other property that grounds these rights. According to Regan, the only property that is common to both normal adult human beings and the marginal cases is the property of being a subject of a life.

Some thinkers lend to the view that human beings have indirect duties for animals. Aquinas does not approve of the cruelty towards animals, lest such mindset may lead treat their fellow beings in the way they treat non-humans. According to Kant, beings with rational nature are only worthy of being included in the moral community. Kant pleads for compassion to animals purely on anthro pocentric considerations. Reason imparts objectivity to moral laws. Moral laws are dictates of reason and hence they are valid for all rational beings. We should not be inhuman towards the non-humans for it could take away the humaneness in us which is distinctive of human species.

There are several thinkers who have pioneered the cause of animal rights. Some have been callous towards animals in order to achieve their

¹ Animal and Ethics, internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy Thomson Gale, New York, p. 13.

selfish ends but later, organized protests led to the formation of organizations as effective agencies for prevention of cruelty to animals. The first animal welfare organization was formed in 1824 in Britain. The organization 'People for the ethical treatment of animals (PETA)' had proper action plan to stop all kinds of cruelty to animals. Peter Singer in his book 'Animal Liberation' provided sufficient food for thought.

Philosophy has lent hands in favour of animal rights in the past. In Greece, Pythagoras used to urge people to cultivate respect for animals. He was an advocate of vegetarianism and vehemently opposed the sacrifice of animals. Bentham contends that animals feel pain as humans do. Rationality should not be the criterion in determining how we should treat animals. If this be the case then, infants, mentally retarded individuals should be treated as non-humans. Bentham proposes that ability to suffer should determine the relationship between human beings, animals and other living species. If animals are not granted rights for not being able to reason then granting rights to infants, insane and individuals with congenital defect should have no rights. Moral considerations are to be given to other humans and animals not on the basis of self-consciousness, rationality or having moral sense but on the ability to experience suffering. Chimpanzees, Gorillas and Orangutans are similar to human beings in many respects and are even capable of learning sign language. Hugh Lau Fouette's view is that the argument from necessary pain helps one realize that there are moral limits on how we can legitimately use animals. Moreover, these limits emerge because of the interests of the animals themselves, not because of any parasitic interests which humans have in them. He believes that the animals are in at least some significant sense, ends in themselves, things which cannot be legitimately used as means for human ends.

Advocates of animal rights advance a position that avoids the always daunting, frequently divisive challenge of carrying out uncertain utilitarian calculations. Central to their view is the Kantian idea that animals are never to be treated merely as a means to human ends, however good these ends might be. Animals have rights as much as humans at least their interest to live and grow unhindered. Man's duties towards animals, follow from the rights of the animals in relation to the humans. Animals have rights but no duties. When animal live in relation to human beings, they acquire rights as much as new born babe, insane, mentally challenged individuals have right in relation to others, even though they have no duties.

Michel Tooley, a contemporary American Philosopher, has argued that the 'only beings who have a right to life are those who can conceive of themselves as distinct entities, in other words 'persons' who are said to be self conscious, rational, intelligent and autonomous'.¹ His argument is based on the claim that there is a conceptual connection between the desires a being is capable of having and the rights that the being can be said to have. Humans and nonhuman animals are not very different at all, according to evolutionary theory. 'Unlike Aquinas and Descartes, Charles Darwin saw humans as part of the animal world with mental attributes that might be more complex but not fundamentally different from those possessed by other animals'.²

In our time, numerous philosophers and social commentators have made the attempt to demonstrate that if we are able to ascribe basic rights to life, liberty, etc. to human beings, we can do the same for many of the higher animals. Their argument can have two parts. First they subscribe to Darwin's thesis that there is no difference of kind but only of degree can be found between other animals and human beings. Secondly, even if there were a difference in kind between other animals, especially mammals and human beings, since they both can be shown to have interests (e.g. the avoidance of pain or suffering) for certain moral and legal purposes the difference does not matter, only the similarity does. In connection with both of these arguments, the central conclusion is that if human beings can be said to have certain basic rights e.g. to life, liberty or consideration for their capacity to suffer – then so do higher animals. Some defend animal rights from the view point of natural rights, treating animals' rights as basic limiting principles which may not be ignored except when it would also make sense to disregard the rights of human beings.

There are of course serious differences among defenders of animal rights. Some do not allow any special regard for human beings. Other choose to defend animal rights on utilitarian grounds – to the extent that it amounts to furthering overall pleasure or happiness in the world, animals must be given equal consideration to what human beings receive. The core of the issue is that can animals be treated as objects of moral consideration? Human being possess personhood, rationality, self consciousness and autonomy which are conspicuously absent in the animals. Moral parity does not depend on the apparent equality existing in a species. Equality in the strict sense of the term is not true of all the members of the human species.

¹ Peter Singer, Practical Ethics, Cambridge University Press. p.81.

² Evelyn Pluhar, Animal Rights, Encyclopedia of Applied Ethics, Vol. I, p. 165.

There is a world of difference among people in respect of their physical and psychic abilities. Should they be treated differently because they are different from one another? We have seen that the most sensible and influential doctrine of human rights rests on the fact that human beings are indeed members of a discernibly different species -- the members of which have a moral life to aspire to and must have principles upheld for them in communities that make their aspiration possible. The moral responsibility is absent for all practical purposes in the non-human world. Some argue that some measure of morality can be found within the world of at least higher animals. Rollin holds that some animals even seem to exhibit behavior that speaks of moral agency or moral agreement.

Animals are not persons in the philosophical sense of the term. There are reasons to ascribe personhood to them as they are biological entities with their characteristic nature to suffer and have interest in living. We know that animals can feel pain and can enjoy themselves and this must give us pause when we consider using them for our legitimate purposes. Belonging to a particular species cannot be taken as an objective criteria for superior moral status. The concept of 'animal right' even the rights of plants, rivers and oceans have come to gain the attention of people. There is a great deal to be said for the claim that there are limits on what humans are legitimately doing to inanimate objects. We do not know if all animal experimentation is unjustified, how to deal with certain pests, what to do with current livestock, etc. Since all the details are not worked out, it does not accord the claim that our present view is morally unacceptable.

There is no proof in philosophy. There is certainly critical thinking. I would like to argue there that animal rights teach us that certain things are wrong as a matter of principle. There are some things that are morally wrong to do to animals. Animals and human rights boil down to one fundamental right – the right to be treated with respect as an individual with inherent value.

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THE APPROACH OF SPACE AND AN INTER-WAR ANTHROPOLOGICAL MODEL

Ana BAZAC¹

Abstract: *First of all, the anthropological approach of space is counter-posed to the objectivistic one. Then, by discussing a philosophical theory about space as a cultural construct and factor of style shaping the way of life and trajectory of a people, the paper intends to emphasise a philosophical solution in a time of world crisis. Indeed, the inter-war Lucian Blaga wrote his work in a time of phase crisis: the monopoly phase crisis of capitalism, already showed by the First World War and continuing until the constitution of state monopoly capitalism. Blaga's theory about space as the main factor of cultural style has sketched a solution where the culture rather separates humankind into cultural fragments framed by cultural styles and predestined by their cultural spaces: this solution may be viewed as a reflex of the real antagonisms within the world. In Blaga, the deep cause of the subjective feelings and faculty of creativity of the contemporary people lies within the immemorial collective unconscious that shapes the cultural style. The collective unconscious is the place where the expectations and patterns of behaviour of the immemorial ancestors were shaped just by the structure of space. These expectations and patterns constitute the unconscious spatial horizon, that which is trickling in every conscious creation and behaviour. The spatial horizon of the unconscious is a space-matrix, as that of the Romanians, described by Blaga's model of the "Ewe-space". And the cultural style is the memory of mental structures containing the ancient and continuous logic of natural determinism over man, transposed within his unconscious psychical world. The paper is concerned with the interweaving between the ideological subtext and the ingeniousness of creation in the framework of philosophical theory. It analyses the meanings of the focus on what is continuous and motionless and gives a sentiment of security, the cultural style, and the place of such a theory of culture in the ways of life of a people.*

Keywords: *space, epistemology of philosophical theories concerning space, unconscious, Lucian Blaga, inter-war Romania, cultural style.*

¹ Polytechnic University of Bucharest, Romania.

Warning

An *implicit* thesis here is that space was lesser important for the modern philosophers than time. Not as if the pre-modern thinkers would have focused too much on the problem of space. Why all of these? Just because the space seems to be much more/more directly a *social* concept – or it has much more social reverberations – than the time, and that an integration of the concept of space in the modern theory of movement and development would have guided the philosophers to a more concrete approach of the human being than this approach could take place as related only to the “external” time or to the length of the human life. But spatiality is as much crucial to anthropology as temporality is; or, if the anthropological standpoint – as in the modern philosophy from Kant and Hegel to Heidegger – is generative, it results that spatiality characterises the existence (namely, the essence) of man, as temporality does. Blaga’s theory illustrates this modern turn of philosophy, irrespective here of the content of this illustration.

The epistemological analysis of *man centred theories* – here, of Blaga’s *spatial horizon* and *cultural matrix/style* – emphasises that they are not neutral towards people. They are *ideological*. They reveal a *false consciousness* in both meanings of Marx: as conscience opposed to the objective, epistemological interest of a philosophical theory (and yes, a philosophical theory is, like a scientific theory, rationalist); and as conscience that reflects, consciously or not, the social positions the author shares. As ideological, Blaga’s theory has a nuance of *dogmatism*, since it does not question its own presuppositions. It subordinates the concepts developed by him to the function of instruments of the ideological ground it contains.

Introduction concerning the philosophical framework of the approach of space

The space was and is seen in two manners: as external, *objective datum* of reality in front of which man’s knowledge and understanding are but copies, perfect/perfectible and without any importance of the possible imprint of the human and particular view of the subject, or as *conceptual datum* that, obviously, reflects reality, but it does so through the translation/mediation of the human (psychological and cultural) historical experience.

Indeed, in their attempt to explain space (and time), the European thinkers have had to confront, first, with the psychological problem of the ways the idea or intuition of space appears. From this standpoint, a

significant part of the 17th and 18th centuries have illustrated the contradictory situation of having been, on the one hand, interested to demonstrate the antecedent of the *idea* of space towards the objective spatial situating of the objects – studied by physics – and, on the other hand, the difficulty to demonstrate this antecedent. This was the reason, *inter alia*, that Kant has called *ideas* the transcendent representations – i.e. that “cannot be projected in an image, something that can be intuited”¹ – arising from the procedural potentiality of reason. And this was the reason too of Kant’s supply and doubling of *ideas* with *intuitions*: immediate knowledge resulted from the conscious experience of man.

Anyway, the psychological explanation of the human representation of space cannot substitute the philosophical questioning of space. But this questioning itself has generated two patterns of conceiving of space: according to the *metaphysical* – or, as Kant called it, “transcendental realism” –, space is a “substantial” characteristic of the physical world, be this characteristic an existential dependent (Leibniz) or not (Newton) on the objects and their relations; in the *critical* pattern, inaugurated by Kant, space is a form of intuition, belonging to “the subjective constitution of our mind”², not to the unconscious representation but to the conscious and objective one. (Here and in order to distance from the objectivistic approach according to which space was an objective receptacle of things or a sum of differentials of distances between objects, Kant was the representative of the psychology-philosophy symbiosis).

But what does “objective” mean here? It means a cognition/cognisance that can be proved true empirically. And which are the differences between *intuitions* as conscious representations and *concepts* – conscious representations too? The differences stand mainly in the fact that an intuition no needs and does not uses any other representation – for this reason, it is an immediate awareness about a certain object, and in this way it is like a perception –, while a concept relates to other ones because it is the result of the searching for a *genus proximus* and a *differentia specifica* and defines a particular object through the agency of other concepts referring to different genus. And finally, since intuitions – as the concepts, moreover, because both intuitions and concepts are representations – could be empirical and *a priori*, space is an *a priori* intuition (an objective, individual

¹ Martin Heidegger, “On the Essence of Ground” (1929), *Pathmarks*, Edited and translated by William McNeill, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 117.

² Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), Translated by J.M.D. Meiklejohn, Pennsylvania State University, 2010, p. 45,

<http://www2.hn.psu.edu/faculty/jmanis/kant/critique-pure-reason6x9.pdf>.

and immediate representation, not a conceptual reflection of the outer space). And I could add that, if *psychologically* space is not *a priori* – since it is formed as a fusion of many tactile, visual and movement or kinaesthetic sensations and experiences (see Berkeley, Hume, Mill, leaving aside the psychological research from the last 60-70 years) –, *epistemologically* it is, since after the formation of the intuition of space, it is “the condition of the possibility of phenomena, and by no means as a determination dependent on them, and is a representation *a priori*, which necessarily supplies the basis for external phenomena”¹.

Consequently, this doesn't mean at all that space is something absolutely subjective. Obviously, one can arrive to the concept of space and one can operate with it, but previously and at the level of the “translation” in mind of this concept, “an *a priori* intuition (which is not empirical) lies at the root of all our conceptions of space.”².

This rapid, inherently superficial, running over has the purpose to emphasise that, besides the *objectivistic* paradigm – containing the supposition that the concepts (mostly all of them being, in this paradigm, reflective) would be perfect copies of reality and not arousing any difficulty –, there was and is also another paradigm: that of the *dependence on man of all concepts about the existence* (or, as this paradigm was later formulated, *after* Kant and Hegel: the context-dependent, the *historical* character, thus the *relativity* of concepts). I call this paradigm an *anthropological* one, i.e. which puts man in the centre of the explanation of concepts.

I have to add that the objectivistic standpoint about space is both *substantialist* and, paradoxically, it contains the “anthropological” model of the human sensations concerning space; the objectivistic perspective is that of the *analogy* of the human senses related to space: thus that space is something empty but existing *in se* and filled up with objects. Contrary to this view was and is the *relational* one: that of the real anthropological standpoint manifested in both natural and human sciences. In the first, – it does not translate space subjectively the space, but increases the objective character of phenomena: the anthropological lens states that just through the instruments of measuring, namely not only through the human senses – since a ray of light is an instrument too –, in fact through the possibility and relativity of measuring, space appears as a relation, thus an objective object of science (and philosophy). In the second – space is a *cultural construct*. In other words, the concepts of science are theories, constructions, not simple

¹ *Ibidem*, p. 46.

² *Ibidem*.

generalisations and abstractions: thus in the objectivistic approach, space is homogenous, while in the relational and anthropological – both homogenous and heterogeneous. This last manner is also specific to the anthropological view in the human sciences: space is a structure of human relations and objects.

Leaving aside the pre-modern notes written in the anthropological key, in the 18th century – the last when thinkers could cherish in rational manner illusions regarding the modern system – this cultural paradigm was developed, with good reason, at an epistemological level. Inquiring the manners and human tools man proceeds and uses in order to know/understand reality, philosophers like Kant – but also Fichte, Schelling, Hegel – have arrived at the idea that the development of the human mind and knowledge is indestructibly related to the *critical standpoint* concerning both the human faculty of rationality and the social conditions where this faculty manifests. In fact, the critical standpoint has begun from a very philosophical interest: that of the truth value of the concepts¹. Many centuries, if not millennia, the thinkers have thought that if their inferences are logical, the content they gave to the concepts is absolutely correct and they can erect theories upon the presuppositions contained within the concepts: because these presuppositions would be perfect copies of the real phenomena.

But: a) the accumulation of one-sided theories based on the objectivistic approach, b) the philosophical debate related to these theories and c) the modern transformation of the real life, have determined the appearance and development of the *critical spirit* (from Bacon and Kant and further). And a specific form of this spirit was the *sociological* focus on the relationships between the mediation of concepts and the real life. It is noteworthy that Marx, who is the famous founding father of this sociological focus – see his concept of ideology –, has based just on the thinkers who have developed the “active side” of all concepts related to reality, namely, their dependence on the “sensuous human activity, practice”, though these

¹ In this respect, we should not forget the continuity between Descartes’ rational explanation of metaphysics and the emergence of criticism. (And Leibniz has continued the rationalistic approach: “The great principles of sufficient reason and the identity of indiscernibles change the status of metaphysics. They make metaphysics real and demonstrative, whereas before it didn’t amount to much more than empty words”, “Leibniz’s fourth paper”, 2 June 1716, in *Exchange of papers between Leibniz and Clarke* (1717), 2007, p. 16, <http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/pdfbits/lecl1.pdf>.

thinkers have not arrived to the philosophical significance of the intertwining between the cognitive process and this practice¹.

Finally, objectivism was developed by sciences. If we consider the 17th and 18th centuries – see the Newton-Leibniz debate, where the former has thought space as absolutely independent from the objects and their relations² and the latter, promoter of *relationism* (opposite to Newton's *substantialism*), quite the contrary³ –, philosophy still was intertwined with physics; then, objectivism was continued only by sciences. Until, as in the 20th century, when just sciences have demonstrated that the cognisance of the objective world – for example, the particles and their motion, therefore even/including space, see quantum physics-is depending upon the observer.

But what does “objectivism” mean? It is a kind of *instrumentalism*, of transformation of the concepts and objects represented by them – here, space – into an instrument of the will of the thinker. I do not blame the old philosophy and physics of instrumentalism, but I certainly do so with the 20th century (not only) Romanian thinkers⁴ who, for example, considered space in the *geopolitical* key: in the last analysis, space was only the receptacle of the fragmented human struggle for survival and the bigger was to be this receptacle, the bigger was to be the victory of survivors who would be legitimate to use every means in order to conquer space.

The geopolitical key–continuing the old political tradition of the rulers having the full right to do everything in order to preserve their status, thus the *status quo* – was considered, however, as a quite ordinary standpoint by philosophers like Lucian Blaga⁵ who has promoted the theory

¹ Karl Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach*, I (1845), <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/theses/theses.htm>.

² Isaac Newton, *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica*, Londini, Jussu Societatis Regiae ac Typis Josephi Streater. Prostat apud plures Bibliopolas Anno MDCLXXXVII (1686), Scholium, II, III, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/28233/28233-h/28233-h.htm>.

³ See Leibniz's third and forth paper, in *Exchange of papers between Leibniz and Clarke* (1717), 2007, esp. pp. 9-10, and 16-21, <http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/pdfbits/lecl1.pdf>.

⁴ Simion Mehedinți (1868-1962), Ion Chelcea (1902-1991) have written between the two world wars and have considered the national space as intimately related to the people which has conquered it and, generally, has moved within (in “spatial movements” of “high tide and ebb tide”) until it has fitted the space to its size and will. The geopolitical writings were linked to the nationalistic standpoint advancing – without any sociological analysis of the interests, causes and results of – the idea of foreign aggression against the spaces of identity and opposing any integrative theories, calling them “imperialist”.

⁵ See Lucian Blaga, “Getica”, *Saeculum*, Revistă de filozofie, Sibiu, I, 4, 1943, pp. 3-24, with his indirect criticism against the instrumentalism of geopolitics through the a little euphemistic but sharp attack against the excessive nationalism of some traditionalists who linked the Dacian hypothesis of the specific of Romanians with orthodoxy as the true

of space as a conceptual datum and, more precisely, as a cultural or anthropological concept¹. This is the reason he called his book focusing on the problem of cultural style from the viewpoint of space, *The space of Mioritza*² or the “Ewe-space”.

The presumptions of Blaga

Mioritza was the name of a popular ballad telling about the favourite sheep (*Mioritza*³) belonging to a mythical Romanian shepherd who was to be assassinated by two neighbour shepherds and, knowing that, he told to *Mioritza* that he was not afraid but, on the contrary, he considered his death as a cosmic union with the whole nature. Why would the space of the shepherd – and, more, of all dwellers of Romania – been called the space of *Mioritza*? Because the main old occupation of these dwellers was the breeding of animals, carrying of their grazing and fitting their own lives to that of the seasons and needs of flocks, mostly of sheep.

monotheism promoted by the ancient Dacs. On the contrary, Blaga has represented the Dacs as polytheists and having as “stylistic determinants” in the “stylistic topography” of the Aryan peoples the idea of immortality after death as a result of the magic effectuated by the priests. Namely: Blaga has opposed to the “theologians” – the excessive traditionalist and spiritualist thinkers who considered the theses of orthodoxy as originated in the ancient religion of Dacs, i.e. who considered these presuppositions as already demonstrated – a philosophical standpoint (as in the note 181 from *The Mioritic space*, see infra, he especially has mentioned: that he has detached from the Christian orthodox metaphysics, *writing only from the perspective of the philosophy of culture*). In “Getica”, Lucian Blaga has opposed to the Dacian exaggeration as in 1921 did to the Latinist exaggeration (the pure and only Latin origin of the Romanians), see “Revolta fondului nostru nelatin”, *Gândirea*, 10, 1921 [The revolt of our non-Latin nature].

In his essay from 1943 (pointed out also as a reply to the historian Vasile Pârvan who have written in 1926 a book *Getica*, where he pictured the Dacs as monotheist), Blaga has shown his scientific earnestness – his philosophy was written in the rationalist/scientific key, not in that of “metaphysics”, and his first books intending to configure a comprising philosophical view have concerned with epistemology, see *The Dogmatic Aeon*, 1931; also Ana Bazac, “Lucian Blaga and Thomas Kuhn: The Dogmatic Aeon and the Essential Tension”, *Noesis*, XXXVII, 2012, pp. 23-36 –: he arrived to the above-mentioned conclusions following the analysis of and comparison with other Indo-European mythologies. Since all of them were polytheist and anthropomorphic, how could the old religion of Dacs be monotheistic?

¹ Capitalising on Kant, Blaga was, in the terms of the present epistemology, not an objectivist but “a constructivist”, while at the same time he was “metaphysically, a realist”, Michael S. Jones, *The Metaphysics of Religion: Lucian Blaga And Contemporary Philosophy*, Cranbury, Rosemont Publishing & Printing Corp., 2006, p. 221.

² Literally: *The Mioritic space: Spațiul mioritic*, [The Mioritic/Ewe-Space], București, Cartea Românească, 1936.

³ Literally, in Romanian: little sheep.

But, and here is the irony, as we know, this occupation was common to at least a big part of the South-East European space. This is the reason that the motif of *Mioritza* is not only Romanian, but pertains to this South-East European space¹, though in the first Romanian version (Alecsandri), the locality of the three shepherds is within the three historical Romanian princedoms. Indeed, and even though this – as well as other – ballad/s was/were collected by the 19th century intellectuals including in order to legitimate the tradition of the Romanian nation and modern literature, *Mioritza* attests the *pastoral origin* of the people from this part of Europe² and

¹ Within the Romanian space, the first version of *Mioritza* was collected by Alecu Russo in 1842 in Vrancea county (not in Transylvania, but in Moldavia) and was transmitted to Vasile Alecsandri in order to be published in the progressive journal of the latter, *Propășirea* [The Prosperity] in 1844, but the journal was forbidden by the censorship and so, after the publication of ballad in 1850 by a Romanian journal from abroad, it entered in a general attention only from Alecsandri's collection of Romanian folklore in 1852, *Poesii populare. Balade (Cântece bătrânești) adunate și îndreptate...*, Iași, I / 1852, II / 1853 [Folklore. Ballads collected and corrected...]. (As we know, it was the tumultuous period of the bourgeois-democratic revolutions, and the two modern Romanian intellectuals and poets remembered here were the representatives of the utopian liberalism, marked in their case with a Romantic image about folklore).

From that moment, two major standpoints have constituted the boundaries of the analysis of ballad: one was that of the Romanian origin and specificity of *Mioritza*; and the other – that of a larger, Balkan and South-East European, origin and spreading (Alexandru Odobescu, „Răsunete al Pindului în Carpați” [Echoes from the Pindus mountain to the Carpathian Mountains], *Revista Română*, București, 1861). Lucian Blaga was the promoter of the first viewpoint. But he certainly knew both Alexandru Odobescu's and B.P. Hajdeu's (see infra) demonstrations about the circulation of the ballad, and at least the most recent analysis, that of Ovid Densusianu, *Viața păstorească în poezia noastră populară*, București, vol. 1 – 1922, vol. 2 – 1923 [The pastoral life in our popular poetry], where the poem appeared as a transfiguration of the pastoral life – with the inherent rivalry between shepherds in their wanderings of transhumance –: and since the pastoral life was common (at least) to the entire South-East Europe, how could it be specific only to the Romanians?

It certainly was not; but the many versions within the space of the Romanian state and their aesthetical forms have justified in the eyes of Blaga and other supporters of the theory of the national source of *Mioritza* the thesis that this ballad may be assumed as the *emblematic creation of the Romanian folklore*: being a synthesis of the psychological features of this people.

² This pastoral origin was common at least to the Aromanians, or Vlachs (as the foreigners called them), who were Latin speaker tribes/Latinised by the Roman Empire in the north of Epirus, Macedonia and Thessaly and have spread in the present Albania, Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia. It's interesting that even in the present Albania, the Vlachs are known also as the *çobans*, i.e. shepherds (and *cioban* is the Romanian word for shepherd). The history of the Latin speaker tribes retired in mountains (both the Albanian and Romanian call the flock *turmë/turmă*, from the Latin *turma,-ae*, multitude/crowd/a great number of) and being country dwellers in movement through the agency of transhumance, has allowed both Odobescu's and Nicolae Iorga's theory – Iorga was the most important Romanian historian and a well-known polymath, *Balada populară românească, Originea și ciclurile ei* [The Romanian popular ballad. Its origin and cycles], Vălenii de Munte, Tipografia Neamul

could constitute a myth¹ or a mythical reference of the cultural conscience of Romanians (as this one was forged by the intellectuals). Blaga used *Mioritza* as the metaphor of this origin because:

1. according to the works of folklorists he knew, the Romanian version of the ballad was *the most elaborated, the most valuable*; in this respect, though the ballad could be found in the south of Danube river as well², it seemed to Blaga to be the most specific to the Romanian people, the singing of all its motifs expressed with a unique sweetness being related to the ancestral philosophy of life³ of the settlers of this area⁴;

Românesc, 1910, pp. 9-11 and 24-25 – about the circulation of the ballad and the common motifs in many folklores as the Scottish and Irish, the Spanish, the Serbian and Bulgarian, the Greek, and about the historical and social origin of the quarrel between shepherds. Iorga has told, following historical documents, that in the first half of the 18th century, the Transylvanian shepherds went in transhumance till Moldavia and then, to Dobruja, and the local shepherds tended to drive them away.

At the same time, Iorga (for example, *Albania și România*, lecție de deschidere..., Vălenii de Munte, “Neamul Românesc”, 1915, pp. 14-15, and *Histoire des Roumains de la Péninsule des Balkans (Albanie, Macédoine, Epire, Thessalie, etc.)*, București, Imprimeria Cultura neamului românesc, 1919) was one of the first Romanians (after Hajdeu) mentioning the Latin and the primitive Thracian-Illyrian origin of the Albanian language and the connections between the Romanian and the Albanian language on both the two versants: the Latin and the Thracian. (See also Alexandru Philippide, *Originea românilor - vol. II. Ce spun limbile română și albaneză* [Origin of the Romanians. What are the Romanian and Albanian languages telling], Iași, Tipografia „Viața Românească”, 1928).

¹ This idea was emphasised by George Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române de la origini până în prezent* [History of the Romanian literature from the origin up to the present] (1941), București, Minerva, 1986, pp. 57-58, the greatest Romanian historian and critic of literature.

² “The folklore travels from language to language, but it is not translated: it transforms”, Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu, one of the most important philologists and intellectuals of the 19th century modern Romania, wrote (*Cuvente den bătrâni, Limba română vorbită între 1550-1600*, vol. 2: Cărțile poporane ale românilor în secolul XVI [Words of yore, The spoken Romanian between 1550-1600, volume 2: The popular books of the Romanians in the 16th century], București, Noua Tipografie națională C.N. Rădulescu, 1879, p. XVIII).

³ Indeed, even by 1921 (*Zamolxe. Mister pământ* [*Zalmoxis: Obscure Pagan*, translated by Doris Planus-Runey, Iasi, RO, Oxford, GB, and Portland, USA: Center for Romanian Studies, 2000]), Blaga went in for the traditionalist current that has extolled the Thracian and/or Dacian origin of Romanians, instead of their Latin source: but in a *philosophical* way, which is very important. Anyway, all the supporters of this current have mentioned the imagined characteristics of Thracians/Dacians, which would have been transmitted to the Romanians: *fatalism*, the “*nostalgia of death*” and *pantheism*. For the historical features of this problem, see Dan Dana, “Zamolxe de Lucian Blaga: între construcție și revoltă; un aspect al dezbaterii din jurul ‘specificului național’ în România interbelică” [*Zalmoxis by Lucian Blaga: between construction and revolt; an aspect of the debate concerning the ‘national specific’ in the inter-war Romania*], *Phantasma*, 12, 2007, pp. 334-353, <http://www.phantasma.ro/caiete/caiete/caiete12/30.html>.

⁴ Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu, *ibidem*, p. XVII: the popular literature is “the work of an entire people, even of an entire nation, of the whole humankind”.

2. as originated from Transylvania¹ and because he considered this province as being from ancient times the core territory from where the flocks of sheep went on the ways of transhumance², Blaga has called, by generalising the cultural values of Transylvania, the entire Romanian territory as the *Mioritic space*;

3. this metaphorical *nomen loci* was the substitute of the Romanians' psychology, *as if* the space would frame and guide them to passivity and resignation which have only nature as a compensation. But here we may observe the banal intellectual manner to configure the object of analysis according to the presumptions consciously assumed, or not; i.e., the object is described in the manner the author presents *because its causes are just the presumptions* the author carries; the traditionalist intellectuals have considered the psychology of the Romanians in a pessimistic key (this was the presumption) and in order to justify this key, they searched for the origins of this psychology: namely, they have inversed this deduction, by asserting that just because of the immemorial pessimistic tradition of the

¹ In Adrian Fochi, *Miorița. Tipologie, circulație, geneză, texte*, București, Editura Academiei RPR, 1964 [Mioritza. Typology, circulation, genesis, texts], there were collected 930 variants of the ballad in the Romanian provinces – Transylvania – 329 variants, Banat – 14, Oltenia – 31, Muntenia – 67, Dobruja – 10, Moldavia – 51 –, as they were known from 1842 to 1964. But some of versions have already been collected before 1936, i.e. Blaga knew that Transylvania was the origin issuing the ballad.

² *Mioritza* includes some folkloric *strata* (manifested also as dirge and carol) and is related to an ancient occupation that has constituted probably the most important source of wealth and force of its promoters, just through the peregrinations occasioned by transhumance. At the same time, this occupation seems to not have led only to wealth and stability. This is the reason of the pessimism of the shepherd and its counter-balancing only by the presumptive harmony with nature.

Indeed, the emblematic ballads of the Romanians and sending to their most ancient existence seem – according to the horizon of the traditionalist Romanian intellectuals – to not have been those of the victorious conquer of space through agriculture, but those of the communion with the nature on which they did not act in any (Densușianu, *ibidem*, volume 1, p. 3 and 28, has mentioned the sometimes not too favourable image of the ordinary peasants about the “*dolce far niente*”-ism of the shepherds; this image would have resulted also because of the passion of shepherds to their activity, even until to forget love, p. 4; but generally the prestige of shepherds was big, see the entire chapter 1). There is, obviously, also the *legend of master Manole* that is considered too an emblem of the Romanian people, but it is a little bit later than *Mioritza* (Nicolae Iorga, *Balada populară...*). Anyway, however beautiful the verses of *Mioritza* were, the labelling of the ballad as the founding synthesis of the Romanian spirit and culture was an *intellectual construct of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century thinkers*: they did so in order to tune the representation of the Romanian spirit with their nationalistic image about the logic of history and the present specific of the Romanians. Namely: they did not consider the Romanian historical ballads – related to either the Middle Ages princes and their relationships with the boyars and ordinary people (Iorga, *ibidem*) or to the outlaws making justice and having dramatic destiny – as bearing metaphysical values. For them, only these values would have explained the Romanian soul.

Romanians – as it is shown in *Mioritza* – the pessimistic key one approaches the present trajectory of this people would be legitimate.

Indeed, the “*Mioritic*” attribute of the Romanian space was used by Blaga in two meanings: 1) to give the most comprising and unitary set of features of the psychology of the Romanians; 2) and, by legitimising the immemorial and unitary origin of the Romanians, to explain the whole historical trajectory and destiny of this people. Namely: the destiny would have been shaped by living within this space; consequently, this space itself is assumed and internalised as a destiny.

Therefore, Blaga used the metaphor of *Mioritza*: on the one hand, consciously, namely being aware of the metaphorical function of both the use and the motif; on the other hand, Blaga did not attribute any metaphorical meaning to the use of the motif: he was the follower of the nationalistic paradigm manifested through both the theory of the age of the Romanian people and of its endogenous cultural specific. This is the reason he did not relate his philosophical approach of the Romanian folklore to the scientific data of the historical and linguistic research: au fond, this was the reason he made philosophy of culture – indeed, already the use of the attribute “*Mioritic*” sends rather to metaphysics – and not science concerning the history and culture of the Romanians. Briefly, the nationalistic paradigm supposes the *exceptionality* of the status of a people and culture, always almost unique at least towards some peoples and cultures. My criticism of the nationalistic paradigm doesn’t mean that a culture – and thus every culture – would not be unique/would not have a specificity. It certainly is and has. But the above-mentioned paradigm supposes: that a certain culture would have only a single set of features; that a certain culture would be the *unique origin* of other cultures; and that it would have developed in an *isolated* manner.

As the researchers anterior to Blaga’s *Mioritic space* have shown, neither the Romanian people nor its folklore did develop in an isolated manner, nor the age of *Mioritza* was immemorial¹, although its motifs could be supposed to be so: but, keep attention, at the level of a larger space than

¹ Hasdeu, already quoted, was the only who considered, according to his analysis of historical linguistics, that *Mioritza* was created between 1350 and 1450: B. P. Hasdeu, *Istoria critică a românilor, Pământul Terrei Românești* [Critical history of the Romanians. The earth of the Romanian land], vol. I, București, 1875, pp. 56-57.

Odobescu marked the origin of *Mioritza* in the 15th century, and Nicolae Iorga – in the 18th.

that of the Romanian settlers within the Romanian state¹. However, Blaga was not interested in the examination of scientific theories concerning the age of the Romanian culture and the forging of his philosophy of culture in accordance with these theories. Why this?

A sociological analysis of Blaga's presumptions

I do not want to introduce in this paper the psychological elements clearing up Blaga's endeavour to construct a complete philosophical system, to be original and at the same time to not hurt too much the dominant philosophical frame. My aim is only to understand the ideological framework of his theory of style as metaphysical founding of the existence of man and, more specifically, of the Romanians.

Obviously, Blaga was influenced by the entire Romanian intellectual atmosphere – related inherently to the post-WWI European jolting –: with its dominant tradition of spiritualism and rejection of the social, and with its rapid adaptation to the European fashions of thinking. This atmosphere was also imbued with an assumed or unconscious complex: inferiority, of the complex of *tarde venientibus* at the table of the world thinkers². As we know, the complex of inferiority is covering under its nationalistic transfiguration: this was the reason that a permanent motif of the modern (from the second half of the 19th century on) Romanian intellectual debate was that of the ways of development fine-tuned with the heroic tradition and creativity of the people; subconsciously, the reason was to demonstrate to the European fellow intellectuals that the history and art of the ancient Romanians was so

¹ Dumitru Caracostea, „Miorița la aromâni”, *Omagiu lui Ion Bianu* [“Mioritza at the Aromanians” *Homage to Ion Bianu*], București, 1927, reprinted in *Poezia tradițională română* [Romanian traditional poetry], II, București, 1969, p. 210.

² This complex has belonged to the intellectuals from all the countries which did not constitute the capitalist Centre, or have felt that the victory of capitalism did not involve the assurance of the conditions and positions they have expected, or have been slapped by the evidence that the structural continuity seemed to be bigger than discontinuity and they have fine-tuned, according to the opportunistic specific of intellectuals, with this social turn. See, for example, Alexandre Koyré, *La philosophie et le problème national en Russie au début du XIXe siècle*, Paris, Librairie ancienne Honoré Champion, 1929, where the attitude of the Russian intellectuals towards the Western philosophy is described. But already in this philosophy, the substitution of the 18th century universalism with the nationalistic and idealist Romanticism has taken place. Anyway, the Russian answer consisted, first, of the aspiration to minimise the Russian backwardness (since there were but a difference of degree between the two civilisations) and after, of the confidence in the specific mission of Russia: that to develop a specific civilisation which was both to surpass and fulfil the Western civilisation and to realise the ideal of humanity.

exceptional that the future could but continue this trend¹ – after a period when, for reasons of survival, the dwellers of this space have *retired from history*/ they boycotted it, since history itself has boycotted the Romanians² –.

That meant that, firstly, the intellectuals had to inform their people and the foreign intellectuals about the language, culture and history of the Romanians: they had to work. And they did it, including through Blaga's beautiful writings as a young poet and playwright. But information without an explanatory theory binding so many features has no reason. Philosophy had to supplant this organic need of knowledge, and philosophy meant to go to the last principles – constituting unfortunately “metaphysics”/a “metaphysical” approach³ – and to explain through them the course of things.

Concretely, Blaga started from the present “minor”⁴ situation of Romania and its culture/European recognition of its culture. And he tried to find out more profound possible reasons of this situation, than the vulgar and so a-philosophical *relations of forces* and *domination* and their consequences, including at the level of people's feelings. He found these reasons in the a-historical concepts of *style* and *Mioritic space*. These concepts constituted for him the framework shaping the path the Romanians ought to follow: as a prefiguring forcing their destiny. This was so not as if man would not exist and develop in the pattern of a spontaneous reactivity and individual and unique creativity: but because these individual reactivity and creativity take place within the (obviously, unique) concrete national transposition of the concrete solutions and immemorial criteria of thinking and judging of specific human communities.

¹ Dumitru Caracostea's insistence, *ibidem*, p. 257.

² In Blaga, *history* meant a far-reaching dynamics where the individual facts integrate as specific creative endeavours leading to monumental results. In this respect, history is always “great/major”, *Orizont și stil* [Horizon and Style], București, Fundația pentru literatură și artă “Regele Carol II,” 1935.

He did not explain what the *organic* development of the “*Romanian spirit*” (*românism*) would consist in.

See also *Spațiul mioritic*, pp. 225-239.

³ I put this word between commas in order to emphasise that the metaphysical approach supposes the illustration of the last principles/tenets, and not the constitution of these principles as a consequence of the developments of analyses of facts and arguments.

⁴ In Blaga (*Orizont și stil*), the difference between the “major” and “minor” culture is not so much in quality, but in the provincial and somehow closed character of the popular culture: briefly, the in-existent or low European recognition and influence. In Blaga, a “minor” culture is not necessarily inferior, as was the case in Emil Cioran, *Schimbarea la față a României* [The Transfiguration of Romania], București, Vremea, 1936. Blaga's „minor” culture is related to the “childhood” of a people.

These criteria and landmarks of thinking were and are comprised in what Blaga called the *style*. But au fond the *Mioritic space* is no more than the synonym of the *Romanian style* or *unconsciously shaped manner of existence*. The concept of *Mioritic space* embraces this style and its concrete transfigurations. It is more than a spatial receptacle, a stretch of land where some people live on and where some objects lain. Namely: it is more than an objectivistic meaning of space. It is a manifestation of the subjective feelings and creativity of the Romanians, a metaphor of their entire existence and creation. From this standpoint, though the concept of *Mioritic space* seems to confiscate the identity of shepherds and the scattering of the pastoral and rural life (at least) in the whole South-East Europe¹, in fact it is not related to this enlarged space and it is not interested in historical accuracy. It is an *ideological metaphor*, serving only to legitimate at a metaphysical level the course of the Romanian fate. If we do not consider this concept in this way, we may use it in explaining the whole pastoral and rural life of at least the South-East of Europe: but if it would so, we would have to do with a historical metaphor. Or, this is not the case.

The *Mioritic space*: Blaga's meanings

Before Blaga, geography has shown – already in ancient Greece but also in the spirit of the 19th century positivism – that the behaviour of peoples would be forged by nature: the climate and relief would determine the exterior aspects and the psychical life, the rhythm of reasoning, the temperament and the habits². This geographical determinism was taken over by the entire tradition of the second half of the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries focusing on anthropology and psychology of peoples. Sociologically, this focus was fuelled by the imperialist relations and interests of the time, but the sociological – as any other kind of – explanation is correct only if we *relate it with other* ones, issuing from the logic of research and knowledge.

Two thinkers pertaining to such traditions – and important here because of the comparisons with Blaga, made by the interpreters – are the ethnologist Leo Frobenius and the historian and philosopher of history Oswald Spengler who have considered: the first, that every culture has a soul or style just because it has developed in a certain area (*Paideuma*, 1921);

¹ Mircea Muthu, “Homo balcanicus”, *Caietele Echinoc*, 3, Teoria si practica imaginii. 2. Imaginar social, ediție Corin Braga, 2001, pp. 32-40.

² Élisée Reclus, *La Terre, description des phénomènes de la vie du globe*, Paris, Hachette, 2 vol., 1869 ; *Nouvelle Géographie universelle, la Terre et les hommes*, Paris, Hachette, volume 1, 1876, p. 30.

the second, that every culture, as an organism determined by its opportunities of environment, has not only a wave-form evolution, with progress followed by “winter time”, but also a morphology characterised by a cultural feature or spring to creativity; when this feature is accompanied with a critical turn, the culture becomes civilisation and its evolution too reproduces that of an organism (*The Decline of the West*, 1918, 1922, 1923).

But this approach was considered by Blaga in both *Horizon and Style*¹ and *The Mioritic space* as insufficient: not the sentiment of space generated by a landscape was for him that which would explain the brakes the Romanians feel confronting the existence, but something deeper than the sentiments as such. This deeper was for him the *unconscious*², more precisely the collective unconscious of a people, i.e. the expectations and patterns of behaviour of the immemorial ancestors, shaped just by the structure of space (“without its *pitoresque* content”³). The expectations and patterns shaped by the structure of space form or constitute the *unconscious spatial horizon*, that which is trickling in every conscious creation and behaviour. Namely: every state of mind comprises both a *conscious* moment/level and an *unconscious* one.

The spatial horizon of the unconscious is a *space-matrix*, and that of the Romanians is the *Mioritic space*⁴. The appearance of this space is the plateau, a high tableland formed as an infinite succession of hills and valleys – as Blaga has experienced Transylvania, where the dwellers, especially the shepherds, existed and moved in a tireless and monotone rhythm. To go uphill did not mean to arrive to the terminus of the expectations, since one had to go uphill again and again after one had to go down the valley again and again. For this reason, neither the horizon of the Romanian space-matrix is straight, but wavy, as if the hills and valleys would not be static forms allowing a sure point terminus: no, they transmit to the Romanians the monotone moving in an infinite alternating of enthusiasm and resignation⁵.

¹ Lucian Blaga, *Orizont și stil* [Horizon and Style], p. 43: if we deduce the spatial view of culture from the landscape, we fall down from philosophy to the theory of environment.

² Becoming doctor in philosophy at the University of Vienna in 1920 and returning in the Austrian capital as a diplomat in 1932 till 1937, Lucian Blaga has known not only the psychoanalytical debates shaking the general image about the human mind and soul, but he was from the beginning imbued by the spirit of a “*Gefühlkultur*” (Carl E. Schorske, *Fin-De-Siecle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (1980), New York, Vintage Book 1981, p. 7), of the search for something more than the rationalist explanation of man. And concretely, he borrowed the concept of *collective unconscious* from Jung.

³ Lucian Blaga, *The Mioritic space*, p. 121.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 124.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 255. This never ending advancement, interrupted with steps backward, is like the Romanian popular dance *hora*, name taken over from the ancient Greek χορεία, dance according to rules → dance in general, and chorus of dance, namely a band of dancers, a

This existential rhythm has generated the complex of *the spatial horizon of the unconscious* and *the sentiment of destiny*. It seems that the Romanians have taken over within their unconscious a certain fatalism doubled only by a prudent confidence, issued by the structure of space imprinted upon their deep down.

Thus not the landscape is important, said Blaga¹: in Transylvania lived not only Romanians but also Germans and Magyars; what is important is the spirituality where the unconscious demonstrates the immemorial spatial framing of a people and which manifests, though unconsciously, in songs, dreams, rural architecture and management of rural space, popular poetry.

This unconscious would manifest also in the intellectual constructs of the traditionalist second half 19th century and first decades of the 20th standpoint²: in the idea of the *organic* existence and development not only of the Romanian language and culture, but also of economy and social life³. Or: in the impression generated by the architectural styles of churches: that of the *transcendence which descends* upon the believers⁴ and which leads in its turn to a “Sophianic” sentiment of love and intuition of God, as in *Mioritza* where the death of shepherd becomes a beginning, the union with the whole nature, a genuine church⁵.

collective deed → order, class, rank, from the verb χορεύω, to dance. The present name of the popular dance in Greek is χορός.

To dance in a certain swinging rhythm seems to fit with the wavy horizon specific to the Romanian space of hills and valleys, could Blaga think (but he did not mention *hora* between the examples of the *Mioritic space*). However, the swinging rhythm, i.e. the dance, does not derive from the imprinting of nature in the mind of people. Rather it corresponds to their specific human relationships and answers to their environment. The ancient Greeks have suggested this standpoint: the action of dance was specific to the inhabited space or place, *χώρα*, or to the place where there are things, namely significant to humans. This word – different from *τόπος*, place – was used also as space/place, providing “a home for all created things” (Plato, *Timaeus*, 52a and b, <http://www.ellopos.net/elpenor/physics/plato-timaeus/space.asp?pg=4>), but just for this reason it has had more significances than that (as later on Jacques Derrida, *Khôra* (1987), Paris, Galilée, 1993, has shown). And one is the human space, or space with *human meanings*. These meanings appear and are created only within human communities, i.e. making space inhabited. And what could be a better sign of human community than the both melancholic and full of joy collective dance, separated somehow from the ordinary deeds?

¹ Blaga, *ibidem*, p. 128.

² Blaga has noted only this traditionalist standpoint which, though dominant in the Romanian culture of the time, was not the only one. But just this is “metaphysics”: to select examples in order to demonstrate the presumptions.

³ *Ibidem*, pp. 133-154.

⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 155-160.

⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 176-177.

Here, insisted Blaga, the sentiment of transcendence which descends is like a *space-receptacle* where the Romanian could but insert and adapt in a passive way: this kind of adaptation would be and leads to the idea of the *organic*¹ which is demonstrated by Blaga through the folkloric sacral themes assimilated unconsciously by the Romanian peasants².

The stylistic matrix is not so much a frame, but a creative *potentiality*³: it concerns not temporality but the traditional pattern of a people, “our only tradition”⁴, invisible and only metaphorically expressible⁵.

This creative potentiality engraved upon the unconscious is like the set of categories Kant forged for the conscious and knowledge. As knowledge needs and is provided with the *a priori* categories, as the “human spontaneity” needs and beneficiates of an *a priori* manifested in the popular cultural style, situated in the unconscious⁶. And since the unconscious was shaped by and within the structure/the abstract model of space, it results that the *Mioritic space* is the origin of the stylistic *a priori*.

Therefore, where is the centre of the subjective feelings and faculty of creativity? It is in something different from the conscious life of the psyche; thus not in the feelings resulting from the clash between the subject and the exterior conditions, including the natural environment: these feelings are direct reactions, mostly conscious; the centre is within the *unconscious*. And what is this unconscious creating at the collective level of a people? The cultural popular style is the result of the unconscious. This style is comprised of the *metaphorically expressed values and meanings of life forged within the spatial horizon/space*. We can grasp the style in concrete facts of creation and by grasping it, we can observe the persistence of certain *axiological accents*, of certain *attitudes to life* – of “anabasic” dynamic conquer of space, of “catabasic” withdrawal in front of the spatial infinity, of neutral balance – and of certain *formative tendencies* of people living in a certain culture and generating manners to express their life in cultural creations (such as the “individualizing mode” in the German philosophy, see Leibniz’s monads, or the “typifying mode” of the classical periods, or the “elementary tendency” which the complex reduces to the elementary, as the Byzantine picture).

¹ *Ibidem*, p. 181.

² *Ibidem*, p. 188.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 223.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 224.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 256.

Together with the *spatial* and *temporal horizon*, these factors form the *stylistic matrix* and combine in many ways so as to form many matrices. The Romanian *Mioritic space* is thus not only a frame of the Romanian cultural matrix that would predestined in a pessimistic inexorable manner the trajectory of Romanians – as not only the other traditionalists, but also Blaga was tempted to think –, but, because of the *infinite possibilities* gone in for the Romanian stylistic matrix, this space opens up rather infinite ways of culture: “unlike Spengler who used to prepare us, in a pessimist way, for the death of the European culture, the Romanian Lucian Blaga brings a very optimistic note in the rather scarce and gloomy atmosphere of the morphology of culture: man’s creative destiny is as eternal as man himself is”¹.

The popular collective dance (see note 34) could be and is specific to many peoples, South-East European or not, but the stylistic matrix is the possible *combination of infinite elements*. Therefore, not an aspect or another – like the dance – is essential or could deny the uniqueness of a cultural matrix or style, but only the unique combination of the cultural features shaped within the deep down of the human psyche.

Methodological concepts and...

First of all, we should relate and detach the cultural manner to approach the space from the objectivistic one. Spinoza, with his distinction between *natura naturans* and *natura naturata* helps us. For the objectivistic approach – shared too by the shepherd from *Mioritza* – the surrounding nature is “that which is in itself, and is conceived through itself”², it is the active whole where man can but adapt, bear it (and conceive it according to “what it is”) and enter a communion when his death arrives: nature and space constitute *natura naturans*. Here, man is the result of the infinite chain of natural and super-natural causes – since, in the metaphorical understanding of both Spinoza and the shepherd from *Mioritza*, nature and God are the same –: in this respect, the shepherd is a part of *natura naturata*.

However, the *Mioritic space* of Blaga is not a form of *natura naturans*. Only if we take the *Mioritic space* in a naïve reflective meaning – that was not the intention of Blaga – can we assert that this space, a very natural one, is

¹ Horia Pătrașcu, “The Morphology of Culture in Romania. Lucian Blaga (1895-1965) – The Passage from Axiology to the Ontology of Culture”, *European Academic Research*, Vol. 1, Issue 1, April 2012, p. 13,

<http://www.euacademic.org/UploadArticle/1.pdf>.

² Benedict de Spinoza, *The Ethics* (1677), Translated from the Latin by R. H. M. Elwes, I, prop. XXIX, Note, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/3800/3800-h/3800-h.htm>.

an exterior environment having its cause in itself and positing in front of man as something huge, mostly inimical and non-understandable. In fact, for the Romanian peasant – and especially for the shepherd –, his conception being specific to the mythical thinking and to the primitive stage of man, nature was something *familiar* and significant where they felt to being part of, not only after death but in their entire life¹. Nature was considered the home² and thus it was very “human” (though it was not at all transformed/imprinted by the human), while the peasant was very “natural”. Therefore, even in the naïve reflective sense the *Mioritic space* is not so much an exterior *natura naturans*, but the *complex man-nature*, or the name of the permanent communion man-nature. For the Romanian peasants – at least in the mythical image about them – there was any difference between the forests with their entire wild thickness and the sites of civilisation: quite the contrary, the first were friendlier than the latter³: since

¹ The whole nature, with its cosmic and near-by elements and spaces, was familiar and not distant. In this sense, it was not “exotic”: namely, there was not an “ideal gap” between the far away and the near-by, not the need and “conscience of *complementarity*” between “we” and the strange or foreign. Briefly, the source of the exotic, “the feeling of alterity – with its reflection as a distance –”, has missed. See Mihai Nadin, “The exotic – an example of a diagonal category”, *Revue roumaine des sciences sociales – Philosophie et logique*, 20, 1, 1976, pp. 41-49 (45, 49).

² Blaga has noticed about the distance between houses in the Romanian villages as a manner to show peasants’ reciprocal integration man/civilisation and nature.

³ According to Jacques le Goff, “The Wilderness in the Medieval West” (1980), in Jacques le Goff, *The Medieval Imagination* (1985), Translated by Arthur Goldhammer, University of Chicago Press, 1998, pp. 56-57, in the Western medieval imagination, there was, on the contrary, an antagonism between nature and culture, or between that which is constructed or cultivated or dwelled and, on the other hand, the wilderness (as forest and sea).

We can reflect upon a common meaning concerning the *forest* and at the same time the *world* – which comprises both the wild and the civilised part – grasped in the primeval Indian thinking and the old peasant thinking specific to Romania: as Charles Malamoud has kept attention on (see the motivation of the Colloque international en l’honneur de Charles Malamoud, *Aux abords de la clairière*, Études indiennes et comparées, 2010, <http://ceias.ehess.fr/docannexe.php?id=1389>), in Sanskrit the *world* is *loka*, but if we relates this word with the Latin *lūcus*, *-i*, *forest*, *glade*, we could think to the world as both forest and glade (*Aloka* – light), i.e. unknown and familiar.

In fact, things are always more complicated, since they are an infinite complex whole making possible infinite points of view, we grasping it in a certain moment only through one or some of them. Obviously, the forest was also separated from and adverse to man: again in Sanskrit, *araNya* – forest, while *araNa* – foreigner and *aRati/ArAti*, enemy, *Ara* – multitude of enemies. But we know from the Latin that there was not much difference between the guest, the foreigner, the traveller (called with the same word, *hospēs*, *ītis*) and the enemy (*hostis*, *is*): see in Sanskrit, *gRhAcAra* – duties of a householder towards a guest.

Briefly, the attitude towards nature was always multivalent and the ancient human stages prove this: the unknown was considered as an inimical environment towards which man can but civilise himself, but also, and through the agency of its mythical, thus humanised,

not the natural forces have determined their troubles, but the human relationships, the problems of civilisation.

And Blaga's space is neither a form of *natura naturata*, since it is a cultural construct with explanatory valences and supposes a critical viewpoint towards both the concept of space as such and the cultural theories about the cultural specific of the peoples.

Another interesting concept related to Blaga's *Mioritic space* is that of Goethe's *Urphänomen*. This means an essential scheme of an object/of a whole but grasped in a sensorial manner, an essential image that can be grasped by the senses. Blaga was strongly influenced by Goethe¹, as moreover by the entire German thinking. But the meaning of *Urphänomen* is not quite original. For example, the Greek philosophy, especially Aristotle, has used the word σχήμα as the figure/form/shape of a thing and all the figures formed reality. In Aristotle, σχήμα was obviously understood in an objectivistic manner², but it was also the form man has in his mind, since the objective and subjective *logos* corresponds each other.

In Goethe, the *Urphänomen* is a model or an archetype of a whole series of objects – as animals/only mammals and plants –, an archetype which is not constructed in a rational manner by abstracting characteristics of the objects after researching them, thus it is not an intellectual archetype, but a “first” perception of things certainly helped by the *idea* that “*must govern the whole*”³, but still a *perception* grasped in and proved by n empirical

translation, nature was integrated within the human world. In this respect, the deep forest was considered a shelter, i.e. a home, by the outlaws who are great figures of the Romanian folklore, and not only; and as a part of his shelter, i.e. but this means too a home – by the Romanian peasant. Briefly and if I may paraphrase Heidegger, the ancient and pre-modern people felt in front of nature as being-at-home.

¹ See not only his translation into Romanian of Goethe's *Faust* (1955), but also, for example, the essay *Daimonion* (1926, 1930), where he described Goethe's interest on the concept of *demonic* as a *mythical thinking*, opposed to the *synthesis-image* produced by sciences. In Goethe's mythical thinking, the demonic supposes concreteness and a spring to a concrete realisation of the unconscious feelings of the genius. A preoccupation of that time at the crossroad of history, the genius was seen as demonic and this demonism manifested in the original creation of fine art was called by Kant, keep attention, “the faculty of presenting aesthetic ideas”: Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Aesthetic Judgement* (1790), Translated, with seven introductory essays, notes and analytical index by James Creed Meredith, Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1911, §49, p. 175,

<http://archive.org/stream/critiquekantaest00kantuoft#page/n348/mode/1up>.

² See Αριστοτέλης, *Φυσικά*, (193a and b,

http://users.uoa.gr/~nektar/history/tributes/ancient_authors/Aristoteles/physica.htm, where for the sophist Antiphon matter (and space, I may add) were the same, as “without face”.

³ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Outline for a General Introduction to Comparative Anatomy* (1795), §II, <http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/ge/goethe.htm>.

observations. Consequently, the *Urphänomen* is a “pure phenomenon” which obviously doesn’t exist but which, at the same time, is doubling our concrete perceptions and is visible within them¹. Thus it is about a concept highlighting the intermediary moment between perceptions and the rational construction of concepts, or more – between perceptions and representations. Indeed, the *Urphänomen* stands as the abstract moment within representations, since these ones comprise both the scheme of the phenomenon and its concrete picture with some accidental traits. In this meaning, the *Urphänomen* is a primal or placed at the beginning (*ur*) of the imagination and understanding of phenomena.

So what would be the connection between Blaga’s *Mioritic space* and the *Urphänomen*? It is very clear: Blaga’s concept is obviously a consciously intellectual construction but, at the same time, it can be grasped with both the eyes of the mind and the eyes of the concrete human body confronting here with the hills and valleys of Transylvania. The same is with his concept of *horizon* corresponding to something which “could be rather shown with the finger than defined” and has an indefinite-intuitive character, adapting itself to the concrete spatial events².

Finally, the nearest concept to Blaga’s undertaking is the *archetype* of Carl Gustav Jung, covering a set of motifs or landmarks of the human thinking. Jung’s archetype is a cultural concept and describes patterns helping the human thinking and issuing from the *collective unconscious* of – keep attention to the first distinction between Blaga and Jung – the human being as such, and not of each people or community³. A link between them is the variety of archetypes (Jung’s archetypes of events, figures and motifs – as order) or, at Blaga, of cultural matrices. The *Mioritic space* is an archetype which shapes the cultural behaviour of the Romanian peasants but as we know, Blaga assumed he made a philosophy or morphology of culture, and not a psychological research of the human psyche. From this standpoint, though the domains are different, the analytical explanation is bigger at Jung than in Blaga: the latter only illustrates⁴ the influence of the unconsciously shaped spatial archetype, while the former tries to demonstrate how the

¹ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Experience and Science* (1798), *ibidem*.

² Lucian Blaga, *Orizont și stil* [Horizon and Style], pp. 40 and 41.

³ I am not interested here to discuss the concept of *unconscious* – coined by Schelling and cherished by Blaga including because of this classical German origin –, nor the two types of unconscious at Jung, the individual and universal.

⁴ I think that colours and the abstract motifs in the Romanian popular decorations (*Spațiul mioritic*, pp. 204-210) cannot explain the cultural specific, they can only illustrate it. Or, they can explain it only if they provoke our insight and climbing up to *other concepts* than the cultural specific.

unconscious and its universal elements manifest through and combine with the conscious forms of the human conscience.

The *Mioritic space* is, in Blaga, a pattern kept within the unconscious, transcending the concrete landscapes and shaping the behaviour of the Romanian peasants: *just as if it would be an objective frame of the human existence*. In Jung, space is not an archetype, because he was interested in explaining the behaviour as resulting from social relationships, or relating to other people in their social situation. This is the main difference between them.

...names of space and how is Blaga related to their historical and usual meanings

Why a *Mioritic space* if we have the Greek χώρος, and the universal space¹, place, position, location, settlement (all from τόπος), situation, site, domain/lands/field – with the core δε – the Sanskrite dâ – present in the verb to link (συνδέσσω)? The answer lies not only in Blaga's search for a national specific of culture, but just in the above-mentioned binding: if the human space is always human, if the human relationships configure the meanings of the environment, it results that a specific human community – specific in its search for understanding the world, thus for revealing the great *mystery* surrounding people – configures a specific cultural space. The *Mioritic space* is the "sum" of the cultural answers and reflexes the Romanian peasants experienced and, said Blaga, is kept in their unconscious. Like, I may add, the Greeks' strong internalisation of the surrounding sea which they have transfigured in their memory under the form of double wavy spirals and abstract square type waves as main decorative figures in their culture.

Blaga has forged a *cultural* and *anthropological* concept of space. This one had, obviously, a real geographical basis in the hills and valleys of Transylvania, but in fact not this basis lies in the unconscious that reverberates in all the popular Romanian cultural manifestations, but the *feelings people had by living in this space*. The essence of both these feelings and the space they confronted with is the *horizon*. This is also an *anthropological* concept in Blaga, the symbol of the *expectations* summarised just in the environmental forms people meet and clash with and the distance between the human expectations and their wavy ends. Thus the *Mioritic space* is only the Romanians' *horizon* that explains their complex existence characterised by both their wonderful folklore and their "retirement from history". I think this is the real interpretation of Blaga's intention – or at least of Blaga's

¹ See also *realm, sphere*.

intention related to the explanation of the “Romanian soul” –, because if we refer to his focus on the human knowledge in general and “the living of man in the horizon of mystery” which he reveals through *revealing metaphors*¹ (as the *Mioritic space* is, I add), why and how would this horizon of mystery be explanatory for a cultural specific, if not by transposing into a concrete horizon related to the space where a community tries to understand the world?

The space of Blaga is only *spiritual*, one that transcends both the empirical landscapes and their abstract images and metaphors. It is neither a reflective scientific concept, nor a usual abstract result of the logical process. It is a conscious distancing from a usual abstract concept, since it is a negation of the real stretching of land and asserts that it is *only an imagination*. And third, it is not only an imagined world, but it is also expressed through a metaphor. But thus Blaga’s view is kindred with the concepts which clear up the concepts used as first (the reflective, empirical, mostly general, but also abstract concepts, as the space), the second (the imagined) and the third (the metaphorically expressed) level expressions of the cognitive intentions of man.

In other words, Blaga’s *Mioritic space* attests the constructivist, and not the objectivistic, approach. As well as it is a metaphor emphasising a cultural concept about the social space. Therefore, the concept is culturally constructed – it is not a neutral reflection of a supposed objective thing – and the object is abstract, twice: abstract as a concept that doesn’t reflect anything, it only gathers some abstract features, corresponding thus to an ideal thing; and abstract because it is metaphorically reproduced. The metaphor is a cultural construct and it further develops reality and makes it intelligible, since the reality itself is equivocal and may be revealed only through analogies².

But though cultural and even though related to a community, Blaga’s space is *not social*³, in two senses: it is only the model of *individual* positioning

¹ Lucian Blaga, *Geneza metaforei și sensul culturii* [The Genesis of Metaphor and the Meaning of Culture], București, Fundația pentru literatură și artă “Regele Carol II”, 1937, pp. 20-40.

² Lucian Blaga, *ibidem*.

And later – Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-Disciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language* (1975), Translated by Robert Czerny with Kathleen McLaughlin and John Costello, S. J. (1977), London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 2004, pp. 128-139, 306-329.

³ However, the conscience of the social character of the (inhabited) space was very powerful from the beginning of the human organised/political settlements. For example, the Romanians called *țară* – from the Latin *terra, ae*, land/earth – both a macro political

in front of the existential horizon and does not keep any memory of human construction. More: the *Mioritic space* is neutral to the individuals: they face joy or aggression from the fellow men, but they react only by moving up and down on the hills and valleys and, since the horizon is so wavy and so far from them, they finally are lost in the communion with nature.

A moment on style

In Blaga, the style is the transposition of mental structures containing an ancient and continuous logic of natural determinism over man, transposed within his unconscious psychological world; the style is thus a psychological universal, manifested through *n* creative and living processes; in this respect, it is an essence which precedes the everyday existence of people. Blaga was from this standpoint an *anti-existentialist*, an *essentialist* (thus pertaining to a pre-modern representation of the human *ontos*: where the ontological data/ideas prefigure and explain the real existence of the individual concrete man). For Blaga, this existence only strengthens the immemorial style framing the human – here, Romanian – life.

This essentialism is, perhaps paradoxically, bound up with the principle of *separation* within the human being: this one aims certainly its ends related to the very material needs of life, but these needs and the practice they involve seem to not generate too important habits and structures of behaviour, at least not fundamental ones: i.e. they do not transform themselves into important explaining factors of the human life. On the contrary, the everyday practice of people is, at the one hand, *separated* from the profoundness of their spirit, as if the real life would be (as in the image of Plato) a non-important, superficial and transitory state of man, and this profoundness would be the only constant of man, and as if the unconscious – its explaining factor; and on the other hand, the everyday practice is only an illustration of the grounding role of the shapes imprinted upon the unconscious.

Further, Blaga's emphasising of the role of style as explaining factor of the concrete man – the concrete first decades of 20th century Romanians living in villages and confronting the problems of modern and, at the same time, contradictory, social-economical-political and cultural conditions – denotes an *anti-modern conception on time*. The modern view on time supposes the concept of time as depending on man, or more precisely, on his historical experiences, therefore the (*idea of*) *time not being at all an objective*

organisation and a corresponding territory, irrespective of (from the 13th century on) its forms of relief.

datum preceding these experiences. Consequently, in the human conscience there is a constitutive dialectic of the antecedent and the present time, where these (cultural) moments do not annul each other (nor in the explanation of the human endeavour) but the latter is, inherently, stronger than the former. But Blaga has somehow dissolved the historical experience of time (and the always present time) into an a-historical receptacle signalled by the eternal national style. In Blaga, a certain cultural style – namely, even though there are infinite possibilities to combine the cultural elements and to constitute different styles – is concluded, once it is constituted. Although the elements of the cultural style were forged during a historical interval, once they were finished they will no more change, nor will they leave space for new possible elements.

[Later on, Mircea Eliade has continued this standpoint, by stating that the definition of the human consciousness – namely of an abstract concept, like man, spirit etc. – should contain not only the idea of the historically and culturally shaping of experiences, but also the idea of “transconscious” which would comprise the religious motifs/symbols and states of mind that, keep attention, would transcend the historical conditioning¹. Here is, in my opinion, an epistemological confusion: between the levels of conceptualisation (and from this point of view there obviously are *reflective and general*, but also *abstract* concepts) and, on the other hand, the means the concepts are constituted through. These means are always historical and social/relational and only by these means could people arrive to universal patterns of thinking. But these universals have a historical and concrete content. Yes, “man in his totality is aware of ...the state of dreaming, or of the waking dream, or of melancholy, or of detachment, or of aesthetic bliss, or of escape etc.,” but, contrary to Mircea Eliade’s opinion that “none of these states is historical, although they are as authentic and as important for the human existence as man’s historical existence is”², all these states were shaped in a historical experience of people and have a historical and concrete content. More: our ability to detach our states of mind from their concrete content, or the epistemological patterns of thinking from their historical content, does not annul the historical formation of the concepts and the human states of mind and their awareness].

At the same time, in Blaga there is a kind of *fix determinism* of style upon culture: according to him, not only the popular, but also the learned

¹ Mircea Eliade, *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism* (1952), Translated by Philip Mairet (1961), Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1991, pp. 16-17.

² *Ibidem*, p. 33.

creations – including poetry, philosophy and science – bear the national cultural style that forms somehow boundaries that are difficult to surpass.

Space as a factor of style

This is Blaga's important idea, since we can go forward and have in our view the care towards space. But Blaga did not think to this very contemporary idea, the care about; he considered, on the contrary, that the *Mioritic space* is fix, unalterable and shaped profoundly in the Romanian soul, so as it cannot be the object of transformation. Promoted by the unconscious in both the Romanian *πράξις* and *θεωρία*, the *Mioritic space* is *static* (but does the unconscious promote only the static?) and generates an "organic mentality" of static existence, ignorance of the possible development – thus opposition to the dynamism of urban civilisation – and reserve towards all inputs provoking change.

But this static representation of both space and unconscious is *ideological*. The *Mioritic space* is a mythical realm legitimising not only the past trajectory of Romanians and their culture, but also the traditionalist ideology dominating consciously in the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th. As Constantin Noica – who oscillated between the criticism of the traditionalist motifs and the alignment to the ideological nationalistic viewpoint – has shown in 1944, in this nationalistic approach, illustrated also by Blaga, Romania is an a-historical and a-social model, the Romanian immemorial peasant is an image-fetish, and the Romanian marked by the *Mioritic space* and the pity induced by Orthodoxy is exterior to both the rational knowledge and doubt and the rational ethics of the imperative¹. As I mentioned, not only Blaga but also Noica have in the end considered that the genuine peasant soul is more authentic than that of the modern citizen dwelling in civilised cities. But this is an error following from a substitution: indeed, the temporal anteriority of a fact is not the same with the qualitative anteriority of worth of an ideological image. In fact, we simply cannot make a worth hierarchy of folklore and learned creations: authenticity pertains to all the historical models of man. But the concept itself of *authenticity* is so problematic that philosophy should be precautious to use it without demonstrating its peculiarities.

¹ Constantin Noica, *Pagini despre sufletul românesc* [Pages about the Romanian soul] (1944), București, Humanitas, 1991.

Instead of conclusions

Philosophy is different from the description of a model of culture and its meanings and causes, however metaphorical or even conceptual. Philosophy questions and configures the *meanings of life*, and in this perspective it must discover them as a result of the criticism of reality in all the mediated meanings of this last word. Obviously, Blaga has criticised some theories and theoretical levels concerning culture and knowledge. But what is missing from his approach is the inquiry of the *Weltanschauung* he shared. Heidegger said that philosophy is more than the supply of a *Weltanschauung*: the search for Being¹. Certainly it is. But just in order to undertake this search, one needs to question all its conditions, including the worldviews philosophers share. I mean here by “worldview” the *ideological presuppositions* which function as boundaries, not only framing but also limiting the development of the philosophical thinking.

Not only Blaga with his intellectual concept of space, but nor the promoters of the objectivistic view on space did criticized their own presumptions. But they wrote some centuries ago. Obviously, even Blaga can be pardoned for this fault. But we, who are living in an era of crisis, have understood that we have to question all our tenets: “in order to come nearer to Being”.

I was not interested in this paper about the psychology of the philosophical creation; I was concerned with the *intertwining between the ideological subtext and the ingeniousness of creation in the framework of philosophical theory*.

In Blaga, a specific space is a factor of cultural style. It transposes through n forms or mediations within the popular and learned cultural creation. Space is not the single factor, but it is the most important, since it constitutes the matter of a separate book in the philosopher’s *Trilogy of culture*².

What is very valuable is that space combines with the other factors: but also, I’m continuing Blaga, with the forms or mediations through which the spatial matrix has realised over time.

¹ Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology, Introduction* (1927), <http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/index.htm>.

² Lucian Blaga, *Orizont și stil* [Horizon and Style], 1935, *Spațiul mioritic* [The Mioritic/Ewe-Space] 1936, *Geneza metaforei și sensul culturii* [The Genesis of Metaphor and the Meaning of Culture] 1937. He conceived of this trilogy form from the beginning and later on the three books were published under the name *Trilogia culturii* [The trilogy of culture].

What do all of these mean? That space is very important. Therefore, A) it matters *how do we define* space. In Blaga, the *Mioritic space* is both an *intellectual concept* signifying the labelling of a certain cultural space and, since it is also a *cultural model* as a result of the cultural style, a “*real space*”. (Consequently, being determined by the space, the cultural style is objective, exterior and somehow implacable). But B) it also matters *to what we relate man in his creative process*. And C) it also matters *what from man’s creation is socially important*.

Blaga’s representation about the distinction between *culture* and *civilisation* correlates with these three aspects. We should understand that he has assimilated the usual definition made by intellectuals, or rather by intellectuals in humanities, concerning culture and civilisation: the first covering the spiritual domain, without exterior and utilitarian ends¹, while the second – the material artefacts and structures serving these ends. But this understanding and separation reflects the historical division between the physical and intellectual labour and its fixing into a cliché – an intellectual and a-historical legitimating of the intellectual privileges.

Since the revelation of mystery realises through culture and only the cultural creation is the means man reveals mystery through, and since this relationship of man with mystery generates a cultural style, it results that the style is related only to culture, civilisation bearing only “a reflex”, a trace, a “mimicry” of the cultural style. Briefly, not civilisation, but culture is the essence of man, has Blaga considered.

But here is, on the one hand, a very important significance of Blaga’s conception. It is about *the worth of nature/space* – and here nature and space are objective: the hills and valleys of Transylvania – *as against the devaluation of the created objects of civilisation*. As we know, at least the thinkers from the precedent decades or contemporary with Blaga’s poetical and philosophical writings have arrived to the conscience of the problematic role of technology in the human life. After a precedent spring of techno-optimism, they began to see (at least after the First World War) the alienating force of technology through the forms of both the machines and the created objects; but, at the same time, they saw the help technology gave in order to improve man’s

¹ „Blaga despre cultura românească” [Blaga about the Romanian culture], Mircea Eliade de vorbă cu Lucian Blaga, „*Vremea*”, Anul X, Nr. 501, 22 August 1937, p. 10-11, reproduced in *Profetism românesc, România în eternitate* [Romanian prophets. Eternal Romania], București, Editura “Roza vânturilor”, 1990: synthesising the ideas from *The genesis of the metaphor*, culture is what responds to the human need of *revealing the mystery*, while civilization – to the need of *self-conservation and security*. Blaga insisted that culture has a metaphorical nature, because mystery cannot be revealed otherwise: but if so, it results that the essence of man is culture, not civilization.

life. By the way, in the eyes of these thinkers would this improvement have led to the liberation of man for creation? Already Hegel, remembering Aristotle, has said that the ancient slaves were necessary in order to allow the spare time of the learned men and their creation of spiritual culture. But most of the modern thinkers were tributary to the intellectualist and spiritualist clichés related to the ideology of separation and hierarchy of the physical and intellectual labour: so as, like Blaga, they did not link the improving of civilisation (through technology) with the spiritual creation, with “culture”.

The objects reveal the relationship of man with time, said Heidegger. But these objects constitute only the vulgar civilisation, considered Blaga, and thus not they are those which determine the specificity of man, but culture or the spiritual creations as folklore, philosophy, myths and religion. More, not the objects determine the specificity of a people, but the spiritual culture and the specific cultural style. And if the objects confirming the Romanian are given and almost unchangeable long time, it results that not time is the main factor which explains man, but space. And space is always specific to a community, its significances are those discovered and created by a community. The Romanian peasant’s space was a natural one, nature being familiar to him: by prolonging the household to a large space necessary to the transhumance climbing up the hills.

Blaga has not focused on technology. But his reasoning could be the following: in this specific natural space, the objects are not the enemies of man, as they already were understood by the Western philosophy, but accompany him in his endeavour to live naturally, in communion with nature. Within nature and with his inherent necessary objects in order to survive, the Romanian peasant does not behave mechanically as the Westerners do by borrowing from technology an existence lacked of soul but, on the contrary, they live according to their immemorial stylistic matrix. This cultural style explains the authenticity of man and this style forbids the Romanian peasant to change.

Strongly related to nature, the ancient objects could reveal the authentic nature of the Romanian peasant; the modern technology cannot transmit to modern Romanians any authentic spirit. The ancient technology was not violent towards nature, but only uncovered its internal potentialities – as, I add, in Aristotle the substance already contained within it the forms: the marble stone and the form of the possible statue –. The ancient technology did not calculate, did not aim at productivity and efficiency as the modern machine is inserted in a “chrematistic” economy. It rather prolonged the tendencies of nature and thus, has Blaga thought, the

Romanian peasant had and has not an alienating life, not even in the first decades of the 20th century: he works just as much as he could survive and have a spare time when he sings, dances and tells beautiful myths¹. The ancient technology did not subordinate man, as the modern does, but allowed harmony between nature and the human life.

Thus, Blaga has opposed to the modern Western care about man's time and being, the pre-modern perspective of a motionless time removing the change which would lead to in-authenticity; the only way to resist and to live a human life was to integrate within nature and the cultural style generated, though in a mediated way, by the *Mioritic space*.

Technology and man-technology relations have metaphysical meanings, as Marx and Nietzsche have shown. But Blaga's spiritualism overlooked the impact of technology on the style², since this one was created only by the spiritual creation, by culture, not by civilisation. Only nature could involve an authentic life; the modern technology was only mystifying man. Blaga has thus provided an undeclared defence against technology. But his position does not suppose an inquiry of the conjectures this position is based on. Obviously, it is interesting to compare it with Heidegger's theory and to characterize an entire conservative or traditionalist pattern of thinking, but epistemologically it is *ideological*.

On the other hand, the insistence of the modern thinkers, including Blaga, on the specific role of culture as "revealing mystery" could be seen through *epistemological lens*. Here "culture" simply covers the fundamental moment of creation, the moment of *thinking and knowing*. And from this standpoint, every creation, not only the spiritual, is the manifestation of the profound process of understanding the world, of realisation of some "glades" in the ocean of mystery. Obviously, folklore and the spiritual creation, both poetry and science³, seem to realise these glades more directly

¹ Certainly, Blaga was not original at all. Contemporary to him was an interesting economist and sociologist, Mircea Vulcănescu, who has written in 1932 the study *Gospodăria țărănească și economia capitalistă* [The peasant household and the capitalist economy] counter-posing the idealised Romanian middle size household – where the family members would have worked only to the limit of an easy survival, this one being considered by them more advantageous than hard working in order to have money necessary to insert in a modern life – and the capitalist striving for profit.

² But later on, André Leroi-Gourhan has considered that the cultural style is the result of human practices involving both spiritual and material sides.

³ Including science. In *Eonul dogmatic* [The Dogmatic Aeon], București, Cartea Românească, 1931, and *Cunoașterea luciferică* [Lucifer-type Knowledge], Sibiu, Tiparul Institutului de arte grafice "Dacia Traiană," 1933, Blaga has shown, preceding somehow Thomas Kuhn's distinction between the "normal" science and the scientific revolution, what

than the material objects; why this? Because they are *articulated*, i.e. they *present* the means people grasp the existence and express its meanings; did Heidegger not say that language is the shelter of Being?

Yes, but science does not ‘corresponds’ to a specific national space, but to a larger one, that of the deciphering of mystery by man. The scientific style comprises other factors than space: or, it comprises the universal space of knowledge.

Consequently, science and the scientific style do not have the characteristics of a people: but, can we add, they influence its trajectory, especially when they happen in its middle. Therefore, a cultural model is sending to aspects un-included within its accidental problematic.

The epistemological key distinguishing culture helps us to separate from the fetish of the specific national space that frames the cultural endeavours. When the peoples become modern – au fond, gone in for universal spaces, as the one of knowledge, or of technology, or of the world relations –, the former particular cultural styles and spaces have a historical and limited influence upon the human creation. In fact, *all styles and spaces have this limited influence*. But this pushes us to scrutinize with a critical eye the various presumptions partisan of one or another cultural style and space – be they local and narrow, or universal and large –. Both the immemorial and the un-modern Romanian inter-war peasant have belonged to a particular cultural space and the latter practically was forbidden to enter larger spaces. Nowadays, the Romanian is and is not integrated within these spaces: from a standpoint, it is – and this appurtenance seems to dangerously decrease the cultural specific it was the bearer; is it not a pity the disappearance of folklore, as the disappearance of a species of living being is? From another standpoint, the Romanian is prevented from entering the space of universal economy and culture – as the peripheral countries are prevented, or, from a class viewpoint, as the world “superfluous” people to the capital are hindered from – and has the easy way to “retreat from history” in order to survive somehow: but he retreats by losing *at the same time* the cultural specific – and thus becoming poorer than it was – and by hiding himself within irrational nationalistic clichés which do not help him at all. Is philosophy not the *sine qua non* tool to uncover the epistemology of all these wanderings and changing situation of man and communities?

As we know, the *unconscious* is a difficult concept. But Blaga’s intermediary origin of man’s cultural stereotypes in his relationships with

differences are between the “paradise type science” and the “Lucifer’s revolt” science and their common and interdependent function to know and to understand.

nature draws attention on the idea of *permanence* within man's life and culture. Blaga has suggested that the permanence is possible only through the unconscious, but is this suggestion not a source of further (critical) reflections?

Lucian Blaga has constructed his theory of space and culture in a time of crisis¹. The focus on what is *continuous* and *motionless* gives a sentiment of security, and the persistent cultural style somehow predestining a certain system of boundaries surrounding man – who is infinitely creative, but only *within* this system, let us not forget Blaga's theory – estranges culture from the life problems of society. Culture remains the spring of the human creativity, but if it is made only by some ones, how could the others be creative? By using the cultural results said Blaga – like the inter-war Romanian peasants who copied and prolonged the old folklore, demonstrating in this way their pertaining to the *Mioritic space* and its unmistakable cultural shade. This would have been Blaga's reasoning if he would have posed this question. But he did not pose it.

But our present reasoning may contain it and may present variants of questions and answers concerning man-culture relationships and the dialectic of *continuity and permanence* and *discontinuous* creation. A theory is interesting only if, starting from it, we can develop our representation about the world: and Blaga's theory – just because of its limits and fragmentary approach of man – pushes us to think more efficiently to the problems of culture and human understanding.

¹ I do not think here to the Great Depression and its continuation, but to the *monopoly phase crisis of capitalism*, emphasized by the First World War and continuing until the constitution of *state monopoly capitalism*. The Great Depression was only a climax, as the Second World War was another.

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COLLECTIVE VIEWS OF COMMUNICATION AS THE SUBJECT OF COMMUNICATION HISTORY¹

Michał WENDLAND²

***Abstract:** The article is devoted to the issue of collective views on communication described as one of the research subjects of communication history. Three areas of communication history can be distinguished: media history, history of communication practices, and the history of collective views on communication. The presentation is carried out with regard to the traditional concepts of collective views (Durkheim, Lévy-Bruhl, Mauss), as well as to the history of ideas and the history of mentalities. Collective views are considered as products of human collectives, categorizing and shaping the collective experience in relation to the socio-cultural reality. The article also raises methodological problems of the accessibility of source materials and of the role of researcher in the interpretation of past collective views.*

***Keywords:** communication history, collective views, communication practices, history of mentalities, media history.*

1. Introduction

The main topic of this article is one of the fields of communication history, understood as a sub-discipline of communicology. This area – both very important and interesting, but also comparatively the least developed – is the history of collective views on communication. This article aims to provide its methodological and substantive characteristics, and to identify the place it occupies in the history of communication in relation to its other areas: history of communication practices and media history. I will try to demonstrate that the study of historical views on communication should involve not only communicologists, but also historians and cultural anthropologists. This very interesting aspect of communication history is

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² Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland.

also an extension of the tradition of study on collective views and social representations, and, as such, may be based on the achievements of, for example, the history of mentalities and the history of ideas.

By history of communication I mean a communicology sub-discipline whose main feature is the assumption of the historicity of communication phenomena (historicising communication¹), with its research subject being past communication practices, the media and historical views on communication. The three fields (taken as closely related aspects of the history of communication) are believed to affect other areas of symbolic culture and social reality and to be affected by historical and social factors.

The history of communication is a relatively new area of research. Its formation proceeded in several stages, the first of which was to transcend the classic transmission approach to communication², whose representatives were either not interested in the history of communication, because they focused on their contemporary phenomena or deemed the transmission metaphor to be universal, ahistorical and supra-cultural. Only the concepts of such authors as Dell Hymes, John Gumperz, Erving Goffman, Ray Birdwhistell, and above all, James W. Carey³ allowed for a broader view on communication from the culturalist perspective, and also allowed for its historicising.

The achievements of the successive generations of the Toronto School representatives', including Eric Havelock, Walter Ong, Marshall McLuhan and Jack Goody, were a very important step in the development of communication history. Studies of oral cultures in relation to cultures which use writing, carried out under the so-called Great Literacy Theory, allowed the media, means and forms of communication, to be looked at in a new

¹ According to the authors of *The Handbook of Communication History*, “reflexive historicising refers to the need for scholars in all areas of communication research to acknowledge the historicity of their subject matters, and to know something of the history if only as context for understanding present phenomena” (Simonson, Peck, Craig, & Jackson 2013: 7).

² The transmission approach to communication is here understood to be the set of the concepts which emerged in the nineteen-forties and fifties, mainly owing to two trends: Claude Shannon's mathematical theory of communication and Wilbur Shramm's media studies. Their common assumption was to metaphorically conceptualise communication as the transmission of information from sender to recipient. I recommend the excellent and comprehensive monograph by Everett Rogers (1997), devoted to the story of the creation and development of the science of communication in the U.S.

³ I am referring here mainly to the so-called ritual view of communication associated with sociolinguistics, cultural anthropology and communication ethnography which emerged in the nineteen-sixties and seventies.

light. It was concluded that the media not only have a history, but also their historical transformations influenced (and still influence), both the nature of socio-cultural reality and cognitive structures.

A very important factor in the development of communication history was the inclusion of representatives of history and cultural anthropology, literary scholars and philosophers interested in the various aspects of past events and communication. In this very cursory review, at least the studies on the impact of the emergence and dissemination of print in early modern Europe, conducted by the likes of Robert Darnton and Elizabeth Eisenstein should be mentioned,¹ as well as the thriving current of history books, represented, among others by Roger Chartier and Steven Fisher. Interestingly enough, when interpreting the past practices of communication, those researchers do not usually see themselves as “communicologists” or “communication historians.”

Finally, in the nineteen-eighties, researchers such as Peter Burke started presenting arguments in favour of the establishment of the Social History of Communication or the Cultural History of Communication. Burke recognized that “in the last few years a relatively new area of historical research has developed, which might be described as a social history of language, a social history of speaking, or a social history of communication”. He also distinguished four basic assumptions specific to this trend: “1) Different social groups use different varieties of language. 2) The same individuals employ different varieties of language in different situations. 3) Language reflects the society or culture in which it is used. 4) Language shapes the society in which it is used” (Burke 2007: 1–9). At the turn of the millennium, many researchers responded to these postulates with enthusiasm, which resulted in a number of excellent papers on topics including the idea of communication history (Peters 2012), social media history (Briggs & Burke 2010), and a series of monographs on various aspects of communication history.

The publication, earlier this year, of the fundamental work *The Handbook of Communication History*, edited by the leading experts in the field: Peter Simonson, Janice Peck, Robert T. Craig and John P. Jackson, is the best evidence of the establishment of communication history as a sub-discipline of communicology (Simonson et al. 2013).

¹ In the context of the communication history, among the many fine works by these authors the following deserve particular attention: Robert Darnton (Darnton & Roche 1989), and Elisabeth Eisenstein (2012).

Communication history is a relatively new field of research. There are still discussions about its scope and capacity. It is also yet to be determined which methodological problems it shares with the disciplines which lend it its interdisciplinary nature. Three main areas or possible aspects of it could be discerned: the history of communication practices, media history and the history of collective views on communication. This article is devoted to the latter issue. I will try to indicate the relationship between the field of communication history and the tradition of researching collective views (Emile Durkheim, Marcel Mauss, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl), social representations (Serge Moscovici) and trends in the history of ideas and history of mentalities. I will focus also on the issue of interpretation of sources, which is one of the most important problems of the history of collective views. I intend thus to demonstrate that communication history is not only based on the achievements of, say, the Toronto School, but also on the achievements of historical anthropology led by, for example, the Annales School.

In the first part of this article I will briefly present the relations between the previously mentioned three fields of communication history and explain how I understand communication itself. The second part is devoted to the (mostly French) tradition of research on collective views and social representations and on the relation which the history of ideas and the history of mentalities have to the subject in the title. Meanwhile, the third part is devoted entirely to research into historical views on communication and the methodological problems which they involve. Giving examples of such research, I describe there primarily the matter of how they are conducted in the context of the dispute between the supporters of the positivist and narrativist approaches to historiography.

2. The main fields of communication history

Before proceeding to describing the three fields of communication history, I ought first to explain what I understand by communication itself. It is a crucial issue, as the way of describing communication in the study of its past may differ from how the phenomena of contemporary communication are described. I assume that the matter of communication history is primarily regarded as a cultural phenomenon, which is subject to reformulation and enters into relations with other spheres of culture. This means that communication is analysed here in culturalist terms, not just as the transmission of information from sender to recipient.

The issue of how communication should be defined as a subject of interest to historians, anthropologists and philosophers presents a big dilemma. If we assume that the forms of describing (scientific or colloquial) communication have evolved over time, that the metaphorical conceptualisations of communication underwent transformation under the influence of historical and social factors, then what definition and which metaphorical conceptualisation should the historians, anthropologists and philosophers interested in these transformations choose? If we assume that views on communication are variable and relative, then the idea of communication, shared by its researchers, is subject to the same condition. Consequently, the historicising of communication can result in an abandonment of the cognitive mode of studying its history in favour of the narrativist approach. I return to this issue in the final sections of this article. Now I shall try only to demonstrate a proposition for a culturalist description of communication which should be regarded only as a provisionally accepted “point of view of a researcher – the communication historian”, simultaneously taking into account the close relationship between the concepts of “culture” and “communication”, as well as the consequences of recognising the historicity of communication phenomena.

Adopting this perspective, it could be said that an act of communication is an intentional action which is subject to interpretation, and thus it is rational (in this meaning of “rationality” ascribed to it by e.g. Max Weber) and consists in the manipulation of inter-subjectivised characters (symbols) by people who interact. That interpretation of communicative action is a philosophical modification of the culturalist description of communication presented by the likes of James Carey. He writes that “communication is a symbolic process whereby reality is produced, maintained, repaired, and transformed” (2008: 19). This also means that there is no culture without communication and there is no communication without culture. Communication is therefore not just another of the many spheres of culture, but a sphere of special interest: “some scholars have argued that, not only is communication necessary feature of culture, but communication by itself is sufficient for the emergence of culture” (Conway & Schaller 2002: 109).

From this point of view, communication is a cultural activity and, therefore, a deliberate act, not reducible to merely conveying information. Owing to this approach, communication acts can be identified by researchers and distinguished from other types of social activity. This is particularly important for anthropological and historical research on

communication. Without attributing the abovementioned features to communication acts, anthropologists and communication historians would not be able to distinguish them from other types of social activity, especially since the object of interest, in these cases, are acts occurring in communities culturally that are diverse and remote from one another in time. In other words, without adopting such an approach (or similar) to communication, the researcher would not be able to determine whether the investigated phenomenon is an act of communication or not.

The approach to communication presented above may be subject to numerous controversies. The scope of this article prevents a more detailed discussion of them. Assuming, however, that it is – as a hypothesis – a certain starting point for research in the communication history I shall now proceed to present the main areas of the subdiscipline.

Probably the most developed aspect of communication history today is media history and the analysis of the transformations that forms of communication underwent – from clay tablets to the Internet. The legacy of the Toronto School seems crucial in this case. It is in fact still ongoing – sustained by the next generation of researchers. David R. Olson and his work (1996) could serve as an example. Olson most interestingly brings up to date, for example, research on the mentality of the representatives of ancient cultures, referring to cognitive psychology.

Simultaneously, other types or aspects of communication history are increasingly making their presence known. Regardless of the typical research in media history, individual communication practices are studied, as exemplified by the history of reading¹, which is described as a continuation of research into the history of books, which in turn is derived directly from the tradition of the French “new history” (*nouvelle histoire*) instead of traditional media studies. Another good example is social history, concerned, for example, with the history of conversation². Finally, we should also mention the area of communication history, which is devoted to the study of not so much the means and forms of communication or the individual types of communication practices, but rather of historical collective views on communication.

¹ I recommend the works of Roger Chartier, among others: *Inscription and Erasure: Literature and Written Culture from the Eleventh to the Eighteenth Century* (2008) or *A History of Reading in the West* (Cavallo, Chartier, & Cochrane, 1999), as well as works of Steven R. Fischer: *A History of Reading*, Reaktion Books (2004), or Armando Petrucci: *Writers and Readers in Medieval Italy: Studies in the History of Written Culture* (1995).

² Cf., e.g. the works of Peter Burke: *The Art of Conversation* (1993), and Benedetta Craveri (2006): *The Age of Conversation*.

I believe that within the framework of communication history at least the above three main areas (or aspects) may be indicated. It should be strongly emphasized that they should be regarded as very closely related to each other, just as three aspects, rather than three separate elements. I assume that research in communication history should be carried out with regard to these three areas, although, of course, particular researchers tend to emphasize one or other of them.

The first identifiable area (aspect) of communication history is the history of communication practices. This concerns the various types of communication practices described at the micro or macro level, as well as any transformations they underwent over time, taking into account the mutual influence of such practices on other spheres of socio-cultural reality.

By “communication practice” I mean a specific type of communication act. While communication activity is regarded as a kind of social practice at the individual level, communication practice is seen as a social practice at the collective level.

Thus understood, communication activities can be studied in the form of communication practices, understood as certain types of culturally regulated activities. For example, the set of all individual activities involving reading and writing letters can be considered as cases (realizations) of communication practices, in this case – epistolary practices. This approach to the relationship between particular actions and general practices is very important, as in historical research no specific activities are available as research objects: they are permanently unavailable as they are in the past. Communication historians only have certain artefacts, mostly in the form of stored texts (possibly images) or tools – the means of communication. On their basis they can build certain views on any given historical communication practices. Also, for example, a surviving letter (be it one of the letters from Cicero to Atticus) is a monument of some communication practice and as such may be the subject of research (over ancient epistolary art understood as a historical communication practice) – however, the act itself, its assumption and implementation (Cicero intending to write a letter, Cicero writing the letter Atticus reading and interpreting it, etc.) remains inaccessible to researchers.

The second area of communication history which can be identified is the history of the media. It is assumed that particular communication activities and practices are undertaken and implemented by means of specific measures and forms. As I mentioned earlier, media history is probably the most common and the most developed field of communication

history. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the task of a communication historian, focussing on historical media, is relatively easier than the task of researchers focussing on the practices or collective views on communication. The media historian has relatively accessible empirical material: inscriptions, paintings, tools for preparing inscriptions and texts, and so on. Although the study material is relatively abundant, its interpretation is difficult. The physical description of the Sumerian cuneiform tablets and Egyptian hieroglyphics alone will not tell us too much about the meaning and impact of these measures and forms of communication of the nature of ancient social practices. The representatives of the Toronto School made an important attempt at going beyond physical description and providing an interpretation of the role of these and similar historical media. But the description is not complete without, in this case, including the way in which people perceive the media, incorporating the collective colloquial and theoretical views which influenced the use of specific forms and means of communication.

In addition to practices and media history, the third the sphere of communication history is the history of collective views on communication. The next part of the article is dedicated to this issue and the methodological problems associated with it.

3. The problem of collective views in the social sciences

The concept of “collective imagination” (as well as “collective consciousness”) is derived from the tradition of the French school of sociology and was introduced by Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, Emile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss. Within this approach, it is assumed that the collective imaginations are “social facts” created by the human collective, independent of the psyche of individuals, having a symbolic (intangible) character. Collective views consist of ideas, religious beliefs, value systems, etc., which organize social life, shape individual and collective experience or determine the nature of social practices. Collective views, which according to Durkheim are the proper object of sociological research, are images, representations of the world. “What in fact do they represent? Durkheim’s answer would seem to assert that what lies behind representations is reality. All reality is representable, and knowledge can only come from representations of reality. Man is in fact a representing creature” (Pickering 2002b: 116).

The concept of collective views is deeply rooted in the social sciences, especially sociology, it is also a very important part of contemporary philosophical considerations. In general, it can be said that the collective world view determines how the content of the collective experience of the world is ordered. The collective view is therefore the sum (and/or synthesis) of the metaphorical conceptualizations of experience (colloquial and scientific). Thanks to the collective world view, that which is the object of subjective perception becomes the object of knowledge, which is intersubjective in nature. From a philosophical perspective, one could also say that the world view determines how specific social practices are undertaken and implemented (in particular fields of culture).

According to these assumptions, it can be concluded that the perception of the world on an individual level is related to the perception of the world at the collective level, and even depends on it. This would mean that the collective (culture) determines the perception of the world by the individual. The sum of knowledge resulting from experience (i.e., the sum of the individual experience) thus creates the collective experience. However, the nature of collective experience is actually determined by collective views on the world. "Individual representations are imperfect reflections of collective representations. Each person has a particular set of representations which is never identical to that of society" (Pickering 2002a: p. 15). It can therefore be said that the collective view of the world is not simply derived from the sum of individual experience, but rather the experience of the individual is subject to the collective view, established within a community and passed on during the learning process (socialization) from generation to generation. Human experience of the world differs from the animal experience because it is not ephemeral, short-lived, but rather preserved (i.e. stored and transmitted such as text). The non-transiency (and the historicity) of the human experience of the world is thus guaranteed by the existence of the collective view, i.e. preserved and transmitted cultural forms.

The classics of French sociology have distinguished several types of representation: "For Durkheim (...) there are many kinds of representations. In addition to collective representations, he refers to scientific, individual representations, representations of feeling, religious representations, and so on" (Pickering 2002b: 98). This means that the collective view of the world can be further divided into particular collective views about the different spheres of culture, such as collective views on religion, art, ethics, politics, and so on, as well as collective views on communication which play such an important role in the study of historical transformations.

However, in order to address this topic, one should ask whether the Durkheimian collective views are of a historical nature, i.e. whether they are subject to transformation, or are they rather universal, ahistorical structures?

Durkheim and other representatives of classical French sociology wavered in this regard, recognizing collective views as “social facts” – rather permanent and objectified. However, they simultaneously acknowledged that the views were subject to (at least to some extent) historical changes and were not universal beings of Platonic nature. According to Pickering, “no representation is completely universal. There may be universal types such as representation of time and the person, but the actual content of the representations varies a great deal from society to society, and with time” (Pickering 2002a: 18). Thus, collective views are not set once and for all, but can be transformed so that new views can emerge, while older forms disappear. The non-biological nature of collective views may mean that they are historical in character.

The French social psychologist, Serge Moscovici, in the nineteen-sixties and seventies, analysed the problem of the transformation of collective views. He proposed replacing Durkheim's classic categorization of the collective view with a new concept: social representation. Moscovici concluded that on the grounds of the modern social sciences the unsettled, fluid and pluralist character of post-modern societies should be taken into account. Therefore, the category constructed by Durkheim, Mauss and Lévy-Bruhl, in his opinion, may be used primarily with regard to historical and primitive communities, however, it is much less effective as a research tool for contemporary societies. Bigritta Hoeijer writes, “this concept by Durkheim is, however, too static in relation to how we should understand contemporary society. It does neither catch the dynamics of and changeable character, nor the variability and plurality of social cognitions of the age which we now live” (Hoeijer 2011: 4).

Moscovici's proposition emphasizes the variability of collective views (or, in his own terminology – the social representation)¹, nevertheless, he refers mainly to modern societies, while, within the framework of communication history, past collective views are actually the main objects of interest. The concept of social representation, however, can not be disregarded, as – in contrast to the earlier propositions by Durkheim and others – it strongly emphasizes the connection between social representation

¹ In this paper, however, I consistently use the term “collective views” as the classic Durkheimian category referring to the historical community, than the notion of Moscovici's “social representation”.

and communication. According to Hoeijer, “social representations may even be considered as thoughts in movement developing through communication” (Hoeijer 2011: 4).

Conducting the considerations on the grounds of social psychology, Moscovici concluded that “we cannot communicate unless we share certain representations” (Moscovici 2001: 274). From his point of view, any social representations require communication, and communication requires the social representation. Gerard Duveen thus describes the issue: “representations may be the product of communication, but it is also the case that without representation there could be no communication” (Duveen 2000: 12). Although sociologists in the past used to include the topic of linguistic communication in its historical dimension in their reflections on collective views, it was only in Moscovici and his followers' concept that it gained a special position. As Caroline Howarth writes with regard to Moscovici's position, “representations (as common structures of knowledge and social practice produced in social psychological activity) can only exist in communication through the development of shared systems of values, ideas and practices; and social representation (...) is only possible through the communication of emergent and relational identities” (Howarth 2011: 155).

If within communication history the “history of collective views on communication” may be indicated as one of its major fields, then research in this field should take into account two versions of the concept of collective views: the older, classic one, and the more recent one, which is an extension and modification of the former. The classic proposition by Durkheim, Lévy-Bruhl and Mauss is important to communication history because it mainly relates to historical communities. On the other hand, Moscovici's postulate may be reduced to an understanding of the concept of social representations as supplementing and adapting the earlier concept of collective ideas to the dynamic, changing nature of modern societies. At the same time Moscovici significantly highlighted the role of communication in the study of social representations. Since there is no contradiction between these two positions, and in fact they complement each other, it is possible to treat them collectively as the theoretical basis for research on historical collective views and the transformations they underwent.

After a brief discussion of these two concepts – collective views and social representations – a third should be presented. While I am describing it last, this does not mean it is the least important. Quite the contrary, the history of mentalities – as this is what I am referring to – formulated by the

representatives of the so-called “third generation” of the French historiographical school called the Annales School, is a particularly important component of the methodology of communication history.

The introduction of the concept of mentalities (*mentalités*) and the project history of mentalities is a consequence of what Peter Burke (1990) has called “the French Historical Revolution”. The methodological innovations proposed by the authors of the Annales School (Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre) resulted in the nineteen-seventies and eighties in the development of Lucien Febvre's earlier concept of mental equipment (*outillage mental*) and Georges Lefebvre's idea of a “history of collective mentalities” (*histoire des mentalités collective*). The initiators of research on the history of mentalities include Michele Vovelle, Philippe Ariès and Jacques Le Goff.

The history of mentalities project was proposed as a response to the earlier proposal of the history of ideals. Both may be viewed as aspects of cultural history. However, as argued by Patrick Hutton, for example, in the case of the history of ideas researchers (e.g. Burckhardt, Huizinga) focused on “high” culture, represented by elite, well-established historical societies in the form of the classical texts of philosophy, theology, as well as works of art, and so on: Hutton writes, “though they did not treat culture as the exclusive preserve of this elite, they identified the guiding ideals of society closely with its great intellectuals, and hence concentrated upon the ways in which these ideals were propagated” (Hutton 1981: 237–238). However, the history of mentalities project assumed a shift of interest from the elite to the ordinary members of society, from “high” to “low” culture.

According to Hutton, the difference between the history of ideas and the history of mentalities can be reduced to a difference in the use of the term “culture”. In the former case, the perspective of the “high” culture is dominant, in the latter – it is the perspective of everyday life, pop culture, the perspective of colloquial, common-sense views on the world. Elizabeth Clark writes, “as distinguished from an older history of ideas, which focused on elites and “high” literary and philosophical texts (...) the history of *mentalités* has been described as the intellectual history of non-intellectuals. It focusses on common people, collective attitudes, everyday automatic behaviour, and the impersonal content of thought” (Clark 2009: 69–70). This implies that the history of ideas and the history of mentalities are not mutually contradictory or exclusive, and the latter was established to complement and extend the former. In either case, the subject of interest to historians is the past collective view on the world. In the case of the classic history of ideas, these are views shared by philosophers, scientists, artists,

writers, theologians, and so on, whereas, a historian of mentalities is interested in the colloquial collective views which were shared by ordinary people. It is easy to note that these two perspectives may combine and be mutually complementary.

From the point of view of communication history – if it were indeed related to cultural history – it is possible to carry out research in the context of both, the history of ideas, and the history of mentalities. Communication historians, interested in past collective views on communication, can focus their attention on those past views on communication which were shared by philosophers, scientists (e.g. linguists), poets, and so on, which they expressed in the form of theoretical works or works of art.

With this remark we can move to the next section, devoted to some aspects (mainly methodological) of research into views on communication. It transpires that adopting the concept of collective ideas (and social representations) as well as using the history of mentalities project (and the history of ideas) forces communication history to “inherit” certain specific methodological problems faced by earlier historians and cultural anthropologists.

4. Collective views on communication

In the earlier part of this article I recalled theoretical approaches to collective views (social representations) which presume those views to be ways of shaping the experience of reality shared within a community, which include value systems, religious beliefs, aesthetic principles, cognitive categories, political ideas, and so on. Thus understood, collective views affect both the way we experience reality and the way we undertake and implement various social practices in the community whose members share a given world view.

As I stated above, several types of collective views related to specific spheres of culture can be distinguished (e.g. collective religious images, etc.), the sum of which adds up to an overall “world view” (*imago mundi*) of a given community. All ideas concern something, they are representations of the various fields of reality. In addition, they probably differ from each other depending on the place and time in which a particular community functions. For example – the collective religious views of ancient Egyptian people differ from the religious imagery of the medieval Benedictine monks of Monte Cassino. The differences may relate not only to different cultures, but also the social classes (castes) within a given society. In the same way the

religious views of the medieval Benedictines will differ from the religious views of peasants and craftsmen living in the villages surrounding Monte Cassino. It could be said that the religious views of monks may be of interest to culture historians in the context of the history of ideas, while the religious views of peasants and craftsmen would be of interest from the point of view of the history of mentalities. This relativity and variability of collective views demonstrates that they are of a historical nature and are a suitable subject for historical research.

But what are the collective views on communication? I referred earlier to Serge Moscovici's opinions to emphasize the relation between social representations and social communication. Without a doubt, any collective view is created and functions by means of interpersonal communication. Without fulfilling the condition of intersubjective communicability, collective views could not be disseminated, transformed or contested. This refers to the culture as a whole – its functioning is dependent on communication, and conversely, acts of communication require culture.

Collective views not only require communication acts to function as factors influencing human thinking about the world and acting in it. Communication can also be their subject. Collective views about communication pertain primarily to communication practices and activities, as well as the means and forms of communication. This means that in addition to views influencing various practices – religious, artistic, political, scientific, social, and so on, other collective views can be distinguished – on language and gestures, the forms of dialogue or debate, on the functioning of the press and on the access to information, on rhetorical and argumentative styles, on signs, texts and words, and so on, as well as on theoretical models of communication. It should be noted that although views on communication affect communication practices and the forms and means of communication, the influence also works in the opposite direction: the individual practices and the nature of the media, in turn, shape the collective views, including views on communication.

The impact of views on communication upon the means and forms of communication is exemplified in the criticism of writing in Plato's *Phaedrus* and *Letter VII*. Plato's objections to the written word (as a relatively new medium in his day) result from his metaphysical and introductory beliefs – in his opinion, the knowledge about the “ultimate questions” should not be disseminated to everyone, which writing makes possible, but only to a chosen few initiates. It is clear from *Phaedrus* that even Socrates himself

chose not to give his teachings in writing for similar reasons. In this case, a unique view on communication (with an emphasis on oral dialogue) affects not only the evaluation of the applicability of writing as a medium, but it also affects the practice of communication (a total or partial rejection of writing).

At the same time, one could easily point to examples of the influence of media and communication practices on collective views. An especially conspicuous example, comprehensively described by Robert Darnton and Elizabeth Eisenstein, is the impact of the emergence and dissemination of printing on European societies in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Another example may be the phenomenon of a specific communication practice, analysed by Benedetta Craveri – parlour conversation in France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and its influence on the ideas of the Enlightenment¹.

The presented examples of views on communication and their impact on communication practice are historical examples. Of course, analogous examples from the present could be indicated. Without a doubt, the Internet and the social media have exerted a huge impact on the way modern societies view communication. Phenomena of this type are an extremely interesting field of research for sociologists, psychologists and media experts. However, on the grounds of communication history the interest shifts to the past phenomena, sometimes even very distant in time.

Consequently, it is possible to distinguish between contemporary (with respect to the researcher) and historical collective views on communication. The same principle applies when distinguishing contemporary (for the researcher) and past forms and means of communication. There is no doubt that the nature of research into historical views on communication will be significantly different from the study of contemporary views – communication historians have different tasks and face different problems than researchers studying contemporary social media, for example.

In the section devoted to the foundations of communication history, I referred to the following fields: history of communication practices and

¹ Benedetta Craveri assumes that the economic and political transformations in France at the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, related to the strengthening of absolutism, led to the emergence of a new way of creating the collective identity of the aristocracy, by means of special parlour conversation. The interpretation of the communication practice reveals its strong impact on the entire culture of the European Enlightenment. I recommend Craveri's work: *The Age of Conversation* (2005).

media history. The subject of the third field is (historical) collective views on communication.

At this point, I shall move on to discuss one of the most important methodological problems in the history of views on communication. The problem is, above all, their status as subjects of research – that is as past phenomena, inaccessible directly. It is, naturally, a problem for all historians and cultural anthropologists. What is available to them are usually better or worse preserved texts, works of art, archaeological sites, and so on. The task of the media historian is not easy, but it is not the most difficult: it involves texts and preserved means of communication (clay tablets, styles, parchments, etc.). It is much harder if the subject of research are non-material, the past elements of a symbolic culture. Both historical communication practices and historical ideas about communication, are such elements. It is clear that the more they are distant in time, the more complicated it is to examine them.

First of all, the researcher of the views on communication depends on the source material – mainly on historical texts, or possibly images, which in any case are preservations of communication practices. However, there is no access to colloquial communication in the form of conversations or dialogues. In historical times such form of communication practices was quantitatively absolutely dominant, even in literary cultures. As a result, past collective views are permanently inaccessible as objects of research. The communication historian – similar to the historian and cultural anthropologist, only receives interpretations. However, it is here we reach the most serious of problems.

Do communication historians (as well as other historians) discover or reconstruct the facts of the past, or do they rather interpret the observed sources (texts) and create certain interpretations? The above question, of course, focuses on the substance of the controversy in the philosophy of history between the supporters of the narrativist and positivist historiography models. From a positivist point of view, the activity of a historian is a deductive-nomological explanation, capable of both exploring the laws of history and reconstructing past phenomena and events as historical facts¹. Opposition to such a vision of history appeared in the nineteen-seventies. A conviction appeared, mainly due to Hayden White and Frank Ankersmit, that the work of a historian is closer to literature than to science. Narrativists acknowledged that the subject of study (more

¹ Carl G. Hempel's (1965) position is representative of the methodology of positivistically described historiography.

precisely – interpretation) is not facts or objects, but historical texts. The historian does not re-construct the past, but constructs (in a range of pre-figuration) a certain idea and strategies for its conceptualization¹.

In the case of the history of collective views, narrativist arguments are particularly persuasive. Historical communication phenomena are not “facts” or “objects” which can be extracted from context and examined as such. When interpreting a social practice, the scientist creates an idea about it, whereas when interpreting a historical view, the researcher constructs an idea of the view. A historical collective view (of communication) is something inaccessible, “hidden”, and the historian-communicologist has no possibility of “extracting” or reconstructing it. It is possible only to construct (based on preserved communication practices “artefacts”) a certain idea of these historical practices, a view on the historical views, which itself is influenced by the collective views of the modern researcher.

Research in other areas of culture and other social practices can be carried out analogously. For example, the collective historical religious views of a community remain “hidden” from the historians, anthropologists and religious studies scientists who study them. With the preserved text records (or images) they construct an idea, a view on these historic religious views, or an idea, a view on historical religious practices. For example, Homer’s *Iliad* or Herodotus’s *Histories* are not texts devoted to religious beliefs (or at least not only, and not directly), however, they do include – as texts from a culture – elements of the Greeks’ collective views on the world. It is also possible to indicate some more specific elements of their collective religious views (implicit in the text). Sometimes the researcher works with a text concerning the given views directly – for example, Hesiod’s *Theogony* or Plutarch’s *On the Decline of the Oracles* are works devoted directly to what we call the collective religious views of the ancient Greeks. In such a situation, the researcher’s task is relatively easy.

The study of the collective views on communication is similar in this respect. The views are implicit, being in the past, and the historian-communicologist constructs an idea about them. However, in comparison with the task of a researcher of religious or artistic views, the task of the communication historian is highly singular. As mentioned previously, communication is not just yet another aspect of culture. It is the means which enables and supports the functioning of other aspects. Religious,

¹ I recommend the works of H. White: *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination In Nineteenth-Century Europe* (1975) The John Hopkins University Pres, Baltimore 1973, and F. Ankersmit: *History and Tropology: The Rise and Fall of Metaphor* (1994).

artistic, political and other practices are inextricably linked to communication. One can not practice religion, art or politics without communicating.

This means that the collective views on communication may be found within various types of social practices. Barnett Pearce writes, “if you look carefully, you can see an implicit theory of communication in everything that people say or do with each other. That theory matters. It prefigures the content and quality of the conversations people have with each other and these conversations have afterlives” (Pearce 2009: 30). This means that a historical record of a religious ritual, a theatrical play and a political debate is simultaneously a record of certain communication practices. And these practices are determined not only by (respectively) the collective religious, artistic or political views, but also by the collective views on communication.

The researcher can construct an image of a historical view on communication based on any historical record (preservation) of any communication practice. For example, the preserved correspondence of Pliny the Younger with the emperor Trajan is a record of a communication practice recorded in writing which has survived to our time. Although Pliny does not write about communication, but the way of writing, the accepted forms and measures may reveal to us an element of the views on communication which were shared by Pliny, Trajan, and their contemporaries. However, the interpretation of the views based on such a text is very difficult, since the text directly refers to how the Roman administration should deal with Christians by, rather than to communication. Using the metaphor, it can be said that in this case the view on communication which implicitly regulates the practices implemented by Pliny and Trajan, is “very deeply hidden” from the investigator, strongly implicit. A text of this type provides, probably, a lot more data to a media historian than to a historian of communication views.

On the basis of this example it can be concluded that the historical practice of communication, for example epistolary, can be studied on the basis of preserved texts (for example, letters or quotations, from Trajan's correspondence with Pliny). We would say that in these practices, implicit colloquial views on communication are included, which regulated the communication practices engaged in by the participants of the correspondence. On the basis of these preserved texts an attempt to interpret the nature of the ancient practices of communication and collective perceptions about them can be made. Although the authors of the letters

mentioned above are undoubtedly people belonging to the elite of the Roman society, they discuss administrative and business matters (Pliny asks the emperor for leave, for advice on the municipal sewer system, asks about court proceedings against Christians, etc.). Language, signs, speech, or anything related to communication itself is not discussed in the letters. Therefore, the view is present in the content and form of the letters only implicitly.

Sometimes, a textual artefact of communication practices refers to itself. Such entities, containing self-referring communication practices, tell (write, etc.) something about communication, thus presenting an element of the collective view that accompanies them. For example, Plato's *Cratylus* or Quintilian's *Institutes of Oratory* allow for a more extensive interpretation of the ancient Greek and Roman ideas of communication to a much greater extent than other preserved texts. Texts of this type are relics of communication practices which were determined by theoretical collective views on communication.

Such theoretical views are expressed in a reflexive form, with a theoretical approach, and thus belong to philosophy or science. In this case, a given communication practice indicates and illustrates itself, which is the case in, say, Herder's *Treatise on the Origin of Language* or Shannon and Weaver's *A Mathematical Theory of Communication*. Such theoretical ideas are also subject to interpretation by the researcher, who refers to certain communication practices (implemented with a theoretical mindset), however, in such cases the researcher's task is much easier.

5. Conclusion

The findings of the representatives of the Toronto School revealed the historicity of forms and means of communication. It was argued that a society which uses writing is organized differently and sees the world in a different way than one which does not know writing. It was also argued that among literate civilizations, the ones which used, for example, clay tablets, differed from those which used papyrus, and later paper. However – bar certain exceptions – attention was focused on the media and their impact, placing less emphasis on the area of ideas and views.

At the same time a strong tradition of research of ideas and views was founded whose particular results are the history of ideas and the history of mentalities. However, the representatives of this tradition are only sporadically interested in communication. Similarly, many cultural

historians study the issue of communication, but they do not see themselves as “historians of communication.”

As a result, on the one hand we are dealing with research in the history of communication *expressis verbis*, but narrowed mainly to the media, on the other hand, there is research on views and mentalities, but not focused directly on communication. This means that the study of historical views on communication must be conducted at the intersection of these two traditions. It should build on them and synthesize their achievements. This means that the belief in the historicity of communication, characteristic of the Toronto School, is upheld, but the emphasis shifts from the media to the ways in which people perceive and treat communication, both in everyday life as well as within a theoretical approach. In order to achieve this, communication historians must, however, take advantage of the achievements of the collective views of researchers and historians of ideas and mentalities.

What may be the result of such a procedure? Although communication historians are not able to reconstruct past ideas as “facts” but only construct their own views about the views on communication using preserved source materials, nevertheless, it is the only way leading to the interpretation of transformations of communication phenomena and tracing the impact that they had on other areas of culture. Studies of historical media and historical communication practices can not be complete unless historical views on them are taken into account.

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RECENZII

Gianluigi SEGALERBA, *Semantik und Ontologie. Drei Studien zu Aristoteles*, Berner Reihe philosophischer Studien, Peter Lang AG, Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften, Bern 2013, S. 547. Kurzrezension von Darius Persu

Welche sind die Bestandteile der Realität? Oder anders gesagt, welche Arten von Dingen existieren? Welchen ontologischen Status besitzen allgemeine Entitäten wie z.B. „Raum“, „Existenz“ oder „Ursache“? Sind sie Erschaffungen unseres Intellekts und existieren nur abhängig vom menschlichen Denken, oder besitzen sie eine eigene Existenz auch unabhängig vom Gedacht-Werden durch unseren Intellekt? Der Versuch, auf diese Art von Fragen eine Antwort zu finden, stellt eine der ältesten philosophischen Unternehmungen dar. Die systematische Beschäftigung mit diesem Problem gehört zum Kern der Ontologie. Im Buch „Semantik und Ontologie. Drei Studien zu Aristoteles“ vom Herrn Prof. Gianluigi Segalerba werden ontologische Fragen auf Grundlage der aristotelischen Philosophie beantwortet.

Gianluigi Segalerba lehrt Philosophie mit dem Forschungsschwerpunkt „aristotelische Ontologie“ an der Universität Wien. Sein hier präsentierte Buch setzt sich aus drei Studien zusammen, die zu je einem Thema der aristotelischen Philosophie gewidmet sind, und stellt sich als eine der vollkommensten und tiefgründigsten Studien über die Philosophie Aristoteles' vor. Dank der zahlreichen, ausführlichen, eingehenden Erläuterungen und des umfassenden, ganzheitlichen Begriffsapparats, die an mehreren Stellen mit Berufung auf die Originalpassagen begründet werden, eignet sich das Buch als ausgezeichnetes Werkzeug zum Studium der aristotelischen Philosophie, das sowohl von jenen verwendet werden kann, die mit der Philosophie Aristoteles' nicht unbedingt vertraut sind, als auch von denjenigen, die sich einen tiefgründigen und weitreichenden Einblick in die Ontologie Aristoteles' verschaffen möchten.

Im Folgenden werde ich versuchen, die Hauptthemen des Buches mittels einer möglichst knappen Darstellung seines Inhalts unter Berücksichtigung seiner argumentativen Struktur aufzufassen.

Die erste Studie „Aspekte der aristotelischen Theorie der zweiten Substanzen und der Universalien“ stellt sich als interpretatorische Auslegung der Ontologie Aristoteles' vor. Es wird diesbezüglich versucht, anhand der Begriffe wie „Substanz“ (erste und zweite Substanz), „Universalien“, „Einzelentitäten“, „allgemeine Entitäten“, usw. die definitorischen Merkmale der ontologischen Auffassung Aristoteles' darzustellen. Die Analyse verfolgt sehr detailliert die Entwicklung verschiedener ontologischer Begriffe in mehreren Schriften Aristoteles, und zielt darauf ab, ihre Kontinuität und ihre Umwandlungen aufzufangen.

In Rahmen seiner Studie gelingt es Segalerba, ein sehr klares Bild über die ontologische Auffassung Aristoteles' zu schaffen, ohne aber zu vergessen, diesbezüglich auch eigene Akzente gegenüber der aristotelischen Exegese zu setzen.

Es werden diesbezüglich viele Aspekte des ontologischen Vorhabens Aristoteles' diskutiert, welche seine philosophischen Spekulationen kennzeichnen. Im Rahmen der Diskussion über die Fachtermini der aristotelischen Ontologie werden wir über die Anschauung Aristoteles' in Bezug auf die Bestandteile der Realität und über die ontologischen Merkmale, die er verschiedenen Arten von Entitäten zuschreibt, ausführlich aufgeklärt. So erfahren wir z.B., dass Aristoteles die Forschungsobjekte der Wissenschaft als allgemeine Entitäten konzipiert und nicht als Ideen, wie das bei den Idealisten wie Platon der Fall ist. Damit wird gleichzeitig die Kritik angesprochen, die Aristoteles an der Ideentheorie Platons ausübt. Im Vergleich zu anderen Exegeten der aristotelischen Ontologie wie z.B. G. Fine (G. Fine, „On Ideas. Aristotle's Criticism on Plato's Theory of Forms“), der mit Bezug auf die aristotelische Kritik behauptet, dass Aristoteles gegen die Ideen Platons „nur [das] einwenden würde, dass sie getrennt seien, während er in vielen anderen Punkten mit der Lehre Platons grundsätzlich übereinstimme“, plädiert Segalerba dafür, die Kritik Aristoteles' als „härter zu interpretieren“, und zwar in dem Sinne, dass Aristoteles die platonischen Ideen im Großen und Ganzen ablehnt, da er sie als „widersprüchliche Entitäten bewertet“. (Segalerba 2013:19-20). Seine Positionierung betont Segalerba an mehreren Stellen seiner Analyse: „[...] Aristoteles übt eine sehr harte, kompromisslose Kritik an Ideen aus“ (Segalerba 2013:78); „Was die Bewertung betrifft, welche Aristoteles von den Ideen gibt, so erachtet er die Ideen meiner Ansicht nach als mangelhafte und widersprüchliche Universalien [...]“ (Segalerba 2013:82).

Mit Bezug auf die Thematisierung des „Allgemeinen“ oder „Gemeinsamen“ vertritt Aristoteles, wie Segalerba argumentiert, eine realistische Position: das Allgemeine entsteht nicht durch den Erkennungsprozess unseres Intellekts, sondern es besteht in der Realität schon vor seiner Anerkennung durch den Intellekt. Das Allgemeine wird bei Aristoteles als Klassifikationseinrichtung ausgedeutet, nach der Einzelentitäten in vorgegebene Gruppen angeordnet werden. Die Gründe der Klassifizierung entsprechen, wie gesagt, der Beschaffung der Realität, und stellen also keine konstruierten Klassifikationskriterien dar. (S. 5-6, und insbes. die Fußnoten 2 und 3). Anders formuliert, wird das Allgemeine vom Intellekt in der Realität entdeckt, und stellt sich vor als „[...] Bearbeitung der Universalien und deren Merkmale [...]“. (Siehe Segalerba 2013:22-23 und die Fußnote 30).

Die Universalien ersetzen im Rahmen der aristotelischen Ontologie die platonischen Ideen. Sie werden von Aristoteles, ähnlich wie die allgemeinen Entitäten, nicht als existierende Entitäten, aber auch nicht in einer nominalistischen Art und Weise ausgedeutet. Bezüglich des ontologischen Status der Universalien vertritt Aristoteles laut Segalerba wie im Fall des Allgemeinen eine realistische Position: „Die Universalien dürfen nicht als existierende, sondern nur als konzeptuelle Entitäten eingestuft werden, aber sie seien trotzdem in der Realität“. Dieser Balanceakt gelingt Aristoteles, indem er annimmt, dass es mehrere Formen der Existenz gibt. Man muss also zugeben, dass eine realistische Interpretation der

Universalien möglich ist, ohne voraussetzen zu müssen, dass die Universalien eine vom Intellekt unabhängige Existenz haben. (Segalerba 2013:21-22, insb. Fußnote 30).

Die Analyse Segalerbas diskutiert des Weiteren andere Hauptmerkmale der aristotelischen Ontologie und erklärt, was Aristoteles unter der Bezeichnung der typologischen und stufenartigen Ontologie versteht (S. 15-19), die ontologischen Voraussetzungen und die Bedeutung der Argumente des sogenannten Regresses des Dritten Menschen (S. 42-44 und weiter), die Leitungslinien des ontologischen Systems Aristoteles' (S. 42-51), den Unterschied zwischen Ideen und Universalien (S. 95), das Allgemeine in Relation zu den Einzeldingen und die Merkmale des Allgemeinen (S. 75-77 und resümiert die Hauptthesen der aristotelischen Theorie der Idee (S. 84-88).

Die zweite Studie „Aspekte der Substanz bei Aristoteles“ thematisiert den aristotelischen Begriff der Substanz. Das Konzept der Substanz wird bei Aristoteles mit verschiedenen Sinngehalten verwendet, die von einer ganzen Palette definitorischer Merkmale und Sachbezüge gekennzeichnet sind. Unter ihnen kommen in den Schriften Aristoteles' folgende drei Bedeutungen der Substanz am häufigsten vor:

1. „Substanz als Gegenstand
2. Substanz als Form oder als Gestaltungsprinzip
3. Substanz als Materie eines wahrnehmbaren Gegenstandes“. (Segalerba 2013:106).

Die verschiedenen definitorischen Inhalte, die die Substanz bei Aristoteles annehmen kann, verdeutlicht Segalerba weiter auf Basis der aristotelischen *Kategorien-* und *De Anima-*Schrift und der *Metaphysik*. (Siehe Segalerba 2013:111-20 und weiter). Diesbezüglich macht uns Segalerba darauf aufmerksam, dass die aristotelische Substanz sich nicht nur auf äußerliche, sondern auch auf innerliche Aspekte beschreiben lässt. (Segalerba 2013:121-22).

In Bezug auf die Analyse, die Segalerba auf Basis der *Kategorien-*Schrift entwickelt, lässt sich hervorheben, dass Segalerba die *Kategorien-*Schrift Aristoteles' nicht nur als sprachlich-logische Auslegung verstehen will, wie es in der Fachliteratur meistens der Fall ist; er will sie auch als ontologische Aufteilung der Entitäten bewerten, indem er die ontologische Konstitution der ersten und zweiten Substanzen mithilfe des in der *Kategorien-*Schrift angeführten Erklärungsmodells auszudeuten versucht. (Siehe Segalerba 2013:125). Unter diesem Gesichtspunkt versucht Segalerba aufzuzeigen, welche Beziehungen es gibt, einerseits, zwischen erster und zweiter Substanz (S. 184), und, andererseits, zwischen diesen und den Einzelentitäten (S. 175).

Die Mehrdeutigkeit des Begriffes Substanz wird weiter am Beispiel der aristotelischen Schriften dokumentiert und verdeutlicht. Substanz kann diesbezüglich „als Gegenstand“, der „materiell oder immateriell, quantitativ und qualitativ veränderlich oder unveränderlich, wahrnehmbar oder übersinnlich“, usw. sein kann, „als Form, oder Wesen eines materiellen und immateriellen Gegenstands“, und „als Materie, die sich als Potenzialität ausdrückt, etwas zu

werden“ verstanden werden. (Segalerba 2013:111-19). Weitere Aspekte des aristotelischen Konzeptes der Substanz werden mittels der Darstellungen aus dem Buch *Metaphysik Zeta* ausgeführt, wo die Substanz hauptsächlich zwei ontologische Deutungen bekommt, nämlich als unabhängig existierender Gegenstand und als „Was ist“ oder Essenz eines Gegenstandes. (Siehe Segalerba 201:202-06). Ein anderes wichtiges Thema, das im Rahmen der zweiten Studie besprochen wird, besteht in dem Versuch klarzustellen, welches Verhältnis zwischen der wahrnehmbaren, denkenden und erkennbaren Substanz und der äußeren Welt besteht. (Siehe Segalerba 2013:285 und weiter).

Die dritte Studie „Synonymie in der Kategorien-Schrift gegen Nicht-Homonymie im Argument aus den Bezüglichen (Relativa)“ aus dem Buch Segalerbas beschäftigt sich hauptsächlich mit zwei Themen. Auf der einen Seite versucht sie, eine Interpretation der ontologischen Bedingungen zu entwickeln, die „den Besitz einer bestimmten Eigenschaft seitens einer Entität oder einer Pluralität von Entitäten begründen“. Andererseits werden hier die Möglichkeitsbedingungen der Synonymie bei Aristoteles und die für die Nicht-Homonymie der Prädikation“ entgegengestellt, die von den Befürwortern in dem sogenannten von der platonischen Philosophie beeinflussten Argument aus den Bezüglichen (Relativa) entwickelt worden sind. (Siehe Segalerba 2013:321 und 356).

Die Studie ist von einem umfangreichen Begriffsapparat begleitet, in dessen Rahmen die wichtigsten in der sehr breit angelegten Studie (über 300 Seiten) verwendeten Begriffe wie z.B. „wirkliche Eigenschaften“, „Eigenschaft-Name“, „homonyme und synonyme Prädikation“, „Substanz“, „gewöhnliche Wirklichkeit“, „Instantiation“, „das Allgemeine“, „typologische und stufenartige Ontologie“, „Essenz“, „Universalien“, „in einer primären Weise existierende Entitäten“, „nicht in einer primären Weise existierende Entitäten“, „Ewigkeit“, „ontologischer Dualismus“, „Gleich-Sein-Entitäten“, usw. sehr präzise eingeführt werden. (Siehe Segalerba 2013:322-56).

Wie schon erwähnt, setzt sich die letzte Studie aus dem Buch Segalerbas vorrangig das Ziel, anhand der *Kategorien*-Schrift und anderer Texte Aristoteles, klarzustellen, was die Prädikation einer Eigenschaft seitens eines Gegenstandes ermöglicht. Diese Unternehmung stellt den Versuch dar, herauszufinden, wodurch die Beziehungen einer Eigenschaft mit den Gegenständen, die diese Eigenschaft besitzen, gekennzeichnet sind. Es geht hier also darum, die Art und Weise, in der ein Gegenstand eine gewisse Eigenschaft besitzt oder hat, zu determinieren, d.h. zu sagen, ob ein Gegenstand eine gewisse Eigenschaft „seiner Natur nach“ oder nur durch Akzidenz besitzt. (Siehe Segalerba 2013:357 und weiter). Da eine Eigenschaft auch einer Vielzahl von Gegenständen zugeschrieben werden kann, hängt diese Problematik mit dem anderen oben erwähnten Thema zusammen, nämlich mit der Frage nach den Bedingungen für die Synonymie oder Nicht-Homonymie. Allerdings macht uns Segalerba diesbezüglich darauf aufmerksam, dass es sich hier um verschiedene Problematiken handelt, die auch verschiedene Interpretationen der Ontologie voraussetzen, und dementsprechend unterschiedliche Deutungen

„[...] für die Bedingungen bezüglich der Bedeutungsgleichheit der Prädikation determinieren“. (Segalerba 2013:359-60).

Die Synonymie wird bei Aristoteles als „ontologische Korrelation“ definiert. Das heißt, dass zwei Entitäten als synonym betrachtet werden, genau dann wenn sie „denselben Begriff der Substanz, oder zumindest denselben Teil dieses Begriffs gemeinsam haben“. (Segalerba 2013:360). Der These der Synonymie setzt Segalerba die Idee der Nicht-Homonymie aus dem sogenannten „Argument aus den Bezüglichen“ entgegen, das besagt, dass „[...] eine Eigenschaft einer Pluralität von Entitäten gemeinsam ist, und welche von einer Vielzahl von Entitäten prädiziert wird.“ (Segalerba 2013:362). Trotz der täuschenden Ähnlichkeit in der Formulierung würden die Synonymie aus der *Kategorien*-Schrift und die Nicht-Homonymie aus den Bezüglichen, so Segalerba, auf verschiedene, „miteinander inkompatiblen ontologischen Auffassungen“ hinweisen. (Segalerba 2013:364). Wie es in der ersten Studie aus dem Buch Segalerbas anlässlich der Diskussion des Arguments des Dritten Menschen schon gezeigt wurde, lehnt Aristoteles die These ab, laut der eine Eigenschaft über eine Vielzahl prädiziert wird, und „gleichzeitig auch numerisch eins ist“. Überdies ist er in seinen Texten „[...] immer darum bestrebt, die Entitäten, welche numerisch eine sind, von den Entitäten, welche allgemein oder gemeinsam prädiziert werden, strengstens zu unterscheiden.“ (Segalerba 2013:42, Fußnote 64). Da das Zuschreiben einer Eigenschaft einer Gruppe oder Menge, die Möglichkeit der bedeutungsgleichen Prädikation voraussetzt, soll es sich hier um eine andere Interpretation der Ontologie handeln. Diese Unterscheidung zu nuancieren und argumentativ zu untermauern, stellt die Aufgabe dar, der sich Segalerba auf den restlichen Seiten seiner Studie zuwendet.

Zum Schluss möchte ich noch einige allgemeine Anmerkungen zu den Leistungen des hier rezensierten Buches hinzufügen. Neben den oben schon erwähnten Qualitäten des Buchs Segalerbas muss man auch hier die Fähigkeit des Autors hervorheben, sehr komplexe Themen und Problematiken prägnant und übersichtlich auffassen zu können. Die präzise Sprache, die Klarheit der Präsentation und die gut strukturierte Argumentation, die im Buch verwertete Primär- und Sekundärliteratur, die zahlreichen Konstellationen von Definitionen und konzeptuellen Präzisierungen empfehlen das Buch Segalerbas als unabdingbares Instrument zum Studium der Philosophie Aristoteles' und als ausgezeichnete Einführung in die aristotelische Ontologie. Darüber hinaus muss hier noch gesagt werden, dass der Autor auch ein sehr guter Kenner des Altgriechischen ist, dass viele der im Buch angegebenen Zitate von ihm selber übersetzt worden sind und damit ein Plus an Originalität in der Analyse mit sich bringen.

Darius PERSU (University of Vienna, Austria)

Dumitru Alin Negomireanu, *Ființă și transcendență la Gabriel Marcel*, Editura Tipo Moldova, Iași, 2014, 292 p.

Despre Gabriel Marcel nu sunt disponibile multe lucrări în limba română. Ca o consecință a unui posibil record cu receptarea curentă în Franța – cultură în care filosoful nu se mai află în prim-plan – spațiul românesc actual nu este mai dornic să infirme unele etichete injuste la adresa lui Gabriel Marcel. Altfel stau, însă, lucrurile cu cartea de față, care reprezintă cercetarea de doctorat a lui Dumitru Alin Negomireanu. Șabloanele în cauză despre filosoful existențist creștin, așa cum spune academicianul Gheorghe Vlăduțescu, în „Cuvânt înainte”, sunt eliminate printr-o cercetare de amploare, prin bibliografia parcursă și prin profunzimea analizei personale. Totuși, autorul nu infirmă aplecarea lui Marcel către creștinism, către credință, mai ales, ci chiar o descrie pe ultima ca proiect filosofic autentic, de o complexitate și magnitudine care pun la încercare capacitatea cititorului de a înțelege demersul marcelian. Acest lucru se întâmplă nu pentru că procesul în cauză ar presupune o dimensiune cognitivă sau intelectuală aparte, ci pentru că tema se bazează pe necesitatea descoperirii și folosirii unor moduri lăuntrice ale cititorului, cum ar fi dispoziția către Celălalat, neliniștea, problematizarea etc.

Încă din primul capitol, autorul investighează raportul dintre filosofie și Dumnezeu, pornind de la optica fenomenologică a unui atare proiect, ce are ca obiecte speciale de investigație sfințenia, revelația sau credința. Amprenta creștină este inerentă unei astfel de investigații, deoarece religia creștină a „magnetizat” felul nostru de a fi. În calitate de ființe istorice, nu putem nega multele secole creștine (p. 25). Raportarea la Dumnezeu este centrală în filosofia lui Marcel, întrucât aceasta are rol „de focalizator al energiilor ființiale într-un centru transcendent” (p. 27).

Perspectiva filosofică a autorului integrează dintru început o componentă folosită adesea în mod reflex atunci când pare că obiectul de investigație nu este în mod curent (sau poate nu a fost niciodată) specific filosofiei. Nu întâmplător, așadar, autorul adresează întrebarea legată de posibilitatea unei metafizici a credinței sau dacă o „fenomenologie a existenței” poate susține credința. Orizontul de interogare în această manieră este tranșat net încă din primul subcapitol al lucrării, prin aceea că se cristalizează o „gândire a credinței” suprapusă pe ceva „intens personal” (p. 28). Cu alte cuvinte, pentru a păstra registrul filosofic, obiectulul îndepărtat, adică Dumnezeu, rezonază cu subiectivul profund, adică omul în carne și oase. Legitimitatea relației filosofie-credință este afirmată, în consecință, frontal: toate adevărurile reale sunt personale, adică sunt experimentabile prin prisma subiectivității proprii, cu mențiunea că nu trebuie să înțelegem de aici că acestea ar fi relative sau de natură solipsistă. În acest fel se justifică și faptul că demersul este unul fenomenologic, adică bazat pe relația directă dintre subiect și obiect, într-un sens, căci în altul disocierea subiect-obiect capătă noi valențe.

Ca fenomen, o credință „justificată” apare prin imperativul transcendenței acesteia în fața cunoașterii. De aici și întrebarea: cine întemeiază pe cine? Chiar dacă autorul susține, citându-l pe Roger Troisfontaines, că ființa se unește cu sine, se lasă

influențată (prin comuniune) de ceilalți și are un raport cu absolutul, ne este greu, în această etapă, să răspundem la întrebarea de mai sus. Lucrurile par și mai complicate dacă ținem seama de dualitatea structurală de care vorbeam (conștiință – transcendență), prin care granița dintre subiect (eu) și obiect (Dumnezeu) este și mai accentuată. Interpretarea autorului la această aporie dialectică se face prin intermediul modurilor subiectiv-personale, adică, fenomenologic spus, acele moduri care țin de felul de a privi divinitatea, și nu de compatibilizarea sau sincronizarea subiectului cu obiectului, atât de încercată de către filosofi de-a lungul timpului: „Credința nu este o chestiune de a crede că, ci de a crede în; și Dumnezeu este pentru Marcel, ca și pentru Kierkegaard, Tu-ul absolut. Ființa umană, în conformitate cu Marcel, are o exigență a Ființei, care într-un limbaj religios este o orientare a Tu-ului absolut” (p. 31). Dar modurile de a relaționa cu Dumnezeu nu sunt unice, ci, dimpotrivă, foarte variate (iubire, rugăciune, invocare-răspuns etc.), fără ca ele să fie în mod necesar „reciproc exclusive” (p. 31), în situația în care, prin voința și libertatea proprie, oamenii obturează sau închid acest raport.

Ca experiență autentică, revelația „stinge” aporia psihologistă subiect-obiect, iar transcendența nu mai este de alt ordin decât ființarea. Raportul nu se rezumă, totuși, la un mod facil de experimentare. Ca dovadă în acest sens, „exigența transcendenței”, care implică, la început, o trăire negativă, dată de sentimentul de insatisfacție (p. 37), de lipsa a ceva din afară. Non-obiectulitatea lui Dumnezeu implică, pe deasupra, concluzii cu totul îndrăznețe: „Este posibil să crezi în realitatea lui Dumnezeu iar în același timp să-i negi existența” (p. 37).

Pe de altă parte, relația cu absolutul apare în lucrarea *Ființă și transcendență la Gabriel Marcel* de multe ori ca implicație simetrică a problematicei raporturilor intersubiective, eu-celălalt, eu-eu, eu-lume, care sunt doar câteva paliere ale lucrării lui Dumitru Alin Negomireanu. În ansamblu, multitudinea de problematice și perspective trasează în lucrarea de față o nouă abordare a lui Gabriel Marcel, prin spectrul său generos și profund. Din acest motiv, cartea *Ființă și transcendență la Gabriel Marcel* devine un instrument important în aprofundarea filosofului francez.

Ionuț RĂDUICĂ (University of Craiova, Romania)

Vlad Vasile Andreica, *Argumentul ontologic în filosofia analitică. O reevaluare din perspectiva conceptului de existență necesară*, prefață de Ionel Narița, Iași, Institutul European, 2013, 299 p.

Argumentul ontologic este unul dintre cele mai intens dezbătute argumente cu privire la existența lui Dumnezeu, iar intenția de a scrie o carte prin care să treci în revistă disputele create în jurul acestuia reprezintă ea însăși o provocare. Această sarcină și-a asumat-o și autorul cărții încă din perioada studiilor de doctorat și a finalizat-o pe parcursul celor trei ani de bursă postdoctorală din cadrul proiectului individual de cercetare „Perspective și interpretări asupra existenței necesare a lui Dumnezeu” din cadrul proiectului *Societatea Bazată pe Cunoaștere – cercetări, dezbateri, perspective*, cofinanțat de Uniunea Europeană și Guvernul României din Fondul Social European prin Programul Operațional Sectorial Dezvoltarea Resurselor Umane 2007-2013.

Așa după cum știm, prima formă explicită a argumentului ontologic a fost concepută de către Anselm, în secolul al XII-lea. Deși scopul filosofului era acela de a construi un argument care să poată convinge și pe cel mai ignorant dintre oameni de existența lui Dumnezeu, acesta a stârnit o multitudine de reacții de opoziție încă din vremea sa. Variantele construite mai târziu de Descartes sau Leibniz au avut aceeași soartă. Autorul lucrării își pune, deci, problema, dacă se poate construi un argument ontologic „victorios”, care să elimine cele mai multe dintre aceste critici și, dacă da, în ce direcție ar trebui căutată soluția salvatoare.

Argumentul ontologic se deosebește de celelalte argumente teiste prin faptul că este un argument *a priori*, făcând apel doar la rațiune, indiferent la experiență. Cu alte cuvinte, argumentul este numit *ontologic* „nu numai pentru că are de-a face cu dovedirea existenței a ceva, ci pentru că vizează nucleul ontologiei tradiționale: ce înseamnă că ceva *există*”. (p.18) Practic, soluția problemei, după cum sugerează, implicit, autorul, se găsește chiar în natura argumentului, adică în legătura cu conceptul de *existență*. Abordarea problemei din perspectiva acestei legături este și scopul lucrării, iar motivul este că această cale ne dă posibilitatea de a părăsi „cadrul filosofiei religiei extinzând aria de reflecție asupra unor probleme legate de conceptul de *existență*, care deși sunt tradiționale în istoria filosofiei, fac obiectul unor ample discuții în cercurile intelectuale contemporane”. (p.18)

În consecință, nucleul lucrării îl va constitui „problema raportului dintre argumentul ontologic și conceptul de *existență*, cu prelungirile sale în filosofia recentă de factură analitică și cu reevaluările sale din perspectiva logicii modale și a teoriei lumilor posibile.” (p.18) Avem de-a face, deci, cu o lucrare de sinteză, care poate servi ca o bună introducere în istoria argumentului ontologic, cu trimeri la celelalte argumente teiste. Autorul analizează riguros variantele tradiționale ale argumentului ontologic propuse de Anselm și Decartes, precum și criticile aduse de către contemporanii acestora (cap.2), evaluează principalele obiecții aduse argumentului din perspectiva conceptului de *existență* (în special critica lui Kant, dar și reevaluarea conceptului de *existență* de către Frege și Russell, cap.3), focalizându-

se pe variantele modale ale argumentului, începând cu varianta modală a lui Leibniz, perspectiva semanticii lumilor posibile, diferitele reluări ale argumentului în filosofia analitică, reformularea argumentului ontologic de către Malcom și Plantinga. (cap.4) În această evaluare autorul dovedește un veritabil spirit analitic și o atenție fină cu privire la diferitele nuanțe ale argumentelor.

În ultimul capitol autorul acordă o atenție deosebită reconstrucției argumentului ontologic în versiunea lui Charles Hartshorne, care, în opinia sa, „ a adus o lumină nouă și o interpretare originală asupra argumentului”. (p. 20) Chiar dacă Hartshorne nu este considerat, în general, un filosof analitic, ci mai degrabă un reprezentant al filosofiei procesuale și al teismului neoclasic, locul său în această lucrare este justificat de către autor prin faptul că acesta a tratat argumentul „într-o manieră analitică”, adică s-a angajat într-o analiză conceptuală și a formalizat argumentul folosindu-se de legile modale, în special de sistemele S_4 și S_5 .” (p.20)

Soluția autorului cu privire la vulnerabilitatea la critici a argumentului ontologic vine din direcția filosofilor care au utilizat logica modală și au pus în prim plan conceptul de *existență necesară*, precum Norman Malcom și Charles Hartshorne. Chiar dacă argumentul nu este imun la critici, utilizarea conceptelor logicii modale îl îmbogățește și îl face mai greu de respins. (p. 272) Autorul consideră că atât critica lui Kant, cât și cea a lui Russell, venită din perspectiva teoriilor descripțiilor, nu afectează argumentul bazat pe existența necesară. (p.274)

În concluzie, argumentele modale, care abordează problema existenței lui Dumnezeu în termeni de posibilitate și necesitate, înlocuind conceptul de *existență* cu cel de *existență necesară* au șanse mari de a înlătura cele mai multe dintre critici. Vulnerabilitatea argumentelor e legată de adevărul premiselor, care poate fi contestat, însă principiul care stă la baza lor rămâne în picioare: „contingența trebuie eliminată, deoarece este incompatibilă cu statutul ființei perfecte”. (p.279)

Apreciez spiritul critic și rafinamentul analitic al autorului acestei cărți și recomand lucrarea ca o bună introducere în problema argumentului ontologic. Cu toate acestea, consider că autorul ar fi trebuit să rezerve un spațiu mai restrâns aspectelor istorice ale problemei și să acorde o mai mare importanță conceptului de *existență necesară* precum și avantajelor ce decurg din acesta pentru construirea unor argumente ontologice valide.

Ștefan-Viorel GHENEA (University of Craiova, Romania)

Tom G. Palmer (ed.), *Peace, Love, & Liberty. War is not Inevitable*, Atlas Economic Research Foundation, and Students for Liberty, 2014, 176 p.

Anul 2014 a cuprins evenimente politice cu impact răsunător iar războiul cutremură în continuare ideea păcii globale. La o primă impresie, concluzionăm că anul 2014 este un an al adversității. Pe bună dreptate, veștile rele sunt consolidate de către mașinăria mass-media. Nu există nici un titlu de ziar precum „Astăzi, șapte miliarde de oameni au trăit în pace”, iar pentru ochii pesimiștilor, se pare că veștile bune nu se întrevăd. Lăsând la o parte tendința de a vedea partea negativă a lucrurilor, cartea *Peace, Love & Liberty*, propune o alternativă la această situație. Ea reprezintă efortul Atlas Network și Students for Liberty, organizație non-guvernamentală a studenților din SUA adepți ai valorilor libertariene și care are o largă asociere cu grupuri pro-libertate din întreaga lume.

Apărută în finele anului 2014, ca succesori spirituali ai cărții *Why Liberty? (De ce Libertatea?)*, această carte are rolul de a introduce în filosofia libertariană dar aduce și un aer de noutate, dezbătând problema păcii și propunând libertarianismul ca o filosofie a păcii. Pas cu pas suntem purtați printr-o serie de argumente pro-libertate, menite să arate că ideile libertariene sunt motorul actelor pacifiste. Cartea insistă deci că pacea nu trebuie să fie doar un țel dezirabil, ci chiar o realitate obiectivă. Editorul, doctorul Tom G. Palmer, este Senior al institutului libertarian, CATO Institute și vicepreședinte al organizației Atlas Network. El a scris numeroase lucrări despre curentele liberal clasice și libertarian, fiind de asemenea promotor activ al acestora încă din 1970. Cele mai reprezentative lucrări ale sale sunt *Morality of Capitalism: What Your Professors Won't Tell You*, *Realizing Freedom: Libertarian, History, and Practice*, și prima carte scrisă în colaborare cu Students for Liberty, intitulată *After The Welfare State: Politicians Stole Your Future, You Can Get It Back*.

Sub girul editorial al doctorului Tom G. Palmer, cartea *Peace, Love & Liberty* se structurează în eseuri ce prezintă diverse subiecte politice, dar și din domeniul științelor economice și al psihologiei. Pe parcursul întregii cărți sunt aduse argumente în favoarea păcii. Așa cum arată și subtitlul cărții, „Războiul nu este inevitabil”, iar noi înțelegem că nu putem fi imparțiali în fața conflictului. Nu avem de-a face cu o alegere binară și nu putem pune în joc cartea ignoranței când vine vorba despre subiectul păcii și al războiului. Activismul nu este suficient, căci nu putem predica pacea fără să o practicăm. Nu este de ajuns să denunțăm războiul și să subminăm practicile distructive fără să fim agenți ai păcii. Tocmai acesta este nucleul ideologiei libertariene.

În primul eseu „Peace is a Choice” („Pacea este o alegere”), scris chiar de Tom G. Palmer, se explică fenomenul războiului și multiplele lui ingrediente. Sunt oferite exemple recente, familiare, din Statele Unite până în Ucraina. Cititorul român poate verifica ideile avansate de el cercetând realitatea cotidiană. Acest eseu, menit să introducă în filosofia libertariană și să capteze interesul, are și tentativa de a rezona cu fiecare dintre cititori, punând convingerile și credințele fiecăruia la încercare. Tematica păcii în cadrul libertarian implică și promovarea ideologiei

pieței libere. Aceasta susține că lumea ar fi un loc mai sigur datorită comerțului fără constrângeri, fiindcă niciun bun comerciant nu dorește să își sperie clienții. În eseu „The Economics of Peace: How Richer Neighbours Are Good News” („Economia păcii: Cum vecinii mai bogați sunt o veste bună”), autorul Emmanuel Martin ne oferă un exemplu concret în acest sens, arătându-ne cum putem profita din evitarea conflictului. De aceea eseu este o infirmare a vechii minciuni: „când cineva profită, altcineva trebuie să piardă”.

Pe de altă parte, cine pierde cu adevărat? – se întreabă autorii diverselor articole ale cărții? Tocmai cel ce pornește la război. Nu există un exemplu sănătos sau un caz favorabil războiului. Aici vorbim de pierderi uriașe, peste cele materiale, vorbim de vieți omenești. Însă cel mai adesea ni se repetă faptul că războiul are un scop superior și că este o datorie eroică. Nimic mai fals, spun libertarienii. Etatismul este sămânța acestei convingeri și tot etatismul setează scena conflictului.

Cine are, totuși, de câștigat? Evident, nu există niciun câștig, de nici o parte, deoarece pierderile sunt decisive. În carte, cifrele ne arată cum războiul dezechilibrează economia, devalorizează calitatea vieții și decimează poporul. Cine sunt victimele? Bineînțeles, studentul, părintele și cetățeanul. Printre aceste victime, mai există una, dificil de observat la o primă vedere, dar odată cu trecerea timpului devine din ce în ce mai evidentă: războiul ucide Libertatea.

Sunt voci care vor să ne convingă de faptul că războiul, care este omniprezent, este și inevitabil. Mai mult: că războiul fertilizează puterea statului și reprezintă sănătatea acestui sistem. Deci, suntem damnați să trăim în acest mediu al războiului? Răspunsul libertarian este: NU. Nu suntem generația conflictului și nu promovăm violența în masă. Nu mai suntem în era lui Heraclit din Efes, unde războiul este văzut ca un tată salvator. Ce poate însemna asta? Nimic mai simplu. Peste tot în lume se observă un declin al violenței. Bineînțeles, ea nu a dispărut, dar s-a redus semnificativ pe parcursul istoriei. Concluzia: suntem generația ce se bucură de prosperitate, inovație și bunăstare. Însă, cel mai important factor este ca în viitorul apropiat să ne putem bucura de o pace autentică.

Dragoș-Iulian UDREA (University of Craiova, Romania)

MANIFESTĂRI ȘTIINȚIFICE

Cel de al X-lea Congres mondial al International Society for Universal Dialogue (ISUD), cu tema: *"The Human Being: its Nature and Functions"*, Craiova, 4-9 iulie 2014



ISUD

International Society for Universal Dialogue

International Society for Universal Dialogue (ISUD), membră a Federației Internaționale a Societăților Filosofice (FISP), este o asociație internațională de filosofi și oameni de știință dintr-o sferă largă de discipline (istorie, arheologie, pedagogie, antropologie, etc.), dedicată promovării dezbaterii unor probleme fundamentale, precum: pacea mondială, dreptatea socială, drepturile omului și dialogul între diverse culturi.

Înființată în 1993 în Polonia, ea a organizat, până în 2012, nouă congrese mondiale, în țări ca Polonia, SUA, Grecia, Finlanda, Japonia, China. Printre publicațiile ISUD se numără: *The Challenges of Globalization: Rethinking Nature, Culture and Freedom. Oxford: Blackwell, 2007*; *Between Global Violence and Ethics of Peace: Philosophical Perspectives. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009*; *Philosophy After Hiroshima. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010*.

Cel de al X-lea Congres ISUD a fost organizat în România, între 4 și 9 iulie 2014, împreună cu Universitatea din Craiova, Facultatea de Drept și Științe Sociale, prin Centrul de Cercetări Filosofice (CEFI). Tema Congresul a fost: **"The Human Being: its Nature and Functions"**. Evenimentul științific a reunit un număr de peste 80 de importanți specialiști din mediul academic și de cercetare, veniți din 20 de state de pe toate continentele, care au dezbătut diverse teme actuale, precum: rolul moralei în comportamentul uman, explicația științifică a realității sau efectele economiei globale asupra vieții și valorilor umane.

Comitetul științific al Congresului a avut următoarea componență: **Dan Claudiu Dănișor**, Profesor, Rectorul Universității din Craiova, România; **Georgia Xanthaki**, Profesor, Director al Departamentului de Filologie, Universitatea din Peloponez, Grecia; **Basarab Nicolescu**, Profesor, fizician onorific la Centrul Național de Cercetare Științifică (CNRS), Franța, și Laboratorul de Fizică Nucleară și Energii Înalte de la Universitatea « Pierre et Marie Curie », Paris, Membru al Academiei Române; **Gheorghe Vlăduțescu**, Profesor la Universitatea din București, România, Membru al Academiei Române; **Alexandru Boboc**, Profesor la Universitatea din București, România, Membru al Academiei Române; **Ashok Kumar Malhotra**, Profesor la SUNY College și Oneonta, New York, SUA; **Thomas Robinson**, Profesor Emerit de Filosofie, Universitatea din Toronto, Canada.

Comitetul de organizare a fost constituit din: **Christopher Vasilopoulos**, Profesor la Eastern Connecticut State University, SUA, Președinte al ISUD; **Panos**

Eliopoulos, Lector la Universitatea din Peloponez, Grecia, Vicepreședinte al ISUD; **Lilian Karali**, Profesor la Universitatea Național-Kapodistriană din Atena, Grecia, Secretar General al ISUD; **Jean A. Campbell**, Specialist în limbaj, Universitatea din New York, SUA, Trezorier al ISUD; **Adriana Neacșu**, Conferențiar la Facultatea de Drept și Științe Sociale, Universitatea din Craiova, România; **Emilya Tajsina**, Profesor, Director al Departamentului de Filosofie, Universitatea de Stat de Inginerie Energetică din Kazan, Rusia.

Deschiderea oficială a avut loc vineri, 04 iulie, în *Aula Magna* a Facultății de Drept și Științe Sociale. În cadrul ei, au luat cuvântul: **Christopher Vasilopoulos**, Președinte al ISUD; **Panos Eliopoulos**, Vicepreședinte al ISUD (coordonator al Congresului); **Radu Constantinescu**, Directorul Departamentului de Cercetare Științifică și Management al Programelor, al Universității din Craiova; **Adriana Neacșu**, Director al Centrului de Cercetări Filosofice din UCV (coordonator al Congresului); **Charles S. Brown**, Profesor la Emporia State University, SUA, membru al ISUD.

În plenul Congresului au fost prezentate două comunicări. Prima dintre ele: *“How Can We Enter in Dialogue? Transdisciplinary Methodology of the Dialogue Between People, Cultures, and Spiritualities”*, a fost susținută de dl. **Basarab Nicolescu**, iar cea de a doua: *“Moral and Social Values in the Ancient Greek Tragedy”*, a fost susținută de dna **Georgia Xanthaki**. Ambii specialiști au primit câte o **Diplomă de Membru de Onoare al ISUD**.

Începând din 05 iulie, lucrările Congresului s-au desfășurat zilnic, în trei amfiteatre de la parterul Facultății de Drept și Științe Sociale, fiecare dintre ele găzduind câte două sesiuni de dimineață și una de după-amiază. Intrarea publicului în sălile de dezbateri a fost liberă. Datorită numărului mare de participanți, vom menționa doar numele și titlul comunicărilor acestora, precum și țările de proveniență.

Austria: **Herbert Hrachovec**, *“The Socrates Treatment”*.

Belgia: **Vaiva Adomaityte**, *“Emotions and Ethics. A Conversation with Martha C. Nussbaum and Thomas Aquinas”*.

Brazilia: **Delamar José Volpato Dutra**, *“Human Rights and the Debate on Legal Positivism”*.

Bulgaria: **Anna Ivanova**, *“Understanding Others: The Coherentist Method in Intercultural Communication”*; **Stilian Yotov**, *“New Medical Technology and Human Dignity”*; **Svetla Yordanova**, *“Manipulations of questions or Manipulations with questions”*; **Vasil Penchev**, *“Superhumans: Superlanguage?”*; **Vihren Bouzov**, *“Globalization and Cosmopolitanism: Some Challenges”*.

Canada: **Thomas Robinson**, *“Did Plato Distinguish Male and Female Souls? Some Thoughts on this and Other Features of his Discussion of psyche”*.

China: **Hu Jihua**, *“Classic Myth and Ancient Regime”*; **Keqian Xu**, *“Xing: Mencian Understanding of Human Being and Human Becoming”*; **Li Zhongyuan**, și **Guo Jie**, *“Function of Intentionality in Idea Cognition and Practical Activity”*; **Zhang**

Zengxiang și Li Yuping; *"An Exploration of Human Nature from Yin & Yang Perspectives"*.

Columbia: Alejandro Rosas Lopez, *"Social preferences make us moral"*.

Franța: Ionuț Untea, *"From "the Kingdom of Darkness" to "the Pit Beneath the Cave": Leo Strauss's Critique of "Steady Progress" and the Contemporary Ideal of Sustainable Development"*.

Grecia: Archontissa Kokotsaki, *"Passions of the Soul being associated with humanistic society: theories of Plutarch, Aristotle, Stoics, Boethius"*; **Ilektra Stampoulou,** *"Considering Agren's findings: Ethical ramifications of interfering to brain functions with the intention of neutralizing memories of pain or fear"*; **Maria Kli,** *"The notion of human nature in political theory: from sovereignty to freedom"*; **Michail Mantzanas,** *"The Sophists' political art"*; **Giorgos Papaoikonomou,** *"Arendt's twofold response to the modern moral and political collapse"*; **Panos Eliopoulos,** *"Epicurean Views on the Human Soul in Lucretius' De Rerum Natura"*; **Zaphira Kambouris,** *"The Didactic quality of logos and myth in the ancient Greek context in comparison with other world mythic views"*.

India: Amita Valmiki, *"The Path of Theistic Mysticism – The Only Hope for Future?"*; **Indoo Pandey Khanduri,** *"The Nature of Human Being and Moral Regulation of Passions"*; **Manjulika Ghosh,** *"Human Transcendence, Nature and Society"*; **Raghunath Ghosh,** *"Morality and its Role in Human Being: An Indian Approach"*; **Sandeep Gupta,** *"The Option before Modernity: Change or Perish"*.

Iran: Ramezan Mahdavi Azadboni, *"Quranic Perspective on Human Dignity: An Existential Interpretation"*;

Nigeria: Ogbujah Columbus, *"Exploring myths: a key to understanding igbo cultural values"*.

Papua Noua Guinee: Eric Gilder, Silvia Florea, Peter J. Wells, *"Where Have All the Characters Gone? Understanding the Changing Ethos of Higher Education and the Reclaiming of "Being in" Higher Education"*.

Portugalia: Ana Nolasco, *"Mythology and Art"*.

România: Alexandru Boboc, *"The pluralism of values and the cultural communication in nowadays world"*; **Adrian Boldișor,** *"Myth in the thinking of Mircea Eliade"*; **Adriana Neacșu,** *"Between heaven and earth – Human being in Porphyry's conception"*; **Ana Bazac,** *"Person – for me, and object – for the other? How does humanism occur?"*; **Ana Caras și Antonio Sandu,** *"Relational autonomy – moral agent theory"*; **Ana-Maria Demetrian,** *"The human character in times of conflict in selected twentieth century african american novels"*; **Bogdan-Costin Georgescu,** *"Towards a new The(c)ological Anthropology: the Anthropocentric Vision of Eastern Christian Theology and the Right of Man on the Nature"*; **Claudiu Mesaros,** *"Concordia doctrinarum or the concept or cosmic harmony in Gerard of Cenad"*; **Ecaterina Sarah Frăsineanu,** *"Interferences between knowledge and learning"*; **Gabriela Tănăsescu,** *"Individualism and responsibility in the rationalist ethics. The actuality of Spinoza's ethics"*; **Gheorghe Dănișor,** *"Justice – manifestation form of the essence of human being"*; **Ioan Alexandru,** *"The issue of justice sacredness"*; **Ionuț Răduică,** *"Hans Blumenberg's Concept of Modern"*.

Human Being: Freedom within Immanent History"; **Lorena Stuparu**, "The religious dimension of aesthetic experience"; **Nicolae Răzvan Stan**, "The ontological structure and the destiny of the human person in Dumitru Stăniloae's theological vision"; **Titus Lateș**, "Stories about the human being in Romanian philosophy".

Rusia: **Andrey Matsyna**, "Integral model of archaic perception of death"; **Artur Karimov**, "Analyticity and Modality"; **Egor Makharov**, "Man as the Supreme Object of Philosophy"; **Elina Minnullina**, "Social Knowledge in Discourse Practice"; **Emilya Tajsina**, "Knowledge from a human perspective: on existential materialism"; **Renat Apkin**, "Human Functions and Human Nature: radiation life-threat"; **Sergey Nizhnikov**, "Spiritual cognition and morality"; **Valery Goryunov**, "Redundancy as a driving force of human existence"; **Vladimir Przhilenskiy**, "On Modernization of Humanism".

SUA: **Ashok Kumar Malhotra**, "Time and the Mystery of Existence"; **Bruce A. Little**, "What Is A Human Being?"; **Charles S. Brown**, "Rethinking Anthropos in the Anthropocene"; **Christopher Vasilopoulos**, "Aristotle's defense of equality: explanation or warning"; **Earnest N. Bracey**, "The Political and Spiritual Interconnection of Running, Death and Reincarnation"; **Hope Fitz**: "Human Knowledge from a Human Perspective"; **Isabelle Sabau și Carmen Sabau**, "The Impact of technology on humanism and morality"; **James Block**, "Human Nature in the Post-Modern Era: Toward a Theory of Instinctual Flourishing"; **James Tanoos**, "Profiles of CEOs from Top-Performing Multinational Manufacturing versus Financial Organizations: Age, tenure, internal hiring, and gender"; **Jean A. Campbell**, "Considering Value - What are the ways and means of its expression?"; **Kevin M. Brien**, "The Human Being: its Nature and Functions"; **Martha Beck**, "All Human Beings, by Nature, Seek Understanding: Creating a Global Noosphere in Today's Era of Globalization"; **Noell Birondo**, "Aristotelian Eudaimonism and Patriotism".

Turcia: **Özlem Duva Kaya**, "Being human among humans: plurality in the divided world".

Ucraina: **Olga Gomilko și Oleg Bazaluk**, "The embodied mind: from mind power to life vitality"; **Tetyana Matusevich**, "The Future Human Being – What is it like?".

Ungaria: **Adrián Bene**, "Nature and lived experience in late Sartre".

În cadrul Congresului, în ziua de 08 iulie, s-a desfășurat și Sesiunea Anuală de Comunicări Științifice a Studenților de la Specializarea Filosofie a Facultății de Drept și Științe Sociale, condusă de lect.univ.dr. **Vasile Sălan** și lect.univ.dr. **Trandafir Cristinel**. Au prezentat comunicări: **Alexandru-Valentin Bănică**, "Consumer Society and Contemporary Alienation"; **Alin-Vasile Popa**, "Crime, law and punishment. Contemporary theories of punishment"; **Alina Georgiana Firu (Ghenea)**, "Education and Media Culture"; **Bianca Mihaela Angela Golumbeanu**, "Die Kehre, the other beginning in Martin Heidegger's thought"; **Denisa-Alina Marcu**, "The rapport between man and God in Tomas Aquino"; **Elena Preduț**, "The relation between man and the world in the analytical philosophy"; **Georgiana Antonela Zamfir**, "The Man from self-knowledge to Socratic irony"; **Ionela-Simona Catrinoiu**, "Brain death. Ethical

implications"; **Iustina-Smărăndița Apetrei**, "*Levels of the human being moral achievement in Schopenhauer's conception*"; **Lavinia-Maria Poenaru**, "*Sigmund Freud's Theory of Psychosexual Development*".

Sub egida Congresului s-au desfășurat și următoarele evenimente culturale: Vineri 04 iulie - vizitarea Parcului Romanescu din Craiova. Duminică 06 iulie - excursie pe ruta: Craiova, Hobița, Târgu-Jiu, Peștera Muierii, Mănăstirea Horezu, Craiova. Duminică 06 iulie 19,00 - *Aula Magna* a Facultății de Drept și Științe Sociale: prezentarea, de către participanții la Congres, a dialogului filosofic "*Reaching for Democracy*", scris de Dr. **Thomas Robinson**, profesor emerit de Filosofie la Universitatea din Toronto, Canada, participant la Congres. Luni 07 iulie 19,30 - "*Aula Buia*", Facultatea de Agricultură și Horticultură : Spectacolul de teatru: „O scrisoare ...”, după piesa *O scrisoare pierdută*, de Ion Luca Caragiale, susținut de Promoția 2014 a Departamentului de Arte, Specializarea Arta Actorului, a Universității din Craiova; profesor îndrumător: **Adrian Andone**. Miercuri 09 iulie - vizitarea Muzeului de Științe ale Naturii din Craiova.

Totodată, organizatorii le-au asigurat participanților prezența la o serie de alte evenimente culturale, dintre care amintim: Vineri 04 iulie - Spectacolul de teatru „Rinocerii”, de Eugen Ionescu, regizat de Robert Wilson, SUA, la Teatrul Național din Craiova. Sâmbătă 05 iulie – „Magia Paganini” - Concert în aer liber al Orchestrei Filarmonicii din Craiova.

În ziua de 09 iulie a avut loc Adunarea Generală a membrilor ISUD, care a decis prin vot componența noii conduceri a ISUD. Astfel, în Comitetul executiv au fost aleși: **Cristopher Vasillopulos** (SUA) - Președinte; **Panos Eliopoulos** (Grecia) - Vicepreședinte ; **Emilya Tajsina** (Rusia) - Secretar General; **Charles Brown** (SUA) - Trezorier, iar în calitate de membri ai Consiliului de administrație au fost aleși: **Jean Campbell** (SUA), **Hope Fitz** (SUA), **Raghunath Ghosh** (India), **Columbus Ogbujah** (Nigeria), **Athena Salappa** (Grecia), **Adriana Neacșu** (România), **Ashok Malhotra** (India-SUA), **Amita Valmiki** (India), **Keqian Xu** (China), **Manjulika Ghosh** (India).

Partener principal al acestui eveniment științific a fost Consiliul Județean Dolj, iar sponsori au fost: MediaPharm, Piraeus Bank, Hotel Emma Est, Hotel Europeca, Hotel Flormang, Hotel Helin, Hotel Royal.

Adriana NEACȘU (University of Craiova, Romania)

AUTHORS/CONTRIBUTORS

ADRIANA NEACȘU

University of Craiova,

St. A. I. Cuza nr. 13, Craiova, Romania, 200585.

<http://www.ucv.ro/> ; aneacsu1961@yahoo.com

ANA BAZAC

Polytechnic University of Bucharest,

Splaiul Independentei nr. 313,

sector 6, Bucharest, Romania, CP 060042.

<http://www.upb.ro/> ; ana_bazac@hotmail.com

CĂTĂLIN STĂNCIULESCU

University of Craiova,

St. A. I. Cuza nr. 13, Craiova, Romania, 200585.

<http://www.ucv.ro/> ; cfstanciulescu@yahoo.com

DARIUS PERSU

University of Vienna,

Dr.-Karl-Lueger-Ring 1, 1010 Vienna, Austria.

<http://www.univie.ac.at/en/> ; persu_darius@yahoo.com

DRAGOȘ-IULIAN UDREA

University of Craiova.

St. A. I. Cuza nr.13, Craiova, Romania, 200585.

<http://www.ucv.ro/> ; dragos.udrea93@yahoo.com

GABRIELA VASILESCU

Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiesti,

Bd. Bucuresti, no. 39, Ploiesti, Romania.

<http://www.upg-ploiesti.ro/> ; gabrielavasilescu52@yahoo.com

HÜLYA ŞİMGA

Koç University of Istanbul,

Rumelifeneri Yolu 34450 Sarıyer İstanbul Türkiye

<https://www.ku.edu.tr/en> ; HSIMGA@ku.edu.tr

HARSHA BADKAR

Wilson College, Mumbai, Maharashtra,

CHOWPATTY SEAFACE ROAD, MUMBAI 400 007, India.

<http://www.wilsoncollege.edu> ; harsha_badkar@yahoo.com

IONUȚ RĂDUICĂ

University of Craiova,
St. A. I. Cuza nr.13, Craiova, Romania, 200585
<http://www.ucv.ro/> ; ionutraduica@yahoo.de

JAMES GARRISON

University of Vienna,
Dr.-Karl-Lueger-Ring 1, 1010 Vienna, Austria.
<http://www.univie.ac.at/en/> ; james.garrison@univie.ac.at

JAYANTY JAGATDEB

Uktal University,
Vani Vihar, Bhuvaneswar, Odisha 751004, India
<http://utkaluniversity.ac.in> ; jayantijagdev@yahoo.co.in

MICHAŁ WENDLAND

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan,
Wieniawskiego 1, 61-712 Poznań, Poland
<https://amu.edu.pl> ; wendland@amu.edu.pl

OLEG BAZALUK

Pereyaslav-Khmel'nitsky State Pedagogical University,
St. Sukhomlyn'sky, 30, Pereyaslav-Khmel'nitsky,
Kiev, Ukraine, 08401.
<http://phdpu.edu.ua>

ȘTEFAN VIOREL GHENEA

University of Craiova,
St. A. I. Cuza nr.13, Craiova, Romania, 200585.
<http://www.ucv.ro/> ; gheneastefan@yahoo.com

TETIANA MATUSEVYCH

Kyiv University of Tourism, Economic and Law, Ukraine
02192, Kiev, st. Generala Jmachenko, 26.
<http://kutep.ua/en> ; sokmatus@gmail.com

UMA SHANKAR,

SIES College, Mumbai India.
uma2162@yahoo.com

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