



ORIGINAL PAPER

Adrian Ghenie and Angelus Novus

Simber Atay¹⁾

Abstract

Adrian Ghenie (1977) is one of the most distinguished painters of Contemporary Art. He represented Romania at the 56th Venice Biennale (2015) with project titled “*Darwin’s Room*” curated by Mihai Pop. His paintings display a baroque grandeur. His style shows intertextual and transpictorial creative strategies. The facts of Modern History in anachronistic sense, post-communist era of Romania and personal memory records are intertwined within his works. Gheni’s approach to history is reminiscent of Walter Benjamin’s Angelus Novus. Moreover as an artist he reveals an ‘*Angelus Novus*’ performance. He use both historical and actual mass communication perspectives. He appropriates styles of Velasquez, Géricault, Van Gogh, Rothko, Pollock and Bacon. Ghenie is an expressionist painter in an abstract and figurative sense. Sometime, the intensive use of colour, brush and the other painting tools embody qualia that provide the materialization of the historical and cultural meaning of his painting beyond his technical style. In this study, the subject described above is analyzed using a descriptive method.

Keywords: *Adrian Ghenie; Darwin’s Room; Angelus Novus; Persian miniature; Appropriation; Qualia.*

¹⁾ Professor, PhD Head of Photography Department, Dokuz Eylül University, Fine Arts Faculty, Theories of Photography; Intertextuality and Visual Arts specialization; Phone:+90 533 724 63 43; Email: simber.atay@gmail.com.

Introduction

Adrian Ghenie (1977) is one of the most distinguished painters of Contemporary Art. He was born in Baia Mare, Romania. He grew up there during Nicolae Ceaușescu's Communist Regime, the Romanian Revolution (1989) and then traumatic transition period from totalitarianism to democracy. However, he explains his artistic aim as follows: "I'm not trying to make my biography like I grew up in a communist dictatorship; I was just a kid, I didn't have any trauma... But what happened in Romania after '89' was very interesting... I saw how it is possible to manipulate a whole country. What is the truth? What is trauma? Do we just think we're humiliated, or are we really humiliated? In the end, wars and tragedies are all the same" (Battaglia, 2017a).

Ghenie studied at the University of Art and Design Cluj-Napoca (2001). Currently his paintings are exhibited in major galleries and museums around the world and they are included in important collections. He is eventually a star in contemporary international art market; his paintings are selling for millions of euros.

He has also gallery activities beyond his art activities and he is co-founder with Mihai Pop of Gallery Plan B in Cluj- Napoca, Gallery Plan B becomes a popular and international art institution in course of time, organized the exhibition of Romanian Pavilion at the 52nd Venice Biennale in 2007 and opened its branch in 2008 in Berlin.

Adrian Ghenie represented Romania at the 56th Venice Biennale in 2015 with the project titled "*Darwin's Room*" curated by Mihai Pop. Darwin's Room is exhibited in Romanian Pavilion, located in the Giardini. The project covers nineteen works of Ghenie and it's based on three sections: The Tempest, The Portrait Gallery and The Dissonances of History.

Okwui Enwezor was curator of 56th Venice Biennale and the Biennale concept was *All The World's Futures*.

Ghenie explains the significance of Darwin's Room as a concept in such a way: "From my point of view, Darwin is not a closed book, there was life before and after him, the paradigm he changed is much too large to have been fully digested. I have the feeling that everything which happened in the 20th century has its roots in him, from Marx to eugenics to modern racism" (Vasiliu, 2015a).

This participation verifies his great success because The Venice Biennale as the "great mother" of all the biennale activities is an exceptional art environment since its beginning in 1895 until today. Each Biennale is a decisive event for both Modern and Post- Modern Art History. Performance of each Biennale curator/curators and his/her/their concept formulated and developed for Biennale create new spaces/exhibitions where could be comprehensively realized contemporary cultural and esthetic conjunctures.

Darwin's Room (2015)

Darwin is an obsession-topic for Ghenie. There are exactly five paintings or visual variations about Darwin theme in the exhibition: *Darwin and the Satyr* (2014), *Charles Darwin at the Age of 40* (2014), *Charles Darwin as a Young Man* (2014), *Study for self-portrait as Charles Darwin* (2013, drawing), *Charles Darwin as a Young Man* (2013).

Romanian Pavilion has a colossal door. Thus, when it's approached to the entrance of the exhibition, in Giardini, what first comes to the sight is the picture of *Darwin and the Satyr* (2014). In this painting, Darwin accompanied by Satyr

contemplates the immense nature from his cave. Moreover, at the same time, with his Nike sneakers, Darwin is walking in an aquatic transparency, in the opposite direction of the stage. This universe is a fluid universe that constantly moves from one threshold to another and it transforms across water, soil, and air. That is an allegorical scene where Darwinism and Classical Mythology meet to represent the design of modern universal civilization.

Meantime Satyr as figure recalls also Saint Jerome's lion- wild guard of knowledge and wisdom- in iconographical way. Satyr is a basic instinct symbol related Dionysus sensibilities. At the same time he is a hybrid creature-semi human semi goat. He is embodiment of a continuous becoming from bestial to human, from instinct to consciousness or vice versa.

According to Nietzsche: "Greek saw in his satyr, and so he did not yet mistake him for an ape. Quite the contrary: the satyr was the primordial image of man, the expression of his highest and strongest emotions, as an inspired reveler, enraptured by the approach of the god, as a sympathetic companion, in whom the suffering of the god was repeated, as a messenger bringing wisdom from the deepest heart of nature, as a perceptible image of the sexual omnipotence of nature, which the Greek was accustomed to observing with reverent astonishment" (n .d.).

Actually, in this point, the title of Paul Gauguin's famous painting - Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going? (1897) is a summary of the existence and position of human being on earth.

Luciano Floridi explains as follows: "Science changes our understanding in two fundamental ways. One may be called extrovert, or about the world, and the other introvert, or about ourselves" (Floridi, 2014a:87) and he continues- focusing particularly on digital revolution- that there have been four major scientific revolutions so far. Those who made these revolutions are eventually Nicolaus Copernicus, Charles Darwin, Sigmund Freud and Alan Turing (Floridi, 2014b:88-90).

Thus, the fourth revolution initiated by Alan Turing puts an end to this range of universal paradigm and changes in question-of course for now!-: "Turing displaced us from our privileged and unique position in the realm of logical reasoning, information processing and smart behavior. We are no longer the undisputed masters of the infosphere... We have been forced to abandon once again a position that we thought was unique" (Floridi, 2014c:93). In other words, these revolutions, on the one hand, glorify by nature the human being, and on the other hand open the vanity of being human to discuss. Moreover, virtual reality as equivalent of actual reality impacts and shapes individually and globally the understanding of truth. Therefore, the solution of the problem is as problematic as the problem itself.

Slavoj Žižek also discusses this issue to criticize particularly modernist mentality. Turing is not included in his scientists list but cognitive effects of computers exist eventually within the text. According to him, Nicolaus Copernicus, Charles Darwin and Sigmund Freud represent humiliation of human being and their paradigms are three "narcissistic disorder". The common symptoms of these disorders are: megalomania as consciousness of self- wretchedness, establishing power of science and technology over nature, anti- humanism that reduces human being in an ordinary element of reality whereas raises transcendental subject and skeptical hermeneutics shared by Marx, Nietzsche and Freud. As for Darwinism, Darwin mocks "any adaptation of the mind to the world". Because natural selection is based on contradictions and incompatibilities (Žižek, 2014:163-165). Furthermore, the survival champion of natural selection is the

loser of history, because the historical adventure of mankind is usually composed of violence, repression, terror and death. Political ideals and utopian social projects have been defined by primitive instincts of human being.

Therefore, the parallax between evolution - as concept- and history- as truth- is defined in Darwin's Room focusing particularly on totalitarian ideologies of 20th Century.

Besides *Darwin and the Satyr* (2014), *Charles Darwin as a Young Man* (2013), *Charles Darwin as a Young Man* (2014) and *Charles Darwin at the Age of 40* (2014) are expressionistic portraits of the scientist. The picture of *Charles Darwin as a Young Man* (2013) is partly an example of a Darwin's photograph taken in 1854. The picture is dominated by brown-beige tones and has an almost monochromatic appearance. The photographic immobility does not exist here, painted Darwin is a dissolving figure on canvas but the other painting titled *Charles Darwin as a Young Man* (2014) is multicolored and multilayered; layers that make up the portrait give an impression of mobility in the form of a continuous decomposition and recombination.

Study for self-portrait as Charles Darwin (2013, drawing) reflects Adrian Ghenie's endless effort of becoming Darwin by overlapping indefinite and blur figures.

Ghenie's becoming effect, that desire is one of the great mechanisms of his style. Hence, he conceptualizes his own unique existence as evolution- man by portrait of Darwin. Those, Darwin as a Young Man paintings are exhibited side by side with *Untitled* (2012, the portrait of Hitler), *Self-portrait as Vincent Van Gogh* (2012), *Degenerate Art* (2014) and *Duchamp's Funeral II* (2009) in the same hall.

Charles Darwin at the age of 40 (2014) looks like technically *Charles Darwin as a Young Man* (2014). There is the same pseudo-analytical vision and this once the image reflects slightly plastination aesthetic but certainly by a non-perfectionist interpretation. Ghenie's problem is not a scientific analysis of nature but an aesthetic deconstruction: "I want a deconstruction of a portrait" (Battaglia, 2017b).

This painting and *Study for self-portrait as Charles Darwin* (2013, drawing) are exhibited side by side with *Turning Blue* (2008, the portrait of Lenin), two *Pie Fight Study* (2012) and *Pie Fight Study* (2012, drawing) in another hall.

Vincent Van Gogh

Van Gogh is another obsession-topic of Ghenie. Besides Van Gogh is exceptionally popular in today's art scene. Additionally, Van Gogh painted many self-portraits during his carrier Ghenie has also many self- portraits as Van Gogh.

Herein, *Self-portrait as Vincent Van Gogh* (2012) is also an image of transformation; from Ghenie himself into Van Gogh, from foreground to background, from sharpness to blur, from figurative to abstract, or vice versa. The element that provides this impression beyond figurative structure is the brushwork in blue-turquoise used by Ghenie that looks like the pointillist- almost-brushwork in blue of Van Gogh used in his *Self-Portrait* dated 1887.

Self-portrait is in a very privileged position in postmodern art and there are several esthetic strategies in this field. Herein Carla Gottlieb identified the significance of self-portrait at a very early date based on classical but mostly avant-garde origins and classified eleven self-portrait strategies. One of them is "In Disguise" self-portraiture; accordingly, Ghenie's becoming Van Gogh phenomenon can be regarded in this way: "If the artist has turned from identification with an admired predecessor to identification

with an admired masterpiece by the admired artist, then he has turned from a person to an object of art” (Gottlieb, 1981:277)

Degenerate Art (2014) is another Van Gogh portrait and it's at the same time a historical allegory, because the title denotes *Entartete Kunst* (Degenerated Art) event that's one of the greatest cultural disasters of the 20th century: “the Nazis removed more than 20,000 artworks from state-owned museums. In 1937, 740 modern works were exhibited in the defamatory show *Degenerate Art* in Munich in order to “educate” the public on the “art of decay.” The exhibition purported to demonstrate that modernist tendencies, such as abstraction, are the result of genetic inferiority and society's moral decline. Some of those works were later destroyed; others, officially declared “internationally marketable,” were sold through art dealers acting on behalf of the German government” (n.a., 2017) The Nazis established, among other social organizations of absolutist character, the Nazi Art. In fact *Degenerate Art* exhibition was a radical and hostile attempt to destroy art and artist. There were eventually expressionist painters- in *Degenerate Art* exhibition as for Van Gogh, he is a pioneer of Expressionism.

Gheni's literally deconstructive, violent, extremely naturalist in brief expressionist brush-work conceptualizes a kind of redemption after passion of Van Gogh, traumas of World War I and vandalism of Third Reich. If a parenthesis has to be opened in this point, Ghenie has another painting related *Degenerate Art* that was not included in the *Darwin's Room: The Sunflowers in 1937* (2014). This monumental appropriation work is a product of mnemonic activism of Ghenie like his *Degenerate Art* (2014) painting.

Marcel Duchamp

Duchamp takes part in the *Darwin's Room* after Van Gogh: *Duchamp's Funeral II* (2009). Thus, the circle starting with Hitler is completed with Duchamp or vice versa in the exhibition hall.

On the other side, if the self-portrait classification of Gottlieb is discussed again, she makes the following conclusion about the nature of the postmodernist self-portraiture: “The roots of this artistic revolution lie, I believe, in the work of Marcel Duchamp...The double-entendre self-portrait is probably the most significant contribution of postmodern art to the genre... It consists of a self-portrait that circumscribes personality by playing with verbal and pictorial puns, that is, with double entendre” and Marcel Duchamp as Rose Sélavy perfectly represents the double-entendre self-portrait by his famous work *Belle Haleine: Eau de Voilette* 1921 (Gottlieb, 1981 p.267-268).

Ghenie as a self- portrait master, performer of *becoming* and postmodern appropriator criticizes - even! - Duchamp's alfa & omega effect on modern and postmodern art.

Ghenie painted Duchamp in his coffin within a direct and concrete interpretation. Therefore, this great funeral scene is ironic because death is death. Besides, it could be interpreted also as Death of Artist! After Nietzsche and Barthes, it's Ghenie's turn!

Roland Barthes, in his famous text titled “The Death of the Author”, focusing automatic writing, underlines the subject as follows: “...surrealism doubtless could not accord language a sovereign place, since language is a system and since what the movement sought was, romantically, a direct subversion of all codes — an illusory subversion, moreover, for a code cannot be destroyed, it can only be “played with” (Barthes, n.d.:3).

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Herein, one more is added to Ghenie's adjectives mentioned above, he is also a code player. Hence, he chooses the glorious path of painting despite contemporary conceptual art authority- even hegemony!-. This anachronistic manner, this magnificent return to painting is a great postmodern surprise, after all these conceptual experiences. However, Ghenie conceptualizes power, surviving, judgment and challenge phenomena from universal and historical perspectives- indicating often parallax gap between ideas and truth- through immerse surfaces of his canvas.

Damnatio Memoriae

Untitled (2012) is the portrait of Hitler. Based on some visual elements such as the famous mustache, not the title of the work, it seems that the portrait belongs to him; it's painted with multiple visual strategies of modern art that Hitler intended to destroy by describing it as degenerate art. He has been to dissect by brush-work and he is consistently decomposing, dissolving, abstracting by modern visual dynamics.

Pie Fight Study

Pie Fight scenes have, at their origin, a setting unique to the American comedy cinema tradition and they have carnivalesque nature in Bakhtinian sense. Ghenie uses generally popular pie fight imagery in portrait format establishing an intertextual connection between cinema and painting.

According to Bakhtin, carnival culture: "belongs to the boundary between art and life...the idea of carnival itself embraces all people...Carnival has a universal spirit... Carnival is the second life of the people organized on the basis of laughter... The carnival celebrates a temporary emancipation from sovereign truth and established order, underlining the suspension of all hierarchical ranks, privileges, norms and prohibitions. The carnival is the true feast of time...hostile to all that has been immortalized and completed." (Bakhtin, 2005:33-36).

Hence, the naive, funny, absurd pie fight symbolizes just to be freed and to have fun beyond all imperatives - even if temporary-. However Ghenie's pie fight's paintings- or female pie fighters' portraits- are paradoxically serious images. Those frozen scenes describe the impossibility of carnival, carnivalesque lives or alternative lives in general sense in modern and postmodern totalitarian regimes.

Turning Blue (2008, the portrait of Lenin) takes place between these paintings. Turning Blue is a medical term that means cyanosis as a symptom of death. But style is different here, it's silent; Lenin has been painted relatively in a simple manner which indicates a minimalist variation for Ghenie's expressionism than portrait transformed into a still-life in blue. Moreover, blue color provides percept a cosmic sensibility (Deleuze&Guattari, 1996a:162) and in this context, Lenin has become a color, a blue color.

On the other side, Ghenie explains as follows: "Hitler and Lenin appear as ghosts in my paintings...It was a period in which I tried to depict their residual image in the collective unconscious, painting after such clichéd photographs like the ones with Lenin lying dead, an image familiar to millions of people" (Radu,2009).

There is an interesting coincidence during Biennale: "reading live *Das Kapital* of Karl Marx" in Arena designed by Ghanaian-British architect David Adjaye.; according to Okwui Enwezor: "*Capital* is the great drama of our age!" (Turner, 2015).

Aftermath

Muses are daughters of Mnemosyne. This classical design determines eternal mission of artist that's struggle against oblivion. In the New Darwinist context, natural selection is both a genetic and memetic issue. In the same way that genes disappear or survive in gene soup, accordingly memes/cultural genes disappear or survive in meme soup (Dawkins,2016:249).Therefore, the historical background, especially the crimes against humanity and their cultural consequences, must always be remembered.

According to Ghenie: "To be capable of burning books in public squares or putting on exhibitions of Degenerate Art, you have to be part of a whole web of people" (Vasilu, 2015b).

In fact, book burning was part of large Nazi organizations that took place across the whole Germany and only on the Berlin- Opernplatz, 25 000 books were burned (n.d.). University students and academicians -themselves- removed "un-German" books according to their own racist thoughts from universities libraries and burned in the capital and other cities as purge-rituals in presence of German people and German Media (Barbian, 2013: 1887).

Ghenie depicted this event of book-burning of Nazis happened in 10 May 1933, in his *Opernplatz* (2014) painting. As in *Darwin and the Satyr* (2014) painting, there is also here a similar aquatic transparency -as memetic environment of surviving cultural elements that exist in books- in the smoke rising to the sky from burning books.

In *Darwin's Room* exhibition, *Opernplatz* (2014) takes place together with *Carnivorous Flowers* (2014) and there is *Black Flag* (2015) on their opposite wall.

Carnivorous Flowers (2014) is an expressionist landscape about concentration camps of the Third Reich. In the midst of a wild and exotic South American nature-plenty of giant carnivorous flowers- a stranger who is Nazi doctor Josef Mengele alias Angel of Death of Auschwitz, is seen wearing winter clothes. Nazi atrocity, which did not exist at any stage and form of evolution and nature, was neither fully prosecuted nor convicted. Mengele is one of the many Nazis who fled to South America and lived there for many years without being captured under fake identities.

As for *Black Flag* (2015), a simple building is seen with tile roof where the black flag was hoisted that's situated in a far, deserted and snowy environment. This black flag is an ambiguous element but again in context of the exhibition, it can be speculated in such a way: In totalitarian regimes, totalitarian ideology seeps into every corner, every detail, and it is impossible to escape and get away with it. Hence, this painting is visualization of a totalitarian formatting method besides totalitarian events World War II.

Qualia

Persian miniature (2013) is unique among self-portraits and it's an Arcadian landscape as well. In the middle of a snow-white birch forest, Ghenie is seen with a wolf in perfect harmony. It continues to snow- with Pollock's dripping technique-. Whole scene is depicted eventually using sophisticated lines unique to miniature art. Then the silent communication between creatures in the depth of nature, timelessness and snow become palpable sensations overflowing the surface of the painting. For instance, a visitor/blogger named Jane McGehee (2015) tells her sensations in about Persian miniature while visited Romanian Pavillon: "A thick mist twists through the rows of birch trees; their silver bark glistens despite the sun's absence. The propelling wind stiffens my face, and my breath forms around me as my eyes move up the trees... Snow

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flurries weave throughout the corridors of bark and branch and drop on the white canvas of the forest floor. Around my feet, the dried remnants of ferns and fallen leaves struggle to prop up the ivory snow...I discover that I am not alone”.

This is a subjective effect related painting that's beyond all possible expression and interpretation. In other words, this is visual *quale* (in plural form: *qualia*) that has been evoked by white, dominant color of painting.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty refers to two quotations in order to explain *quale* components. Firstly according to Cézanne “Color is where our brain meets the universe” (Merleau-Ponty, 2016a: 64) and secondly according to Klee- disciple of Cézanne-, modern artists of his generation are not satisfied with visible, they add the share of the invisible to the visible (Merleau-Ponty, 2016b:76).

Thence, contemplating “*Persian Miniature*” provides an intuitive experience created by whiteness *qualia*. Ghenie invented a snow affect for our visual culture. After that “*Persian Miniature*” has become a source for the idea of feeling to snow and its effects. “Artist is inventor of affects... He does not only creates them in his own work, he gives them to us and allows us to become with them” (Deleuze&Guattari, 1996b:157).

Adrian Ghenie as Angelus Novus

In regard to the exhibition choreography of Mihai Pop, the curator, on one side of *Darwin and the Satyr* (2014) there is *Burning Bush* (2014), on the other side *The Storm* (2015) takes place.

Burning Bush (2014)

Burning Bush is a religious theme in history of art. Moses and God encounter in a sacred space where there is a burning bush- but never consumed- and they talk about Exodus (Exodus 3:1-17). Ghenie depicts green leaves of the burning bush with a mannerist perfectionism. The rest is painted in abstract expressionist way. In Ghene's interpretation, flames emerge from the trunk and roots of the bush and surround that sacred space/the earth beyond the usual iconographic composition of burning bush. As the flames intensify in the foreground, the aforementioned aquatic transparency begins to appear from the depths of the painting, fire and water mix together along the floating antennas. Moses disappears in the landscape of Ghene, but he and his vocation become the invisible elements of the landscape. This becoming event or percept phenomenon or self-existence of art work and organizing all these by the painter are based on the formula of Cézanne: “there is no human but completely in the landscape” (Deleuze &Guattari,1996c:151).

Eventually, the concept of this divine spectacle is vocation. There are many masterpieces in art history that interpret the Burning Bush theme; one of them is Dierick Bouts' painting (1465). Antonio Genziani (2017) analyzes from religious and iconographic perspective the painting that depicts this Bible scene with its dramatic stages underlining: “Come per Mosè la vocazione è la risposta al grido degli Israeliti, così ogni vocazione è accolta e provata nei fatti, nella vita e nella storia” / “As for Moses, vocation is the answer to the cry of the Israelites, thus every vocation is accepted and tested in events, in life and in history” (p. 9).

The Storm (2015)

Paul Klee (1879-1940) is one of the painters who took part in the Degenerated Art exhibition in 1937. After the Nazis came to power in 1933, Klee was ridiculed by the crony press, the Gestapo raided his house, he lost his job at the academy and had to immigrate to Switzerland (Candil Erdoğan, 2019 p.63).

Before this difficult period, he also suffered the trauma of the World War I. He survived but lost his close friends - August Macke and Franz Marc-. He wrote the following lines in his diary: "...In that shattered world I remain only in memory, as one thinks back sometimes. Thus I am "abstract with memories" (Danchev, 2014a:372).

He is also an important modern art theorist. His saying "Art does not reproduce the visible; it makes visible" has become an aphorism used often in art circles.

According to Vallega, Klee developed a polyphonic style : "Klee has introduced a characteristic that distinguishes painting and other visual works, namely, the possibility of experiencing simultaneously various dimensions of life, history and ...time in its cosmological sense" (2013 465).

Meanwhile *Angelus Novus* (1920) of Klee became a universal and popular cultural code beyond modern art history, because Walter Benjamin owned it in 1921, after that the painting became his inspiration source. He transformed *Angelus Novus* in a modern allegory of history in Chapter IX of his "On the Concept of History" (1940).

In other respects, Benjamin's close friend Gershom Scholem wrote "Greetings from Angelus" (Paul Klee *Angelus Novus*) poem in 1921 for his 29th birthday (Danchev, 2014b:375). A part of this poem is epigraph of Chapter IX.

Benjamin's understanding of history has been represented by Angel but this Angel of History is Angel of Storm at the same time.

"There is a painting by Klee called *Angelus Novus*. An angel is depicted there who looks as though he were about to distance himself from something which he is staring at. His eyes are opened wide, his mouth stands open and his wings are outstretched. The Angel of History must look just so. His face is turned towards the past. Where *we* see the appearance of a chain of events, *he* sees one single catastrophe... He would like to pause for a moment... But a storm is blowing from paradise, it has caught itself up in his wings... The storm drives him irresistibly into the future, to which his back is turned, while the rubble-heap before him grows sky-high. That which we call progress, is *this* storm" (Benjamin, 2005, 1)

Kalinowski describes *The Storm* (2015) as:"...a maelstrom of imagery that has become so twisted and blown apart that any traces of an original "whole" have been destroyed. Ghenie is a history painter working at the end of history..." (Kalinowski, 2017). In this context, *The Storm* (2015) is abstract but a symbolic painting, its title is meaningful. Ghenie's vocation of being painter has been revealed throughout his intertemporal adventures/paintings, as evolution- time, as history-time, as historical progress, as actual time moreover evoking sensations of temporality and timelessness.

Thus, Ghenie displays in conceptual level a constant "*performance of Angelus Novus*". In other words, he is a postmodern *AngelusNovus*. However, although the phenomenon of the end of history is perceived as an ongoing entropy in our era as in

Kalinowski's comment, the 21th century profile needs fresh definitions. Hence, Ghenie's art could be a clue to describe features of this new profile.

Epilog

Our work includes only the *Darwin's Room* exhibition. However, we could briefly describe the style features of Adrian Ghenie:

-His painting has Baroque grandeur. Besides, he works generally in large scale.
-Velásquez, Géricault, Van Gogh, Rothko, Pollock, Bacon take place within his appropriation strategies. He said already frankly: "I steal from everybody" (!) (Tully, 2018).

-He is eventually an anachronist and wanderer through history of art, history of cinema, history of photojournalism and actual mass media activity.

-In his paintings, abstract and figurative elements melt, mix and form into each other displaying an endless flux by intensive use of paint, brush and the other painting tools.

- His multi-layered surfaces have also a mnemonic meaning "Do you know what's changed since the Eighties? Not just in Romania, everywhere. Textures have been replaced. A superficial, easy-clean world has appeared, mountains of laminate, polystyrene, double-glazing, plastic, we now use spray-on, ready-to-go things. Romania of the 1980s was a hard-to-clean world of textures, it gathered dust" (Vasiliu, 2015c).

-He is a mnemonic activist.

-Finally his paradigmatic poetics offer rich interdisciplinary research possibilities.

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