

New Europe College *Ștefan Odobleja* Program Yearbook 2014-2015



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New Europe College
Ștefan Odobleja Program
Yearbook 2014-2015

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NEW EUROPE FOUNDATION NEW EUROPE COLLEGE

Institute for Advanced Study

New Europe College (NEC) is an independent Romanian institute for advanced study in the humanities and social sciences founded in 1994 by Professor Andrei Pleșu (philosopher, art historian, writer, Romanian Minister of Culture, 1990–1991, Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1997-1999) within the framework of the *New Europe Foundation*, established in 1994 as a private foundation subject to Romanian law.

Its impetus was the *New Europe Prize for Higher Education and Research*, awarded in 1993 to Professor Pleșu by a group of six institutes for advanced study (the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford, the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, the National Humanities Center, Research Triangle Park, the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in Humanities and Social Sciences, Wassenaar, the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences, Uppsala, and the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin).

Since 1994, the NEC community of fellows and *alumni* has enlarged to over 500 members. In 1998 New Europe College was awarded the prestigious *Hannah Arendt Prize* for its achievements in setting new standards in research and higher education. New Europe College is officially recognized by the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research as an institutional structure for postgraduate studies in the humanities and social sciences, at the level of advanced studies.

Focused primarily on individual research at an advanced level, NEC offers to young Romanian scholars and academics in the fields of humanities and social sciences, and to the foreign scholars invited as fellows appropriate working conditions, and provides an institutional framework with strong

international links, acting as a stimulating environment for interdisciplinary dialogue and critical debates. The academic programs NEC coordinates, and the events it organizes aim at strengthening research in the humanities and social sciences and at promoting contacts between Romanian scholars and their peers worldwide.

Academic programs currently organized and coordinated by NEC:

- ***NEC Fellowships (since 1994)***

Each year, up to ten NEC Fellowships open both to Romanian and international outstanding young scholars in the humanities and social sciences are publicly announced. The Fellows are chosen by the NEC international Academic Advisory Board for the duration of one academic year, or one term. They gather for weekly seminars to discuss the progress of their research, and participate in all the scientific events organized by NEC. The Fellows receive a monthly stipend, and are given the opportunity of a research trip abroad, at a university or research institute of their choice. At the end of their stay, the Fellows submit papers representing the results of their research, to be published in the New Europe College Yearbooks.

- ***Ștefan Odobleja Fellowships (since October 2008)***

The fellowships given in this program are supported by the National Council of Scientific Research, and are meant to complement and enlarge the core fellowship program. The definition of these fellowships, targeting young Romanian researchers, is identical with those in the NEC Program, in which the Odobleja Fellowships are integrated.

- ***The Black Sea Link Fellowships Program (since October 2010)***

This program, sponsored by the VolkswagenStiftung, invites young researchers from Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as from other countries within the Black Sea region, for a stay of one or two terms at the New Europe College, during which they

have the opportunity to work on projects of their choice. The program welcomes a wide variety of disciplines in the fields of humanities and social sciences. Besides hosting a number of Fellows, the College organizes within this program workshops and symposia on topics relevant to the history, present, and prospects of the Black Sea region.

- ***The Europe next to Europe (EntE) Fellowships Program (starting October 2013)***

This program, sponsored by the Riksbankens Jubileumsfond (Sweden), invites young researchers from European countries that are not yet members of the European Union, targeting in particular the Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Macedonia, Serbia), Turkey, Cyprus, for a stay of one or two terms at the New Europe College, during which they will have the opportunity to work on projects of their choice.

Other fellowship programs organized since the founding of New Europe College:

- ***RELINK Fellowships (1996–2002)***

The RELINK Program targeted highly qualified young Romanian scholars returning from studies or research stays abroad. Ten RELINK Fellows were selected each year through an open competition; in order to facilitate their reintegration in the local scholarly milieu and to improve their working conditions, a support lasting three years was offered, consisting of: funds for acquiring scholarly literature, an annual allowance enabling the recipients to make a one-month research trip to a foreign institute of their choice in order to sustain existing scholarly contacts and forge new ones, and the use of a laptop computer and printer. Besides their individual research projects, the RELINK fellows of the last series were also required to organize outreach activities involving their universities, for which they received a monthly stipend. NEC published several volumes comprising individual or group research works of the RELINK Fellows.

- ***The NEC–LINK Program (2003 - 2009)***

Drawing on the experience of its NEC and RELINK Programs in connecting with the Romanian academic milieu, NEC initiated in 2003, with support from HESP, a program that aimed to contribute more consistently to the advancement of higher education in major Romanian academic centers (Bucharest, Cluj–Napoca, Iași, Timișoara). Teams consisting of two academics from different universities in Romania, assisted by a PhD student, offered joint courses for the duration of one semester in a discipline within the fields of humanities and social sciences. The program supported innovative courses, conceived so as to meet the needs of the host universities. The grantees participating in the Program received monthly stipends, a substantial support for ordering literature relevant to their courses, as well as funding for inviting guest lecturers from abroad and for organizing local scientific events.

- ***The GE–NEC I and II Programs (2000 – 2004, and 2004 – 2007)***

New Europe College organized and coordinated two cycles in a program financially supported by the Getty Foundation. Its aim was to strengthen research and education in fields related to visual culture, by inviting leading specialists from all over the world to give lectures and hold seminars for the benefit of Romanian undergraduate and graduate students, young academics and researchers. This program also included 10–month fellowships for Romanian scholars, chosen through the same selection procedures as the NEC Fellows (see above). The GE–NEC Fellows were fully integrated in the life of the College, received a monthly stipend, and were given the opportunity of spending one month abroad on a research trip. At the end of the academic year the Fellows submitted papers representing the results of their research, to be published in the GE–NEC Yearbooks series.

- ***NEC Regional Fellowships (2001 - 2006)***

In 2001 New Europe College introduced a regional dimension to its programs (hitherto dedicated solely to Romanian scholars), by offering fellowships to academics and researchers from South–Eastern Europe (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, The

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, and Turkey). This program aimed at integrating into the international academic network scholars from a region whose scientific resources are as yet insufficiently known, and to stimulate and strengthen the intellectual dialogue at a regional level. Regional Fellows received a monthly stipend and were given the opportunity of a one-month research trip abroad. At the end of the grant period, the Fellows were expected to submit papers representing the results of their research, published in the NEC Regional Program Yearbooks series.

- ***The Britannia-NEC Fellowship (2004 - 2007)***

This fellowship (1 opening per academic year) was offered by a private anonymous donor from the U.K. It was in all respects identical to a NEC Fellowship. The contributions of Fellows in this program were included in the NEC Yearbooks.

- ***The Petre Țuțea Fellowships (2006 – 2008, 2009 - 2010)***

In 2006 NEC was offered the opportunity of opening a fellowships program financed the Romanian Government through its Department for Relations with the Romanians Living Abroad. Fellowships are granted to researchers of Romanian descent based abroad, as well as to Romanian researchers, to work on projects that address the cultural heritage of the Romanian *diaspora*. Fellows in this program are fully integrated in the College's community. At the end of the year they submit papers representing the results of their research, to be published in the bilingual series of the *Petre Țuțea* Program publications.

- ***Europa Fellowships (2006 - 2010)***

This fellowship program, financed by the VolkswagenStiftung, proposes to respond, at a different level, to some of the concerns that had inspired our *Regional Program*. Under the general title *Traditions of the New Europe. A Prehistory of European Integration in South-Eastern Europe*, Fellows work on case studies that attempt to recapture the earlier history of the European integration, as it has been taking shape over the centuries in South-Eastern Europe, thus offering the communitarian Europe some valuable vestiges of its less known past.

- ***Robert Bosch Fellowships (2007 - 2009)***

This fellowship program, funded by the Robert Bosch Foundation, supported young scholars and academics from Western Balkan countries, offering them the opportunity to spend a term at the New Europe College and devote to their research work. Fellows in this program received a monthly stipend, and funds for a one-month study trip to a university/research center in Germany.

- ***The GE-NEC III Fellowships Program (2009 - 2013)***

This program, supported by the Getty Foundation, started in 2009. It proposed a research on, and a reassessment of Romanian art during the interval 1945 – 2000, that is, since the onset of the Communist regime in Romania up to recent times, through contributions coming from young scholars attached to the New Europe College as Fellows. As in the previous programs supported by the Getty Foundation at the NEC, this program also included a number of invited guest lecturers, whose presence was meant to ensure a comparative dimension, and to strengthen the methodological underpinnings of the research conducted by the Fellows.

New Europe College has been hosting over the years an ongoing series of lectures given by prominent foreign and Romanian scholars, for the benefit of academics, researchers and students, as well as a wider public. The College also organizes international and national events (seminars, workshops, colloquia, symposia, book launches, etc.).

An important component of NEC is its library, consisting of reference works, books and periodicals in the humanities, social and economic sciences. The library holds, in addition, several thousands of books and documents resulting from private donations. It is first and foremost destined to service the fellows, but it is also open to students, academics and researchers from Bucharest and from outside it.

Beside the above-described programs, New Europe Foundation and the College expanded their activities over the last years by administering, or by being involved in the following major projects:

In the past:

- ***The Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Religious Studies towards the EU Integration (2001–2005)***

Funding from the Austrian Ludwig Boltzmann Gesellschaft enabled us to select during this interval a number of associate researchers, whose work focused on the sensitive issue of religion related problems in the Balkans, approached from the viewpoint of the EU integration. Through its activities the institute fostered the dialogue between distinct religious cultures (Christianity, Islam, Judaism), and between different confessions within the same religion, attempting to investigate the sources of antagonisms and to work towards a common ground of tolerance and cooperation. The institute hosted international scholarly events, issued a number of publications, and enlarged its library with publications meant to facilitate informed and up-to-date approaches in this field.

- ***The Septuagint Translation Project (2002 - 2011)***

This project aims at achieving a scientifically reliable translation of the Septuagint into Romanian by a group of very gifted, mostly young, Romanian scholars, attached to the NEC. The financial support is granted by the Romanian foundation *Anonimul*. Seven of the planned nine volumes have already been published by the Polirom Publishing House in Iași.

- ***The Excellency Network Germany – South–Eastern Europe Program (2005 - 2008)***

The aim of this program, financed by the Hertie Foundation, has been to establish and foster contacts between scholars and academics, as well as higher education entities from Germany and South–Eastern Europe, in view of developing a regional scholarly network; it focused preeminently on questions touching upon European integration, such as transnational governance and citizenship. The main activities of the program consisted of hosting at the New Europe College scholars coming from Germany, invited to give lectures at the College and at universities throughout Romania, and organizing international scientific events with German participation.

- ***The ethnoArc Project–Linked European Archives for Ethnomusicological Research***

An European Research Project in the 6th Framework Programme: Information Society Technologies–Access to and Preservation of Cultural and Scientific Resources (2006-2008)

The goal of the *ethnoArc* project (which started in 2005 under the title *From Wax Cylinder to Digital Storage* with funding from the Ernst von Siemens Music Foundation and the Federal Ministry for

Education and Research in Germany) was to contribute to the preservation, accessibility,

connectedness and exploitation of some of the most prestigious ethno-musicological archives in Europe (Bucharest, Budapest, Berlin, and Geneva), by providing a linked archive for field collections from different sources, thus enabling access to cultural content for various application and research purposes. The project was run by an international network, which included: the “Constantin Brăiloiu” Institute for Ethnography and Folklore, Bucharest; Archives Internationales de Musique Populaire, Geneva; the Ethno-musicological Department of the Ethnologic Museum Berlin (Phonogramm Archiv), Berlin; the Institute of Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest; Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin (Coordinator), Berlin; New Europe College, Bucharest; FOKUS Fraunhofer Institute for Open Communication Systems, Berlin.

- ***Business Elites in Romania: Their Social and Educational Determinants and their Impact on Economic Performances.***

This is the Romanian contribution to a joint project with the University of Sankt Gallen, entitled ***Markets for Executives and Non-Executives in Western and eastern Europe***, and financed by the National Swiss Fund for the Development of Scientific Research (SCOPES) (December 2009 – November 2012)

- ***DOCSOC, Excellency, Innovation and Interdisciplinarity in doctoral and postdoctoral studies in sociology*** (A project in the Development of Human Resources, under the aegis of the National Council of Scientific Research) – in cooperation with the University of Bucharest (2011)

- ***UEFISCCDI – CNCS (PD – Projects): Federalism or Intergovernmentalism? Normative Perspectives on the Democratic Model of the European Union (Dr. Dan LAZEA); The Political Radicalization of the Kantian Idea of Philosophy in a Cosmopolitan Sense (Dr. Áron TELEGDI-CSETRI)***, Timeframe: August 1, 2010 – July 31, 2012 (2 Years)
- ***Civilization. Identity. Globalism. Social and Human Studies in the Context of European Development*** (A project in the Development of Human Resources, under the aegis of the National Council of Scientific Research) – in cooperation with the Romanian Academy (Mar. 2011 – Sept. 2012)
- ***The Medicine of the Mind and Natural Philosophy in Early Modern England: A new Interpretation of Francis Bacon*** (A project under the aegis of the European Research Council (ERC) Starting Grants Scheme) – In cooperation with the Warburg Institute, School of Advanced Study, London (December 2009 - November 2014)
- ***The EURIAS Fellowship Program***, a project initiated by NetIAS (Network of European Institutes for Advanced Study), coordinated by the RFIEA (Network of French Institutes for Advanced Study), and co-sponsored by the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme - COFUND action. It is an international researcher mobility programme in collaboration with 14 participating Institutes of Advanced Study in Berlin, Bologna, Brussels, Bucharest, Budapest, Cambridge, Helsinki, Jerusalem, Lyons, Nantes, Paris, Uppsala, Vienna, Wassenaar.
- ***UEFISCCDI – CNCS (TE – Project) Critical Foundations of Contemporary Cosmopolitanism***, Team leader: Tamara CĂRĂUȘ, Members of the team: Áron Zsolt TELEGDI-CSETRI, Dan Dorin LAZEA, Camil PÂRVU (October 5, 2011 – October 5, 2014)

Ongoing projects

Research programs developed with the financial support of the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research, The Executive Unit for Financing Higher Education and Innovation, National Council of Scientific Research (UEFISCDI – CNCS):

- **PD – Project: *Mircea Eliade between Indology and History of Religions. From Yoga to Shamanism and Archaic Religiosity* (Livi BORDAȘ)**
Timeframe: May 1, 2013 – October 31, 2015 (2 and ½ years)
- **IDEI-Project: *Models of Producing and Disseminating Knowledge in Early Modern Europe: The Cartesian Framework* (Vlad ALEXANDRESCU)**
Timeframe: January 1, 2012 – December 31, 2015 (4 years)
- **Bilateral Cooperation: *Corruption and Politics in France and Romania (contemporary times)***
Silvia MARTON – Project Coordinator, Constanța VINTILĂ-GHIȚULESCU, Alexandra IANCU, Frederic MONIER, Olivier DARD, Marion FONTAINE, Benjamin GEROME, Francais BILLOUX
Timeframe: January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2016 (2 years)

ERC Starting Grant:

- ***Record-keeping, fiscal reform, and the rise of institutional accountability in late medieval Savoy: a source-oriented approach – Castellany Accounts* Ionuț EPURESCU-PASCOVICI**
Timeframe: May 1, 2015 – April 30, 2020 (5 years)

Other projects are in the making, often as a result of initiatives coming from fellows and *alumni* of the NEC.

Present Financial Support

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VolkswagenStiftung, Hanover, Germany

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Social Sciences, Stockholm, Sweden

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SOUTHEAST EUROPEAN STUDIES DURING THE COLD WAR: ASPECTS OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONALIZATION (1960s-1970s)

Abstract

The article analyzes the relationship among epistemic communities, symbolic geographies, cultural diplomacy, and Cold-War politics in the Balkans. It historicizes the hegemonic internationalization of Southeast European studies from the periphery. The epitome of this phenomenon was the International Association of Southeast European Studies (AIESEE). This organization was an environment where regional scholars tackled perceived marginalizations and re-ignited pre-1945 traditions. It was a framework within which academics negotiated their societies' and cultures' Europeaness among three symbolic pillars: the 'Balkans', the 'West' and the 'East'. It was also a stage where epistemic multilateralism was a proxy for political entanglement.

There were four spaces of institutionalization within the AIESEE. First, there were its leadership dynamics – who were the most prominent decision-makers within the association. Second, there were the local specialized institutes and, more generally, national communities involved in the production of knowledge about the Balkans in world and continental contexts. Third, there were AIESEE's specialized commissions, laboratories of transnational regional narratives. And fourth, there were the international congresses of Southeast European studies –pinnacles of international academic-political exchange. The hegemonic aspect underlying the evolution of these four spaces was that they were constantly managed by Balkan academics. The study focuses on the first three spaces of institutionalization, only hinting at the role of the fourth.

The objective of my approach is twofold: to reveal the mechanisms of institutional hegemony; and, to characterize some of the outcomes of this phenomenon. The study concludes that AIESEE established itself

as the locus of Balkan episteme's projection of "counter-circulation" into the general context of Cold War humanities. It was the springboard for the dissemination of knowledge that rehabilitated, de-colonized, and de-marginalized the Southeast beyond the Iron Curtain. Within AIESEE, scholars found a *modus parlandi*. It reflected varying degrees of historiographical peaceful coexistence and trans-localism as conduit for particularisms.

Keywords: Cold War, UNESCO, AIESEE, Balkans, communism, post-colonialism, periphery.

Introduction

In the first half of 1960s, as the Cold War evolved from a hot phase (the Cuban missiles crisis or the building of the Berlin Wall) into the mellower decade of *détente*, Southeast Europe experienced an ambivalent process of systemic and scholarly entanglement. At the political level, the different regimes in Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Turkey gradually began to explore possibilities for bilateral relations. Simultaneously, leaders would recurrently strive for an ever-eluding multilateral arrangement that could complement and even evade bipolarism. At the level of expert knowledge, the new environment would prove fertile for the formulation of regional identities that synthesized postwar re-imaginings of national communities with larger institutional and discursive frameworks (post-colonialism, Europeanization, or UN-inspired inter-governmentalism). The epitome of the interaction between diplomacy and politics of culture in the Balkans under circumstances of widening practices of emancipation from ideological hegemony was the International Association of Southeast European Studies (AIESEE).

The present article discusses some aspects of what I call the hegemonic internationalization of Southeast European studies from the periphery. This phenomenon translated alterity among individual states, between Balkans and Europe, and within the international contexts of the Cold War. It was a distinct European self-narration in a post-colonial world. This academic collaboration was a form of projecting local knowledge by way of re-institutionalizing area studies from within the region onto a global stage – UNESCO or the International Committee for Historical

Sciences (ICHS). The stages of this process echo the politics of international engagement of various Balkan regimes from 1960s onward. The dyad academia-politics generated specific conceptualizations about the place and role of the Balkans in postwar cultural, political, and ultimately historical hierarchies.

There were four spaces of institutionalization within the AIESEE. First, there were its leadership dynamics – who were the most prominent decision-makers within association. Second, there were the local specialized institutes and, more generally, national epistemic communities involved in the production of knowledge about the Balkans in world and continental contexts. Third, there were AIESEE's specialized commissions, laboratories of transnational regional narratives. And fourth, there were the international congresses of Southeast European studies – pinnacles of international academic-political entanglement. The hegemonic aspect underlying the evolution of these four spaces was that they were constantly managed by Balkan academics. Western and North American scholars and politicians undoubtedly played a crucial role in the fate of Southeast European imaginations during the Cold War. Just as UNESCO's agenda did as well. However, local episteme held the leading role within AIESEE's activities, often in direct connection with their own regimes' diplomatic agendas. Though I will not develop this idea here, it remains to be analyzed whether this hegemony over a nominally international institution generated a certain disconnect between scholarship about Southeast from within the Balkans with area studies from outside the region.¹

Due to space limitations, the article will deal with the first three spaces of institutionalization, only hinting at the role of the fourth. It will show how the high profile local scholars within the AIESEE made their mark on the outlook of the organization. It will briefly historicize the steps taken to found the association and its connection with national specialized institutes. A significant section of the analysis will sketch the outlook of AIESEE's commissions in order to configure the main topoi advanced during this internationalization from the periphery. The objective of my approach is twofold: to reveal the mechanisms of institutional hegemony; and, to characterize some of the outcomes of this phenomenon.

The timeframe chosen covers a little more of a decade of the functioning of the AIESEE. I do not claim to exhaust all the complexities of the Balkan politics of cultural dynamics during his period. What I do try is to define and describe the characteristics of an international emancipation of local

episteme by way of pinpointing some of its most typical institutional and discursive manifestations.

Political Context

From mid-1950s, de-Stalinization and peaceful coexistence opened the possibility of geographies in Europe complementary to the East-West divide. The available spheres of contact for countries within the socialist bloc significantly diversified. Inevitably, the seemingly impenetrable Iron Curtain started to conceal “multileveled interaction ... between different types of actors, between people, institutions and states”. The veneer of bipolarism obscured “relatively free space[s] where dealings with others were determined only by the rules set by the parties involved themselves”.² These lower-level actors, below the great powers’ arena, engaged in mutually beneficial cooperation, which quite often ran counter to the ambitions of the bloc leaders. A former communist deputy minister of foreign affairs and minister of education in Romania, Mircea Malița confessed that he learnt, at the time, that the new conditions favored those who created their own smaller international organizations and those who, within the existing international framework, “could launch themselves in the orbit of civilization”.³ All bets were off, as countries, aligned or non-aligned, scurried to take advantage of the intermediary, multipolar spaces of the Cold War.

Southeast Europe became the center stage of a sort *détente* avant la lettre. After the tensions caused by the Balkan pact (1953) and by the possibility of NATO nuclear presence in the region and/or in the Mediterranean, Bulgarian and Romanian proposals (1957-62) concerning the possibility of the Balkans to be a geographical area of non-proliferation proved, to a certain extent, to be an ice-breaker. The discussion however really got going on the path to regional cooperation after the 15th session of the UN General Assembly, in September 1960. Romanian communist leader, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, backed by Todor Zhikov and Josip Broz Tito, put forward a project of resolution entitled “Regional actions concerning the advancement of good neighborly relations among European states belonging to different socio-political systems”. It would be finally approved at the General Assembly in 1965. The foundation of this initiative was the idea of a Balkan entente that “did not presuppose giving up on [military] alliances to which the states involved belong” and

which, as a form of multilateral relationship among Balkan countries did not exclude bilateral relations about which he was rather optimistic.⁴ Or, as one official of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs declared to a Greek journalist, “we are generally interested in the continent we live in, where two world wars took place. But first and foremost, we are interested in our region, in the Balkans”.⁵

The local circumstances were inauspicious at first. From late 1950s and during early 1960s, Macedonia was, and it would continue to be throughout the Cold War era, the sore point and source of conflict among Greece, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria. In 1962, Yugoslav and Greek ministers of foreign affairs signed a gentleman’s agreement that basically settled, at the official level, the minorities’ question between the two countries until 1980s. In 1963, Zhivkov officially proclaimed that there was no “historic Macedonian nation”.⁶ This basically set Bulgaria at odds with any scholarly/cultural discourse coming from Skopje. It is not surprising that in 1969, in a conversation with Nicolae Ceausescu, Tito stated that he was most worried by the “situation at the border with Bulgaria, because Bulgarians are evermore aggressive, incessantly negating the existence of the Macedonian nation”.⁷ Indeed, the dispute over Macedonia proved to be a factor of permanent tension especially between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. Between 1968 and 1979, the political leaders, not only the historians, of these regimes were entangled in highly acrimonious disputes.⁸

Starting with 1964, Romania’s and Bulgaria’s position toward Greece and Turkey followed a constant path of expanding cooperation. This development was eased by the beginning of what would later be called the long European *détente*, but also by local developments in the two non-socialist countries. Turkey truly stands out: in the aftermath of military coup-d’état of 1960, both the Gürsel government (which was a caretaker government installed by the officers that deposed Adnan Menderes’ regime) and those led by the Justice Party (which dominated the decade) proclaimed the return to Kemal Atatürk’s principles in foreign policy. Among them the idea of Balkan cooperation figured prominently. Under the circumstances, Greece had to pursue its own rapprochement with socialist countries in the area lest it would face isolation. After the 1960 settlement in Cyprus, the relationship between Greece and Turkey experienced several crises generated by this long-standing bilateral issue: 1963/4, 1967, 1974, or 1983. Just like Macedonia, Cyprus remained one if not the most outstanding obstacle to political multilateralism in

the Balkans. Albania was *l'enfant terrible* of regional cooperation. Until 1960 its leadership fully supported the Romanian, Bulgarian, and Soviet initiatives for a weapons' free region of peace. But, as Enver Hoxha broke away from the Moscow center, his regime began to consistently oppose any form of political multilateralism, including the Helsinki agreements. However, this attitude did not prevent the local regime from engaging in 1971 in covert negotiations (endorsed by the UN) with Greece. As a result, Greece renounced any territorial claims to Albania.

Throughout 1960s, a pattern developed: multilateralism at governmental level proved unachievable. It was replaced with a web of bilateral agreements that basically fuelled Balkan political, economic, and cultural cooperation. Southeast Europe seemed to find its place in the détente's world through what I would call an "ambidextrous internationalism", to borrow Mark Mazower's concept.⁹ This specific form of interaction combined entanglement based on bilateral relations determined by long standing national issues and/or bipolar alignment with affirming regional agendas in trans-systemic environments. During the decade, maybe the harshest test to it was the colonels' dictatorship in Greece (1967-1974). After the initial isolation of the regime, by 1969, the Greek minister of foreign affairs, P. Pipinelis, approached his socialist colleagues about "the possibility that Balkan countries, on the basis of a platform founded on ideas generally agreed, to actively contribute at the drafting of the agenda of the Conference for European security".¹⁰ Such partnership was premised on the axiom that "the membership of Balkan states to different political and military treaties must not be discussed, as this issue is not an obstacle on the path of fruitful cooperation".¹¹

Indeed, the ambidextrous internationalism characterizing Balkan politics was, for all parties involved, a convenient mechanisms to supplant existing bipolar alignments and to create a stronger lobby for the countries in question in the negotiations that led to the Helsinki agreements. It is therefore unsurprising that when the idea of political multilateralism resurfaced – Greek prime-minister Konstantinos Karamanlis' initiative of inter-Balkan conferences – it was described as "the first true implementation of the Helsinki spirit". Ultimately, the ever-elusive political multilateralism reflected an ethos common to all regimes in the region: co-operation was a means to mitigate the super-powers' influence and to carve out autonomous interests in the context of détente. Or, in Karamanlis' words, "the fact that we know we can have such close cooperation even with rival systems lessens our need to depend on others".¹²

The Path to AIESEE

The principle of good neighborly relations advanced by the UN resolution in 1961 materialized in the creation of national committees of Balkan cooperation and understanding. They first met in Athens in the aftermath of the meetings of the UN Assembly. In 1962, at the second meeting in Sofia, two themes were discussed: “peaceful coexistence in the Balkans” (the Bulgarian proposal) and “activities for developing Balkan cooperation” (the Greek topic). The Romanian account of the meeting hardly suggests a spirit of mutual understanding among the participants: “the suggestions of the draft presented by the Greek delegation are generally impractical. Most of them have a general character; they are exclusively the responsibility of governments or are obviously unachievable”.¹³ The Bulgarian statement contained “tactless evaluations” about the relations between Romania, Yugoslavia, Albania, on the one hand, and Greece and Turkey, on the other. At the same time, it seems that the conclaves of national committees were considered by Albania a potentially viable forum of Balkan dialogue. After not being invited at the second meeting in Sofia, Albania issued an official complaint. The Romanian observer noted the absence of references to what he called “the Albania problem”.¹⁴

One palpable result was the emphasis on “actions with non-governmental character” as mechanism of regional cooperation. The Greek delegation recommended “the method of using experts (scholars) for drafting studies concerning the possibilities of collaboration on multiple levels”. They went as far as to propose the creation of an institute of Balkan research with representations in each of the participating countries and the organization, that year, of a conference on Balkan culture under UNESCO’s aegis.¹⁵ Greece seems to have triggered a certain emulation across the region. Since 1953, in Thessaloniki, there already was an Institute of Balkan Studies, which was initially an offspring of the Society for Macedonian Studies (1953). From 1960, this institute had its own review, *Balkan Studies*, which was simultaneously published in Greece and the United States, thus insuring the wide projection of local scholarly discourses.

The Greek example re-opened the issue of (re)founding local institutes of Balkan studies, which had had an honorable activity during the interwar period. According to Austrian historian, Erna Patzelt, there was in Yugoslavia a project to re-create a Balkan Institute in Sarajevo, which would continue the tradition of the pre-1945 one in Belgrade. But, the death of P. Skok (1956), who along with Milan Budimir had been the

editor-in-chief of the previous institute's highly influential review, and of H. Barić (1957) made the realization of this project doubtful.¹⁶ This initiative will be revived again in 1963. Similarly, in November 1960, Gheorghiu-Dej approved a plan for the re-founding "the Institute for Balkan Studies and Research". The Romanian leader also sanctioned the organization of a regional "conference of intellectuals" with the theme "the Balkans, a land of peace". The event was supposed to bring together "prestigious Balkan personalities from the field of economy, culture and science".¹⁷

These early discussions coincided with two other endeavors, which can be considered stepping stones for AIESEE's creation. The first is the influence of already existing cooperation in the field of Byzantine studies. The relevance of this factor can be exemplified by findings from the archives of the Romanian Academy. A delegation of this institution participated in April 1961 at the creation, in Weimar, of the German Society for Byzantine Studies. Upon its return, the head of the History Section, C-tin Daicoviciu, wrote a letter to the Presidium of the Academy in which he stressed the importance of developing this field of research. The initial stage was to send, few months later, a larger delegation (over ten people) at the International Congress of Byzantine Studies in Ohrid (Yugoslavia). According to the document, all socialist countries funded and encouraged this academic field. They were also sending to Ohrid fairly large delegations. The example was Bulgaria, who was represented by 15 delegates.¹⁸ A second initiative that set the ground for AIESEE was the organization of the first meeting of university rectors from Balkan and Adriatic countries (1961). The participating countries were Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey, Yugoslavia and Italy. No less than twenty seven universities were involved.

By early 1960s, the idea of academic multilateralism as a proxy for the political cooperation had gained significant ground across the region. The only element that was missing was an international stage that could transgress local or even continental divisions. This was the UNESCO. The Greek and Romanian idea of a conference of Balkan intellectuals would materialize in 1960 at UNESCO's Eleventh General Conference. Two years later, during the Regional Conference of European UNESCO National Commissions in Sofia, the last details of a colloquium on Balkan civilizations will be ironed out. In July the same year, the event officially entitled "Unity and Diversity of Balkan Civilization. Contribution of the Balkan world to the relations between East and West" will open its doors

in Sinaia (Romania). It brought together representatives from sixteen European and non-European countries.

The Creation of AIESEE

The Colloquium in Sinaia was the founding moment of AIESEE. The peculiar name of the event can be explained by the fact that it was sponsored by UNESCO within the Major Project on the Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Cultural Value. This program was launched in 1957 as a reply to the ebbing flow of de-colonization. Initially, it was supposed to provide a framework for “Asian and Arab states in the process of defining and redefining their national identities to present their cultural values as not only distinct from but also on an equal footing with Western cultural values”.¹⁹ I will not dwell extensively on the profile of this Major Project and its impact on the conceptual input that it provided to Balkan scholars.²⁰ The Major Project managed to democratize the space and span for the study of exchanges, influences, and adaptations from Europe to sub-regions, regions, world traditions (Orient and Occident). It placed *le genie propre* of each people at the center of its understanding of culture and civilization (none of them normatively explained). It therefore created an environment highly conducive to “enshrining the ‘invented traditions’ of nationalist historiography”.²¹

The shadow of the Major Project loomed large over the event in Sinaia. The UNESCO representative was N. Bammate, the head of the Section for Philosophy and Human Sciences of the Department of Cultural Activities. More importantly, he was also the Chief of the Coordinating Unit for the Major Project. Also present was Ronald Syme, the general secretary of the International Council for Philosophy and Human Sciences. During his intervention in the proceedings, Syme advanced the idea of creating “a space for Balkan studies”. Such project ideally would evolve into a non-governmental entity facilitating academic exchange beyond ideological and national borders. Once the proposal was on the table, things were quickly set in motion. By the last day of the gathering, the organizers had prepared a resolution calling for the creation of a provisional committee charged with taking the necessary steps, locally and internationally, for the founding of “an international institution for Balkan studies meant to promote scientific research in the field of human sciences within the Balkan and Southeast European region”.²² Only four

months later, during UNESCO's Twelfth General Conference, the Draft Program and Budget listed a grant of \$25,000 should be made for the establishment of an International Association of Balkan Studies and for the implementation of scientific work for 1963-1964.²³

Indeed, on 23 April 1963, AIESEE came to life in the Romanian capital. Bucharest hosted its General Secretariat, position held by Emil Condurachi. Along with specialized institutes in some of the member countries, AIESEE will function as the core institution for the project of Southeast European studies and as maybe the most visible and glamorous materialization of trans-systemic Balkan cooperation during the Cold War. It initially brought together specialized national committees or institutions from fourteen countries (Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, France, Greece, Italy, Yugoslavia, Lebanon, Great Britain, Romania, Turkey, Hungary and the Soviet Union). By its ten-year anniversary, other four joined in (GDR, German Federal Republic, Poland, and the United States).

AIESEE's leadership was elected by an International Committee and it formed the Bureau of this committee. The former was made up of representatives of all the affiliated national committees, two from each of the core countries and one from each of the others. It would meet every two years, than later on every four years. Between its meetings, the association's coordination was the responsibility of the Bureau of the international committee, which comprised one president, four vicepresidents (later eight upon AIESEE's expansion), a general secretary and a treasurer. The last two positions will be soon held by the same person. The president could only be a scholar from the core countries and the position was held by rotation.

The first president was Dennis Zakythinis, whose biography reinforces, among other things, the influence that Byzantine studies had on the internationalization of Southeast European studies. From 1960 until 1975, Zakythinis was head of the Institute for Byzantine at the National Hellenic Research Foundation. He was also General Secretary and then President of the International Association of Byzantine Studies. At the time of AIESEE's creation, he held, in Greece, the position of deputy prime-minister. Throughout the years, he served in Parliament and held various ministerial positions. He rose to academic prominence during 1950s, when he advanced the thesis of Byzantium's preponderant association with the West. His scholarship played a central role in the debates of the 1960s and 1970s about the validity of the continuum Ancient, Byzantine, and Modern Greeks.²⁴

The second president was Bulgarian linguist Vladimir Georgiev (for his biography see below), followed by Croat medievalist Franjo Barisic. Between 1971 and 1974, Halil İnalcık, maybe the most prominent Turkish Ottomanist, held this position. When his mandate expired, next in line was Albanian linguist and cultural historian, Androkli Kostallari. He refused to take the chairmanship, probably because the Albanian regime did not want to have one of its representatives hold the leadership of an institution (even a nongovernmental one) founded on the principle of multilateralism. After deliberation within the International Committee, Bulgarian historian Nikolai Todorov became president. He was a compromise solution, as his nomination avoided the possibility for a Greek scholar to hold the position. The Turkish invasion in Cyprus (1974) had generated within the AIESEE calls for the exclusion of Turkey from this institution.²⁵

The highly prominent positions held in their own countries by the various members of the AIESEE's leadership point to a fusion between scholarship and diplomacy. The general secretary, Emil Condurachi, who was also a representative of the pre-1945 epistemic traditions of Romanian Southeast European studies, was one of the three most important historians in the country. He was head of the Institute of Archeology (until 1970) and vice-president of the International Academic Union. Alecs Buda, initially AIESEE's treasurer and one of its vice-presidents, was the most influential historian in Hoxha's Albania and the founding president of the local Academy (1972). Nikolai Todorov, the head of the Institute of Balkan Studies in Sofia, reached ever new heights during the 1970s and 1980s in the political-epistemic hierarchies in Bulgaria. Between 1970 and 1972, he was director of the Institute for Foreign Policy at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. He was twice elected a candidate member of the central committee, in 1981 and in 1986. From 1979 to 1982 he was general secretary of UNESCO's International Information Centre on Balkan History (funded by the Bulgarian Academy).²⁶ In 1985, he presided in Sofia the 23rd session of UNESCO's General Conference.

From the beginning, the leadership of the association was very ambitious. It initially sent invitations of association to institutions from thirty countries. The replies did not presuppose immediate affiliation for two reasons. In some countries, scholars prepared first the creation of national committees of southeast European or/and Balkan studies. And, specialists from several others adopted a wait and see approach, which they would later forfeit as the AIESEE proved its sustainability. Furthermore, the association admitted the possibility that there would be countries where

there were no national specialized committees or institutions. It allowed for scholars from such places to be affiliated as non-voting members. This clause of its statute allowed the participation at the association's events of scholars from countries that one usually does not associate with the Balkans: Tunisia, Iran, Egypt, Ghana, Japan, South Korea, etc. With this in mind, I would argue that the AIESEE did achieve a highly international profile, if not even a global one.

According to article 3 of its statute, the association would specialize on "the advancement of Balkan studies and, more generally, of the study of Southeast Europe in fields of the humanities such as: history, archeology, ethnography, linguistics, philology, literature, folklore, the arts, etc. from the earliest until present times".²⁷ This clause hints to an academic mission premised on a teleological view of human and collective development in the region. As it would become apparent from the activities and publications of the association, for the scholars from the core countries (Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romanian, Turkey, and Yugoslavia), the AIESEE will become a framework for unearthing and certifying sets of evolutionary permanences of local communities. These permanences were building blocks for identity narratives projected internationally in the larger epistemic exchange under the association's umbrella.

The AIESEE was the space where regional academics, and I am paraphrasing here a Bulgarian literary historian, liberated themselves from the putatively "suffocating" influence of "a 'Western Europeanism' that simply ... continues to treat them [local cultures] as poor relatives that, of course, do not know how to emancipate themselves".²⁸ Denis Zakythinos made the aim of the institution even clearer: it had to escape the tradition of 'Balkanism', which he envisaged both as prejudice-loaded knowledge about the region and as proliferation of nationalist historicisms. Instead, he proposed that the association would pursue a wider geography mindful of the Balkans connections with "old Europe" and the Near East or with the countries at the Pontic, Mediterranean and Carpathian periphery. For this purpose he did not consider the new institution as Balkan, but as southeast European.

Under the circumstances, the association had to focus on two trajectories of integration: first, a regional one, which circumscribed the area as "a community of material and spiritual life, of economic, social, political, and cultural phenomena [...] a community established by History".²⁹ And second, it had to flesh out the Balkans' place within "the general unity of human societies". With this permanent dichotomy in mind, the AIESEE's

activity would configure “what we received and assimilated, what we created ourselves, all which resulted in an original synthesis that holds an honorable place among the general accomplishments of humanity’s history. But we did not only receive. We also gave. We transmitted farther that which he have created, that which became ours by way of putting our imprint on it”.³⁰ The AIESEE was an arena not only for disciplinary emancipation, but also an international locus where originalities and syntheses could be formulated, expounded, and legitimated.

At the end of the day, regional scholars attempted to discover the developmental models and the historical specificities. These simultaneously set them apart and integrated them in UNESCO’s new vision of a world concert of cultures. They also situated local societies in *l’Europe des patries*, which was the Gaullist continental vision of a continuous cultural space from the Atlantic to the Urals. The epistemic multilateralism of the AIESEE was supposed to reflect UNESCO’s own vocation of universality. In 1973, the Director-General, René Maheu, in a conversation with Nicolae Ceaușescu, defined the mission of the international organization:

UNESCO plays an important role in aiding developing countries to construct national policy, to invent models and not to imitate the models of developed countries. In this way, multilateral activity is different from the bilateral one. In bilateral relations one often tends to practice import-export of models. We though help them to find their own models.³¹

Regional Outlook

The starting point for mapping AIESEE’s institutionalization is the fact that it began as an associate institution within the Major Project. Accordingly, its functions were “to respond to: (a) the need for more comparative studies of cultures; (b) the need for an interdisciplinary approach in the study and presentation of cultures;” and, c) it was not supposed be geographically confined to pre-determined groups or zones of culture.³² While administratively working on a national basis and in a regional framework, it had to focus on area studies without ignoring any of “the many tinges and varieties, and respecting the essential characteristics, of the various cultures concerned”.³³ The AIESEE as an “associated institution” would promote, “on a systematic basis and

thorough a concerted program of scholarly works and publications, study of civilizations and their mutual interaction within a broad regional context, with special emphasis on their evolution and achievements".³⁴

Under the circumstances, during 1960s, the process of institutionalization of Southeast European studies in the Balkans would follow two directions. First, the creation of the AIESEE triggered a region wide process of founding specialized institutes. In Romania, in 1963, a new Institutes of Southeast European Studies is created. Its head was historian Mircea Berza, whose biography made him, like many other scholars in the region involved with the association, a direct transmitter of pre-1945 traditions. He had been a student of Nicolae Iorga and, more importantly, the closest collaborator of historian Gheorghe Brătianu, the head of the Institute of Universal History after Iorga's assassination. Brătianu was the first local scholar who transplanted the methodology of the *Annales* school in local historiography. Moreover, before his untimely death (1962), a central figure in the creation of the new institute during communism was Victor Papacostea, the former director of the Institute of Balkan Studies (1938-1945) and a central figure in the regional school of Balkanology.

A year later, in Sofia, an Institute of Balkan Studies was created under the directorship of Nikolai Todorov, a product of the new socialist epistemic establishment in Bulgaria. There are in this case too prominent examples of continuity of pre-war traditions. The second AIESEE president, linguist Vladimir Georgiev, the vicepresident of the Bulgarian Academy, had been socialized in the academic environment from before 1945. He taught at Sofia University during 1930s. His mentor was Veselin Beseliev, one of the most important local scholars in Thracian studies, who held the chair of classical philology at Sofia University (from 1932). In 1964, he would become the head the section of ethnography and historical geography at the new Institute of Balkan Studies. Georgiev and Beseliev will spearhead the organization, under the AIESEE umbrella, of the first International Congress of Thracology (1972).

In 1969, an Institute of Balkan Studies would be created in Belgrade, under the leadership of Vaso Čubrilović. During early 1940s, he advocated for ethnic cleansing as a mechanism of solving the minorities' problem in Yugoslavia. The founding of this institution was rather protracted. According to Dimitrije Đjordžević, the general secretary of the Yugoslav National Committee for Balkan studies, the project was initiated in 1963. It was supposed to be an all-Yugoslav, that is, federal institution. In the end, it would only be under the umbrella of the Serbian Academy of

Sciences.³⁵ Đjordžević himself is an interesting case. His family was part of the Belgrade pre-1945 elite (his uncle, Aleksandr Belić was president of the Serbian Academy). He fought with the Chetniks during the war. He was imprisoned for a while in Tito's Yugoslavia (similarly to Victor Papacostea in Romania). In 1970, he took a professorship position at University of California in Santa Barbara. It seems that in the early years of AIESEE's activity, the towering Yugoslav figure, besides Croat medievalist Franjo Barisic, was Jorjo Tadić. Before the establishment of the communist regime, Tadić held the position of full professor of modern European history at University of Belgrade. By the beginning of 1960s, he chaired the most important institutions of history production in Serbia, including the Historical Institute and the Department of History.³⁶

An Institute of Balkan Studies and Languages was created in Tirana under the chairmanship of Androkli Kostallari. An Institute of Southeast European Research was founded in Edirne in 1970. A year earlier, it had functioned as an autonomous branch under the umbrella of Istanbul University. This institutional network notwithstanding, the AIESEE also relied in the core countries, on the involvement of other institutes of the local Academies. In the case of Greece, an institutional actor of importance equal to the institute in Thessaloniki was the Royal/National Hellenic Research Foundation (Athens 1958) with its Institutes of Byzantine and Neohellenic Research. Similarly, in Turkey, the Turkish Historical Society held the coordinating role for the country's scholars in AIESEE's activities. The institutes in Bucharest, Sofia, Belgrade, and Edirne had their own specialized reviews: *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes*, *Etudes Balkaniques*, *Balkanica*, and *The Journal of South-East European Research*.³⁷

The second direction of institutionalizing AIESEE was the creation of specialized commissions of research. These were basically the lungs of the organization, the main venues through which research in various branches of southeast European studies was coordinated and synthesized from national contexts to international, multilateral activities and programs. There were 8 such commissions: of archeology, led by the M. Garašanin and officially created in Sarajevo (May 1965); for the study of post-Byzantine art, chaired by Manolis Chatzidakis and its first session was in Thessaloniki (April 1966); of economic and social history, presided by N. Todorov (Sofia, 1965); for the study of the history of ideas, led by M Berza (December 1965); for the study of popular songs (i.e. folklore), chaired by Zihni Sako, the director of the Institute of folklore in Tirana (June 1966); for

the study of Ottoman archives (it first met in 1967 in Istanbul) – its initial president was H. İnalcık, who was replaced by Ömer Lütfi Barkan, who himself relinquished the position in 1972 to historian Tayyib Gökbilgin; and, for the study of the substratum of Balkan languages – it first met in 1967 and was headed by Vladimir Georgiev. Last but not least, there was the Commission for the study of the Balkans in the contemporary period presided by the president of the Turkish Historical Society, Enver Ziya Karal. This latter body has a tumultuous history. It took almost four years for it to come into being (1971-1974). The chairs of each of these commissions were exclusively scholars from the core countries.

What should be apparent by now is that Balkan academics did set the tone in the functions and programs of the AIESEE. They adjusted UNESCO's recommendations and the interaction with scholars from Western Europe, North America, and other countries from North Africa or the Middle East to regional and national agendas of knowledge production. The results were epistemic constructs that claimed to realign, in past and present, Balkan societies with a view to established historical, cultural, and political continental and world hierarchies. Or, as M. Berza proclaimed at the rostrum of the IIIrd Congress of Southeast European and Balkan Studies in 1974: "in the last decades, we have made immense progress toward the enlargement of our cultural horizon, in our understanding of the past, which following older attempts to escape the former Eurocentrism translated into a fortuitous 'dearistocratization' of history".³⁸

AIESEE's Commissions and their Topoi

To get a better idea about the internationalization of regional and national agendas in the framework of the AIESEE, one needs to take a closer look at ideas formulated within the specialized commission. At the beginning, these bodies organized internal seminars that were meant to clarify the respective research programs and methodologies. However, in 1969 such practice became secondary. That year in Plovdiv (Bulgaria), the commissions of archeology and linguistics had the initiative of organizing an international symposium on the ethnogenesis of the Balkan peoples. The impact this event had within AIESEE as well as UNESCO's reaction imposed it as model for future activities. It officialized the practice of interdisciplinary conferences that brought together at least two

commissions or individual representatives from the multiple components of the association.

The aims of the commissions of archeology and linguistic are apparent from the proceedings of the Plovdiv symposium. The organizers produced a memorandum endorsed by all participants. Two of its clauses stand out:

2. The demographic composition and changes in civilizations are not equivalent notions. There are civilizational changes without fundamental ethnic alterations. [...] 3. New facts in a civilization can be considered as local development or transfers via migrations or they could as well be the products of cultural influences. Every case must be studied on the basis of concrete information.³⁹

These statements implied a regional agreement on the continuity of autochthonous populations. It also pointed to the predominance of indigenous contributions to civilizational change, which trumped any constructive external influence. The two *topoi*, continuity and nativism, would become pillars of the activity of the commissions of archeology and linguistics.

Another essential *topos* was that of the Balkan societies as “main cultural hearths (*foyers*) (*Kulturlandschaft*)”.⁴⁰ This feature of the region was postulated at the Sinaia colloquium. The secretary of the Romanian UNESCO national commission, literary historian Tudor Vianu emphatically stated that “the Balkan region proved to be one of the most ancient and complex cultural regions in the world”.⁴¹ A year later, Em. Condurachi would find the most enduring formulation: “this [Balkans] ancient meeting place, a genuine stepping stone that brings together the Mediterranean and Central Europe, reinitiating, under novel circumstances, the millennial dialogue between the Orient and the Occident”.⁴² Such unsurprising view of the region did however trigger an entire agenda of research.

The participants at the Plovdiv international symposium on the ethnogenesis of the Balkan peoples unanimously reached the conclusion that the region was the homeland of two grand civilizations: the Thracians and the Illyrians. They were the original autochthonous factor that came into contact with the ancient Greek-Roman civilization and later with other migratory groups. There were two important caveats to this idea. First, the Thracians and the Illyrians had been indo-European from the very beginning, that is, the original populational groups that came to form them. In fact, several participants claimed that “the localization

of the main center of the formation and the expansion of the common indo-European must be placed in the Northern Balkans and south of the Danube".⁴³ V. Georgiev defined the specificity of the ancientness of the Balkans in contrast with other regions of Europe. He contended that three conditions facilitated the study of Balkan peoples' formation and ancestry in contrast to the rest of the continent:

1. we have plenty of information about the Balkan Peninsula since most ancient times; 2. there are here the names of tribes, places, and persons that can be dated since the thirty-fifth and thirty-second centuries [before Christ, n.a.]; 3. Most of the Balkan languages, such a Greek, Bulgarian, Romanian, Serbo-Croat preserved quite well the phonetic structure of the words. [...] On the contrary, it would be very difficult or impossible to claim this for France, England and Germany...⁴⁴

The foundation of Balkans' ancientness, autochthonous development and continuity was what the head of the archeology Commission, M. Garašanin called "the Balkano-Anatolien civilization",⁴⁵ which basically brought together all the putative ancestors of the area's peoples.

Before turning to the commission for the history of ideas, I believe it is important to point out that a possible organizational model of this body might have been the Association for the Study of the Greek Enlightenment. Created in 1962, this latter institution had "to define and to compile a systematic register of all data relating to the Greek intellectual legacy, in whatever represents 'Greek space' and 'Greek time'". By "Greek time" the members of the Association meant that "all periods of Greek History, with no interruptions, have left traces in modern Hellenism. Consequently all these periods fall within the scopes of the Association..." And, "Greek space" meant that they argued that while focused on the Greek peninsula, their interests extended "over much larger areas than those comprised in the historical frontiers of Hellenism".⁴⁶ This epistemic ethos of writing intellectual history by way of a nationally holistic vision of time and space carried over to the AIESEE's commission.

Another tremendous influence from Greece on this Commission's production of knowledge was the work of historian C. Th. Dimaras on "modern Greek enlightenment". Dimaras emphasized the fact the grand European intellectual currents are made up of their national components, which can be historicized only once they reach their evolutionary course. This insight was based on a theory of cultural reception that reflected

a symbolic economy of “offer and demand”: “the receptor chooses whatever suits its needs....the process of influence is ... the expression of a conscious, semi-conscious, or unconscious inclination”.⁴⁷ Such give and go eliminated any possibility of subordination between the Orient and the Occident.

During the Commission’s first meeting in Bucharest (December 1965), the participants decided that the goal of this body was to tackle “theoretical problems such as the notions of humanism, Renaissance, Enlightenment, romanticism, etc. and the chronology of these currents” in the Balkans but in a European context.⁴⁸ The principle behind their activity was to go beyond the East-West divide. The commission studied the extent to which the cultures in the regions synchronized with the great trends of European socio-political thought and how they developed national versions of each of them. The premise that founded such scholarly program was a democratization of continental intellectual history as “these region has been unfairly forgotten among the wonderful development of old Europe”.⁴⁹ Regional scholars perceived their endeavor as a reconstruction of national traditions often obscured if not altogether absent in general accounts of European history. It advocated a new symbolic geography that on the one hand was unequivocally proclaimed as European, while on the other hand was invoked in order to debunk “the myth of Western civilization as the civilization par excellence”.⁵⁰

Despite the fact that the Balkans “had lived in zones of high culture”,⁵¹ scholars did admit that by the beginning of the 17th century, the area was lagging behind the West. But this backwardness was anachronistic for two reasons. First, the West itself represented only a minority or a limited phenomenon in comparison with the still dominant old oriental civilizations. Second, “Southeast Europe was moving *en recul* in comparison with the standards set by its own civilizations”.⁵² But once the intellectuals of the East entered into contact with the ideas of the West, starting with the 17th century, a new phenomenon came about:

the European education...coexists superficially with *strictly local problems* [original emphasis, n.a.] generated by pressing political and social issues. This particular ability to target the Enlightenment from the West upon regional problems... is the manifestation of the Southeast European genius.⁵³

With this in mind, Romanian historian Virgil Candea, wondered whether “these Southeast intellectuals were in fact the last men of the Middle Ages and the last humanists of Europe or, if one prefers, the most recent ‘moderns’ in European thought”.⁵⁴

The Berza Commission set out to accomplish a “grand synthesis” based on studying both individual cultures and general European movements of ideas. In 1972, Al. Dutu, one of the most prominent Romanian scholars within the commission’s activities, argued that “in the Southeast the formation of national cultures is not synchronic, but diachronic”.⁵⁵ He along with his colleagues considered that, in the multiplicity of Balkan syntheses, individual cultures/civilizations produced their own historical tempos based on the origins, plasticity, and the impact of the permanences of each and every of them. What was initially a restorative historiographical enterprise transformed, despite its innovative approach and methodology, into a potentially competitive quest for exceptionality. Modern national culture was the last phase of a series of syntheses based on the creative assimilation within an ever-expanding tradition of Western and global influences. Genuine modernity became the incarnation of the continuity and development of tradition.

The commission for the social and economic history was the institutional locus for conceptualizing the relative backwardness of the Balkans on the path to modernization. More often than not, the Todorov Commission defined backwardness either in terms of Ottoman exploitation or on the basis of capitalism’s irrepressible march to imperialism and socio-national exploitation. Two topics dominated its activities: the study of Balkan cities and the penetration of capitalism in the region. The head of the commission contended that during Ottoman rule, in Southeast European societies, “the dominant nationality”, by which he ambiguously meant both “the Turks” and “the dominant Ottoman class”, “remained outside of the development of the forces of production”. Its main contribution was “an ever more encroaching bureaucracy”. In contrast, “the subjected peoples were the promoters of capitalist relations”.⁵⁶ Under the circumstances, between the 17th and 19th centuries, “the developed forms of capitalist economy...did not appear in these countries despite the existence of favorable economic premises with advanced money-goods relations”. This statement brings forth a corollary: “the contradictions between the forces and modes of production” mixed in with national contradictions resulted in “the unprecedented intensification of the latter”.⁵⁷ Southeast

Europe's inability to follow a 'normal' path to capitalism was rooted in the Orient parasitic presence in the Balkans.

The second factor of relative backwardness was apparent from the commission's discussion of Europeanization. The latter was a processes synonymous with the demise of the Ottoman Empire and the development of capitalism in the region. These synchronic processes would however become sources of decalage because

the possibility to profit from the experience of the most advanced countries depended on the conditions existent in the countries that made a delayed transition to capitalism. There are very few cases when the latter took advantage in a rational fashion of such experience.⁵⁸

As the modernization process was underway, "European capitalism profited from its supremacy in order to reduce to the state of colonies or semi-colonies not only the countries detached [from empires, n.a.], but entire continents".⁵⁹ The looming specter of foreign capital combined with the region's stunted development imposed an "intrinsic (asynchronous) backwardness". Echoing the finding of the coomission for the history of ideas, backwardness from the point of view of social-economic history became the inability of "real forces and the 'legitimate' possibilities (*virtualités 'légitimes'*)" of Southeast European societies to take hold of their respective national modernizations.⁶⁰

There was a flipside to these argumentations about the connection between internal dynamics of the Ottoman Empire and the penetration of capitalism in the Balkans. Important sections of Turkish historiography tied the 'corruption' and 'decay' of the Ottomans to three main factors: the effect of disaggregation that the economic and political presence of Great Powers had on the empire; the development of Balkan nationalisms; and, the alliance between semi-colonial capitalist influences from the West and so-called "compradore" nationalities (e.g., Greeks or Armenians). One of the outcomes of this narratives was that, mirroring Todorov, "non-Muslims have been equated with the capitalist class, nourished by the capitulations. In the struggle against this class, every means seems to become legitimate, and even the principle of general equality becomes suspect as if it were an imperialist trick".⁶¹ Ironically, just as Todorov associated decalage with the Ottoman/Muslim 'parasitic' presence, Turkish historians produced discourses of underdevelopment because of the 'parasitic' attitudes of other ethnic groups.

In the end, for the academics associated with these commissions, the negotiation of Europe in the Balkans meant the historicization of specific visions of national modernity. The latter was as European as the one from West. But it was defined by 'original spiritualities' and often by the rejection of capitalism as a civilizational model. Nevertheless, the anti-Westernism of scholars from the core countries of AIESEE was not an attempt to find an alternative to western culture or civilization. I believe that Samuel Hirst's diagnosis of Turkish and Soviet anti-Westernism during 1930s fits very well with the type of conceptual emancipation of Balkan episteme within the AIESEE. These scholars aimed "to rewrite the western order in such a way that the European periphery would gain equal, and perhaps even preeminent, membership". They were committed "to importing the content of European progress while shedding the forms of European domination".⁶²

The commissions on post-Byzantine art and folklore followed interpretation mechanisms inspired by the theoretization proposed by the commission of history of ideas. That is, the evolutive interplay between tradition and innovation was structured in favor of successive syntheses. The latter enriched the originality of regional cultural-historical manifestations in the arts or in folklore.

The commission for the study of the Ottoman archives was used as a medium by Turkish scholars to consolidate their involvement within AIESEE. Though present from the beginning in the association's activities, this country's representatives increased their profile especially during 1970s. Unsurprisingly, this process also coincided with Halil İnalcık tenure as AIESEE president. Generally speaking, one can identify two goals of their interventions in the organization's debates. First, they aimed to subvert the dominant historiographical topos that equated the Ottoman Empire with backwardness and oppression. Second, they constructed an imperial history that situated the Ottoman tradition within European context and on par with either the West or with the Byzantine Empire. Such a reformulation of historical, political, and cultural lineage consolidated Turkish civilization pedigree in the continental and world concert of cultures. Following the tradition of Fuad Köprülü (who incidentally was minister of foreign affairs in Turkey between 1950 and 1955), highly visible scholars such as Halil İnalcık, Ömer Barkan, or Tayyib Gökbilgin argued that the Ottoman empire was its own creation. It was not simply a continuity or 'parasitic' adaptation of the Byzantine empire.

Barkan, along with İnalcık, rejected the Marxist theory that the Asiatic mode of production was applicable to the Ottoman empire. They also

questioned the Annales school thesis of an Ottoman feudalism equivalent with the Western one.⁶³ İnalçık also emphasized that the Ottoman empire had been “a commonwealth founded by Turks, but built by Arabs, Greeks, Slavs, and Albanians along with its Turkish founders”.⁶⁴ One can identify two main instruments of critique of the West among Turkish historians involved within the AIESEE. They either reconsidered the imperial tradition thus re-inserting the Ottoman heritage in larger international and continental civilizational hierarchies. Or, in an interconnected way, they adopted approaches inspired by world-system theory or post-colonial critiques of the West⁶⁵ aimed at overcoming earlier cultural and historiographical peripheralization.⁶⁶

The year 1970 was a turning point from the point of view of how UNESCO envisaged AIESEE's research priorities. Starting with the budgetary year 1971-972, AIESEE had to study the Balkans as “pathway of cultural communication between Mediterranean Europe, the Slavic world, and Asia Minor”. Moreover, its programs had to turn their attention toward more contemporary topics and problems.⁶⁷ As this article does not deal with the specific dynamics of the association's congresses, I will turn to the second aspect of UNESCO's recommendation. It set the ground for the creation of the commission for the study of the Balkans in the contemporary period.

In April 1971, N. Todorov organized the international conference “The Politics of Great Powers in the Balkans before the Second World War”. At the end of the event, he argued that the issues discussed pointed toward a future research program centered on Great Power involvement in the region before and at the beginning of World War II.⁶⁸ In July, Soviet historian A. F. Miller proposed the creation of a body, within AIESEE, that would tackle various subjects pertaining to the study of the interwar period. Miller did specify that “the commission would not only cover the field of history per se, as it would also deal with cultural history, literature, economic history and sociology”. A year later, during a meeting of the International Committee, this proposal was hotly debated. According to Condurachi's report to the RCP Central Committee before this gathering, there was a great deal of apprehension within the association toward the Soviet-Bulgarian project: “by their very nature, contemporary issues could trigger polemics and constitute a source of conflicts”. The Romanian delegation was to adopt a positive attitude in this matter pending the reactions of representatives from other core countries.⁶⁹

Subsequently, in 1972, it was decided that a group of specialists (A.F. Miller, G. Castellan, E.Z. Karal, Ch. Fragistas, A Buda, I Sanders, Em Condurachi) will draft the program of the new commission. The following year in Moscow, the main themes of this body were sketched. Among them were:

1) the contribution of Balkan countries to peace efforts in the interwar period;...4) the contribution of Balkan countries to the development of contemporary education, science, science (paying attention in particular to the celebration of eminent personalities representative for the science and culture of Southeast European countries); ...6) the development of state and juridical institutions in Southeast Europe during the modern and contemporary period...⁷⁰

I chose these three examples in order to point out that the new commission followed a similar emancipatory pattern as the others within the AIESEE. It recuperated national traditions in European context, which in itself was highly impactful on the re-assessment of the pre-1945 period within socialist historiographies. It also opened the door to conflicting narratives of state and cultural progressivism.

Conclusion

AIESEE's institutionalization and implicitly its internationalizing functions were not a one-and-done phenomena. During 1970s and 1980s, the association evolved in relation with the dynamics within the UNESCO and the national establishments of knowledge production from the core countries. A fundamental instrument for the structural and conceptual evolution of the institution were the congresses of Southeast European and Balkan studies. They were supposed to take place in one of the cities of AIESEE's core countries: Sofia-1966, Athens-1970, Bucharest-1974, Ankara-1979, Belgrade-1984, Sofia-1989.

The very possibility of these congresses, and indeed of AIESEE itself, can hardly be imagined without crucial developments within the International Committee of Historical Sciences. The International Congress of Historical Sciences in Rome (1955) was a turning point. For the first time during the postwar, historians from the socialist bloc participated. The congresses in Stockholm (1960) and Vienna (1965) were landmarks that revealed a

turning tide. On the one hand, Western historians were challenged from the point of view of multiple historical materialism-inspired discourses. On the other hand, and more pertinently to the topic of present article, national(ist) historicisms made their presence felt.⁷¹

One can argue that the AIESEE was an offspring and a textbook example of the re-emergence, within the ICHS, of a sort of “ecumenical community of historians” to use Karl Dietrich Erdmann’s term.⁷² Undeniably, détente and the internationalization of the humanities brought about a new spirit of cooperation between East and West (then North and South). Nevertheless, strong ideological differences persisted. What developed within the ICHS, and particularly within the AIESEE, was a *modus parlandi*, if not *vivendi*. It reflected varying degrees of historiographical peaceful coexistence and trans-localism as conduit for particularisms. The epistemic common ground founded on the imperative of overcoming peripheralization allowed the simultaneity of cooperation and competition among national narratives and scholars.

AIESEE was an environment where regional scholars tackled perceived marginalizations and re-ignited pre-1945 traditions. It was an institutional framework within which, taking advantage of their hegemonic positions, these academics negotiated their societies’ and cultures’ Europeaness among three symbolic pillars: the ‘Balkans’, the ‘West’ and the ‘East’. AIESEE triggered the (re)founding of specialized institutes and academic reviews. It allowed epistemic elites to acquire continental and even global prestige through their leading positions within the UNESCO-sponsored association, by way of the organization’s congresses, and ultimately through carrying regional/national agendas into international historiographical discussions. AIESEE established itself as the locus of Balkan episteme’s projection of “counter-circulation”⁷³ into the general context of Cold War humanities. It was the springboard for the dissemination of knowledge that rehabilitated, de-colonized, and de-marginalized the Southeast beyond the Iron Curtain.

Ironically, AIESEE’s demise during 1980s and early 1990s reflected the embeddedness of Balkan academic-political cooperation into the very same Cold War realities it tried to evade. The historiographical peaceful coexistence upon which AIESEE’s *modus parlandi* was based came under attack. The ‘aggressor’ was a radicalization of the very same topoi that had been initially formulated within it (e.g., the specialized commissions). This phenomenon was intertwined with increasingly fragile bilateralism/multilateralism because highly volatile topics such as security, territorial claims, or minority rights rapidly came back on regional agendas.

NOTES

- ¹ This insight is also inspired by Diana Mishkova's comparison of Southeast European studies in the West with those from the Balkan countries in "Academic Balkanisms: Scholarly Discourses of the Balkans and Southeast Europe," in Roumen Daskalov ed., *Entangled Histories of the Balkans*, vol. IV (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming).
- ² Sari Autio-Sarasma and Katalin Miklóssy, "Introduction. The Cold War From a New Perspective," in Sari Autio-Sarasma and Katalin Miklóssy eds., *Reassessing the Cold War* (New York/Oxon: Routledge, 2011), p. 2 and p. 5.
- ³ Mircea Malița and Dinu C. Giurescu, *Zid de pace, turnuri de frăție. Deceniul deschiderii: 1962-1972* (Bucharest: Compania, 2011), pp. 151-152.
- ⁴ "Cuvântarea tovarășului Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej la cea de a XV Sesiune la ONU din septembrie 1960," 27 September, ANIC, Fond C.C. al P.C.R., Secția Relații Externe, dosar 46/1960, vol. I, f. 137.
- ⁵ "Buletine de presă 14-28 septembrie", ANIC, Fond C.C. al P.C.R., Secția Relații Externe, dosar 49/1960, p. 138.
- ⁶ Spyridon Sfetas, "In the Shadow of the Macedonian Issue International Re-alignments and Balkan Repercussions from the Greek-Yugoslav Agreements of 18 June 1959 to the 1960 Crisis in Relations between Athens and Belgrade," *Balkanica*, vol. 39 (2008), 195.
- ⁷ "Stenograma convorbirilor între tov. Nicolae Ceaușescu și Iosip Broz Tito, Timișoara 1-2 februarie", ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția Relații Externe, 3/1969, ff. 11.
- ⁸ Spyridon Sfetas, "The Bulgarian-Yugoslav Dispute over the Macedonian Question as a Reflection of the Soviet-Yugoslav Controversy (1968–1980)," *Balkanica*, vol. 43 (2012), 241-271.
- ⁹ Mark Mazower uses "ambidextrous internationalism" in order to describe United States evolving attitudes toward the UN. He emphasizes the fact that American foreign policy was not either realist or idealist. "Most of the time it was both, and for the pragmatists in charge the true realism involved using international institutions where possible." See Mark Mazower, *Governing the World. The History of an Idea* (London/New York: Allen Lane, 2012), p. 277 and also p. 294.
- ¹⁰ "Notă de propuneri referitor: unele idei ale ministrului de externe al Greciei, P. Pipinelis, cu privire la contribuția țărilor balcanice la elaborarea ordinii de zi a conferinței privind securitatea europeană", ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția Cămară, no. 36/1970, f. 32.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, f. 36.
- ¹² Quoted in Steven S. Roberts, "Détente Even in the Fractious Balkans," *New York Times*, 26 October 1976, p. 206.
- ¹³ Teodor Marinescu, "A doua întâlnire a reprezentanților Comitetelor de colaborare balcanică", 27 March, ANIC, Fond C.C. al P.C.R., Secția Relații Externe, dosar 2/1962, f. 3.

- 14 Marinescu, "A doua întâlnire...", f. 2. Also C. Lăzărescu, "Notă de convorbire", 19 March, ANIC, Fond C.C. al P.C.R., Secția Relații Externe, dosar 10/1962, ff. 1-3.
- 15 Marinescu, "A doua întâlnire...", f. 4.
- 16 Erna Patzelt, "Les recherches concernant le sud-est europeen en Autriche," *Bulletin AIESEE*, no. 2, 1964, pp. 29.
- 17 "Plan de acțiuni întocmit pentru regiunea balcanică" 7 noiembrie, ANIC, Fond C.C. al P.C.R., Secția Cancelarie, dosar 49/1960, f. 10.
- 18 C. Daicoviciu, "Referat," ANIC, Fond Academia de Științe Sociale și Politice a Republicii Socialiste România - Secția de Istorie și Arheologie, dosar 2/1961.
- 19 Laura Elizabeth Wong, "Relocating East and West: UNESCO's Major Project on the Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Cultural Values," *Journal of World History*, Vol. 19, No. 3, New Histories of the United Nations (Sept., 2008), p. 356.
- 20 Bogdan C. Iacob, "From Periphery to Cardinal Borderland: The Balkans into the UNESCO," *CAS Working Papers Series, Advanced Academia Program 2015*.
- 21 Sunil Amrith and Glenda Sluga, "New Histories of the United Nations," *Journal of World History*, Vol. 19, No. 3, New Histories of the United Nations (Sept., 2008), p. 270.
- 22 The document was read by writer Camille Aboussouan, the general secretary of the national Lebanese commission for UNESCO. For details about the membership of the provisional committee see "Séance clôture des travaux du colloque" in Commission Nationale Roumaine Pour L'UNESCO, *Actes du Colloque International de Civilisations Balkanique* (Sinaia, 8-14 July 1962), p. 189. Bammate called the resolution a "natural, spontaneous" result of the participants' dialogue during the event (p. 193).
- 23 UNESCO 12C/8 (Paris, 29 October 1962), p. 65.
- 24 For details about the debates concerning the connection between Byzantium and Greek antiquity and the the relationship between modern Greece and Byzantium see Antonis Liakos, "Hellenism and the Making of Modern Greece: Time, Language, Space," in Katerina Zacharia ed., *Hellenisms. Culture, Identity, and Ethnicity from Antiquity to Modernity* (Burlington, VT.: Ashgate Variorum, 2010), pp. 216-220. Also G.G. Arnakis, "Byzantium and Greece," *Balkan Studies*, vol. 4, no. 2 (1963), 379-400 and A. P. Vacalopoulos, "Byzantinism and Hellenism. Remarks on the Racial Origin and the Intellectual Continuity of the Greek Nation," *Balkan Studies*, vol. 9, no. 1 (1968), 101-126.
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- 26 See Ivan Elenkov, "The Science of History In Bulgaria in the Age of Socialism: The Problematic Mapping of its Institutional Boundaries", *CAS Working*

- Papers Series* (Sofia: Center for Advanced Studies, 2007) and Todorov's obituary in *The Sunday Times*, October 2, 2003 (<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/obituaries/article1100971.ece>).
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- 28 Emil Georgiev, "Le développement des études balkanique en Bulgarie," *Actes du Ile Congrès International des Etudes du Sud-est Européen*, Tome I, Chronique du Congrès, Rapports (Athènes, 1972), p. 200.
- 29 Nikola Todorov, "Les études balkanique en Bulgarie," *Bulletin AIESEE*, nos. 1-2, 1969, p. 63.
- 30 "Exposé de M. Mihai Berza traitant des buts que se propose la Commission," in "Actes de la première réunion de la Commission d'histoire des idées dans le sud-est de l'Europe (Bucarest 27-28 décembre 1965)," *Bulletin AIESEE*, nos. 1-2, 1966, p. 9.
- 31 "Notă convorbire între tovarășul Nicolae Ceaușescu și directorul general al UNESCO, René Maheu, 29 noiembrie", ANIC, fond CC al PCR – Secția Relații Externe, 224/1973, f. 11.
- 32 UNESCO/CUA/96 (Paris, 17 June 1959), p. 4.
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- 35 Dimitrije Đjordjević, "Le nouvel Institut d'études balkaniques de l'Académie serbe des sciences et des arts," *Bulletin AIESEE*, nos. 1-2, 1969, pp. 73-76.
- 36 Dimitrije Đjordjević, "In Memoriam: Jorjo Tadic," *Balkan Studies*, 10:2 (1969), pp. 450-452.
- 37 For a more detailed analysis of the (dis)connections between pre-1945 and post-1945 institutional and personnel structures in the field of Southeast European studies in the Balkans see Mishkova, "Academic Balkanisms..."
- 38 Mihai Berza, "Les études du Sud-Est européen, leur rôle et leur place dans l'ensemble des sciences humaines," *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes*, tome 13, no. 1, 1975, p. 14.
- 39 "Résolution discutée et adoptée par les participants au Symposion," in Académie Bulgare des Sciences, Institut d'Etudes Balkanique, *L'Ethnogenèse des peuples balkanique. Symposium International*, Plovdiv, 23-28 avril 1969 (Sofia, 1971), p. 330.
- 40 Aleks Buda, "Problèmes de l'histoire de l'Albanie des VIIIe-XVIII siècles dans les recherches de la nouvelle historiographie Albanaise," *Actes du Ile Congrès International... Tome I*, p. 96.
- 41 "Séance clôture des travaux du colloque," *Actes du Colloque International de Civilisations Balkanique*, p. 206.
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- 44 Georgiev, "L'ethnogenèse de la Péninsule Balkanique...", p. 168.
- 45 For an initial formulation of this idea see Milutin Garašanin, "La contribution du monde sud-est européen," *Sources archéologiques de la civilisation européenne, Actes de la colloque international organisé par le Secrétariat général de l'AIIESEE*, Mamaia (Roumanie), 1-8 septembre 1968 (AIIESEE: Bucarest, 1970), p. 103.
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- 48 Al. Duțu et Vlad Georgescu, "La première reunion de la Commission Internationale de l'Histoire des Idées dans le sud-est européen", *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes*, vol 4, no. 1-2, 1966, pp. 258.
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- 50 Valentin Georgescu, "La terminologie: Modernisation et Européanisation de l'Empire Ottoman et du Sud-est de l'Europe, à la lumière de l'expérience Roumaine," in Institut d'Etudes Balkanique in Sofia, *La révolution industrielle dans le Sud-est européen – XIX s.* (Sofia, 1976) p. 121.
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- 53 *Ibid.*, pp. 217-218.
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- 55 Alexandru Duțu, *Sinteză și originalitate în cultura română 1650-1848* (București: Editura enciclopedică română, 1972), p. 129 and p. 167.
- 56 Nikolai Todorov, "Le passage au capitalisme dans les Balkans," *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européennes*, tome I, no. 1-2, 1963, pp. 123-124.
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- 58 *Ibid.*, p. 125.
- 59 *Ibid.*, p. 144.
- 60 Georgescu, "La terminologie..." , p. 117.
- 61 See Taner Akçam's criticism of discourses about non-Muslims within Turkey as described in Hercules Millas, "Non-Muslim Minorities in the

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- 62 Samuel J. Hirst, "Anti-Westernism on the European Periphery: The Meaning of Soviet-Turkish Convergence in the 1930s," *Slavic Review*, Vol. 72, No. 1 (Spring 2013), p. 35.
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- 64 Nancy Gallagher "Halil İnalcık," in Kelly Boyd ed., *Encyclopedia of Historians...*, Volume I, p. 579.
- 65 See for example Kemal H. Karpat's paper on "The Social and Economic Transformation of Istanbul in the Nineteenth Century" at the interdisciplinary colloquium "Istanbul à la jonction des cultures balkanique, méditerranéennes, slaves et orientales, XVIe – Xle siècles' – 15-20 octobre 1973," in *Bulletin AIESEE*, no. 2, 1974, pp. 267-308 or Ergil, Dogu. "A Reassessment: The Young Turks, Their Politics and Anti-colonial Struggle," in *Balkan Studies*, volume 16, no.2, 1975.
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ART AND POLITICS IN MODERN DICTATORSHIPS IN THE SOUTHERN CONE AND EASTERN EUROPE¹

A Preview of Theoretical Problems

Abstract

This article introduces the comparison of the relationship between art and politics in ten dictatorships in Central and Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania), and South America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay). The specific analysis concentrates on the 1970s and the 1980s when the two regions were ruled by dictatorships, either inspired by communism or anti-communism (Doctrine of National Security). The article provides an overview of the main theoretical issues in studying such diverse regimes by focusing on their institutional frameworks. The tentative conclusion is that these regimes are not only comparable, but also similar in several respects.

Keywords: art and politics, modern dictatorships, South America, Eastern Europe.

Art is a product that has to be sold and not given away. Why one pays for shoes and not for a sonata of Beethoven? Secondly, art should be managed with the same techniques of 'marketing' that are used to sell a refrigerator or a blender...

Cesar Sepúlveda, vice-president of the BHC (Vial) group, one of the two most important economic groups of Chile

The art and letters people must also have a program. I know some people say: literature and art cannot be planned. To tell you frankly I do not consider that impossible. [...] As we demand to produce goods of consumption and technical goods at the level of the request, we have the same pretensions in art.

Nicolae Ceaușescu, 1971

Introduction

The research project *Art and politics in modern dictatorships in the Southern Cone and Eastern Europe* investigates the relation between the dictatorships in Eastern Europe and South America in the 1970s and 1980s and their respective artistic spheres with a focus on visual arts. This article presents a brief introductory overview of theoretical aspects of this analysis.

The ten cases considered² in this research project include in the Southern Cone the dictatorships in Argentina (1966-1973 & 1976-1983), Brazil (1964-1985), Chile (1973-1989), Paraguay (1954-1989), and Uruguay (1973-1985); and in Eastern Europe: Bulgaria (1944-1989),³ Romania (1948-89), Hungary (1944-89),⁴ Poland (1945-89),⁵ and Czechoslovakia (1948-1989).⁶ Because these regimes have different lengths, this project only considers the 1970s and 1980s, when they were contemporary, and taking into account the broader developments in the case of the regimes that were already in place at the time.

The analysis is an extension of my doctoral thesis, which compared Chile during the Pinochet regime to Romania under Ceaușescu in the period 1970s-1989;⁷ now, I include other cases so as to amend or confirm my framework of analysis. These two regimes represent the extremes of a range of governments. Their dissimilarity is seen both ideologically, communism versus “Doctrine of National Security”, and in the role assumed in the artistic field, by the state in the case of Romania, and respectively the market in Chile. We are confronted thus with two dissimilar regimes that adopt opposed strategies. Different strategies that have the same purpose: control and direct artistic manifestations. However, the effects they produce on the artistic sphere are similar: unavoidably, art is created in relation to the political. The two regimes are alike in so much as they imagine political projects with a totalitarian turn, but the strategies they impose on the actors differ.

This type of comparison between the East and the South, between East European communist regimes and authoritarian regimes in South America while marginalized by political science, has already been addressed by art history.⁸ The exhibition, which also published a catalogue, *Subversive Practices Art under conditions of political repression 60s-80s/South America/Europe*, edited by Iris Dressler and Hans D. Christ shows how, in both regions, the artists’

subversive potency and political relevance were expressed in very different ways, yet they indeed coincided in one common point: in the creation of free spaces of thinking and agency, in smaller or larger collectives respectively. Although opposing different regimes with contrasting mechanisms, they reach the same point, that is, they show how the political power can be subverted, and how, the stronghold on power has its limits and margins of possibilities.⁹

The purpose of this comparative endeavor is to establish a framework of analysis of the relation between art(ists) and politics in modern dictatorships, other than the totalitarian ones. This comparative perspective allows for interesting parallels, for example between the Ceaușescu regime in Romania, and the Stroessner regime in Paraguay (1954-89), both being analyzed in terms of sultanism and acknowledging their common use of the nationalist discourse, as well as the extended cults of personality¹⁰ despite their ideological opposition, communist versus anti-communist.

The analysis is multilayered and organized from multiple perspectives, and theoretical approaches. Regime theory is the first important theoretical resource. The analysis employs the concept of modern dictatorship as a common heading/framework from which to study the relation with the art of regimes. To examine the artistic strategies of the regimes, it is important to study what does the state do, in terms of regulations, institutions and cultural policies, and also use the theoretical resources provided by the interdisciplinary approach of the study of the relationship between art and politics. The qualitative comparative method is used to confront each time the details concerning each national case. Thus, this is a political science investigation using a comparative politics approach to study the relation between politics (power, institutions) and art.

The research focuses on the case of visual arts, called plastic arts in Eastern Europe, (which include increasingly in the period analyzed, new mediums as photography, video, installations, performances, situations, art actions, the human body, etc.), but looks at the general framework of the artistic spheres depending on the country. The meanings of political art are dramatically different in distinct dictatorial contexts: sometimes only small gestures, details, versus very bold acts of resistance and critique of the regimes. It is this diversity that this investigation wants to underline and discuss.

In what follows, this article recalls some theoretical landmarks used in the comparative analyses of the modern dictatorships with an accent on

the theoretical framework of analysis of the relationship between art and politics in general, art and politics in totalitarian regimes, and the different panorama of this relationship in authoritarian regimes with an addendum on the cultural policies of the authoritarian regimes in South America.

Modern Dictatorships

Two important claims are central to this investigation. First, that authoritarian regimes and totalitarian regimes are not only comparable, but also similar in so far as artistic strategies are concerned. This is underlined by the use of the common denominator of modern dictatorships as a term that highlights the commonalities along the evident differences between the two regimes.

I argue that comparing such different case studies helps decipher the relations between political power and artistic expressions that develop in dictatorial settings, and that cut across the left/right and the authoritarian/totalitarian categories. Romania and Chile embody the extremes of imaginable studies concerning the subtle relations connecting art and politics in modern dictatorships. Therefore, no sign of equivalence is placed between the two. Analyzing them in terms of modern dictatorship is done in the line of the studies that, departing from a comparison of the totalitarian regimes tried to establish a common ground of analysis of postwar non-democratic modern forms of government. Stemming from regime theory, the concept takes into account the theorization of Juan Linz that introduced authoritarian forms in-between the twin formula of democracy-totalitarianism, advancing a tripartite framework of analysis (democracy-authoritarianism-totalitarianism).¹¹ As Franz Neumann observed, we still don't have a systematic study of dictatorship.¹² Modern dictatorship was a term used in the interwar period to describe the new types of autocratic rulership, but was later abandoned by the literature that privileged primarily the analysis of "democracy versus totalitarianism".

Juan Linz introduced a third type of regime, authoritarianism considered different from totalitarianism or, on the contrary, as a "milder" variant of it. But, as Linz wrote, "the effort of conceptualization and comprehension of the range of authoritarian regimes" was forestalled by the "tendency to study political systems inside cultural or geographic areas", or by the propensity to "regroup countries such as the communist regimes of Eastern

Europe" while ignoring their comparison with other non-communist authoritarian regimes.¹³

One of the first to use the concept in the sense used here was Hermann Kantorowicz (1935) who defined modern dictatorship as a government "which is autocratic; works through dictation; and in which the governed still remember a less autocratic or less illiberal former system".¹⁴ The dictator was either "an individual or a group: in the first case we speak of *personal*, in the second of *collective dictatorship*" and modern dictatorships were of three types: military, party, and administrative dictatorship.¹⁵

Referring to the specific case of Eastern Europe, several authors have underlined the input of citizens in their analysis of the communist regimes or the state socialist countries in Eastern Europe; this participatory/participative approach could take into consideration the Southern Cone regimes. Specific analyses of the GDR case are the most advanced approaches of this type. Mary Fulbrook uses the notion of *participatory dictatorship* so as to emphasize how "the undoubtedly dictatorial political system was 'carried' by the active participation of many of its subjects...The East German dictatorship was one that managed to involve large numbers of its citizens in its political structures and processes".¹⁶ In the same sense is coined the formula by Martin Sabrow of *people's dictatorships* which are not people's democracies, "based on a shared or forced identification between the rulers and the ruled."¹⁷ They are based on a form of "'consensus dictatorships'. This type of rule was marked by cooperation, and understanding between above and below, between the avant-garde, and the masses, the leaders, and the led, and the party, and the people. The acceptance of dictatorship was created, in large part, by this kind of consensus building – by conviction, repression, and (self-)deception, in short by the creation of a particular form of historical and social reality."¹⁸ This type of analysis centered on a bottom-up perspective makes clear how dictatorships are not only imposed from above through coercion, but are also durable because of the collaboration, or participation of a certain degree of some parts of the citizenry. This aspect is particularly relevant for the East European regimes, and the politicization of art, as well as for the Southern Cone examples, that most often demand an apolitical art.

The purpose of this approach that uses modern dictatorship supports the theorization of non-democratic regimes in terms of different *degrees* of control of power and not as fundamentally different forms of government. This is done by showing, for example that the Pinochet regime had an explicit program for controlling the arts, and that even more so, the

free-market policies it applied to the artistic space altered its functioning in similar ways to the communist, state-centered model. Therefore, it is rather a difference in the degree of control exerted by the respective dictators, than a fundamental difference in the intentions of the programs they enforced.

A modern dictatorship entails a varying process of centralization and control upon society: milder or stronger depending on the distance it displays to the authoritarian or totalitarian poles. Cultural activities are also affected when artistic freedom disappears, and the political power imposes an exclusive, mandatory discourse. A modern dictatorship imposes an official art – an official vision on art. To ensure its predominance, this entails a process of monopolization of all cultural activities, ideologically through the control of discourses that emanate from the political power personified by the dictator, and institutionally. This process also includes the dissemination of this official version to which artists must comply. To enforce it, regulations and norms are imagined, institutions are set in place, and mass-communication means are activated. To express this view artistic education is also used, so as to create, and disseminate the new ideology on art.

The second statement is that art provides a space where *other* discourses than the officially sanctioned ones can be formulated, and the study of these discourses can prove fruitful for political science approaches to modern dictatorships. This analysis provides proof that, studying arts in dictatorships offers a better understanding of these regimes, by a look at their modalities to conceive art, their functioning, and their inbuilt inconsistencies. Examining artistic expressions created during the dictatorships is also helpful for our understanding of how people feel living under a repressive regime, as often artists are able to transmit these shared feelings through a figurative language. This second line of analysis is not discussed in this article, which only refers to the theoretical aspects of studying such diverse examples of modern dictatorships.

The Dictatorships in Eastern Europe and South America

In the 1970s from the ten Latin American countries of South America only two did not experience a military regime, Colombia and Venezuela. The authoritarian regimes in South America are contemporary and inscribed in the same general logic of the Doctrine of National Security

or the Ideology of National Security which developed under the influence of the Superior School of War in Brazil, and with the help of the very influential manual *The geopolitics of Brazil* (1966) written by Golbery do Couto e Silva. The Doctrine of National Security (DNS) was imagined in the context of the Cold War as a strategy to limit the influence of Marxism in Latin America (especially after the victory of the Cuban revolution in 1959), and identified an internal enemy that had to be eliminated, through repression and economic development, which would prevent the success of Marxist ideas. Increasingly during the military regimes, the enemy became anyone that opposed the military's conceptions.

The military coups d'état in Brazil (1964), Argentina (1966 and 1976), Chile (1973), and Uruguay (1973) were organized as a reaction or a preventive measure taken to stop the influence of populism or Marxism, guerrilla movements, or democratically elected socialist presidents as in the case of Salvador Allende in Chile. Seen as short-lived military interventions as other previous ones in several countries, these developed in what Juan Linz and other authors such as Guillermo O'Donnell, have called "bureaucratic-authoritarian" regimes so as to underline the collaboration between civilians and the military. In this sense, the military allied with civilian sectors to put into place several reforms that they deemed, on the basis of the DNS, essential for the purging of their societies, and for the restructure of their political regimes. Furthermore, also based on the DSN was the collaboration of these dictatorships in the secret Operation Condor, which saw the cooperation between the secret services of the five dictatorships (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay), together with Bolivia, and later on joined by Peru and Ecuador in the 1970s. Condor targeted their respective internal enemies on the territory of the neighboring countries, and even in the US or Europe. It was organized under the control of the secret police in Chile, National Intelligence Directorate (DINA), and its chief Manuel Contreras with the support of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

Despite this ideological perspective, the regimes followed national paths. For example, Chile and Uruguay (1918-1933, 1942-1973) had a strong democratic tradition compared to their neighbors. The respect for democratic institutions was higher in these two cases, thus the complete surprise of the long dictatorships (17 and 12 years respectively) they endured starting in 1973. The Alfredo Stroessner dictatorship (1954-1989) in Paraguay was a personal dictatorship, the longest after the one of Fidel Castro in Cuba in terms of length, although ideologically completely

opposed to the former. Thus, several of the decisions concerning the cultural sphere were imagined before the other countries in the Southern Cone. The Stroessner dictatorships also developed an intense cult of personality of the leader himself that was less present in the other regimes, which emphasized the military character and symbols, with the partial exception of the Pinochet regime in Chile, which increasingly became a personalized regime. In Argentina (1966-1973 & 1976-1983), on the other hand, the military dictatorships were collective governments (*juntas*), which saw the dominance of the first military leader, Juan Carlos Onganía for the first one (1966-1970)¹⁹ and Jorge Videla for the last military dictatorship (1976-1980).²⁰ In Uruguay (1973-1985), differently than the other Southern Cone dictatorships, the first leader was in fact not a military, but a democratically elected president who welcomed the intervention of the armed forces in 1973, Juan María Bordaberry (1972-1976). He was followed by another civilian, Aparicio Mendez (1976-1981) who was appointed by the military, and finally, by a general, Gregorio Alvarez (1981-1985). In Brazil (1964-1985), the alliance between civilians and the military was the clearest. The military acted collectively, not allowing for any personal domination to be established. So, the military dictatorship in Brazil saw five leaders in the twenty one years of rule: Humberto Castello Branco (1964-1967), Artur da Costa e Silva (1967-1969), Garrastazu Médici (1969-1974), Ernesto Geisel (1974-1979), and João Figueiredo (1979-85).

Hence, not all the dictatorships in the South were personal regimes (Chile and Paraguay), and we can also register collective forms of leaderships in the form of *juntas* (Uruguay, Argentina), or with limited personal autonomy (Brazil).

The communist regimes in Eastern Europe are also very different although ideologically found under the same approach of communist regimes, or more exactly of state socialism. All the regimes were established after the Second World War in the interval 1945-1948, but in different national contexts, with the help of a local communist movement, or in the absence of such a political organization. Thereafter, different local events structure the evolution of the communist regimes such as the 1956 revolution in Hungary, the 1968 revolt in Czechoslovakia, and the occupation by the Soviet army, as well as the reactions in other countries such as Romania, the dissent and protests followed by the 1980 martial law in Poland. Thus, in the 1970s and 1980s the differences between these

regimes made the national scenarios sometimes closer to the situation found in the Southern Cone of South America.

The preeminence of specific leaders in these differentiated contexts is also unequal. Personal dictatorships are the regimes in Romania with Nicolae Ceaușescu (1965-1989), and in Bulgaria with Todor Zhivkov (1954-1989), although in the latter case, the allegiance to Moscow is stable until the end.

After 1956, the Hungarian regime of “Goulash communism” saw with János Kádár (1956-1988) the choice to

accommodate public aspirations for limited sovereignty, modest economic progress and in the context of political-ideological demobilization, made provisions for the citizens’ personal space under existing socialism. Kádár also agreed to come to terms, by way of cooptation and selective marginalization, with the traditionally recalcitrant intellectuals. The remaining critical intellectuals – none of whom were jailed for political reasons after 1973 – were free (censorship and mild police harassment permitting) to have their say and thus became tolerated nay-sayers in the public arena.²¹

Among the communist regimes in Eastern Europe, the Polish case is a unique one as it saw an increased autonomy of several actors in relation to the state. First of all, the Catholic Church remained autonomous, and the party, the Polish United Workers’ Party (PWUP) “played the role of a hegemonic party, rather than being the sole party organization in the country.”²² For Andrew Michita what characterized the different phases of Polish communism was dissent, different forms of popular resistance, which were consecrated in the final recognition by the state of the citizens’ right to independent political organization.²³

In Czechoslovakia the experience of communism was further complicated by the difference between the Czech lands and Slovakia. A federal state since the constitution of 1968 separated the governments of the two countries after 20 years of shared communist rule. Thus, in the 1970s they had different structures of power. An important need for reforms was registered in 1968, followed by the Soviet occupation and the so-called “normalization” campaign. The normalization included the decimation of the Writers’ Union, the dismantlement of certain humanistic studies, and the eviction of 900 University professors. Then came the moment of the Charter 77, which “was more of a network of

communication and artistic expression than a formal association for action. It also came to provide the basis for the expression of an alternative view of life, the 'second polis', suggesting the formation of modes of action separate from, but parallel to, those of the state."²⁴

Intellectual life was also not as tightly controlled [in Slovakia] after 1968 as in the Czech lands. As a result, many Slovaks who had they lived in the Czech lands would have been classified as dissidents by the regime were able to keep their jobs in the official world while at the same time engaging in what Martin Bútora, one of the founders of Public Against Violence, has called "constructive deviance". In the late 1980s, activist intellectuals were able to use officially approved organizations, such as the Guardians of Nature, to organize and engage in activities to support the environment and other non-conformist actions.²⁵

The Bulgarian regime of Todor Zhivkov (1954-1989)²⁶ remained a close ally of Moscow, but in the same time accentuated, as Nicolae Ceaușescu the nationalistic project. As in the Romanian case, Zhivkov celebrated the very long history of his state, as the 1981 celebration of the 1300 years of the Bulgarian state proved. New monuments and buildings were imagined by the regime, which had at its center Zhivkov as father of the nation.²⁷ Specific to the Bulgarian case is the family approach to culture with the daughter of the leader, Lyudmila Zhivkova, who was in charge of the State Committee for Culture since the 1970s, and until her death in 1981. Certain liberalism in culture was seen in the 1970s when Zhivkov wanted to attract intellectuals and artists to his cause, just as Ceaușescu did in the mid-1960s.

Romania experienced with Nicolae Ceaușescu (1965-1989) an extreme political centralization, meaning he was the sole decision-maker. This exaggerated power the Romanian leader held has been analyzed in terms of *Ceaușescuism* (Trond Gilberg) or sultanism (Juan Linz). Ceaușescu played an important role in the articulation of artistic policies. At the beginning of his regime, he used artists so as to legitimize his rule, and then imposed his nationalist policy openly since 1971 ("the July theses"), which were reinforced in 1983 ("the Mangalia theses") and maintained until 1989. The 1971 July Theses included a 17 points program with the lines that were to be followed by party activists in the purpose of "ameliorating the political-ideological and cultural-educational" level of all citizens. Artists were assigned specific tasks especially "through different forms

and varied styles of expression, art must serve the people, the fatherland, the socialist society".²⁸ The political mandatory orientation of all artistic and media products was also announced; as well as the support of national products, especially historical films and patriotic poetry, and the endorsement of two mass cultural festivals, *Cântarea României* (Romanian Song) and *Cenaclul Flacăra* (The Flame Cenacle).

Art and Politics in Dictatorships: A Theoretical Framework

Although dictatorships argue differently when they attempt to politicize every artistic gesture, it is only aesthetically that art is political, as several theoreticians have argued: Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, and Jacques Rancière. Boris Groys underlines "the ability of art to resist external pressure" because of its autonomy,²⁹ although in fact, Adorno was the one that first observed "the double character of art, in the same time autonomous and a social fact",³⁰ and this dual role of art supports our analysis here.

As Hannah Arendt acknowledged, art has always been important for the political,³¹ but it appears that during modern times, this relationship is most easily seen in nondemocratic regimes and most specifically in the case of totalitarian regimes that have been studied extensively. Aside the examples of the Nazi dictatorship, of the Soviet Union, and of the fascist dictatorship of Mussolini, there are other modern dictatorships that use art in their consolidation of power or at least impose a mandatory program to the arts. Beside the aestheticization of the political practiced by the fascists and the politicization of the arts that the communists imagined in response, as Walter Benjamin observed, there are additional regimes that used somehow different strategies. My study investigates these other examples, as everything is politicized under a dictatorship and artists are among the first to react to this reality, and to try to give form to broader feelings while the regimes seek to subdue artists exactly for their power.

There is a growing literature on art and politics stemming from very diverse disciplines, from cultural studies, or sociology, to philosophy, and art history. These studies include the francophone approach, either institutional following the sociological method of Pierre Bourdieu,³² or the eclectic analyses coordinated for example by Lachaud, or Van Essche.³³ In the Anglo-Saxon space we can spot other types of approaches, linking democracy and artistic expressions.³⁴ History of art also discusses political

art or revolutionary art that uses political references, political quotation, and direct interventions in the status quo so as to alter it, etc.³⁵ These studies document several types of relations that appear between artistic forms and the political, but no coherent theorization that can be used in other studies, such as this one, is visible. Therefore, a mix of approaches and theoretical points of view guides the analysis of the Southern Cone countries and the Eastern European regimes.

If political science has not yet developed a particular approach for the study of arts, there are several authors and concepts that are useful to our understanding, as the focus on “art and politics/politics and the arts” progresses. While no full-fledged theory exists in this eclectic subfield, several approaches and foci can be identified in recent literature. An attempt to establish a specific method under the heading of “politics and the arts” has been developing especially since the 1980s in the United States, where attention was given to artistic practices in democracies as a new space for enriching political theory (the American Political Science Association has organized sections on literature and film, and since 1974 the Social Theory, Politics and the arts conferences have convened). Literary works were privileged by this focus such as “the narrative turn” shows, only to recently include visual arts practices. In Europe, the subfield has developed with the support of the Polarts standing group inside the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR) since 1995. In the Polarts framework, as part of the art and politics fluid group, are those authors inspired by the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze, Michel Foucault, Jacques Rancière or Roland Barthes etc., and who relate these ideas to visual arts, or literary illustrations.³⁶

These approaches deal essentially with democratic regimes in North America and Western Europe, and scarcely take into account the non-democratic experiences. This research tries to do just that, to integrate the type of analyses developed to study art in relation to the political through the investigation of modern dictatorships. This kind of focus can help enrich our understanding of the role art can, and does play in politics.

Although Marx did not develop an aesthetic theory, his writings on artistic topics have inspired most of the reflections on the relationship between art and politics inside what can be called the “Marxist constellation”.³⁷ The connection between art and politics has been analyzed under different names and from different viewpoints such as the relation between society and art, the commitment of the artist, art for art versus committed art, etc. The common denominator of these studies

is found in the Marxist and neo-Marxist approaches – such as those of Georg Lukacs and the Frankfurt School scholars: Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse. Critical theory analyzes the importance of cultural industries and their effects, such as the individual alienation in advanced capitalism, but their conclusions are not useful for the communist experiences; erstwhile they can be applied to the South American cases, which saw a neo-liberal experiment. Post-Marxist influences are also quite common in art and politics' studies: Gilles Deleuze, Michel Foucault, but most importantly Jacques Rancière's studies. Different art forms have also seen the development of even more specific approaches: film (Gilles Deleuze, Jacques Rancière, Walter Benjamin), photography (Roland Barthes, Walter Benjamin, Susan Sontag); theater (J. Rancière), music (T. Adorno), literature (Pierre Bourdieu, J. Rancière), and visual arts (J. Rancière, Michel Foucault.). These different theorizations make even more difficult to pinpoint the general "art and politics" heading.

Art in Dictatorships of Eastern Europe: Totalitarian & Post-totalitarian Art

One of the most comprehensive analyses of totalitarian art is that by Igor Golomstock who follows the Arendtian perspective. Golomstock considers that artistic life in the period 1932-1937 in the Nazi dictatorship, and the Soviet one was "entirely determined by Hannah Arendt's three main characteristics of totalitarianism: ideology, organization and terror".³⁸ This same framework of analysis is useful for the understanding of other dictatorships because they impose an official vision of art (ideology), and convey an institutionalization of this official art through institutions (organization), ensuring that no alternative projects can contest their monopoly (terror). Golomstock delineates five instances that are deployed by totalitarian regimes in the process of imposing totalitarian art:

- (1) The state declares art (and culture as a whole) to be an ideological weapon and a means of struggle of power;
- (2) the state acquires a monopoly over all manifestations of the country's artistic life;
- (3) the state constructs an all-embracing apparatus for the control and direction of art;
- (4) from the multiplicity of artistic movements then in existence, the State selects one movement, always the most conservative, which most nearly answers its needs and declares it to be official and obligatory;
- (5) finally the State

declares war to death against all styles and movements other than the official ones, declaring them to be reactionary and hostile to class, race, people, Party or State, to humanity, to social or artistic progress etc.³⁹

Totalitarian regimes constructed an institutional framework that centralized every artistic gesture. Nonetheless, other forms of art continued to exist.

What's specific to totalitarian regimes, in Golomstock's opinion, is that they create a specific cultural expression, "totalitarian art with its own ideology, aesthetics, its own organization and style".⁴⁰ "Total realism" was the international style of totalitarian culture and could be seen in Nazi Germany, in the Soviet Union and its satellites, and in communist China.⁴¹

The main principle of totalitarian ideology was the spirit of the party which meant that an artist had to look at reality through the eyes of the party... and to accomplish this task, the writer and the artist had to live the life of the people, had to play an active role in the building of the new society and depict, in a simple language and generally comprehensible, the works and accomplishments of the masses under the guiding of their leaders, struggling to create history.⁴²

Socialist Realism that became the unique and mandatory official style in the Soviet Union after 1932, and in the satellite communist countries after 1945 demanded that artworks were "'realistic' in form, and socialist in content".⁴³ From the writers, this unique style was extended to all the arts. Without any conceptual rigor, Socialist Realism "reflected a surreal reality, reconstructed ideally from political directives" and the artists had to abide by these and "to tell the truth. The truth was what the Party said".⁴⁴ Aucouturier recalls, "the aesthetic content was secondary, the essence of Socialist Realism did not reside in its directives, but in its orthodoxy statute that placed art under the jurisdiction of the totalitarian party-State".⁴⁵

One of the main characteristics of the totalitarian unions was they were mandatory, if an artist wanted to continue to create, he had to join the official union which was based on the new dogma.⁴⁶ An important aspect of totalitarian art in its Eastern version is the organization by the state of the different artistic fields and the establishment of what Miklos Haraszti called the "state artist". The Hungarian intellectual describes, in his famous volume *The velvet prison: Artists under state socialism*, the situation of his country's artists, but which is also applicable to other

communist countries, where artists were transformed in state workers as in any other field. "These artists are educated to be unable to create anything unpublishable. They are trained to be creative executors."⁴⁷ In fact, as Overy observed, "there existed very little cultural resistance in either state [the Nazi and the Stalinist regimes] to the stifling of artistic experiment and openness" and "one of the chief reasons for this success lies not in the apparatus of cultural repression, but in the extent to which the great majority of those engaged in all the many forms of cultural expression participated, willingly or otherwise, in sustaining the new artistic reality".⁴⁸

In the same time, totalitarian regimes developed into post-totalitarianism and the characteristics of art and artists were also transformed. In Eastern Europe this was seen after the 1956 thaw, and with different national trajectories. The analyses of totalitarian art of Haraszti and Golomstock do not include the different artistic expressions created during the dictatorship that did not respect the official line, as this investigation will. Groys' conclusion for the Soviet Union is also useful for other East European cases, "The majority of unofficial artists, writers, poets, and intellectuals believed that the true protest against the oppressive power of the Soviet system consisted not in criticizing it, but in ignoring it".⁴⁹ In fact, "a new value system had established itself. The art community valued not the artworks that defined the core message and the specific aesthetics of Socialist Realism, but rather the artworks that were able to widen the borders of censorship, to break new ground, to give other artists more operative space".⁵⁰ But, as Piotrowski observed, this situation of two cultural scenes, functioning in parallel was not common to all the countries in the East: "One of the key historic problems of Czechoslovak culture of the 1970s was its duality. The phenomenon of the 'parallelism' of official and unofficial culture was much less apparent in the other countries of the region and in some, for instance Poland, it was entirely absent".⁵¹ Furthermore, an essential observation of Groys concerning Soviet artists, also applies to the Romanian context of the Ceaușescu period. Groys answers the question "Why [Soviet] artists did not practice something like an institutional critique directed against power structures...why they were not politically engaged..." by saying that opposing the state would have meant opposing the Union of Soviet Artists that was a bureaucratic organization that dominated the artistic space governed by other artists.⁵²

Meanwhile, artists created art that disrupted the official codes of creation and of conduct, thus unsettling the official myth of totalitarian art. As Piotrowski notes, in some East-Central European countries, artists had

to freedom to create as long as they did not touch upon politics. During its post-totalitarian phase,

(...) the [Polish] regime allowed a certain amount of freedom of artistic expression, but only within the sphere of formal experimentation. (...) To use M. Haraszti's term, the artist lived in a "velvet prison" and he knew the price of that velvet lining. As the regime enlarged the cage, giving the artist greater freedom of expression, his desire to break out faded. ... In return the regime demanded from him neutrality, lack of criticism and respect for ritual linguistic conventions, as well as active production, formal experimentation and the use of Modernist or rather postmodernist stylistic approaches that could attest to the "modernity" and "Occidentalism" of the post-totalitarian society (...) The regime...required modern but uncritical art that did not question the status quo and respected the post-totalitarian social order, an order that was both totalitarian and consumerist, or more precisely, post-totalitarian and pre-consumerist.⁵³

This situation recalls the Chilean experience of the dictatorship, as well as other authoritarian examples from the Southern Cone of South America.

The different communist regimes in Eastern Europe allowed for diverse degrees of freedom and at different times, further complicating the regional panorama. "There were times when liberalization in one country occurred simultaneously with the tightening of political controls in another. This meant that, depending on the location and political context, the same type of art could have radically different meaning and significance in different countries of the region".⁵⁴ As we recalled it above, citing the Polish example, all the regimes disavowed any open critique of the regime and any political engagement.⁵⁵ The limits of autonomy, and of liberalization after the thaw were very different, making Romania an exception, closest to the Bulgarian experience.

Another well-documented example of totalitarian art is that of the Nazi experience. For Lionel Richard, "Nazism was the best example of a culture that was both the instrument and the expression of political power".⁵⁶ The guiding principles of the Nazi experiment were those expressed by Hitler himself. Nazi culture was imagined as an expression of race that the new man personified (the accent was placed on the Arian body, healthy, and robust that exulted biological values as presented by ancient Greek art), and was based on moral values (patriotism, heroism, obeying, love of work, the leader, and war).⁵⁷ Like in the Soviet Union, for the National Socialist government, "the role of the artist was essential:

he served through his work the national community. Art became then a propaganda tool that fell under the arbitrary of political power".⁵⁸ If in the USSR, writers were "engineers of the soul", in Nazi Germany they were meant to be "cultural soldiers of Adolf Hitler". Again, as in the Soviet Union and following the precepts of the vanguards, "the German society was meant to become, in the eyes of the Nazi officials, a work of art: art was not supposed to represent life, but life had to become a work of art" and its architect was Hitler.⁵⁹

In the same time, Glenn Cuomo underlines "the competing ideological, economic, and personal agendas pursued by the leading members of the Nazi hierarchy and the network of state, police, and Nazi Party agencies, ministries and departments" and their "overlapping purviews and rivaling interests (...) 'aptly labeled state of authoritarian anarchy'".⁶⁰ In fact, "the cultural policy put in practice by the National Socialist regime encompassed many principles that seemed to be incompatible. On the one hand, Hitler and the Party leadership promoted an aesthetic of representational art rooted in the realism and neoclassicism of the previous century. On the other hand, they also were willing to embrace the most recent technological advances in the new mass media of broadcasting and film."⁶¹ A detail in this sense is worth remembering, "The German [film] industry was second only to Hollywood in 1933...ticket sales expanded more than fourfold between 1933 and 1944."⁶² Despite of this total project, the Nazi regime failed to control all the mechanisms of escape and resistance as a recent volume by Vincent Platini shows.⁶³ Platini has investigated the ways in which several mass produced cultural products were able to construct a daily resistance to the total project of the regime; through crime novels, *Krimi* the author shows the many ways in which entertainment was both used by the regime, but failed to submit to its totalitarian policies. A sum of contradictions was found underneath the surface of the Nazi project, as any other totalitarian example shows. Likewise, in the Soviet Union, after the second world war, in 1948 some fifty "trophy films" (American, English, Italian, French) taken from the liberated countries were shown in cinemas and met with the public's enthusiasm, so they were soon taken out of the movie theaters.⁶⁴

This investigation reveals how the concept of totalitarian art is not useful to define the entire period of the communist regimes, as some of them develop into post-totalitarianism. Furthermore, not all the art produced during these regimes respected the official canon. And finally, national evolutions were more important in different turning points.

Art in Dictatorships of the Southern Cone: Authoritarian Art? An Institutional Perspective

There is no equivalent study of art of authoritarian regimes that would include cases in Southern Europe (Italy under Benito Mussolini, Spain under Francisco Franco, and Portugal under Antonio Salazar), and South America, and in fact this project tries to fill this gap in the scholarship by providing an analysis of diverse cases of modern dictatorships.

In the same time, we could identify a sum of elements that are specific to what could be called “authoritarian art” as it develops in Southern Europe. In Fascist Italy, “Cultural policy was [rather] executed through the encouraging of supporters, than by destroying those that were against”.⁶⁵ This consideration is very well suited for authoritarian regimes and their approach of the arts. They rather support those artistic expressions that are congruent with the official ideology, than impose a unique style. The regime of Antonio Salazar (1932-1968) in Portugal, and that of Francisco Franco (1939-1975) in Spain developed long-lasting systems that saw an evolution in the cultural field. In what concerns their approach of culture, the basic principles followed by the two regimes encompassed: an accent laid on tradition, the Catholic faith, the nation, the homeland, a cult of the leader (in Spain); the promotion of a standardized form of folklore (with such extreme examples as the “most Portuguese village” competition of 1938), the defense and use of the patrimony, especially of the imperial one, propaganda.

Culture during the Franco regime was declared apolitical, but in the first decades concentrated on the winners of the Civil War (1936-1939) translating in a predominant memorial culture with reminders of the fallen, and statues dedicated to Francisco Franco; as well as on the Catholic heritage. In the last decades, accompanying the economic development, a culture of “escape/evasion” centered on the *corridos*, easy-going comedies and literature, coupled with radio shows became dominating. High-culture, artistic innovation were abandoned by the state and granted to the market, thus suffering in an important manner. This model is close to the Chilean experience during the Pinochet regime. In the same time, the two authoritarian regimes did not develop a centralized institutional framework for the artistic domain, but used several institutions and privileged institutional dispersal. In the Portuguese case we see how it is a private foundation that assumed the role of the ministry of culture, supporting what the state did not: the Gulbenkian Foundation. Established

in 1956, the foundation had an art collection, libraries, and scientific magazines, an orchestra, and a dance company; today it administers one of the few important art museums in Lisbon.

The Chilean dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet (1973-1989) has been considered mainly as a form of "*apagón cultural*" or cultural blackout, and the main opposition to it, formed by left wing movements and personalities connected to the government of Salvador Allende (1970-3) was exiled, if it did not suffer the policies of extermination enforced by the regime. The core of this opposition was culturally inspired by socialism and used confrontation, and an open critique of the military regime. While this type of reaction is interesting, my analysis will make use of the investigation of those artistic expressions that came about and offered an alternative, for example in the form of the neo-vanguard expressions (such as C.A.D.A. or Colectivo Acciones de Arte, 1979-1985) as theorized by the cultural critic Nelly Richard under the label of "*Escena de Avanzada*" (New vanguard scene). The absence of an unitary, ideological, political project of the military after the coup d'état led the junta to resort to the different Right wing groups supporting this intervention. The approach of the Pinochet regime was not unitary, clearly framed and linear but an approach subjected to different centers of influence. The strategy of the regime encompassed at least three axes: the nationalistic-authoritarian, the integrist high culture conception, traditionalist, Catholic, and the neoliberal one which imposed the market model. The latter split into two paradoxical directions: elitist manifestations (opera and ballet, classical music and theater, academic painting, "bourgeois folklore"), and mass-culture (cultural industries and particularly the audiovisual).

The Chilean cultural model was based on private initiative, on private patronage, but also on direct and active state support specifically undertaken by the *Departamento de Extensión Cultural* (Department of Cultural Diffusion) of the Ministry of Education starting with 1977. Furthermore, the *Secretaria de Relaciones Culturales* attached to the General Secretariat of the Government since 1974 had the role of promotion of the official programs, together with the private entities. The different tendencies that structured the official approach had in common the affirmation of the *apolitical* character of art: art must only develop its specific language and must not be tainted by the political. The mass culture direction saw the recuperation by the regime of "the most commercial popular music, especially the romantic ballad and the 'rock-mantic ballad'".⁶⁶ Televised culture was encouraged by the Pinochet

regime by direct economic stimulus, such that 95% of Chilean houses had a television set by 1983,⁶⁷ while reading was discouraged by directly punishing the book industry.⁶⁸ "The permanent party on the screen [was] the consolation for an anemic nocturnal life" because if "streets were sad, screens were over-cheerful and wore spangles".⁶⁹

The discussion of the "*apagón cultural*" or cultural blackout was seen not only in Chile, but also in Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. In the four countries, the artists considered the regimes did not have a cultural project, but in fact, those artists that did not follow the ideological line of the regimes were punished, and in exchange an apolitical, safe version of culture and art were promoted. The four used television as a privileged means of transmission of their cultural program, and of the propaganda. The five countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay) used folklore in their cultural projects, as a strategy of legitimation.

Other coincidences occur, such as 1975 being the year of cultural policy in three of the five countries: Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay. This year is also the one in which Operation Condor was institutionalized through the secret meeting of the heads of the secret polices in Santiago. In Brazil, the official cultural model was gradually consecrated by the military regime. In 1975, they announced the "National cultural policy". In 1968 the cultural space was already controlled by the infamous Institutional Act No 5 (December 1968), which established "preventive censorship".⁷⁰ In fact, the Brazilian regime began to be interested in culture when the "economical miracle" (1967-73) proved to be a failure and in the same time that the regime tried to liberalize (*distensão*) during the administration of Ernesto Geisel, since 1974.⁷¹ The Brazilian project of cultural reform included the establishment of new institutions and the reform of previous ones. The state was not central to this project, and there was, as in Argentina and Chile a plurality of institutions, and in the Brazilian and Argentinian case the federal character of the state further multiplies them. In 1966 the Brazilian state established the Federal Council of Culture (modifying the National Council of Culture established in 1938); in the same time, another center of state power was the Department of Cultural Affairs (DAC)⁷² inside the Ministry of Education and Culture created in 1970.⁷³ Besides these 2 institutions, there were also the University networks, the federal units (state, federal district and municipalities), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but also department and sub-departments in other ministries and the Secretary of Planning of the Presidency.⁷⁴ Under the presidency of Geisel new institutions were created such as the very important Funarte

(National Foundation of Art), but also other institutional reforms. Without an apparent link, it is also in 1975 that the Pinochet regime imagined its main cultural project, *The Cultural Policy of the Government of Chile*. The project the Pinochet regime imagined towards its end, in 1988, *Project of a plan of cultural national development* included similar institutions to the ones promoted by the Brazilian dictatorship, the Fondart (similar to Funarte), as well as the specific institutes dedicated to music or literature in Chile.

In Argentina there was no ministry of culture once the last dictatorship took over in 1976 as in the other countries. Since 1964, the Under-secretary of culture had replaced the General Direction of culture created in 1958 as an institution dependent on the Ministry of Education and Culture.⁷⁵ In 1981 the sub-secretary was transformed in a Cultural Secretary dependent on the presidency and had 3 under-secretaries, of cultural policy and programs, of cultural relations and cultural action.⁷⁶ There were contradictions of the cultural policies in the Argentine dictatorship and not many funds dedicated to it, except for the 500% increase of funds by Jorge Videla for the World Football Cup of 1978, which Argentina won, in order to promote a better image of the military abroad.⁷⁷ The sub-secretary of Culture Francisco Carcavallo (1976-1981) was succeeded by four other ministers, and three under-secretaries of culture.⁷⁸ Carcavallo created a Plan of Technical Assistance in 1976 that offered classes of theater, dance, plastic arts, dance, music, folklore, literature, etc. to the municipalities of the provinces so as to form their own centers of plastic arts, literatures, orchestras, etc. This initiative could not be continued due to the lack of funds in the provinces. Carcavallo also sought to transfer the “classical and traditional culture” through theater works and itinerant exhibitions but these were also problematic due to the lack of funds and the lack of artworks in museums. The climate of the 1960s and 1970s linked any artistic or cultural activity to “subversion” and to deal with this, the military imagined “Operativo Claridad” (Operation Clarity), a program meant to eliminate subversion in the educational and cultural spheres. This included the “normalization” of libraries and public school, certain artistic education programs were closed temporarily or permanently, and censorship was in place between 1977 and 1981.

The military dictatorship in Uruguay did not organize a central institution specifically dealing with culture. As in the other Southern Cone countries, there was a Ministry of Education and Culture, the SODRE (Servicio Oficial de Difusion Radio Electrica), the cultural sections of

Intendencias and the education system. In 1975, the military also created DINARP (National Directorate for Public Relations) that played a role as censor and promoter of different cultural activities of the regime such that of supervising the publishing of books, posters, discs, films, etc.⁷⁹ Despite the lack of a centralized institutional framework, the culture of “the new Uruguay” was promoted by the military dictatorship (1975-80) through such programs as “1975 – Año de la Orientalidad, 150 años de la nación” (1975 The year of orientalism – 150 years of nationhood) accompanied by a sculptural and monumental euphoria connected to the image of José Gervasio Artigas, the hero of independence. In fact, as in the Chilean case, inside the regime there were several ideological currents that were promoting cultural projects: the conservative traditional thought, ultra-right Catholicism, nationalist revisionism of the early 19th century, the nativist currents in art, military historiography and political ruralism.⁸⁰ Interestingly enough, the *cinemateca* (film library) was and still is very influent in Uruguay, and even films that denounced the socialist regimes were transformed in instruments of critique of the Uruguayan dictatorship.

Finally, in Paraguay, there is also a spreading of tasks and a lack of centralization. The institutions that dealt with cultural activities during the Stroessner regime included the “Department of Superior Education and Cultural Diffusion” (1940), and the “General Direction of Cultural Goods” (1983) in the Ministry of Education. Along with this, involved in the promotion of culture, there was the Cultural Direction of the Municipality of Asuncion; for censorship, there was the “Commission of Morality and Public Shows”.⁸¹ As Ticio Escobar observes the fact that the long dictatorship of Alfredo Stroessner (1954-1989), one of the longest in Latin America did not develop a positive policy for the cultural field, does not mean it did not have one. “Even if negative, a system needs ideological support” and this was based on “the control, censorship, fear and punishment, and the complete lack of funding”.⁸² For Escobar the cultural model of the *stronato* used three myths, “the idea of History as the evolution of an epic and linear time that concluded with Stroessner, the concept of nation as the homogeneous content of an omnipotent state, and the notion of the people as an idealized subject”.⁸³

Concluding Remarks

No final conclusions can be put forward by this short theoretical preview of the analysis of the relationship between art and politics in modern dictatorships in Eastern Europe and South America that has introduced several theoretical landmarks. In the first part, the utility of the concept of modern dictatorship was addressed as it offers a common heading to the two types of regimes found in the two regions, and that political science analyses scrutinize separately. The analysis of the relationship between art and politics is addressed in an interdisciplinary approach that combines resources from contemporary philosophy with art theory, and art history, sociology of art and the analysis of cultural policies. The analyses of cultural manifestations, and specifically of the arts during the communist regimes in Europe use the term of totalitarian art as a lens of scrutiny. Erstwhile, this approach is not useful to understand the period addressed in this study – the 1970s and the 1980s – when post-totalitarianism developed distinctively in each country, making national events perhaps more important than the ideological common approach. Finally, the issue of a specific art of authoritarian regimes was addressed through an implicit comparison with the Southern European dictatorships of Mussolini, Franco and Salazar. By recalling the cultural institutional frameworks of the Southern Cone dictatorships we have already acknowledged the regimes' intentions of establishing a cultural policy, but with only partial success in Brazil.

NOTES

- ¹ This article is a part of the introduction to my book on the topic. Although in the proposal submitted to the New Europe College of Bucharest in 2014, I was planning to include several interviews with Romanian contemporary artists, I preferred to first write the theoretical introduction to the study. Thus, the subtitle given to this study, "A preview of theoretical problems".
- ² My study leaves aside: Albania (Enver Hoxha, 1944-85), Yugoslavia (Josip Broz Tito 1944-80), East Germany, Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador, which also had dictatorial regimes in the period analyzed. Equally so, I don't discuss the Soviet Union cultural sphere, although several references are made throughout the study to this case.
- ³ The study will refer to the regimes of Todor Zhivkov (1954-89), and Petar Mladenov (1989-90).
- ⁴ The analysis will focus on the regime of Janos Kadar (1956-88).
- ⁵ The analysis will focus on the regimes of Edward Gierek (1970-80), Stanislaw Kania (1980-1), and Wojciech Jaruzelski (1981-9).
- ⁶ The study will focus on the regime of Gustav Husak (1975-89).
- ⁷ Caterina Preda, *Dictators and Dictatorships: Artistic Expressions of the Political in Romania and Chile (1970s-1989) No paso nada...?* Doctoral Dissertation in Political Science, University of Bucharest, 2009.
- ⁸ See also the exhibition "Construction to Transmission: Art in Eastern Europe and Latin America, 1960-1980", organized by the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) in New York (September 5, 2015 – January 3, 2016).
- ⁹ Iris Dressler, Hans D. Christ (eds.), *Subversive Practices. Art under conditions of political repression 60s-80s/South America/Europe* (Stuttgart: Hatje Cantz, 2010), 51.
- ¹⁰ They also have specific types of adulation, such as the "Purahei Kele'e" or adulating songs of Alfredo Stroessner (1954-1989).
- ¹¹ While Linz warns about the misuse of "dictatorship" in his Introduction of *Régimes totalitaires et autoritaires* he also uses the formula "modern dictatorship" as a "general term" reuniting authoritarian regimes Linz, Juan, *Régimes totalitaires et autoritaires* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2006), 32-35.
- ¹² Neumann, F. (1957), "Notes on the Theory of Dictatorship", in *The Democratic and the Authoritarian State*, 233-256. New York: Free Press, 2001. (Translation by Enzo Traverso in *Le Totalitarisme*, 533-548. Paris : Editions du Seuil).
- ¹³ Linz, Juan, *Régimes totalitaires et autoritaires* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2006), 185.
- ¹⁴ Hermann Kantorowicz, "Dictatorships", *Politica* 4:1 (1935), 471.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 480, 483.
- ¹⁶ Fulbrook, Mary, *The People's State. East Germany Society from Hitler to Honecker*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), 2, 4.

- 17 Sabrow, Martin. "Dictatorship as discourse. Cultural Perspectives on SED legitimacy", in Jarausch, Konrad, H. (ed.), *Dictatorship as experience Towards a socio-cultural history of the GDR*, New York, Oxford: Berghen Books, 1999, pp. 195-211, 197.
- 18 Sabrow, p. 208.
- 19 He was followed by two other military leaders, Roberto Levingston (1970-1971), and Alejandro Lanusse (1971-1973).
- 20 He was followed by three other military leaders: Roberto Viola (1980-1981), Leopoldo Galtieri (1981-1982), and Reynaldo Bignone (1982-1983).
- 21 Rudolf L. Tökés, "Party politics and political participation in postcommunist Hungary" in Davisha, Karen and Bruce Parrott (eds.), *The consolidation of democracy in East-Central Europe*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 109-149, 112.
- 22 Andrew A. Michta, "Democratic consolidation in Poland after 1989", Davisha, Karen and Bruce Parrott (eds.), *The consolidation of democracy in East-Central Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, 66-108, 73-74.
- 23 *Ibid.*, 74-75.
- 24 David M. Olson, "The experience of the Czech Republic", Davisha, Karen and Bruce Parrott (eds.), *The consolidation of democracy in East-Central Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, 150-196, 153.
- 25 Sharon L Wolchik, "Democratization and political participation in Slovakia", Davisha, Karen and Bruce Parrott (eds.), *The consolidation of democracy in East-Central Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, 197-244, 205.
- 26 For a detailed analysis of many perspectives on the Zhivkov regime see: "Chapter 4 September Ninth, 'People's Democracy' and Socialism" in Roumen Daskalov, *Debating the Past Modern Bulgarian History: From Stambolov to Zhivkov* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2011), 223-318.
- 27 Stefan Krause, "Todor Zhivkov, Bulgaria's longtime communist leader" in Bernd J. Fischer (ed.), *Balkan strongmen: dictators and authoritarian rulers in South Eastern Europe* (USA, Canada: Purdue Press, 2007), 355-392, 380.
- 28 Ceaușescu, N., *Propuneri de măsuri pentru îmbunătățirea activității politico-ideologice, de educare marxist-leninistă a membrilor de partid, a tuturor oamenilor muncii, 6 iulie 1971*, Bucharest: Editura Politică, 1971.
- 29 Further on, in the same book, Groys specifies how he sees this autonomy "Art is of course political. All attempts to define art as autonomous and to situate it above or beyond the political field are utterly naïve." Boris Groys, *Art Power* (MIT Press: Cambridge MA, London, England, 2008), 13, 163.
- 30 Adorno, T., *Teoria estetică*, Pitesti: Ed. Paralela 45, 2006. (Translated by Andrei Corbea, Gabriel H. Decuble, Cornelia Eșianu), 11.
- 31 "La culture indique que l'art et la politique, nonobstant leurs conflits et leurs fusions, sont liés, et même en mutuelle dépendence". Hannah Arendt, *La crise de la culture* (Paris: Gallimard, 2011), 279.

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ARISTOPHANES AND ARISTOCRACY. POLITICAL GENDER AND THE HERMENEUTICS OF DESIRE

Abstract

This paper is concerned with the study of gender as political metaphor. It argues that in ancient Athens, or indeed in other pre-industrial societies, the aristocracy had symbolic feminine attributes, and that „political gender“ was performed by the people of the time in order to allegorically signify the political relationships between different social classes; essentially this means that gender and love were perceived as mediums of political expression. His-story, the contemporary production of the past through the lens of “big men”, ignores the role of symbolic women, projecting instead today’s hyper masculine worldview of what it means to be part of the elite. Mostly based on capital strength and the idea that the nobility was synonymous with warlords and brute force, this view has the direct result of excluding Eros from the political conversation that residually survives in ancient texts. Eros, thus exiled to an exclusively private sphere, such as the private life of individuals, has lost nowadays its multifaceted ancient meanings, and this paper is a step towards recovering them.

Keywords: political gender, political love, Eros, aristocracy.

“Do not raise a lion cub in the city, but if you
do be ready to serve his every mood.”

Aristophanes, *Frogs*, 1431-1432.

Observing that to translate “How are you?” into any given language one needs to translate the convention of greeting, not the individual items of “how”, “are” and “you”, David Bellos foregrounds the complexities that underpin a textual rendition.¹ Meaning, he says, “ is not the only component of an utterance that can in principle and in practice be turned

into something else; things said are always said in some tone of voice, with some pattern of pitch, in some real context, with some kind of associated body use (gestures, posture, movement)".² Asserting that humans are in constant need of translation and that meaning does not inhere solely in words,³ Bellos challenges the binary model of a direct, unmediated relationship between the signifier and the signified, envisioning the possibility for misapprehensions to arise notwithstanding familiar contexts, within one's own culture or language for example.

While countenance and manners are a source of meaning allowing feelings to be apparent even in the absence of verbal communication, including them alongside the latter may create dialogical exchanges that could supplement or even contradict the aforesaid, thus enriching communication in a coeval space. Faced with a text from the distant past though, emotions that transgressed the written account or other overt forms of expression are seldom sought after; instead the historian considers the written word as the sole repository of truth, thus limiting reality to whatever is manifest. Symptomatic for this approach is a drive to constantly accumulate "facts" and a belief that data and a detached observer establish the truth of a past "as it really happened".⁴ Impossible situations, those that do not relate with the historian's *weltanschauung*, are either appropriated to fit his cultural bias or explained away as fantasy, and a quest to distinguish reality from fiction ensues. For example, translating from ancient Greek words like "man" or "woman" may seem nowadays straightforward in terms of the reality they convey, yet that of a pregnant man may not. This paper will advocate that none of the above can be grasped with the modern historical toolkit focused on rooting out emotions and symbolic expressions in the name of philological accuracy, and that, based on context and intuition, the role of the storyteller is to foresee an alternative and more inclusive reality by imaginatively approaching an age when allegories were paramount. If imaginatively pursued, these allegories will then be able to challenge the overt meanings historians have grown accustomed to consider objective, factual and therefore real.

Two thousand five hundred years ago, in Athens 416 BCE, at a symposium, in an atmosphere remarkably similar to the one preceding the mutilation of the herms, men became pregnant for the first time in recorded history and today modern scholarship struggles to explain such an extraordinary event. Various theories have been put forward; Plass considers that the *Symposium* is "a sophisticated plea for pederasty" and that the idea of male pregnancy and childbirth has to do with a "confusion

of sexual roles in a homosexual relationship" which tries to mimic heterosexuality.⁵ Against this theory, and following Morrison and Dover, E.E. Pender rejects, beyond the general formula of πάντες ἄνθρωποι and the presence of the verb κυεῖν,⁶ otherwise known to designate the female experience of child delivery, a direct feminine reference to the metaphor of childbirth. He believes that Socrates carefully avoids it, trying to pander to his homosexual audience, and thus that male pregnancy must have been equated physiologically by seed retention and delivery, through orgasm and ejaculation. In support of this view, he takes Diotima's statement, ἡ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς καὶ γυναικὸς συνουσία τόκος ἐστίν / "For intercourse of man and woman is a childbirth",⁷ to stand for the "birth of the seed", alleging, by drawing on testimonies from Diodorus Siculus, Euripides and Aeschylus, that the ancient Greek psyche relegated the woman's role in procreation to that of a mere incubator, and as result that ejaculation, in the aftermath of intercourse, must have been the "real" moment of childbirth that Plato actually had in mind.⁸

Cogent for an immediate reading, on closer inspection this literal interpretation is prone to debate at least on three accounts. Firstly, Diodorus narrates as a curiosity that, in Egypt, the father was considered the sole author of procreation, the mother's role being limited to that of a receptacle, but he uses this story in order to highlight an opposite custom, alien to the Greeks, for in Egypt, he says, "trees that bear fruit are "male" and those which do not "female", exactly opposite to the Greek usage".⁹ Secondly, one could also argue that when it comes to theatre plays and especially tragedies, the poet can aggrandize ideas for the dramatic effect without them being necessarily representative for the society as a whole. Furthermore, in this particular case we cannot overlook the fact that these arguments were used to justify murder by one party in a trial; to discard the opposition's stance as less indicative for the ancient Greek thought is at least partisan, considering that even here, in the dramatic setting, the votes were equally split. Thirdly, in *Theaetetus*, another Platonic dialogue where men are pregnant and Socrates plays the role of the midwife, the language used abounds in explicit references to women and their experience in childbirth: pangs of labour, the cutting of the umbilical cord, miscarriages, etc.¹⁰ It is therefore entirely possible that in Plato the metaphor of female pregnancy could have been applied to men as well, and I am of the opinion that in the *Symposium* childbearing, instead of being related with male orgasm and ejaculation, was an effeminizing process bringing forth a new creature.¹¹

Perhaps less convincing is Pender's reasoning that "Plato's audience was composed of well-educated, upper-class men, who were likely to have only a limited interest in the subject of female childbearing" and that "female pregnancy is out of place in the homosexual ambience of the dialogue, and it is therefore not surprising that when Diotima speaks of the male lovers procreating spiritual children, all reference to the female role is avoided. Plato is seeking to impress on his readers the pleasures of spiritual procreation and so concentrates on those aspects most familiar and most appealing to them".¹² But the *Symposium* does not stand alone among other Platonic dialogues in being designed for the "well-educated, upper-class men", indeed none were addressed to the plebs and neither was the aforementioned *Theaetetus*, Plato's dialogue on knowledge. As for the homosexual environment, or the specific reception and expectation of a homosexual audience, these ideas are very popular across the aisle of modern scholarship, from feminists to philologists and classical historians, but they are somewhat peculiar, as the conundrum we have to deal with is that in classical Athens homosexuals and homosexuality did not exist.

In his book, "One Hundred Years of Homosexuality", David Halperin reveals that homosexuality and by extension heterosexuality are fairly recent and somewhat odd, Western, bourgeois cultural constructs rather than universal "building-blocks of sexual identity for all human beings in all times and places" and as such that they are "inappropriate for the interpretation of sexual life in ancient Greece" or for that matter in any other non-western society.¹³ Conversely, in another paper, he dismisses the universal explanatory aura surrounding them in psychology, gender studies and related disciplines, stating that, "the distinction between homosexuality and heterosexuality, between homosexuals and heterosexuals as individual types, had no meaning for classical Athenians; there were not as far as they knew two different kinds of "sexuality" two differently structured psychosexual states or modes of affective orientation, but a single form of sexual experience".¹⁴ Furthermore, rather than an object of study for its own sake, sex was often used as a metaphor to access higher truths; he exemplifies with who we could now imagine as Freud's counterpart in classical antiquity, Artemidorus, the dream interpreter, for whom dreams, even those sexually explicit, were never really "about sex" but about politics, social and economic status, therefore reversing what western bourgeois intellectuals conceptualize as the natural flow of meaning: from overt, public signifiers to private, hidden, and repressed desires.¹⁵

Halperin's iconoclastic contribution to the study of gender in antiquity unshackled eros from "sexuality" and outlined the possibility for its study as part of a wider social and political matrix. I would like to develop this approach by introducing *political gender*, a concept which I think will shed new light both on Aristophanes' speech in the *Symposium* as well as on his comedies in which women take centre stage.

What is political gender? I will start by arguing that this is not a new concept but a forgotten one. Current academic fashion dictates that sex is biological and that gender is the "sex of the brain" linked with personal identity, that they both belong to individuals defined simultaneously as cultural beings and biological organisms. Judith Butler famously described gender as a performative act, a "corporeal style" which is both intentional and performative, where "performative" itself carries the double meaning of dramatic and non-referential".¹⁶ An "act" of the individual, gendered identity is linked to the ways bodies are acted in public.¹⁷ But this view entails an enshrined division between public and private life which itself is a relatively recent concept. Originating in the nineteenth century, in the follow-up of the French revolution, this dichotomy between the seen and unseen, between public, nuanced and therefore important information and a "private", allegedly simple, domestic, and as such an irrelevant enunciation for the wider society, forcibly expiated an imagination sensitive to allegorical political thinking. Previously, disembodied, abstract public entities such as political factions, social classes, could have been casually performed in ways that visualised and facilitated the understanding of social status through gender in face-to-face environments, but nowadays this is no longer the case. As a consequence of this contemporary trend, we have reached a point where one finds difficult to conceive sex, gender or even the entire body outside the exclusive empire of "the individual" in his private capacities, or to imagine the possibility that ancient political allegories could have been themselves objects of fantasy and desire, and that humans were able to fall in love or to have intercourse with them. Pre-bourgeois societies however experienced no qualms in these matters. In France, during the Old Regime, it was possible to imagine the entire nation as a body, with different social orders acting as different body parts. Anthropomorphic symbolism of the political bodies allowed then for a marriage between Lady Aristocracy and the "citizen body" to take place or, as the revolution progressed, imagined the monster Iscariot (an anagram for the aristocrat) savagely preying on the bodies of innocent revolutionaries.¹⁸ Similarly, in classical Athens, Eupolis' comedy *Poleis*

exhibited international politics through the lenses of gender in an interplay between the Athenian citizens and the female chorus of *Poleis*, which stood for the allied cities of the empire. It was a symbolism that cultivated the relationship of power and subordination within an imagined *oikos*, extrapolated from an actual “household” to the stage of the Athenian empire. As Rosen pointed out in the analysis of the “love affair” between Athenian men and their subject cities in this play:

The desire for “marriage” with individual allies, was analogous to the desire for a “real” marriage with a woman: in each case the relationship was intended to foster the higher goal of managing, maintaining, and enriching an *oikos*, whether it be the actual one of the Athenian household or the metaphorical one of the international hegemony which Athens claimed for itself.¹⁹

Overall I think that rekindling the idea of political gender may advance a new theory of erotic desire, capable of raising fresh perspectives by extrapolating masculinity, femininity, the feminine and pregnant men, from the organic agency we have boxed them in, and this will ultimately offer us an alternative to the readings focused on private experiences between individuals and go beyond the sexual templates we currently operate with.

In Plato's *Republic* Love is portrayed as tyrannical, but this was no dead metaphor lamenting some private, unrequited love. On the contrary, Ἔρως Τύραννος abruptly enters the public space to purge sobriety, cajole, seduce and subjugate the thrifty “democratic citizen”.²⁰ The metaphor is overtly political, Τύραννος is the epiclerus for Ἔρως and vice versa, for as Plato explicitly reveals, one cannot exist in the absence of the other. Tyranny aggregates political power that previously was equally dispersed, and it does so not through brute force, for a singularity could not openly overcome a multitude, but infecting its victims with desire and erotically enslaving them. Tyrants are sexy, wealthy, cunning, and insatiable; their love for luxury, deception and artifice renders them non-male in the all-male, democratic and egalitarian, imagined political universe.²¹ For ancient Greeks μαλακία (softness) and πολυτέλεια (magnificence, wealth) were stereotypical attributes that epitomized the tyrant in his capacity to derail the normative civic ideology which envisioned citizenship as contingent on ideas of frugality, manhood and military service.²² The tyrant was therefore the antipode of the democratic citizen in all walks of life, and most prominently in the imagery of gender. Biologically male and a Greek citizen of course, the tyrant's political gender however was

constructed symbolically, projecting otherness by showcasing a luxurious, effeminate and conversely oriental, non-Greek, lifestyle. Ideologically a “woman”, on the fringes of the political system and rejected by Athens’ official discourse, the tyrant’s dominion was a paradox, as he extends his influence over the three traditional pillars that defined male democratic ideology, ultimately subverting them in the symbolic discourse: *common interest and equality*, confiscated through his rule despite the fact that in a face-to-face society power over many was not deemed to be exercised by one; *physical prowess*, boasted upon despite the fact that in an agonistic environment the numerically feeble could not rule over a fit multitude; and *legal standing*, for in the Athenian jurisprudence all the signifiers that relegated his social status to womanhood rendered him unfit to govern over the free men of a Greek polis.²³ A paradox explained by Eros, tyranny is by no means unfathomable; its presence lingers even in the democratic discourse that, during the opening procedures of the Assembly, builds up its own identity by publicly expiating the tyrant’s monstrous alterity only to succumb afterwards, in the proceedings, to the lovable tongues of tyranny, the sweet erotic speech of the rhetoric. It is no coincidence therefore that, both in *Menexenos* and in the *Symposium*, “political women” are called upon to initiate Socrates in the mysteries of rhetoric and erotics and subsequently, either directly or through the philosopher, the political leaders of the day, Pericles and Alcibiades. But who were those women and what did they stood for?

Political women were biological males involved in Athenian politics, but they were also part of a wide ranging, partisan discourse which equated etiquette, beauty and femininity with the aristocracy and opposed it with the coarse manners and behaviour of the male citizenry;²⁴ they existed in the realm of political allegory and shared with their biological counterparts certain features that when transposed in the agora acted like markers that symbolically gendered political identity. Ἀβρός and its more pejorative synonym, τρυφή linked with ὕβρις as the pursuit of vainglory, imagined a geography of otherness, pushing externally the boundaries of μαλακία and feminine luxuriance eastwards and internally upwards on the social ladder. This geography of alterities is also present in Aristophanes’ *Clouds*, where it thoroughly demarcates political genders. Here Strepsiades is a peasant modestly living in the countryside, while his wife is the embodiment of high-class refinement. Member of one of the most illustrious Athenian aristocratic families, niece of Megacles son of Megacles, she is from “the” town (ἄστυ) which unlike the democratic, all-encompassing πόλις typifies

the pinnacle of the urban space associated with the high status of an urban elite.²⁵ In Greek, ἄστυ literally means the (upper) “town”, and was associated with the original birthplace of the community through the city’s aristocratic founding families, though, in the archaic period, it extended its semantics to incorporate the urban area marked by the city walls. In *Oedipus Tyrannos*, the tyrant proclaims himself ἀνὴρ ἀστῶν μέγιστος (the greatest of the men in town),²⁶ to showcase power, wealth, and dominion over the most illustrious citizens, a vision replicated in Aristophanes’ *Lysistrata* where the conflict between men and women is superimposed over the one between ἄστυ and πόλις. This, Nicole Loraux attributes to a division between “citadine et citoyen”,²⁷ but I think that rather than a conflict between actual women and men with different topographic backgrounds, the onstage clash between ἄστυ and πόλις was intended as a metaphor, a symbolic enactment of the internal conflict that divided Athens in 411 BC, ultimately projecting a power struggle between aristocracy and democracy, political women and political men, the victory being claimed simultaneously in the *stage drama* and the *social drama* by the former.²⁸

Political gender is further emphasized in *Clouds* when the supercilious wife’s portrait is inwrought with manifold qualities that baffle her thrifty husband. Haughty, spoiled, spendthrift and “thoroughly Coesyrrized”, the playwright fastidiously parallels her with Coisyra, a character famous for her exotic tastes, wealth and extravagance, and above all used here and elsewhere in the extant comedies as a signifier for an aristocratic lifestyle. Next, zoological and gender symbols coalesce to further the status divide between the two spouses, constructing a discursive and interconnected web of meanings around the “noble” horse and, implicitly, a “servile” donkey; this Mark Griffith has unveiled to be part of a deep social structure of power relations in antiquity which also gendered the roles of the horse and the donkey.²⁹ The explicit symbolic confrontation between the two equids can be found in Plato’s *Symposium*, but *Clouds* also employs a pattern of beauty, wealth and power-display opposed to one of “hard work” in the compromise naming of their son, Phidippides:

After that, when this son was born to us, I mean to me and my high-class wife, we started to bicker over his name. She was for adding *hippos* to the name, Xanthippus or Chaerippus or Callippides, while I was for calling him Phidonides after his grandfather. So for a while we argued, until finally we compromised and called him Phidippides. She used to pick up this boy and coo at him: “When you’re grown you’ll drive a chariot to the Acropolis, like Megacles, and don a saffron robe”, and I would say “No

you'll drive the goats from the Rocky Bottom, like your father, and wear a leather jacket'. But he wouldn't listen to anything I said; instead he's infected my estate with these galloping trots.³⁰

Saffron dyed fabrics are extremely expensive and they functioned throughout history as a status symbol for the nobility. "Saffron, from dried stigmas of *Crocus sativus*, is the world's most expensive spice. It takes seventy thousand flowers to produce about half a kilogram of saffron" and "one kilogram of saffron contains about 10 g of crocin and 60 g of crocein (...) which are the actual dye components".³¹ Pictured together with the chariot's procession, the long saffron robe recalls Homeric kingly splendour but it is also an image of extreme hybris as this vain magnificence is set to challenge the Goddess worshiped on top of the Acropolis, rivaling the robe she was adorned with during the festival of the Panathenaea. Athena's garment is invoked also in *Knights* where noble "gentlemen worthy of this land and the Robe" lament the city's contemporary predicament, saying that base men serve the country nowadays only for free meals and monetary benefits.³² Beautiful, long haired, and wearing a tiara, the aristocratic knights are metaphorically associated with the animals they steer: long maned, proud, luxurious, their pursuit is vainglory not money or material goods. The aristocratic, "feminine", gender is therefore emphasized by expensive garments and these luxurious equine signifiers, for as Victoria Wohl observed, "long hair was the badge of a wealthy and snobbish elite" while "the tiara marks an ostentatious, even tyrannical, superiority".³³

Combed, clipped into patterns, arranged in pom-poms, perfumed and decorated with bows or ribbons, the horse's mane and indeed the entire animal exuded grace and femininity for the ancient Greeks.³⁴ Together with the lion, another feminine symbol of aristocracy and royalty, the horse's existence was opposed ideologically to the donkey's masculine, utilitarian, and labour intensive life. It is at this crossroad of symbolic gender identities that Strepsiades' plight can be understood through Semonides' imprecation of the "horsy wife". The latter is a picture of unattainable beauty for the common folk, of luxury and pampered femininity that cannot coexist with the dung, misery and hard labour so commonplace in the average household. It is not for the commoner to behold such beauty, the poet says, but for the tyrant and sceptre-bearing king, thus effectively segregating social relations in the seventh century BCE on a politically gendered framework:

But the one whom the mare, luxurious and long-haired, bore, she turns away from the works of slaves and misery, and she would never touch the mill, or lift a sieve, or throw the dung from the house, or sit beside the oven, since she avoids soot. But she makes her husband a friend of necessity, since she bathes away the dirt every day, two or three times a day, and anoints herself with fragrant oils, and she always wears her hair combed, hanging heavily, shadowed with flowers. Such a woman is a beautiful sight for others, but an evil for the one to whom she belongs, *unless* he is a tyrant or a sceptre-bearing king, who rejoices his spirit in such things.³⁵

So what can we infer from all these various records that steer us towards defining gender as political? While there is no “hard evidence” to support the concept, if by evidence we mean a text whereby the aristocracy would be explicitly revealed as feminine or bluntly equated with “real” women, there is enough ground that will allow political gender to be corroborated by symbolic associations, fashion, countenance or the behaviour of aristocratic subjects. As was previously mentioned, meaning does not inhere solely in words, so we should follow the Greeks in imagining for instance Alcibiades’, one of Athens’ most prominent aristocrats, wanton walk, his lisp, largesse and conspicuous exoticism as sexy signifiers that enticed his audience and rendered him “erotically”³⁶ desirable in the eyes of the Assembly. Indeed one of Plutarch’s anecdotes substantiates this point of view. According to it, after Alcibiades’ inaugural speech a quail hiding in his cloak and scared by the commotion caused by the frenzied clapping of the enraptured Ecclesia, flew away, prompting the mob to leave everything aside, hunt it down and return it to its owner; this behaviour, as Jaqueline de Rommily and Victoria Wohl’s keenly observed, is reminiscent to the courtship rituals in ancient Greece, whereby a man (the *erastes*) would have given a bird as a token of love to his beloved (the *eromenos*).³⁷

The present obscurity of the aristocracy’s feminine political gender has more to do with a contemporary scholarly agenda: feminist theory focuses on the broad issue of actual women in antiquity and tries to extract as much evidence as possible about their “real”, “everyday life” from a limited and scattered corpus of textual and archaeological information, while classical scholars generally look for the minutiae trying to prove the actual existence even of theatrical characters.³⁸ If we are to use an Alcimboidian metaphorical analogy, this leaves our perception pendulating between a quest to discover the actual, real existence of the God of seasons, Vertumnus, and an analysis aimed at identifying the beautiful and delicious individual fruits, vegetables and flowers that composed his portrait. To

grasp the concept of political gender, I think that what we need is an imaginative leap that will incite us, paraphrasing Clifford Geertz, “to look over the native’s shoulders” to all those instances where sex, love and desire transcended the current erotic formulas that ascribe gender to the individual, and gaze instead at its social and political dimension. Strepsiades and his wife will thereafter appear not as fictional or actual characters in need to be identified onsite, but as archetypes that initiated through gender a discussion on the power relations in the Athenian politics. Reaching a point of allegorical understanding will provide incentives for a contemporary audience to appreciate the “hidden kingly image” and the meaning of *political love* in a context where love (eros), luxury and womanhood would have been coterminous, and subsequently to imagine and decipher who actually were, in the *Republic* and elsewhere, “these terrible charmers and tyrant makers” (οἱ δεινοὶ μάγοι τε καὶ τυραννοποιοὶ) that contrive to engender in men a ruling passion (ἔρωτά τινα αὐτῶ μηχανωμένους ἐμποῦησαι), corrupting them to a decadent lifestyle.³⁹

Victoria Wohl’s path breaking book revealed that in ancient Greece political eros was a palpable reality rather than the dead metaphor, “that ill-defined sense of attachment” contemporary patriots are accustomed to feel when they declare love for their country. She considers Greek politics intrinsic to the erotic manifestations that, based on the seductive speech of the rhetoric, enflamed desire between the *erastes* and the *eromenos*, men and women, orators and the Assembly. This living metaphorical love, however, was not disembodied, “platonic”, rather one of most passionate and sexual of its kind and it involved political, symbolic genders ; (re) imagining them provides us with a quest to recuperate the ancient “bodies” engaged in that loving, sexual encounter and Plato’s *Symposium* is a good starting point.

In other dialogues but especially in the *Symposium*, women pursue politics and the study of philosophy. Taken at face value, for a patriarchal society like Athens where even information about actual women was rare at best, this may have been a startling idea.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, midwives, weavers and the pregnant “humans” (ἄνθρωποι) burst on the dramatic and philosophical stage to capture the imagination of their contemporaries, not in their biologic form or private capacity however, but as gendered signifiers unhindered by the social and political limitations of their signified, for unlike the latter the former masters the public space, and is at the core of the Athenian political discourse. I believe that such a symbolic approach to the *Symposium* could also offer us an alternative to the present

day binary theories about the “physical” and the “spiritual” pregnancies or other “feminine” activities present in the dialogue, because this view is employed nowadays only to explain away the women’s “physical” experiences as mere vessels for higher, manly, “spiritual” truths; indeed these modern theories have tried to accommodate a very large foot in a Cinderella shoe and it is perhaps time we do away with them and imagine instead the Athenian *political men and political women*, by contextualizing the dialogue simultaneously with the events in the agora and the symbolic universe of Aristophanes’ “women comedies” performed at about this time.

The Political Context

In 415 BCE, pandemonium erupted in Athens, in one night, at the cover of darkness, sacrilegious people mutilated the herms, the city’s public monuments, whose beards were then chipped and phalluses chopped off.⁴¹ The public inquiry which followed showed that the culprits were aristocratic *hetairoi* led by Alcibiades, on their way back home from a symposium. Together with the investigation into the mutilation of the herms, a parallel inquiry also indicted Alcibiades and his chums for profaning the Eleusinian mysteries, an event which allegedly took place also during a symposium, in the house of Plato’s uncle, Charmides. The idea that a few decades later Plato would innocently write a dialogue titled the *Symposium* about *another* symposium, unrelated to the one which triggered those events, and which apparently only coincidentally included all the most prominent perpetrators indicted by the Athenian courts,⁴² is based on two premises: the first is that Plato’s *Symposium* is either a dialogue about love between individual partygoers or a philosophical treatise that it is concerned with ethereal, timeless truths and therefore disconnected from its surroundings, and the second is that the date of the dialogue is fixed to a few months prior, owing to the celebration of Agathon’s victory. The second reasoning is perhaps easier to dismiss, on one side because it is difficult to simultaneously argue for the *Symposium*’s timelessness and to wrangle for a few months, and on the other because paradoxically it does not have a fixed date, instead its narrative is based on a set of mirrors each placed at a different time, and each looking back at the dialogue from a different vantage point and thus, in hindsight, through the lens of subsequent events. Indeed the storytelling may start in 416 BCE, but it goes on, continued by the one between Plato’s alter- ego,

Apollodorus and his companion, a dialogue which itself is a sequel to the one between him and his fictitious friend, Aristodemos of Cydathenaeum who, like Diotima, was an allegory rather than an obscure individual mentioned nowhere else. Aristodemos stood for the “aristocratic demos” that introduced the reader into the elegant atmosphere which typified the sympotic environment, a distinct figure from the “real” demos that gave Agathon the prize in the dramatic competition but at the same time analogous in his award giving capacity. Basically the story stems from him and he is the one that crowns the winner at the end. My view therefore is that Plato uses poetic licence to describe *the* drinking party which unleashed the *hetairoi* on the streets of Athens, and therefore one needs to approach its symbolic and allegorical dimension rather than being very precise about an imprecise date. As for the first reasoning, this is harder to dismiss because it goes against an exegetic tradition of what the *Symposium* is all about, for example the Victorian ideal of “platonic love”, and, more importantly perhaps, against the grain of contemporary understanding of what love is, basically a feeling between two individuals, though recently this approach has been challenged as well by historians of classical antiquity, as outlined above.

What we know for certain about this drinking party is that it congregated upper class men that were all part of Alcibiades’ inner circle and which included Plato’s family, people that privately clamoured for at least a decade against what they perceived as the Athenian democracy’s divide between public contribution for the war effort and decision-making. This dissatisfaction boiled over a few years later, in 411 BCE, when an oligarchic coup succeeded to overthrow democracy while most of the Athenian citizens were stationed at Samos, serving in the Athenian fleet.

The act of mutilating the herms’ erect phalluses and chipping off their beards was charged with a political symbolism that unmanned the masculine political body of the Athenian citizens, expiated masculinity and with it democracy, feminizing and aristocratizing the public space. In this respect, Osborne convincingly illustrates how the herms acted much like theatrical props outside the theatre made by and for the Athenian men/ citizens to gaze at themselves. While ideologically they were part of a self-referential public discourse which, on the domestic front, symbolically emphasized the Athenian democracy’s “masculinity”, they also projected this “masculinity” abroad, as they were linked with the monument of the Eion victory which commemorated the first success of the Greek forces under Athenian leadership against a “feminine”, luxurious monarchy represented by the

Persian Empire.⁴³ It is in this context that in 415 BCE, the herms collectively projected Athens' democratic hegemony now at its height, in a way that was at the same time sexually and politically explicit, since

they re-presented the individual Athenian to himself, and this not just on a few special occasions in the year, as with the Dionysiac mask, but every time he set foot outside his house. Whenever the Athenian prepared himself to make contact with another he had first to make contact with the other that was himself in the herm(...) It is undeniable that the mutilators chose as their target objects whose destruction was most certain to unman the Athenians and render them impotent.

For Osborne, in the Greek psyche, "herms and hoplites have a more fundamental link. As the herm is (and is not) the viewer, so every hoplite is (and is not) every other hoplite in the equality which is the foundation of the democratic polis, the equation of soldier and citizen."⁴⁴

Following Osborne's insight into these theatrics of the phallus in classical Athens, I would also venture to link political gender with Zoe Petre's analysis of the Athenian democracy. Arguing that the vote is a mean to stage confrontation and that the Greek democracy was a sublimated form of violence, an overt *mise en scène* of brute force, measuring the strength of its citizens in rallying numbers, she demonstrates that democracy is all about the show, about flexing the demos' political muscle in an open display of imaginary force.⁴⁵ On the other hand, aristocracy and its extreme form, the tyranny of individuals, due to their minority status, operated on the political stage with a different, less "muscular" set of political tools. According to Detienne and Vernant, *metis*, cunning skill, artifice, along with persuasion were for the Greeks "feminine" attributes, used by those less physically endowed in order to overcome adversity.⁴⁶ It is therefore entirely plausible to extrapolate this idea to all those symbolic "political women" in their quest to rule the demos, and by doing so we could imagine, looking over the ideological Athenian shoulder, why openly, in a democratic environment, the tyrant or the aristocrats needed to role play the enchanters, winning power by pleasing and seducing the people.⁴⁷ What made that night in 415 BCE to stand out however was that a minority managed to successfully carry out an attack upon the majority's symbols of power, an unprecedented event in the Athenian democracy which had put into question the established order underlying an entire edifice of "sublimated violence" which the Athenian democracy was built upon. I think that for our following analysis of the *Symposium's*

feminine paraphernalia and Aristophanes' contribution there, these points are important to solve the puzzle of the political symbolism of gender and desire which played out in the city. With those issues in mind one can imagine as well not just the political context of Aristophanes' women comedies but also how those gendered signifiers were the cornerstone of a lively, symbolic political debate.

The Dramatic Context

Aristophanes' hilarious account of Love in the *Symposium* offers a paradox for modern readers, which makes them miss out his political agenda and inherently the joke. He begins the story by telling us that once upon a time the nature of man was different inasmuch as there were three kinds of human beings rather than today's two sexes: the male, the female and the *hermaphrodite* (ἄνδρόγυνος), and that in terms of the form of body and spirit, each person was a totality comprising the other. This superhuman individual was "round", endowed with four legs, two set of ears, two faces and privy parts, and instilled with an ambition that would challenge the gods. It is for this reason and to diminish their strength that Zeus decided to cut them in two, and humorously thought about doing a further cut in case their impiety would not abate, so that quarter men would hop around in one leg.⁴⁸ Modern day humans, the playwright says, are but a half of the original ones, hence men who are a section of the primordial men love and pursue men, women who are a section of the primordial women are attracted to other women, and those that descended from the hermaphrodite, love and pursue the opposite sex. Aristophanes goes on to praise male-male bonding, love and desire as superior to the rest and especially the hermaphrodite figurehead, saying that only those that engage in male-male relationships are real men, having the most manly nature and therefore that they are the finest citizens worthy of doing politics.

And here lies the paradox for modern scholarship. Rather than imagining that Aristophanes is using love as a political allegory, the assumption is that he refers to personal relationships, and furthermore that he departs from his views in his comedies where time and again he chastises Agathon for his femininity, in order now to praise him and his lover, Pausanias, for their manliness. This would be done either out of politeness so as not to insult the host, or because allegedly this was the comic effect that he was after: by praising Agathon's "homosexual" relationship with Pausanias he would

have delivered a tongue-in-check rebuttal since everyone knew his “real” stance on the subject matter.⁴⁹ I disagree with these opinions because they are informed by contemporary views on homosexuality and also because they are unimaginatively based on a straight, fact based reading. The key to the puzzle I think is to be found elsewhere, in *Thesmophoriazusae* and with it one can decipher both Agathon’s (as well as Alcibiades’ and the rest of the company’s) rightful place in Aristophanes’ comic panoply of love, and the subtle humour that informs the poet’s myth. The issue of “male” pregnancy in Socrates’ contribution, as well as the meaning of his betwixt nature, will thereafter also fall into place.

Written and performed in a time when democracy was abolished or not entirely reinstated, *Thesmophoriazusae* is a play about the playwrights’ freedom of speech or, to be more precise, the lack of it which places Euripides in mortal danger. Comedy and tragedy are both represented and they coalesce for the common good. Comedy is the symbolic kinsman of tragedy and it is performed by Aristophanes himself who, in the role of Euripides’ histrionic “relative”, saves him in the end from his predicament.⁵⁰ At the start of the play both playwrights arrive at Agathon’s house wishing to learn how to become a woman so as to infiltrate the women’s undemocratic Good Council (Eubule) that took over the city during the festival of women, and to speak there on Euripides’ behalf. As Agathon enters in the orchestra his appearance baffles the comedian who thinks he is going to meet Cyrene, a famous courtesan, and immediately afterwards, when Agathon has delivered his lavish entry song, he explicitly mocks him for his feminine attire, his seductive song and his gender ambiguity:

Holy Genetylides what a pretty song! How feministic and tongue gagged and deep kissed! Just hearing it brought a tingle to my very butt! And you, young lad, I want to ask you, a la Aeschylus Lycurgeia what kind of female are you. Whence comes this femme? What its homeland? What’s its dress? What confoundment of living is this? What has a lute to chat about a party dress? Or a lyre with a hairnet? Here’s an oil flask and a brassiere how ill fitting! And what’s this society of mirror and sword? And you yourself child, are you being raised male? Then where is your dick? Your suit? Your Spartan shoes? All right, say you’re a woman: then where are your tits?⁵¹

Debra Nails considers that presenting Agathon in *Thesmophoriazusae* “as a luxuriant Asian drag queen” was “obviously offensive to Athenian sensibilities”,⁵² however on the basis of the arguments so far presented in

this paper I would say that Agathon's appearance could have intrigued the public mostly on the basis of what his image stood for, as it was underlying the quintessential qualities of an eastern despot: luxury, extravagance and the exulted "Persian" femininity that Athenian aristocrats were identified with. In my opinion, for reasons already discussed, Agathon's comic portrait was not intended to cause uproar or "offend" the public's sensibilities, if by that we understand presenting a "homosexual" to a "heterosexual" audience, for these are modern bourgeois concepts that had no place in an ancient mind-set; rather what was meant was to issue a warning to the spectators concerning the perils of tyranny, and I think precisely Agathon's symbolic display of a decadent power grab through seduction and artifice is what made his staged persona funny and politically significant at the same time. For the ancient Greeks, love, seduction and desire were tools of tyranny; with them one could enslave the people, while nonetheless they offered an ideological alternative to the democratic system of sublimated violence which regulated the democratic, face-to-face relationship between Athenian males.

In the above excerpt from *Thesomphoriazusae*, after an open display of poetic luxuriance, Agathon's song was described by the comedian as irresistible, having the melodic and poetic qualities to inflame desire, seduce and subjugate the audience just like the tyrant Lycurgus of Thrace has done in Aeschylus' *Lycurgeia*, when he subdued the satyrs and made them perform for him rather than for Dionysus.⁵³ What makes this passage relevant however is not just the indirect reference to the satyrs, which have a significant symbolic presence in the *Symposium* although in an altered, betwixt form, but the deep comic analysis of what Agathon stands for. This provides us with the backdrop for deciphering Aristophanes' contribution in the *Symposium*, since the subtle humour behind the playwrights' myth and his relationship with his host in the platonic dialogue stem from successive definitions of Agathon's duality. An Athenian young man and a foreign woman at the same time, Agathon's portrait emerges out of an array of gender contradictions which culminate with an unnatural communion between two very distinctly gendered utensils: the mirror and the sword, making him the epitome of the androgynous figurehead from the *Symposium*, the aristocratic "woman" filling the common folk with longing and teaching Athenian men how to become feminine. It is precisely this image that Aristophanes, with stealth and ingenuity, will mock again in the *Symposium*, where he will deliver the most biting satire directed at the aristocracy, Eros and his impersonator, Agathon.

Eros, from Ridicule to Extolment. Love, Politics and the Hermeneutics of Desire in the Symposium

A straight reading of Aristophanes' myth of circle humans has led to multiple fallacies which scholars have tried to no avail to reconcile with logic and common sense. One of them is that "homosexuals" are more masculine than the "heterosexuals" and that somehow Agathon becomes here a scion of manliness. According to this interpretation of the myth, a man "who prefer men are *ipso facto* manly because his preference proves him part of the original male (...) in fact, real effeminates are heterosexual males, an astounding reversal but a logical result of the same argument".⁵⁴ Following this *ad litteram* path, the text offers no surprise and we would have to take whatever it gives, however illogical. But what Aristophanes appears to be saying is not what he actually conveys, rather, in the subtext, his stance is logical and consistent with the one from his comedies, both as far as Agathon and the aristocracy are concerned.

To access this hidden comic meaning we start from the premise that there was no homosexual or heterosexual involved in his speech, and that what the myth was all about concerned the political relationships in the city. Male-male desire is centred around labour, work and livelihood, the masculine embrace between citizens gives surfeit, freeing them to pursue the basic necessities of life, such as gathering food and crafting so as to sustain themselves rather than to debate here, at this drinking party, Socrates' abstract and useless notions of virtue and beauty. The male half of the primordial man is the democratic man, for as the playwright explicitly reveals, "upon reaching maturity he alone is able to prove himself as man in a political career".⁵⁵ Unlike the working men, the other feminine halves of the primordial humans are concerned exclusively with pleasure. To the extreme is the woman-woman desire, which having no contact with men is apolitical and stands for an aristocracy in love with her own beauty, remote from the civic life and therefore not elaborated upon. Male-woman desire on the other hand is vilified here just like in the comedies. The male tally, which stands for a debauched and gullible demos that has traded his manliness for the oratorical pleasure provided by the elite, is the city's lustful adulterer, while the woman half is a ravenous aristocracy, "man-courting" and possessed by an insatiable desire.⁵⁶ In the *Acharnians*, we have this image where the woman in question is the beautiful and noble Alcibiades derogatory referred to as εὐρύπρωκτος, while other orators try to transform Demos (who on this occasion is played openly, without a name substitute) into an *eromenos*. The "politics of Eros" in this comedy is explicit: charmed

or rather entranced by the orators, Demos sits on his rock, the Pnyx, “mooning with the open mouth as one who gapes for figs”.⁵⁷ With the figs being a code word for the clitoris, the politics of Eros, the playwright contends, is destructive for the wellbeing and manliness of Demos which stands now to be effeminated by the “women” of Athens.

In the *Symposium* too, Aristophanes’ speech is covertly directed against Eros, the tyrant and the aristocrat trailing throughout the city his soft pleasures and appetites, a leitmotif present in Plato’s *Republic* as well as in his comedies. Unlike LoveCleon from *Wasps*, an alter-ego of Demos played by a boorish man invited to a high-class symposium, Aristophanes does not need to be lectured on etiquette and decorum, but the subtle mock of his companions, of their “impressive stories” (λόγους σεμνοῦς) and his reliance on a funny myth to debunk theirs, is not dissimilar in outcome from that of his comic antihero and nonetheless biting. Staunchly standing against Eros, Aristophanes delivers an encomium of manliness through hard labour, where the hardworking men that form the city’s political backbone are revealed as the true heroes of the story. Subsequently, Eros is altogether flushed away from his comic performance because he is deemed irrelevant and counterproductive for a relationship between “real” men, since that relationship “no one could imagine to be a mere amorous connection”.⁵⁸ To add insult to injury, immediately afterwards, Eros, the god of love, is replaced with Hephaestus, the masculine god of crafters and ordinary citizens, which unites with his bellows, anvil and hammer the working men of Athens. Sweat, not perfume, is what Aristophanes celebrates, and it is Hephaestus, not Eros, who “joins and fuses” together in the “closest possible union so that they shall not be divided by night or day”⁵⁹ the male – male, democratic, citizens of Athens.

Jocularly, Aristo-phanes’ speech “sheds light” on the true face of the aristocracy, he outs Agathon and his companions as women which are in the business of seducing the people with their “deep kissed songs”, in a way that is consistent with his approach in *Thesmophoriazusae* and elsewhere. Far from transforming Agathon into a poster boy of manliness, he makes him here once more pose as the female half of the political hermaphrodite, the “society of mirror and sword” he ridiculed in the above mentioned excerpt from *Thesmophoriazusae*. To enforce this view, towards the end of his speech, he warns Eryximachus not to think that the male-male mythological couple refers to Agathon and Pausanias, because while they are “males by nature”, “they belong to the fortunate few”.⁶⁰ By now he has left the myth behind and he is blunt with Eryximachus as well as with the rest of the audience; as he divulges that the “males by nature”

are not the political males he had in mind, he issues a clear warning to the doctor who, due to his profession, might have confused the actual sex with the symbolic political gender the comedian just performed. The physician thus finds out in the most explicit fashion that Aristophanes is not concerned with, or in the business of mocking Agathon's, Pausanias' or indeed the rest of the company's natural sex, but their political gender.

Dismissed by Aristophanes in favour of Hephaestus, Eros nevertheless makes a magnificent entrance onstage in Agathon's glittering speech. As soon as he starts, the latter elucidates that his praise of Eros is synonymous with the highest qualities and that these are to be found only among the most illustrious citizens, not the commoners. As a result, instead of boasting his recent victory in the dramatic competition and the prize awarded to him by the Athenian people, he makes the disparaging comment that "an intelligent speaker is more alarmed of a few men of wit than a multitude of fools",⁶¹ thus dismissing the importance of the event he was supposed to celebrate, and, in the subtext, revealing that there is another, hidden, purpose for this gathering. Socrates' opinion as well as that of his fellow symposiasts far outweighs the Demos', in a move which on the aristophanic erotic scale recalls the woman-woman erotic involvement. Having this idea in the background and under the rapturous applause of an aristocratic demos (Aristodemos), Agathon delivers an encomium of Eros which elevates the God to the status of the city's absolute monarch. Soft, delicate and gentle, Love is a tyrant and an aristocrat situated above the city's common law. A champion of idle appetites, he is the most beautiful and the best, *κάλλιστον ὄντα καὶ ἄριστον*,⁶² and in this capacity that he rules over the city's lesser sovereign, the law, not with violence but with charm and persuasion. The violence of men (citizens), sublimated or manifest, falls under his spell, and any attempt to use it against him proves useless, for just as Ares, the god of war, succumbed and was enslaved by Aphrodite, so too will those that rally strength and power to face him.

Agathon is the embodiment of the God; as the definition progresses, through wordplay, Agathon "the good" becomes interchangeable with Eros both in name and in purpose, both being associated with the fairest qualities: luxury, beauty, elegance, and the aristocratic good life which is opposed to the ugly and the commonplace:

"τρυφῆς, ἀβρότητας, χλιδῆς, χαρίτων, ἱμέρου, πόθου πατήρ. ἐπιμελὴς ἀγαθῶν, ἀμελὴς κακῶν."

"Father of luxury, tenderness, elegance, graces, longing and yearning; careful of the good (*ἀγαθῶν*), careless of the bad."⁶³

Ἀβρός and τρυφή, markers of aristocratic glory and source of its hubris,⁶⁴ are flaunted in front of an ecstatic aristocratic audience (Aristodemos), together with all the other qualities that point to excellence and perfection. Sending an arrow towards Aristophanes, Agathon places under Love's command the two gods that previously, in comedy, challenged his imperium, Zeus and Hephaestus. Cunningly, in their company he also assigns the virgin goddess Athena, now a servant of Eros, weaving his clothes. Subjecting the poliad goddess to his whims, Eros Tyrannos resurfaces in the subtext as master of the Athenian people, while his tyranny appears as the sweetest form of enslavement. Next, we are covertly informed that this tyranny is not limited to commoners; trying to "bring us (the aristocrats) together in such friendly gatherings as the present, at feasts and dances, Eros makes himself a leader; politeness contriving moroseness outdriving, kind giver of amity, giving no enmity, gracious and benign (...)".⁶⁵ It is to the general acclaim that Eros is crowned the leader of the people but also of the aristocrats, of Demos and of Aristodemos, proving that aristocracy is just an expanded form of tyranny and that every aristocrat aims to become a tyrant; as Oedipus in Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannos* remarked, the tyrant is the greatest of the great men.

The next two speakers are Socrates, accused and convicted of impiety but one who brings in the conversation the prophetess Diotima, the personification of godly piety according to her name, and Alcibiades the man accused and found guilty for the mutilation of the phallic public statues in the agora and for the profanation of the Eleusinian mysteries, but who ironically will now praise an ἄγαμα, the godly gold statue residing within Socrates.⁶⁶ These are not just coincidences but the incriminating evidence in favour of a political reading.

Much ado surrounds the idea that in Socrates' (or Diotima's) speech, men allegedly become pregnant. Indeed this would be without precedent both in literature and in reality, for men cannot be pregnant or give birth; this is a fact. To solve the puzzle scholars have put forward a few solutions such as the "pregnancy of seed", alleging that the ancient Greeks thought that men were pregnant with their semen. We have discussed the issue in the first part of the article and we outlined the reasons why this theory is problematic. I think that the solution lies elsewhere, that Socrates' exhortation was not about men becoming pregnant but about the symbolic women of Athens going through all stages of their womanhood.

In *Symposium* 206 C we learn that humans, not men, are pregnant, and this I think is a salient feature if we consider Nicole Loraux's persuasive

argument that for the Greeks there were two very distinct categories of humans, the ἀνὴρ and the ἄνθρωπος and that there was a dichotomy which was simultaneously gendered and politically inscribed. Ἀνὴρ represents masculinity in its purest form, while ἄνθρωπος is fluid. The opposition between the two terms consists in aligning ἀνὴρ with hoplites and the masculine citizen body, while the “humane human”, associated with its feminine qualities, is the source of civil strife in the polis.

C'est bien aux *ándres* en tant que tels – entendons, come hommes virils, indissociablement citoyens et soldats- que la guerre civile s'attaque (...) Or, lorsque Thucydide donne son nom au principe d'un reversement aussi destructeur, il s'avère que, derrière la stásis et ses effets catastrophiques c'est bel et bien la nature humaine (*phúsis anthrópon*) qu'il faut incriminer (...) la nature humaine est pour l'*anér* à la fois source et lieu de regression, et cela tout au long de *La Guerre du Péloponnèse*.⁶⁷

At the crossroad of masculine and feminine, the humane human is the political hermaphrodite outlined by Aristophanes. She is the fusion of donkey and horse, of labour and idleness, of poverty and wealth and as she claims universality and cosmopolitanism she gives birth, and challenges the pre-eminence of city's democratic masculine citizen body. Socrates was a woman, and though in the *Symposium* she acted through a medium, the midwife from *Theaetetus* introduced us to the inner world of female procreation and offered a political alternative to the extrovert phallic statues erected in the public square. Claiming to have privileged access to the gold statue she was pregnant with, Alcibiades, the man with Eros on his shield, the dainty aristocrat on horseback and the most notorious woman in Athens, recalls the image of Phidippides from Aristophanes' *Clouds*, himself a “compromise” between a woman and a man, wealth and poverty.

In conclusion, present-day dominant narratives on sex, gender and desire have displaced the significance of the aristocratic Eros and the loving interplay of political genders. In the past couple of centuries there has been a steady scholarly tradition that equated the status of Athenian women with slaves when in fact they, or rather their symbolic counterparts, were the city's absolute masters. Imagination is all that remains to recover them and glimpse into Eros' ancient aristocratic beauty. In the meantime, having to navigate the literal meanings of today's impoverished somatic or “spiritual” Eros, we conclude with the words of Umberto Eco: “stat rosa pristina nomine, nomina nuda tenemus”.

NOTES

- ¹ David Bellos, *Is That a Fish in Your Ear? Translation and the Meaning of Everything*. London & New York, 2011, p. 76.
- ² *Ibidem* pp. 30-31.
- ³ *Ibidem*, p. 70.
- ⁴ Charles Martindale, *Thinking Through Reception*, in Charles Martindale and Richard F. Thomas (ed.), *Classics and the Use of Reception*, Blackwell Publishing, 2006, p. 3.
- ⁵ P. C. Plass, "Plato's «Pregnant» Lover", *Symbolae Osloenses* 53, 1978, p. 50; in E. E. Pender, "Spiritual Pregnancy in Plato's Symposium", *CQ*, 42. 1, 1992, p. 72.
- ⁶ Plato, *Symp.* 206 C. At best, for Pender, female pregnancy is an "absent presence" *ibidem* . p 79.
- ⁷ Plato, *Symp.* 206 C.
- ⁸ Pender, *op. cit.* p. 74 .
- ⁹ Diodorus Siculus I. 80. 4; Aeschylus *Eumenides*, 658-659; *Seven Against Thebes* 754, Sophocles *Oedypus Tyrannos* 1211.
- ¹⁰ Plato, *Theaetetus*, 148 E- 151 D.
- ¹¹ Aside from various literary sources that infirm the exclusively paternalist theory, Halperin's reasoning about the kinship structure of classical Athens effectively ends this controversy. "The law permitted half-brother and -sister to marry only if they were descended from different mothers thereby in fact denying the claim of the Aeschylean Apollo that the father is the only true parent. The thesis that Plato's contemporaries generally disbelieved that women played any contributory role in conception cannot plausibly be maintained" David M. Halperin, *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality. And Other Essays on Greek Love*, Routledge London & New York, 1990, p. 139.
- ¹² "The homosexuals in the audience (both Socrates' and Plato's) at this point may be pleasantly surprised to learn that all the time they were courting their beloveds with a view to physical intercourse at a later stage, their souls during these conversations were already having sexual intercourse!" Pender, *op cit.* p. 79.
- ¹³ David M. Halperin, *op. cit.* p. 8 – 9. See also the analysis focused on Charles Gilbert Chaddock's invention, in 1892, of the word "homosexual" and that of the "heterosexual" shortly afterwards. *ibidem*, p. 15 sqq.
- ¹⁴ David M. Halperin, "Is There a History of Sexuality?" in Robert M. Burns (ed.), *Historiography. Critical Concepts in Historical Studies* , vol. 3, Routledge, London & New York, 2006, p. 380. Some of the ideas here can be found in the book as well, p. 36- 40. Halperin considers that in ancient Greece a single form of sexual experience was conceptualized and it involved the ideas of "penetrator" and "penetrated": "I have already argued in the title essay of this collection that sex, as it is represented in classical Athenian documents, is a deeply polarizing experience: constructed according to a model of penetration that interprets „penetration" as an intrinsically unidirectional act", David M. Halperin, *op cit.*, 1990, p. 132.

- 15 *Ibidem.* p. 379.
- 16 Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution. An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory", in Philip Auslander (ed.) *Performance: Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies*. Routledge, London & New York, Volume IV, p. 100.
- 17 *Ibidem* p. 102.
- 18 Antoine de Baecque, *The Body Politic: Corporal Metaphor in Revolutionary France 1770-1800*, Stanford University Press, 1997; for the marriage between "Monsieur Third-Estate" and "Madame Nobility" see pp. 94- 96, for Iscariot pp. 157- 165.
- 19 Ralph M. Rosen "The Gendered Polis in Eupolis' Poleis" pp. 149- 176 in G. Dobrov (ed.), *The City as Comedy. Society and Representation in Athenian Drama*. Chapel Hill & London, 1997, p. 160.
- 20 Plato, *Republic*, IX, 573 B. Plato narrates a progressive moral degradation from a golden age of frugal manhood in the past generations, represented by the "democratic man's" father, to present generations that are increasingly swayed by soft, erotic desires.
- 21 "He (the tyrant) is assimilated to all those other Others to the ideal Athenian man. In his uncontrollable appetite, his love of finery, his tendency toward deception and artifice, he is like a woman; the ostentation and autocracy of his power equates him to an Eastern despot; in thrall to the demands of his own pleasures and the necessities of his rule, he becomes a slave" Victoria Wohl, *Love Among the Ruins. The Erotics of Democracy in Classical Athens*. Princeton University Press, 2002, p. 224. Wohl's analysis is astute, I depart however from her belief that multiple "Others" are at play in the tyrant's portrait: women, eastern despots and slaves. In the Greek psyche the eastern despot was conceived as the epitome of femininity while Aristophanic comedies often describe women as slaves of their own desires. Symbolically, the woman is a foreign "oriental" despot and a slave at the same time, master and slave of unlawfulness (παράνομία), and that is why the tyrant's association with all of those "other Others" was not part of a competition of alterities but symbiotic, enforcing his femininity. For the agglutinating notions of ἀβροσύνη (luxury, delicacy, refinement), Asians, women and the Greek aristocrats see Lezlie Kurke, "The Politics of ἀβροσύνη in Archaic Greece", *Cl. Ant.* Vol 11, No 1, 1992, pp. 91- 120, Kurke reads Sappho's affirmation "I love ἀβροσύνη" [Fr. 58.25] as "politically programmatic (...) endorsing a particular style of aristocratic luxury", and dismisses the "misreading of the archaeological evidence". The actual gender of characters donning eastern lyres, long flowing garments, earrings, and parasols on sixth century BCE vase paintings is seminal for contemporary archeological debates, with opinions split between those who say that the images stand for transvestite women with "fake" beards or transvestite men. *ibidem*, p. 98- 99. For more information on the "feminine", oriental and aristocratic paraphernalia see also M. C. Miller, "The Parasol: An Oriental Status-Symbol in Late Archaic and Classical Athens", *JHS*, 112, 1992.

- 22 See the criticism on Alcibiades' effeminate, dissolute and luxurious life in
Plutarch, *Alcibiades*, 16.1, and analyzed by V. Wohl, *op cit.* p. 132- 133.
- 23 Herodotus' Artemisia is not an exception. She is an eastern despot therefore
her political powers would have not been conceptualized within the confines
of a Greek polis.
- 24 Aristophanes, *Wasps* 1450-1454.
- 25 Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 46- 55.
- 26 Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannos*, 775-6.
- 27 Nicole Loraux, "Aristophane, les femmes d'Athenes et le theatre", *Aristophane,
Entretiens sur l'antiquite Classique*. Tome XXXVIII, Vandoeuvres- Geneve,
1991, p. 217 sqq.
- 28 On the symbiotic relationship between *social drama* and *stage drama* see
Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre. The Human Seriousness of Play*, New
York 1982, p. 76.
- 29 Griffiths argues that in ancient Greece there was an overlap of cultural and
practical distinctions between the "aristocratic" – prestigious activities of the
horse (cavalry actions, ceremonial riding, chariot racing), and the "lower-class"
– „banausic" activities of the donkey; differences that were observed through
display, function and transgression and had correspondences with gender.
Mark Griffith, "Horsepower and Donkeywork. Equids and the Ancient Greek
Imagination", *Cl Ph.* 101, 4 (October 2006) p. 307-308.
- 30 Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 60- 74.
- 31 Sir Ghillean Prance, Mark Nesbitt (eds.), *The Cultural History of Plants*.
Routledge, London & New York, 2005 pp. 168; 308.
- 32 Aristophanes, *Knights*, 566.
- 33 The offer made to the democratic city in exchange for the knights' war time effort
comes subtextually at the expense of the community, for what the noble knights
ask is to be allowed to continue, in peacetime, to enjoy their undemocratic
ways. Victoria Wohl, *op.cit.* p 109. Aristophanes, *Knights*, 579- 580.
- 34 Mark Grriffith, *op cit.* pp. 308- 309.
- 35 Semonides of Amorgos, Fr. 7.57- 70. For the symbolic connection between
horses, women and tyranny see also Aristophanes, *Wasps* 500- 503,
Lysistrata, 616 -633.
- 36 Ἔρως (love) in Greek includes but is not limited to sexual connotations.
- 37 The anecdote is in Plutarch, Alc 10.1. see the commentary in V. Wohl,
op. cit. p. 147, and Jaqueline de Rommily, *Alcibiades, ou les dangers de
l'ambition*, Paris, 1995, pp. 45-46.
- 38 D.M. Lewis, "Who was Lysistrata?", *Annual of the British School at Athens*
50, 1955. For scholarship on women in classical antiquity, see for example
Pauline Schmitt Pantel (ed.), *Historire des femmes. L'antiquite*, Plon, Paris,
1991., Sarah B. Pomeroy *Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves. Women in
Classical Antiquity*, New York, Shocken Books Inc. 1995, Laurie O'Higgins,
Women and Humor in Classical Greece, Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- 39 Plato, *Rep.*, IX, 572 E.
- 40 David Schaps, "The Woman Least Mentioned: Etiquette and Women's
Names", *CQ*, 27, 1977, pp 323 –330.

- 41 Olivier Aurenche, *Les Groupes D'Alcibiades, de Léogoras et de Teucros. Remarques sur la vie politique athénienne en 415 av J.C.* Paris, 1974. p. 14.
- 42 From among the participants to Plato's drinking party, almost everyone, with the exception of Aristophanes and the fictitious characters of Diotima and Aristodemus, were accused with profaning the Eleusinian mysteries and/ or mutilating the herms. Thus, Agathon and Pausanias fled to the Macedonian court, Eryximachus, was accused by the metic Teucrus and charged by the Athenian courts with desecrating the herms, Phaedrus was accused by Teucrus and charged with profaning the Eleusinian mysteries and he too fled into exile, Alcibiades was accused by Agariste, wife of Damon, and the slave Andromachus for profaning the Eleusinian mysteries and mutilating the herms, he then deserted to Sparta where he received asylum, Charmides son of Glaucon was charged with profaning the mysteries and fled into exile as well, while Socrates himself was later charged with impiety. Though I do not agree with Debra Nails as far as the actual existence of Diotima and Aristodemus is concerned, she makes a compelling argument for the aftermath of the Symposium, see Debra Nails, "Tragedy Off-Stage", in Debra Nails, J. H. Leshner, and C. Frisbee (eds.), *Plato's Symposium: Issues in Interpretation and Reception*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006, pp. 179- 180; 202- 203.
- 43 Robin Osborne, *The Erection and Mutilation of the Hermai*, PCPhS 31, 1985, p. 61.
- 44 *Idem*.
- 45 Zoe Petre *Cetatea greacă între real și imaginar*, Ed. Nemira, București, 2000, pp. 12- 15.
- 46 Marcel Dietenne, Jean Pierre Vernant, *Vicleșugurile inteligenței. Metis la greci*. București, Editura Symposion, 1999, p. 33, 36-67.
- 47 V. Wohl, *op. cit*, p. 82.
- 48 Plato, *Symp.* 189 E- 190 D.
- 49 See the discussion in Paul Ludwig's "Politics and Eros in Aristophanes' Speech: Symposium 191e-192a and the Comedies", *AJPh* vol 117, n 4, 1996, pp 537- 562. and K. J. Dover, "Aristophanes' Speech in Plato's Symposium", *JHS*, Vol. 86, (1966), pp. 41-50.
- 50 In a chapter from my PhD dedicated to the analysis of *Thesmophoriazusae*, I asserted that the play narrated metaphorically the struggle of the playwrights during the new oligarchic regime of 411 BCE, and that it involved Aristophanes as Euripides' unnamed kinsman. This goes against the grain of current scholarship on the subject, which tries to identify a real life in-law for Euripides. In a nutshell, the argument supporting a symbolic kinship between the playwrights, aside from the fact that very few people would look nowadays for real life characters in Shakespeare or more recent plays as we systematically do when we analyse these ancient plays, is twofold: firstly, Aristophanes provides us elsewhere, through wordplay, with an encrypted reference to τρυφή (Ach. 497- 501.) as a synonym for comedy in a way that suggests a metaphoric kinship between the two sister art forms: the comic and the tragic drama, while here, in *Thesmophoriazusae* 85, Euripides' conceptualises a link between his craft

and comedy using τραγῳδεῖν, which signifies to dramatize or to portray, as the synonym for κωμῳδεῖν, which means to satirize in comedy. Secondly, when it comes to finding a precedent for symbolically charged relatives there are plenty in Aristophanes' comedies, for example the portrait of Euripides' mother. Despite being repeatedly depicted in the comedies as a garland seller (*Thesm.*, 387, 456, *Ach.* 457, 478, *Knights* 19, *Frogs* 840) in real life she was actually a noble woman, having no connection whatsoever with her staged persona, see Philochorus in F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, Berlin- Leiden 1923-1958, 328 F218. I think that a symbolic understanding that does not programmatically equate the staged personas with actual people can, along with imagining Euripides' mother performed by the garland seller in Aristophanes' comedies as a symbol of the tragedian's profession, imagine, in *Thesmophoriazousae*, the kinsman of tragedy, represented by Euripides, as the comedy of Aristophanes. And since Aristophanes performed before characters in his own plays, we can further imagine him onstage now as well, in which case the hard evidence that philologists are after, namely an explicit, written reference to Aristophanes as the kinsman of Euripides, would have been redundant for an Athenian audience.

51 Aristophanes, *Thesm.*, 130- 144.

52 Debra Nails, *op. cit.* p. 182.

53 A. Sommerstein, Aeschylus, *Fragments*, III, Loeb Classical Library, 2009.

54 Paul W. Ludwig, *op. cit.* p. 555.

55 Plato, *Symp.* 192 A.

56 Plato, *Symp.* 191 E.

57 Aristophanes *Ach.* 755

58 Plato, *Symp.* 192 C.

59 Plato, *Symp.* 192 D- E.

60 Plato, *Symp.* 193 B.

61 Plato *Symp.* 194 B.

62 Plato, *Symp.* 195 A.

63 Plato, *Symp.* 197 D.

64 "Wealth, hubris and arrogance were intimately conjoined in Athenian perceptions of the rich. Lysias notes that poor men who possess little are not likely to commit hubris, but rather those men who possess much more than they need" Josiah Ober, *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens. Rhetoric Ideology and the Power of the People*. Princeton University Press, 1989, p. 208. For an analysis of "status and social standing" in classical Athens see also p. 248 sqq.

65 Plato, *Symp.* 197 D.

66 For an analysis of ἀγαλμα in Alcibiades' speech see C.D.C Reeve, "A Study in Violets: Alcibiades in the Symposium", in *Plato's Symposium: Issues in Interpretation and Reception*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006, p 124 sqq.

67 Nicole Loraux, *La tragédie d'Athènes. La politique entre l'ombre et l'utopie*. Editions du Seuil, 2005, pp. 77; 78.

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RÉCEPTION DE LA THÉORIE DU PROGRÈS PERPÉTUEL AU XIV^e SIÈCLE BYZANTIN: GRÉGOIRE PALAMAS ET CALLISTE ANGÉLICOUDÈS

Abstract

This paper deals with the late Byzantine reception of Gregory of Nyssa's teaching about perpetual progress (*epektasis*), with a focus on Gregory Palamas and Kallistos Angelicoudes. As attested most notably in his *Triads*, Palamas readily appropriates Nyssa's theory by adapting it to the problematic of the hesychastic controversy, without further personal reflection. Kallistos Angelicoudes offers a more complex case. He appears to have been sensitive to Maximus the Confessor's insistence on the aspect of rest which must balance that of mouvement. He also combines speculative insights on God's infinity with more direct and personal testimonies. And, finally, in composing a refutation of *Summa contra Gentiles*, he becomes aware of the quite different ways in which Aquinas and the most prominent of the Eastern authors conceive the dynamics of the eschatological beatitude.

Keywords: Grégoire de Nysse, *epektasis*, reception, Grégoire Palamas, Calliste Angélicoudès.

Vers la fin de son enquête historique sur la notion d'*energeia* d'Aristote jusqu'aux théologiens byzantins du XIV^e siècle, D. Bradshaw en vient à discuter brièvement la question de la vision béatifique chez Thomas d'Aquin. Cette discussion s'achève avec une liste de différences entre Thomas et la tradition orientale¹. En premier lieu on y retrouve sans surprise l'insistance de Thomas sur le fait que l'objet de la contemplation eschatologique est l'essence divine elle-même, alors que les Pères grecs et les théologiens byzantins ont traditionnellement rejeté une telle possibilité,

au nom de la transcendance divine. Il est significatif que Thomas regarde la position qu'il tient comme ayant la sanction de l'autorité ecclésiastique, puisqu'il renvoie au début de son *De veritate* à un jugement prononcé à l'Université de Paris en 1241, selon lequel nier que les hommes et les anges puissent connaître Dieu dans son essence était une hérésie. Bradshaw identifie ensuite une deuxième opposition, portant cette fois sur le rôle assigné au corps dans l'existence eschatologique. S'il est prêt à admettre que la béatitude s'étend aussi au corps, pour Thomas d'Aquin le corps n'est pas nécessaire à la béatitude, puisque celle-ci consiste en une activité purement intellectuelle. Une partie significative de la tradition grecque en revanche conçoit le corps comme faisant l'objet du processus de déification à travers la participation aux *energeiai* divines. La troisième différence, enfin, consiste en l'absence de l'idée d'un progrès perpétuel dans la *visio beatifica* chez Thomas d'Aquin. Du côté de la tradition grecque, l'enseignement de Maxime le Confesseur et Grégoire Palamas, qui insistent sur le caractère éternellement dynamique du désir et de la fruition qu'éprouvent les bienheureux, est donné en contre-exemple. Il est instructif à cet égard de comparer la manière dont Thomas définit la satisfaction eschatologique du désir comme une « stabilité immobile (*immobilis stabilitas*) »² à celle de Maxime qui, lui, en parle au contraire comme d'une « stabilité sans cesse mobile (ἀεκίνητος στάσις) »³.

Pour Bradshaw, l'absence d'un dynamisme eschatologique infini chez Thomas d'Aquin est due à la conviction, de provenance aristotélicienne, selon laquelle tout désir naturel doit trouver sa satisfaction finale et donc sa cessation. C'est une explication qui est tout à fait plausible. Il est en revanche un peu moins convaincant lorsqu'il avance comme un détail aggravant l'absence chez Thomas de la distinction essence-énergies. Tout en admettant la vision de l'essence divine par les bienheureux, Thomas soutient néanmoins que cet acte n'est pas synonyme de la compréhension parfaite (ST I, 12, 7). De surcroît, il situe la vision béatifique dans l'*aevum*, moyen terme entre le temps et l'éternité divine. Il apparaît donc que pour Thomas la vision béatifique de l'essence de Dieu n'épuise pas son infinité, pas plus qu'elle n'est incompatible avec sa transcendance. Mais dans l'ensemble il reste vrai de dire qu'il n'admet pas une croissance indéfinie pour ce qui est de l'existence eschatologique. Dans la *Somme théologique*, cette question est explicitement considérée en relation avec les anges, par exemple, et rejetée. À propos de l'idée d'un progrès sans fin des anges dans la béatitude, Thomas écrit : « En sens contraire, le mérite et le progrès appartiennent à la condition de voyageurs. Mais les

anges ne sont pas des voyageurs; ils ont la parfaite vision. Donc les anges bienheureux ne peuvent ni mériter, ni progresser en béatitude. »⁴. Il n'y a pas de place pour le changement dans la condition eschatologique. Perfection spirituelle et mouvement semblent ici mutuellement exclusives.

En l'état actuel de la recherche, il est difficile de dire avec certitude quel impact ont pu avoir les objections de Thomas en Occident. La présence des éléments de cette idée a été relevée chez des auteurs comme Jean Scot Erigène ou Guillaume de Saint Thierry, auxquels il faudrait probablement rajouter Grégoire le Grand⁵. Le détail significatif est cependant que ces auteurs sont tous antérieurs à Thomas, mais seule une enquête approfondie pourrait nous permettre de déterminer dans quelle mesure sa critique s'est avérée décisive en Occident pour la destinée de la théorie d'un progrès spirituel sans fin (l'épectase), si prééminente dans l'œuvre de Grégoire de Nysse. Cette évaluation devrait également prendre en compte le fait qu'une autre autorité de la théologie latine, Augustin, s'est montré rétif à admettre une croissance indéfinie dans la béatitude eschatologique⁶. Il est certain en revanche qu'un siècle après Thomas d'Aquin l'idée maîtresse de Grégoire de Nysse est accueillie avec faveur par les théologiens byzantins, qui la regardent comme un élément bien établi de leur tradition. En Orient, c'est en fait l'aboutissement d'une longue histoire, commencée vers la fin du quatrième siècle, qui inclut des auteurs de premier plan comme Macaire-Syméon⁷, Jean Climaque, Maxime le Confesseur ou encore Syméon le Nouveau Théologien. Au XIV^e siècle cette idée semble même avoir exercé une attraction encore plus grande qu'auparavant, à en juger par le nombre d'auteurs qui en font état. On la retrouve brièvement chez Grégoire le Sinaïte, par exemple⁸. Des échos sont identifiables même chez un écrivain si peu enclin à la hardiesse spéculative comme Nicolas Cabasilas⁹. Et, sur la base du recours fréquent qu'ils y font, on peut parler d'une véritable réception chez Grégoire Palamas et Calliste Angélicoudès. C'est à ces deux derniers auteurs que sera consacrée l'analyse suivante.

1. Grégoire Palamas (1296-1359)

Grégoire Palamas est un lecteur assidu de Grégoire de Nysse et de Maxime le Confesseur. On ne s'étonnera donc pas de retrouver chez lui les éléments de la théorie de l'épectase¹⁰. Défenseur de l'authenticité des expériences spirituelles ayant au centre la vision de la lumière divine, telles qu'elles étaient revendiquées par les moines athonites, Palamas intègre

la théorie du progrès perpétuel à la problématique de la controverse hésychaste. Une question centrale dans cette controverse fut de savoir comment sauvegarder l'idée de transcendance divine, et en même temps tenir qu'une communication directe entre l'être humain et Dieu est possible ici-bas même au-delà des voies communes de la connaissance. À certains égards, cette question recoupe une difficulté à laquelle Grégoire de Nysse s'était déjà lui-même heurté, sans qu'elle reçoive une solution nette au niveau terminologique. Contre Eunome, Grégoire soutient en effet le caractère transcendant de la nature divine (« inaccessible pour la participation [ἀπρόσιτος εἰς μετουσίαν οὐσα] »)¹¹. En même temps, il n'a de cesse d'insister que la vie spirituelle suppose une participation réelle et transfiguratrice à la vie de Dieu, et qu'elle doit être comprise comme une croissance continue¹². Sur quoi porte donc cette participation, si d'une part elle ne peut avoir pour objet l'essence divine, et que d'autre part Grégoire soutiens pourtant qu'à travers elle « Dieu est présent dans l'âme »¹³ et que la pureté dont jouit l'âme est « identique dans sa nature » à celle qui est en Dieu¹⁴ ? Toutes ces expressions, auxquelles on pourrait facilement en rajouter d'autres, trahissent la volonté de Grégoire d'affirmer le caractère à la fois inaccessible et participable de Dieu. Mais on a du mal à identifier clairement dans ses textes les précisions techniques qu'un tel paradoxe semble exiger¹⁵. Chez Grégoire Palamas en revanche la difficulté est résolue par le recours à la distinction entre l'essence de Dieu et ses énergies. La lumière divine incréé fait partie de ces dernières, et c'est précisément cette lumière qui constitue chez Palamas l'objet du processus de la contemplation « déifiante ». Tel est le cadre dans lequel la théorie de l'épectase apparaît dans ses *Triades* notamment, où il dépeint l'activité contemplative sous le mode d'un progrès perpétuel, en continuité avec les pratiques relevant de la vertu.

Et en proportion de sa pratique de ce qui est agréable à Dieu, aussi bien que du détournement de ce qui ne l'est pas, en proportion de son application à la prière et de l'élévation de toute son âme vers Dieu, [l'hésychaste] est toujours porté vers de degrés plus hauts et fait l'expérience d'une contemplation toujours plus resplendissante. Et il s'aperçoit alors de l'infinité de Celui qu'il voit, puisqu'il est infini; et il ne voit pas de fin pour sa splendeur, mais il voit d'autant plus la faiblesse de sa propre capacité à recevoir cette lumière¹⁶.

Ce texte mentionne le fondement théologique du progrès spirituel, l'infinité de Dieu, sans s'y attarder pour autant, et les moyens d'entrer dans cette dynamique (observance des commandements, refus du péché, prière, l'aspiration à Dieu). À propos de son caractère sans fin, Palamas s'exprime encore plus clairement dans ce même écrit.

De cette contemplation, il y a un commencement, et des étapes qui s'ensuivent, se distinguant les unes des autres de façon tantôt plus obscure, tantôt plus claire, mais il n'y a point de terme. En effet, la progression dans la contemplation se poursuit à l'infini, de même que le ravissement dans la révélation¹⁷.

Deux observations sont à faire à propos de ce texte. D'abord il est clair que le progrès dont il est question s'amorce dès ici-bas, mais il n'est pas qu'un moyen temporaire d'attendre le but, car la perspective dans laquelle il est envisagé par Grégoire est résolument eschatologique. Ce progrès est en effet la forme que prendra l'existence des bienheureux dans l'éternité. Chez Grégoire Palamas donc, le Paradis n'est pas statique, mais dynamique. Quant aux étapes dont ce progrès est constitué, il semble que Grégoire les conçoit comme des seuils de capacité que la lumière divine, en « dilatant » l'âme, fait sans cesse franchir, comme il l'explique dans un autre passage.

L'éclat même de cette lumière-là, lequel de façon paradoxale a pour matière la contemplation du voyant, augmente par l'union cet œil spirituel et le rend toujours plus capable de le contenir; cet éclat ne cessera jamais de l'éclairer des rayons toujours plus lumineux à travers toute l'éternité, de le remplir éternellement d'une splendeur de plus en plus mystérieuse et de lui révéler à travers elle des choses jamais découvertes auparavant. C'est pourquoi les théologiens disent aussi qu'elle est infinie cette lumière grâce à laquelle, après la cessation de toute puissance de connaître, par la puissance de l'Esprit Dieu devient visible aux saints, étant uni à eux et contemplé par eux comme Dieu par des dieux. En effet, étant transformés dans le Meilleur par la participation au Meilleur et, pour parler à la manière du prophète, « changeant de force » (*Is* 40, 31), ils cessent toute activité intellectuelle et physique, en sorte que Lui seul apparaît en eux et est vu par eux, une fois que leurs caractéristiques naturelles se trouvent vaincues par la surabondance de Sa gloire, afin que, selon l'Apôtre, *Dieu soit tout en tous* (*1 Co* 15,28)¹⁸.

Cet texte rappelle à certains égards un passage du dialogue *Sur l'âme et sur la résurrection* de Grégoire de Nysse¹⁹. On y reconnaît en particulier la métaphore de l'âme réceptacle (sous la forme de « l'œil spirituel ») qui ne cesse de s'élargir au fur et à mesure qu'il reçoit la lumière toujours nouvelle dans la contemplation. La présence de Dieu dans celui qui le contemple est pour Palamas réelle, la connaissance que Dieu donne ainsi de Lui-même est positive, bien qu'elle déborde les concepts. Son mystère ne s'évanouit pas pour autant, mais demeure entier pour l'éternité, puisqu'il repose sur son infinité. Ainsi ni les humains ni les anges ne pourront-ils jamais l'épuiser ou s'arrêter d'en découvrir la nouveauté. Le progrès en est précisément l'indice.

Et le signe de ce mystère plus qu'inconnaissable, c'est l'aspiration, la demande et l'ascension vers une vision toujours plus claire de la part de Moïse, mais aussi le progrès ininterrompu vers des visions de plus en plus lumineuses qu'à travers le siècle infini connaissent les saints et les anges, en sorte que, tout en la voyant, ils connaissent grâce à leur vision même que cette lumière transcende la vision ; d'autant plus Dieu, Celui qui se manifeste à travers elle²⁰.

À résumer brièvement, on peut dire que Grégoire Palamas s'est approprié l'essentiel des intuitions de Grégoire de Nysse sur le progrès perpétuel tout en les adaptant à la problématique qui lui est spécifique. La participation sans cesse croissante aux perfections divines, thème cher à Grégoire de Nysse, devient chez le théologien byzantin la contemplation toujours plus intense de la lumière incréée. Mais on n'a pas l'impression que Grégoire Palamas y ait beaucoup ajouté de son propre cru. On peut même remarquer que certains éléments ne sont pas repris. Le thème de la satiété (*koros*) dans la contemplation, par exemple, dont on soupçonne l'importance dans le genèse de la conception de Grégoire de Nysse²¹, n'est pas directement reconnaissable dans les textes. Et d'une manière générale, on ne retrouve pas une réflexion plus approfondie sur les idées de son prédécesseur, à l'instar de celle menée par Maxime le Confesseur, par exemple²².

2. Calliste Angélicoudès (c. 1325-1395)

L'identité de Calliste fut longtemps entourée de confusion, du fait que pas moins de quatre auteurs portant ce nom ont été inclus dans l'anthologie de textes spirituelles connue sous le nom de *Philokalia* et publiée en 1782 à Venise: Calliste Xanthopoulos, Calliste le Patriarche, Calliste Télécoudès et Calliste Cataphygiotès. Mais sur la base des similarités thématiques et stylistiques, les éditeurs soupçonnaient déjà à l'époque qu'il devait s'agir d'un seul et même Calliste, auquel il fallait par conséquent rendre tous ces textes. Les recherches entreprises depuis plus d'un siècle sur la question ont confirmé pour l'essentiel cette hypothèse, en sorte qu'il y a aujourd'hui un consensus grandissant parmi les byzantinologues pour considérer que les textes attribués aux derniers trois *Kallistoi* font en réalité partie d'un *corpus* transmis de manière désordonnée, appartenant à un seul auteur. Son vrai nom est Calliste Angélicoudès (dont la variante corrompue est « Télécoudès »), moine connu aussi de l'appellatif de « Méléneoteos », puisqu'il a vécu près de Mélénikon, une bourgade dans la province de Macédoine, (aujourd'hui Melnik, au sud de la Bulgarie), où il a fondé autour de 1350 un monastère dédié à la « Mère de Dieu ou notre Refuge (*Kataphygion*) », d'où aussi le *cognomen* de « Kataphygiotès »²³.

L'œuvre de Calliste est assez étendue et reste malheureusement inédite dans une proportion importante. Elle comprend entre autres deux séries de chapitres (*Chapitres sur l'union à Dieu et la vie contemplative*²⁴, *Chapitres sur la prière*²⁵), une *Consolation hésychaste* composée de 30 discours, dont seuls cinq ont été à ce jour édités²⁶, et un traité *Contre Thomas d'Aquin*²⁷. C'est sur ces écrits que repose la discussion suivante. Dans un premier temps les écrits non-polémiques de Calliste seront abordés. Ce traitement s'achèvera par une brève analyse de sa réfutation de la *Somme contre les Gentils* de Thomas d'Aquin.

Dans les *Chapitres sur l'union à Dieu et la vie contemplative*, les éléments de la théorie d'un progrès spirituel sans fin sont d'emblée articulés dans une réflexion spéculative sur le fini et l'infini. Il serait exagéré pour autant de considérer Calliste comme un penseur de l'infini au sens où Aristote, par exemple, l'avait été. Tout comme Grégoire de Nysse, Calliste pense à l'aide de l'infini plus qu'il ne pense l'infini. Il ne s'intéresse pas d'abord ni en principal à la logique interne d'un concept, pas plus qu'aux apories auxquelles il peut mener le philosophe. Le contexte intellectuel et spirituel dans lequel il s'inscrit est en effet bien différent, sa motivation aussi. Dans ce concept il voit surtout un moyen

lui permettant de répondre aux questions qui touchent à la destinée spirituelle de l'homme dans sa relation à Dieu. Pour Calliste, seul Dieu est infini, et bien qu'il n'en donne pas de démonstration formelle, il entend son infinité dans un sens fort et positif. La fréquence avec laquelle cette idée apparaît dans ses textes n'a probablement pas d'équivalent dans la tradition théologique chrétienne d'expression grecque. L'infinité divine est chez Calliste le pendant naturel d'une anthropologie qui insiste à la fois sur le caractère limité de l'existence humaine et son dynamisme incessant. Selon Calliste, en effet, le mouvement de l'intellect étant sans arrêt, il serait contraire à sa dignité et à son activité naturelle de prendre pour objet privilégié les réalités finies.

Le mouvement perpétuel de l'intellect a donc besoin d'un être infini et illimité, vers lequel il pourrait se porter en conformité avec son principe et sa nature propre. Or il n'est rien de vraiment infini et illimité, si ce n'est Dieu, qui est Un par nature et au sens propre. C'est donc vers l'Un qui est infini au sens propre, Dieu, que l'intellect doit tendre, regarder et se mouvoir, parce que c'est cela qui lui est naturel au sens propre²⁸.

Ce n'est que la contemplation de Dieu qui procure à l'intellect une réjouissance intégrale (*χαίρειν ὁλοκληρῶς*)²⁹. Calliste précise que l'intellect trouve en Dieu « sa tranquillité naturelle (*τὴν σφετέραν φυσικὴν ἡρεμίαν*) » ; « il y a là une stabilité survenant grâce à l'Esprit et un repos d'une étrange nature et le terme infini de toutes choses, mais dans cette unité-là le mouvement ne cesse aucunement pour tout intellect, car ce qu'il a atteint est illimité et sans bornes, impossible à circonscrire, sans figure ni forme, absolument simple »³⁰. Il s'agit donc d'une synthèse paradoxale, faite de repos et de mouvement, et on a l'impression que ce texte est comme une explicitation ou paraphrase de la fameuse formule de Maxime (*ἀεικίνητος στάσις*), de même qu'un autre passage, où Calliste parle de manière semblable d'un « repos intellectuel qui tourne de façon uniforme autour de Dieu seul, dans un mouvement perpétuel (*νοερὰ κατὰπαυσις, ἀεικινήτως περὶ μόνον τὸν Θεόν ἐνοειδῶς στρεφομένη*) ». C'est un « repos » en ce que l'intellect qui se trouve en Dieu ne cherche plus désormais autre chose que Lui³¹. Mais ce repos n'a rien de statique, car il s'agit de « s'enrichir à l'infini des réalités éternelles (*πλουτεῖν εἰς ἄπειρον τὰ ἄδια*) »³². C'est un processus que Calliste décrit souvent en termes de « participation », « assimilation » ou encore « amour » ; l'intellect y est sujet d'une transformation « de gloire en gloire »³³. C'est dans ce sens qu'il faut comprendre des expressions comme « l'intellect devient infini » : non

pas qu'il change de nature, car la participation ne se fait pas *kat'ousian*, mais que par son activité il devient meilleur à l'infini³⁴.

À lire certains de ses passages, on peut trouver Calliste un peu aride et artificiel. Cette impression est cependant trompeuse, car vers la fin de ses *Chapitres* le ton change. La même dynamique y apparaît, mais d'une manière qui est beaucoup plus poétique et personnelle. En voici un exemple tiré du chap. 91, où Calliste décrit ce que vit l'intellect lorsqu'il qu'il se trouve plongé dans la contemplation de Dieu.

Mais dès lors qu'il ne parvient pas à aller plus loin, considérant comme il faut ce qui lui échappe indubitablement, qui est au-dessus de lui et qui le porte, il (*scil.* l'intellect) est tout à fait pris par l'éros, il est irrésistiblement transporté d'amour fou pour Toi, et il rallume dans l'âme un désir ardent, enflammé qu'il est lui-même d'amour divin (ὀπéκκαυμα θείας ἀγάπης)³⁵ par ce qu'il peut comprendre à l'incompréhensible, et faisant de la privation le moyen d'acquérir l'éros, moins par le charme dont Tu le touches que par la brûlure de ce qui lui échappe et le dispose, par la nature inaccessible de la connaissance, à s'émerveiller au plus haut point, à désirer avant tout, et j'ajouterai, à se persuader de ne pas rechercher ce que Tu es selon l'essence, ce qui de surcroît est de toute manière totalement impossible. Mais la nature de la puissance et de l'énergie de l'essence divine est tout à fait incompréhensible, comme celle des réalités intelligibles et divines que nous contemplons autour de Toi et qui, on l'a dit, sont infinies en grandeur et insondables dans leur multitude. Dès lors que ces réalités sont infinies, il est impossible, en effet, de les atteindre. Mais il est possible, en T'approchant par la purification et en se tendant vers Ta beauté, de parvenir à des visions plus claires et plus lumineuses des réalités qui T'entourent, et d'être déifié en conséquence. Tu brûles alors de la blessure de l'éros l'intellect qui T'attend comme il faut, l'illuminant de plus en plus, et par là même l'introduisant dans ces merveilles qu'il contemple, inaccessibles, mystiques, plus hautes que le ciel³⁶.

Le même ton et le même mouvement sont reconnaissables dans ses *Discours*.

Je ne puis contenir mon désir, et brûlée par Ton éclat sans pareil, j'ai soif de la parfaite beauté de Ta splendeur, et plus j'aspire à Toi, source inépuisable de biens, et reçois par Ton Esprit Tes saints rayons, pures délices rivalisant avec celle des anges, plus insatiable se fait mon désir, étonnante ma faim, et plus je tends, sans y parvenir, à cette région supérieure où Tu demeures et à la communion de Tes biens si élevés³⁷.

La description du désir insatiable de la beauté divine que donne ici Calliste se rapproche beaucoup de certaines expressions de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien³⁸, de même que celle que l'on trouve dans le *Discours 23*, sur l'extase dans laquelle se trouve plongée l'âme « blessée » par l'ineffable beauté de Dieu.

De cette façon, c'est une sorte de cercle divin que l'intellect a merveilleusement accompli : resplendissant sous l'effet de la contemplation en Dieu, le très vénérable amour à son tour accroît cette contemplation et l'élargit encore, comme si, engendré par la contemplation, l'amour l'engendrait à son tour. À la suite de la connaissance mystique, l'amour, clouant l'intellect à Dieu, le prépare à voir se révéler sous ses yeux mille spectacles ineffables et mille mystères et à être lui-même déifié. Par là, l'amour dans son engendrement se surpasse toujours lui-même, engendrant sans cesse et étant sans cesse engendré en Dieu éternel³⁹.

3. Calliste, critique de Thomas d'Aquin

Ce qui est notable chez Calliste pourtant, c'est peut être moins la manière dont il s'est approprié, directement ou indirectement, les divers éléments de la théorie de Grégoire de Nysse, quoique la réception qu'il en fait apparaît plus élaborée que celle de Grégoire Palamas. C'est plutôt la conscience qu'il a que ces idées ne sont pas un simple *theologoumenon*, mais font désormais partie constitutive de l'enseignement de la tradition de l'Église. Aux yeux de Calliste, le dynamisme indéfini est sans hésitation la façon dont il faut concevoir l'existence eschatologique des créatures raisonnables. Or, à la lecture de la traduction de *Summa contra Gentiles* de Thomas d'Aquin⁴⁰, il découvre que, sur ce point comme sur bien d'autres, les deux traditions, grecque et latine semblent se trouver en divergence. Dans la réfutation qu'il compose il consacre dès lors un espace assez important à discuter la question.

À tort ou à raison, la réfutation de Calliste n'a pas beaucoup attiré l'attention jusqu'à présent⁴¹. Certains lecteurs modernes l'ont même trouvée rébarbative, et en tout cas indigne d'être prise en compte de façon sérieuse⁴². On peut effectivement avoir le sentiment que Calliste ne cherche pas à comprendre en profondeur la position qu'il critique. Il se contente souvent de reproduire divers passages de la *Somme* de Thomas qui apparaissent soit impies, soit en contradiction les uns avec les autres. Il leur oppose ensuite quelques considérations brèves visant

à les réfuter, appuyées pas des citations des auteurs patristiques, le plus souvent grecques, mais aussi des Pères latins comme Augustin ou Grégoire le Grand. S'il lui accorde parfois de « dire le vrai » ou de « retrouver le bon sens », Calliste n'est jamais trop tendre avec Thomas, c'est le moins que l'on puisse dire. Il me semble pourtant que sur la question qui nous occupe ici sa réfutation mérite que l'on s'y arrête. D'un point de vue historique, Calliste apparaît comme le premier auteur oriental à avoir remarqué que la tradition grecque et celle latine, ou plutôt les plus proéminents parmi leur représentants, conçoivent la béatitude éternelle dans des termes qui sont sensiblement différents. Sa réfutation est intéressante aussi en ce qu'elle recoupe sur certains points les observations formulées par des auteurs modernes comme D. Bradshaw. Je me dois cependant de préciser qu'il ne sera pas question ici de faire une vraie confrontation entre les deux auteurs, car l'impression persistante est que le débat comprend une part de malentendu qui l'empêche d'être véritablement concluant. Le but sera plutôt de suivre et d'explicitier autant que possible les raisonnements de Calliste, pour déterminer la mesure dont il s'inscrit dans la tradition de ses prédécesseurs patristiques et byzantins.

La discussion concernant l'épectase part de la façon dont Thomas affirme la cessation du désir une fois que sa fin ultime, la vision de Dieu, est atteinte. Calliste cite d'abord SCG III, 48, 2, où il est dit que « la fin ultime de l'homme fait son aspiration naturelle cesser de telle manière que, cette fin-là une fois atteinte, il ne cherche pas plus loin. En effet, s'il continue à se mouvoir vers quelque chose, c'est qu'il ne tient pas encore la fin dans laquelle il trouve son repos », et SCG III, 48, 12: « Tant qu'un être se meut vers la perfection, il n'est pas encore dans sa fin ultime »⁴³. Calliste construit son objection à partir de l'infinité divine. À ses yeux, le raisonnement de Thomas n'est tenable qu'à condition de considérer ou bien que Dieu soit fini (πεπερασμένον), ou bien que l'intellect soit dépourvu de son activité (ἀνοηταίνει) une fois qu'il atteint sa fin ultime. Mais si Dieu est infini (ἄπειρος) et que l'intellect ne cesse de devenir plus brillant et plus capable de connaissance dans sa tension vers Lui (φαινότερος καὶ ἐπιστημονικώτερος ἀνατεινόμενος πρὸς Θεὸν), c'est Thomas alors qui est manifestement dépourvu d'intelligence (ἀνότητος), puisqu'il ne voit pas que ces prémisses impliquent une progression incessante, et préfère en revanche s'en tenir aux « idées des Grecs (ἐλληνικὰ φρονήματα) »⁴⁴. Et Calliste de citer en contre-exemple, après Maxime le Confesseur, trois passages significatifs tirés des *Homélies* de Grégoire de Nysse sur la *Cantique des Cantiques*⁴⁵.

L'aspiration de l'intellect vers des degrés toujours supérieurs de contemplation est pour Calliste la conséquence du caractère inépuisable et transcendant de l'objet de cette contemplation. Certains textes de Thomas lui semblent au contraire impliquer que la persistance eschatologique du désir signifierait que la béatitude ainsi atteinte n'est pas encore véritable⁴⁶. En d'autres mots, un mouvement incessant du désir serait plutôt l'indice que ce désir reste en fin de compte frustré. Or, pour Calliste, cette objection provient encore une fois de l'échec à prendre en compte de manière sérieuse le fait que « Dieu est infini selon tout ce qui est naturellement désirable pour toute nature raisonnable (ἄπειρός ἐστιν ὁ Θεὸς κατὰ πάντα τὸ πεφυκὸς πάσῃ λογικῇ φύσει ἐπιθυμητόν) »⁴⁷. Le désir de l'âme en Dieu devient sa véritable nourriture, et ni les humains, ni les anges ne peuvent cesser d'aspirer toujours plus loin, en sorte que leur désir sera en perpétuel mouvement et sans fin⁴⁸. Ainsi l'intellect n'est-il pas frustré, mais plutôt sans cesse débordé par le caractère inépuisable des biens que Dieu (ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἔσχατον τέλος, ἄπειρον καὶ ἀόριστον) lui donne en partage. Il est vrai que « l'abîme infini existant entre Dieu et les hommes »⁴⁹ ne sera jamais franchi. Mais la réjouissance que connaît l'âme n'en est pas moins réelle et positive : « parvenu en Dieu, l'intellect brûle du feu de l'amour, il est frappé de stupeur à la vue des merveilles qui sont en Dieu, il se réjouit d'une joie inexprimable grâce à la communion et à l'union à Dieu, il est mis hors de lui-même par la richesse supra-céleste dont il hérite, il vit un joie incessante à cause de son héritage incorruptible et toutes les autres que nous avons mentionnées auparavant »⁵⁰.

L'inclusion des anges dans le processus de croissance eschatologique que connaissent les bienheureux mérite d'être signalée à titre particulier, car c'est encore un point qui sépare Calliste et Thomas. Rappelons que dans la *Somme théologique* I, 62, 9 Thomas avait examiné la question de savoir si les anges peuvent progresser en béatitude, et il avait rejeté une telle idée. Calliste ne connaît probablement pas la *Somme théologique*, mais il cite un passage de la *Somme contre les gentils* où il est dit que « les connaissances des anges sont immuables »⁵¹. Si cela est vrai, poursuit-il, « il est évident que les anges ne progressent, ni ne s'avancent vers Dieu »⁵². Mais faire une telle affirmation, c'est renverser les enseignements divins pour se poser en défenseur des idées des « Grecs ». Les anges, de même que les âmes, tiennent leur béatitude de Dieu à travers la participation⁵³. Or, puisqu'ils sont, comme toute créature, « imparfaits et dans le besoin (ἀτελεῖς καὶ προσδεόμενοι) », leurs aspirations vers Dieu ne connaissent pas d'arrêt dans cette activité, « parce qu'ils sont déficients et parce

qu'ils éprouvent le désir de la connaissance de Dieu qu'il ne possèdent pas encore (ἀεικινήτους ἔχουσι τὰς ἐφάρσεις, ὡς ἐλλίπεις καὶ ὡς ἐπιθυμοῦντες τῆς θείας γνώσεως, ἣν οὐπω ἔχουσιν) »⁵⁴. Ils sont voués, en d'autres mots, à une progression perpétuelle. On pourrait être tenté de penser qu'il s'agit là d'une idée osée de la part de Calliste. Mais loin de la considérer comme une hardiesse personnelle, il la tient plutôt pour un enseignement de la tradition dans laquelle il veut ainsi s'inscrire. « Personne en effet parmi les saints n'a jamais affirmé ou conçu un arrêt de l'aspiration des hommes ou des anges vers Dieu ». Il n'y a que les « Grecs » qui puissent l'imaginer, et maintenant Thomas aussi⁵⁵. Aucun texte patristique n'est donné à l'appui cette fois, mais en rapport avec la même question Calliste renvoie ailleurs à quelques passages de Pseudo-Denys⁵⁶. À vrai dire, les expressions sur le progrès perpétuel des anges que l'on trouve chez Jean Climaque⁵⁷, chez Grégoire de Sinai⁵⁸ ou chez Grégoire Palamas⁵⁹, pour ne donner que trois exemples, auraient été plus explicites que celles de Pseudo-Denys, mais Calliste ne les évoque pas. Il est clair en tout cas qu'il n'a pas tort de penser être ainsi en ligne avec quelques figures illustres de ses prédécesseurs.

Un dernier point sur lequel Calliste pense devoir s'inscrire en faux contre Thomas est la manière de concevoir la perfection spirituelle des créatures raisonnables. Plusieurs textes de la SCG qu'il cite semblent associer l'épanouissement des bienheureux avec l'absence du mouvement et du changement. Tant qu'il y a encore mouvement du désir, la béatitude n'est pas parfaite. La perfection exclut le changement. Calliste réagit contre cette façon de concevoir la perfection à propos d'un texte tiré de la SCG III, 40. Thomas y traite de la présence eschatologique de Dieu dans l'âme, et distingue entre la connaissance de foi et la connaissance directe, qui unit à Lui. Il précise que « par la connaissance de foi, l'objet connu, c'est-à-dire Dieu, n'est pas parfaitement présent dans l'intellect ». La foi porte, en effet, sur ce qui est n'est pas encore présent; loin de satisfaire le désir naturel, elle l'aiguise, chacun désirant voir ce qu'il croit. Or Calliste s'insurge contre l'idée même que Dieu puisse jamais être parfaitement présent dans l'âme.

Mais, quoi qu'il puisse arriver, que ce soit grâce à la foi ou par quelque autre moyen, dans ce siècle ou dans celui à venir, ni les hommes ni les anges ne peuvent parvenir à un état tel que l'objet de leur foi, c'est à dire Dieu, soit présent d'une manière parfaite dans l'intellect. D'après les saints, en effet, la perfection des créatures est une perfection sans terme, puisqu'il

n'est possible d'aucune manière qu'il y ait compréhension pour le Dieu incompréhensible. Or il est patent que tu sens l'éducation et la religion des Grecs, et tu penses que Dieu est présent dans l'intellect de manière parfaite, c'est-à-dire selon l'essence, quoique non pas dans l'existence présente, mais dans celle à venir. Voilà pourquoi tu es tombé dans de pareilles absurdités et dans d'autres plus grandes encore. Mais Dieu dévient présent aux saints et aux êtres angéliques non pas selon l'essence, jamais, non, mais selon sa puissance, selon son énergie illuminatrice et selon son illumination ineffable, comme tu l'a déjà appris ; énergie qui étant infinie de ton aveu même, ceux qui en participent la recevront éternellement, alors que l'essence de Dieu reste absolument inaccessible⁶⁰.

Calliste comprend l'adverbe τελείως au sens d'exhaustif ou de complet, alors que l'infinité de Dieu interdit précisément qu'il y ait jamais coïncidence entre le créé et l'incrée. Si l'asymétrie entre le fini et l'infini est indépassable, la perfection des créatures ne peut dès lors se comprendre que sous le mode d'une perfection ouverte ou dynamique. C'est une perfection paradoxale, indissociablement liée au mouvement et au changement puisqu'il s'agit d'un processus plus que d'un état ; une perfection « imparfaite (ἀτέλεστός ἐστι τελειότης) » donc, concept que Calliste attribue encore « aux saints » sans donner de nom ou de citation. Sur ce point encore force est de constater qu'il aurait facilement pu se prévaloir des témoignages de Grégoire de Nysse⁶¹, de Jean Climaque⁶² ou de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien⁶³.

Conclusion

Un millénaire s'est écoulé entre Grégoire de Nysse et Calliste Angélicoudès, période pendant laquelle les idées du premier sur la dynamique de la vie spirituelle ont suscité un intérêt notable dans l'Orient chrétien. Nous venons de constater qu'au XIV^e siècle cet intérêt n'a pas diminué, bien au contraire, et ce n'est probablement pas un hasard. La querelle hésychaste a poussé les théologiens byzantins à revisiter les grands textes de l'époque patristique afin prouver leur fidélité à la tradition et d'établir ainsi la légitimité de leur position au-delà de toute contestation possible. Or Grégoire de Nysse et ses écrits y figurent à la place d'honneur. S'il a pu par le passé être objet d'une certaine méfiance, due notamment à ses affirmations sur l'apocatastase ou à certaines de ses expressions christologiques, pour les auteurs du XIV^e siècle Grégoire

est clairement une autorité qu'ils citent et revendiquent sans réserve. En particulier son enseignement sur le progrès perpétuel devait exercer une attraction certaine pour les défenseurs de la pratique hésychaste en ce qu'il fournissait un moyen de comprendre comment la transcendance de Dieu, pierre de touche pour tout théologien byzantin, pouvait être conciliée avec l'affirmation d'une communion directe et réelle avec Lui dès l'existence présente. Ainsi c'est avec des modifications minimales que Grégoire Palamas peut se l'approprier. Pour expliciter le paradoxe d'un Dieu inaccessible dont la vie pourtant se communique aux hommes, il se sert de la distinction entre l'essence et les énergies divines. De surcroît, l'objet du progrès est chez Palamas la lumière divine incréée. Calliste Angélicoudès nous offre, quant à lui, une synthèse plus complexe. Il insiste souvent sur le fait que la théorie du progrès perpétuel est une conséquence de l'infinité divine, il définit la perfection spirituelle comme n'ayant pas de terme et il inclut les anges dans ce processus de croissance continue. Calliste semble également avoir été sensible aux nuances apportées par Maxime aux idées de Grégoire de Nysse, puisqu'il prend soin de souligner le caractère de « repos » que ce progrès comporte. De surcroît il est intéressant de remarquer chez Calliste la façon dont les raisonnements les plus spéculatifs (ses *Chapitres sur la vie contemplative et l'union à Dieu* sont aussi appelées « syllogistiques ») s'entrelacent avec le discours direct et le témoignage personnel. Enfin, la lecture et par la suite la réfutation qu'il a rédigée de la *Somme contre les Gentils* lui ont donné l'occasion de remarquer que l'épéctase constituait un point de divergence entre certains théologiens d'expression latine et les plus proéminents de leurs homologues grecs. Par son érudition patristique et par la manière dont il l'envisage dans une perspective historique, Calliste apparaît ainsi comme le précurseur des auteurs modernes comme Kallistos Ware, Dumitru Stăniloae ou Placide Deseille, pour ne donner que quelques exemples, qui ont reconnu dans les idées formulées par Grégoire de Nysse un enseignement de la tradition de l'Église d'Orient.

NOTES

- ¹ David Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West. Metaphysics and the Divisions of Christendom*, Cambridge, 2004, 256-257.
- ² *Summa Contra Gentiles* III, 48, 3.
- ³ *Quaestiones ad Thalassium* 59.
- ⁴ *Summa theologiae* I, 62, 9: « Sed contra est quod mereri et proficere pertinent ad statum viae. Sed Angeli non sunt viatores, sed comprehensores. Ergo Angeli beati non possunt mereri, nec in beatitudine proficere. » (trad. Jean-Hervé Nicolas, dans Thomas d'Aquin, *Somme Théologique*, tome I, Paris, 1984, 579). Voir, pour ces références et discussion, Daniel Lattier, « A Ground of Disunion : The Absence of *epektasis* in Western Soteriology and Eschatology », conférence donnée à l'occasion de la réunion annuelle de *American Academy of Religion*, Atlanta, GA, 31 Octobre, 2010, et disponible en ligne sur www.academia.edu. L'argumentaire présenté en *STI*, 62, 9 est cependant plus complexe, mais je ne peux lui rendre justice en l'espace de cet essai.
- ⁵ Placide Deseille, « Epectase », dans : *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique*, t. IV. 1. Paris, 1960, 786-787.
- ⁶ Voir *ibidem*. Pour une brève comparaison entre Grégoire de Nysse et Augustin sur ce point, voir aussi Lucas Francisco Mateo-Seco, « ¿Progreso o inmutabilidad en la visión beatífica? Apuntes de la Historia de la Teología. »; dans : *Scripta Theologica* 29 (1997), 14-30.
- ⁷ Il n'est pas aisé de déterminer les rapports entre Macaire-Syméon et Grégoire. Les deux auteurs ont vécu à peu près à la même époque, et la *Grande lettre* de Macaire-Syméon fut retravaillée et reprise par Grégoire dans son *De instituto christiano* (Robert Staats, *Gregor von Nyssa und die Messalianer*, Berlin, 1968). À l'inverse, on peut également déceler les indices d'une influence des Cappadociens sur Macaire-Syméon, et on retrouve chez lui des idées proches de celles de Grégoire sur le progrès spirituel. Il est donc en principe possible que les contacts littéraires aient été réciproques, même si l'on aimerait pouvoir l'affirmer avec plus d'assurance (Marcus Plested, *The Macarian Legacy. The Place of Macarius-Symeon in the Eastern Christian Tradition*, Oxford, 2004, 47-58). Cette question sera de toute façon difficile à trancher, faute de pouvoir établir avec précision la date de rédaction des *Homélies spirituelles* de Macaire-Syméon. Staats situe la rédaction de la *Grande Lettre* après 381, puisque l'expression trinitaire qu'elle rapporte en § 1,2 suppose une connaissance du langage consacré au concile de Constantinople, 381 (Robert Staats, *Makarios-Symeon. Epistola magna: Eine messalianische Monchsregel und ihre Umschrift in Gregors von Nyssa De instituto christiano*, Göttingen, 1984, 26-39). Si l'on accepte cette datation, et si l'on accepte que la *Grande Lettre* fut le premier écrit rédigé par Macaire (ce qui n'est pas sûr), il semblerait que l'on doive accorder à Grégoire de

Nysse la primauté dans la question de l'épectase, puisqu'il en fait état au plus tard dans ses *De hominis opificio* (début du 379) et *Contre Eunome I* (380). Tout cela comporte évidemment une grande part d'incertitude.

8 *Capita valde utilia per achrostichidem disposita* 54 (PG 150 : 1253 D).

9 *La vie en Christ* II, 90-91 (SC 355, 218).

10 Parmi ceux qui l'ont remarqué, on peut citer Mariette CANÉVET, « Grégoire de Nysse », *Dictionnaire de spiritualité, ascétique et mystique*, t. VI, Paris, 1967, 971-1011 ; John Meyendorff, « Introduction », dans Gregory Palamas, *The Triads*, translation by Nicholas Gendle, Preface by Jaroslav Pelikan, New Jersey, 1982, 14-15; Torstein Tollefsen, « Gregory of Palamas » dans : *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa*, Lucas-Francisco Mateo-Seco et Giulio Maspero (éd.), Leiden, 2010, 234-235.

11 *Contra Eunomium* II, 419.

12 Voir sur le thème de la participation chez Grégoire, David L. Balàs , *Metousia Theou. Man's Participation in God's Perfection according to Saint Gregory of Nyssa*, Rome, 1966. Voir aussi *idem*, « Metousia », dans : *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa*, 472-473.

13 *In Canticum Canticorum* 6 (GNO VI, 179, 6).

14 *De perfectione christiana* 212,10-12 (GNO VIII.1).

15 Pour une mise au point récente, voir Alexis Torrance, « Precedents for Palamas' Essence-Energies Theology in Cappadocian Fathers », *Vigiliae Christianae*, 63 (2009), 64-69.

16 *Pro hesychastis* I, 3,22 (éd. Meyendorff, 158,26-159,6) : καὶ κατ' ἀναλογίαν δὲ τῆς θεαρέστου πράξεως, τῆς τε τῶν ἄλλων πάντων ἀποχῆς καὶ τῆς προσοχῆς τῆς προσευχῆς καὶ τῆς πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν ἐκ ψυχῆς ὅλης ἀνανεύσεως ἐπὶ τὰ πρόσω φερόμενος αἰεὶ καὶ διαυγεστέρας πειρώμενος τῆς θεωρίας, κάντεῦθεν τὸ ἄπειρον συνίησι τοῦ ὁρωμένου ὅτι ἄπειρον καὶ τῆς μὲν λαμπρότητος ἐκείνου πέρας οὐχ ὁρᾷ, τῆς δ' ἑαυτοῦ πρὸς φωτοληψίαν ἐπιτηδειότητος ἐπὶ μᾶλλον ὁρᾷ τὸ ἀδρανές. Au début de ce développement, Palamas cite le nom de Macaire-Syméon. La référence donné par l'éditeur est Macaire-Syméon, *De libertate mentis*, 21 (P.G. XXXIV, 956 A). La traduction des fragments tirés du *Pro hesychastis* m'appartient.

17 *Pro hesychastis* II, 3,35 (éd. Meyendorff, 459,10-14) : Τῆς δὲ θεωρίας ταύτης ἔστι καὶ ἀρχὴ καὶ τὰ μετὰ τὴν ἀρχήν, κατὰ τε τὸ ἀμυδρότερον καὶ τηλαυγέστερον διαφέροντα πρὸς ἄλληλα, τέλος δ' οὐμενοῦν· ἐπ' ἄπειρον γὰρ ἡ πρόοδος αὐτῆς, ὡσαύτως καὶ τῆς ἐν ἀποκαλύψει ἀρπαγῆς·

18 *Pro hesychastis* II, 3, 31 (éd. Meyendorff, 449,24-451,11) : Αὐτὴ ἡ ἀγλαΐα τοῦ φωτὸς ἐκείνου, ἡ παραδόξως ὡς ὕλην ἔχει τὴν θέαν τοῦ ὁρῶντος, αὔξουσα διὰ τῆς ἐνώσεως τὸ πνευματικὸν ἐκεῖνο ὅμμα καὶ χωρητικώτερον αἰεὶ ἐαυτῆς ἐργαζομένη, οὐδέποτε λήξει διὰ τοῦ παντὸς αἰῶνος φανοτέρας ἀκτῖσι περιανγάζουσα αὐτὸ καὶ κρυφιοτέρας ἐστοδιηνεκὲς αἴγλης ἐμπιπλῶσα καὶ ἀναφαίνουσα δι' ἑαυτῆς, ἃ μηδέπω πρότερον. Ὅθεν καὶ τοῦτ' ἄπειρον οἱ θεολόγοι λέγουσι τὸ φῶς, δι' οὗ κατὰ ἀπόπausιν πάσης γνωστικῆς δυνάμεως, ἐν δυνάμει Πνεύματος, ὁρατὸς γίνεται

- τοῖς ἁγίοις ὁ Θεός, ὡς Θεὸς θεοῖς ἐνούμενός τε καὶ ὁρώμενος· τῇ γὰρ μεθέξει τοῦ κρείττονος ἐπὶ τὸ κρείττον μετασκευασθέντες καὶ προφητικῶς εἰπεῖν «ἀλλάζαντες ἰσχύν», πᾶσαν ἀποπαύουσιν ἐνέργειαν ψυχῆς καὶ σώματος, ὥστε μόνον αὐτὸ δι' αὐτῶν φαίνεσθαι καὶ ὑπ' αὐτῶν ὁρᾶσθαι, τῶν φυσικῶν γνωρισμάτων τῇ ὑπερβολῇ τῆς δόξης νικηθέντων, «ἵνα ἢ ὁ Θεὸς τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσι» κατὰ τὸν Ἀπόστολον.
- 19 *De anima et resurrectione* 105 B-C (PG 46).
- 20 *Pro hesychastis* II, 3, 56 (éd. Meyendorff, 505,18-24) : Τεκμήριον δὲ τῆς ὑπερανθρώτου ταύτης κρυφιώτητος, ἡ τοῦ Μωσέως ἐπὶ τὴν τρανότεραν θεὰν ἔφεσις τε καὶ αἰτήσις καὶ ἀνάβασις, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡ τῶν ἀγγέλων καὶ τῶν ἁγίων ἐν ἀπείρῳ αἰῶνι διηνεκῆς ἐπὶ τὰ φανότερα τῶν θεαμάτων προκοπή, ὥστε καὶ ὁρῶντες αὐτῇ τῇ ὁράσει ὑπὲρ ὅρασιν γινώσκουσι τὸ φῶς ἐκεῖνο, πόσῳ μᾶλλον τὸν δι' αὐτοῦ ἐπιφανιζόμενον Θεόν.
- 21 Voir Robert Heine, *Perfection in Virtuous Life. A Study in the Relationship Between Edification and Polemical Theology in Gregory of Nyssa's De Vita Moysis*, Cambridge, MA, 1975, et Warren Smith, *Passion and Paradise. Human and Divine Emotion in the Thought of Gregory of Nyssa*, New York, 2004.
- 22 Voir sur ce point Paul M. Blowers, « Maximus the Confessor, Gregory of Nyssa and the Concept of Perpetual Progress », *Vigiliae Christianae* 46 (1992), 151-171.
- 23 Voir, par exemple, Syméon Koutsas, « Callistos Angelicoudès, Quatre traités hésychastes inédits. Introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes », surtout le chap. I : « Essai biographique sur Calliste Angélicoudès », *Theologia* 67 (1996), 114-124; Antonio Rigo, « Callisto Angelicoude Catafighiota Meleniceota e l'esicismo bizantino del XIV secolo. Una nota prosopografica », dans : *Nil Sorskij e l'esicismo. Atti del II Convegno ecumenico internazionale di spiritualità russa, Bose 21-24 settembre 1994*, Adalberto Mainardi (éd.), Bose, 1995, 251-268 ; Oleg Rodionov, « The Chapters of Kallistos Angelikoudes : The Relationship of the Separate Series and their Main Theological Themes », dans : *Byzantine Theology and its Philosophical Background*, Antonio Rigo (éd.), Turnhout, 2011, 141-159, ou encore Ioan I. Ică jr, « The "Kallistoi" of the *Philokalia* and Their Hesychastic Writings : Enigmas, Discoveries and a Recent Restitution », *Revista teologică* 94(3)/2012, 211-237.
- 24 *Capita de unione et de vita contemplativa* (ci-après *De unione*) dans *Philokalia tōn hierōn neptikōn*, t. V, Athènes, 1963³, 4-59 (cf. PG 147, 836-941) ; trad. fr. par Jacques Touraille, dans *La Philocalie des Pères Neptiques*, t. 11, Abbaye de Bellefontaine, Bégrolles-en-Mauges, 1991, 145-228.
- 25 *Capita de oratione* (ci-après *De oratione*) dans *Philokalia tōn hierōn neptikōn*, t. II, Athènes, 1963³, 299-367 ; trad. fr. par Jacques Touraille, dans *La Philocalie des Pères Neptiques*, t. 11, 17-119.

- ²⁶ Le *Discours* 22 sous le titre *Sur la pratique hésychaste* dans la *Philokalia tôn hierôn neptikôn*, t. IV, Athènes, 1961³, 368-372 (trad. fr. par Jacques Touraille, dans *La Philocalie des Pères Neptiques*, t. 11, 125-131); le *Discours* 29 comme le 15^e chapitre d'une série figurant dans la deuxième édition de la *Philokalia*, Athènes, 1893², t. 2, 412-415, Athènes, 1961³, t. IV, 299-301; les *Discours* 5, 16, 22 (à nouveau) et 23 par l'archimandrite Syméon Koutsas, avec une traduction française en miroir, dans la revue *Theologia* 67 (1996), 518-529 ; 696-755 ; *Theologia* 68 (1997), 212-247 ; 536-565.
- ²⁷ Καλλίστου Αγγελικούδη κατά Θωμά Ακινάτου: introduction, texte grec et notes par Stylianos Papadopoulos, Athènes, 1970 (ci-après *Refutatio*).
- ²⁸ Calliste Angélicoudès, *De unione* 3 (*Philokalia* V, 4).
- ²⁹ *De unione* 4 (*Philokalia* V, 5)
- ³⁰ *De unione* 5 (*Philokalia* V, 5-6): στάσις γάρ διὰ Πνεύματος ἐκεῖ καὶ ξενότροπος ἀνάπαισις καὶ πάντων πέρας τὸ ἄπειρον καὶ κίνησις ἐν τῷ ἐνὶ γινομένῳ ἐκείνῳ οὐκ ἀπολείπεται οὐδαμῶς παντὶ νῶ, τὸ ἀόριστον καὶ ἀπέραντον πεφθακότι, τὸ τε ἀνείδεον καὶ ἀσχημάτιστον καὶ ἀπολύτως ἀπλοῦν· »
- ³¹ *De unione* 75 (*Philokalia* V, 40).
- ³² *De unione* 35 (*Philokalia* V, 22).
- ³³ *De unione* 91 (*Philokalia* V, 58).
- ³⁴ *De unione* 20 (*Philokalia* V, 14).
- ³⁵ Calliste n'oppose ἀγάπη et ἔρως, mais considère que le deuxième est une forme intensifiée de la première. Voir *De unione* 23 (*Philokalia* V, 14) : "Ἔστι δ' ὁ ἔρως ἀγάπη ἐπιτεταμένη. Cf. Grégoire de Nysse, *In Canticum Canticorum* 1 (GNO VI, 383,10) : ἐπιτεταμένη γὰρ ἀγάπη ὁ ἔρως λέγεται.
- ³⁶ Calliste Angélicoudès, *De unione* 91 (*Philokalia* V, 57-58 ; trad. J. Touraille, 226-227, légèrement modifiée).
- ³⁷ *Oratio* 23,21 (éd. Koutsas 724, 20-27) : Οὐ στέγω τὸν πόθον, φλέγει μου τὸ ὑπερβολικόν σου ὥραϊον καὶ διψῶ τῆς σῆς λαμπρότητος τὸ περικαλλές· καὶ ὅσον πρὸς σέ, Ἀπειρόδορε, ἀνατείνομαι καὶ δέχομαι διὰ Πνεύματος τὰς ἀγίας ἀκτῖνάς σου καὶ τρυφῶ ὑπερκόσμια καὶ ἀγγέλοις ἐφάμιλλα, τοσοῦτόν σε ἀκορέστως ἐπιθυμῶ καὶ πεινῶ θαυμαστῶς καὶ ἀκάθεκτος διατελῶ πρὸς ἀνάτασιν μείζονα τὴν πρὸς σέ καὶ ὑψηλοτέρων σου ἀγαθῶν κοινωνίαν.
- ³⁸ Voir, par exemple, *Hymne* 23, 321-336 (SC 174, 210). Cf. *Hymne* 8, 47-49 (SC 156, 218).
- ³⁹ *Oratio* 16,14 (éd. Koutsas 242, 18-27) : Καὶ μέν γε ταύτη τοι θεῖόν τινα κύκλον ὁ νοῦς θαυμαστῶς πεποίηται· ἐκ γὰρ τῆς περὶ Θεὸν θεωρίας ἀναλάμπουσα ἢ πανόσιος ἀγάπη, τὴν περὶ Θεὸν θεωρίαν αὐξάνει καὶ οὕτως αὐτῆς εὐρύνει αὐτήν, ὥσπερι γενημένη τε ὑπὸ θεωρίας καὶ αὐτῆς θεωρίαν γεννῶσα. Τῷ γάρ τοι Θεῷ προσηλοῦσα μετὰ τὴν γνῶσιν τὸν νοῦν, πολλῶν ἀρρήτων θεωριῶν καὶ πολλῶν μυστηρίων ἀποκαλύψεις τοῦτον θεῶσθαι παρασκευάζει καὶ θεουργεῖσθαι δῆπουθεν γιγνομένως αὐτόν, δι' ὧν ἐσαῦθις μείζων ἐαυτῆς ἢ ἀγάπη γεγένηται,

- αἰεὶ γεννῶσα καὶ αἰεὶ γεννωμένη περὶ Θεὸν τὸν ἄπειρον καὶ αἰδίων. Voir aussi *ibidem* (éd. Koutsas, 242, 30-33).
- 40 Cette traduction a été achevée pas Demetrios Kydones en décembre 1354. Voir Marcus Plested, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas*, Oxford, 2012, 63-72.
- 41 À signaler cependant l'étude d'ensemble que lui a consacrée Stelianos Papadopoulos, *Συνάντησις ὀρθοδόξου καὶ σχολαστικῆς Θεολογίας* (*En tō prosōpō Kallίστου Ἀγγελικοῦδη καὶ Θωμά Ἀκινάτου*), Thessalonique, 1970. Voir aussi Giorgi Kapriev, « Transzendentalien und Energien. Zwei Modelle mittelalterlicher Philosophie : Thomas von Aquin und Kallistos Angelikudes », dans : *Miscellanea Mediaevalia*, Bd. 30, M. Pickavé (éd.) ; Berlin – New York, 2003, 433-453.
- 42 Très récemment, par exemple, Marcus Plested, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas*, 113-114.
- 43 *Refutatio Thomae Aquinæ* 187 (éd. Papadopoulos, 105,29-106,4 ; abrégé *Refutatio*) : « τὸ ἔσχατον τέλος τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τὴν ἔφειν αὐτοῦ τὴν φυσικὴν ἴσθησιν οὕτως, ὥστε, ἐκείνου τοῦ τέλους ληφθέντος, μηδὲν περαιτέρω ζητεῖσθαι. Εἰ γὰρ ἔτι κινεῖτο ἐπὶ τι, οὐπὼ τὸ τέλος ἔχει, ἐν ᾧ ἡρεμεῖ. Καὶ ἔτι· «ἐφόσον τι κινεῖται ἐπὶ τὴν τελειότητα, οὐπὼ ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ ἔσχατῳ τέλει». Le texte de Thomas sera traduit à partir de la version grecque citée par Calliste. Toutes les traductions de *Refutatio* m'appartiennent.
- 44 *Refutatio* 188-189 (éd. Papadopoulos, 106,22-107,1).
- 45 Les citations de Grégoire de Nysse sont de *In Canticum Cantorum* 1 (*GNO* VI, 31, 5-8) : μόνον τὸ θεῖον ἐστὶν ὡς ἀληθῶς γλυκύ τε καὶ ἐπιθυμητὸν καὶ ἐράσμιον, οὐ ἢ ἀπόλαυσις ἢ αἰεὶ γινομένη ἀφορμὴ μείζονος ἐπιθυμίας γίνεται τῇ μετουσίᾳ τῶν ἀγαθῶν τὸν πόθον συνεπιτείνουσα. ; *ibidem* (*GNO* VI,32.5-8) : ἡ γὰρ τῷ θεῷ συναπτομένη ψυχὴ ἀκορέστως ἔχει τῆς ἀπολαύσεως, ὅσῳ δαυλιέστερον ἐμφορεῖται τοῦ κάλλους, τοσοῦτῳ σφοδρότερον τοῖς πόθοις ἀκμάζουσα., et *In Canticum Cantorum* 7 (*GNO* VI, 245,23-246,5) : τῆς μακαρίας ἐκείνης τῶν ἀγαθῶν φύσεως πολὺ μὲν ἐστὶ τὸ αἰεὶ εὕρισκόμενον, ἀπειροπλάσιον δὲ τοῦ πάντοτε καταλαμβανομένου τὸ ὑπερκείμενον καὶ τοῦτο εἰς τὸ διηνεκὲς γίνεται τῷ μετέχοντι ἐν πάσῃ τῇ τῶν αἰώνων αἰδιότητι διὰ τῶν αἰεὶ μειζόνων τῆς ἐπανξήσεως τοῖς μετέχουσι γινομένης·
- 46 Par exemple *SCG* I, 101,13, cité en *Refutatio* 197 (éd. Papadopoulos, 110,26-31) : Λέγει καὶ γὰρ· «διὰ τῆς μακαριότητος πᾶσα ἔφεις παύεται, ἐπεὶ ταύτης ληφθείσης, οὐδὲν ὑπολείπεται ἐπιθυμητόν». Ἐτι· «ἐφόσον τινὶ λείπεται τι, οὐ χρήζει, οὐπὼ μακάριός ἐστιν, ἐπεὶ ἡ αὐτοῦ ἔφεις οὐπὼ ἐστὶ πεπαιωμένη· ὅς ἂν ἄρα ἕαντῷ ἢ αὐτάρκει, οὐδενὸς δεόμενος, ἐκείνός ἐστι μακάριος».
- 47 *ibidem* 199 (éd. Papadopoulos, 111,12-19). Il la trouve d'autant plus étonnante qu'un autre texte de Thomas lui paraît soutenir exactement le contraire. Il s'agit de *SCG* III, 62,14, 172,1, cité en *Refutatio* 209 (éd. Papadopoulos, 114,27-30) «τὸ μετὰ θαύματος θεωρούμενον κινεῖ τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν, ἡ δὲ θεία οὐσία ὑπὸ τοῦ κτιστοῦ νοῦ αἰεὶ μετὰ θαύματος ὁράται· οὐδεὶς γὰρ αὐτὴν περιλαμβάνει κτιστὸς νοῦς· ἀδύνατον ἄρα τὴν νοερὰν οὐσίαν περὶ

τὴν θεϊαν θεωρίαν ἡγγιᾶν». Évidemment, Calliste rejette la possibilité que les créatures contemplent l'ousia divine elle-même.

48 *Refutatio* 281 (éd. Papadopoulos, 141,23-26) : Ἡ γὰρ ἐν Θεῷ ἔφρεις τροφὴ ἐστὶν ἀληθοῦς τῆς ψυχῆς, διὸ καὶ προαπεδείξαμεν ῥητοῖς θεοφόρων, ὅτι οὔτε ἀγγέλων, οὔτε ἀνθρώπων ἔφρεις ἢ πρὸς Θεὸν παύσεται ποτε, ἀλλ' ἀεὶ κίνητος ἔσται καὶ ἀόριστος. Cf. *ibidem* 282 (éd. Papadopoulos, 142, 5-9). Dans ce dernier passage, Calliste précise que la véritable béatitude ne consiste pas en l'acte de penser (ἐν τῷ νοεῖν), mais en l'union, en l'illumination et en la communion (κοινωνία) de l'Esprit Saint. Cf. *De unione* 52 (*Philokalia* V, 33) : ... τρυφὴν ἀμετάβατον ποιούμενος τὰ ὁρώμενα.

49 *Discours* 23, 14 (éd. Koutsas, 718, 15-16).

50 *Refutatio* 297 (éd. Papadopoulos, 297,19-24) : ἐν τῷ Θεῷ γενόμενος ὁ νοῦς φλέγεται τῷ πυρὶ τῆς ἀγάπης, ἐκπλήσσεται διὰ τὰ ἐν τῷ Θεῷ θαύματα, χαίρει χαρὰν ἀνεκλάλητον διὰ τὴν πρὸς Θεὸν κοινωνίαν καὶ ἔνωσιν, ἐξίσταται διὰ τὸν ὑπερουράνιον πλοῦτον, ὃν κληρονομεῖ, ἄπαυστον ἔχει τὴν ἡδονὴν διὰ τὴν ἄφθαρτον αὐτοῦ κληρονομίαν καὶ δι' ἄλλ' ἕτερα, ὅσα προεθήκαμεν. Cf. *Discours* 23, 21 (éd. Koutsas, 724, 5-17).

51 *SCG* III, 91,4, citée en *Refutatio* 195 (éd. Papadopoulos, 110,3-4) : « αἱ τῶν ἀγγέλων γνώσεις ἀμετάβλητοὶ εἰσιν.

52 *Refutatio* 196 (éd. Papadopoulos, 110,23-26).

53 *Refutatio* 275 (éd. Papadopoulos, 139, 26-27). Il s'agit des anges non déchus.

54 *Refutatio* 301-302 (éd. Papadopoulos, 150,10-18).

55 *Refutatio* 295 (éd. Papadopoulos, 147,17-148,3).

56 *Refutatio* 191 (éd. Papadopoulos, 107,28-108,18). Ici encore, Calliste assimile les idées de Thomas à celles des « Grecs » et d'Aristote.

57 *Scala Paradisi* 26, II, 38 (PG 88, 1068 B) : εἰ καὶ ξένον πως τοῖς πολλοῖς τὸ λεγόμενον, ὅμως κατὰ τὴν προλεχθεῖσαν ἡμῖν ἀπόδειξιν, ὧ μάκαρ, οὐδὲ γὰρ τὰς νοεράς οὐσίας ἔγωγε ἀπροκόπους εἶναι εἶπομι ἂν, δόξαν δὲ μᾶλλον δόξῃ αἰὶ προσλαμβάνουσας, καὶ γινώσκιν ἐπὶ γνώσει ὀρίζομαι.

58 *Capita valde utilia per achrostichidem disposita* 54 (PG 150 : 1253 D) : Ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι οἱ ἄγγελοι καὶ οἱ ἄγιοι, φασί, προκόπτοντες ἐν τῇ τῶν χαρισμάτων προσθήκῃ οὐδέποτε λήξουσιν ἢ ἐνδώσουσι τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἐφετῶς ἔχοντες. ὕφρσιν γὰρ ἢ μείωσιν ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρετῆς ἐπὶ κακίαν ἐκείνος οὐκ ἔχει ὁ αἰὼν.

59 Voir *supra*, n. 20.

60 *Refutatio* 377 (éd. Papadopoulos, 180,29-181,15) : « Διὰ τῆς ἐκ πίστεως γνώσεως οὐ γίνεται τὸ πιστεούμενον πρᾶγμα, ἥγουν ὁ Θεός, παρὸν τελείως τῷ νῷ ». Ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἂν εἴ τι καὶ γένοιτο, οὔτε διὰ τῆς ἐκ πίστεως, οὔτε δι' ἄλλου τινὸς οὐδενός, οὔτε ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι, οὔτε ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι, οὔτε ἀνθρώποι, οὔτε ἄγγελοι, εἰς τοιαύτην κατάστασιν γίνονται, ὥστε γίνεσθαι τὸ πιστεούμενον πρᾶγμα, ἥγουν ὁ Θεός, παρὸν τελείως τῷ νῷ. Ἡ γὰρ τῶν κτιστῶν τελειότης κατὰ τοὺς ἁγίους ἀτέλεστός ἐστι τελειότης· οὐδεμία γὰρ κατ' οὐδένα τρόπον περιλήψις γένοιτ' ἂν τῷ ἀπεριλήπτῳ Θεῷ. Ἀλλὰ δῆλον, ὅτι ἐλληνικῆς ὅζει παιδείας τε καὶ θρησκείας καὶ δοξάζει, ὅτι πάρεστιν ὁ Θεὸς τελείως τῷ νῷ, ὃ ἐστι κατ' οὐσίαν, εἰ καὶ μὴ

ἐν τῷ παρόντι, ἀλλ' ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι. Διὰ τοῦτο εἰς τὰ τοιαῦτα ἄτοπα περιπίπτεις καὶ εἰς ἕτερα πλείονα. Ὁ δὲ Θεὸς παρὼν γίνεται τοῖς ἀγίοις καὶ ταῖς χωρισταῖς οὐσίαις οὐ κατ' οὐσίαν, μὴ γένοιτο, ἀλλὰ κατὰ δύναμιν καὶ ἐνέργειαν φωτιστικὴν καὶ ἀπόρρητον ἔλλαμψιν, ὥς ἀκήκοας· ἦν ἐνέργειαν, ἄπειρον οὕσαν καὶ κατὰ σε, αἰωνίως οἱ μέτοχοι ἔξουσιν, ἡ δὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ οὐσία παντάπασι μένει ἀπρόσιτος.

⁶¹ *De vita Moysis* 8 (SC 1 bis, 4) : Ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς ἀρετῆς ἓνα παρὰ τοῦ Ἀποστόλου τελειότητος ὅρον ἐμάθομεν, τὸ μὴ ἔχειν αὐτὴν ὅρον· ou encore *De perfectione* 213, 23-214,5 (GNO VIII,1) : μὴ τοῖνυν λυπεῖσθω ὁ βλέπων ἐν τῇ φύσει τὸ πρὸς τὴν μεταβολὴν ἐπιτήδειον, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὸ κρεῖττον διὰ παντὸς ἀλλοιούμενος καὶ ἀπὸ δόξης εἰς δόξαν μεταμορφούμενος οὕτω τρεπέσθω, διὰ τῆς καθ' ἡμέραν αὐξήσεως πάντοτε κρεῖττων γινόμενος καὶ αἰεὶ τελειούμενος καὶ μηδέποτε πρὸς τὸ πέρας φθάνων τῆς τελειότητος. αὕτη γάρ ἐστιν <ἡ> ὥς ἀληθῶς τελειότης τὸ μηδέποτε στήναι πρὸς τὸ κρεῖττον αὐξανόμενον μηδέ τι περὶ περὶ περιορίσαι τὴν τελειότητα. Calliste connaît et cite *De perfectione*.

⁶² *Scala Paradisi* 29.1 (PG 88, 1148 C) : ... αὕτη οὖν ἡ τελεία τῶν τελείων ἀτέλεστος τελειότης ...

⁶³ *Hymne* 1, 213-214 (SC 156, 172-174) : ... ἔσεται ἀτέλεστος ἡ τούτων τελειότης καὶ ἡ τῆς δόξης προκοπὴ ἀένναος ὑπάρξει. Cf. *Hymne* 23, 411-414 (SC 174, 214) : καὶ ἀρχὴ τοῦ δρόμου τέλος, / τὸ δὲ τέλος ἀρχὴ πέλει / ἀτελής ἡ τελειότης, / ἡ δ' ἀρχὴ γε πάλιν τέλος.

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CLASSICAL LIBERALISM IN ROMANIA: THE CASE OF EMANUEL NEUMAN¹

Abstract

In this paper we try to rescue from oblivion a man and his work. At the same time we try to uncover traces of genuine classical liberal thought on Romanian soil. Emanuel Neuman – “Manole” from Nicolae Steinhardt’s *Journal of Happiness* – wrote a PhD thesis in constitutional law entitled *The Limits of State Power* which he defended (but did not properly publish) in 1937. We will try to shed light on the importance of this work and the ideas contained therein and also present some biographical details of this very discreet man who immigrated to Brussels in 1960 and lived there until his death in 1995.

Keywords: classical liberalism, Emanuel Neuman, nature of the state, limits of state power

1. Introduction: The Missing Tradition

One of the things which can probably be safely – and sadly, in our opinion – said about the history of modern Romania is that it knew neither a coherent and consistent body of classical liberal ideas nor a genuinely classical liberal political and economic program. That liberalism acquired, in the Romanian context (and more generally in the eastern European and Russian context), the distorted meaning of “progressivism” by the top-down hand of the state if necessary (and somehow it seems it has always and by almost all been considered necessary) is often acknowledged.²

In our opinion, to drive home this point provides a better understanding of the relative ease with which the orthodox Stalinist brand of socialism has been implemented in Romania after 1945 and its deep entrenchment. At the same time, it can be seen as part of the explanation for a certain predisposition on the Romanian soil for various brands of authoritarianism.

If we were to venture a short rendition of the essence of the classical liberal program, it would be the idea of a fundamentally limited (at least; more often the idea of a rather *small* and limited state; also the idea of a *minimal* state is put forward) sphere of legitimate state or governmental action.³ Together with this, as the other side of the coin, comes the delineation of the inviolable private sphere of the subjects of the state, a “separation” between the state and the various components of this private sphere. Another way of putting the same point would be the following: clearly distinguishing and delineating the proper (necessarily limited) sphere of government action is part and parcel of both properly *understanding* the state (normal and/or abnormal) and, as a consequence, of *proper political action* (both while in power and in opposition; or outside the narrow political sphere, for that matter, within what has been called civil society). Exploiting this point to interpret Romanian history it could be said that not having had a genuine classical liberal tradition, Romanians – intellectuals, politicians, peasants, priests and members of the clergy, monks, merchants, members of ethnic minorities, etc. – have never properly come to terms with the political instrument of the state. They have never quite made sense of it, of its nature and role. And, as might unsurprisingly be expected, a poorly understood instrument is bound to be misused.

In what follows we will argue that there is at least one instance of unambiguous classical liberalism, albeit almost unknown. And that is the case of Emanuel Neuman - “Manole” – the true friend and mentor of Nicolae Steinhardt. He wrote a PhD thesis in constitutional law, defended in 1937, and entitled *The Limits of State Power*. After a first biographical part, we will approach the mentioned work in order to analyze and bring to light the classical liberal character of the ideas discussed within and, at the same time, their perennial relevance. Then we will look at the other works Neuman has written in order to see whether his option was a consistent one. After placing him in the larger context of the late French liberal school, we will end with some conclusions and with two appendixes: one consisting in a tentative Neuman bibliography and the other with a few photos.

2. The Life and Times of Emanuel Neuman

The life of Emanuel Neuman was lived – in part due to character, and in part to external circumstances – under the sign of discreetness. Not only was he a young Jew reaching maturity years in the fateful decade of the thirties in Romania, marked by consolidated antisemitism in a general context of increase in state power,⁴ or a more or less obscure emigre in Belgium after 1960, but he was also a classical liberal in a time when any other possible doctrine might have seemed more respectable. No wonder, then, that Neuman is not – but for the anecdotal fame that Steinhardt's *Journal of Happiness* managed to secure for him as "Manole" – among the prominent personalities of Romanian culture (or any other culture for that matter).

Born on the 25th of July 1911 in Oltenita, Romania, Emanuel – actually the name seems to be Emanoil in the official papers and documents – Neuman died in Brussels in June 28, 1995⁵ as a Belgian citizen (more or less completely assimilated). He was the elder son of Joseph Neuman (1881-1923, salesman) and Sofia Moscovici (1887-1970, housewife), brother of Maur-Mihail Neuman (1914-2008; medical doctor and author of important works in the field) and Natalia Basilia Neuman (1923-?; engineer). Among the few elements of information left concerning his Romanian period we can find the following: his family moved to Bucharest in 1916, where they lived in the Ion Maiorescu Street; he studied political economy (B.A. level) at the Academy of High Commercial Studies (the so-called "Consular Section", forerunner of the present Faculty of International Business and Economics) and law at the University of Bucharest (PhD level); he completed military service in 1933; in February 1941 he married Gertrude Steinhardt (1916-2001), B.A. in letters and philosophy at the University of Bucharest, cousin of Nicolae Steinhardt, (Neuman's residence has changed in this context to Calea Mosilor, 313, for the period 1940-1960); he worked as a lawyer by the Bucharest Appeal Court (approx. 1933-1948), and later – and probably having to do with the entrenching of the communist regime on the Romanian soil and a degradation of Neuman's personal and professional situation – as an economist at some enterprise (approx. 1948-1960).

The files available in the Belgian archives suggest that the Neumans had attempted for quite a while – around nine years; roughly all the decade of the 1950s – to leave Romania. Thinking that they have a good chance in 1958,⁶ they initiated the process of "traveling to Belgium" (and, therefore,

of obtaining the necessary permits) through Aristide Steinhardt (1920-?), brother of Gertrude, who had already successfully immigrated to Brussels and received UN refugee status. The latter was an accomplished engineer, technical manager with Tedesco, single and wealthy enough to support his mother and a few other relatives (a relevant aspect in the eyes of the Belgian authorities which seemed – understandably – sensitive to the issue of having immigrants fall on their account). Nevertheless, the process is completed only in September 3, 1960, when the Neumans finally reach Belgium by plane and move in for a while with Aristide Steinhardt in 223, avenue Tervueren, Woluwe St. Pierre, one of the communes which Brussels comprises.

By the time they got to Brussels, Emanuel Neuman was 49 years of age and his wife Gertrude 44. Even though at the beginning the idea was to leave further for the United States of America, it seems that gradually (but swiftly enough) the Neumans decided to stay in Belgium for what must have been basically a restart of their life.

Having at long last escaped communist Romania and – judging by what happened to his friend Nicolae Steinhardt and others – most probably some time in prison (if not worse), Neuman seems to have had a strong feeling of insecurity. Up until his naturalization as a Belgian citizen in 1966 the specter of deportation always stayed with him.⁷ This is another factor which could explain – apart from character and ideological profile – his constant care to keep a rather low public profile.

Thus, as soon as the idea that Belgium and Brussels might become the new home seeped in, Neuman applied (late 1960) for UN refugee status which he obtained (early 1961). As for making a living, the period from 1960 to 1962 is marked in his naturalization file as having consisted in various employments and collaborations. Together with his wife he approached – and cooperated with – the *Istitut de Sociologue Solvay*, most specifically the *Centre d'Etudes des Pays de L'Est*. He also became a member of *Association Belge de Documentation*. By 1962 we find him working as legal adviser (“conseiller juridique”) for Anc. Etablissements Martin Frères, based in V. Besme Lambermont Street, at Verviers (working permit no. 901.527, valid by 31.08.1962).⁸

By far the most important was his encounter with the International Institute for Administrative Sciences⁹ (IIAS) which seems to have occurred sometimes in 1963 or 1964. Neuman worked there for the remainder of his active life and even after retirement. He joined as a librarian (or an even lower position, it seems, for the first couple of years) and was promoted

as researcher (“maître de recherche”) in 1972. In 1976 the moment of retirement comes, at 65, but the archives of the institute retain a sequence of (accepted/approved) requests by Neuman (from 1976 until 1980) to continue his activity on a yearly basis. After 1980 traces of him are found only now and then in connection with various events organized by the (somewhat reformed) institute. His main activity as an employee of IIAS was to acquire books for the institute library, but much more than that to review books – quite a lot of them – in very short reviews which constituted an important section (*Bibliography*) of the main publication, namely the *Revue Internationale des Sciences Administrative* (*International Review of Administrative Studies*).

After his collaboration with the IIAS was discontinued, we find him, throughout the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, writing book reviews in the Canadian journal *Etudes internationales*. Although short pieces, these reviews are as many instances in which the penetrating analyst from the pages of his 1937 PhD thesis resurfaces.

Neuman died in 1995. He and Gertrude had no children, but they seem to have had a very close relationship with the son of Maur-Mihail Neuman, Victor Neuman (n. 1948; the “favorite nephew”¹⁰) who is most probably the only relative still alive (again, most probably in Paris, France). His wife outlived him. She died in 2001 and their last address was 22 Rue Forrestiere, Ixelles, Brussels.

As for the works of Neuman, an attempt at a bibliography is provided below in the first appendix. Unfortunately no other major works – of the size and importance of his PhD – are known to exist (yet?). Whether he had any “drawer literature” or kept a journal (or has written any memoirs) is for future research to discover.

3. The PhD Thesis: *The Limits of State Power*

Even if nothing else remains after Neuman but his PhD thesis, it should still be enough to secure for him a place in Romanian culture. Apart from the intrinsic qualities of his writing (learned, cultured, witty, penchant), the ideas discussed in the work (and the author’s judgements, stances and answers) are as relevant and important today as they were when written. In present day Romania, questions such as: what type of a society and state do we want? Is the European Union a state, and if not, should it become one? If so, of what type? Is the financial crisis (and its more dramatic episodes

such as the Greek one) a failure of unfettered markets and capitalism, or of modern over-ambitious and over-extended states? Are taxes too high or too low? Is fiscal fraud a symptom of perverted citizenry or of perverted political authorities? Should the parliament be with one or two chambers? etc. would most certainly be more adequately addressed with the help of insights and discussion contained in Neuman's thesis. And this in spite of the fact that the text was written almost eighty years ago. Its freshness and relevance are as many arguments for its value.

Neuman's thesis has not been properly published as a book. Only a handful of copies are in existence, in the Central University Library and Law Faculty Library in Bucharest – probably the ones he had to prepare for the defense. Thus, so far, no edition exists and is long overdue, in our opinion. It can, nevertheless be included in a group of PhD theses, along with Steinhardt's *Classical Principles and the New Tendencies of Constitutional Law. A Critique of the Works of Leon Duguit* (defended 1936) and at least one other (F. Dârlea, *The Evolution of Individualism*, 1939). Together they might form a small Romanian classical liberal circle or even school under the auspices of Prof. Mircea Djuvara who himself, in works such as *Rational Law, Sources and Positive Law* (1934) presents ideas with a classical liberal flavor (at least).

Neuman's understanding of the nature of the state, its necessary limits, individual rights and individual freedom is unparalleled, in my opinion, in Romanian intellectual history. The present chapter aims at a presentation and commentary of some of the main ideas of this work. In what follows, a series of topics – suggested by the book – will be presented and discussed.

The trivium structure of the book

The book is structured in three parts: the first is entitled *Theories regarding the limitation of state powers* (and comprises chapters such as *Natural rights; The liberal doctrines; The reaction of collectivist and absolutist doctrines*); the second, *The limits of state power* (and comprises essential chapters such as *The state concept and the modern state; The nature of the state; The nature of things; An enumeration of the essential limits of the state: historical, international, social, natural, religious, moral, juridical, psychological, cultural*; last but not least, the third part, *Ancient statism/etatism and modern statism/etatism. The decadence of the state* discusses equally interesting topics (*The democratic nature of modern statism/etatism; Political democracy and social democracy; The decadence*

of the Roman Empire and Diocletian's legislation; Administrative hypertrophy and police-ism).

On closer inspection, the book has a *trivium* like structure. The classical educational instrument of the *trivium* consists in a three-stage process, beginning with *grammar* (an accumulation of relevant knowledge and information with an eye to quantity and build up), continuing with *logic* or *dialectic* (stage at which the interconnections of the body of knowledge and its systematic appraisal become important) and *rhetoric* (where, after having amassed knowledge and having logically and systematically mastered it, one gets to make it relevant by "saying it the right way" and applying it to current or important problems).¹¹ The main idea behind this structure is that it follows (and enhances) that natural learning process in which children start at younger ages with memorizing stuff, then proceed to make the logical connections and understand the content they previously memorized to end with the application or the understood relevance (which come together with the ability to properly present and contextualize the knowledge). More than that, for every other age and for every problem one can think of, the learning process seems to follow the same pattern (finding things out, making sense of them and contextualizing them).

Thus, Neuman's thesis has the three parts in this fashion. The first part comprises a "grammar" of the limits of state power – a stock taking of a number of important theories regarding the limitation of state power; the second aims at synthesizing a more unified body of theory concerning the same topic (the "logic" of the limitations of the state); and the third (with which the "Introduction" must be counted) aims at harvesting the fruits of the first two parts by shedding light on something from the past (a known story retold, or re-contextualized) – Diocletian's reforms – and some contemporary developments – modern democratic statism, social democracy as a degenerative evolution and the administrative hypertrophy and police state character prevalent at the time of writing.¹²

Hypertrophy of the State

The theme with which Neuman opens is the hypertrophy of the state in his times:

With regard to the hypertrophy of the state, everybody admits it, only some baptize it with the fancy name of social progress, while others, looking less at labels and intentions and more at results, see in it a new absolutism. The

state has an enormous amount of functions/tasks and it attributes their less and less adequate fulfilment neither to the impossibility of undertaking so many things at once, nor to its fundamental incapacity in some areas where it improperly and unpreparedly intervened without any calling, but to any number of other causes: daily events, the economic crisis, the malevolence of citizens, bad weather, insufficient budget, insufficient laws, too many or too few schools, to thick school syllabuses that exhaust the mind of future public officials (or, on the contrary, to the insufficient instruction of new generations) (Neuman, 1937, p. 12).¹³

Or again:

[t]hat this unmeasured growth of state attributions is a danger to everyone, the State itself included, is an undisputable thing. The greatest authority in administrative law – due to the fact that he was not only someone with a profound knowledge of the inner workings of state organs but a legal scholar without theoretical servitudes/biases and tributary to no political partisanship – professor Berthélemy wrote on the “excessive growth of collective action” in the following manner: “Interventionism did not know to restrain itself. The State, normally a supplier of justice and security, has also become commissioner, banker, ship leaser, ship builder, librarian, collector, engraver, teacher, show-business enterpriser, mineral water salesman, medical doctor, philanthropist, typographer, tapster, forester, husbandman, cigarette producer, matches salesman, insurance broker, journalist, bookmaker, etc... When the administration does not itself work, it controls and regulates the actions of private agents. Administration is involved in everything” (p. 13).

And, continuing the same idea:

Taking upon himself all those attributions/tasks of which professor Barthélemy spoke and the enumeration of which seem like a cheap sidewalk parade (ro: *etalaj de bâlcui*) even if far from complete, the State fails twice by messing up his own activity and hindering everyone else (p. 15).

In this respect Neuman is part of (and among the forerunners) a line of thought which observes/notices the great expansion of states throughout the twentieth century. Usually, such a trend is evidenced through the growth of public expenditure as a proportion of gross domestic product (which as such underestimates the size of the state as it does not account

for its regulatory presence). While at the beginning of the twentieth century, the size of the public sector (as total public expenses as a proportion of GDP) was well below 15% (in some instances as low as 5%), today the same indicator is well above 40% (in many case well above 50%).¹⁴ At the time of preparing the thesis under discussion he would have been witnessing the trends set in motion by the Great Depression of 1929-1933 and the buildup for the Second World War.

The solution to this hypertrophy is, unsurprisingly, the reversal of the trend. Much as in the traditional morals advocated by the Church Fathers where a certain passion or vice can be cured by the cultivation of the opposite virtue: “[t]he state finding himself in trouble for taking upon himself to do things which are none of its business, the mess will be remedied by the retreat of the state from those things, which should be left to free social cooperation/action” (p. 20).

In this context of the hyper expanded state and the need for its restraint and diminishing, Neuman also speaks about the “traditional doctrine” of state action (concerning which he notices that while – unfortunately, it seems, in his opinion – not entirely liberal, it was powerfully impregnated by liberal ideas). The content of it, briefly stated is: “The traditional doctrine proposed that the State remained within the confines of its aptitudes and there to allow no opposition and no interference” (p. 15). In an outburst of irony which becomes at times a trademark of our author, he says concerning this “traditional doctrine” that:

It is true that the predilection of State organs being neither sports, nor statistics, nor abuse, they [the “traditional” state organs] did not pretend to know, to register and to control how many hen eggs have been laid in nests overnight, what sports teams have prevailed, how many hours every citizen works, how much money in his pocket, and if he spends it why he spends it and if he does not spend it why he does not spend it (p. 16).¹⁵

Natural Rights

Another topic is natural rights. More specifically natural rights seen as a fundamental limitation of the (legitimate) powers of the state:

The main limitation of state power is constituted by the existence of individual natural rights. This notion has its origins in the natural rights theory, in speculations on the social contract and, finally, in deep insights

into, and knowledge of, the human person. ...Indeed, the source of law is in the human person, and the latter owes its contour to individual rights, which are thus natural to it as without them the human person disappears. Political societies have no independent existence of their own and thus no rights; the individual, free and real being, is the source of rights and to look for the notion of law and rights outside the human person or to try to picture it as existing without rights, is at least an irreparable mistake (p.45).

Although natural rights might seem as a more or less scholastic topic inherited from intellectually more primitive times, the idea of law as a nondiscretionary and non-arbitrary field of study and of law based social and political action cannot be dispensed with. The very possibility of systematic rational pursuit of the idea of ordered, civilized (conflict free) society implies the possibility of discerning among competing views on the inter-human relations and, therefore, on laws and legislation (even if not only laws, but much more). This discerning must operate with the idea of criticizing existing legislation (positive legislation), this in its turn implying the possibility to discriminate between good and bad laws. Thus, the idea of a standard, above positive legislation, based on which to judge it, opens up the discussion on natural law. The latter becomes such a standard to which positive legislation must conform.¹⁶

Neuman has also an interesting epistemological stance at this point. Usually the idea of natural rights is met with skepticism as it implies a fraudulent passing from an "is" (nature) to an "ought" (rights), thus being oxymoronic. For our author, recognizing human nature as necessarily interested in – and judging matters in terms of – what should be is a positive (unavoidable) truth. Thus, the analysis of the proper social order based on the idea of natural rights does not pass from facts to values, but has values (value judgments or normative ones) among premises from the very beginning (implicitly or explicitly acknowledging the possibility of rational discourse concerning value judgments and the normative). Neuman approaches this issue in the chapter entitled *On the definition of the state* the main thesis of which is that the state is a legal concept. Debating a stance taken by Gaston Jèze, he says:

When Mr. Gaston Jèze states in the foreword to *General Principles of Administrative Law* that in the study of positive law we must leave aside considerations of ideal justice, he transforms the legal study of free wills and rational analysis as successfully built by Roman classicism and inherited ever since into a formalism dry, amoral and dangerous. "The law of a

country, writes Mr. Jèze, is the ensemble of rules – whether we consider them good or bad, useful or not – which, at a certain moment, in a certain/given country, are actually applied/implemented/enforced by practitioners and courts. Any theoretical exposition which moves away from this definition is, in my opinion, very vulnerable: it is a work of imagination, a novel written by a jurist, the worst of the boring kind, a monument of hubris and guaranteed uselessness... There is no such thing as absolute justice; we must therefore avoid speaking of it as if it were something that could be known or as something already known". [...] Precisely the contrary is true. Absolute justice exists and it exists for a very powerful reason, which is because we men/human beings believe in it. And that is enough. On the other hand we cannot see how Mr. Jèze could prove the assertion that absolute justice does not exist. That is why he does not even attempt such a thing, but only asserts it – it is true, with an impressive certainty. Objects of scientific knowledge are of two categories: there are some, creations of our spirit, their knowledge consisting in the profound analysis/scrutiny of the human soul. Others belong to the external, concrete, world. Nothing is more dangerous than to confound them, to search for ideal categories in the positive world, while seeking the concrete/specific in our simple beliefs (pp. 26-27).

Two things must be said about the above. First, that Neuman acknowledges the need for a methodological dualism in science, separating the study of man (or, more precisely, of what is specifically human) from the study of nature.¹⁷ And second, although no less important, the idea of justice in a strong sense ("absolute justice") as a presupposition of meaningfully ordered human societies. This is the charitable interpretation we propose for the idea that absolute justice exists "because we humans believe in it". Otherwise we would be forced to adopt the interpretation that Neuman simply sides with the possibility of whimsically and arbitrarily stipulating the existence of absolute justice. Apart from the fact that the whole work is permeated by the contrary spirit, there are more specific grounds for dismissing this facile interpretation. A few lines before the above quoted one, he says of the state the following: "A political abstraction, connected to a juridical idea and maintained by it, [the State] takes care/manages the law as the embodiment of a superior idea and not as an ensemble of mere technical rules which come in handy for anything. With a scalpel one can undertake surgery or commit murder" (p. 26). Thus, for him the idea of justice as a "superior idea" makes intelligible the distinction between "surgery" (rendering justice and maintaining a just, ordered and peaceful society; in one word, civilization)

and “murder” (an unjust, chaotic, permanently conflictual state of affairs; in one word, barbarism).

Negative versus Positive Rights

Neuman also tackles the negative versus positive rights issue: (approvingly commenting on an idea of Esmein) “It is Esmein again who classifies individual rights into civil equality and individual liberty and finds a common feature for all: they limit the rights of the state but impose no positive obligations.¹⁸ That is why, the so-called rights to existence, to education, to work, do not have the character of rights and if they are nevertheless called so, it is a simple demagogical expedient” (p. 46). Of interest is also his view on equality (named here “civil”) which is seen as having the sole role to limit the state in his arbitrary splitting of citizens in classes or castes (e.g. freemen and slaves).

The essence of this discussion is the idea that a body of rights must be coherent in itself and concord must exist between the several rights considered together. Thus, the combination of negative and positive rights do not form such a coherent whole as the enforcement of the so-called positive rights (to a minimum guaranteed income, for instance) necessarily implies the denial of other rights (from the “negative” bundle, such as the right to the inviolability of one’s private property).¹⁹

The topic is, in a sense condemned to have perennial relevance. In contemporary debates concerning intellectual property the same problem arises. The enforcement of intellectual property rights (in the form of patents, for instance) must necessarily prevent certain arrangements the property in the traditional sense (non-intellectual; one might say in this context the right over the “physical” integrity of one’s property). For example, with one’s own resources and one’s own mind, one could not build a car, a house or a computer similar to one already patented by another.²⁰

The Minimal State

One of the most important features of this work which sets Neuman apart in Romanian culture is the exposition of the classical liberal doctrine of the minimal state (or the “night watchman” state). This he does by doing two things: first, he mentions the specific (limited) role of the state;

and then insists on the perversion of the state institution when it exceeds its proper role.

Pertaining to the specific role of the state: "It is only the state which can be a keeper of order, a provider of justice and a defender of external independence which is collective and internal liberty which can only be individual" (p. 117). Or, approvingly commenting on Leroy-Beaulieu: "By origin, nature and object/function, the state is but a military, diplomatic and judicial apparatus. By getting involved in tasks for which it was not made, it loses its cohesion and authority, falling swiftly in the power of adventurers and fanatics" (pp. 122-123).

To make the matters more complicated, there is no explicit statement throughout the work that its author is a supporter of the doctrine of the minimal state. Nevertheless, adding to the two elements mentioned above, Neuman repeatedly comments approvingly on views which consider the apparatus of the modern state as first and foremost an instrument for justice. For instance:

[b]ut the answer of constitutional law and constitutional history, the disciplines which encompass the technical aspects of state problems, is that, as a technical instrument, the State has a limited capacity. For example, one of his missions is to provide justice. By his nature it is called to do this. Moreover, it has the very possibility to accomplish such a thing. A well-organized justice is something to which any state can aspire (p. 20).

Or in another place:

What the individual cannot but exceptionally accomplish, is a matter of course for the state. What the individual is able to accomplish in other directions, the State is not. And when contrary to its nature, it undertakes such activities, either by depriving the individual of his rights, or by not respecting its own positive obligations, *such as the one to administer justice under all its forms, in all its stages and against anyone, itself included*, the state stumbles and the mismatch shatters it to its foundations (p.133; emphasis ours).²¹

He rarely mentions other functions as pertaining to the proper sphere of state action.

At the same time, when one counts the number of implicit or explicit exclusions from the proper sphere of state action and judges what remains

inside, again a picture of the minimal state seems to be the only one to qualify. Thus, one after another, most of the domains of social life are considered to be outside of state competence: the economy and economic activity in general²² (p. 20; p. 123; p. 138; p. 139; p. 143); family (p. 127, p. 166); education (p. 112; p. 173); culture (pp. 172); religion (p. 127; pp. 158-163); charity, welfare (p. 127; pp. 147-148). Any of these are sufficient to grant Neuman a role among the harbingers of classical liberalism on Romanian soil (even today).

The Nature of the State

Undoubtedly classical liberal, arguably a proponent of the minimal state, Neuman is, nevertheless, not a political anarchist. Somewhat paradoxically, he is a very staunch defender of the state when it functions in its proper limits, equating it to nothing less than civilization itself. In his opinion “[l]iberalism has created/provided the most solid ground of political authority... Politics is but the means to rightfully distribute to liberty and authority each one its own” (p. 70). Or, in another place: “The State is not, as Faguet believed, a simple necessary evil, it is a great creation of the human mind, a political instrument of the greatest importance” (p. 88). And – to give a final example:

It is not true, says [Paul] Leroy-Beaulieu, that the State must try to make himself useless and to prepare its resignation as some philosopher maintained (Jules Simon). The State must only refrain from vainly dissipating its activity, getting busy with trifles, which is altogether another thing. The reasons for which the state must not prepare its resignation are two: [first] the State, far from being an oppressor, a necessary evil or something alike, is a positive good. Then the State is a political instrument of unparalleled value because it cannot be replaced, as there is no other political setting/settlement/institution which could provide the same services it does. Hence the great value and role of the State. It is only it that can guarantee life in common in the best conditions, and due to this its role acquires the character of an imperative necessity; the State must fulfill and subordinate everything – not to its purposes/objectives which do not exist and can be only a simple metaphor for the tyranny of those who govern – but to its role/function, which is specifically and exclusively his. It is only the state which can be a keeper of order, a provider of justice and a defender of external independence which is collective and internal liberty which can only be individual. The desire to dismantle the State means the desire to

give up order, security, defense against invasions, justice and all rights. There are but two known forms of social life: the one is that provided by the State; the other, anarchy, can embrace the feudal or any other form (pp. 117-118).

In Neuman's view the State is a modern instrument which appears in history only in civilized epochs (Ancient Rome or modern, post feudal, Western Europe). It is a positive good and not a necessary evil. Its functions – which we have suggested that seem to be those of a minimal state – are indispensable for civilization and cannot be provided by means of another political/societal framework.²³ While it should not exceed its proper limits, the state must act responsibly – and that also means with authority, resolution and utmost power – inside its sphere, otherwise it fails its role and barbarians (from “outside” or from “inside” the gates take over).²⁴

An interesting argument brought forward by Neuman is that of the superiority of the territorial state as opposed to other possible forms of state, specifically the corporatist (or professional) state. The premise of the territorial state is that a stake in the political apparatus have, on an equal footing, all members of a certain territory (as simply inhabitants of that territory). That of the corporate version of states is that a say, a voice, in the state apparatus belongs to members of various professions (as members of those professions). For Neuman the second version of the state – which became very fashionable as an idea in the interwar period²⁵ – was nothing more than the re-iteration of the mercantilist state, spawn – under monarchical rule – by the interplay of guilds (seen as professional associations). Based on the economic insight that members of a territory taken as such together will most probably have in common the simple fact of being consumers, our author considers that – as consumers – they will (as territorial citizens of a territorial state) promote this general interest of consumers.²⁶ While if one adopts the perspective of the professions (or the corporatist; or fascist; or mercantilist one) a factional political picture arises. As producers, men do not have the same interests, but various divergent ones. Thus, such a state will be driven by the factionalist “moral of the producer” spawning constant conflict and maneuvering at the political level in search of rents, monopolies, privileges, subsidies, protective tariffs and the like. Hence the superiority of the simple territorial state over the corporatist state.

We end this point on the nature of the state with an insight of Neuman – which is also an insight of all good classical liberals – which is most often

forgotten or taken too lightly. Namely, that the state is force. The specific difference of the state is the legitimized use of force.²⁷ Understanding that “the state is a force, not an intelligence” (which, of course, could be morphed into analogous adages such as “the state is a force, not a benevolence” or “the state is a force not an intention” or a “sentiment”) should make one pause when invoking state action in various fields. And this because invoking state action – in education, in trade, in research, in culture, in health, in family matters, in Church matters, etc. – means invoking the use of force and the implicit belief that adding force into those fields significantly and relevantly improves them. This should be a sobering thought, to say the least, as interventionists *ipso facto* become glorifiers of force.

Religion and State

One of the most interesting topics discussed in Neuman’s thesis is the relation between religion and the state. In synthesis, his take on this issue is that the separation of Church and State (while necessary and proper) does not mean that the religious sphere is unimportant or irrelevant (or that it must remain a petty private affair much as stamp collection). On the contrary, the way he puts it, religion and church as human and social phenomena and institutions are among non-state prerequisites of successful state action. Moreover, they contribute a great deal to keeping the State in its proper limits (the other side of the coin being that if they are weakened, the state invades their sphere creating the dangerous pseudo-religion of “statolatry” or state worship or, at the least, for want of serious and traditional religions, various surrogates – such as pantheism or fetishism - flourish).

Thus, he says:

[t]he most powerful limits imposed on the State are the religious ones. And on the modern State more than any other, as it was born from the separation of religion and politics and because with its democratic structure, the democratic religion par excellence, pantheism, swiftly/quickly degenerates into fetishism. The religious evolution of the modern State is very curious. A quite old heresy, Statolatry/Stateworship, has gotten hold of it. Leroy Beaulieu reckoned in 1889 that the State has remained the only god of the modern world (pp. 158-159).

An interesting observation that he makes, in connection with the superiority of religion (especially of the traditional, revelation based types) to various modern surrogates thereof is the comparison between prayer book reading and newspaper reading. While prayers had a more or less fixed structure, permeated by ideals that would constantly work on man's soul in the direction of uplifting him morally, the newspaper – at the beginning an instrument of cultural and human uplifting – let himself be corrupted by its readers, perverting itself and then contributing to the further perversion of the public.²⁸

Thus, for someone like Neuman, the separation of Church and State does not at all imply an atheist state (or even a religiously neutral state). It does not even imply the lack of importance of religious or spiritual matters; quite the contrary. Of great importance, in this respect, is his observation that if – with the separation of church and state – religion is evacuated out the front door of civilization, it will return through the backdoor, only in perverted forms of pantheism or, worse, fetishist or totemic spirituality.²⁹ Either the state institution is more and more seen as a magic wand by means of which all evils can be countered and all problems solved – which is already a form of idolatry (the “statolatry” of Paul Leroy- Beaulieu). Or the religious sentiments and energies get to express themselves through whatever ad-hoc, fashionable channels they find available.³⁰

Miscellaneous

We choose to end this main chapter of our paper with a section on “miscellaneous” aspects (three; they could have been much more) that, for space reasons, will be treated more cursorily: fiscal fraud, incidence of legislation and taxation, and education. In our opinion any contemporary debates of this issues could only benefit by the inputs someone like Neuman has to offer.

Concerning *fiscal fraud*, Neuman expresses a both classical liberal and – at least by present day standards – politically incorrect view. He says somewhere:

Fiscal need is not sufficient as a motive for trespassing the boundaries of justice. The tax is immoral when it is excessive or when it is collected by wrong means and in these cases it promotes fraud. The size of the tax is in itself immoral and has bad consequences. It is a long observed fact/thing. The excess of taxation has as consequences the denial of justice, the loss

of liberty, the weakening of morals...The State is outside its own purpose if it uses taxes as a means to modify existent inequalities... [Fiscal] fraud is not so much due to taxpayer immorality as to governmental immorality (pp. 145-146).

At times he shows mastery of difficult discussions in both law and economics as when he discusses (and compares) the issue *of the incidence of taxation and legislation* (p. 31):

The law limits the State both through its technical rules and its own ideals. The technical difficulty to translate its intention in juridical forms, of succeeding through the elaborated text in reaching precisely those targets aimed at is analogous to the financial problem of the incidence of taxation. A tax laid on a certain category of persons is thrown by the free interplay of economic laws and forces upon a category completely different from the one intended by the fiscal authority. In the same manner, a piece of legislation can generally be avoided in such ways that results are reached totally contrary to those desired by the legislator. And a whole judicial system can have surprising effects, by contrast with what were considered first instance effects. We have to deal with an incidence of laws, with a judicial incidence (p. 31).

In the area of *education*, the opinions of Neuman are no less challenging and interesting than in the many others, previously discussed (or as many others undiscussed here). Thus he says, while discussing what he calls the cultural limits of the state, the following:

[t]he main problem of the State as limited by civilization is that of education. There are here grounds for hesitation with respect to direction, quantity or opportunity. The State does not do even in this sphere liberalities without hidden purposes. It seeks to control not only the use of its own money, but also the use of other people's money. And it does not stop at the policing type of control concerning material order and decent behavior. Even though only a temporal instrument meant to protect the freedom of conscience and learning, it tends many times to acquire church like character and to impose some sort of spiritual orthodoxy. If, after all, it could keep a certain wise neutrality the monopolization of education by the state would lose half of its disadvantages. There is also the question of moderation. As in many other respects, the public services exaggerate here too. Obsessed with quantity, they neglect the essence and err in proportions that could not happen under a private regime. Public education tends to become an

arrogant state religion: <<it suffers no dissidence/opposition, and it is the meeting place of all fanatics>> [quoting Paul Leroy-Beaulieu] (pp.173-174).

He then draws attention to the fact that intellectuals such as Nicolae Iorga or G. Dissescu have argued (in Romania) against the organization of education under a state monopoly.³¹

4. The Judaism Essays and Other Works

Emanuel Neuman expressed classical liberal ideas in other works as well, even though so far his thesis remains the most comprehensive and important example. Somewhat surprising – although it is not the substance of the works – is the explicit option for liberalism that can be found at the end of the *Illusions and Realities Jewish*. The main idea is that if Jews become liberals in the classical sense and if they plead for the states in which they live to become liberal (in the same sense), all their problems (which are mostly intertwined with statism, and are symptoms thereof) tend to disappear:

The Jews of today are the offspring of the liberal era. Far from being a sign of better times, the socialization movement, with its state capitalism, concentration, cooperation and monopoly turns, sooner or later, against them. This is, cleansed of the obscurities of German style, the meaning and message of the great demographer and economist Ruppin who underestimates himself as being sociologist. He puts economic freedom/liberty at the foundation of any society in which life as a Jew is possible. "Anti-Semitism apart, all these economic tendencies which in the end prove harmful for Jews can be in a way reduced to a common denominator: the abandonment of free competition...When the central state itself does not monopolize the various branches of production, municipalities or big business trusts or cooperatives do. Personal ingeniousness and action cannot fight anymore against big banks or official stores. There is no room in commerce and industry for the Jew when degenerate capitalism morphs into state capitalism, and its situation resembles more and more the one at the end of the Middle Ages when the guild system, under official auspices, restrained – to his detriment – the field of free competition. The birth of capitalism ameliorated the situation of the Jews; its demise threatens them anew (Arthur Ruppin, *Les Juifs dans le monde moderne*, p. 125)". The meaning of this beautiful fragment, of these essential lines is not that Jews are somehow predestined capitalists; it is not about a few millionaires who

succeed in maintaining their wealth under any regime. Liberal capitalism is important because it permits men of modest condition to earn a living facing only the natural difficulties of economic life and not absurd and unjust artificial barriers. The controlled economy, by being politically managed, easily transforms itself into a system of anti-Semitic persecution (Steinhardt and Neuman, 2011, pp. 318-319).

Apart from the PhD thesis and the two booklets on Jewish matters co-authored with Steinhardt, the works of Neuman are few in number and extent (an tentative bibliography is provided in Appendix I). A few letters to Steinhardt, a study on the Yugoslav constitution of 1963, some technical material elaborated under the auspices of the International Institute of Administrative Sciences in Brussels and a number of book reviews in *Etudes internationales*. In all these he has limited space and opportunity to bring to surface his political philosophy, but one can guess here and there that the old *causeur* has not disappeared. For instance, all his book reviews mentioned above point into the direction of the perils and vagaries of high politics.³²

5. The (Late) French Liberal School Connection

One last thing about Neuman we think is worth mentioning here. Although well imbibed in the great French classical liberals such as Constant, Guizot, Tocqueville, Laboulaye, Bastiat, etc., he is closer in spirit to the late French Liberals, such as Yves Guyot, Paul Leroy-Beaulieu and Charles Beudant. In his monumental work, *History of Economic Analysis*, Joseph Schumpeter has the following to say about this “Paris group” of economists:

[...] [W]e consider first the laissez-faire ultras who are known as the Paris group because they controlled the *Journal des économistes*, the new dictionary, the central professional organization in Paris, the Collège de France, and other institutions as well as most of the publicity – so much so that their political or scientific opponents began to suffer from a persecution complex. It is extremely difficult, even at this distance of time, to do justice to this group that was also a school in our sense. I shall mention only a few names that will guide any interested reader to its work and, instead of characterizing individuals, attempt to characterize, in a few lines, the group as a whole. The most distinguished names, then, were

Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, Courcelle-Seneuil [...], Levasseur, the indefatigable Gustave de Molinari, Yves Guyot, Maurice Block, and Leon Say. They were anti-*étatistes* that is to say they indulged in a belief to the effect that the main business of economists is to refute socialist doctrines and to combat the atrocious fallacies implied in all plans of social reform and of state interference of any kind. In particular, they stood staunchly by the drooping flag of unconditional free trade and laissez-faire. This accounts easily for their unpopularity with socialists, radicals, Catholic reformers, solidarists, and so on, though it should not count for us. They simply did not care for the purely scientific aspects of our subject. J.B. Say and Bastiat, and later on a little diluted marginal utility theory, satisfied their scientific appetite. [...] The politicians can hardly have liked a group that stood for free trade and otherwise indulged in an impracticable liberalism. So, when the government proceeded to establish chairs in economics in all the law faculties of all the universities of France (1878), it saw to it that the new professors should not all of them be of the political complexion of the Paris group. [...] [T]he little knot of laissez-faire stalwarts, not less remarkable for longevity than for strength of conviction, held out like Leonidas' Spartans at Thermopylae (Schumpeter 2006[1954], pp. 808-810).

Leaving aside here Schumpeter's half admiring, half dismissive comments, it is striking how well imbibed Neuman is in the works and ideas of some of those mentioned as part of this Paris Group (Paul Leroy-Beaulieu stands out as a source of inspiration from those mentioned by Schumpeter). Joseph Salerno also considers³³ - taking issue to some extent with Schumpeter's judgments - that there existed a powerful French Liberal school starting around 1803, with J.B. Say's *Traité d'économie politique* and lasting until around the death of Gustave de Molinari in 1912 (arguably even later, through authors such as Guyot or Beudant).

We should also bear in mind that Steinhardt's thesis on the new trends in constitutional law as exemplified by the work of Léon Duguit is marked by relevant references to authors from this group. Some of them are mentioned even in *The Journal of Happiness* (again Paul Leroy-Beaulieu and Yves Guyot come to mind). Thus we can at least speculate that, having learned law in close connection with the French milieu - again, we should bear in mind that one guest member of Steihardt's PhD committee was Julien Bonecasse, French jurist of the interwar period who had a very high regard for the young candidate - Steinhardt and Neuman (and possibly others - a thing for future research to investigate) were imbibed with whatever remained of this spirit of the French liberal school.

They – the French classical liberals – are today almost as forgotten as Neuman, but equally interesting and relevant. Works such as *Where and Why Public Ownership Has Failed* (Guyot, 1914), *Essai sur la repartition des richesses et tendance a une moindre inegalite des conditions* (Leroy-Beaulieu, 1881) or *Le droit individuel et l'état: introduction a l'étude du droit* (Beudant, 1891) are examples of works that can be (re)read today with the utmost intellectual and civilizational profit, especially in Romania.

6. Conclusion: A Tradition, Lost and Found

We have tried to argue in this paper that there were elements of classical liberalism on the Romanian soil. Our main argument was the PhD thesis of Emanuel Neuman, “Manole” from the *Journal of Happiness*, dear friend and mentor of the young Steinhardt at the beginning of his legal studies in constitutional law. The thesis, entitled *The Limits of State Power* is an unambiguous case of a classical liberal text. Exposing a firmly grounded view of a (severely) limited state, it becomes a promontory – in our opinion – for unearthing and rediscovering whatever other elements of classical liberalism might have existed on Romanian soil prior to the unfortunate communist experiment. Neuman was not alone. Steinhardt’s PhD thesis on *The New Tendencies in Constitutional Law. A Critique of the Work of Léon Duguit* can arguably be included in the same ideological camp, even though it is not as explicit.

Classical liberalism had timid beginnings in the space inhabited by Romanians.³⁴ Intermingled with nationalistic ideas in the context of the 1848 revolution, promoted mostly by immigrants or offspring thereof (such as Ion Ghica or Nicolae Șuțu/Soutzou; the odd man out here would be Ioan Strat), members of a rather international intelligentsia than of a genuine Romanian one (yet to mature), classical liberal ideas seem to have sunk into oblivion after 1859. And this, one could sadly observe, somewhat in proportion to the successes along the lines of obtaining state independence and sovereignty. Thus, modern Romania knew no powerful classical liberal party, or doctrine, let alone political program. On the contrary, it has experimented fully with the opposite side of the spectrum, ranging from state-capitalism, to interventionism and protectionism, through corporatism or fascism all the way to full blown soviet style socialism. As we have said above, one of the important contributions of the classical liberal paradigm to civilization was to offer key insights into

the nature of the state. This contribution remains, we think crucial. To discover elements of genuine classical liberalism – no matter how small, unknown or tentative – in Romania can only be a useful thing as, in our opinion, the challenges of the present are still connected at every step with a proper understanding of what the state is and can, or cannot, do. In this context re-discovering, re-reading and re-connecting with Neuman (and the context he was a part of) can only help, besides being an act of culture valid in itself.

NOTES

- ¹ This project would have been much poorer without the help of the staff of the International Institute for Administrative Sciences in Brussels which hosted and helped me in many ways while in Brussels, in February 2015.
- ² See, for instance, Andrew C. Janos, "Modernization and Decay in Historical Perspective: The Case of Romania", in Kenneth Jowitt (ed.), *Social Change in Romania 1860-1940. A Debate on Development in a European Nation*, Institute of International Studies, University of California Berkeley, 1978, p. 84.; also Victor Rizescu, *Tranziții discursive. Despre agende culturale, istorie intelectuală și onorabilitate ideologică după comunism*, Editura Corint, Bucharest, 2012, pp. 74 and the following. The latter author seems, nevertheless, to consider that various Marxist social critics – such as Lothar Rădăceanu and Șerban Voinea who wrote in the tradition of Constantin Dobrogeanu Gherea – make up, at least in part, for the lack of classical liberal ideas. In their view a genuine capitalist system must be implemented on the Romanian soil as a necessary precondition for a future authentic transition to socialism.
- ³ One of the shortest and to the point rendition of the essence of classical liberalism is, in our opinion, the one expressed by Ludwig von Mises in his *Liberalism. In the Classical Tradition*, where he says, on page 19: "The program of liberalism, therefore, if condensed into a single word, would have to read: *property*, that is, private ownership of the means of production (for in regard to commodities ready for consumption, private ownership is a matter of course and is not disputed even by the socialists and communists). All the other demands of liberalism result from this fundamental demand" (Ludwig von Mises, *Liberalism. In the Classical Tradition*, The Foundation for Economic Education & Cobden Press, 1985[1927], p. 19).
- ⁴ See Zigu Ornea, *Anii treizeci și extrema dreapta românească*, Editura Fundației Culturale Române, Bucharest, 1995.
- ⁵ The following biographical details are based on the study of two main Neuman files (and a few related ones): file no. 2801697 compiled by the *Administration de la Sureté publique* upon/around his arrival (September, 1960) in Brussels, Belgium, as an immigrant and, very soon after, UN political refugee; and file no. 29233N prepared for his naturalization as a Belgian citizen, process completed in 1966. The present author must express his gratitude to Mr. Louis-Philippe Arnhem from *Direction generale Office des Etrangers* and Mr. Filip Strubbe from the *Archive generales du Royaume* without the support of which the present research would have been much poorer in biographical detail.
- ⁶ The historian Lucian Boia, in one of his recent books speaks of a certain pattern of the emigration of Jews out of Romanian after 1948 (the date of the creation of the state of Israel). Thus, from 1948 until 1951 over 120

000 Jews left Romania (more than a quarter of the Jewish population in Romania). This was followed by a period of closed borders from about 1953 until 1958 when a new wave of emigration began (see Lucian Boia, *Cum s-a românizat România/How Romania was Romanized*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 2015, p. 113). Most probably in connection with this second wave starting in 1958 the Neumans tried (again, probably), and succeeded (in 1960) to leave Romania.

7 As suggested by Ms. Marie-Anne Estas, former colleague at the International Institute for Administrative Sciences and friend. The present author had the chance to interview Ms. Estas in February 2015 and would like hereby to express his deep gratitude to her. We also had the chance to interview Mrs. Gail Darge, also former colleague of Neuman. We were helped in connecting them by Hafida El Ouaghli. The latter was also instrumental in accessing the remains of the IISA archives available at the headquarters in Brussels. The author is highly indebted to all these ladies.

8 Information from file no. 2905762 (p. 9) of Sofia Neuman Moscovici, Emanuel's mother, whom he helped to settle in Brussels.

9 We are highly indebted to the International Institute for Administrative Sciences in Brussels as it offered full cooperation in unearthing as much as possible about Neuman. We would like to thank the President, Rolet Loretan, for approving our research stage with the institute, Ms. Hafida El Ouaghli for constant and precious help with publications, archives, connections and Institute customs and practices and, last but certainly not least, to Dr. Steve Troupin whose help was instrumental for this project from the very beginning.

10 According to Ms. Marie-Anne Estas.

11 See Dorothy Sayers, *The Lost Tools of Learning*, available on line at <http://www.gbt.org/text/sayers.html>.

12 The author must mention here – and express gratitude at the same time – the observation by prof. Ioana Both, from the Department of Romanian Literature and Literary Theory at the Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, former NEC fellow, who commented that the *trivium* like structure might have been a standard requirement in the Romanian universities in the interwar period, especially in the humanities and social sciences. This, in our opinion is testimony of the good foundations that higher education had at that time. By contrast, at present, these fields are more and more invaded by the positivistic – scientist even – view according to which works (articles, theses, etc.) must follow the (broadly synthetized) *hypotheses-literature review-methodology-model-results and results interpretation* outline. The latter, although fit for the so-called “hard” sciences such as physics, chemistry, astronomy, engineering, medicine (with limitations – usually underestimated – even here), etc., is, in our opinion inappropriate for the “sciences of man” (beginning with economics, law and political philosophy and ending with literature and philology in general).

- ¹³ Throughout the remainder of this chapter we will indicate only the page number or numbers, as – if not otherwise specified – the quotes are from Neuman’s 1937 thesis.
- ¹⁴ See Robert Higgs, *Crisis and Leviathan. Critical Episodes in the Growth of American Government*, Pacific Research Institute for Public Policy, Oxford University Press, New York and Oxford, 1987, especially chapter 2 (for the American case). See also Mihai Ungureanu and Diana Iancu, “The economic analysis of bureaucracy and government growth”, *Theoretical and Applied Economics*, Vol. XIX, no. 11 (576), 2012, pp. 59-74. At one point Neuman tackles this issue explicitly: “Spencer’s forecasts have come true as such. The proportion of taxes is today between 30% and 40% of individual income in all States. This means that each works for the collectivity between 100 and 150 days per year and only the rest belongs to himself. A form of serfdom in which the serf is obligated to 100 or 150 days of unpaid work is one of the worst kind; only the monetary and industrial economy of our times makes this possible, as in agriculture it would be considered purely and simply slavery” (Neuman, 1937, p. 105).
- ¹⁵ At this point Neuman quotes a certain Alexandru Valeș, author of an article entitled *The Limits of State Power* (in *The Burgeois Magazine*, 1937, no. 7, p. 11) as saying: “They (the limits [of state power]) spring from a natural order of things and are meant precisely to consolidate what is the essence of sovereignty. Limits which, in any case, have prevented the *night watchman State* from ridiculously becoming the *sportive State*” (emphasis in the original). This Alexandru Valeș is another possible member of the group of classical liberal minded people mentioned above.
- ¹⁶ Neuman’s approach is strikingly similar here and there with modern libertarian approaches such as the one of Murray Rothbard. See for instance the latter’s *The Ethics of Liberty*, New York University Press, New York and London, 1988[1982], especially the first part on natural law.
- ¹⁷ See in this context the methodological works of Ludwig von Mises: *Epistemological Problems of Economics*, The Ludwig von Mises Institute, Auburn, Alabama, 2003[1933]; *Theory and History. An Interpretation of Social and Economic Evolution*, The Ludwig von Mises Institute, Auburn, Alabama, 2007[1957]; *The Ultimate Foundations of Economic Science. An Essay on Method*, D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., Princeton, New Jersey (and Toronto, New York, London), 1962 ; and last but not least, his magnum opus, *Human Action. A Treatise on Economics*, The Scholar’s Edition, The Ludwig von Mises Institute, Auburn, Alabama, 1998[1949].
- ¹⁸ We draw attention here to this seldom expressed idea that civil equality does not imply positive rights. This is, in our opinion, part and parcel of the sole possible understanding of equality with no associated dangers to evolve into a procrustean view of general uniformity. In this sense, equality and liberty are in harmony, not mutually exclusive parts of an ever challenging

trade-off. Later Neuman also says: “what is essential for the polity is political equality. All the other equalities, possible or impossible, are outside of the [proper] notion of state” (Neuman, 1937, p. 127).

19 Thus, A’s right to a minimum guaranteed wage or income necessarily implies a denial (at least partial) of the rights of B, C, D, etc. to their legitimately acquired property. So, strictly speaking, a simultaneous and universal upholding of both rights is impossible.

20 For this particular discussion see N. Stephan Kinsella, *Against Intellectual Property*, The Ludwig von Mises Institute, Auburn, Alabama, 2008.

21 Many other instances where Neuman, without explicitly proclaiming himself a supporter of the minimal state, speaks as if he were one: “If public servants get busy in industry, trade and their own strikes, who will take care of order, protection, justice? Here is the revenge of forgotten realities” (Neuman, 1937, p. 143).

22 The separation between the state activity and economic activity resurfaces many times throughout the book and it seems that for Neuman it is an unquestionable character of a proper state to be strictly non-interventionist economically: “The first element which shows us whether we are dealing with a polity that has the character of a state or not is the separation between the economy and politics” (Neuman, 1937, p. 123). In another place: “[o]n the contrary, nothing pertains to the state in economic life. A state to have succeeded in this is nowhere to be found. And nothing suggests that some state could here succeed” (Neuman, 1937, p. 20).

23 Neuman does not explicitly tackle political anarchists such as Gustave de Molinari (1819-1912) (who wrote on the private production of security; see his *The Production of Security*, The Ludwig von Mises Institute, Auburn, Alabama, 2009 [1849]) or Lysander Spooner (1808-1887) (see *No Treason. The Constitution of No Authority*, 1867, available on-line at <http://www.freedomforallseasons.org/TaxFreedomEmail/LysanderSpoonerNoTreason.pdf>), authors who raise important questions regarding the very idea of the state, especially as represented by a territorial monopoly over the use of force. Neuman’s explicit targets are here authors such as Jules Simon (1814-1896) or Emile Vandervelde (1866-1938).

24 Thus, we can see Neuman speak against the so-called freedom of association implied by the existence of labor unions. Their birth and development meant, to an important extent, a weakening of the state through the fact that previously unacceptable (considered illegal and aggressive) behavior – violent restraint on businesses, forced collective bargaining, forced exclusion of non-unionized workers and the like – has been gradually tolerated and, finally, even sanctioned by positive legislation. For Neuman this was equivalent with an unfortunate partial resignation by the state from some important function, and therefore a weakening of it. Interestingly enough – fact which also makes Neuman an interesting author not only in Romania,

but worldwide – when he speaks of “the freedom of association” as a spurious freedom, one might expect him to go against the modern corporation which many criticize as a fake extension of the classical idea of (private) property. Nevertheless, his only and immediate target here are the labor-unions, especially those of the public sector. On the other hand, behind the idea of a weak state – one that fails to meet the demands of the hour – one can guess Neuman’s discontent with the bothersome leniency with which the government and the courts of law treated violent manifestations of the right wing in general (an those of the Iron Guard in particular) throughout the interwar period (see, for instance, Armin Heinen, *Legiunea <<Arhanghelului Mihail>>/The Legion of Archangel Michael*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 2006. This is the second way in which the state can fail its mission, in addition to the first (involvement outside its proper sphere).

25 One well known example is Mihail Manoilescu with his *Secolul corporatismului. Teoria corporatismului integral și pur/The Century of Corporatism. The Theory of Integral and Pure Corporatism*, Ed. Naționala-Ciornei, 1934 (which had a first edition in French).

26 It should be added here that from an economic point of view, the purpose of economic activity is consumption (seen at large, of everything one might imagine, not only strictly of material goods; in this light, going to a symphonic concert is – from an economic point of view – an act of consumption, apart from the fact that it might also be qualified as an act of culture or otherwise). Only because consumption is severely limited in the absence of production does production acquire importance. But production as such is not in itself important. Thus, a polity which follows the general interest of the population seen from the point of view of consumption is also economically well structured, or natural.

27 We could add here that a supplementary insight of the modern version of classical liberalism – namely libertarianism – is that the state has as specific difference not the use of force as such, but the *initiation* of the use of force or violence. In Murray Rothbard’s terms, a distinction must be made between the use of force which can be both offensive and defensive, and aggression which he reserves as a term and concept solely for the acts of initiating force or violence against someone else. Thus, the specific difference of the state as an instrument is that it can initiate violence toward others in order to fulfill its objectives. The entire work of Murray Rothbard is an attempt to hammer this distinction and trace out economic and political implications.

28 One can only think of the modern phenomenon of tabloid newspapers or television reality shows which have a tendency of becoming more and more base, simple minded (in the worse sense) and rudimentary. These phenomena, as symptoms of decay, could be considered as “barbarism inside the gates”. Of course, Neuman’s idea is not that such phenomena should be curtailed by the iron-hand of the state. The point is that a civilized

society must at the same time keep the state and church separated (and the state small) and take religious matters seriously (outside the sphere of the state). These are both equally valid fronts of civilized man. A practical illustration of Neuman's options in this respect is reported at various places in *The Journal of Happiness* by Nicolae Steinhardt who mentions their (his and Neuman's) attempts to get closer to the traditionalist Jewish in Bucharest (Neuman being the instigator, if we may say so). And even though, in time Neuman grew bitter on this front, his friend, Steinhardt, provides a vivid illustration of the importance of this relation between religion and liberty, or religion and civilization. We have in Nicolae Steinhardt an un-repentant classical liberal who became an Eastern Orthodox monk, being a genuine "enemy of the (communist) state" throughout the entire last part of his life.

29 We could probably include here the phenomenon of "hooligans" who take as their identity that fact of being supporters of a certain football team. Interestingly enough, apart from the fact that such phenomena flourish on the grave of the influence of traditional religions, particularly Christianity, there is an institutional aspect to it. The football teams act in a sector – the football federation – which is not quite a free-market, but organized along corporatist or mercantilist (not to say fascist) lines with important monopoly privileges, dedicated regulation and subsidies. Thus, the modern state subsidizes "the circus" which in turns subsidizes the supporters' groups (whose trips to matches, and tickets and fan-club activities are very often paid by the clubs themselves).

30 It is striking at times that modern environmentalism has significant traits of a secular religion. Likewise, the entire idea of a "New Age" spirituality sound remarkably close to a confirmation of Leroy-Beaulieu and Neuman's predictions.

31 Neuman suggestively observes, at the end of this discussion (p. 175) that "the involvement of the State where he has no business being involved renders those fields barren".

32 In the one a little bit longer material of certain Neuman paternity that we could find in Brussels, in the IIAS archives, there is a text written as secretary of the Working Group on Integrated Budgetary Systems. It is a somewhat neutral text, a review of the activities of the said group. The ideological or doctrinaire color of the text is almost absent.

33 See his Salerno, Joseph T., *Comment on the French Liberal School*, Journal of Libertarian Studies, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 65-68, 1978. And also Salerno, Joseph T., *The Neglect of the French Liberal School in Anglo-American Economics: A Critique of Received Explanations*, The Review of Austrian Economics, no. 2, 1988, pp. 113-156.

34 See, for instance Eugen Demetrescu, *Influența școalei economice liberale în România în veacul al XIX-lea/The Influence of The School of Economic Liberalism in Romania in the XIXth Century*, Editura Domino®, 2007.

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*** File no. 29233N, the naturalization file of Emanuel Neuman, Royal Archives, Brussels

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Appendix II: A Few Photos



(Neuman in Caracas, Venezuela, 14.09.1972, attending one of the International Institute for Administrative Sciences events;
photo from the institute archive)



(Neuman – the above row, first on the left – with a group of colleagues from the International Institute for Administrative Sciences;
year unknown; photo provided by Ms. Marie-Anne Estas)



(Neuman, around 1960; photo from his immigrant file no. 2801697) ;
Copyright: Office des Etrangers, Bruxelles, Belgique



(Neuman, around 1960; photo from his immigrant file no. 2801697) ;
Copyright: Office des Etrangers, Bruxelles, Belgique



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Books:

*De la Reformă la unitatea vizibilă deplină: dialogul teologic dintre anglicani și
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Anglicans and Lutherans], coll. *Studia Oecumenica* 6, Presa Universitară
Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, 2012

Cu frică s-au temut acolo unde nu era frică... *Istoria dialogului teologic dintre
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in great fear, were no fear was... *The History of the Theological Dialogue
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BYZANTINE IMPERIAL EXCOMMUNICATION OR ABOUT THE BOLDNESS OF A PATRIARCH. CASE STUDY: MICHAEL VIII PALAIOLOGOS

Abstract

In the Byzantine society, profoundly religious as it was, one could hardly imagine that the emperor or a member of the imperial family could become subject to excommunication. Firstly, the status of *God's chosen*, promoted by the Byzantine imperial ideology, was totally incompatible with the severe transgressions one had to commit in order to be liable for ecclesiastical censure, even only for a temporary one. Secondly, any bishop who would dare to forbid an emperor's access to the Church would obviously risk opening a conflict with very little chance of success. The practice of excommunication was mentioned by the Church in several penitential canons and enforced, in some exceptional cases, even on the Byzantine emperors (Theodosius I, Leo VI, Nikephoros II Phokas, and John I Tzimiskes). Thus, the conflict between Arsenios and Michael VIII should not be construed solely as a Western influence, but rather merely as one of the recurring disputes between the representatives of the State and the Church that took place throughout the Byzantine history.

Keywords: excommunication, Byzantium, State vs. Church, emperor vs. patriarch

The ecclesiastical sanction of excommunication (the exclusion of an individual from the Christian community; *ἀφορισμός*, *excommunicatio*, *segregatio*), either on a temporary (*μικρὸς ἀφορισμός*) or on a permanent basis (*μέγας ἀφορισμός*, *ἀνάθεμα*) is a penitential practice introduced by the Church as early as the first centuries. However, the role of this spiritual penalty was rather therapeutic by nature as the repentants were supposed to become fully aware of the sins they had committed and to undertake a canon of repentance in order to be accepted again by the Christian

community. The permanent excommunication or the anathema would be employed in cases of heresy and could only be pronounced by those who had been consecrated to as bishops (be they patriarchs, metropolitans, archbishops or bishops).

Notwithstanding the cases in which certain dogmas of the Church were flagrantly breached, there were indeed very few situations that compelled a member of the upper clergy to pronounce excommunications on the Byzantine emperors during their life time. However, since the 13th century the context has changed radically in that the sentence of ecclesiastical censure was endorsed by the lay courts of justice and replaced the practice of oath-taking. Thus the testimonies of those involved in private disputes or criminal activities would be taken *under the penalty of excommunication* carried out by the Church, should the testimonies have proved to have been untrue. Afterwards, during the post-Byzantine period, this extreme ecclesiastical sanction was enforced in almost all circumstances provided by private law.

A particularly suggestive excommunication formula, dating back to the 17th century, has been preserved in a volume by Paul Rycaut, the British Consul in Smyrna (1667-1678):

May all those who will not pay his right or empower him peacefully, but allowed for him to remain wronged and deprived, be excommunicated by God Almighty, and may they be cursed and unforgiven and may they not decay after death either in this world or in the world to come. Stones, wood and iron will decay, but may they never do. May they inherit the leprosy of Gehazi and the hanging of Judas. Let the ground cleave open and swallow them up like Dathan and Abiran. Let them sigh and tremble on the earth like Cain. May God's wrath be upon their heads and faces and may they never see the fruits of their labor and may starvation be their bread in all the days of their lives; may their belongings, their estates, their toils and their burdens be cursed and may they never accomplish anything, but be destroyed entirely and be scattered away like husks on a field at harvest time. May the curses of the Holy and Righteous Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and of the 318 Holy God-bearers Fathers from Nicaea, and from the other Holy Councils be upon them and may they be excommunicated by the Church of Christ. Let no one, under the penalty of forbiddance from the Eucharist and of excommunication, make them partakers to those ecclesiastical, or to consecrate them, or to cense them, or to give them Holy Bread, or to eat, or to drink, or to work, or to have any physical connection with them, or to bury them after their death, until they accomplish what is written here and will be forgiven.¹

The Circumstances Related to the Excommunications of Michael VIII Palaiologos

In a very short period of time (from the autumn of 1258 – when he became regent for the legitimate young emperor John IV Laskaris – to the autumn of 1261 – when he was ostentatiously re-crowned in Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, in the absence of the legitimate emperor), the position of the founder of the Palaiologos dynasty on the throne of the Empire changed radically. Thus, the process of progressive usurpation of the imperial power had to be concluded with a brutal and permanent removal of the one who held the legitimate right to rule the Byzantine State. Therefore, Michael Palaiologos chose to have the last male descendant of the Laskaris dynasty lose his sight, on the religious feast day of the Nativity of the Lord (December 25) in 1261.²

This deliberate gesture of the one who was named *novus Constantinus* after he had conquered back the capital from the Latins, meant that he had consciously broken the successive oaths of allegiance to both the Laskaris imperial family (in the second half of 1254)³ and to the young legitimate basileus (in the autumn of 1258 and on the date of the imperial proclamation on January 1, 1259, respectively).⁴ All these solemn oaths explicitly stipulated the penalty of ecclesiastical in the case that Michael Palaiologos made an attempt at John IV Laskaris' life or if he took measures to establish his own dynasty on the throne of the Empire. Thus, after patriarch Arsenios Autoreianos belatedly learned that the legitimate emperor had been mutilated, in January 1262 he decided to excommunicate Michael VIII Palaiologos.⁵ However, this penalty concerning the basileus did not imply his permanent banishment from among the Church members, but rather his temporary forbiddance from attending the Holy Liturgy and from receiving the Holy Eucharist. At the same time, whoever would pronounce such an interdict would also indicate a canon of repentance which the penitent would have had to undergo in order for the excommunication to be removed. As a concession to this exceptional situation, patriarch Arsenios allowed the clergy to continue to pray for their temporal authority, namely for their repenting emperor, during the daily divine services.⁶ Also, before the beginning of the Holy Liturgy, the emperor was allowed to enter the church and to venerate the Holy Icons,⁷ pointing to the fact that Michael VIII found himself in the third penitential stage out of the four stages required for the reintegration of those who were temporarily banished from the Christian community. This group of *kneelers* included those who had the right to attend the Holy Liturgy inside the church until the special prayer for the

neophytes (which made the transition from the Liturgy of the Catechumens to the Liturgy of the Faithful), but who thereafter had to leave.⁸

Confronted with the above-mentioned situation, emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos acknowledged the sin he had to expiate and humbly accepted the penalty imposed by the ecclesiastical authority, confident that he would be forgiven once the repentance period established by the patriarch came to an end.⁹ According to Georgios Pachymeres, the basileus' vigilant consciousness urged him to permanently seek to make amends for this situation.¹⁰ Therefore, until the summer of 1264, the emperor failed in his attempt to have the patriarch disclose the terms of the penance (*ἡ θεραπεία*) that he was ready to carry out.¹¹ Instead of giving a suitable canon of repentance, Arsenios Autoreianos imposed a series of political conditions on him: he was to reduce taxes and commercial fees as well as to restore justice in the Empire.¹² He also suggested, sometimes clearly, other times in a more concealed manner, that the appropriate moral remedy for the sin of having broken the oaths towards the legitimate emperor would be for him to resign the imperial throne.¹³ In reply, Michael VIII threatened to appeal to Rome and plead his case to the pope in order to receive forgiveness, should the patriarch obstinately refuse to indicate to him the proper spiritual therapy and hence agree to remove his excommunication.¹⁴

Georgios Pachymeres described in detail one of the direct confrontations between the two protagonists as it follows:

And because, as one would say, presence in person is a remedy [...], [the emperor] decided to go himself and to ask for absolution and to confess. Therefore he went to see him several times. However, one would ask for the canon for his sin, while the other would demand that the canon be undertaken, without clear terms, but rather imprecise and confuse [conditions]. However, one would ask to be taught openly, in order to carry out immediately what should be said, while the latter would answer ambiguously: 'Repent and I accept'. As he had asked for remedy several times, without receiving clear answers, the emperor said: 'How knows if, after I shall do even more [than what was required of me], you will not add some other [demands] in order to accept me [back]?' And the latter answered that for grievous sins it is a heavy penance as remedy. The emperor, pushing things further [said]: 'Then what? Don't you order me even to waive from [the command of] the Empire?' And while saying that, he took out his sword and offered it to him, so as to test his intentions. The other quickly turned his hand for the sword, wishing to take the object apparently offered, but still not completely drawn out from its sheath,

[and] the emperor started to sing the same tune [went back to what he was previously saying] and reproached him that, if he wanted [to take the sword], he made an attempt to [take] his life. However, removing the crown which he had on his head, shamelessly threw himself to his feet, although many [were able] to saw him. Yet the other rejected him firmly and looked down on the one threw at his knees. The graver is the sin, the more honorable is the virtue. And as he continued and press him with many requests, slipped out towards his chamber, closed the doors in his face and left him without any answer.¹⁵

On the one hand, the scene described by Pachymeres confirmed the conflicting positions of the emperor and the patriarch concerning the removal of excommunication: Michael VIII went to the patriarchal palace, threw himself at Arsenios Autoreianos' feet and begged him to consider a canon of penance which he was ready to accomplish; the patriarch refused several times to point out the suitable repentance for the sin the emperor committed, choosing to speak in general or ambiguous terms. On the other hand, this depiction contains two Western imperial symbols: the sword (*ἡ σπάθη*) and the crown (*ἡ καλύπτρα*). Marie Theres Fögen interpreted this scene as the Byzantine reproduction of the Canossa episode that had taken place almost two centuries before (the three-day penance undertaken by the emperor Henry IV (January 25-28, 1077) in front of the above-mentioned Tuscan fortress, which accommodated pope Gregory VII, so as to convince the pontiff to remove his excommunication).¹⁶ The similarities between the main elements of the two episodes are remarkable: an excommunicated emperor, willing to accept and undergo a penance, humbly addresses to the primate of the Church so that his censure is removed. Also, Michael VIII's intention to offer the patriarch his sword, which is a token of dignity and imperial power according to the Western political ideology, could be interpreted within the *theory of the two swords*, the spiritual and the temporal one, both pertaining *de jure* to the Church. Thus, returning the temporal sword to the patriarch would inherently lead to his acknowledging the key role of the Church in relation with the State.

However, notwithstanding these analogies, which would indicate at first glance an ideological borrowing from the West to the East, one must also clarify the reasons that might have convinced the protagonist, Michael VIII Palaiologos, to prefer this strategy. Actually, the main key of interpreting the entire episode relies in understanding the fact that it was not the patriarch who dictated the terms of this meeting, but the emperor who intentionally chose to act in this manner. Firstly, it is obvious that in the eyes of the Byzantine audience the laying down of the sword and

crown did not necessarily have the same connotation as it did in the West. Besides, the two imperial symbols belonged to Baldwin II, the last Latin emperor of Constantinople, and did not exactly carry the same meaning, even if they were used in the context above by the Byzantine emperor. Secondly, Michael VIII's conscious yet inferior position, doubled by patriarch Arsenios Autoreianos' proud and resolute rejection, allowed him to assume the image of an apparently innocent victim. At the same time, this position offered him enough arguments, should he have decided to plead his case to the pope in order to have his excommunication removed. And thirdly, it might be typical of Pachymeres to depict the entire scene in this rather dramatic tone. Consequently, a comparative analysis of the moment in Magnesia when the *officium stratoris* was performed, and of the above-mentioned meeting between the emperor and the patriarch, two exceptional episodes in relation with the Byzantine ceremonies, highlights a hypothesis based on the chronicler's highly subjective perception.

At the beginning of 1265, three years after the excommunication was pronounced, emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos decided to abandon the defensive attitude he had adopted up to that moment and that had no effect over the patriarch's decision. Thus, in March 1265¹⁷ a *libellus* was drafted, containing several detailed accusations¹⁸ against Arsenios Autoreianos, namely that he eliminated a psalm *for the emperor* from the Orthos service; he allowed the courtiers of the former Seljuk Sultan of Ikonion, Izz ad-Dīn Kaykāwūs II (1246-1256; 1257-1261), who resided in Constantinople until 1264, to bathe in the baptistery, the place where the Holy Sacrament of Baptism was officiated; he administered the Holy Eucharist to the sons of the same Seljuk Sultan, before being baptized; he permitted Sultan Izz ad-Dīn Kaykāwūs II and the satraps in his entourage to accompany the patriarch during the Orthos service officiated on Resurrection Sunday (most likely in 1264). The bishops in Constantinople were immediately convened, and this first meeting being followed by three sessions of the patriarchal Council (April-May 1265). Patriarch Arsenios was invited to defend himself, but he declined. The invitation was reiterated three times, as indicated in the ecclesiastical prescriptions, and only after his third rejection did the assembly proceeds to examine the accusations. In between the second and the third session, the emperor made one last attempt to have his excommunication removed, before a celebration of a Holy Liturgy in one of the churches from *Blachernai* Palace attended by the patriarch Arsenios. However, he was faced with the same adamant rejection.¹⁹ Thus, during the third session of the Synod, the accusations were examined *in absentia* of the incriminated person and the patriarch was deposed by a great majority of those who

were present.²⁰ The Council appointed two bishops to inform the high prelate of the decision that he should be deposed and the latter declared his willingness to step down from the patriarchal office. Consequently, in mid-May 1265, Arsenios Autoreianos left Constantinople for the monastery St. Nicholas on the island of Prokonnesos, the place of his exile.²¹

One would think that, since the man who excommunicated emperor Michael VIII and who thereupon obstinately refused to discuss at all the removal of excommunication was banished from the patriarchal office, the basileus' reintegration in the Church should quickly come about. However, surprising as it may seem, although Michael VIII guaranteed for metropolitan Germanos of Adrianopolis (Germanos III, May 1265 – September 1266), considering his transfer²² to patriarchal office fully legitimate, the removal of the ecclesiastical censure was delayed. This postponement was the emperor's deliberate action due to the fervent opposition of the Arsenites who claimed that the deposition of Arsenios Autoreianos and the subsequent election of Germanos as patriarch were not according to canonical prescriptions. Also, considering the context, the authority of the new Patriarch was weak. That is why Emperor Michael VIII refrained from any attempt to seek the removal of his excommunication. This extremely delicate decision, that had driven him to repeatedly humiliate himself in front of Arsenios, the former patriarch, had to remain undisputed. On the contrary, the act of removal of his excommunication, as conceived by the emperor, was supposed to imply that the Church acknowledged him once again, after he had been successively proclaimed and crowned in Magnesia, Nymphaion, Nicaea and Constantinople (1258-1261).

Rhetorical treatment of Michael VIII between 1265 and 1267 reinforces the impression that penitence played a central role in the emperor's strategy for public acceptance. After having been rehabilitated in the first part of 1265, Manuel Holobolos, *the rhetor of the rhetors* (ῥήτωρ τῶν ῥητόρων), prepared several speeches that praised the personality of emperor Michael VIII. If some of these addresses portrayed him as *novus Constantinus*, one of Holobolos' works particularly emphasized the penance of the Byzantine emperor, which was compared to that of king David. The entire argumentative construction relied on the similarities between the two personalities: emperor Michael VIII was excommunicated by patriarch Arsenios, while king David was admonished by Nathan the prophet; both rulers proved on many occasions that they had indeed fulfilled the penance for the sins they had committed; king David's reprehensible action was forgiven and God permitted his son, Solomon, to reign over

the people of Israel after his death; as a consequence, the Church should also reconsider the position of the Byzantine emperor.²³

After Germanos III was forced to write down his resignation (September 15, 1266), the patriarchal office was occupied by the hieromonk Joseph Galesiotes, who was the emperor's confessor and spiritual advisor, as well as a person of high esteem within the Church. Elected by the Synod sometime between September-December 1266, Joseph was promoted (*πρόβλησις* / *προβολή*) by the emperor on December 28, 1266, whereas his ordination (*χειροτονία*) as bishop and his enthronement (*ἐνθρονισμός*) as patriarch took place on the feast of Saint Basil the Great (January 1, 1267). Therefore, five years after Michael VIII had been excommunicated (January 1262), the patriarchal office was assumed by a person who was most suitable for the emperor's intentions: Joseph I was well-known and highly respected by the clergy, he was furthermore the emperor's spiritual father and, upon his ordination as bishop and receiving the title of patriarch, he acquired the means to remove the excommunication pronounced by Arsenios Autoreianos.²⁴ The ceremony in which the repenting emperor was granted forgiveness took place soon after, on the feast of the Presentation of the Lord (February 2, 1267). At the end of the Holy Liturgy, Michael VIII knelt bareheaded at the feet of the patriarch, in front of the ambo of Hagia Sophia, begged for forgiveness and confessed his sin with a loud voice. Meanwhile, Joseph I read the special formula for the removal of excommunication, which also included the emperor's reprehensible deed, namely that he had caused the blindness of the legitimate emperor John IV Laskaris and had banished the latter from the imperial throne. One by one, all the bishops who had attended the service would pass by the prostrating emperor and would read the excommunication removing formula. In the meantime, the attending Senate members would beg God to have mercy on the sinner. At the end of this touching ceremony, the emperor was given a few crumbs of Holy Bread (*ἀντίδωρον*) as a token of his reintegration into the Church.²⁵ During the following years of his reign, the feast of the Presentation of the Lord would be ostentatiously celebrated in Constantinople, so as to stress the importance of the moment when emperor returned into the canonical boundaries of the Church.²⁶

However, shortly after this solemn moment in Hagia Sophia, the disputes issued by the Arsenite dissidents with respect to the legitimate election of patriarch Joseph I grew stronger and stronger. The main accusation against the one who had dared to loose what Arsenios Autoreianos had bound, referred to an alleged excommunication concerning Joseph, which was supposedly enforced in March 1265, on the account of continuing to hear the repenting emperor's confessions, despite the censure imposed

by the patriarch.²⁷ Obviously, had Joseph I been excommunicated prior to his election as patriarch, all his future decisions, including the episode when he granted forgiveness to Michael VIII, would have been null from the canonical point of view. The information regarding the censure of the new patriarch was mostly spread among the Arsenites, who were Joseph I's sworn enemies.²⁸ The accused provided only a brief reply to this rumor at the time of his second election to the patriarchal office (December 1282 – March 1283).²⁹ Therefore, due to the one-sided and inconsistent sources that endorse such an interpretation,³⁰ on the one hand, and Pachymeres' cautiousness in this matter,³¹ on the other hand, there are strong arguments to discard the hypothesis of a supposed excommunication regarding Joseph I, either before or after becoming patriarch. Consequently, the act of forgiveness towards Michael VIII was genuine and compliant with the canonical provisions of the Church.

The second reaction against the emperor's reintegration into the Christian community came from Arsenios Autoreianos himself. He and his supporters considered that his banishment from Constantinople was a tyrannical deed, which ignored the canonical legislation. Thus, according to them, the only *legitimate* patriarch was Arsenios, who had been unjustly deposed and exiled to the monastery St. Nicholas in Prokonnesos. Before he died (September 30, 1273) the former patriarch made use of his alleged canonical legitimacy and wished to reinforce the excommunication he had pronounced against emperor Michael VIII, condemning at the same time the forgiveness granted by Joseph I on February 1267:

And I renew the excommunication and the anathema, to which he subjected by his own will, by his own pleasure, by his own [vain] glory, and I give him to Satan, as before he gave himself [to Satan] by breaking the oaths, and nowadays by persecuting the Church.³²

Was this reinforcement of excommunication really effective on the spiritual ground, taking into account that it came from a patriarch who had been officially deposed? Should he not have resolved this conflict by granting his forgiveness, as the Christian ethics suggest, especially since the repentant showed true signs of remorse? The only reliable argument Arsenios Autoreianos could use was the *praxis Ecclesiae* which recommended that each repentant should receive forgiveness from the one who had pronounced his or her excommunication. In this way the former patriarch could have claimed that morally it was his right to assess the repentant's amends and possibly to grant forgiveness. On the other hand, since

Arsenios Autoreianos had been deposed by a legitimate Synod, although under Michael VIII's influence, the canons of the Church forbade him to exercise his rights as a bishop, namely the power to bind and to loose.³³ The dilemma resided in the validation or the rejection of the legitimacy of the patriarchal Synod of April-May 1265, and, hereafter, in the validity of the decisions taken in the three consecutive sessions.

The history of the ecclesiastical censures imposed on emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos was not limited to this open conflict with patriarch Arsenios Autoreianos and the excommunication issued against him (January 1262) and subsequently renewed by the latter during his exile (May 1265 – September 1273). Three other ecclesiastical assemblies declared the founder of the Palaiologan dynasty guilty of transgression the Church canons and dogmas. Chronologically, the first penalty inflicted on the basileus was issued by the local Council held by the Melkite Patriarchate of Alexandria, in June-July 1264, as he had broken the terms of the treaty signed in November 1261 – November 1262 with the Mamluk sultan of Egypt and Syria, Baybars I (1260-1277), by retaining in Constantinople the members of his embassy to the Mongol khan Berke (1257-1266):

During this month [Ramaḍān 662, June-July 1264], news reached the sultan that king al-Ashkarī [Laskaris]³⁴ detained his ambassadors to king Berke, who were travelling accompanied by the ambassadors from king Berke. The sultan demanded the documents relating to the oaths, and from these he brought out a record of the oaths of king, kyr Michael, which were written in Greek. The patriarch [Nicholas II of Alexandria] and bishops were summoned, and he [the sultan] had a discussion with them about the case of a person who swears in such and such a way, and then violates his oaths. They passed a verdict to the effect that he should be put outside the pale of his religion and excommunicated. The sultan recorded their signatures on this, while they did not know what was expected of them. Then he placed before them the records of the oaths taken by al-Ashkarī, and said to them: 'By detaining my ambassadors, he has violated his promises and has inclined to the side of Hülegü [Mongol khan, 1256-1265]'. Then, he sought out the Greek philosopher who read the coin,³⁵ and he sought out [as well] a bishop and a priest, and equipped them to their expedition to al-Ashkarī, with these letters accompanying them. He wrote to al-Ashkarī, being rough with him in his speech, [...].³⁶

Subsequently, along with the rising discontent that seized the Byzantine society after the religious union with Rome was accomplished (July 1274), Michael VIII was perceived as the tyrant who sought to impose the decisions from the Council of Lyons by force. Thus, as a direct reaction to this attitude,

at the end of 1276, *sebastokrator* John I Doukas of Thessaly convened a local Synod at Neopatras, which excommunicated the pope, emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos, and patriarch John XI Bekkos.³⁷ At that time pope John XXI (September 1276 – May 1277) was in charge, but the excommunication most likely involved Gregory X (September 1271 – January 1276), the one who had convened *Concilium Lugdunense Secundum*.

The last excommunications concerning Michael VIII were pronounced by pope Martin IV (1281-1285). As he was French and therefore willing to commit the Latin Church to the interests of the Angevin crown, represented by Charles I of Anjou, king of Sicily (1266-1282) and of Naples (1266 – 1282), Martin IV, while in Orvieto, excommunicated emperor Michael VIII without a warning, on November 18, 1281. He was charged to have offered support to the *schismatic and heretic Greeks*.³⁸ Afterwards, on Maundy Thursday (March 26, 1282), the previous censure was reaffirmed and moreover extended to all the representatives of the Western powers who would dare to provide the excommunicated with military assistance and supplies.³⁹ A third sanction addressed to the Byzantine emperor, confirming the previous censures, was publicly displayed on the doors of Orvieto's cathedral, on the feast of the Ascension of the Lord (*in die Ascensionis Domini* – May 7, 1282), after the *Sicilian Vespers* from Palermo (March 30, 1282).⁴⁰ At last, the fourth excommunication pronounced by the pope against Michael VIII was signed at Montefiascone (Viterbo), on November 18, 1282, together with a similar document addressed to king Peter III of Aragon (1276-1285), who had been the ally of the Byzantine emperor against Charles I of Anjou.⁴¹ The basileus' reaction to the news from Rome was harsh: after he had supported the Latin religious policy for nearly two decades, sacrificing even the Empire's internal peace in the process and almost steering it on the verge of a civil war, he admitted the failure of his diplomatic policy in this respect: he ordered that the pope's name be removed from the diptychs and considered disclosing the unfavorable terms of the Lyons union.⁴² This last part of his plan was not carried out as the first emperor of the last Byzantine dynasty died on Friday, December 11, 1282, while leading a military campaign against *sebastokrator* John I Doukas of Thessaly.

The Recurrence of Imperial Excommunications during the Byzantine Period

Throughout a reign of nearly a quarter of a century, emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos' deeds and actions caused him to be successively

excommunicated by patriarch Arsenios Autoreianos (January 1262), censured by the local Synod of the Melkite Patriarchate in Alexandria (June-July 1264), forgiven by patriarch Joseph I (February 1267), banished by the another local Synod in Neopatras (end of 1276) and finally excluded four times from the Latin Christian community by pope Martin IV (November 1281; March / May / November 1282). Thus, the founder of the Palaiologos dynasty finds himself on a relatively short list of Orthodox Byzantine emperors who have been in conflicting relations with the Church and who have endured the ecclesiastical censure for a shorter or longer period of time, so as to expiate their sins.

Chronologically, the first Church personality who dared to impose penitence to an emperor was archbishop Ambrosius of Mediolanum (374-397). The bloody massacre in Thessalonica, in the summer of 390, authorized in order to stop the inhabitants' rebellion against the barbarian troops of general Butheric, prompted Ambrosius to address a confidential letter to emperor Theodosius I (379-395). Therein the bishop of the Western capital of the Empire admonished the latter for having recklessly killed the innocent people and then he brought forth king David's model of penance for his sin.

Certainly, I, between all the others, although indebted to Your Piety, for which I cannot be ungrateful, piety which I see to many emperors, but suitably to only one, I, I say [that] I have no charge out of ambition against you, but I have [one] of fear; I dare not to perform the Sacrifice, if you intend to be present. Something that is not allowed when the blood of only one innocent [is spilled], is allowed [in the case] of many? I think not.⁴³

Even if he does not explicitly pronounce the emperor's excommunication in this epistle, the archbishop's declared resolution not to perform the Holy Liturgy in his presence, points out to an obvious ecclesiastical censure. Few decades later, Theodoret, bishop of Cyrrhus (423-457), depicts a scene that is much more relevant in this aspect:

When the emperor came to Mediolanum and, according to the custom, wished to enter the godly place, that Ambrosius, whom I have remembered several times, having learned of the tragedy that had brought about many tears, greeted him in front of the entrance, forbade him to go past the holy doors, saying to him such words: [...] 'With what eyes will you see the sanctuary of the Master of all [things]? With what feet will you walk on this holy ground? How will you raise [your] hands [in prayer], on which the blood of unjust killings still trickles? How will you receive in such hands

Most Holy Body of the Lord? How will you bring [His] Precious Blood close to [your] mouth, which, through wrathful words, spilled so much blood in an impious manner? Thus, leave and do not attempt to add to the first transgression another one, and accept the penitence that agrees with God in Heavens, the Master of all [things]'.⁴⁴

After having repented for eight months in Mediolanum, period of time when he refrained from wearing his imperial vestments, he shed many tears for the sin he had committed and passed a law that enforced a 30-days period before executing a death sentence,⁴⁵ emperor Theodosius I was appraised by archbishop Ambrosius in December 390.⁴⁶ Then, in April 391, on Maundy Thursday, the emperor's interdict was removed.⁴⁷

If in Mediolanum, the Western capital of the Empire, Theodosius I accepted the ecclesiastical censure, in Constantinople, the Eastern residence, the open conflicts between archbishop John Chrysostomos (398-404) and the imperial family (emperor Arcadius, 395-408, and *augusta* Aelia Eudoxia), resulted in two exile sentences for the Church representative. Although in this episode no excommunication was pronounced, due to the numerous public criticisms regarding the Empress' moral weaknesses (especially, love of money and vainglory), the Church was expected to propose a penitential canon. Also, the explicit analogies the famous exegete had resorted to, so as to stigmatize the *augusta* for her sins, were quite suggestive: Aelia Eudoxia was consecutively compared to Jezebel, king Ahab's wife, who craved for Naboth's vineyard (*1 Kings* 21); to the unfaithful wife of Job, who incited the latter to curse God (*Job* 2:9); to Potiphar's adulterous wife (*Genesis* 39); to Herodias, king Herod Antipas' wife, who asked for John the Baptist's head on a platter (*Matthew* 14; *Mark* 6). Eventually, due to a series of unfriendly circumstances and also to empress' resentment towards him, archbishop John was judged and exiled during the Synod of the Oak (September 403), called back to the capital shortly after (October 403), then deposed and exiled for the second time (June 404).

A paradigmatic moment for the disputes between a patriarch and a Byzantine emperor was the one centered on Nicholas I Mystikos (901-907; 912-925) and Leo VI (886-912). Aiming to consolidate the Macedonian dynasty, founded by emperor Basil I (867-886), Leo VI infringed both the civil laws and the canonical provisions of the Church with respect to successive marriages. Thus the male descendant, the future emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos (913-959) was born from an affair with Zoe Karbonopsina (September 905), after three unsuccessful marriages. The patriarch agreed to officiate the Baptism for the infant (January 6, 906),⁴⁸ provided that emperor Leo VI put an end to his relationship with Zoe. In a

short while, after the feast of the Resurrection of the Lord (April 906), the imperial couple received the blessing of Marriage from one of the palace priests. The infringement of the Church canons, with no previous synodal dispensation, compelled patriarch Nicholas I to enforce the ecclesiastical censure on the emperor.⁴⁹ Consequently, when Leo VI wished to attend the celebration of the Nativity (December 25, 906) and of the Epiphany (January 6, 907) in Hagia Sophia, Nicholas I forbade him to enter:

But the patriarch, excusing himself, said to him: 'If the metropolitans and primate Arethas [the bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia] will not agree, I have no power. However, if you wish to be above the law and enter, then I and those with me from here will leave immediately'.⁵⁰

At the beginning of February 907, for having dared to confront the basileus, Nicholas I was forced to step down from the patriarchal office and was driven into exile.⁵¹ In the meantime, the representatives of the four other patriarchates (Rome, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem) had arrived in Constantinople with official documents stating that emperor Leo VI was granted dispensation for his fourth marriage, by exercising the *oikonomia* while interpreting the canons. The basileus was to be acknowledged again by the Church after he had undergone the penitence that was usually assigned in similar circumstances.⁵² Euthymios, the new patriarch of Constantinople (907-912), agreed to crown Constantine VII on Pentecost Sunday (May 15, 908), thus securing the Macedonian dynasty, which was Leo VI's main goal and the reason for having accepted even the patriarchal excommunication. A few days before his death († May 12, 912), the basileus called back the former patriarch from his exile, restored him in his office, confessed his sin and received forgiveness, as Nicholas I himself reveals in a letter addressed to pope Anastasius III (911-913):

I do not say these of the good emperor [Leo VI] (God forbid!), or of your primate, Sergius [pope Sergius III (904-911)], nor do I mean that these should be anathematized. For when God had already stretched forth His hand upon the good emperor, he, being near the end of his life, found for himself (as I trust in the Divine Favor) an escape from the condemnation and the anathema, acknowledging his own transgressions and imploring pardon and release from the ban which we had laid upon him, and gave us back the flock from which we had been expelled, and entrusted all things to be administered by us as we thought pleased by God and in conformity with the holy and divine canons.⁵³

Also during the 10th century, patriarch Polyeuktos (956-970) imposed the ecclesiastical censure on two great generals who acceded consecutively to the imperial throne, *id sunt* Nikephoros II Phokas (963-969) and John I Tzimiskes (969-976), forbidding them to attend the Holy Liturgy officiated in Hagia Sophia. The conflict with emperor Nikephoros II Phokas, who usurped the imperial throne from the Macedonian dynasty, broke out when he married the widow of emperor Romanos II (959-963), basilissa Theophano, in September 963 so as to reinforce his position. Although the patriarch had previously granted them his dispensation for the second marriage⁵⁴ and had also attended the ceremony, the imperial couple was then forbidden access to the divine service until they completed the penance foreseen by the Church for cases of *secondes noces*:

When they came to the moment of entering the sanctuary, Polyeuktos, leading him by the hand, approached the Holy Doors and entered inside himself, forcing him to remain outside, saying that he would not allow him to enter the sanctuary if firstly he will not perform the penance required for the one who weds a second woman. This offended Nikephoros and he never ceased being indignant with him until his death. Then a rumor, which disturbed the Church in no small way, spread in all directions that Nikephoros had stood as godfather for one of Theophano's children at his Holy Baptism. Taking the rumor as an opportune pretext, Polyeuktos demanded him either to separate from the woman, as the canons required, or to stay away from the Church; which he did in fact, separating from Theophano. The local bishops of the city summoned [by Polyeuktos], along with the leading senators, were consulted on this matter. They all said that was a law of [Constantine V] Kopronymos and that, according to them, it needs not be observed. They put their signatures to a statement in this respect and sent it to him [the patriarch]. And when Polyeuktos delayed in admitting the emperor to [the Holy] Communion, the caesar [Bardas Phokas] affirmed that he [the emperor] had not stood as godfather. And that Stylianos, the first clergy of the Great Palace, who was suspected first to have put the rumor in circulation, came before the Synod and the Senate and swore that neither had he seen Bardas or Nikephoros stand as godfather, nor had he told [this to] anybody. Whereupon Polyeuktos, fully convinced that Stylianos was perjuring himself, forgave him for this charge of godfathering, and that who previously insisted to impose [the emperor] a penitence for a second woman, overlooked even this grave offence.⁵⁵

Surprising as it may seem, patriarch Polyeuktos decided to remove the ecclesiastical censure despite the fact that the union in marriage of two persons spiritually related (*συντεκνιά*) was considered a sin similar to that

of an incest, by both the Church (Canon 32 of the *Quinisextum* Council, Constantinople 691-692) and by some local customs.

A few years later the same patriarch imposed a time of penitence on emperor John I Tzimiskes (969-976) for having committed the grievous sin of murder against Nikephoros II Phokas on the night of 10/11 December 969.⁵⁶

After taking these measures, without any apprehension, in the same night, the emperor, accompanied by only a few men, went to the Great Church, aiming to receive the [imperial] crown from the hands of the patriarch. But when he wanted to enter, Polyeuktos would not let him, saying that the one whose hands were dripping with the steaming blood of a recently murdered kinsman, was not worthy to enter the Church of God, and he had better start showing deeds of repentance and thus gain permission to step into the House of the Lord. John quietly accepted the penance and humbly declared that he would perform all of these, asking for forgiveness, although it was not him the murderer who went against Nikephoros, but Balantes and Atzypotheodoros, instigated by the Sovereign Lady [the Empress]; on hearing these, the patriarch ordered him to be ejected from the palace and sent to an island, Nikephoros' murderers to be punished, and the document by which Nikephoros sought to throw into disarray the Church affairs to be torn up.⁵⁷

Just as in Nikephoros II Phokas' case, who was excommunicated in 963, the canonical *akribeia* applied to the basileus was short lived. Thus, after having fulfilled all the requests of the patriarch, on the occasion of the Nativity of the Lord (December 25, 969), the censure pronounced against John I Tzimiskes was removed and the usurper was crowned as *autocrator*. Moreover, not long after the crowning ceremony, the patriarch issued a synodal statement⁵⁸ which stipulated the effects of the emperor's anointment, in accordance with the canon 12 from the Synod of Ancyra:

Relying on this canon, this Most Holy patriarch, kyr Polyeuktos, firstly banned the emperor, kyr John Tzimiskes, from within the Most Holy Great Church of God, for having murdered the emperor, kyr Nikephoros Phokas, then he received him back. For he said, together with the Holy Synod, in the synodal document which was issued afterwards and which is kept in archives, that since the anointment from the Holy Baptism wipes away the sins committed before, no matter is their kind or their number, also, undoubtedly, the imperial anointment completely wiped away the murder committed before by Tzimiskes.⁵⁹

The last two direct disputes between the Church and the State representatives took place during the Palaiologos dynasty. Consequently, after the successive censures aiming emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos, at the beginning of the civil war that occurred the following century (1341-1347), in October/November 1341, patriarch John XIV Kalekas (1334-1347) excommunicated the one who had just proclaimed himself *co-imperator* at Didymoteichon (October 26, 1341), the future emperor John VI Kantakouzenos (1347-1354).⁶⁰ In this case the ecclesiastical interdict was strictly political: this gesture addressed to the usurper was meant to express, on the one hand, the Church's support for the legitimate emperor, young John V Palaiologos (1341-1391), and for the empress Anna's regency, and on the other hand, the utter disapproval against John Kantakouzenos' audacity to assume the imperial symbols. Later on, after the end of the civil war, the ecclesiastical censure was at first removed by the same patriarch John XIV Kalekas, the same day in which John VI Kantakouzenos triumphantly entered in the Capital (February 3, 1347).⁶¹ However, due to the patriarch's ambiguous canonical situation (he had been previously deposed by *basilissa* Anna/Giovanna and then, shortly after, condemned by the Synod, both events taking place consecutively, in the first week of February 1347), around John VI Kantakouzenos' second imperial coronation (May 21, 1347), the new patriarch, Isidore I, issued another synodal decision by which all former excommunications pronounced during the civil war by his predecessor were removed.⁶²

This brief recount of the situations in which several Byzantine emperors were excommunicated by a representative of the Church, brings the first conclusions. Thus, apart from the last example (John XIV Kalekas vs. John VI Kantakouzenos), all the pinpointed conflicts were caused by the breach of the Christian moral prescriptions (killing of innocent people; successive marriages; second marriage with no canonical dispensation / forbidden matrimony with a spiritual relative; murder of the basileus; blinding of the legitimate emperor). Also, according to the Church regulations, the excommunication was eventually removed for those who have fulfilled the penance (Theodosius I; Nikephoros II Phokas, John I Tzimiskes). But whenever the representatives of the Church applied the *akribeia* in the interpretation of the canons and were by no means willing to grant dispensations, they were condemned to exile (John Chrysostom, although he had not pronounced the excommunication formula towards either emperor Arcadius or *augusta* Aelia Eudoxia; Nicholas I; Arsenios Autoreianos).⁶³ Two of those punished died during their exile (John Chrysostom – September 14, 407; Arsenios Autoreianos – September 30, 1273) and there was only

one occasion when the emperor reversed his decision and the exiled was forgiven, then offered back the patriarchal office (Nicholas I vs. Leo VI). Similarly, the conflict between Arsenios Autoreianos and Michael VIII was the sole case when the one who pronounced the excommunication formula not only did not grant forgiveness, but, instead, he reinforced the censure, although the patriarch was deposed at that time (the emperor was reintegrated into the Church by the next patriarch, Joseph I). On the other hand, the analysis of the positions of those excommunicated by the Church points out the following: two of the emperors were founders of dynasties, Theodosius I and Michael VIII, the former being invited to take part in the government of the Empire, while the latter usurped the legitimate rights of a Laskaris emperor. Three other *autocrats* condemned by the Church seized the throne by acts of usurpation (Nikephoros II Phokas; John I Tzimiskes; John VI Kantakouzenos). Emperor Leo VI was the second representative of the Macedonian dynasty but, due to the lack of any male descendants, the dynasty line was without perspective and could not be continued. Thus, besides the rightly application of the Canon Law even in the case of those *anointed by God*, the inflexibility displayed by the ones who rose against the representatives of the temporal authority, could also be explained by an attempt to benefit as much as possible from their insecure positions (Leo VI; Nikephoros II Phokas; John I Tzimiskes; Michael VIII Palaiologos; John VI Kantakouzenos). The false impression of the precarious situation in which the emperors found themselves at the beginning of their reign, accompanied by a serious offence against the moral commandments, determined the patriarchs of Constantinople (Nicholas I; Polyeuktos; Arsenios Autoreianos; John XIV Kalekas) to withhold their self-preservation instinct with respect to the position they occupied on a temporary basis, and to think that they had enough authority to impose themselves in open conflicts with the Byzantine emperors. A reason for this conclusion resides in the fact that, in three of the cases mentioned earlier, the patriarchs inexplicably backed down shortly after the context changed (Polyeuktos vs. Nikephoros II Phokas; Polyeuktos vs. John I Tzimiskes; John XIV Kalekas vs. John VI Kantakouzenos). At the same time, by enforcing this extreme censure, publicly expressed so as to enhance its effect within the Byzantine society, the representatives of the spiritual power implicitly proposed a reassessment of the limits of the two institutions, which would lead to the superiority of the Church in relation with the State. Thus, in most of the personal disputes (patriarch vs. emperor) throughout the Byzantine history, the decisions that condemned various violations of the ethical commandments done by the temporal authority would also conceal several political interests.

Moreover, the audacity that the Church representatives manifested when confronting an *autocrator* most likely also derived from the recurrent insurrections that took place in the Byzantine society against the imperial family. Consequently, out of the 107 emperors of Constantinople between 395 and 1453, more than half of them (65) either were forced to abdicate or suffered a violent death (they were poisoned, stabbed, strangled or mutilated).⁶⁴ However, if were to consider the other unsuccessful attempts at the lives of the emperors, the number mentioned above would increase considerably. This way the Byzantine practice managed to balance the authoritarian theoretical formulas (*princeps legibus solutus est / quod principi placuit legis habet vigorem*) through a real *jus resistendi*. On the other side, the legislation tried to protect the imperial family, holding the attempts to overthrow the government (*ἐπανάστασις*) as crimes against the State (*τυραννίς*) and crimes of *lèse-majesté* (*καθοσίωσις / crimen majestatis*) and sentencing the guilty to death penalty. Surprising as it may seem, although the attempts to overthrow the State government were not subject to the prescriptions of the canonical *corpus* of the Church, between 11th to 13th centuries there have been three synodal decisions pronouncing the *anathema* with respect to all those who would dare to plot against the Byzantine emperor.⁶⁵ The canonical and legal authority of the first two decisions, ratified by a Synod and confirmed by the basileus, was so great that it could only be exceeded by that of the canons passed during the first millennium (the Apostolic Canons and those ratified by the Ecumenical Councils, by the local Synods and by the Fathers of the Church). Arsenios Autoreianos was familiar with the content of the first two *tomoi* when he decided to excommunicate Michael VIII Palaiologos (January 1262). Thus, the patriarch's gesture cannot be reduced only to a mere reaction against the fact that the emperor had breached of the previous oaths of allegiance or against the cruel measure to which the latter had resorted in order to remove John IV Laskaris from the throne, but also by the existence of these previous synodal decisions he applied the ecclesiastical censure provided by the Byzantine Canon Law for those who attempted to harm the legitimate emperor.

In the end, the rather small number of high clergy who dared to impose penitence to the Byzantine emperors was the direct result of the successful rhetoric of the imperial ideology. Thus, the relationship between Church and State was affected by the frequent interference of the political power in the internal affairs of the spiritual authority. The privileged status of the emperors with respect to the Church was captured in a few clear-cut expressions (*ισαπόστολος; επίσκοπος τῶν ἐκτός; ιερεὺς καὶ βασιλεὺς*) that

advanced the idea of the sacred nature of the one, who, *by the will of God*, came to rule the Empire. After the iconoclast period, when several emperors promoted various heresies and enforced them on the Church, it became imperative that the position of the Byzantine *autocrator* with respect to the spiritual authority should change. Thus, starting from patriarchs Photios (9th century) and Michael I Kerularios (11th century) up to archbishop Symeon of Thessalonica (15th century), a hierocratic theory was devised in order to decrease the influence of *Temporalia* on the Church and to increase that of *Spiritualia* on the emperor and the State. As a result, two parallel rhetoric discourses were developed, each claiming its superiority to the other institution. Gradually, the powerful expressions specific to the imperial office in the first centuries of the Byzantine history came to be replaced by much milder formulas (*ἐπιστημονάρχης; δεπούτατος / δεποτάτος*) and the status of the emperor was lowered to that of a *layman*, with just a few prerogatives during the religious services. Yet, in spite of this profound ideological change, the emperor continued to hold a special place in the collective mentality of the Byzantine society. Thus, the hesitation manifested by some patriarchs to impose the canons of the Church on the imperial figures can be explained not only by their desire to protect their own position, but also by their misconception of the emperor's intangibility with respect to the civil law (*νόμος*) and to the ecclesiastical legislation (*κανών*).

Conclusions

In the Byzantine society, profoundly religious as it was, one could hardly imagine that the emperor or a member of the imperial family could become subject to excommunication. Firstly, the status of *God's chosen*, promoted by the Byzantine imperial ideology, was totally incompatible with the severe transgressions one had to commit in order to be liable for excommunication, even only for a temporary one. Secondly, any bishop who would dare to forbid an emperor's access to the Church would obviously risk opening a battlefield with very little chance of success. Thus, if in some cases the patriarchs who had the audacity to enforce the canonical *akribeia* on the Byzantine emperors as on any other lay member of the Church, grounded their actions solely on spiritual reasons, combined with an inner drive to promote morality within the ecclesiastical community, there were also cases when the high clergy would pronounce excommunications upon the emperors as a means of pursuing their own political agenda.

Referring to the open conflict between patriarch Arsenios Autoreianos and emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos, Marie Theres Fögen⁶⁶ concluded that the imperial excommunication episode of January 1262 and the subsequent meetings between the two protagonists, as presented by Pachymeres, would constitute the Byzantine copy of the Canossa event in January 1077 (the three-day penance of emperor Henry IV, as a result of the censure enforced upon him by pope Gregory VII Hildebrand). Then, sequentially, the *officium stratoris* performed by Michael Palaiologos at Magnesia (1258), the deepening of the emperor's remorse problems after his excommunication, the inclusion of two Western imperial insignia (the sword and the crown) during one of the meetings between the emperor and the patriarch, and the gesture made by the representative of temporal authority to lay down the sword as a symbol of his stepping down from the imperial throne, were inferred as irrefutable indications to the fact that the Byzantine chronicler intended to copy and mock the Western type of Church-State relationship.

On the other hand, Lutz Rickelt⁶⁷ deepened his investigation, stressing that patriarch Arsenios would have been influenced in his decision to resort to the extreme gesture of imperial excommunication by his direct knowledge of the Western usages during his visit to Rome. Most likely, Arsenios allegedly participated in the second imperial mission from Nicaea to Innocentius IV (1243-1254) during 1253-1254. Therefore, given the circumstances, the future patriarch would have had the occasion to observe not only pope's official entrances, riding a white horse, or visiting the Saint Sylvester chapel within the *Santi Quattro Coronati* cloister, where a fresco which also included a few representations from the *Donatio Constantini* had just been executed, but also to become aware of the tensions between pope Innocentius IV and the king Conrad IV of Jerusalem, Germany and Sicily (1228-1254; 1237-1254; 1250-1254), tensions that the bishop of Rome had addressed precisely in the first months of 1254 by excommunicating the son of emperor Friedrich II Hohenstaufen (1194-1250). Moreover, patriarch Arsenios seems to have acquired all these Western gestures, as it results from the Magnesia episode in the autumn of 1258, from the usurping the imperial ritual of public appearances on horseback and from the excommunication of the emperor.

Nevertheless, the assumptions made by the two German scholars, who put emphasis on a Western ideological influence on the relationships between the emperor and patriarch in Constantinople, which could be perceived in the ceremony of the imperial court, should be properly placed into context, so as to correctly understand the extent to which the Latin

ideas and practices have penetrated the Byzantine society. Consequently, one should first of all emphasize that the practice of excommunication was mentioned by the Church in several penitential canons and enforced, in some exceptional cases, even on the Byzantine emperors (Theodosius I, Leo VI, Nikephoros II Phokas, and John I Tzimiskes). Therefore, the conflict between Arsenios and Michael VIII should not be construed solely as a Western influence, but rather merely as one of the recurring disputes between the representatives of the State and the Church that took place throughout the Byzantine history. Secondly, as in the case of previous conflicts between the patriarch and the emperor, this time also, the dispute was bluntly approached, the two protagonists meeting face to face. In this respect, the Western Europe would provide a different model because of the geographical impediment: the long distance between the residence of the popes and those of the various representatives of the temporal authority, with whom they came into conflict, required the dispute to be settled by letters of excommunication. Last but not least, it is conspicuous that most medieval ecclesiastical sanctions pronounced in the Western Europe lack moral grounds and rely mostly on the accusation that the political rulers did not submit to the Church of Rome. In Byzantium, on the other hand, even when the representative of the Church envisaged a political agenda, the original grounds for pronouncing an excommunication on the emperor would always be due to a serious violation of Christian moral commandments. Therefore, without denying the infusion of certain Western ideas into the Byzantine mentality, both through a careful examination of the Latin practices in Constantinople (1204-1261) and through several other channels of information, Michael VIII's excommunication should not be construed solely as a transfer in Constantinople of a specific Western practice. A thorough investigation of the complex historical background has revealed not only the presence of a legitimate moral reason for initiating such a conflict (the Byzantine pattern), but also a series of political claims made by the representative of the Church (the Latin pattern). In this way, the Byzantines borrowed some of the Western ideas that could have helped them push back the institutional boundaries of the State by reference to the Church, and contextualized them in a specific Eastern context.

NOTES

- ¹ Paul Ricaut, *The Present State of the Greek and Armenian Churches*. Anno Christi, 1678, John Starkey, London, 1679, pp. 274-275 (chap. XIII: *Of the Power of Excommunication, and upon what frivolous occasions it is made use of*): Ἐὰν μὴ πληρώσωσι [corr. πληρώωσι] τὸ δίκαιον αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἐξουσιάσωσιν αὐτὸν εἰρηνικῶς, ἀλλ' ἐάσωσιν τοῦ τὸν ἡδικομένον, καὶ ἐξημιωμένον [corr. ἐξημιωμένον] ἀφωρισμένοι ἦσαν παρὰ Θεοῦ παντοκράτορος, καὶ κατηραμένοι, καὶ ἀσυνχώρητοι, καὶ ἄλλοι μετὰ θάνατον ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι καὶ ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι· αἱ πέτραι, καὶ τὰ ξύλα, ὁ σίδηρος λυθήσονται, αὐτοὶ οὐδαμῶς· κληρονομήσουσι τὴν λέπραν τοῦ Γιάζη, καὶ τὴν ἀχόνην [corr. ἀγχόνην] τοῦ Ἰουδα· σχίθη ἡ γῆ, καὶ καταπῇ αὐτοὺς, ὡς τὸν Νάθαν [corr. Δάθαν] καὶ Ἀβίρων· στένοντες ἦσαν καὶ τρέμοντες ἐπὶ γῆς ὡς ὁ Κάϊν· ἡ ὀργὴ τοῦ Θεοῦ εἶη ὑπὲρ τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν καὶ προσωπῇ, οὐ μὴ ἴδοιεν πώποτε ἐφ' οἷς ἐργάζονται, καὶ λυμωξείαν ἄρτον πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς ζωῆς αὐτῶν, τὰ πράγματα, κτήματα, οἱ κόποι, αἱ δουλεύσεις αὐτῶν εἴησαν κατηραγμένα, καὶ εἰς ἀφανισμόν πανταλῇ, καὶ ἐξυλόθρευσιν γινόμενα ὡς κοινορτὸς ἀπὸ ἄλωνος θερινῆς· ἔχοιεν καὶ ἀράς πρὸ ἁγίων δικαίων Πατριάρχων Ἀβραάμ, Ἰσαὰκ, καὶ Ἰακώβ, καὶ τῶν ἁγίων τριακοσίων δέκα καὶ ὀκτὼ Θεοφύλων Πατέρων τῶν ἐν Νικαίᾳ; καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν ἁγίων Συνόδων, καὶ ἔξω τῆς Ἐκκλησίας Χριστοῦ· καὶ μηδεὶς Ἐκκλησιάση αὐτοὺς, ἡ ἀγίαζη, ἡ θυμιάζη, ἡ Ἀντίδωρον δῶ, ἡ συνφάγη, ἡ συνπίτ, ἡ συνδουλεύση, ἡ σωμασραφή [corr. σωμαστραφῆ], ἡ μὴ θάνατον ταφιάζη ἐν βάρει ἀργίας, καὶ ἀφωρισμοῦ, ἐὼς οὐ ποιήσω οὐ γράφομεν καὶ συγχωρηθήσονται.
- ² Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* III.10, in: Georges Pachymères: *Relations Historiques* (Livres I-III), Édition, Introduction et Notes par Albert Failler, Traduction française par Vitalien Laurent, coll. *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* XXIV/1, Société d'Édition Les Belles Lettres, Paris, 1984, p. 257¹⁵⁻²¹ [= Pachymères, *Relations* 1]; *Διαθήκη τοῦ ἀγιωτάτου Ἀρσενίου, ἀρχιεπισκόπου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως Νεᾶς Ῥώμης καὶ οἰκουμενικοῦ πατριάρχου* IX, in: *Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Graeca*, accurate J.-P. Migne, tomos 140, Garnier Freres, Parisii 1887, col. 956A [= PG 140]; Νικηφόρος Γρηγοράς, *Ῥωμαϊκὴ Ἱστορία* IV.4, in: Nicephori Gregorae. *Byzantina Historia, Graece et Latine*, cum annotationibus Hier. Wolfii, Car. DuCangii, Io. Boivini et Cl. Capperonnerii, cura Ludovici Schopeni, coll. *Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae* XIX/1, Impensis Ed. Weberi, Bonnae, 1829, p. 93⁵⁻⁸ [= Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia* 1]; Μακάριος Μελισσηνός (Μελισσουργός), *Χρονικόν* I.2, in: Georgios Sphrantzes. *Memorii* (1401-1477). *În anexă: Pseudo-Phrantzes: Macarie Melissenos, Cronica* (1258-1481), ediție critică Vasile Grecu, coll. *Scriptores Byzantini* V, Editura Academiei, București, 1966, pp. 164³⁴-166¹ [= Sphrantzes, *Memorii*].
- ³ Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* I.7, II.2, in: Pachymères, *Relations* 1, pp. 37⁸⁻¹¹, 39⁸⁻¹¹, 135⁸⁻⁹; Μακάριος Μελισσηνός (Μελισσουργός), *Χρονικόν* I.1, in: Sphrantzes, *Memorii*, p. 158²⁰⁻²⁴.

- 4 Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* II.3-4, in: Pachymérès, *Relations* 1, pp. 135²¹-137¹⁶; *Διαθήκη τοῦ ἀγιωτάτου Ἀρσενίου, ἀρχιεπισκόπου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως Νεᾶς Ῥώμης καὶ οἰκουμενικοῦ πατριάρχου* IV-VI, in: PG 140, col. 949D-953A; Νικηφόρος Γρηγοράς, *Ῥωμαϊκὴ Ἱστορία* IV.1, in: Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia* 1, p. 78¹⁻¹²; Μακάριος Μελισσηνός (Μελισσουργός), *Χρονικόν* I.2, in: Sphrantzes, *Memorii*, p. 162⁹⁻¹³, 18-19.
- 5 Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* III.14, in: Pachymérès, *Relations* 1, p. 269¹⁴⁻¹⁷; *Διαθήκη τοῦ ἀγιωτάτου Ἀρσενίου, ἀρχιεπισκόπου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως Νεᾶς Ῥώμης καὶ οἰκουμενικοῦ πατριάρχου* IX, in: PG 140, col. 956A; Νικηφόρος Γρηγοράς, *Ῥωμαϊκὴ Ἱστορία* IV.4, in: Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia* 1, p. 93¹⁷⁻¹⁸; Μακάριος Μελισσηνός (Μελισσουργός), *Χρονικόν* I.2, in: Sphrantzes, *Memorii*, p. 166⁷⁻⁹. There is no historical source mentioning a synodal document that might have ratified the patriarch's decision. In conclusion, this gesture was assumed by Arsenios Autoreianos alone: V. Laurent (ed.), *Les registes des actes du Patriarcat de Constantinople*, vol. I (*Les actes des patriarches*), fasc. IV (*Les registes de 1208 à 1309*), Institut Français d'Études Byzantines, Paris, 1971, n. 1362 [= Laurent, *Regestes* IV].
- 6 Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* III.14, in: Pachymérès, *Relations* 1, p. 269¹⁹⁻²²; Νικηφόρος Γρηγοράς, *Ῥωμαϊκὴ Ἱστορία* IV.4, in: Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia* 1, p. 93¹⁸⁻²².
- 7 Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* IV.5, in: Georges Pachymérès: *Relations Historiques* (Livres IV-VI), Édition et Notes par Albert Failler, Traduction française par Vitalien Laurent, coll. *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* XXIV/2, Société d'Édition Les Belles Lettres, Paris, 1984, p. 343⁴⁻¹⁰ [= Pachymérès, *Relations* 2].
- 8 Νικηφόρος Γρηγοράς, *Ῥωμαϊκὴ Ἱστορία* IV.4, in: Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia* 1, p. 93²²⁻²⁴. See: G.A. Rhalles, M. Potles, *Σύνταγμα τῶν Θείων καὶ Ἱερῶν Κανόνων*, τόμος ἕκτος, Τυπογραφίας τῆς Ἀυγῆς, Ἀθήνα, 1859, pp. 363-364 (*Περὶ τῶν τῆς μετανοίας τόπων*); Dimiter G. Angelov, "The confession of Michael VIII Palaeologus and King David", *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*, 56 (2006), p. 195, n. 8 [= Angelov, *The confession*].
- 9 Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* III.14, in: Pachymérès, *Relations* 1, p. 271¹⁻⁷; Νικηφόρος Γρηγοράς, *Ῥωμαϊκὴ Ἱστορία* IV.4, in: Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia* 1, p. 93²²⁻²⁴.
- 10 Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* III.15, III.19, in: Pachymérès, *Relations* 1, pp. 271¹⁰⁻¹³, 281³⁻⁴. Michael VIII's remorse's depicted by Georgios Pachymeres have been interpreted as part of a true *dramatic play*, in which the basileus and the patriarch were the main characters. See: Marie Theres Fögen, "Kaiser unter Kirchenbann im östlichen und westlichen Mittelalter", *Rechtshistorisches Journal*, 16 (1997), p. 539 [= Fögen, *Kaiser*]. At the same time, the unjustified prolongation of the emperor's excommunication would weaken the latter's authority and would reduce the efficiency of his political actions.

- 11 Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* III.19, in: Pachymères, *Relations* 1, p. 281⁷⁻¹².
- 12 Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* III.19, in: Pachymères, *Relations* 1, p. 281¹⁴⁻¹⁶; *Διαθήκη τοῦ ἀγιωτάτου Ἀρσενίου, ἀρχιεπισκόπου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως Νεᾶς Ρώμης καὶ οἰκουμενικοῦ πατριάρχου* IX, in: PG 140, col. 956A.
- 13 Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* III.19, in: Pachymères, *Relations* 1, pp. 281³⁰-283¹; Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* IV.1, in: Pachymères, *Relations* 2, p. 331⁸⁻⁹; Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* XII.2, in: *Georges Pachymères: Relations Historiques (Livres X-XIII)*, Édition, Traduction française et Notes par Albert Failler, coll. *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* XXIV/4, Institut Français d'Études Byzantines, Paris, 1999, p. 517⁴⁻¹⁰ [= Pachymères, *Relations* 4].
- 14 Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* III.19, in: Pachymères, *Relations* 1, p. 283¹⁷⁻¹⁹; Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* IV.1, in: Pachymères, *Relations* 2, p. 333⁸⁻¹³.
- 15 Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* III.19, in: Pachymères, *Relations* 1, pp. 281²⁰-283¹¹: *Καὶ ὅς ἐπειδὴ καὶ τὸ αὐτοπρόσωπον ἀντιφάρμακον λέγουσι [...], αὐτὸς ἔγνω προσερχόμενος ἐντυγχάνειν καὶ τὴν λύσιν ἐξομολογούμενος ἐκζητεῖν. Ἐφίστατο τοίνυν πολλάκις· καὶ ὁ μὲν ἐζητεῖ τὴν θεραπείαν τοῦ τραύματος, ὁ δὲ τὰ τῆς θεραπείας πράττειν προσέταττε, πλὴν οὐκ ἐπὶ ῥητοῖς, ἀλλ' ἄορίστως καὶ ἀφανῶς. Καὶ ὁ μὲν ῥητῶς ἐζητεῖ μαθεῖν ἐπὶ τῷ ποιεῖν προθύμως ὅ τι καὶ λέγοι, ὁ δὲ καὶ πάλιν ἀορισταίνων ἔλεγε· «Ποίει τὴν θεραπείαν καὶ δέξομαι.» «Ὡς δὲ πολλάκις ἐκείνος μὲν ἐζητεῖ τὰ φάρμακα, ὁ δ' οὐ φανερώς ἔλεγεν, εἰπεῖν τὸν βασιλέα· «Καὶ τίς οἶδεν εἰ καὶ πλείω ποιοῦντα οὐ προσθήσῃ τοῦ δέξασθαι;» Καὶ τὸν ἀποκρίνασθαι ὡς μεγάλων ἁμαρτημάτων μεγάλην εἶναι δεῖ καὶ τὴν ἀντίποινον θεραπείαν. Καὶ τὸν βασιλέα, πρὸς τὸ βαθύτερον βάψαντα· «Τί δαί, εἰπεῖν, μὴ τῆς βασιλείας ἐκστήναι κελεύεις;» Καὶ οὕτω λέγοντα, τὴν σπάθην ἀποζώννυσθαι καὶ διδόναι, τῆς ἐκείνου διανοίας ἀποπειρώμενον. Ἐκείνου δὲ τὴν χεῖρα κατὰ σπουδὴν προτείναντος, ἐφ' ᾧ λαμβάνειν τὸ δῆθεν διδόμενον, μήπω τελῶς καὶ τῆς ὁσφύος ἀπολυθέν, παλινωδῖαν τε ἄδειν τὸν βασιλέα καὶ ὡς ἐπιβούλῳ οἱ τῆς σφετέρας ζωῆς ὀνειδίζειν, εἰ οὕτω βούλεται. Πλὴν καὶ τὴν ἐπὶ κεφαλῇς καλύπτραν ἀποτιθέμενος, ἐς πόδας ἐκείνῳ ἑαυτὸν ἐρρίπτει καὶ, πολλῶν βλεπόντων, οὐ κατηδεῖτο. Ὁ δ' ἀπέπεμπεν ἐμβριθῶς καὶ ὑπερεώρα ἀπριζ τῶν γονάτων ἐχόμενον. Οὕτως ἡ ἁμαρτία περιδεῖς, οὕτως ἡ ἀρετὴ τίμιον. Ὡς δὲ πολλάκις παρακαλῶν ἠκολούθει καὶ κατηνάγκαζεν, ἐκείνος, εὐθύς τὴν κέλλαν ὑποδύμενος, ἀπεζύγου τε τὰς θύρας αὐτῷ κατὰ πρόσωπον καὶ ἄργον ἡφίει.*
- 16 Fögen, Kaiser, pp. 543-544.
- 17 For the chronology of the episode when patriarch Arsenios Autoreianos was formally removed, see: Albert Failler, "Chronologie et composition dans l'Histoire de Georges Pachymère", *Revue des Études Byzantines*, 39 (1981), pp. 155-164.

- 18 Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* IV.3, in: Pachymérès, *Relations* 2, p. 337⁹⁻¹⁸.
- 19 Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* IV.5, in: Pachymérès, *Relations* 2, pp. 341²¹-345¹².
- 20 Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* IV.6, in: Pachymérès, *Relations* 2, pp. 345¹³-351³.
- 21 Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* IV.7-8, in: Pachymérès, *Relations* 2, pp. 351⁴-355³.
- 22 *Συνοδικὸς τόμος*, in: I. Sykoutres, “Συνοδικὸς τόμος τῆς ἐκλογῆς τοῦ πατριάρχου Γερμανοῦ τοῦ Γ. (1265-1266)”, *Ἑπετηρίς Ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν*, 9 (1932), pp. 180¹⁶-182²⁵, 183⁵⁻¹².
- 23 The text of this *oratio*, entitled *Τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἐρμηνεία εἰς τὸ εὐαγγελικὸν ῥητὸν τό· «ἐὰν ἔχητε πίστιν ὡς κόκκον σινάπεως ἐρεῖτε τῷ ὄρει τούτῳ» καὶ τὰ ἑξῆς. ἡπορήθη δὲ τοῦτο παρὰ τοῦ ἁγίου ἡμῶν αὐτοκράτορος τοῦ καὶ νέου Κωνσταντίνου* [By the same, an interpretation of what is said in the Gospel: ‘If you had faith as a grain of mustard seed, you would say unto this mountain’ and the others. This was an *aporia* of our holy emperor, the New Constantine], in: *Manuelis Holoboli: Orationes*, edidit Maximilianus Treu, vol. 1-2, coll. *Programm des Königlischen Victoria-Gymnasiums zu Potsdam* (Ostern 1906), Druck der Krämerschen Buchdruckerei (Paul Brandt), Potsdam, 1906-1907, pp. 20-29. Also, for a pertinent contextual interpretation of this *oratio*, see: Angelov, *The confession*, pp. 193-204.
- 24 According to Theodore Balsamon’s commentary to canon 5 from the First Ecumenical Council (Nicaea, 325), although in theory the excommunication could be removed by any bishop or Synod, Church practice would encourage the repentant to ask forgiveness from the very bishop that had bound him, precisely so as to prevent abuses of any kind. Thus, hieromonk Joseph, even if he was the emperor’s personal confessor, could not remove the excommunication pronounced by a bishop, however, after occupying the patriarchal throne, he would be able to grant forgiveness, at least in theory. With respect to the exceptions from Church practice (at that moment the person who had pronounced the excommunication was still alive), this could be explained by Arsenios Autoreianos’ explicit condemnation through a synodal decision that would be canonically undisputed, although Michael VIII influenced it. This way, Arsenios was not only removed from the patriarchal throne, but he was also defrocked, which made it impossible for the excommunication to be removed by the same person who had pronounced it. See: G.A. Rhalles, M. Potles, *Σύνταγμα τῶν Θείων καὶ Ἱερῶν Κανόνων*, τόμος δεύτερος, Τυπογραφίας Γ. Χαρτοφύλακος, Ἀθήνα, 1852, p. 127.
- 25 Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* IV.25, in: Pachymérès, *Relations* 2, pp. 397²¹-399¹⁸; Νικηφόρος Γρηγοράς, *Ρωμαϊκὴ Ἱστορία* IV.8, in: Gregoras, *Byzantina Historia* 1, pp. 107²¹-108⁸; Laurent, *Regestes* IV, n. 1386.

- 26 Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* IV.25, in: Pachymérès, *Relations* 2, p. 573²²⁻²⁴.
- 27 Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* IV.2, in: Pachymérès, *Relations* 2, p. 335⁷⁻⁹; Laurent, *Regestes* IV, n. 1365.
- 28 The two Arsenite texts which support the authenticity of the ecclesiastical censure imposed to Joseph are: *Διαθήκη τοῦ ἀγιοτάτου Ἀρσενίου, ἀρχιεπισκόπου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως Νεᾶς Ῥώμης καὶ οἰκουμενικοῦ πατριάρχου* XI, in: PG 140, col. 956C; *Τοῦ μητροπολίτου Πισιδείας πρὸς τὸν μητροπολίτην Θεσσαλονικῆς κῦρ Μανουὴλ τὸν Δισυπάτον πῶς καὶ τινὰ τρόπον ἀφωρίσθη ὁ κῦρ Ἰωσήφ παρὰ τοῦ ἀγιοτάτου πατριάρχου κύρου Ἀρσενίου ὡς λύων ἄπερ αὐτὸς ἔδῃσε κανονικῶς*, in: Sofronios Eustratiades, “Ὁ πατριάρχης Ἀρσένιος ὁ Αὐτωρειανός (1255-1260 καὶ 1261-1267)”, *Ἑλληνικά*, 1 (1928), pp. 89-94 (the author of this epistle, Makarios, the metropolitan of Pisidia, supported the theory that Joseph was excommunicated three times by Arsenios Autoreianos: once before being elected patriarch – March 1265, and twice during his office, before Arsenios’ death, between 1267-1273).
- 29 *Πιττάκιον τοῦ πατριάρχου κῦρ Ἰωσήφ πρὸς τὸν μετὰ ταῦτα γεγόνота Θεσσαλονικῆς μητροπολίτην κῦρ Ἰγνάτιον, δέσμιον ὄντα τηνίκαντα διὰ τὴν λατινικὴν ὑπόθεσιν*, in: V. Laurent, “L’excommunication du patriarche Joseph I^{er} par son prédécesseur Arsène”, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 30 (1929-1930), pp. 495-496. More than a decade later, in 1296, John Cheilas, metropolitan of Ephesus, brought up the subject again and rejected the Arsenites’ accusations: *Λόγος συντεθείς* III.9-10, IV.9-13, in: *Documents inédits d’ecclésiologie byzantine*, Textes édités, traduits et annotés par J. Darrouzès, coll. *Archives de l’Orient chrétien* 10, Institut Français d’Études Byzantines, Paris, 1966, pp. 375⁹-376²², 383⁶-387¹⁰.
- 30 Besides the two Arsenite sources already mentioned (footnote 28), the first referring to only one excommunication, while the second clearly indicating the three successive excommunications of patriarch Joseph, there is another Arsenite document dating from 1275-1276, including an indictment on the same person, which omits however this important accusation: *Ἐπιστολὴ Καλλίστου πρὸς τὸν Θεσσαλονικῆς κύριον Ἐμμανουὴλ τὸν Δισύπατον*, in: I. Sykoutres, “Περὶ τὸ σχίσμα τῶν Ἀρσενιατῶν”, *Ἑλληνικά*, 3 (1930), pp. 17-26.
- 31 Although Pachymeres would mention this accusation in multiple contexts, he would adopt however a distant attitude: Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* IV.28, V.2, in: Pachymérès, *Relations* 2, pp. 409⁹⁻¹⁴, 437⁷⁻¹⁰; Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* VII.12-13, VII.30-31, in: *Georges Pachymérès: Relations Historiques (Livres VII-IX)*, Édition, Traduction française et Notes par Albert Failler, coll. *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* XXIV/3, Institut Français d’Études Byzantines, Paris, 1999, pp. 47²⁷⁻²⁸, 51²⁻⁶, 95¹²⁻¹⁷, 29-31 [= Pachymérès, *Relations* 3]; Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* XII.2, in: Pachymérès, *Relations* 4, p. 515¹⁷⁻²².

- 32 *Διαθήκη τοῦ ἁγιωτάτου Ἀρσενίου, ἀρχιεπισκόπου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως Νεᾶς Ῥώμης καὶ οἰκουμενικοῦ πατριάρχου XI*, in: PG 140, col. 956D-957A: *καὶ ἐπιτείνω τὸν ἀφορισμὸν, ὃν αὐτὸς ἑαυτῷ ὑπέβαλε δι' οἰκείαν ὄρεξιν, δι' οἰκείαν ἀπόλαυσιν, δι' οἰκείαν δόξαν καὶ τὸ ἀνάθεμα· καὶ παραδίδωμι τοῦτον τῷ σατανᾷ, καθὼς καὶ τὸ πρότερον αὐτὸς ἑαυτῷ διὰ τῶν ἐπορκιῶν παραδέδωκε, καὶ νῦν διὰ τοῦ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας διωγμοῦ·*
- 33 For the ecclesiastical canons that forbid the removal of the excommunication by a different bishop than the one who had pronounced it, during the latter's lifetime (but notwithstanding the case in which the bishop is defrocked) see: Jean Darrouzès, "Fragments d'un commentaire canonique anonyme (fin XII^e – début XIII^e siècle)", *Revue des Études Byzantines*, 24 (1966), p. 31 (n. 8).
- 34 Originally, this name (*al-Ashkarī* / Laskaris, abbreviated from the correct form *al-Laskarī*) was used by Arabian chroniclers to designate the Byzantine emperors during the Nicene exile (1204-1261). Later, although they knew about the political changes in Constantinople, they continued to use the same nickname for the members of the Palaiologan family. Thus, depending on the time of events under discussion, this appellative (*al-Ashkarī*) must be read as either *Laskaris*, or *Palaiologos*, in this case obviously concerning emperor Michael VIII.
- 35 The episode mentioned by Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir, Baybars I's biographer and the head of his chancellery, is described in the paragraph preceding the quotation: a Greek monk was the only one able to read the inscriptions on a copper coin (*al-fals*), part of a treasure found in Qūṣ that had belonged to king Goliāth (?!), which was about 2.300 years old at the time of its discovery (June-July 1264). See: Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir, *'Al-Rawḍ al-Zāhir fī Sīrat al-Malik al-Zāhir*, in: Syedah Fatima Sadeque, *Baybars I of Egypt*, Oxford University Press, Dacca, 1956, pp. 344 (original text in Arabic), 218 (English translation) [= Sadeque, *Baybars*].
- 36 Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir, *'Al-Rawḍ al-Zāhir fī Sīrat al-Malik al-Zāhir*, in: Sadeque, *Baybars*, p. 345: *وفي هذا الشهر بلغ السلطان ان رسله الذين كانوا توجهوا إلى الملك بركه وصحبته: 345: رسول الملك بركه عوقهم الملك الأشكري. فطلب السلطان نسخ الإيدان وأخرج منها يمين الملك كرميخائيل الأشكري وهي بالرومية. وأحضرت البطارقة والاساقفة، وتحدث معهم فيمن يحلف بكذا وكذا من الإيمان ثم يخرج عنه، فقالوا يلزمه كذا وكذا مان الأمور المخرجة له عن دينه، وانه يكون محروما من دينه. فأخذ خطوطهم بذلك وهم لا يعلمون ما يراد منهم. ثم أخرج لهم نسخ إيمان الأشكري وقال: قد نكت بيمسك رسلي ومال إلى جهة هولاكو ثم طلب الفيلسوف اليوناني الذي قرأ الفليس وطلب اسقفا وقسيسا وجهزهم إلى الاشكاري وصحبته هذه المكاتب، وكتب إلى الاشكري وهو يغلظ له في القول ويقول له... I extend my gratitude to Coleman Connolly who transcribed this paragraph and amended the English translation made by S.F. Sadeque.*
- 37 *Littere misse ex parte Ogerii prothonotarii M. Paleologi imperatoris Grecorum nuntiis eiusdem imperatoris* 15-17, in: R.-J. Loenertz OP, "Mémoire d'Ogier, protonotaire, pour Marco et Marchetto nonces de Michel VIII Paléologue auprès du pape Nicolas III. 1278, printemps-été", *Orientalia Christiana*

- Periodica*, XXXI (1965), 2, pp. 392-393 [reprinted in: Raymond-Joseph Loenertz OP, *Byzantina et Franco-Graeca: articles parus de 1935 à 1966 réédités avec la collaboration de Peter Schreiner*, coll. *Storia e Letteratura: Racolta di Studi e Testi* 118, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, Roma, 1970, pp. 537-572].
- 38 *Acta Martini IV* 53, in: *Acta Romanorum Pontificum ab Innocentio V ad Benedictum XI (1276-1304) e Regestis Vaticanis aliisque Fontibus*, collegerunt Ferdinandus M. Delorme OFM et Aloysius L. Tăutu, coll. *Pontificia Commissio ad Redigendum: Codex Iuris Canonici Orientalis – Fontes*, series III, volume V, tomus II, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, [Vatican], 1954, pp. 101-102 [= Delorme-Tăutu, *Acta Romanorum Pontificum V.II*].
- 39 The text of this papal interdiction is lost, but the message can be reconstructed, based on the censures passed later (May 7, and November 18, 1282, respectively). See: *Acta Martini IV* 54, in: Delorme-Tăutu, *Acta Romanorum Pontificum V.II*, p. 103 (§218). The date indicated by the two publishers (April 5, 1282) is wrong.
- 40 *Acta Martini IV* 54, in: Delorme-Tăutu, *Acta Romanorum Pontificum V.II*, pp. 102-104.
- 41 *Acta Martini IV* 58, in: Delorme-Tăutu, *Acta Romanorum Pontificum V.II*, pp. 109-110.
- 42 Γεώργιος Παχυμέρης, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* VI.30, in: Pachymérès, *Relations* 2, pp. 637⁹-639⁷.
- 43 Ambrosius Mediolanensis, *Epistula* 11.13 (Maur. 51: *Augustissimo Imperatori Theodosio Ambrosius*), in: *Sancti Ambrosii Opera*, pars X (*Epistulae et Acta*), tom. III (*Epistularum liber decimus. Epistulae extra collectionem. Gesta Concili Aquileiensis*), recensuit Michaela Zelzer, coll. *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* 82/3, Hoelder-Pichler-Tempsky, Vindobonae, 1982, p. 216¹¹⁹⁻¹²⁵ [= *Sancti Ambrosii, Epistulae*: *Ego certe in omnibus aliis licet debitor pietati tuae, cui ingratus esse non possum, quam pietatem multis imperatoribus praeferebam, uni adaequabam, ego, inquam, causam in te contumaciae nullam habeo, sed habeo timoris; offerre non audeo sacrificium, si volueris assistere. An quod in unius innocentis sanguine non licet in multorum licet? Non puto.*
- 44 Θεοδώρητος, Ἐπίσκοπος Κύρρου, *Ἐκκλησιαστικῆς Ἱστορίας* V.18.1-4, in: Théodoret de Cyr. *Histoire ecclésiastique*, tome II (*Livres III-V*), Texte grec de L. Parmentier et G.C. Hansen (GCS, NF 5, ³1998) avec annotation par J. Bouffartigue, Introduction Annick Martin, Traduction Pierre Canivet, Revue et annotée par Jean Bouffartigue, Annick Martin, Luce Pietri et Françoise Thelamon, coll. *Sources Chrétiennes* 530, Les Éditions du Cerf, Paris, 2009, pp. 404¹⁻⁶, 404¹⁷-406²⁷ [= Théodoret, *Histoire*]: *Ταύτην μαθὼν τὴν ὁδυμῶν γέμουσαν συμφορὰν Ἀμβρόσιος ἐκεῖνος, οὐ πολλάκις ἐμνήσθη, ἀφικόμενον εἰς τὴν Μεδιόλανον τὸν βασιλεῖα καὶ συνήθως εἰς τὸν θεῖον εἰσελθεῖν βουλευθέντα νεῶν ὑπαντήσας ἕξω τῶν προθύρων, ἐπιβῆναι τῶν ἱερῶν προπυλαίων τοιαύδε λέγων*

- ἐκώλυσεν· «[...] Ποίοις τοίνυν ὀφθαλμοῖς ὄψει τὸν τοῦ κοινοῦ δεσπότητος νεών; Ποίοις δὲ ποσὶ τὸ δάπεδον ἐκείνο πατήσεις τὸ ἄγιον; Πῶς δὲ τὰς χεῖρας ἐκτενεῖς ἀποσταζούσας ἔτι τοῦ ἀδίκου φόνου τὸ αἷμα; Πῶς δὲ τοιαύταις ὑποδέξῃ χερσὶ τοῦ δεσπότητος τὸ πανάγιον σῶμα; Πῶς δὲ τῷ στόματι προσοῖσεις τὸ αἷμα τὸ τίμιον, τοσοῦτο διὰ τῶν τοῦ θυμοῦ λόγων ἐκχέαντι παράνομον αἷμα; Ἄπιθι τοίνυν, καὶ μὴ πειρῶ τοῖς δευτέροις τὴν προτέραν αὔξιν παρανομίαν καὶ δέχου τὸν δεσμόν, ᾧ ὁ θεὸς ὁ τῶν ὄλων δεσπότης ἄνωθεν γίγνεται σύμφηφος· [...]».
- 45 Codex Theodosianus IX.40.13, in: *Theodosiani Libri XVI cum Constitutionibus Sirmondianis*, edidit Th. Mommsen, adsumpto apparatu P. Kruegeri, vol. I.2 (*Textus cum apparatu*), Weidmannos, Berolini, 1905, p. 503.
- 46 Θεοδώρητος, Ἐπίσκοπος Κύρρου, *Ἐκκλησιαστικῆς Ἱστορίας* V.18.5-25, in: Théodoret, *Histoire*, pp. 406²⁹-414¹⁵⁰.
- 47 Ambrosius Mediolanensis, *Epistula* 76.26 (Maur. 20: *De traditione basilicae <sorori frater>*), in: Sancti Ambrosi, *Epistulae*, p. 124²⁵³⁻²⁶¹.
- 48 Venance Grumel (ed.), *Les registes des actes du Patriarcat de Constantinople*, vol. I (*Les actes des patriarches*), fasc. II-III (*Les registes de 715 à 1206*), Deuxième édition revue et corrigée par Jean Darrouzès, Institut Français d'Études Byzantines, Paris, 1989, n. 601 [= Grumel-Darrouzès, *Regestes* II-III].
- 49 Grumel-Darrouzès, *Regestes* II-III, n. 601a.
- 50 Vita S. Euthymii Patriarchae Cp. XII (*Περὶ τῶν ἀναμεταξὺ τοῦ τε βασιλέως καὶ τοῦ πατριάρχου γεγονότων παροξυσμῶν*), in: Vita Euthymii Patriarchae Cp., Text, Translation, Introduction and Commentary by Patricia Karlin-Hayter, coll. *Bibliothèque de Byzantion* 3, Éditions de Byzantion, Bruxelles, 1970, p. 77¹⁵⁻¹⁹: ὁ δὲ πατριάρχης πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀπολογούμενος ἔλεγεν ὡς «εἰ μὴ παρὰ τῶν μητροπολιτῶν ὁμόνοια γένηται καὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ πρωτοθρόνου Ἀρέθα, ἀδυνάτως ἔχω· εἰ δὲ ἐκ τῆς αὐτονομίας εἰσελθεῖν βουληθῇς, παρευθὺ ἐγὼ μετὰ καὶ τῶν σὺν ἐμοὶ τῶν ὧδε ἐξίημι».
- 51 Grumel-Darrouzès, *Regestes* II-III, n. 603-605.
- 52 Grumel-Darrouzès, *Regestes* II-III, n. 607a.
- 53 Νικόλαος Ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Κωνσταντινουπόλεως, *Ἐπιστολαὶ* 32 (*Τῷ τὰ πάντα ἀγιωτάτῳ πάπᾳ τῆς πρεσβυτέρας Ῥώμης, Νικόλαος ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Κωνσταντινουπόλεως περὶ τῆς παραλόγως δεχθείσης τετραγαμίας παρὰ Ῥωμαίοις*), in: Nicholas I, Patriarch of Constantinople. Lettres, Greek Text and English Translation by R.J.H. Jenkins and L.G. Westerink, coll. *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* VI [= *Dumbarton Oaks Texts* 2], Dumbarton Oaks / Center for Byzantine Studies / Trustees for Harvard University, Washington DC, 1973, p. 242⁴⁹⁴⁻⁵⁰³: Τοῦτο δὲ φαμεν οὐ περὶ τοῦ καλοῦ βασιλέως (μὴ γένοιτο) οὐδὲ περὶ τοῦ ὑμετέρου προέδρου Σεργίου, οὐδ' ἵνα ἐκείνοι τῷ ἀναθέματι παραπέμποιντο· ἤδη γὰρ χεῖρα ἐπορέξαντος θεοῦ τῷ καλῷ βασιλεῖ, αὐτὸς πρὸς τὸ τέλος τῆς ζωῆς γεγονώς, καὶ τοῦ κατακρίματος καὶ τοῦ ἀναθέματος (πεποιθαμεν τῇ θεϊκῇ εὐμενείᾳ) τὴν φυγὴν ἑαυτῷ περιπεποίηται, τὸ μὲν οἰκεῖον ἀμάρτημα ἐπιγνούς, συγγνώμην δὲ καὶ λύσιν τῆς καταδίκης ἐξαίτησάμενος ἢ παρ'

ἡμῶν ὑποβέβλητο, καὶ ἀποδοὺς καὶ ἡμῖν τὸ ποιμνιον ἐξ οὐπερ ἡλάθημεν, καὶ πάντα διοικῆσαι ἡμῖν ἐπιτρέψας καθὼς συνορώμεν καὶ θεῷ ἀρέσκον καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς <καὶ> ἱεροῖς κανόνσιν ἀρμόδιον.

54 Grumel-Darrouzès, *Regestes* II-III, n. 789q.

55 Ἰωάννης Σκυλίτζης, *Σύνοψις Ἱστοριῶν* (*Νικηφόρος ὁ Φωκάς* 2), in: Ioannis Scylitzae, *Synopsis Historiarum*, editio princeps, recensuit Ioannes Thurn, coll. *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* V, Walter de Gruyter et Socios, Berolini / Novi Eboraci, 1973, pp. 260⁸⁰-261⁹ [= Scylitzae, *Synopsis*]: [...] ἐπεὶ περ ἔμελλεν εἰσοδος ἐν τῷ θυσιαστηρίῳ γενέσθαι, τῆς χειρὸς κατέχων αὐτὸν ὁ Πολύευκτος καὶ ταῖς ἱεραῖς ἐγγίσας κιγκλίσιν, εἴσεισι μὲν ἐκεῖνος εἰς τὰ ἄδυστα, ἐκεῖνον δ' ἐξώθησεν ὀπισθεν, ἐπειπὼν μὴ πρότερον συγχωρηθῆσεσθαι αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ θυσιατήριον εἰσελθεῖν, πρὶν ἂν δέξηται ἐπιτίμια δευτερογαμούντων. ἐλύπησε δὲ ἐν τούτῳ τὸν Νικηφόρον, καὶ οὐ διέλιπεν ἐγκοτῶν αὐτῷ μέχρι τῆς τελευτῆς. διεδόδοτο δὲ καὶ λόγος ἀπανταχοῦ, ὅς οὐ μικρῶς διετάραξε τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, ὅτι περ ὁ Νικηφόρος ἀπὸ τοῦ ἁγίου βαπτίσματος ἀνάδοχος ἐγένετο τῶν τῆς Θεοφανοῦς ἐνὸς παίδων. ταύτην δὲ τὴν φήμην ὡς εὐλογον ἀφορμὴν δεξαμένος ὁ Πολύευκτος, ἢ χωρισθῆναι αὐτὸν τῆς γυναικὸς ἀπεμάχετο κατὰ τὸν κανόνα, ἢ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἀναχωρεῖν. ὁ δὲ καὶ πεποίηκε, τῆς Θεοφανοῦς ἐξεχόμενος. συγκαλεσάμενος δὲ τοὺς ἐνδημοῦντας ἐπισκόπους ἐν τῇ πόλει καὶ τοὺς τῆς συγκλήτου λογάδας, σκέψιν περὶ τοῦτου προέθετο. πάντες δὲ οὗτοι τοῦ Κοπρωνύμου εἶναι τὸν νόμον ἔλεγον, καὶ δέον αὐτὸν μὴ φυλάττεσθαι ἔκρινον. τοῦτ' ἄρα καὶ λίβελλον ἀφέσεως ὑπογράφαντες τούτῳ ἐπιδεδώκασιν. ἐτι δ' ἀναβαλλόμενον τὸν Πολύευντον κοινωῆσαι τῷ βασιλεῖ ὁ καῖσαρ ἐπληροφόρησεν, ὥς οὐκ ἀνάδοχος γέγονεν. ἀλλὰ καὶ Στυλιανὸς ὁ πρωτοπαπᾶς τοῦ μεγάλου παλατίου. ἐξ οὗ πρῶτον ἐλέγετο ἢ τοιαύτη φήμη διαδραμεῖν, ἐνώπιον ἐλθὼν τῆς συνόδου καὶ τῆς συγκλήτου ἐξωμόσατο μήτ' ἰδεῖν, μήτε πρὸς τινας ἀνειπεῖν, ὥς ἄρα Βάρδας ἢ Νικηφόρος ἀνάδοχος γένοιτο. ὁ δὲ Πολύευκτος καί περ φανερώς ἐπιорκοῦντα εἰδὼς τὸν Στυλιανόν, τὸ τῆς συντεκνίας συγκεχώρηκεν ἐγκλημα, καὶ ὁ πάλαι ἐνιστάμενος δευτερογαμίας ἐπιτίμια ἐπιθεῖναι καὶ τὸ μέγα τοῦτο παρήκεν ἀμάχημα.

56 Grumel-Darrouzès, *Regestes* II-III, n. 793.

57 Ἰωάννης Σκυλίτζης, *Σύνοψις Ἱστοριῶν* (*Ἰωάννης ὁ Τζιμισκῆς* 2), in: Scylitzae, *Synopsis*, p. 285²¹⁻³⁴: Οὕτω δὲ τῶν πραγμάτων οἰκονομηθέντων, κατὰ τὴν αὐτὴν νύκτα πάσης ὑποψίας ἀπολυθεὶς ἅπεισι μετ' ὀλίγων ὁ βασιλεὺς εἰς τὴν μεγάλην ἐκκλησίαν, χειρὶ τοῦ πατριάρχου λαβεῖν βουλόμενος τὸ διάδημα. ὃν ἐλθόντα εἰσελθεῖν οὐκ εἴασεν ὁ Πολύευκτος, μὴ ἄξιον εἶναι φήσας ἐπιβῆναι θείου ναοῦ νεαρῷ καὶ ἀτιμίζοντι ἔτι τῷ συγγενικῷ αἵματι σταζομένας τὰς χεῖρας ἔχοντα, ἀλλὰ σπεῦσαι ἔργα μετανόιας ἐνδείξασθαι, καὶ οὕτως ἐφίσσας πατεῖν ἔδαφος οἴκου κυρίου. τοῦ δὲ Ἰωάννου ἡπίως δεξαμένου τὴν ἐπιτίμησιν καὶ πάντα πράττει μετ' εὐπειθείας ἐπαγγεिलाμένου, ἀπολογησαμένου δ', ὅτι καὶ αὐτόχειρ οὐκ αὐτὸς ἐγένετο τοῦ Νικηφόρου, ἀλλ' ὁ Βαλάντης καὶ ὁ Ἀτζυποθεόδωρος ἐπιτροπῇ τῆς δεσποίνης, ταύτην μὲν ὁ πατριάρχης προσέταττε τῶν ἀνακτόρων κατενεχθῆναι καὶ ἐν τινὶ νήσῳ περιορισθῆναι, ἐξοστρακισθῆναι δὲ καὶ τοὺς τοῦ Νικηφόρου

αὐτόχειρας, διαρραγῆναι δὲ καὶ τὸν τόμον, ὃν ἐπὶ συγκύσει τῶν ἐκκλησιαστικῶν
ὁ Νικηφόρος πραγμάτων ἐξέθετο.

58 Grumel-Darrouzès, *Regestes* II-III, n. 794.

59 *Κανόνες τῆς ἐν Ἀγκύρᾳ συστάσεως συνόδου. Κανὼν IB' Ἑτέρα ἐρμηνεία* [Θεόδωρος Βαλσαμών], in: Γ.Α. Ῥάλλης, Μ. Ποτλῆς, *Σύνταγμα τῶν Θείων καὶ Ἱερῶν Κανόνων*, τόμος τρίτος, Τυπογραφίας Γ. Χαρτοφύλακος, Ἀθήνα, 1853, p. 44: *Τῷ παρόντι κανόνι χρησάμενος ὁ ἀγιώτατος ἐκείνος πατριάρχης κυρὸς Πολύευκτος, πρῶτον μὲν ἐξώθησεν ἐκ τῶν ἱερῶν περιβόλων τῆς ἀγιωτάτης τοῦ Θεοῦ μεγάλης ἐκκλησίας τὸν βασιλέα κυρὸν Ἰωάννην τὸν Τσιμισκὴν, ὡς φονεύσαντα τὸν βασιλέα κύριον Νικηφόρον τὸν Φωκᾶν· ὕστερον δὲ ἐδέξατο. Εἶπε γὰρ μετὰ τῆς ἀγίας συνόδου ἐν τῇ γενομένῃ τηνικαῦτα συνοδικῇ πράξει, τῇ ἐν τῷ χαρτοφυλακείῳ ἀποκειμένη, ὡς, ἐπεὶ τὸ χρίσμα τοῦ ἁγίου βαπτίσματος τὰ πρὸ τοῦτου ἁμαρτήματα ἀπαλείφει, οἷα καὶ ὅσα ἂν ᾖσι, πάντως καὶ τὸ χρίσμα τῆς βασιλείας τὸν πρὸ ταύτης γεγονότα φόνον παρὰ τοῦ Τσιμισκῆ ἐξήλειπεν.*

60 J. Darrouzès (ed.), *Les registes des actes du Patriarcat de Constantinople*, vol. I (*Les actes des patriarches*), fasc. V (*Les registes de 1310 à 1376*), Institut Français d'Études Byzantines, Paris, 1977, n. 2218 [= Darrouzès, *Regestes* V].

61 Darrouzès, *Regestes* V, n. 2267.

62 Darrouzès, *Regestes* V, n. 2274.

63 Although patriarch John XIV Kalekas was also exiled after he was condemned by the patriarchal Synod that took place on February 7-8, 1347, in this case, the decision to be banned from Constantinople was not at all a consequence of the excommunication pronounced with respect to John VI Kantakouzenos in October-November 1341. On the contrary, when he realized that *the usurper* John Kantakouzenos would come to the imperial throne, he urgently removed the ecclesiastical censure (February 3, 1347).

64 Charles Diehl, *Les grands problèmes de l'Histoire Byzantine*, coll. *Collection Armand Colin. Section d'Histoire et Sciences économiques* 237, Librairie Armand Colin, Paris, 1943, pp. 49-50.

65 The texts of these three synodal *tomoi* were paraphrased and inserted by Constantine Harmenopoulos (an anti-palamite Byzantine jurist, loyal friend to emperor John V Palaiologos) in an *addendum* (*Epimetra Hexabiblibi*) in his work entitled *Hexabiblos*, also known as *Procheiron Nomos* (1345), where he attempted to put together all the Byzantine civil laws that were in effect at that time. In this *addendum*, apart from paraphrasing the three decisions of the patriarchal Synod, the author also included a short version in Greek translation of the *Donatio Constantini*. The three synodal *tomoi* were ratified in June-July 1026 (during the reign of Constantine VIII), on March 24, 1171 (during the reign of Manuel I Komnenos) and on November 8, 1272, respectively (during the reign of Michael VIII Palaiologos, on the occasion of Andronikos II's coronation as *co-imperator*). All three synodal decisions have been interpreted as canonical innovations and their issue

has been explained through the excessive subservience of the patriarchs of those times (Alexios Studites, Michael III and Joseph I). In fact, there were also kept the two negative reactions to the idea of excommunicating those who rose against the imperial government, idea that was supported by Constantine Harmenopoulos himself, since he published the texts. Consequently, either before November 1353 (when he became patriarch), or around the end of 1354 and the beginning of 1355 (when he was defrocked), but before October 1364 (when he became patriarch for a second time), Philotheos Kokkinos wrote a letter to Constantine Harmenopoulos in which he produced a series of arguments against this innovation (Theodore Balsamon's commentaries to the canon 3 from the local Synod in Gangra; excerpts from St. John Chrysostom's exegetical commentary). Also, Matthaios Angelos Panaretos, an anti-Latin polemist from the mid-14th century, in a *codex* preserved in *Βιβλιοθήκη τῆς Βουλῆς* (Athens, mid-15th century, mss. gr. 33, ff. 398-401), aware of Philotheos Kokkinos' arguments, rejected the possibility to pronounce an excommunication on a person who remained loyal to the Orthodox faith, but chose to rise against the imperial government. For the critical edition and for annotations to these three *tomoi*, see: Marie Theres Fögen, "Rebellion und Exkommunikation in Byzanz", in: Marie Theres Fögen (hrsg.), *Ordnung und Aufruhr im Mittelalter. Historische und juristische Studien zur Rebellion*, coll. *Ius commune. Sonderhefte* 70, Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main, 1995, pp. 43-80 (critical edition of the three texts pp. 67-79).

⁶⁶ Fögen, *Kaiser*, pp. 541-545; Marie Theres Fögen, "Um 1262: Warum Canossa in Byzanz nur zur Parodie taugte", in: Bernhard Jussen (hrsg.), *Die Macht des Königs. Herrschaft in Europa vom Frühmittelalter bis in die Neuzeit*, Verlag C.H. Beck, München, 2005, pp. 209-211.

⁶⁷ Lutz Rickelt, "Die Exkommunikation Michaels VIII. Palaeologus durch den Patriarchen Arsenios", in: *Zwei Sonnen am Goldenen Horn? Kaiserliche und patriarchale Macht im byzantinischen Mittelalter. Akten der internationalen Tagung vom 3. bis 5. November 2010*, hrsgg. Michael Grünbart, Lutz Rickelt, Martin Marko Vučetić, Teilband I, Lit Verlag, Berlin, 2011, pp. 102-105, 112-114, 118-125.

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MORAL DISTRUST: CONFLICT AND MUTUALISM IN A ROMANIAN VILLAGE

Abstract

This paper discusses the distrust between fellow villagers in a Romanian community as a form of moral attitude. I argue that distrust is neither a pathological inclination, nor a stable and indiscriminate feature of cultural representations, but an expression of moral relationships and folk epistemology in the village society.

Introduction

The social phenomena I tackle in my research may be understood starting from an ethnographic vignette. The story happens after the fall of socialism in 1989. Several villagers described to me the dissolution of the collective farm, in the village that I have studied for two years during my doctoral research. The CAP (*Cooperativa Agricolă de Producție* – the agricultural collective farm) was established more than a decade after the end of the WWII, by persuasion backed by psychological and physical coercion.¹ Virtually everyone in the village became a CAP member contributing all her land, except for a small plot allotted for subsistence agriculture. Despite generalised pilferage and lack of motivation on behalf of its members, the collective farm was a considerable advance in agricultural technique and productivity in comparison to pre-War levels.

When the end of communism removed the totalitarian state's control over social life in general and collective farms in particular, people faced the choice of handling the machinery and buildings accrued to the CAP. Rather than maintaining the stables and annexes as functional units, and either selling or using them as common goods, former collective members chose to divide them in a Kafka-meets-Kusturica manner. Each building was divided into two-meter sections, designed by chalk

marks, which were then distributed to particular members. The members physically dismantled their allotted section, down to adobe bricks and concrete slabs pried apart with crowbars, and carted the resulting pieces back home. Although most people had opposed collectivisation and its subsequent existence, villagers had just regained real (and not only nominal) ownership of the farm and its capital after the collapse of the totalitarian regime. Moreover, they were not unaware of the outstanding value of shares in an intact building, compared to a cartload of concrete fragments taken home to make a path to the chicken shed. Yet pieces they tore apart and used for trifling purposes.

This paper will propose a perspective aimed to explain this apparently irrational behaviour. On the face of it, the aforementioned situation may be described as, essentially, a “tragedy of the commons” (Hardin 1968).² But to make further sense of such absurd events, we must understand their anchorage in the profound distrust regarding the possibility of moral cooperation between unrelated villagers. People did not see possible an endeavour in which, in the absence of external enforcement, a group could collectively manage property without somebody gaining more (and conversely others getting less) than their fair share. They would not trust either managers or fellow villagers with the fate of their newly returned property. The precautionary decision was to gain something rather than nothing, or at least to get an equal and fair share to everyone else’s, despite the suboptimal result of generalised division. Such failure to cooperate, will be argued, is exemplary for a persistent state of distrust and moral fragmentation in a society such as Sateni.

The perspective I propose to understand such phenomena is that each villager in Sateni lives a dual social life. Each person engages in deep moral relationships with a particular set of persons, expressed in strong cooperative actions and symbolic representations of communion. However, outside this moral sphere she acts as a self-responsible agent in a world built on perennial competition and distrust.

This form of “moral parochialism” may explain why most cases of hostility and distrust are created by deep moral commitments, rather than wanton destructive inclinations. At the same time, many strong moral relationships depend upon the quasi-contractual necessity of consistent reciprocity. People may go in and out of moral contracts with other villagers. I will argue that an intersection of universal, evolved moral inclinations with local configurations of social institutions and ecology may explain this paradox as a prudent and stable cultural representation.

My argument, in a nutshell, is this: Apparently absurd failures of social coordination or cooperation and profoundly pessimistic representations of society may emerge not despite, but because people pursue deep moral commitments. Given certain social causal mechanisms, a zero-sum approach to social life may be the only moral thing to do. Moral relationships are social relationships conditional upon shared interests and fair behaviour.

In the next section, I will present a brief proposal of how distrust may be understood as resulting from a specific moral order. Further, I will discuss why the moral aspects of kinship may explain why kinship is constituted by both genealogy and reciprocity. Then, I will reflect upon the importance of reputation in the village I have studied. Reputation is both a matter of informing others of one's own, or third party's, cooperative inclinations, but also a way of communicating about the formidability of an actor in social interaction: from defensive capacities and revengeful attitudes to verbal prowess and intellectual skill. I will briefly describe the village tavern as the informational arena where these reputations are displayed, contested and culturally-reproduced, especially in the case of village men. The ethnographic material also assesses the culture of secrecy in village society, and its epistemic effect in collective action and individual morality. The stance of epistemic defence deployed by villagers creates a great deal of objective uncertainty, but also, paradoxically, ends up in wildly exaggerated (or entirely misled) representations about fellow villagers and strangers. The paper ends with a discussion over the interpretation of ethnographic material through the lens of classical theories of social order in the contractualist tradition.

Should We Trust the Trust? The Link between Trust, Morality, and Cooperation

This subtitle, and the fundamental question behind it, is largely inspired by Diego Gambetta's concluding remarks about the nature of trust in his influential book.³ One of his astute observations is that you cannot will trust, meaning that trust is not an outcome of a voluntary, intentional attitude. Trust is epiphenomenal, in other words it is the by-product of actions and beliefs directed at other ends. However, a sense of diminishing and loss of trust permeates the contemporary public sphere, with data provided by opinion polls and interpretation by political pundits.

Moreover, people themselves decry an absence of vital trust in everyday affairs, in Romania perhaps as much as anywhere else.

The sense of crisis of is largely informed by a distinction between two forms of trust, as "(...) researchers have usually resorted to the 'extremes in a continuum' metaphor: from 'thick' to 'thin' trust, from 'personalized' to 'generalized' interactions, from 'bonding' to 'bridging' social capital (Narayan, 1998; Putnam, 2000)".⁴ Especially the latter author, in a much celebrated analysis of American distribution of social capital, distinguishes between thick trust and thin trust, and emphasises the radical importance of the latter to create democratic, cooperative societies:

There is an important difference between honesty based on personal experience and honesty based on a general community norm — between trusting Max at the corner store because you've known him for years and trusting someone to whom you nodded for the first time at the coffee shop last week. Trust embedded in personal relations that are strong, frequent, and nested in wider networks is sometimes called "thick trust." On the other hand, a thinner trust in "the generalized other," like your new acquaintance from the coffee shop, also rests implicitly on some background of shared social networks and expectations of reciprocity. Thin trust is even more useful than thick trust, because it extends the radius of trust beyond the roster of people whom we can know personally. As the social fabric of a community becomes more threadbare, however, its effectiveness in transmitting and sustaining reputations declines, and its power to undergird norms of honesty, generalized reciprocity, and thin trust is enfeebled.⁵

In a way, Putnam's model is the rehashing of an old idea with an illustrious history. In classical sociology, this story appears in some way or another in all the major theories of modernity. For Tonnies, the transition from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft*, for Marx the replacement of feudalism by liberal capitalism (soon to be, in its turn, replaced by socialism), for Weber the rationalisation and individualisation of society (and the accompanying iron cages of bureaucracy), for Durkheim the transformation of mechanical solidarity to organic sociality in modern states. In each of these classical theories, there is a fundamental transformation in social relationships, which may be understood also as a change in the regime of trust. In their fairly deterministic manner, they talk about a previous stage of sociality in which trust is thick inside tight-knit communities, employed to demarcate the boundary between "us" and "them", living the long duration of kinship rather than the short

duration of the market contract, personalised rather than impersonal, based on ascribed status rather than achieved social identity. Even more importantly, each of these theoretical perspectives emphasises the role of life in a anonymous, urban, industrial society, where the old ties are lost and new ones are ephemeral and dispersed. What Putnam argues, on the basis of survey data, is a stagnation or even a diminishing of thin trust, that “chicken soup of social life” as Uslaner called it.

This image of a crisis of trust ought to be taken, nevertheless, with a grain of salt. In her Reith lecture, philosopher Onora O’Neill shows signs of skepticism with the ontological nature of trust as employed in social sciences:

How good is the evidence for this crisis of trust? A lot of the most systematic evidence for the UK can be found in public opinion polls and similar academic research. The pollsters ask carefully controlled cross-sections of the public whether they trust certain professions or office-holders. The questions aren’t easy to answer. Most of us would want to say that we trust some but not other professionals, some but not other office-holders, in some matters but not in others. (...) In answering the pollsters we suppress the complexity of our real judgements, smooth out the careful distinctions we draw between different individuals and institutions, and average our judgements about their trustworthiness in different activities.⁶

Although this appears to be a rather slight criticism of the UK situation, it inspires a wider problem with sociological studies of trust, that may very well apply to my Romanian case study. Pollsters and academic scholars collect and interpret answers to questions about trust in strangers, or trust in people of other ethnic groups, or trust in friends or relatives. It is a question that only begs another question: “trust to do what?”, one that is left unanswered. What are we to make of the fact that Romanians exhibit low levels of generalised trust, but relatively high levels of trust in family and friends?⁷ What are the structures of social interaction which underpin this difference? What are the practices in which trust is actually created, tested, and deployed? What is the structure of opportunities and expectations that informs the trust or distrust in other people?

In a more general manner of exploring social relationships, the distinctions between different types of trust may be illuminating at a descriptive level, but what about their causal nature? What is the difference

between the mechanisms of thick and thin trust? At a more empirical level, how does thick trust survive and apply to a modern state society whose official rules and laws are based upon a different kind of sociality?

I will start from the following premise: when we talk about trust, we are in fact talking about morality. What I mean is that trust is an epiphenomenon, or by-product of morality. People trust, or distrust, people according to the nature of the moral relationship between them, not the other way around. Subsequently, when we are talking about morality, we are talking about cooperation. The second of these premises rests upon the naturalistic theories of morality as an evolved disposition to engage in and monitor cooperative, mutualistic social interaction.⁸ Rather than a normative theory of morality, these theories treat morality as a psychological disposition which has evolved under Darwinian constraints of natural selection. However, these theories, and especially the Baumard-Andre-Sperber proposal, do not exclude the importance of culture as mental and public representation. In other words, our moral actions and representations are the product of the intersection between evolved dispositions and a structure of ecology, history, and cultural transmission. The same psychological inclinations may develop differently in a two societies with a different division of labour, with different theories of personhood, or different modes of production.

I want to argue that trust is an epistemic stance towards cooperation expressed in terms of morality. Thus, when people do not trust another person (or they trust her less), it means that they do not perceive the possibility of mutually-beneficial social interaction and social coordination with another person. This may be due either to the reputation of the other person as non-cooperator, or due to risk-averse choices under incomplete information, or due to the impossibility of coordinating over a stable cooperative solution to social dilemmas. In representation, both mental and public, the presence or the absence of trust are expressed as moral terms. I will argue that my ethnography of trust and distrust is compatible with a model of psychological inclinations as proposed by Baumard, Andre and Sperber in their model of mutualistic, contractarian morality underpinned by reputation and enlightened self-interest, with some I have mentioned above that the survey-approach to the study of trust was evoked with skepticism in relation to its method of collecting and interpreting data. In a way, the sociological distinction between generalised trust and personalised trust seems to have a theoretical affinity with a dichotomy in cooperation made by Bernard Williams between macro-motivations

and micro-motivations for cooperation.⁹ The former is a general motive to cooperate (which could be strictly egotistical or not), while the latter is comprised by a particular motive to cooperate (either a special event, or with a special person). The distinction may be compared, in a naturalistic reading, with the difference between evolved adaptations for cooperation and actual, real configurations. To employ the biological terminology, we are talking about the difference between genotype and phenotype, between the initial endowment and potential of the organism and its eventual development under specific ecological conditions.

Here, however, lies the limitation of survey methods in the study of trust. Probing questions cannot directly access that general motive for cooperation, the generalised inclination to trust or mistrust categories of people at the level of psychological mechanisms. Survey answers offer a glimpse into mental representations of trust and distrust, but with the added pretense of generality. I am not convinced that such evidence adequately represents anything else but a crude summation of different social phenomena and personal experiences. It is not that the image is wrong, since there is something both intuitively and empirically solid about the fact that aggregate levels of thin trust are much larger in Sweden than they are in Romania. But we need to unpack the causal mechanisms of cooperation which underlie the representations of trust. Such an endeavour requires a foray into the folk notions of personhood that are tapped by questions such as “how much do you trust your relatives”. If we want to understand what trust in relatives means, we need to understand why and how do people cooperate with relatives, and what exactly is a “kinship” relationship for a particular society such as the village of Sateni.

Distrust in the Village Society

Sateni is a village of about a thousand inhabitants in NE Romania, in the historical region of Moldova. I have spent there two years doing ethnographic research for my PhD thesis, acting as a construction apprentice, and then associating with various people in participant observation of the social life of the village. As far as I could tell from comparing it with neighbouring villages and many other Romanian villages that I know, there was nothing particular about Sateni, at least nothing that would suggest an anomalous structure of distrust and cooperation. In fact, Sateni could be said to be one of those “arbitrary locations” whose

particularities matter less than their capacity to be explored in search for more general theoretical considerations.¹⁰ Bearing in mind my aim to explore cross-cultural patterns, it is worth mentioning that my ethnography of the village of Sateni uncovered a society very much in line with portraits of peasant cultures across the world.

During my first lessons in social pedagogy, my Sateni associates taught me the importance of self-reliance, personalised kinship networks, generalised mistrust and particularist morality. In political science, Edward Banfield summarised “the ethos of amoral familism” in his famous quote, “maximize the material, short-run advantage of the nuclear family; assume that all others will do likewise”.¹¹ Banfield’s description of a South Italian locality was not received kindly in anthropology. Critics have attacked his inference that ethos causes underdevelopment,¹² the causal direction between values and social structure,¹³ his ethnocentric definition of family and morality,¹⁴ while his work was better received and developed by his political science colleagues.¹⁵ Nevertheless, the amount of attention given to a rather cursory analysis by a non-anthropologist is remarkable. There are even opinions that Banfield was making a correct diagnostic without providing a good explanation for South Italy and other similar societies,¹⁶ Moreover, I find myself in the awkward position of claiming that Sateni villagers tacitly and sometimes explicitly agree to principles superficially similar to “amoral familism”.

I believe that Banfield came across an important pattern of mental representations, but his approach was neither theoretically illuminating nor descriptively accurate. His critiques agree to the trivial point that people do not see themselves as morally obliged to everyone in the same way, but amoral familism is at most an epiphenomenon that hides underlying causal processes which Banfield had largely ignored.¹⁷ The problem lies in the relationship drawn by Banfield between individual perspectives and social mechanism. Although he overtly embraces a form of methodological individualism, he is actually making a holistic statement about Montegrano society. What is worse, he neither develops the theoretical affordances of the holist and individualist perspectives, nor does he correct their respective weaknesses.

An example of Banfield’s haste is that a universal postulate of amoral familism makes people appear individually irrational, in direct contradiction to the author’s own assumption. He describes Montegranesi as broadly rational, with the exception of their amoral familism ethos. If family welfare is centrally valuable, why are Montegranesi not improving

it in the long term? If short-term inclinations harm their benefits in the long term, it seems that Montegratesi don't even care for their families. Moreover, since Montegratesi are said to assume that everyone else is an amoral familist, what happens when this assumption is not met? Such fundamental questions cannot be answered by simply postulating moral principles – with essentialist undertones–, without paying attention to their practical employment in social life.

I consider that there is a non-trivial aspect to Banfield's work which was obscured by his botched attempt to link values with economic development: differences in moral reasoning are not only quantitative, but also qualitative. Simply put, an actor's perspective of morality is unique given a particular definition of who is included within the moral sphere and who is without. Thus, moral fragmentation can co-exist and be determined by a single moral orientation shared by everyone in a social locality rather than relative moral values. As Barth puts it, people can "live together in differently constructed worlds".¹⁸ I argue that a theoretically reliable form of methodological individualism must account for the intersection of these individual perspectives in practical action and intentional communication. A discussion of morality is thus possible only by paying attention to mechanisms which link folk representations with existing behaviour and its consequences, often unintended.

An alternative way of studying morality in social relationships is to understand opportunities in and constraints determining moral behaviour rather than deriving social configuration as amoral familism writ-large. The point I am trying to make is that similar moral commitments can be associated with different social relationships, whether amoral "familists" meet each other as butcher and baker, as Adam Smith envisaged the emergence of enlightened self-interest, or as reciprocal cattle rustlers.¹⁹ As Merton advised, causal chains between holistic social structures and individual reasoning and practice should be approached as social mechanisms described by empirically testable middle range theories.²⁰

The kind of worldview that Banfield suggests may be better understood as not so much an "ethos" but as a response to social dilemmas. Montegratesi, villagers in Sateni, as well as Swedish taxpayers or Nuer pastoralists, each face one form or another of collective problems, and each have some sort of institutionalised response. The problem is how to achieve cooperation at a social level when cheating or exploitation may provide sufficient individual incentives? In its simplest form, the problem comes as the Prisoner's Dilemma, where two individuals have certain

benefits if they cooperate, but each could gain more if he alone is cheating the other. In a perfectly rational at individual level – but suboptimal at social level, each chooses to defect and both are worse off.²¹ The Prisoner's Dilemma may be one of many kinds of collective problems that people face in real life. Many of these do not have cooperative solutions that are simple and easy to maintain. But many other do, and people can coordinate on certain choices for mutual benefit. In more than passing remark, the transition from non-cooperative equilibria to cooperative equilibrium may be what made us human in the first place, at cultural and psychological level as argued by Boyd and Richerson²² and respectively Tomasello.²³

In the case of peasants, social anthropology brought an inspiring example of collective dilemma and the cultural representation associated with it. George Foster argued that peasant society is governed by an “image of limited good”, based on his ethnographic work in Tzintzuntzan, Mexico – but said to apply to a more general category of social organisation which may be called “peasantry”.²⁴ In short, this worldview informs that all social life is based on a zero-sum game.²⁵ If one individual will have more of something, then someone else (may be more than one) must have less. There is no plus-value in such society, no social interaction which might leave both actors better off than how they were before the event. Much has been said about this perspective,²⁶ which – in a simplistic reading – may be seen as a retelling of Banfield's maxim (it is, but there is more than this). At the very least, it may be said to be the opposite of the ideology of capitalism and liberalism, where perpetual growth is possible if non-zero interaction develop.²⁷ The corollary to this worldview is that each social relationship carries with it the potential for exploitation and unfair division of good.

If everyone is exclusively pursuing narrow, egotistical interests, and the amount of good and welfare are limited in this world, what is the reasonable attitude for an individual in, say, Sateni? Their dominant inclination, in a nutshell, is to go it alone. It is not too much of an exaggeration to say that several dominant peasant values are emphatically non-cooperative. Even in relation to relatives and friends, villagers put above all characteristics such as independence and autarchy, with an emphasis on self-reliance and self-interest to rival the Robinson Crusoe of literature and many economic models. Thus, a villager achieves a status of esteemed householder (*bun gospodar*) by accumulating enough land, animals and tools to avoid any reliance upon other individuals, without the need to borrow or buy, nor the desire to lend or sale. From my experience of Sateni, I was puzzled

to see that being entirely independent and self-reliant (an ideal almost never realised) was put above other considerations (such as efficiency or interdependence).

To summarise briefly a complex cosmology, a householder who does not need others (to borrow something, to buy or to sell their labour power or their produce) avoids the perils of social interaction with people who are unreliable or who might prove even outright exploitative. This gives social life a subtle sense of “everyday siege”, where you are not sure who might be out to take advantage of you, either as direct coercion or indirectly through deception. After all, this is what zero-sum games are about, having more on the expense of others. Distrust, thus, is not a pathological state,²⁸ but a rational response to a state of epistemic uncertainty, competition for scarce material and symbolic resources, and a society centered around the family.

But notice that peasant societies, such as Sateni, are organised along two dimensions. On the one hand, you have the zero-sum-game approach that is described above. But this does not characterize relationships with the kith and the kin,²⁹ which are based on mutualism and community of feeling and action. Sateni villagers live a double life. In both deed and word, there is a solid (if negotiable) distinction between two social spheres. My ethnographic materials shows that folk models of society in Sateni carve social configurations into meaningful categories of persons between the axiom of individualism and the axiom of amity. Each individual in Sateni represents other people in his village as belonging to either of two domains of society. One sphere includes people committed to and respecting norms of mutual responsibility and reciprocity with Ego. The other sphere contains everyone else in a social organisation of private responsibility and individual autonomy. The social life of the village of Sateni, as I understand it, is an emergent phenomenon of everyone thinking and acting towards others according to this dualism.

However, I am not convinced that the causal relationship between trust and kith-and-kinship is unidirectional and constant. If we are to understand why people trust relatives and friends more than others, we need to understand how “relatives and friends” is a flexible and negotiated category of people, whose membership is the result of relatedness as well as mutualism. We could, thus, get closer to the idea of trust as barometer of cooperation.

Given and Made: The Flexibility of Kinship as a Cooperative Principle

For natural sciences, especially those concerned with the evolutionary perspective, the great enigma is not “why don’t people cooperate?” but “why do they cooperate, and why in such extensive manner”? Starting from a similar realist assumption, we could turn the tables on the structure of Sateni distrust, and ask ourselves how is trust and cooperation possible given such representations of individualism and zero-sum approach to life.

For a biologist,³⁰ cooperation has three roots in nature. The first is kin altruism towards individuals genetically related. The second is superior survival rate of social groups which cooperate in contrast with less-cooperative groups. The third is the relative competitive advantage accrued to cooperators in contrast with non-cooperators. Since I take the second to be relatively an insignificant factor in Sateni and other mono-ethnic villages,³¹ I will focus on the first and the third origins for morality, respectively kin altruism and mutualism. The former has a simple Darwinian explanation: helping others who share our genes becomes an indirect benefit for our gene-replication organisms.³² In the latter, we act morally because we expect other to act morally towards us. If we are allowed to chose our partners in social interaction, we will pick those who proved to act moral (and expect them to prefer us if we have a reputation for being cooperative).

Analytically, the two roots of cooperative inclinations have a distinct evolutionary origin, and should apply to different social domains – kinship, respectively a market of cooperation. But here is the rub: a lot of what anthropologists and the people they study call kinship, is actually a phenomenon which fuses the two origins of morality. The principles of evolution incline human beings (as well as any other gene-replicating organism) to favour other individuals whose genetic make-up is (at least partly) similar. In other words, by helping out your daughter, grandsons, or cousins and their grandsons, you indirectly favour the replication of their genetic material – and implicitly yours. Kin altruism should thus be a misnomer, since there is very little altruism involved.³³

But there is something else about kin that makes them special: they are the people with whom you interact most closely, people who know your life, and you know theirs. People with whom you share, you partake at each other’s moments and emotions. People with whom you are publicly associated, and reciprocally acknowledged. Taking a step back, a classical

debate in anthropology asked what is kinship really about?³⁴ On the one hand, we have claims that kinship is about the facts of procreation which establish genealogical relationships on natural basis but with different social arrangements. To summarise this position, kinship is about the facts of biology, no matter how skewed the interpretation might be in a particular culture.³⁵ On the other hand, other arguments are that kinship as such does not exist as a general human category, that each culture has its own mode of kinship which may involve biology (as in the American kinship system),³⁶ or not.³⁷ Rather than facts of nature, facts of kinship are cultural facts which build upon sharing each other's lives. Few phenomena fit this metaphor than cooperation with people who promote and are sensible towards each other's well-being.

From a genetic point of view, there is no wonder that kinsmen cooperate. As long as there is an increase in inclusive fitness, individuals should be inclined to act generously towards relatives, and they expect the same. But crosscultural evidence complicates the matter. It is true that genetic kin are often deemed as relatives, but not always, not all of them, and not exclusively. In a society with unilineal descent, one of your parent's blood relatives are not your relatives in a sociologically important way. Nurture and ritual may create kinship where there was none before. Phenomena as adoption or assisted reproduction further complicate the meaning of "kinship" even in modern societies. It seems the latter approach also has something going for itself.

I propose that both perspectives may be right in the same time if we conceive them not as exclusive modes of society, but as cultural attractors.³⁸ In this perspective, kinship-as-biology and kinship-as-mutuality may co-exist at the level of psychological inclinations and at the level of the evolution of social institutions. The inclination to favour kin and the inclination to choose interaction partners which are cooperative and reliable, may each contribute a push-or-pull impact upon how people think and act in relation to relatives – or better said, what is culturally considered as "relatives". Sateni kinship arrangements could serve as ethnographic material for my modest proposal. In the village I have studied, kinship is informed both by nature and morality. Kinsmen are the epitome of moral agents towards ego, and the main recipients of morality from ego. But genealogical kinship may be erased by a history of unrequited altruism. Moreover, a villager may create kinsmen from previously unrelated people – mainly through ritual kinship. Trusting and cooperating with kin may be more about shared experiences and mutual knowledge (building up to a

good management of reputation) than blood ties. Blood may be thicker than water, but mutuality and cooperation might be thicker than both.

Take the example of creating kin ties from scratch. Marriages and baptisms are events of “making kin” in the guise of spiritual kin, i.e. godparents and wedding sponsors. In Romanian, both categories have the same name: *nași*, m. *naș*, f. *nașă*, although the Orthodox Church sometimes uses an archaic term for wedding sponsors – *nuni*. In order to differentiate between them in utterances, one adds wedding or baptism godparents. Baptismal godparents and parents proper are in a relationship of *cumetrie*, while godchildren are *fini* to the godparents and their offspring. Ideally, the godparents should have a solid social and economic status without already being close relatives to the married couple. The selection of godparents is largely informed by the candidates’ social and financial standing, given the costs of ritual and gifts given to newlyweds and godchildren. Local politicians often figure as such ritual kin, due to their advantageous social position.

Nevertheless, a household looks for more than an instant fix for a single event. Entering into a relationship with godparents is a way of creating kinship outside the existing sphere of relatives. A shepherd justified his choice of another sheep-owner as godfather to his daughter thus: “we were such good friends and we got along so well, that we wanted to make ourselves *neamuri*”. But godparenthood is much more than dyadic friendship adorned with the garment of kinship. While a godparent starts out as a friend to one or both parents, spiritual kinship creates a bond between families. It is a family and not a person who baptises a child or confers spiritual parentage to the couple. This implies a multi-stranded relationship between two corporate groups with complex commitment. A spouse can reject a proposed godparent if his family is socially flawed, over and above the particular characteristics of the individual. Just as with marriage, godparenthood is a total fact of relatedness, involving more than the directly acting parties. Mutuality in cooperation is the key element institutionalized by the newly established kinship relationship.

But making kin is just one part of the pattern, because people may “lose” kin in just as regular fashion. By losing kin, I mean the gradual social isolation between actors, leading to mutual (or unilateral) dis-acknowledging of relatedness. The causes of rupture can be traced to the nitty-gritty of everyday life. First, the division of a larger piece of the estate could leave room for disagreement. A family could feel disadvantaged in receiving a smaller or poorer quality plot than another

inheriting family. Long-term conflicts started from boundary management. Some families complained that their relatives pinched a couple of furrows from their field during early ploughing. In other cases, fences between house plots were moved in secret, by a few centimetres each year. Perceived imbalance between dowries, endowments for grooms or parental gifts also led to clashes between siblings.

Potential for conflict may remain even beyond the partition of wealth. Animals could wreak havoc on the garden of a kin neighbour, and weeds spread from a relative's fallow plot. A large tree blocked out sunlight from a neighbour's tomatoes. Accusations of petty theft or damaging negligence also targeted the close relatives that surrounded one's property. If one's neighbours, at home and in the open field, were predominantly close relatives, if transfer of property through partible inheritance would pit relatives against relatives, the seeds of conflict had been structurally planted in genealogical kinship. The household-centred form of kinship makes it irrelevant if Ego is fighting with consanguineal or affinal kinsmen. His interests are identical with his family interests, and conflict can sever genealogical ties on either side, due to similar inheritance-related quarrels. As predicted by the idea of trust as barometer of morality and cooperation, it is fascinating to observe that the highest distrust is not attached to anonymous, distant villagers – but towards those that lost (or are in the process of losing) their attachment to Ego as relatives. Distrust beckons kin rupture.

Sometimes, the denial of relatedness can begin as a unilateral attempt to sever ties with unwanted kin. Mihai, my local apprentice, was approached by a dirty, drunk and stuttering herder with: "Hey, cousin, how are you?" Mihai ironically imitated his lisp, and sent him away. He then turned to me and whispered that, despite appearances, that pitiable fellow was indeed his second cousin. Some of Mihai's friends knew about the genealogical link, and repeatedly taunted Mihai to acknowledge and treat his "co-co-co-cousin" to a drink. Many villagers were angry with their better-off relatives who "didn't hold us as neamuri anymore" once they got rich. One of those who found relatives to be something of a burden was the woman rebuking her uncle's claims to be neam with her son, especially after her recent increase in status and wealth, due to migrant remittances from another son. To a prosperous and reputable villager, poor relatives can be a source of public embarrassment and annoyance, given their recurrent demands for assistance without plausible prospects of reciprocity. In the process of "unmaking" kin, the active party stops

visiting and inviting undesirable relatives, avoids interaction in everyday or ritual contexts and, finally, tacitly obscures or expressly denies relatedness.

As Maurice Bloch suggests,³⁹ this can be understood as the tactical use of a moral concept, only in a different direction. Rather than extending morality, a denial of kin recognition means withdrawing it. Things are not that simple, though. I asked people if brothers who no longer “hold each other as brothers” are still brothers, and the answer was positive.⁴⁰ Even if they killed each other, they would remain brothers no matter what. The facts of ‘brotherhood’ cannot be changed by individual agency, not even mutual misrecognition. The same reasoning applies to cousins, brother-in-laws and other collaterals, but seems to diminish the longer the genealogical tie and the stronger the reciprocal denial of relatedness. I take this evidence to speak for the presupposed effect of the cultural attractor of genetic kinship. Facts about biological relatedness remain relevant for other reasons except cooperation (for example, incest avoidance). But the effect of the cultural attraction (or better said cultural repulsion in this case) makes less relevant for human cognition those relatives with whom cooperation has proven difficult or costly. They may still figure as relatives in the semantic memory, but hardly in episodic memory.

Returning to the issue of trust, we may observe a further development of why we trust relatives. We could do it, on the one hand, because they share our blood and our genetic chances. As Fortes put it with wonderful precision:

There is a fiduciary element in amity. We do not have to love our kinfolk, but we expect to be able to trust in them in ways that are not automatically possible with non-kinfolk.⁴¹

But there is an implicit *caeteris paribus* in this axiom of amity. We could not trust our genetic kinfolk no matter how they acted in the past (what if they cheated us of our inheritance?), while we could very well trust our godfather in matters in which no blood relative could be expected to be trusted. A model of cultural attraction would suggest that folk theories of kinship would be informed both by mutualism and by genealogical considerations.

But there is a problem: in the absence (or the presence in insignificant manner) of biological kin ties, what would promote cooperation (and thus trust) in kin rather than any other villager? The answer, I believe, lies with the fact that social cooperation is largely built upon reputation.

If direct proof of a possible partner's cooperative disposition is absent, any information about previous behaviour (witnessed first-handedly or not) could provide relevant inputs to adjust one's cooperative stance. One thing that relatives in Sateni do is know a lot about each other. They visit each other a lot, they act in minor cooperative acts (even such banal events such as spinning yarn with little productive value). They even gossip a lot, perhaps even more about other relatives than about unrelated villagers. They exchange stories, news about distant kinfolk, opinions and interpretations of events, and what-not. As Sahllins would put it, they partake to each other's existence.

One ostensive effect of this pattern of interaction is a web of knowledge and reputation which doubles up and even constructs the web of kinship. People know more about relatives than about others, and they use it in order to engage in successfully cooperative actions. This fits right in with Baumard-Andre-Sperber's model of morality as fairness.⁴² Their argument, in a gist, is that humans have an evolved disposition for fairness in human cooperation, which helps them build a reputation as honest partners in a market of potential cooperators. Fairness, in their models, is the reaping of benefits (or the retribution of sanctions) equivalent to each partner's contribution to common goods. A reputation for fair collaboration (i.e. neither a sucker nor a predator) makes one a stable partner, everybody reaping the mutually-rewarding benefits of cooperation (rather than non-cooperation). Cheaters and exploiters either select themselves away, or change they ways in order to remain as potential cooperators.

We can see how this is played out in Sateni kinship. Stingy, greedy, deceiving kin are avoided, and very likely erased from the map of practical kin, at least in cooperative manners. With the rest, mutual knowledge vastly decreases transactional costs, with each party knowing when and how to negotiate, bargain over inputs and results, enter or leave a joint activity. Successful mutualism in the past guarantees a string of cooperative endeavours. Those relatives who manage to fuse biological relatedness with cooperative affinity remain dead on the centre of an individual's mental map of kinship.⁴³ However, there are more chances for a cousin to gently disappear from memory and action if social interaction with him is costly and unfair, than for a "fictive" but mutually-rewarding kin relationship.

If trust is representation and behaviour regarding the reputation and identity of other people, the sphere of kinship provides an individual with a ready-made map of cooperation. Some relatives might be better for this

project (e.g. women for helping out with funeral rituals), other relatives for something else (godparents from the city to help out with finding a job for their spiritual sons). The information is more easily accessible, the facts better understood, alternatives more clearly spelt out. Trust in kin appears, thus, as part inclusive fitness-oriented altruism, and part informational stability. We may contrast the cooperation-oriented mode of sociality with the kith and the kin, with the competition-oriented way of approaching village society, to have a better grasp on the trust-distrust dichotomy.

Secrecy and Reputation: The Communicative Sources of Trust and Distrust

By and large, social life in Sateni may be said to be informed by a “culture of secrecy”. Sateni villagers make strict considerations about the social distribution of knowledge, which makes information vital, yet hard to obtain. Basically, one should be cautious in public representations, carefully control the flow of information, but should conversely acquire as much evidence as possible from others. Within private spheres, amity creates a dense network of information which must be kept as much as possible “in” rather than “out”. The group which freely shares information (along with reciprocal prestations and gifts) has the family living within a united household in the centre, and further allows different levels of intimacy with kin, friends and neighbours. Outside this safe sphere, one has to cultivate an intensely controlled public image, from physical impression and participation to discussions, to the appearance of households, crops and graves.

The reversal of the attempt to minimize and control information disclosure is the education of attention⁴⁴ to material cues, unwittingly shared thoughts, bodily aspect and any other relevant tokens. Noticeable interests are the evolution of markets for agricultural products, local political activities, the state of affairs between kin, friends and neighbours, evaluations of wealth, opportunities for local business and external migration. As information is precious and restricted, one has to master the art of inference and deduction from little available signs. As often as not, erroneous inferences lead to botched interpretations and subsequent miscalculated behaviour. Runaway rumours might prove false, but escalation of gossip is bound to happen when there is no way of getting

to know the inside story. Often, the “truth” of the matter is besides the point, replaced by the management of reputation.

The separation between the ‘safe’ private spheres and closely-watched public spaces in this informational game of hide-and-seek is borne out in physical configuration of households. Spaces are divided between publicly visible areas such as front gardens, fences, roofs, façades, courtyards, and the intimate spaces of houses and barns. In general, impenetrable fences for courtyards and graves are interpreted as a sign of social standing in protecting one’s property physically and symbolically. The visible items’ appearance is keenly scrutinized by the inquisitive eyes of visitors, neighbours or passers-by, thus severely restricting individual behaviour. An example is the social taboo against working on Sundays or other holy days. Few invite gossip by overtly breaching it, yet it is an open secret that many people do work in indoor privacy, as long as the secret is made inaccessible. We may add that the fact that everyone is a hypocrite does not increase public trust.

The importance of this “culture of secrecy” appears forcefully in the explicit instructions given to children regarding the protection and management of information. From an early age, parents and elders teach children to never give away the secrets of the family. They should dodge inquiries from unrelated people or give misleading answers. Children are praised when they manage to avoid unwanted intrusions or scolded when they do not protect the integrity of the household. A child who speaks too much about what is happening at home is said to “*a da din casă*”, i.e. “give (knowledge) from the home”. Adults are aware that children have easy access to spaces which are not easily penetrated (such as other people’s courtyards) and often ask them to relate what they have seen in their daily wanderings. On the other hand, lies told by children to parents or consociates are severely punished. One of the most serious offences is a lie told to protect a stranger in the detriment of the child’s family. Therefore, a clear distinction is made between who should be treated to the truth and who does not have a right to truth due to potential harm. Arguably, this pedagogy paves the way for the attitudes that a proficient adult should present in a successful social life in Sateni, given the duality of the folk model of sociality. The proper inclination should be for epistemic cooperation inside the sphere of the kith and the kin, and epistemic competition outside it. Distrust appears, once again, as an epistemic stance backed by moral considerations.

The quintessential space for epistemic competition is, from my ethnographic perspective, the village tavern. This is where men collect information by observing patterns of social intercourse in the pub and use this evidence in everyday life when thinking about the elements of social groups or about the status of social relationships. Social hierarchies and individual rivalry are tested and reproduced in competitions of skill and power, ranging from shows of physical strength and gamesmanship when betting, to cunningness when deceiving. Everyone's alertness is geared to tracking patterns of individual agency and social affiliation, and men seem particularly vigilant towards those individuals who influence (or have the potential of influencing) their own situation. All these practices define a social setting in which men act, and are considered to act, as individuals primarily responsible for securing their welfare and position versus others. The stability of roles is underplayed in tavern life; today's friend can become the tomorrow's foe; the mayor is just another individual who has to prove his worth in front of the others; authority can be challenged and displaced; a set of moral contracts will change its configuration according to the individual's actions. Here, power is linked with practical performance. Authority does not come from any transcendental dimension but is created through interaction and the matching of individual fitness and group support, and of these two, only the former is beyond doubt.

There is something specific about coming to the village tavern to do something in particular – such as beating up a rival villager. It is not merely the act of violence, but the communication of the act. The individual engages in ostensive communication, making clear that he is communicating that he is communicating. Thus, much of what goes on in taverns may have originated as the intention to communicate something. From my observation of tavern life, I would insist upon the communication of “formidability”: how powerful really is this social actor i.e. how capable of doing real harm to others?⁴⁵

But why should a villager display costly signals about his formidability? He could use it to keep his political followers under his command, making costlier their defection or challenge. Or to advertise their capacity to protect their animals and their goods from potential intruders. Or just simply as a signal of one's capacity to hold one's own in any conflict. The latter may even be said to have a morally-sincere undertone, since one does not just defend himself, but also family, relatives or comrades if need be. The name “formidability” has a certain sounding which suggests physical prowess (and in Sateni, violence is part of the playing deck), but

it need not be. In a recent article,⁴⁶ I have described how villagers use the fool's errand to demonstrate in humiliating ways who can deceive others most proficiently. The use of lies and coordinated manipulation is socially legitimate in the tavern, and the painful outcomes are seen more as the victim's fault for being unprepared to avoid deception, than the perpetrator's.

Between them, the reputation for physical or psychological formidability manage to squeeze cooperation out of the public sphere. It is not that people advertise their inclination for anti-cooperative behaviour. In fact, they advertise quite the contrary when they act in defence of relatives and friends.⁴⁷ However, the situations that develop in taverns are mainly competitive, almost never cooperative. Games of cards, gin rummy, arm-wrestling, gambling, competitive lying, each and every one of them is a zero sum-game, in which the win of one comes at the price of the loss of another. The winner ranks higher than the loser in a hierarchy of prestige and status which guides everyday life. What these games do not communicate are the actor's competence and inclination in cooperative settings. Even more, an individual who is revengeful, not forgiving, cunning, powerful in muscle and skill, may divert the choice of cooperative partners to kinder actors even if he would have suited.⁴⁸ To sum up, the default epistemic stance towards the wider world is secrecy, and public displays advertise the individual skill of actors, rather than cooperative inclinations.

I believe there is, however, a particular social phenomenon which combines the two forms of reputation as cooperator and as competent individual. In Sateni, mortuary rituals follow a dual system of transcendent moral duties. On the one hand, rituals are aligned with the Christian ontology of universalism, equality before death and before divinity, and social openness towards the weak and the distant. But, underneath and ultimately prevailing in the long term, the rituals pursue another worldview, that of particularistic morality, of competitive individualism between unrelated villagers and of strong solidarity with the kith and the kin.

Two ethnographic examples are illustrative. At each funeral, the bereaved family hands out alms: the poor receive the generic ones, such as ritual cakes and towels. But the family, the friends, and the good neighbours receive specific, individually-nominated gifts under the same guise of alms. Older women pay special attention to wrapping and labelling these items well in advance of their (or their spouse's) death.

Furthermore, anyone can attend the ritual meal after the burial, but, with each cycle of commemoration, the circle gets smaller. After some time, the kith and the kin are the only ones invited to remember and pray for the dead. The sharing of spiritual participation and worldly goods is still present, but the sphere of people is clearly delimited. If we are to define that sphere, the best way would be to include all the people who would, in their turn, invite the dead man's relatives for their own funerary rituals.

In the end, the most salient image associated with the mortuary ritual is, again, a representation of trust. But, unlike the culture of secrecy which engulfs the other social interactions, here the event is ostensibly public. Funerary rituals are different from the flow of everyday life in that they are final and unrepeatable. One of the greatest moral anxieties of old people is whether their relatives will remember them, will perform the proper rituals, will take care of their graves, and, above all, to bury them. To be buried by the village instead of your relatives is perhaps the worst shame and fear in the village society. The "kindness of strangers" is something of a curse in matters of funeral arrangements. Once an individual has died, it is to her circle of consociates to perform according to expectations: for the closest ones to arrange the funeral, for the ones a bit further to help out or perhaps just to be there, showing to the village that they are carrying out their part in the logic of moral social relationships. And I say "showing" although the presence at a ritual is more than just signalling commitment: being there is what morality is about. Fulfilling the mortuary rituals is partaking to the cycle of reciprocity which extends far back in time and extends indefinitely into the future.⁴⁹ I could speculate even further, in seeing funerary rituals as credible displays of cooperation: even when the dead are not around to notice or to punish, yet the living keep their covenant for all village society to bear witness.

If moral commitments are one end of this transcendent plane, the other is distrust and separation. Because death can separate as well as unite, and expectations of mutuality may be confounded. Relatives may quarrel and may not speak to each other for years, they may compete in public and private affairs, they may stretch and bend the expectations of reciprocity. But not attending a funeral where one is expected is an index of moral separation and a signal of perennial distrust. However, attending the ritual for the dead may breathe new life into the social relationship with the living. Simply being there, seen by everyone, is the kind of communicative intention which may reinitiate trust and develop it further.

Death separates in one final way. The village graveyard is the village society writ-small. For example, you have the fenced compounds, this time protecting the inviolability of the grave. Their purpose is doubly symbolic: on the one hand, they are a marker of moral commitment. They show that the dead are not forgotten, that their relatives care for their graves, protecting them. The protection motif leads to the second symbol, one of separation this time. Graves without fences, which are abandoned or look abandoned, are taken over by other villagers, who will quickly occupy any good spot which is not fenced and properly signaled as being cared for by anyone. The fence is the response to the generalised distrust in the benevolence of others to leave undisturbed an unkempt grave. I left the image of the graveyard as a representative “limited good” in the economy of prestige and power in Sateni. It may be just a sideshow to other social realities that I do not describe here, such as political or business life, but the failure to find a collective arrangement to distribute and manage scarce resources is expressive of a wider cosmology. Fences criss-cross the graveyard, and threaten to engulf any patch of land left unclaimed. Paths are lost to generalised appropriation, trust extending only as far as the fence can reach.

The Moral Contracts and the Social Contract

There is nothing eternal about the dual state of trust and morality that I have described. In fact, there is evidence pointing to a flexible adjustment of cultural representation regarding trust and cooperation given a historical or ecological shift. For example, people claim that there was more trust during communism – the dreaded party and its operatives were a constant presence against which, by means of opposition, the villagers had reasons to be solidary and reliable. Elsewhere, in my doctoral thesis, I have explored how even current phenomena such as migration and division of labour are slowly changing the structure of trust versus distrust due to the shift in economic exchanges from subsistence and delayed reciprocity to commercial economy.

Taking even a longer perspective, we could notice the affinity between the dual mode of sociality that I have described in Sateni, as two forms of articulating trust and cooperation, with the classical notions of the social contract. Anglo-Saxon moral and political philosophy was earlier on concerned with the issue of trust. In one passage of *Leviathan*, distrust

seems to be foundational rationale for the existence not only of the state and absolute government, but also the very idea of justice itself.

Therefore before the names of just and unjust can have place, there must be some coercive power to compel men equally to the performance of their covenants, by the terror of some punishment greater than the benefit they expect by the breach of their covenant, and to make good that propriety which by mutual contract men acquire in recompense of the universal right they abandon: and such power there is none before the erection of a Commonwealth.⁵⁰

If you go beyond the simplistic reading that Hobbes is merely talking about absolutist monarchy, this may be said to be the reason of governance itself. Yet it need not be centralised, nor based around a state. It may even not require violent enforcement even though Hobbes famously thought that '(...) covenants, without the sword, are but words and of no strength to secure a man at all.'⁵¹ My ethnography, however, comes closer to another perspective:

There needs but a very little practice of the world, to make us perceive all these consequences and advantages. The shortest experience of society discovers them to every mortal; and when each individual perceives the same sense of interest in all his fellows, he immediately performs his part of any contract, as being assured, that they will not be wanting in theirs. All of them, by concert, enter into a scheme of actions, calculated for common benefit, and agree to be true to their word; nor is there any thing requisite to form this concert or convention, but that every one have a sense of interest in the faithful fulfilling of engagements, and express that sense to other members of the society. This immediately causes that interest to operate upon them; and interest is the first obligation to the performance of promises.⁵²

Hume offers us the possibility of morality without top-down governance. Rather, people are self-governed by their interests and enter into cooperative engagements for mutual benefit. Again, "force is not essentially different from any other motive of hope or fear, which may induce us to engage our word, and lay ourselves under any obligation". Yet there is something strikingly different between the motivation to cooperate in a small scale, rural, peasant society as Sateni, and the modern, large scale-society of the city and the state.

Perhaps the association between trust and different social orders in history follows a certain trend. Thick and thin trust are in an inverse relationship. Their respective levels are negatively correlated, meaning that thick trust will decrease when thin trust rises, and the other way around. A possible causal mechanism (perhaps not causal, but conjectural) is this: Thick trust is associated with personal bonds that can enter in conflict with universalist principles underlying thin trust. In other words, when your nephew (neighbour's son, brother-in-law's cousin, etc) and a stranger compete for a public job opening, as mayor you should give the position to the latter if she is better qualified. The restriction of the range of possibilities chips away layer after layer of thick trust, leaving it with a wide-ranging social layer of thin trust. But above all, the major societal transformation is also a change in morality. Yet this may come not as a change in trust, but a change in matters of cooperation. When economic and political life offer more than a zero-sum game, when the structure of everyday knowledge allows for consistent and accurate monitoring of social partners, the premises of mutualism are created and a rearrangement of trust and distrust is possible.

Until then, people will demarcate a significant sphere of society, and meet the rest with righteous distrust, and expect to be treated similarly. Moral distrust comes off as less of a pathological or a given and fixed inclination for villagers in Sateni and other small-scale, face-to-face (or better said back-to-back as Srinivas once wryly remarked about Indian villagers) communities. Moral distrust is the outcome of a moral contract with a specific sphere of individuals that is denied to the rest of the world which is seen with distrust and engaged with on a zero-sum basis. The social arrangement derived from this form of social particularism is not rigid, as moral parochialism, or at least the kind found in Sateni, constantly adjusts and redefined the boundaries of the "parochy". What remains stable is a persistent state of categorising people into moral and nonmoral social relationships, allotting them to epistemic spheres of trust and distrust, and building a social life in which no-one is purely a solitary individual, nor do all people find themselves inside the same moral domain. Rather, everyone navigates the murky waters where distrust is moral, and morality ever changing in process of pursuing the social contract.

NOTES

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3.2.5



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APPEAL TO CONFUCIANISM IN CHINESE POLITICAL DISCOURSE: HU JINTAO'S HUMAN-CENTERED RHETORIC

Abstract

Chinese political discourse has changed dramatically, in the last decade, as a result of China's story of economic success and continuous growth. At the same time, the Chinese leadership has become more and more aware that economic success alone can no longer be used as single means of legitimation. Successful economic policies did not translate into benefits for people from all social strata and increased the feeling of discontent. The paper analyzes attempts to recover and reinterpret Confucian moral values to the present political realities; it discusses the appropriation of Confucian values in the new political discourse of the Chinese elite to legitimize the continuation of the CCP's stay in power, focusing mainly on the ten-year period of Hu Jintao's government, between 2002 and 2012.

Keywords: Confucianism, Marxism, tradition, political discourse, legitimacy.

Introduction

After more than half a century of overt anti-traditional, and especially anti-Confucian rhetoric, we are witnessing today what seems to be a "comeback" of tradition on the political stage, as reflected in official political discourse. From the ever-present slogans such as "put the people first" (*yi ren wei ben*), "create a socialist harmonious society" (*goujian shehuizhuyi hexie shehui*), "increase moral training" (*jiaqiang daode xiuyang*), or the education campaigns in elementary schools based on the "Eight Honors and Eight Disgraces" (*ba rong, ba chi*), during Hu Jintao's period (2002-2012), which could be easily identified as having Confucian origins, to the less obvious, but nevertheless present employment of

traditional values in the Party discourse after Xi Jinping's coming to power, in 2012, Confucianism has become more and more common present in the elite discourse of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Looking at the new type of rhetoric, so different from the "traditional" Marxist rhetoric of class struggle and continuous revolution, one cannot help but wonder whether the Chinese Communist Party is slowly replacing Marxist ideology with Confucianism,¹ is trying to blend the two ideologies into what is called Sinicized Marxism (*Zhongguohua de Makesizhuyi*), or uses Confucian tradition only at the discursive level, in an attempt to legitimize its rule in the eyes of the people. One should point out from the very beginning that, while not denying that tradition is an important source of inspiration for the current political discourse, the CCP leaders seem to go to great lengths to avoid naming any specific traditional system of thought, in other words, they rarely acknowledge the Confucian origins of many of the concepts present in their discourse, using instead the much more general concept of "Chinese tradition".

Chinese cultural tradition is in no way restricted to Confucianism. Albeit important, Confucianism is just one of the elements that form what is perceived today as "Chinese culture". The term Confucianism itself is rather problematic since it is used in the Western world to refer to a system of thought, a religion, and even various local customs and social practices.² Nevertheless, the contribution Confucianism had to China's political life surpasses that of any other element composing the Chinese culture. As a system of thought that originated from Confucius's teachings, Confucianism was used to maintain order and social stability. As Jiang Qing pointed out, in moments of crisis, it was always Confucianism that was called to "clear up the mess, set up the enlightenment by rites and music, stabilize social life and thus proving the constructive nature of Confucianism" (Jiang, 1989:35). It is its very political application of Confucianism that ensured its survival for thousands of years.

The politicization and elevation of Confucianism to state ideology in Han (206 BC – 220 AD) ensured that, from that moment on, the continuous exposure to Confucian ideology and the emphasis on its core concepts of the 'Three Principles and Five Regulations' (*san gang wu chang*) made Confucianism part of what Li Zehou, quoted by Tu Wei-ming, called "the psychocultural construct" of the Chinese people (Tu, 1993:176). Internalized Confucianism became a system of reference for people's social interactions. No matter how much Confucianism changed over the years, the 'Three Principles' which advocated the need for the minister, son and

wife to be subordinated and loyal to the ruler, father and husband, and the 'Five Regulations' of *ren* (humanness), *yi* (righteousness), *li* (propriety), *zhi* (wisdom) and *xin* (trustfulness) were constantly used to judge an individual's behavior in the social and political space.

The aim of paper is to explore the usage of traditional values in the contemporary political discourse, focusing especially on the former CCP Secretary General Hu Jintao's speeches between 2002 and 2012.

Marxism or Confucianism?

For China, the 1980s did not mean only the beginning of a successful period of economic reforms, but also a period of cultural freedom when many of the topics that had been considered taboo could once again be publically addressed and debated. One of the most debated topics, especially in the intellectual circles, was that of tradition with special emphasis on the importance of Confucianism to Chinese culture. On the mainland, the debate on the role of Confucianism in shaping China and creating a Chinese identity started in early 1980s and developed rapidly, so that in 1986, the National Office for Philosophy and Social Science (*Quanguo zhexue shehui kexue bangongshi*) nominated research on New Confucianism as key-research and named professors Fang Keli and Li Jinquan in charge with a project funded under the seventh five-year plan, which was eventually extended for another five years, in 1992 (Hu, 2007).

The renewed interest in traditional culture became known as "*guoxue re*" (traditional learning fever), or "*ruxue re*" (Confucianism fever). According to Yang Sung-moo (2010), between 1978 and 2008, there were 204 events related to Confucius that were organized on the Chinese mainland alone, while Li Qiqian (1991) noted that new organizations dedicated to research of Confucian thought had been established on regular basis, listing the most important 15 organizations established between 1979 and 1990, with The China Confucius Foundation as the most important. Makeham (2008) mentions that Li listed only the most important organizations, leaving out some of the smaller one, and quotes Zhang Shuhua saying that by the beginning of the 21st century, the number of such organizations was close to one hundred. Makeham also identifies two main reasons behind the revival of Confucian studies on the Chinese mainland, in the 1980s: the interest in Confucian capitalism which could be used as an alternative model to Western modernity, and the fact that the debate on Confucianism

created the space for the bigger debate of the role of the Chinese tradition in creating the Chinese nation. The whole debate on the importance of tradition to the creation of a Chinese identity could not leave supporters of Marxism indifferent. Tu Wei-ming, while agreeing with Feng Youlan that "Confucianism helped inspire the self-consciousness of the Chinese people as a distinct cultural entity", also noted that it "opened the door for Marxist historians to explore the roots of Chinese culture in Confucian terms without directly confronting the issue of evaluating the role of Confucianism in modern China." (Tu, 1993:13-14).

One of the elements that made the revival of Confucian studies possible was people's loss of faith in Marxist ideology. While enjoying (or not) the success of the Reform and Opening policies, the Chinese people, and especially the Chinese youth, lost its faith in Marxist ideology of the Communist Party. After the beginning of the new century, continuous economic success, increasing contacts between China and the Western world and access to modern means of communication aggravated the ideological crisis faced by the Party, in spite of constant reminders that Marxism was still its core ideology.³ Although rarely admitted publicly, the loss in faith in Marxist ideology is one of the problems which concerns the Party⁴ and which led to increased calls by the Party officials to strengthen political education in schools.⁵

There are many reasons young Chinese stopped believing in Marxism. Besides Marxism's decrease in popularity at the international level and the growing presence in the public discourse of concepts such as "democracy", "freedom", "rights", etc., the Chinese need only look around and wonder how relevant the basic principles of "public property", "class struggle" still are. It is not only the common people who debate the meaning of Marxism; Yang Ruisen mentions that there are different points of view regarding the "two 30-year periods" even within the Party.

There are people who oppose the two 30-year periods and use the great achievements during the last 30 years of Reform and Opening to deny the first 30 years after the founding of the new China and call it a period of repeated mistakes by the Party, when certain Party leaders killed and fought one another for power and wealth, a period when the people lived miserable lives. There are also those who, when looking at the glorious results in the past 30 years of Reform and Opening, say that "the satellites flew up the sky, but the red flag fell to the ground; it is the moment when the Chinese socialism set foot on the evil road of revisionism (Yang, 2010:5).

There are also scholars who link the loss in faith to a so-called “national identity crisis” (*minzu rentong weiji*), thus echoing the discussions regarding the role of tradition in shaping Chinese identity from the 1980s. According to Liu Kui and Xu Jun (2010), one of the challenges brought by globalization was that “national identity” turned from a political concept based mainly on the idea of sovereign rights, into a cultural concept, where culture and religion played a much more important role than politics and this fueled discussions regarding the role of Marxism in contemporary Chinese society.

For the Party itself, the question is not whether Marxism still is its “core ideology”, but to what extent it can be sinicized (*Zhongguohua*). There has been a lot of discussion regarding the meaning of sinicized Marxism among the Party intellectuals, but if there is one element that draws consensus that is the fact that Marxism has been going through a continuous process of sinicization ever since it was first introduced in China. The concern of this paper is the role of tradition, mainly of Confucianism, in this process of sinicization. Needless to say, this is also a highly debated topic by the Marxist scholars. Chinese culture has always been considered as part of the “specific Chinese experience” (*Zhongguo juti shiji*) by all Chinese leaders starting with Mao Zedong. Therefore, one of the main answers by the Marxist scholars to those who call Marxism a “foreign ideology forced upon China” is that Western-born Marxism grew roots, bloomed and bore fruits in China just because it was nurtured by the rich soil of the Chinese culture, forming an organic bond with it. Moreover, calling Marxism a “foreign ideology” is wrong because, in spite of its birthplace, Marxism forms the theoretical base of the proletarian revolution and therefore it cannot be confined to a certain country or nation; the only element that makes a difference is class. The Marxist approach to the “outstanding traditional culture” is “absorb its best, reject the drags” (*qi qi jingua, qu qi zaopo*), without being very specific. Confucianism *per se* is rarely ever mentioned in the official political discourse; most of the times Marxist intellectuals underline the richness of the traditional culture which is composed from much more than Confucianism. “To identify traditional Chinese culture with Confucianism does not match the reality of the Chinese culture, where Daoism, Mohism or other schools also have many useful ideological resources, sometimes even more resourceful than Confucianism.” (Zhang, 2008:27).

Although, while agreeing with Makeham (2008) and Ai (2008) that there is still not enough proof that the Party actively supports Confucianism,

there is no denying that Confucianism is present in the official discourse of the Party's leaders, even if it is not openly named. What happens then, when Marxism meets Confucianism? The debate regarding the role of Confucianism in China's future development brings face to face the New Confucians who see China at crossroads and advocate the replacement of Marxism with Confucianism as a solution for social and political problems, and the Marxists who, facing an ideology crisis, try to incorporate elements of traditional culture, mainly Confucianism, into Marxist ideology to further sinicize it. Regardless of one's approach to Confucianism, and while repeatedly emphasizing that Chinese tradition cannot be reduced to Confucianism alone, everyone agrees that Confucianism was the dominant ideology in China for over two thousand years.

Nowadays, many Marxist scholars do not see Confucianism and Marxism as total opposites any longer and consider dialogue between the two possible. Zhang Shibao (2008) reckons that, in the last hundred years since Marxism entered China, the relation between the two ideologies went through three stages: opposition (*duikang*), before 1949, confrontation (*duizhi*), between 1949 to the 1980s, and dialogue, after the 1980s. How much should Confucianism be allowed to influence Marxism is a very complex matter debated within the Party. Occasional employment of Confucian concepts and values by the highest leaders of the Party makes virtually impossible to openly oppose Confucianism. One can criticize it, but cannot reject it totally. Most of the articles regarding the sinicization of Marxism touch upon the question of "Marxist Confucianization" (*Makesizhuyi rujiahua*), which the Marxists totally reject. Besides the ever-present argument that Confucianism is just one of the traditional schools of thought and that Confucianization would actually narrow Marxism down, there is also the question whether Confucianism is prepared to deal with present day situations. Scholars like Zhao Cunsheng (2009) or Yang Ruisen (2010) argue that, even if there is no denying that there are valuable elements in Confucianism, they still need to stand the test of modern times. According to Yang, the reason for which some scholars see a tendency in Marxism to become more Confucian is because they mix up the historical cultural inheritance with the origins of the basic theory behind China's socialist modernization drive.

What Marxist scholars oppose openly is not Confucianism, but Confucian scholars, mainly those from Mainland China, defined by Zhang Shibao as follows:

In order to determine whether some is a Mainland Confucian, the most important thing is to look at the way he deals with the relation between Confucianism and Marxism. This is the touchstone. If someone holds fast to his Confucian beliefs and opposes Marxism, then he is a Mainland Confucian; if one does not oppose Marxism, although he is very close to Confucianism, then we cannot say that he is a Mainland Confucian, he is merely a Confucian scholar (Zhang, 2008:26).

In a more recent article, Zhang Shibao becomes even more radical and labels the calls by Mainland Confucians to replace Marxism with Confucianism “a serious interference with the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics” (Zhang, 2010:60), an attempt to restore the old order, which should not be underestimated. The reason behind this attitude toward the Mainland Confucians is the fact that the latter advocate total replacement of Marxism with Confucianism. The most important representatives of this current of thought are Jiang Qing, Kang Xiaoguang and Chen Ming.

In 1989, Jiang Qing published in *Legein Monthly*, in Taiwan, an article entitled “The Practical Significance of the Revival of Confucianism on the Mainland and the Problems It Faces” (*Zhongguo dalu fuxing ruxue de xianshi yiyi ji qi mianlin de wenti*) in which he openly stated that:

In mainland China today, under the protection of state power, a foreign culture – Marxism-Leninism – has secured unique authority as the “national doctrine”. Yet this foreign culture can neither securely establish the national lifeblood of the Chinese nation, nor is it capable of giving expression to the national spirit of the Chinese nation (Jiang, 1989:32).⁶

Unlike Marxism, a foreign-born ideology, Confucianism is much more than an ideology; it embodies the essence of the Chinese culture, its vitality and its spirit.⁷ Jiang believes that the decline in morality on the Chinese mainland originates in the degradation of Confucian values, starting with the beginning of the 20th century, and therefore, reviving traditional culture is of vital importance. In “The True Spirit and True Values of Confucianism”, he clearly states that Chinese lost moral standards and social ethics collapsed due to the decline of the Confucian tradition in last century.

In the last one hundred years Chinese culture and Confucianism collapsed and the moral standards embodied by Confucianism no longer exist in society and in people’s hearts. The problem nowadays is not the morals are not respected, but that there are no more moral standards. The Chinese do not know what kind of behavior is moral behavior (Jiang, 2005).

Although he does not mention Marxism by name, Jiang Qing is not very subtle either, stating that the collapse of the moral standard exposed the Chinese heart to over fifty years of erosion (*fushi*) by political authority and twenty years of erosion by the wealth of the market economy. All these have brought China in such a serious condition that it has never experienced during its long history. One of the biggest problems of the Chinese political system today is “legitimacy vacancy” (*hefaxing quewei*). Confucianism can solve this problem, since ‘the kingly way’ (*wangdao*) can provide politics with “the triple legitimacy” (*san zhong hefaxing*). Jiang’s idea of triple legitimacy is a critique to the Western-style political system and mainly the Western concept of democracy. The triple legitimacy is given by the Heaven, the Earth and the people. The legitimacy of Heaven is transcendent sacred legitimacy, that of the Earth is the historic and cultural legitimacy, while the human legitimacy is given by the people’s will. On the other hand, the Western concept of democracy is based only on the “people’s sovereignty” and it lacks morality.

Democracy has a further serious problem: it lacks morality. In a democratic system, the authority and legitimacy of the government are determined by a formal will but not a substantive will of the people. They concern majority opinion with no respect for the quality of opinion. (Jiang, 2013:34)

The system proposed by Jiang Qing is a tri-cameral parliamentary system composed of The House of Confucian Scholars (*tong ru yuan*), the House of Common People (*shumin yuan*) and The House of National Essence (*guoti yuan*) whose chairman would be Confucius’s eldest direct descendent and the legislative body formed by descendants of sovereigns, great men of virtue and culture, as well as representatives of all religious cults in China.

Kang Xiaoguang (2004) also opposes Marxism, an alien ideology, and sees “re-sinization” (*zai Zhongguohua*) as the only viable solution for China’s future development. Starting from Harbermas’s theory that public sphere is the source of legitimacy, Kang emphasizes the relation between legitimacy and culture. First of all, legitimacy is an organic part of the cultural system, and secondly the only kind of legitimacy that can last is the one that has its roots in the Chinese culture, to which Marxism does not actually belong. Kang acknowledges the economic success brought by the Party’s policies, but doubts the Party’s ability to solve the current social problems, because both those who hold the political power and the rich lack humanness (*wei*

zheng bu ren, wei fu bu ren). The solution proposed by Kang is making Confucianism into a “state religion” (*guojiao*) and setting a “benevolent government” (*renzheng*), a concept that originates in Mencius, defined as “benevolent authoritarianism” (*renci de quanweizhuyi*), the governance of those who love the people, who have compassion.

Unlike Jiang, Kang Xiaoguang does not advocate in favor of a sudden replacement of Marxism with Confucianism, but proposes a gradual transition. The Four Books and Five Classics should be made compulsory reading in the Party schools, and all officials should be examined from the Confucian classics each time they want to be promoted. Slowly but surely, Confucianism would replace Marxism and the Communist Party would evolve into a community of Confucian scholars.

Chen Ming also agrees that Marxism should be replaced by Confucianism and calls for transforming Confucianism into a civil religion. He reckons that Mainland Confucians approach Confucianism as a civil religion and it is from this angle that they explain the relationship between it and society. One of the biggest problems identified by Chen is the “inadequate system” (*bu heli zhidu*), a system which needs to be rectified (*zhizhu zhengyi*) and this can be done only by Confucianism. Confucianism can answer many of the questions China faces today. Echoing Jiang Qing’s 1989 essay, Chen insists on the multi-dimensionality of Confucianism which holds the keys to designing, critiquing, analyzing and deconstructing the political system, and even to securing a peaceful existence. He argues that even the people at the top realized the necessity of a cultural revival and, therefore, the topics today shifted naturally from “communism” to “national revival” which acknowledges the importance of culture. The government should give up Marxist ideology because it lacks ethnic cultural identity (*minzu de wenhua rentong*) and cannot be seen as legitimate by the Chinese people.

Jiang Qing, Kang Xiaoguang and Chen Ming’s proposals are strongly opposed by the supporters of Marxism. Although many Marxist supporters also ceased to see Confucianism as a backward feudal ideology and accept its central role in the Chinese cultural system, they still insist that Confucianism should be approached from a Marxist perspective. Marxism can and needs to learn from Confucianism, but it cannot be replaced by it.

In an article published in 1989, Fang Keli⁸ identified New Confucianism as “the only ideology (*sixiang chaoliu*) that was likely to survive, had a certain theoretical creativity, quite a big influence and a rather long life”, besides Marxism. Again, in 2009, Fang mentioned that the encounter

between Marxist ideology and Confucianism not only could not be avoided, but Marxism needed to explore and critique the Confucian inheritance, including its moral values, human ideals and harmonious society concept, because it was directly related to the creation of Marxism with Chinese characteristics. Mou Zhongjian (2012) also points out that Confucianism is an integral part of sinicized Marxism. Starting from Mao Zedong and Liu Shaoqi's "On the Self-cultivation of a Communist Party Member" (*Lun gongchandangyuan de xiuyang*) and up to Hu Jintao's principle of "putting people first", Marxism kept alive the dialogue with Confucianism. If it wants to bring about a long period of peace and prosperity, Marxism needs to absorb Confucian wisdom regarding social management, moral education and the self-improvement, says Mou.

Responding to the critique that Marxism was an alien ideology, Fang Keli argued that although from the beginning of the 20th century, China had been exposed to numerous foreign ideologies (pragmatism, neo-realism, Neo-Kantianism, Neo-Hegelianism, logical positivism, etc.), none of them with the exception of Marxism was able to grow roots in the Chinese soil, because they did not incorporated elements of tradition.

None of Western systems of thought or ideologies that entered China have been able to grow roots in China, to spread and develop, unless they combined themselves with Chinese traditional thinking. (Fang, 1989:8)

The reason behind the success of Marxism in China was that it had become sinicized, and therefore part of the Chinese culture. As I have already shown, the ability of Marxism to incorporate elements of the local culture is a recurrent theme in the official discourse. Fang Keli, however, cautioned that although the study of tradition was important, tradition had to be approached critically, to identify and absorb the best elements fit for a modern society with a modern culture (*gu wei jin yong*), and reject "feudalist dregs" (*fengjianzhuyi zaopo*).

Marxist scholars consider that, even if there are many differences between Marxism and New Confucianism, such as the historical and cultural background on which they emerged, their historical tradition, their attitude toward tradition and Western knowledge (for example the understanding of that is "quintessence" and what are the "dregs"), or their approach and compromise regarding the relation between China and the West, there are also many common elements between the two ideologies, such as the appreciation of tradition, readiness to accept

what is outstanding in other cultures, the desire to “make the past serve the present, make what is foreign serve China” (*gu wei jin yong, yang wei Zhong yong*), the emphasis upon the relationship between people and society and people and nature, etc. However, this in no way makes Confucianism equal to Marxism.

True to his beliefs that Marxism is a strong and politically superior ideology, the only one that was capable to transform fundamentally the Chinese society, Fang Keli insists that the relation between the Marxism and Confucianism is that between mainstream ideology (*zhudao yishi*) and supporting ideology (*zhihuan yishi*). Research and study of Confucianism cannot be divorced from Marxism and should be approached only from the Marxist point of view of class-society and class struggle, because Confucianism was born in society which was marked by class struggle. Confucianism must be placed and studied in relation with the ideological struggle existing in contemporary Chinese society.

Chen Xianda (2011) also supports Fang’s view and emphasizes repeatedly that Marxism not only must, but it also can play the role of guiding principle in this dialogue. And it not because Marxism is the core ideology of the ruling Communist party, but because it has got a scientific view of the world and it has scientific methodology. It is the practicality and scientific nature of Marxism that allows it to take the upper hand. The scientific nature of Marxism is one of the main arguments of the Marxist intellectuals against the replacement of Marxism with Confucianism. Marxism can employ scientific theory to critique and choose the suitable elements of Confucianism, to give Confucianism a scientific trajectory in order to make it suitable for the present society.

Fang also answered the question whether socialism with Chinese characteristics could be called, or become “Confucian socialism” (*rujia shehuizhuyi*). The answer he gave was negative, saying that one could not simply put the equal sign between Chinese culture and Confucianism, let alone that this understanding of the Chinese socialism would ignore the importance of the May Fourth Movement and of all the events thereafter, until the establishment of the People’s Republic. Chen Xueming (2012) also rejected the idea of Marxist Confucianization. He answered those who considered that the success China accomplished after Mao’s death was due to a group of leaders who understood the importance of traditional culture, and especially of Confucianism, by stressing that the force that stood behind all the changes in the last 30 years was not Confucian in nature, but Marxist. While it cannot be denied that traditional culture did

play an important role in China's recent development, it was still Marxism that played the most important role. Chen Lai, professor of philosophy at Tsinghua University in Beijing, echoed Fang and Chen's positions, but took a more nuanced approach:

Marxism is the basic theory that guides our cause and Confucianism is the main force of the Chinese traditional culture. If we want to put into practice socialism with Chinese characteristics, we must pay attention to the relation between the two. If we only pay attention to the Chinese tradition culture with Confucianism at its core, and we do not stick to Marxism, than our socialist practice will lose its guiding ideology. But if we stick only to the Marxist classic theory and we do not research traditional Chinese culture with Confucianism as its core, than our socialism will lose its Chinese characteristics. (Chen, 2012)

The conclusion reached by most of the Marxist scholars is that it is impossible for Confucianism to regain its lost central position. Previous events proved that ignoring it was also a huge mistake, because Confucianism penetrated the Chinese consciousness and shaped each and every individual. Marxism is willing to engage in dialogue with Confucianism and learn from it, but in order for Confucianism to survive, it needs to give up its claim to supremacy and accept to be an important element of a multicultural 21st century.

Traditional Values in Hu Jintao's Discourse

The importance of cultural development has been repeatedly emphasized in the discourse of the Party elite. All the reports to the Party congresses in 1992, 1997, 2002 and 2012 stress the necessity of developing "socialist culture", or "socialist culture and spiritual civilization", under the guidance of Marxism, but they differ in the approach of the Party's general secretaries to traditional culture. If in 1992 and 1997, the then CCP General Secretary Jiang Zemin did not mention traditional culture in his reports at the Party congresses, talking instead of "the fine traditions of the Chinese nation" (*jicheng he fayang Zhonghua minzu youliang de sixiang wenhua chuantong*) and the need to carry on "the fine cultural traditions handed down from history" (*jicheng lishi wenhua youxiu chuantong*), in the 2002 report, he acknowledged the power of culture as "deeply rooted in the vitality, creativity and cohesion of a nation". By 2002, Marxism had already ceased to be "the unifying ideology"; the only

deeply rooted culture was the traditional one, albeit the Party insistence that Marxism was the successor of this culture and thus, Jiang's call for the Party members to understand the huge importance of cultural development can be interpreted as a covert urge to study traditional culture.

Jiang Zemin's successor, Hu Jintao was much more direct than Jiang and in the 2007 report at the 17th Congress, he identified culture as an element of national cohesion and national strength. Hu made a separate point in mentioning that the Party needed to "promote Chinese culture and build the common spiritual home for the Chinese nation", because "Chinese culture has been an unflinching driving force for the Chinese nation to keep its unity and make progress from generation to generation." The importance of culture as a unifying factor and the role of the Party as the inheritor of the traditional culture was also stressed in the "Decision of the CPC Central Committee on Major Issues Pertaining To Deepening Reforms of the Cultural System and Promoting the Great Development and Flourishing of Socialist Culture", passed in October 2011, at the Sixth Plenary Session of the Seventeenth CPC Central Committee. The "Decision" states that "traditional culture embodies the national spirit of self-improvement" and "it is a solid foundation for developing advanced socialist culture and an important pillar for building a common spiritual home of the Chinese nation". Nowhere in the "Decision" is Confucianism mentioned and reading the "Decision" from a Confucian perspective has been criticized by Marxist scholars. While they cannot deny that, for example, the core value system of honors (*rong*) and disgraces (*chi*) proposed in this document was influenced by the rich traditional culture (and once again, Confucianism is not mentioned by name), they insist that the system remains Marxist in nature because it was born out of the integration of the characteristics of the present times with the practical necessities and it embodies Marxist historical materialism and scientific development. Confucianism is named only when a clear line needs to be drawn between the Party's theoretical framework and tradition: the type of values mentioned in the "Decision" should not be over-read as a "cultural turn", and definitely not as Confucianization. What defenders of Marxism seem to overlook is that the very concept of shame (or "disgrace" (*chi*), as preferred in the official documents) is Confucian and it is related to the Confucian value of righteousness (*yi*) - just another Confucian value employed in the current political discourse. Just as Van Norden (2004) points out, shame is a characteristic of righteousness, and neither Mohists, who were not interested in self-cultivation, nor Zhuang Zi, who

was not interested in the individual's life as part of a social group, attached too much importance to it. The value system of honors and disgraces underlines a person's role within a social group, the "shame" and "honor" are defined within the social context; they are supposed to tell people what kind of behavior is seen as acceptable and how they can become (or remain) good citizens. The ability to recognize one's actions as shameful is an important step toward becoming a righteous person.

As I have already mentioned, Confucianism is rarely (if ever) mentioned by name in the elite discourse. However, after Hu's access to power, in 2002, slogans such as "putting people first" (*yi ren wei ben*), "governance for the people" (*zhi zheng wei min*), "building the Party for the public" (*li dang wei gong*) or "building a harmonious society" (*jianshe hexie shehui*) flooded "the market" and it is not difficult to read them as Confucian, mainly because of the people-centered rhetoric which can be found in most of the Confucian classics.

In the "Song of Five Sons", in *The Book of History*, it is stated that "It was the lesson of our great ancestor: The people should be cherished, and not looked down upon. The people are the root of a country; if the root is firm, the country is tranquil." (*Shangshu · Xiashu · Wu zi zhi ge*). Xun Zi went further and said: "The sovereign is like the boat and the people are like the water; the water carries the boat, but it can also sink the boat" (*Xunzi · Wang Zhi*). On the same key, Mencius made a hierarchy of the most important elements in a country: "The people are the most important, followed by the gods of soil and grain, with the sovereign as the lightest" (*Mengzi · Jin xin xia*) and "The three most important treasures of a lord are the land, the people and the government affairs." (*Mengzi · Jin xin xia*). As far as the government was concerned, Mencius stated that if the sovereign "puts in practice a benevolent government (*ren zheng*), people will love him more than they love themselves" (*Mengzi · Liang Hui wang xia*) and that "the sovereign that does not put in practice benevolent governance cannot bring peace under heaven" (*Mengzi · Liu lou shang*). Benevolent government is that type of government that focuses on people's needs; the role of the sovereign's main concern is the people and their welfare. The same idea lies at the base of Hu Jintao's concept of scientific development and it is reflected by its core principle of "putting people first". The reason for all the actions and policies proposed by the Party should be the welfare of the people. By insisting that the driving force behind the reforms is the welfare of the people, the Party works with the people for the people, Hu Jintao tried to present his governance as "benevolent". Hu's repeated

remarks, in the reports at the 17th and 18th congresses, or the Address at the CCP's 90th Anniversary, that it was not the people who served the Party, but the Party that represented and worked for the people remind of Xun Zi's statement that "The Heaven did not give birth to the people for the sovereign, but established the sovereign for the people". (*Xunzi · Da Lüe*). The same image of benevolent governance also transpires from Hu Jintao's Premier Wen Jiabao's understanding of Confucian culture. While seeking opinions on the annual government report, in 2010, Wen reportedly pointed out that the most important Confucian value was *ren* which he defined as "love for the people" (*ren zhe ai ren*), followed by compassion (*shan*), harmony (*he*), self-strengthening (*gangjian ziqiang*) and the concept of "putting people first" (*renben sixiang*).⁹ All these are values that need to be reflected into the governance. Those in power need to have *ren*, to love the people, to form a moral government that is *shan*, benevolent, constantly improve themselves morally, and treasure harmony more than anything else. By taking the recent economic crisis as an example, which Wen blamed on moral decay, he also warned that the price of failing to implement benevolent governance was primarily paid by the people and that, in turn, endangered those in power.

The emphasis on the individual ethics is also Confucian and so are the values that the Party tries to inoculate: loyalty (*zhong*), respect (*xiao*), love (*ai*) and righteousness (*yi*). In both his reports to the 17th and 18th Party congresses, Hu repeatedly underlined that the main duty of the Party and party members was that of serve the people wholeheartedly – *wei renmin fuwu, fuwu qunzhong*, build a party which served the interest of the people and governed for the people, *li dang wei gong, zhi zheng wei min*. If people are happy, the Party can be happy. There is no doubt that Hu was very much aware that "winning the hearts of the people is gaining the kingdom, while losing the hearts of the people is losing the kingdom" (*Li Ji · Da Xue*). The acknowledgement that economic success could not guarantee social stability, the insistence that cadres should work diligently, be upright and just, full of vitality and continuously increase their human quality (*suzhi*), and the warning that corruption and abuse of power could trigger the death of the Party, reminds of the fragment in *The Great Learning* where it is stated that "in a country, prosperity does not come from profit, but from righteousness" (*Li Ji · Da Xue*). The same ideas are present in the speech delivered at the Party's 90th Anniversary, where Hu once again reminded the party cadres that they worked for the people, could not make use of their power to seek private gains and

should conduct themselves with dignity so that they became models for the people (yet another Confucian concept – that of a moral model). Integrity, or morals, (*de*) is a cadre's most important asset and it is their integrity that dictates their every action: they morally improve themselves (*yi de xiu shen*), show integrity when serving the masses (*yi de fu zhong*), are moral example (*yi de ling cai*) and use morals to enhance competence (*yi de run cai*). The repetitive usage of the concept of *de* (integrity/morals) does not only remind of Jiang Zeming's urge to "combine governing the country according to the law with governing the country according to virtue" (Jiang, 2001), but also the fragment in the *Analects* where Confucius stated that: "He who exercises government by means of his virtue may be compared to the north polar star." (*Analects*· *Wei zheng*).

The over and again emphasis upon the cadres' moral standards is directly related to the Party's survival. *Zuozhuan* talks about "dying without decaying" (*si er bu xiu*), which is possible if three conditions are met: achieve virtue, render meritorious service and establish [wise] speech (*li de, li gong, li yan*) (*Zuozhuan* · *Xianggong ershi nian*). The three conditions were further explained in *Chunqiu Zuozhuan Zhengyi*, as "achieving virtue means coming up with straight methods and providing relief to those in need; rendering meritorious service is eliminating hardship and providing aid in time; establish [wise] speech means that one's words express what one wants and the reason is worth transmitting."¹⁰ What the Party tries hardly to avoid is *si*, "death", therefore it is not concerned with its image after losing power. However, there is a striking resemblance between the conditions listed in *Zuozhuan* and what is asked from the Party cadres. In other words, by cultivating those elements that can project an image of a non-decadent party, it helps the Party remain in power. Therefore, the cadres must come up with straightforward solutions so that the masses benefit from their policies, must help those in need and must make sure that their deeds match their words, that they speak the language of the people.

The aim of Hu Jintao's politics is the creation of a harmonious society where people can live and work in peace and contentment (*renmin anju leye*). In the "Speech at Special Discussion Class for Leading Cadres at the Provincial and Ministerial Levels to Study Issue about Building a Harmonious Socialist Society" delivered in 2005, Hu acknowledged that the idea of a harmonious society was not new, but it a recurrent topic of Confucian philosophy. Confucius himself had mentioned that the most important thing was harmony (*yi he wei gui*) (*Analects*· *Xue er*), while *The Book of Rites* contained a clear description of how "the world of

great unity" (*da tong*) should be: "When the great unity was established, everything under heaven belonged to everybody. People were chosen according to their virtues and tales, their words were trustworthy and they cultivated harmony" (*Li Ji · Li Yun*). Hu also quoted *The Book of Great Unity* by Kang Youwei, in which "people loved each other like family, every one was equal and every thing was commonly shared" (Hu, 2005). Hu never denied that his theory of a harmonious society drew upon the existing Confucian ideal of harmony, but neither did he make a clear distinction between the Confucian ideal and the one he proposed. Instead, he said that the reason why the Confucian ideal could never become true was the environment into which it had been born – a society with class oppression and class exploitation.

Slogans employed by Hu Jintao can also be said to reflect the ideological changes inside the Party. The Party Hu inherited from Jiang Zemin was different from that of Mao Zedong's and even Deng Xiaoping's. For one, he had inherited a "party for everybody" (*quanmindang*), a party that did not represent only the workers, peasants and soldiers, but also the "red capitalists", in an age when most of the people ceased to believe in Marxism any longer. Economic success continued, but the leadership realized that it might not be enough to keep them in power, with enthusiasm for reforms worn out, economic success not necessarily bringing an increase of the people's standard of living and the gap between rich and poor growing.¹¹ Willy Lam shows that a few years before Hu Jintao took power, the Central Party School and Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) had begun studying the reasons behind the long-time ruling parties, such as People's Action Party in Singapore. Apparently, the conclusion they reached was that democracy was not necessarily the element that kept the parties in power, more important was the ability of these parties to convince the people that it was for them that the parties struggled. Therefore, new slogans were designed to show the ordinary Chinese that they matter, that the new echelon at the top considered first their needs and everything else came after. However, the slogans convey a confusing message. On one hand, they are of Confucian inspiration. As shown above, Hu Jintao himself acknowledged that "harmonious society" and "putting people first" were recurrent themes in the traditional Confucian thought. At the same time, there was no denying that "Confucius was back in style", as proven by movies, TV series, books, the Olympic Games, celebrations and the (timid) return of Confucian classics in schools. On the other hand, Marxist scholars repeatedly denied the Confucianization of the Party and

emphasized that Marxism still is and will remain the core ideology. The so-called “Confucian slogans” were, in fact, the result of the integration of Marxist basic values with Chinese practice (whatever that meant).

Appeal to Confucianism as Means of Legitimation

In his article “Performance Legitimacy and China’s Political Adaptation Strategy”, Zhu Yuchao noted that “the Chinese government has to admit that since the time of revolution and national reconstruction has long passed, the government’s main job now is to promote economic growth, strengthen national power and serve the needs of society and people” (Zhu, 2011:126). Starting with Jiang Zemin’s rule, the transformation the Communist Party went through is the transformation from a party of the revolutionary masses to a party of all the people, so that it can also embrace the better educated business-oriented urban middle class and the “red capitalists” and the shift (at least at the discursive level) toward a more people-oriented approach seem to suggest that the Party has already become aware of this fact. Hu Jintao made it very clear that there was no chance China would turn into a Western-style democracy. In the “Report at the 18th Congress”, Hu Jintao called on cadres to “hold high the banner of socialism with Chinese characteristics” and rejected “both the old and rigid closed-door policy and any attempt to abandon socialism and take an erroneous path”.

The urge to transform China into a moderate well-off society (*xiaokang shehui*) implies that the Party will continue its economic program; at the same time it needs the trust of the people in order to remain in power. The emphasis on the importance of the traditional culture to the sinicization of Marxism, the formulaic use of traditional values and Confucian-inspired slogans show that the Party needed to let go the narrative of leading China towards a strong modern state through economic success and come up with a new type of discourse, one that could win back the hearts of the people. It needed a discourse that could face the increasing social unrest, the calls for political participation by the urban middle class, still timid but rising nevertheless, endemic corruption, the new type of social media harder to control, which provides a relatively free space of debate, if not dissidence, people’s mistrust that the Party’s could solve the existing social problems.

The new type of discourse that emerged conserved all the traditional legitimizing elements - historical legitimation (the Party embodies the spirit

of the May 4th Movement, it is the continuator of the struggle for a rich and powerful China, it is the defender of the integrity and sovereignty of the country, with many of its members sacrificing their lives in the War of Resistance), ideological legitimation (the fight for freedom with references to Mao Zedong, the narratives of victimhood and victor employed during Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin's rules, although the emphasis on Marxist ideology is kept to a minimum) and the economic legitimation. However, it also started appealing much more to traditional culture than ever before. Although Marxism and Confucianism are very much different, the Party ceased to condemn Confucianism as a feudal backward ideology and accepted the fact that it could offer a solution for reaching to the people and thus remaining in power.

I do not consider that the employment of Confucian values in the official discourse can be viewed as Confucianization of the Communist Party. At least, not yet. The Party cannot give up Marxist ideology because that would mean the end of the Party as it is today. Instead, the leaders make use of Confucian concepts because these concepts form a language everybody in China understands. Confucianism is part of Chinese identity. It is so deeply rooted into the collective consciousness that in spite of the anti-Confucian campaigns during the May 4th Movement and the Mao Zedong periods, it could never be eradicated. Confucian thinkers and also CCP leaders nowadays distinguish between political Confucianism and popular Confucianism, where popular Confucianism is seen as consisting of beliefs and social practices employed at the very base of the society. What the anti-Confucian campaigns succeeded was eliminating political Confucianism, but not popular Confucianism, which the Party uses in its current discourse.¹² By incorporating Confucian elements in its discourse, the Party tries to create a sense of unity among the people, an imagined community (as Anderson would call it) defined not ethnically, but culturally, gathered around the caring parent-like Party (*fumu dang*). By re-centering its discourse on the people, the Party has a double aim. First is that of having its own cadres to acknowledge that their sole duty is to work for the people, and secondly is to have the people accept the Party as the benevolent ruler.

The Confucianism influenced rhetoric aims to unite the people around the Party, which is confounded with the state itself - *mei you gongchandang, mei you xin Zhongguo* (without the Communist Party there would be no new China), or *wangdang wangguo* (the end of the Party the end of the country), by using common traditional values and

exploiting collective memories that bring forward the image of a united family. The reason behind the rhetoric shift is the search for legitimacy. It is a discourse that does not operate with us-them opposites, but appeals to the collective consciousness and reinforces the image of the Party of the people by showing that the values of the Party and those of the common people are the same. The Party's efforts and goals are no different from those of a head of a family working to keep one's family happy. And like in any other family, the head of the family is not immune to error, but since it can accept the responsibility for its mistakes and does its best to correct them, the Party remains "one of them". Guo Baogang summed up this type of legitimation as:

[A] ruler, who has the mandate of Heaven, possesses the quality of virtue, shows respect to his subjects, follows the rules of the ancestors, and tries to win the hearts and minds of the people, will be considered a just and legitimate one. A just ruler will strengthen his legitimacy by promoting policies that will benefit the people, not himself, by ensuring relatively equal distribution of these benefits, and by allowing the people to do what they do the best. This unique cognitive model has influenced every government and its rulers throughout Chinese history. (Guo, 2003:1)

Thus, in a case of corruption, the people would not blame the Party as a whole, because the values that stay at the heart of it are right, but would condemn an individual who went astray and let him/herself get corrupted by profit. In a way, the people entrusted the Party with "the mandate" of bringing peace, prosperity and promoting justice, but the Party can meet their expectations only as long as the people remain loyal to it.

Tradition in general, and Confucianism in special, is instrumentally used by the Party to get moral legitimation, in a period when historical, ideological and economic legitimations are not enough any longer. It tries to answer those who doubt the right of the Party to rule by convincing them that even if not directly elected, the Party does not form a separate entity from the people and it has the "mandate of the people" (*min ming*) to govern. However, one must point out that, even if today sinicized Marxism is still the "grammar" and Confucianism only the "vocabulary",¹³ there is no way in saying whether over time, the repeated usage of Confucian vocabulary that carries within thousand of years of tradition does not end by changing the grammatical rules.

NOTES

- ¹ And thus proving Daniel Bell's prevision true: "It is not entirely fanciful to surmise that the Chinese Communist Party will be relabeled the Chinese Confucian Party in the next couple of decades." (Bell, 2008:27).
- ² In spite of all these, I have opted not to use the Chinese transliterations of *ruxue*, *rujia*, or even *rujiao* (which is more commonly understood as Confucian religion), as it would have been difficult for non-Chinese speakers to follow. The distinction between Confucianism as a system of thought and Confucianism as religion was made only where it was absolutely necessary. Unless otherwise specified, Confucianism refers to a system of thought.
- ³ See, for example, all the reports at the Party congresses, during the last two decades.
- ⁴ Money worshipping and the extreme egoism brought by the market economy, Western liberalism propaganda, uneven social distribution and economic polarization, corruption, food safety and moral decline are identified by Chen Xianda (2011) as the main challenges Marxism needs to face if it wants to keep its present status.
- ⁵ See the "Zhonggong Zhongyang Guowuyuan guanyu jin yi bu jiaqiang he gajin daxuesheng sixiang zhengzhi jiaoyu de yijian" (The Central Committee of the Party and the State Council's Ideas on the Further Enforcement and Improvement of Ideological and Political Education to College and University Students), (2014) available at music.njnu.edu.cn/upload/20100302102726490.doc
- ⁶ Translated in Makeham, 2008:262.
- ⁷ As a matter of fact, Jiang Qing makes a very clear distinction between *ruxue* as a school of thought and *rujiao*, as Confucian religion. According to Jiang, the school of thought is that type of Confucianism before it became the official learning of the Palace (*wanggongxue*). Once it was elevated to the status of "official learning" and used as governing principle for the people, society and politics it became much more than a school of thought, it became Confucian (civil) religion. In other words, *ruxue* is to *rujiao* what Christian theology is to Christianity. Most of the times, *rujiao* is the type of Confucianism Jiang Qing talks about. See Jiang Qing (2006).
- ⁸ Chen Ming calls Fang Keli a "red Confucian" (*hong rujia*). See Chen Ming (2012).
- ⁹ Wen Jiabao quoted by the Xinhua News Agency, 2010.
- ¹⁰ Fragment from *Chunqiu Zuozhuan Zhengyi* available at <http://baike.baidu.com/view/422664.htm>
- ¹¹ Willy Wo-Lap Lam quotes an article published by People's Daily on the 18th of July 2004 saying that in 2003, for the first time since 1978, the number of destitute Chinese had increased by 800.000 and reached 30 million. See Willy Wo-Lap Lam, 2006.

- ¹² Lee Cheuk Yin (2003) discusses the importance of traditional values in Chinese communities. Basing his analysis on the research conducted by Godwin Chu and Ju Yanan in Shanghai, Lee shows that Confucian traditional values, especially those related to family, such as diligence, loyalty, devotion, and harmonious relations still rank very high on the hierarchical scale.
- ¹³ Fang Keli, "Zhanwang ruxue de weilai qianjing bixu zhengshi de liang ge wenti" (Two Questions That Must Be Addressed for the *Future of Confucian Studies*), quoted in Makeham, 2008:48.

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