New Europe College
GE-NEC Program
2000-2001
2001-2002

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FOREWORD

New Europe College, a small independent institute for advanced studies in the humanities and social sciences in Bucharest, has included since its start in 1994 among its fellows scholars coming from such fields as history and theory of art and architecture, archaeology, cultural and visual studies. We felt however that New Europe College could contribute in a more consistent fashion to the strengthening of this large disciplinary area, in thus complementing the changes experienced after 1989 by the institutions in Romania involved in teaching and research in these disciplines; a program initiated in 2000 with the support of the Getty Grant Program has enabled us to do so. The program (which we baptized *GE-NEC*) gave us the possibility to offer each year a few fellowships in fields supported by the Getty Grant Program and, no less importantly, to invite reputed scholars from these fields to come to Romania as our guests in order to give lectures and hold seminars at the New Europe College. The two components of the program are meant, on the one hand, to support local scholars active in these fields, and on the other, to acquaint a larger number of young (and even less young) students and researchers in Romania with recent approaches and contributions in disciplines that have been in recent years particularly dynamic and captivating. The list of lectures and seminars held by our guests in this program during its first two years at the end of this volume will give the reader an idea of the topics covered by them. It is our conviction that the presence in this program of distinguished guests has left its mark on the local milieu, and will bear fruit in opening – especially for young scholars – new perspectives in their researches.

The GE-NEC fellowships are modeled on the core fellowship program of the New Europe College: they last for one academic year, during which fellows work on a project, and take part in the weekly seminars we hold, alongside fellows enrolled in other programs at the New Europe College; at these weekly meetings fellows present in turn their work in progress, which is discussed by the group, composed of researchers coming from various fields in the humanities and social sciences. It has been one

of our aims, in setting up this program, to open up the disciplines it addresses to a better and more systematic communication with other disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, and to compensate for its lack in the "normal" research and education units. The inclusion of the GE-NEC fellows in the weekly seminars has been, we feel, profitable to all concerned. Fellowships include a one-month trip abroad, to enable the fellows to consult libraries and to get in touch with colleagues involved in similar or convergent research topics. At the end of their fellowship, the fellows give us a paper, the result of their one-year work on the projects they originally submitted. This volume presents the papers of the first two generations of fellows in the GE-NEC Program.

As is the case with other similar publications of the New Europe College (the Yearbooks containing the papers of the fellows in the core program, or the ones gathering the papers of the fellows in the Regional Program), this volume is first of all a document, a record of the fellows' interests and achievements. The arrangement of the papers is chronological (that is, by academic year), and within this frame, alphabetical. A thematic arrangement would have been unfair to the diversity of the authors' concerns, and to the specificity of each of the disciplines they represent, all the more as in offering fellowships within this program we had not proposed a thematic focus. Archaeologist Alexandru Niculescu reflects on *Material Culture, Tradition And Collective Identities,* in an effort to develop a more substantial and consistent theoretical approach within a discipline which has been, in Romania, frequently blind to its theoretical presuppositions; with the instruments provided by cultural studies Mădălina Nicolaescu discusses the culture of images in a global/local perspective (*Circulating Images: The Translation Of the Global Into the Local*), focusing on *telenovelas* and women journals, a body of images which has been seldom seriously analyzed by local scholarship. Art historian Dana Jenei brings to bear documents in Transylvanian archives, so far scarcely put to such a use by Romanian scholars, on the study of devotional imagery during the late Middle Ages in this region (*Art and Mentality in the Late Middle Ages Transylvania*). A more coherent grouping might suggest itself for the more numerous contributions in the field of architecture, where one can distinguish two main directions: a concern for a better theoretical grounding of studies in this discipline, reflected in Ana Maria Zahariade's paper, where she revisits Vitruvius (*Tribute to Vitruvius*), and in that of Mihaela Criticos, who attempts to build a general theory of ornament (*The Ornamental Dimension. Contributions to a Theory of Ornament*),

while other papers approach architecture with more pragmatic concerns in mind, inspired by the urgency of interventions demanded by Romanian cities: by reflecting on the ways contemporary cities, including Romanian ones, develop, and on the quality of their public spaces (Ioana Tudora: *Contemporary Metropolis: Public Urban Space, Communities and Individuals in Urban Reality*), on the means one could resort to for the rehabilitation of low-income districts in Bucharest (Ioana Teodorescu: *Improving Quality of Life in the Neighborhoods*), or on possible sources of renewal in contemporary sacred architecture, with a special stress on its fate in contemporary Romania (Andreea Mihalache: *Dogma, Canon, Tradition – Resources of Contemporary Sacred Architecture*).

A second volume, collecting the papers of the third and fourth generations of GE-NEC fellows, will be published after the end of this academic year.

It is a good opportunity to express our thanks to the Getty Grant Program for its support of the GE-NEC Program, and to the guests in this program for their readiness to take part in it, and for their very valuable contributions to this program.

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DANA JENEI

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Transylvania

ART AND MENTALITY IN THE LATE MIDDLE AGES TRANSYLVANIA

Beginning with the second half of the sixteenth century, the art of the Middle Ages became an enigma [...]. The meaning of those deep works has been lost. The new generations, having a different notion of the world, couldn't understand them anymore. The symbolism that was the soul of religious art has died. The Church was embarrassed by the legends that had given consolation to Christianity during so many Centuries. The Council of Trento marks the end of the old artistic traditions.[1]

What Émile Mâle wrote in 1898 concerning French religious art can be applied to the whole of European Medieval culture. The first studies on Transylvanian art date back to the same age, when the Romantic spirit resuscitated curiosity about a past that was denied or ignored. Since then, Medieval Transylvanian art has been systematically analyzed and classified[2] but has never been approached with the mentality that generated it and which is extremely indebted to the Church, in this "epoch of the almighty Christianity". Not even those documents from the Middle Ages that have been transcribed and published in a huge effort on the part of scholars have been used in this direction.[3]

New views on the research, the interdisciplinary approach and recent progress in the field of history of the mentalities applied to Transylvanian art as a part of Western culture and civilization, could bring to light, through the study of images as the most direct and pregnant expression of the ideology, the whole universe from beyond artistic representations.

Concentration on the meaning of the "image" dictated by the Word – *Logos* – explains the stress on iconography in the study of medieval art. "In the fifteenth century, as well as in the thirteenth century, there was no work of art that could not be explained completely through a book".[4] In the constitution of imagery, second in importance to the Gospels are the texts of theologians and mystics canonized by the Church.[5] For religious art, the theologians were also the authors of the iconographic programs established in thorough contracts;[6] they probably also chose the compositional patterns from model books, illustrations or, later on, from engravings. Whatever shape it was circulated in, the image was the faithful bearer of the idea, the doctrine. The iconographical exceptions, considered until recently as a sign of creativity of the medieval artist and of his liberty of expression, were rather, for the most part, expressions of the obedience towards a learned donor. Insofar as innovation and originality were not considered important at the time, even the great artists sometimes made free or literal copies of well-known works, being in part inspired by the illustrations in books with wide a circulation.[7] The preserved works show that the Transylvanian masters used the same sources as elsewhere in Europe: *Biblia Pauperum, Specullum Humanae Salvationis, Defensorium Beatae Vergine Mariae,* and, after 1460, German engraving.

Medieval Transylvanian civilization should be also understood from the standpoint of the mentalities that created it. For instance, the increasing number of pious acts – donations and endowing of religious works of art in testaments or the development of funeral chapels in Transylvania, as across the whole of Europe, symptomatically show an increasing concern for the afterlife, in a social context characterized by death, instability and incertitude. An image that was once considered an allegory of charity became, at a new and more attentive reading, an *exemplum*, a reminder for the pious of the sacrifices they must make in order to save their souls from the Purgatory. The same interpretation can be given to the recurrence of some major themes of medieval art, such as *Vir Dolorum*, the *Prayer in the Ghetsemani Garden*, *Maria in Sole*. Contemplation of those images as part of certain devotional acts could sometimes ensure a thousand of years of forgiveness for confessed sins through the indulgences of the Roman Church.

This paper starts from a re-evaluation of the iconography of Transylvanian Medieval art. This became possible after a thorough study, which helped identify new themes, and reconsider previous identifications.

The main aim of this paper is to correlate the data of an interdisciplinary approach that resorts to history, dogma and ideology in order to define and explain the mentality of the time. Archival sources that document this approach will be invoked for the first time in this context, as evidence of typical forms of belief and devotion. Seen this way, Transylvanian art regains the dimension that places it more clearly within the orbit of the Western civilization, in an area where great medieval cultures meet and to which Transylvanian art has made an original contribution.

Late Middle Ages Transylvania. A historical sketch. Figurative art

With the exception of the accidental and isolated experiences caused by historic events, which allowed Western artistic forms to penetrate the Near East, Transylvania, the inter-Carpathian Romanian province, was in the Middle Ages the easternmost area which saw coherent manifestation of such artistic forms. The medieval history of the three major Romanian principalities, situated between the extremes of East and West at the spiritual border between Orthodoxy and Catholicism, denominations that coexist in Transylvania, explains the different cultural evolution of these countries. In the fourteenth century, when the principalities of Moldavia and Walachia became independent states, Transylvania was already an autonomous principality, under the apostolic Hungarian kingdom suzerainty, together with Slovakia, Slovenia and Dalmatia. It is for this reason that Transylvania's history in the Middle Ages was closely connected to the history of central Europe. Following the disappearance of the Arpadian kings, the descendants of the Holy king Stephen, the throne of Hungary belonged to the kings of the Naples side of the Anjou family – Charles Robert (1308-1341) and Ludwig the Great (1341-1382). During the reign of Sigismund of Luxembourg (1382-1435)[8] and that of Albert of Habsburg (1435-1439) Transylvania became a part of the German Holy-Roman Empire. In the second half of the fifteenth century, during the reign of Mathias Corvinus, Hungary was to include Styria, Carinthia, Moravia and southern Austria. The king died in 1490 in a Vienna that he had conquered not long before.

In this wide territory, the circulation of pilgrim masters, following the great trade roads, assured the spread of artistic forms; it contributed to the configuration of local artistic trends under the spiritual authority of

Catholicism, confession of the majority of donors – the privileged strata known in history as *trium nationum*: the Germans, the Siklers, and the Hungarian aristocracy including the Romanian nobles who finally converted from Orthodoxy.[9] It is for reason that we find the masters of Transylvanian art working in Bohemia or visiting Rome, while stylistic analogies and documents prove that artists from Germany, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Tyrol worked in Transylvania. From this perspective, Transylvanian art can be seen both as a creation of local masters, sometimes trained in important central European centers, and of the pilgrim artists who were bearers of the principal trends. The works still preserved that were created between 1300 and 1500 are of extremely different aesthetic levels; they reflect, as they do everywhere where the Gothic Style existed, the mentality, taste and financial possibilities of the donors.

The first known mural ensembles date to no earlier than the beginning of the fourteenth century and preserve, at the height of the Gothic age, the decorative linearity of Romanesque art, due to the influence of book illustrations on painting. At Homorod (1300), Mugeni, at Mălâncrav in the nave, or at Drăușeni, we find a linear-narrative style that is widely spread in the peripheral areas, and which ends by being taken over by folk art. Concurrently, fourteenth century Transylvanian art shows, both stylistically as well as on iconographic levels, echoes of the North-Italian painting, as can be seen in the murals of Ghelința, Homorod (the devotional image *Pietà*), Mugeni (*The Last Judgement*), Sântana de Mureș. The end of the fourteenth century and the first decades of the fifteenth century remain under the sign of the stylistic vocabulary common to the whole Europe of the "International Gothic". This is remarkably illustrated in the painting of the church choir at Mălâncrav, at Dârjiu, in the ensemble (signed and dated 1419) painted by *magister* Paul from Ung, a typical representative of the chivalrous spirit, or in the altar painted by Thomas from Cluj in 1427 for the Hronsky Svaty Benadïk Benedictine Monastery in Slovakia.

Indications of the presence of a "softened" version of Italian painting allow us to talk at the same time of an original provincial synthesis at Vlaha, Sânpetru or Mediaș (1420). Towards the middle of the century, the links with the southern German painting become obvious in the great *Crucifixion* painted by Johannes from Rosenau on the northern wall of the choir of the parish church in Sibiu in 1445. Between 1460 and 1520, with the first Renaissance forms manifested mainly in panel painting,

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Transylvanian art experiences a new wave of internationalization, motivated by the success of late Gothic Flemish painting in the whole of Europe. The most valuable murals at the end of the fifteenth century – the paintings in the Church "on the Hill" at Sighișoara and the image of *Virgin Mary With the Child Among Saints*, the gift of King Mathias for the Black Church in Brașov – are very likely linked to the artistic centers of south-western Germany and Bohemia, entirely enslaved by the painting of the Netherlands. Without being on the same artistic level but nonetheless very precious for their iconography, the ensembles preserved inside the funeral chapels in Hărman and Biertan (1500) are also worthy of mentioned here.

Albeit more weakly represented, figurative sculpture displays links to the *Weicherstil* of the Parlers' sites in Central Europe from the second half of the fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth century. In a time in which artistic works were rather modest and destined normally to decorate the parish churches of the most important Transylvanian towns of Brașov, Sebeș, Sighișoara, etc., we find the unexpectedly avant-garde work of Martin and George, sculptors from Cluj. Their single remaining work, *St. George and the Dragon*, commissioned by the Emperor Charles IV of Luxembourg for his court in Prague, surpassed all European artistic achievements of the time. In the second half of the fifteenth century, the character of the sculpture changes towards a preponderance of wooden sculptures destined to decorate winged altars. The majority of the works dated after 1500 were carved in the workshops of Veit Stoss' sons, settled in Transylvania, from where other isolated pieces also originated, which are now preserved mainly in the collections of the Brukenthal Museum, Sibiu.

Figurative art in Transylvania reflects on each level a mentality shaped by a historical, religious, and affective context common to fourteenth and fifteenth century Europe.

Late Middle Ages Transylvania. "The crisis of the symbols of the security"

If, after the year 1000, "Western Christianity created an organic and stable body, reinforced by a common thinking and sensibility", then the fourteenth century forecasts, through the events that mark it, what Oberman calls "the crisis of the symbols of security".[10] There was a crisis

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in the values and traditional certainties of Middle Ages civilization, symptomatic of a world nearing its end. The natural calamities – wars, the plague – which devastated the continent between 1348 and 1350, but also the famine and rapid social changes caused by economic growth and urbanization in the following centuries,[11] and the religious instability generated by the Great schism and by corruption within the Church[12] deeply marked collective mentality.

"*A bello, peste et fame libera nos, Domine*" was one of the most frequent prayers of the time,[13] while devotional imagery shows a God offended by the sins of His people ready to fire the arrows of war, famine, plague or sudden death.[14] Following the devastating Tartar invasions that began in 1394, the Turks became the most serious danger for centuries to the whole of Europe, with the countries of southeastern Europe being at the greatest risk.[15] Against them, the churchmen preached continuously the saint war, the Turks being seen as a disaster of the times and the near cause of the end of the world. Their cruelty was frequently described in sermons and liturgies, and prayers were composed in which Heaven is called to protect Christianity. Priests and monks fight as soldiers on the battlefields in this war against "the army of Antichrist".[16]

After the defeat of the crusaders armies led by king Sigismund of Luxembourg and Mircea the Old, prince of Walachia, in 1396 at Nicopolis, the whole fifteenth century was to suffer the menace of Ottoman invasions. Dan II, Mircea's descendant, together with Fillipo Scolari,[17] the Italian counselor to the king and leader of the Hungarian armies, led a common offensive against the Turks on the lower Danube. A royal decree in 1405 established that walls would surround all the cities of Transylvania, but by 1421, the fortifications of Brașov had still not been completed and the Turks destroyed the town, taking into captivity the whole council. After the invasion of 1438 Sebeș suffered a setback and was never to complete the bold project of remaking the whole parish church, already built by then up to the choir level, in Gothic style, on the model of St. Sebaldus Church in Nuremberg.[18] In 1453 the Turks conquered Constantinople, and this was a real "psychological shock" for Europe.[19] However, the extraordinary success of the "late crusade" led by Iancu of Hunedoara,[20] prince of Transylvania and governor of Hungary between 1446 and 1453, halted their advance. "Iancu of Hunedoara was an outstanding personality of the fifteenth century, the heroic century of resistance against the Turks. Defending the countries and people in South-eastern Europe against the Ottoman assaults, he was at the same time *the defender of European*

civilization".[21] Each of his victories, acclaimed with hope and vivid admiration, was celebrated in processions and masses of thanks all over the Empire, in Rome, Venice and Oxford. After the battle of Belgrade that was to win peace for Western Europe for many years, pope Calyx III named him *athleta Christi* and established a new feast day. Deeply faithful, Iancu would carry out his night attacks under the device "Almighty God and St. Michael", having beside him on the battlefield his spiritual father, Giovanni da Capistrano. This Franciscan monk, later canonized by the Roman Church, was one of the visionaries who announced "the near apocalyptic terms", making prophecies on the time of the coming of Antichrist and the end of the world.[22] Iancu also had a special devotion to the Virgin of the Annunciation, probably borrowed from Filippo Scolari, the master of his youth. After each battle he would send war trophies to Santissima Anunziata in Florence, in sign of gratitude for her protection,[23] a church that even today hosts the miraculous icon of the Virgin. After the death of the prince in 1456, the pressure of Ottoman attacks began anew. Mathias Corvinus, Iancu's son, became king of Hungary in 1458. Giovanni da Capistrano prophesied of him that he would become a new Alexander the Great. Indeed, all of Christianity saw in the enlightened king the leader of crusades to come and a new *defensor Ecclesiae*.[24] The permanent threat determined Mathias to pronounce the order to "maintain the fortifications, the armament and ammunition at all times prepared". Consequently, even the religious architecture in Transylvania is that of a land under siege: churches, so remote to the immaterial image of the Gothic buildings, remained the last refuge of the community, as sacrosanct places. The invasion of 1493, during which many Saxon villages were burned to the ground, determined the start of a real fortification campaign for parish churches, a vast and unequalled phenomenon in Medieval Europe.[25]

The continuous decline in the living standards of the poorer social categories in Transylvania, as well as in the rest of the Empire, lead to successive revolts, culminating in the uprising of Bobâlna in 1437-1438 – a remote echo of the Hussite wars, in which the poor inhabitants of towns, salt mine workers and the lower nobility all took part. Almost one century later, in 1514, the army which had gathered near Buda under the leadership of Gheorghe Doja and which was supposed to begin a new crusade against the Turks, turned its arms on the aristocracy. The uprising spread rapidly to Transylvania but was suppressed and its leaders caught and executed after terrible torture.[26] Fearing a new popular uprising, the

young king of Hungary Ludwig Jagello refused to include the masses in his army for the battle of Mohacs in 1526. As a result, the Turks crushed the Hungarian army, the king himself, two archbishops and five bishops being killed on the battlefield. After Mohacs, the kingdom was erased for centuries from the map of Europe, while Transylvania preserved its autonomy as a principality.[27]

After war came famine and the plague. Documents from 1456 mention a widespread famine that was also to threaten the country in 1470, when Mathias Corvinus forbade the export of wheat, millet, oat and barley from Transylvania to Walachia. A study of natural disasters from the end of the fifteenth century shows their impact on the demographic situation with statistical precision:

> The famine of 1493-1494 together with the plague of 1495 had many victims, especially in the city of Brașov and in Burzenland. The parametric increase in the population of Brașov, which had been 0.72 percent between 1250 (after the devastating Tartar invasion of 1241-1242) and 1480, ceased, and there was no notable increase by the end of fifteenth century or during the next century, the population remaining stable at between 10,000 and 11,000. However, on the whole, the population of Transylvania increased, as indicated by some data, to a level of around 1,809,300 inhabitants with an average density of some 17 inhabitants per square kilometer.[28]

In late Middle Ages Transylvania there was hardly one single decade that did not see a serious earthquake due to the existence of a seismic center on the edge of the Carpathian curvature. The annals of the Melk Monastery in Austria mention that in 1473 on August 29, at 11 a.m., in Brașov "there was a strong earthquake that almost made all the houses and even most of the town's walls collapse, such that everybody thought it was the end of the world".[29] For five days, there were violent earthquakes throughout Transylvania, Walachia and Moldavia that "moved the mountains and hills, being felt in seven eastern provinces".[30]

The "climatic anomalies", disasters and unaccountable phenomena left a strong impression on the sensibility of the population, reanimating, mainly at the turn of centuries, an apocalyptic psychosis. In 1480, king Mathias Corvinus asked the Pauline monks to pray for rain, the drought being followed the same year by a terrible plague epidemic in Burzenland. The Moldavian-German chronicle records that in Roman, Moldavia, on August 11, 1484, there was a "blood rain". This event convinced prince

Ștefan the Great to stop works on the site of the fortress begun three month earlier, because he believed the strange phenomenon to have been "a sign of divine wrath" against the malice and unfaithfulness of the people.[31] In 1488, the Austrian Jacobus Kendlinger mentions another unusual weather phenomenon recorded in an inscription near the scenes of the Passion painted on the lower part of the tower of the Church "on the Hill" in Sighișoara: beginning with the day of St. Gerardus (September 24) there was so much snow falling for three days that the trees were broken.[32] Such events, mentioned in the Transylvanian chronicles, are heavy with an apocalyptic undertone; they are reminiscent of the miracles described, for instance, by Dürer in his writings, and suggest a similar sensibility: "The greatest miracle which I ever have seen," says Dürer, "happened in the year 1503, when crosses rained down on many people, on children more than on other people. Among these crosses I saw one as I have drawn it here".[33]

Late Middle Ages Transylvania. The new religious sensibility

All these disasters that marked history of the Middle Ages, interpreted as divine punishments for the sins of humanity and signs of time that announce the imminence of the Last Judgment, were the causes of major changes in people's mentality and sensibility.

> The mood of chiliasm, of the end of the world, pervaded the time about the year 1500 just as it filled the time about the year 1000. In those days, people turned to the prophecies of former ages, which came to have a new and real meaning for them.[34]

Fear of the end of the world seems to have become more intense in the fourteenth century, while the legend of the year 1000 was created in the next.[35] The "anxiety of salvation", "the feeling of self failure" (Ariès) or that of "disillusion and discouragement" (Huizinga) are all symptoms of a state of mind which the "black century's" poetry speaks of and which was eventually to be reflected in one of the principal themes of the German Renaissance: the melancholy. "In those days of crisis and despair, the desire for an authentic religious life sometimes became an obsession".[36] That is why, just before the Reformation, piety became

stronger than ever before, through the spiritual emancipation of the laymen. Christianity, a religion rather more accessible to priests and monks in the previous centuries, became accessible to the masses, which obstinately searched for divine mercy in places of pilgrimage or elsewhere. The new conception of "the world beyond" was preached mostly by the mendicant monks and strongly contributed to the spreading of a new religious sensibility, turned towards the care for the afterlife and the cult of the saints.

Care for the afterlife

One major consequence for religious practice was an unprecedented increase in the cult of the dead, generated by the growing importance that Western Christianity attributed to Purgatory. Both in ideology and religion, Catholicism at the end of Middle Ages was to a large extent a cult of the living in the service of the dead.[37]

"In the Church's hierarchy of contribution to the price of passage from this world to the next, the concern of dedicating as many masses as possible to oneself after death now displaced the earlier emphasis upon charity to the poor."[38] Funeral services were conducted "almost without breaks, sometimes starting from the beginning of the agony and continuing for hours, weeks and even months. An incredible number of religious services made possible the subsistence of a quasi-specialized clergy".[39] The testamentary dispositions included impressive amounts of money for religious services, many scholars seeing in those pious donations the cause of the economic ruin of the aristocracy in the late Middle Ages.[40]

> If we do not understand the obsession with salvation and the fear of Hell that characterized people during the Middle Ages, we will never understand their mentality and we will remain astonished in front of such an abandonment of a plentiful life, of power, of riches, which caused an extraordinary mobility of fortunes [...][41]

Georges Duby mentions the case of the Gascon senior of Buch, who tried to ensure his salvation by paying, along with the 50 thousands services officiated in the year of his death, a fabulous number of masses to be officiated afterwards for 61 years by 18 chaplains.[42]

Documents from Middle Ages Transylvania note the same preoccupation with salvation shown by kings and emperors, by the high clergy and nobility through masses, gifts for the Church and works of mercy. A document dated May 31, 1443, attests to a donation by Sigismund of Luxembourg and his successor Albert of Habsburg to the Chapel of St. Martin in Brașov, *extra muros,* for the salvation of "the souls of the saint kings of Hungary".[43] Filippo Scolari, the Florentine *condotiero*, count of Timișoara, is granted recognition of his merits from the Pope for his generosity to the Church. In his testament issued August 15, 1426, in Orșova, he establishes the funeral ceremonial for him and his family, richly endowing the priests and the monks of the church in Székesfehérvár, the coronation place and necropolis of the Hungarian Kings, near which he built his funeral chapel painted by Masolino da Panicale.[44] In 1462 Mathias Corvinus increased his annual donation to the Dominican Monastery of Brașov from two silver marks to ten, in memory of his father, Iancu of Hunedoara. Thirty years later, count Nicolas Bethlen, *perpetuus patronus* of the Dominican Church in Sighișoara, settled a foundation for masses for the soul of the "great king" Mathias.[45] Beginning in 1477, bishop John Gereb started to grant clergy in Alba Iulia the right of testament, the first condition being the establishment of bequests *pro fabrica ecclesia*; the same bishop, in 1485, asked the Pope to grant the right of pilgrimage to all those who had made gifts for the maintenance of the same Cathedral.[46] In 1444 Johannes of Merghindeal offered St. Nicolas Church in Sighișoara "132 pure gold Florins and his part of the family lands in Vulcan" for the salvation of his and his family's souls; with the same purpose, in 1446, Mychael *filius Salamonis* from Nadașd donated his possessions – the villages of Boiu, Drașov and Sebeșel – to the St. Michael Cathedral in Alba Iulia, asking in return "officiated and sung masses for eternity: on Sundays, the St. Trinity Mass, Mondays, the Mass for the Dead, Tuesdays, the Holy Virgin Mary Mass, Wednesdays a service for forgiveness of sins, Thursdays, the Mass for Angels, Fridays, the Lord's Passion, and on Saturdays again the solemn service for Holy Virgin Mary".[47] Nicolaus Apa, the presumed donor of the extraordinary murals in the church sanctuary of Mălâncrav, gave through his will to a few churches, priests and chaplains, cult objects for the salvation of his soul after death, including: a big chalice received from the Emperor, which he gave to the St. Gerard church in Nușeni, another chalice for *XXX missis* (St. Gregory's Masses), which he gave to the Cathedral in Alba Iulia. To Peter, *plebano nostro de Nagfalu*, he donated six golden

Florins, a tunic, a *pallium,* two mitres, demanding in exchange, along with the celebration of 30 other masses in the churches of Nușeni and Mălâncrav, that he be mentioned for eternity in his prayers:*"habeat me in memoria perpetua in orationibus suis".*[48] A document dated December 13 1447 confirmed the donation of Peter, count of Brașov; he gave the villages of Zărnești and Tohan to the *Corporis Christi* brotherhood of the Church of the Virgin Mary in Brașov.[49] Anna, the widow of Georg Appa, left two vineyards to the St. George Church in Dumbrăveni *"pro missa perpetua"* on October 28, 1448.[50] Count Nicholas Gereb of Roșia donated on February 24, 1461 a house belonging to his family to the church St. Nicolas in Seligstat, while Count Nicolas of Ocna Sibiului, vice prince of Transylvania, endowed in his will written August 7, 1465, the parish church from Sibiu and monasteries from Cluj and Sighișoara *"pro perpetuam missa"*; he also left to Thomas, his chaplain, 25 golden Florins to make pilgrimages to the Roman Curia and to the Church of the Virgin Mary in Aix-la Chapelle, for the benefit of his soul.[51] Petrus Greb, Antonius Sander's son from Brașov, also gave on 100 Florins *(primum cento florenos)* on June 1, 1460, for "a pilgrimage to the Holy Land", 20 Florins for the building of the parish church, and 10 Florins to the Dominican monks to officiate an annual mass for his soul.[52] Rich townspeople also donated or endowed religious works of art in their testaments: Margaret, the widow of Simon Abel from Bistrița, gave two houses to the Lord's altar from the Chapel of St. Jeronimus in Vienna in 1403,[53] while Margaretha Schleffer of Cluj prearranged in her will (dated April 29, 1459) daily masses for two years in the St. Michael Church and one year in the Church of the Monastery of the Predicant Friars in Cluj. She also donated large sums of money for the building of the two edifices and for the altars inside, *"pro animae suae salute".*[54] Katherine, daughter of Laurentius Klomp, gave the chapel of St. Lawrence the Martyr in the cemetery of the parish church in Brașov a mill on the Șprenghi brook for a daily mass for the salvation of her husband's soul and the souls of her friends and relatives "in all the times to come".[55]

Lay people along with clergymen were absorbing, through books, the teachings of Church. In 1461, Jacobus from Roderbach donated several religious books to the St. Peter and Paul Monastery in Brașov:[56] "the sermons of magister Niklas from Dinkelsbühl on time and saints, *item* a book with ten precepts on the seven vices, eight bliss and penitence, *item* the Bible, *item* the confessor handbook *cum lepra morali*, *item* the sermons of St. Gregory [the Great], *item* the praises to Virgin Mary, *item,*

four books of the Dialogs of St. Gregory [the Great]". This donation, one of the rare testimonies to the literature read by lay people at the time, is also important from another point of view: such books were the sources that fed the late medieval imaginary of the world beyond and molded mentalities.[57]

Images of the world beyond

In Transylvania and elsewhere in the Christian Middle Ages Europe, burials were done *ad sanctos*, near the altars that hosted the relics of saints, first inside the church, and then around it.[58] Showing new forms of devotion and serving the demands of the pious practice connected to the cult of dead, many funeral chapels were built inside cemeteries; funeral masses were also considered more efficient if conducted nearer the graves. "More than a place for prayers and mystic contemplation, the chapel is a place of funeral cult";[59] the overtly didactic images that decorate its walls uphold on a visual level the values of Christian eschatology.

Developing the same mentality, beliefs and cult needs, chapels were built in Catholic Transylvania, frequently near parish churches, in the free royal towns – in Brașov, Sibiu, Mediaș, as well as in the countryside – in Biertan, Cisnădie, Curciu, Velț, Orăștie, Sânpetru, Hărman, Valea Viilor, etc.[60] It should be noted that the only coherent ensembles of wall painting with exclusively eschatological themes are still preserved inside the funeral chapels of Sânpetru, Hărman, Mediaș and Biertan. Their meticulous iconography, scrupulously conforming to the doctrine, is a most precious proof of the religious mentality of the time. But the imagery of the world beyond is also present on the walls of the churches or on the panels of the altars, as medieval psychology cannot be understood without taking into account the deep attachment to *artes moriendi,* apocalyptic preaching and images of the Last Judgement.

The Paradise. Hell. Abraham's Bosom

The Gospel according to Mathew lies at the basis of the whole Middle Ages conception of the world beyond, and the apocryphal Apocalypse of Paul describes Paradise, and a Hell full of punishments. "St. Augustine and the first Latin Fathers elaborated an almost definitive conception on

salvation".[61] At the beginning of the twelfth century, the belief still existed that after Judgment Day there will be two groups of souls for eternity: the chosen and the damned. The iconography of the two places, Paradise and Hell, in Transylvanian late Middle Ages art, always connected to the theme of Judgment Day, is basically no different from the accepted one: Paradise is represented either as a reflection of the primitive idea of an enclosed garden (Biertan, around 1500), with palm trees above which shines, in the words of Psalmist, the "Sun of Justice" (Hărman, around 1500), or as *Heavenly Jerusalem*, with imposing buildings (Sighişoara, before 1500). At Sânpetru (around 1400) and Mediaş (1420), Paradise is presented through the scene of the *Coronation of the Holy Virgin* surrounded by musical angels and torch bearers, while at Mugeni, Ghelinţa and Sic (fourteenth century), Mary, the universal protector of souls, appears in Heaven as *Mater Misericordiae*. Where there are also explanatory inscriptions on the scrolls, the words of the Son of Man from the Gospel of Mathew (25-34) are always written above Paradise: *Venite Benedicti Patris mei.* Faithfully illustrating the text of the Bible, the good deeds that lead to salvation are sometimes represented nearby. Such representations, including the six evangelical works of mercy and care for the dead[62] are preserved at Hărman. The same preoccupation with pious acts, "charity bonds" that unite all the members of the Church, dead or alive, appears in fifteen-century Transylvanian testaments. Petrus Greb from Braşov left three houses to be put to "pious use", money for the poor in the hospitals, and for the lepers and *leprosarium*; Margaret, the widow of Johannes Schleffer and Katharina Lukachy from Cluj[63] also gave money, medicines, grey cloth and wine vessels to the poor, endowing at the same time several hospitals. An identical message appears in the representation of charity in a scene with a pronounced funereal character at Sânpetru: rich townsmen bearing candles, offering food and clothes to the poor and invalids.

Inscribed with the same words of the Redeemer taken from the Gospel according to Matthew, Hell is frequently represented by the figure of the monster Leviathan, the iconographic illustration of the description in the Book of Job. After the weighing of souls, the sinners (Biertan) or the personifications of the seven deadly sins (Sighişoara) are banished by Archangel Gabriel into his widely open mouth; at Hărman an old formula comes back, in which a group of sinners in chains is taken to Hell by the devils. The damned, wearing the signs of worldly power, are lead by a Muslim – Islam, the most serious danger of the times being seen as an

analog to Antichrist – followed by a Pope, an Emperor, a Bishop, a King, a Cardinal, a woman, or a Saracen. An important exception in this type of representation can be seen in the elaborated and original context of the funeral chapel at Sânpetru, which depicts the fallen angels tumbling down punished by Archangel Michael (Apocalypse of John, 12, 7). This image of Hell, is not, however, unique; it also appears, for instance, on a later woodcut from *Les Heures à l'usage de Rome* by Jean de Pré (1488), where the usual formula, inscribed on a scroll, is uttered this time not by Jesus, but by God the Father: *Discedite a me maledicti.*[64]

Half way between Heaven and Hell stands St. Michael, the unfailing character of Judgment Day. An ancient rival of Satan and eternal protector of souls, "the glorious Michael the Archangel, leader of the heavenly army" is represented not only as the defeater of evil but also as the one who weighs the souls. The Archangel stands with his sword above his head, protecting the soul whose deeds he is weighing. He is ready to strike the devils that come directly from the mouth of the Hell (in a painting by Vincentius from Sibiu, 1520) and try to cheat by pulling down the plate of vices with a hook and filling it with mill stones (at Bistrița and Sântana de Mureș, end of XIVth century), or with scrolls inscribed with the enumeration of sins, in an outstanding representation preserved on the vault of the Church "on the Hill" in Sighișoara (1483). *Psychostasis*, a scene of the Last Judgment Day which, taken by itself, is evocative of the Last Judgement on a spiritual level, illustrates Christian eschatology in a concentrated manner, as does the devotional image of Archangel Michael killing the dragon in the mural paintings and winged altars in Mălâncrav and Biertan.

The appearance of the belief in Purgatory was to change irreversibly the manner of configuration of the world beyond within the Latin Church. The idea of "the existence of an intermediate time" and of "an intermediate space" was also to be found earlier in Christianity, Abraham's Bosom being thought of as the first Christian representation of Purgatory. At the beginning of the twelfth century, the doctrine concerning what happens between death and resurrection was not yet clearly defined.

> Some believe the dead wait in the graves or in a dark and neutral place assimilated to the grave, as the *Sheol* from the Old Testament. Others, more numerous, believe that souls will be received in certain houses. Among these houses there is one that is different, that of Abraham's bosom,

where the souls of believers are gathered and wait for the proper Paradise, meanwhile entering into a place of coolness and rest.

The idea of coolness (*refrigeriu*) that can be found in all Middle Ages Catholic funeral inscriptions (*Deus refrigeret spirituum tuo, in refrigerio anima tua*), originally meant "the joy of the world beyond the grave promised by God to His chosen ones".[65] Transylvanian documents from the mid-fifteenth century frequently use this formula. A paper issued on May 31, 1443, shows that Emperor Sigismund donated a house to the St. Martin Chapel in Brașov *"ob salutem et refrigerium animarum divorum regum Hungariae ac singularem devotionem"*. Michael of Nadeș gave his property to the St. Michael Cathedral in Alba Iulia in 1446, count Peter of Brașov gave two estates to the *Corpus Christi* brotherhood of the St. Mary Church *"ob suae salutis ac animarum progenitorum suorum perpetuum refrigerium"*, Johannes of Merghindeal endowed St. Nicholas Church of Sighișoara *"pro refrigerium animae suae et suorum progenitorum animarum"*, while Katherina Klomp, the widow of Thomas Roth of Brașov donated a mill to the St. Lawrence Chapel in exchange for eternal masses for "the salvation and cooling of the souls of her late husband and those of all her friends and relatives".

Having as its source the parable of the poor Lazarus from the gospel according to Luke (16:19-26), Abraham's Bosom, the place of waiting for believers until the appearance of Purgatory, is still mentioned today in the most widespread funeral service in Catholic ritual, from which a short invocation spreads through prayer books and inscriptions on gravestones: "God, send thy holy angels and through their hands let the soul be taken to the bosom of Abraham."[66] In the moralized context of the Last Judgment, Abraham's bosom continues to be represented both in Orthodox and Catholic art, illustrating the gospel *stricto sensu*. The angels bring the soul of the poor Lazarus to the bosom of the Patriarch, while the thirsty pitiless rich man implores from Hell: *"Pater Abraham miserere mei et mitte Lazarum, ut intignat extremum digiti sui in aquam, ut rifregeret lingum meam, quia crucior in hac flamma"* (Hărman).[67]

Purgatory. The suffrages

Belief in Purgatory was first to be found in the practice of the Catholic funeral ritual in "the suffrages, or supplications for the dead" (*suffragiis*), with the help of which it is possible to save from Purgatory the souls of

those whose sins were labeled in the twelfth century as "excusable" and in the following centuries as "light" or "small" (*levia, minuta*).[68] The authors of the doctrine, which proliferated from the beginning of the twelfth century onwards, were relying on arguments having some scriptural basis, thus giving the Purgatory doctrine a validity within the dogmatic corpus of the Catholicism. The existence of Purgatory is based on the belief in a double judgment. There is, first, the individual judgment that takes place in the moment of death, while the last, the universal judgment, takes place at the end of time. The imagery of the first judgment was mainly reflected in the illustrations to *Ars moriendi,* the book that taught Christians at the end of the fifteenth century how to die in a proper way. The tympanum of an altar painted by Vincentius of Sibiu shows this final moment when the priest places a candle in the dying person's hand and pronounces the last rites: IESU. FILI. DAVID. MI[SERE]RE ME. The soul is conquered for Heaven by the guardian angel, in spite of the devils, that could neither frighten, nor tempt it.[69] This belief in the existence of two judgments is also reflected in the mural painting in Mugeni[70] where, in contrast to canonical representations, the chosen ones go to Jesus the Judge, *leaving* the Paradise as souls already saved.

> Establishment of a place of redemption and of a time for expiation rapidly progresses in the second half of the twelfth century. Even if *Purgatorium Sancti Patricii* guarantees the success of the suggested place, it is Parisian theology that names and defines this place between 1170 and 1180, in the course of exchanges between the school of Notre Dame and the Cistercians from the abbeys situated in eastern and northern France. In the thirteen century Purgatory finds its place in Christianity: on a dogmatic level, through the letter of Innocent IV to Eudes de Chateauroux (1254) and the decisions of the second Council in Lyon concerning the unification of the Latin and the Greek Church. On a theological level, by the integration of Purgatory in all the important theological systems, from Guillaume d'Auvergne and Alexandre de Hales to St. Thomas Aquinas, and on a popular level, that of the mass of believers, through the preaching and little stories taken from *exempla.*[71]

The "final" birth of the Purgatory is fixed at between 1170 and 1220,[72] and its name gains currency in the last third of the thirteen century,[73] while in 1259 the doctrine of Purgatory receives papal definition.[74]

In this context, care for the afterlife is of utmost importance. The Doctors of the Catholic Church found the Biblical source of the doctrine

of Purgatory in the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians (3, 13-15): "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (*quasi per ignem*).[75] For some theologians, Purgatory, "this place with no suffering and no joy", means only "the depriving of the beatific vision". Furthermore, unlike Hell, where "there is no salvation",[76] the souls from Purgatory pray, enjoying the presence of the saving angels. The believers can help through supplications "the souls of the righteous from Purgatory". In the *Dialogs* of St. Gregory the Great, a text known and read in Middle Ages Transylvania, the categories of the suffrages were already specified,[77] a hierarchy asserted also by the famous *Legenda aurea*, composed by the theologian, hagiographer and Dominican preacher Jacobus da Voragine around 1260. In these writings, known to be among the most used literary sources of late Middle Ages Catholic iconography, an entire chapter is reserved for the "commemoration of souls", in which four suffrages are most strongly recommended: the prayers of the devoted and friends, charity, partaking of the host, and fasting.[78] This hierarchy underwent slight changes over time: the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1439)[79] finally declares the mass as being of the highest importance and the Church the supreme earthly authority for the salvation of souls. Transylvanian testaments show that the donations to the Church are, among the suffrages, nearly of the same importance as the Eucharist, which "breaks the chains of the realm of the dead and takes the souls to the shelter of life and light".

The iconography of the Purgatory. Images of supplications in the wall painting of the Corporis Christi *Chapel in Sânpetru*

At the same time as the doctrine, an iconography of Purgatory developed, which dates, in the German areas of culture, from the fourteenth century.[80] For France, Jacques Le Goff mentions a first image in the Breviary of Philippe le Bel, illuminated by master Honoré sometime between 1253 and 1296,[81] in which we already find the elements that will come to characterize Purgatory iconography: the flying angels helping the redeemed souls rise toward Jesus. One century later we find another miniature that illustrates the day of the remembrance of the dead (2

November), in the Breviary of Charles V. This time the angels are lifting the souls out of the fire.[82] The divine purifying fire, different from infernal fire, is another typical iconographic element of Purgatory, with roots in the Bible, and is sometimes sufficient in itself to evoke it.

In keeping with the theological sources, Purgatory iconography[83] also includes images of the suffrages assembled in a coherent program. Vovelle maintains that each church must have had an altar devoted to the souls of the Purgatory that faithfully reproduced a popular image of the world beyond.[84] In the murals of the Chapel *Corporis Christi* in Sânpetru,[85] whose program was conceived, in accordance with custom, by a theologian,[86] representation of the suffrages finds its place in a sophisticated context that requires, beyond the direct message of the image, several levels of reading. The didactic-moralizing charge is amplified by the mediaeval conventions of representation. Paradise, represented by the scene of the *Coronation of the Virgin* on the east side, is opposite to the Hell into which the devils fall, punished by Archangel Michael. The southern wall is devoted to the martyrs St. Stephen and St. Lawrence, the perfect ones, who go straight to Paradise where they are rewarded by the sight of God, *visio beatifica,* Jesus showing Himself in the open door of Heaven; on the northern side, those who were "not very bad, not very good" (*non valde mali, non valde boni*) in Purgatory are redeemed by the mass of St. Gregory the Great, charity works, partaking of the host and donations to the Church.[87]

In the practice of the Catholic Church, the mass of Pope Gregory was considered extremely helpful for the souls in Purgatory. The iconographic program at Sânpetru underlines its importance by its position on the upper part of the wall. In this image that shows the Saint himself officiating, all the souls are released; helped by an angel, they move towards Jesus. Through his theological work, especially *Dialogi*[88] and the miracles attributed to him, Gregory the Great, Doctor of the Latin Church, is one of the saints always linked with Purgatory through the belief that his series of 30 funeral services officiated right after death will guarantee salvation. Even lay people read Gregory's Homilies and Dialogs, and his 30 masses were asked for in the testaments.[89] The theme of *St. Gregory's Mass* was frequently associated with Purgatory in Medieval Spanish altars, in the art of France and the Netherlands.[90]

In the lower part of the same wall at Sânpetru, the iconography develops around the theme of the *Mass for the Dead*, also including the other suffrages that help in saving souls: the Eucharist, the works of mercy

and Archangel Michael. The central image, that also illustrates the dedication of the Chapel – *Corpus Christi* – blends two rare images of the Catholic iconography: the Mass for the Souls and the Miracle of Transubstantiation, as a reminder of the expiating power of the Eucharist that unifies in spirit the living and the dead. "The holy mass, says *Summa conffesorum* of Thomas de Chobam (1215) is celebrated for the living and for the dead, but twice as much for the dead because the holy mysteries from the altar are pleas for the living, signs of gratitude for the saints and, for those in Purgatory, supplications to be granted divine mercy and be spared the punishments".[91] Above the host blessed by the priest, the figure of the child Jesus reminds us of the central truth of the Christian faith, that of the Son of the Living God who offers Himself to the believers in every holy mass through the renewal of the mystery of Incarnation and sacrifice without bloodshed. Linked with the miraculous apparitions and the bloodstained hosts of the late Middle Ages, the image at Sânpetru also provides a rare iconographic representation of the visible incarnation of the child Jesus, under the blessings of the priest, above the holy gifts.

Near the scene of Transubstantiation, richly and fashionably dressed characters carry in their hands funeral candles and give food and clothes as charity to the poor and invalids. They help the souls in prayer escape from the place of punishment, symbolically represented by a cauldron, while the others hopefully await their salvation. In this painted lesson of *charitas christiana*, the two worlds are figured on the same plane: "the living take care of the dead because they themselves are future dead, and in a Christian society – and this is particularly true for the Middle Ages – the future has no chronological sense, only an eschatological one".[92]

Psychostasis, the scene which at Sânpetru closes the cycle of suffrages, is a reminder of Doomsday and has, in the conception of the time, an additional connotation linked to the belief in Purgatory and indulgences: "the image of St. Michael weighing the souls kept alive in everyone's conscience the idea that there was a hope of redemption of the sinful through donations [to the Church]".[93] In the image at Sânpetru, a rare detail, lost in Sântana de Mureş but still preserved at Dârjiu (1419) or in Slovakia, at Kraskovó and Ďivetice, is worth noting: the saved soul, always to the right of the Archangel, holds with both hands a funeral candle with two saving hosts, a direct reference to the Eucharistic funeral sacrifice with the help of which the soul had been saved. St. Michael, the angel of death and the protector of souls, belongs to the iconography of Purgatory:

a German woodcut from the end of the fifteenth century, featuring in the background angels saving souls, clearly shows the power of intercession attributed to the Saint in connection with "the third site".[94] In the already mentioned image of the dying man painted by Vincentius from Sibiu, half of the surface is also dedicated to St. Michael weighing the souls and striking the devils. As the guide of the souls, he is invoked in the mass for the dead: "St. Michael, the standard bearer, will lead the souls toward the sacred light". He is the first saint named in testaments after The Holy Trinity and numerous Middle Ages funeral chapels and altars are dedicated to him. This suggests the possibility of a second dedication of the *Corporis Christi* Chapel at Sânpetru, to St. Michael, given that St. Michael is represented there several times.[95]

As in the frescos from Martignac en Quercy[96] or in the painting of Enguerrand Quarton, located in the proximity of the representation of Purgatory is the image of Paradise, where The Holy Mother is crowned. This metaphorical image of the union between Christ and Mary, which has its origins in the Song of Songs,[97] shows that through Mary the mystical union extends to the whole Church that she symbolizes, so that some suffering souls are released the very moment the crown is set on her head.[98] In this sense we should mention an *exemplum* in which a woman's soul, returned for a short period to earth, tells that the most important Marian feast, the *Assumption*, is one of the days on which most souls are released from Purgatory; the same is true of the feast of St. Michael, of the guardian angels or of All Saints.[99] It is worthy of note that all these themes exist in the iconography of the chapel at Sânpetru. Under the scene of the *Coronation of the Virgin Mary* in Paradise, the *Deesis* can also be seen: Mary and John the Baptist mediating beside Jesus, leading groups of saints. Far from the terrifying idea of the Judgment Day as a tribunal, all the saints pray for the salvation of mankind. In the calendar of the Latin Church, the day of the dead, "the fortunate ones waiting in the Purgatory", is significantly connected with the feast of All Saints a day earlier. The link between the two feasts is strongly emphasized in medieval literature, these days being considered as a respite for the souls in Purgatory.[100] The saved souls contribute to the treasure of merits of the Church, to which all the souls have access through the *communion of the saints,* interceding in their turn for the salvation of the people still living on earth. For this reason, the presence of the archdeacons Stephen and Lawrence, saints with great merits earned by their martyrdom and honored by the Catholic Church with privileges such as *vigilia, octava*

and *reclama,* gains additional signification in this iconographical context; in an *exemplum* from the collection of the Dominican Étienne de Bourbon, a vision is recounted according to which once in Heaven, Stephen intercedes for Saint Paul, who had been present at his lapidation. Of St. Lawrence, the tradition says that he has the privilege to descend every Friday to the Purgatory in order to save a soul.[101] The communion and intercession of the saints – that of the *triumphant Church* in Heaven – joins the suffrages of *the militant Church* – the living church on Earth – for the salvation of the *suffering Church* of the souls in Purgatory. Jesus shows Himself to the saints and blesses the saved ones.

The Limbo

Parallel to the appearance of Purgatory, in the context of the big reshuffling of the geography of the afterworld of the twelfth century, a new place was born – the Limbo of the Patriarchs, inspired by the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, in which the resurrected Jesus descends to save the Fathers of the Old Testament.[102] There is only one known representation of the descent of Jesus in Hell in late Transylvanian Gothic art: a secondary episode of the scene of the Resurrection in the altar of the *Passion of Christ* in Mediaș (after 1480).

Although by the end of the thirteen century the three regions of the afterworld, Paradise/Hell/Purgatory had become the prevailing system, in the writings of certain scholastics a system of five regions was configured, the Limbo of Children remaining a subject of debate for many centuries thereafter. For St. Augustine, baptism being an essential condition of the salvation, non-baptized dead children cannot enter an intermediary place of rest and happiness, although they are not stained by personal sins, only by the original sin.[103] Unlike Purgatory, a place of transition, the Limbo of Children, like Paradise and Hell, is an eternal place and remains so also after the Last Judgement. St. Bonaventura spoke about *limbus inferni,* a *locus inferior* in Abraham's bosom, which includes the Limbo of the Holy Fathers and the Limbo of Children, where the punishment of senses is not endured, but only the punishment of not seeing the face of God. The theologians prefer this canonical variant from the beginning of the thirteenth century, even though not declared official by the councils.[104] For Thomas Aquinas, "the Limbo of Fathers and the Limbo of Children differ according to the quality of the reward and the sufferings endured: children cannot hope for eternal life, which

shines in the light of faith and grace that the fathers enjoy in their limbo". In the not very numerous mediaeval representations, the depriving of the "vision of bliss" is assimilated to the lack of light, to the dark, the Limbo of children being figured as a dark grotto, placed somewhere at the edge of Hell, in which the little non-baptized pray. This scene can be observed in Enguerand Quarton's masterpiece painted for the Carthusian monk Jean de Montagnac in Villeneuve les Avignon, in Spanish art, on the predella of the altar from the museum of the Cathedral in Majorca,[105] or in the San Mateo Church from Castillon. The only image of the Limbo of children preserved in Transylvania is to be found in the Church "on the Hill" in Sighișoara. This representation is painted above the scene of the Hell, as part of the *Last Judgement*, situated on the eastern wall of the nave.[106]

The cult of the saints

Recurrent apocalyptic fears, fed by supernatural revelations, intensified the cult of saints that became as strong as it was in the early centuries of Christianity. On the walls of the Transylvanian fortified churches, which were places of prayer but also shelters for the whole community in times of danger, the saints were presented as powerful protectors and ideal models, "the living stones" of the Heavenly Church. Here, *ad sanctos*, the pilgrims left their names scratched on the surface of the paintings, as an eternal reminder of their passage through the sacred places, which would assure the protection of the saints whose relics and icons were kept inside.[107]

The sanctuary shows the Lord among his Church, formed by the Apostles and the Prophets – sometimes holding scrolls inscribed with the Creed, the Evangelists, the Fathers of the Roman Church, and the Holy Mother as *Mater Ecclesia* – the symbol of the Church and *Mater omnium* – the universal protector of the souls.[108] This is followed immediately by St. Anne, the Virgin's mother and the source of Jesus' earthly family. Her devotion seems to have increased in central and Eastern Europe one century earlier than in the West, where only towards the end of the fifteenth century did it become "completely attached to the cult of the Virgin, all her family enjoying this favor".[109] Images of the *Mettercia* – the group of Ann/Mary/Jesus – are frequently encountered in the churches in the historical territory of Hungary; however, the developed scheme of the Holy Family appears, as a particularity, only in Transylvania at the

end of the fourteenth century. Here, two images were painted at Sântana de Mureș and Mălâncrav, at a time when this theme was virtually unknown in the rest of Europe.[110] The images worship Anne and her descendants, as did late religious prose, *Mettercia* being represented among the Holy Virgin's sisters, the first witnesses of the Redemption – Salomé and Maria Cleophé – and their sons, John, James Major and James Minor, Simon, Judas Thaddeus – the future apostles, and Joseph Justus.[111] Archangel Michael as protector, but also as the saint of the dead and of Purgatory, is also present in every Transylvanian mural ensemble or altar. When he is represented killing the dragon, he is frequently paired with St. George, the protector of the knights. Catherine and Barbara, represented together systematically in the German cultural area, are also extremely familiar in Transylvania, where they accompany the Virgin as the Woman of the Apocalypse or in the Heavenly Garden. The other virgin saints – Margaret, Dorothy and Ursula, "the great martyrs of Christianity" – Stephan and Lawrence, the founders of religious orders – Dominic and Francis, or Nicolas, the patron Saint of Transylvania, are also present in the imagery dedicated to the saints. Louis of France, patron of the dynastic house during the reign of King Louis d'Anjou (1342 – 1382) and the Holy Kings of the Hungarian crown, Stephan, Emeric and Ladislas – are represented mainly in murals, in homage to royalty. St. Ladislas, the Hungarian king who was victorious against the Cumans, and to whom miracles were attributed, came to be considered the absolute defender against the Asiatic invaders. The main episodes from the life of this "frontier hero" were painted inside the churches, in the areas most exposed to invasions: northern Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia and South-east Transylvania, where there they are still preserved in Mugeni, Ghelința, Chilieni, Biborțeni, Daia or Dârjiu.[112] His *vita* was probably written under the spiritual patronage of the Anjou royal family in Hungary, within the theological milieu of the bishopric in Oradea, the principal place of devotion, where his relics were preserved and where the first painted cycle was probably represented.[113]

The popular faith has attached further meanings to certain icons. Jesus as the Man of Sorrow and Mary as the Mother of Mercy intercede and protect the humanity from the arrows of divine wrath, war, famine, plague or sudden death, in images of devotion endowed with indulgences by the Church.[114] It was also considered that he who has seen the image of the Holy Face of the Savior printed on the *sudarium* – the *Vera Icon,* would enjoy protection all day long against violent death without communion.[115]

The same was true of St. Barbara, represented with the chalice and host, and of St. Christopher, whose huge figure could be seen on the outer walls of churches all over Europe, and are preserved in Transylvania at Strei, Mălâncrav, Daia (in two superposed images), in Sighișoara etc. The texts of some prayers preserved near his image in France and Germany clearly show his role as protector against bad death – *mala morte*, famine and plague.[116] Other "saints of the plague" worshiped in Transylvania are Sebastian, Roch and Anthony; to his place of worship in St. Antoine en Viennos (Dauphiné), Sigismund of Luxembourg, the king of Hungary, made a pilgrimage during the epidemic at the beginning of the fifteenth century.[117]

The indulgences of the Roman Church and the images of piety

If in the beginning Christians only knew eternity or an indeterminate expectation, "the triumph of Purgatory" in the thirteenth century prolonged the time of life and memory beyond death, the Church extending its power to the other world by developing the system of indulgences.[118] The Church, as a mediator of redemption, having the authority to dispense and apply the treasure of the merits of Christ and of the saints, grants forgiveness before God for the confessed sins of the believers, the indulgences also being capable of application to the souls in Purgatory: "Because the believers belong either to the militant Church or to the triumphant church, they [those in Purgatory] are in between and [...] may be submitted to the power of the priest due to the power of the keys",[119] says Albert of Hales, "the theorist and witness of this evolution", in an essential text for the development of the doctrine.

The indulgences were at first given only to the crusaders.[120] On the occasion of the first jubilee, in 1300, Pope Boniface VIII gave to all the pilgrims in Rome plenary indulgences – *plenissima venia peccatorum* – extending their action, in that year of forgiveness of sins, to the dead too, though initially salvation of the souls was possible only *per modum suffragii*. The successors of Boniface VIII granted indulgences to all those who served the Church in the late crusades against the Turks or the heretics. Martin V grants them in 1420 to those who would fight against the Hussites in Bohemia, in the war led by Emperor Sigismund of Luxembourg in which Transylvanian troops also participated.[121] Nicholas V[122] gave indulgences in 1447 and 1453, just after the fall of Constantinople, as did Calyx III in 1455 and Pius II in 1463,[123] to all of Christianity called to

fight against the Turks and to those who would aid the Crusade with donations and devotional acts,[124] contribute to the defense of the towns,[125] or help in the rebuilding of the churches destroyed by Muslims in Brașov in 1450[126] and Sebeș in 1455.[127] In the fifteenth century indulgences were used abundantly and could also be obtained through devotional acts:

> *In the middle of our lives we are still far away from death, not thanks to our merits, but to the prayers of the saints and the suffrages of the Church. The mediator between God and people, Jesus Christ, saved us. He offered his body on the altar of the cross of God the Father as an immaculate sacrifice and, by giving his holy blood, he left an invaluable treasure of indulgences useful for any evil people, whose administration was given to St. Peter and his successors and to each of us. The altar from the lectorius of Virgin Mary parish Church, raised in the honor of the Body of Christ, needs financial support. For the spiritual benefit of those who, in front of the altar, kneel and pray" Our Father" and "Hail Mary", willing to reward all those who repent and confess their sins, for those who in all the devotion pilgrimage days will come, will attend the mass and the other divine services and will help with books, candles, wills or other means which they will bring to the aforementioned altar, or for those who pray to God before this altar for their parents and benefactors' souls, every and anytime they will be doing these acts of devotion, from the Almighty God's clemency and by authority of Peter and Paul, 40 days of indulgences for their imposed punishments, by mercy and in God's name we give them forever.[128]*

This quite eloquent text of the letter issued on January 6, 1466, by Johannes, bishop of Moldavia and a supplicant on behalf of the bishop of Transylvania, clearly shows that the spiritual effort was considered the first condition of forgiveness.

> The indulgence theorists took pains to point out that indulgence was attached not to an image or a relic but rather to the act of devotion made before it, and this act was incomplete without full confession and penitence. On this basis many churchmen were willing to defend it mainly as a stimulus to penitence.[129]

In respect of what concerns the offerings that were demanded by the Church in order to obtain the indulgences, we should mention that among donations and acts of piety, testaments and prayers for the souls in Purgatory are specially asked for, as also shown in other documents: "*Pia mater*

ecclesia de animarum salute sollicita devotiones fidelium per quaedam munera spiritualia remissiones scilicet et indulgentias invitare consuevit" (1451).[130]

This is the frame in which scholars of the Middle Ages explain the new "book-keeping mentality" extended also to the imaginary, as an attempt of retrieving an order that was lost by the dissolution of the "qualitative" values of existence. The number and the measure, as means of order creation, were also applied to the afterlife, making "the time of Purgatory to be included in the time of the indulgences".[131] Thus, the years of forgiveness obtained by the living could proportionally shorten the period spent by the soul of the dead in Purgatory.[132] In Transylvanian Medieval documents this time is always specified: for pious visits, but also for donations to an altar or to a church, 40 days, 100 days or even 50 years of forgiveness – in the case of the Church of Virgin Mary in Brașov destroyed by the Turks that Pope Nicholas V wanted to see rebuilt – would be granted.[133].

The recurrence of certain themes in the Middle Ages figurative art is also linked to the indulgences, with some images extracted from their narrative context and being an intrinsic part of the devotional act. Selected from traditional religious iconography, these images (*Andachtsbilder*) "function as a concise symbol of great evocative power, emphasizing the emotional content of the subject in order to awaken pious thoughts". The indulgences were frequently attached to the relics preserved in the altar shrines decorated by sculptors; sometimes their meaning was extended to certain works of arts, which then became objects of pilgrimage.[134] Popular piety brings even today masses of believers to the miraculous icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Poland[135] or to the statues of Schöne Maria in Regensburg[136] and Madonna with Child in Șumuleu-Ciuc (1500) in Transylvania[137] – to mention just a few examples in central and eastern Europe. But it was the Church itself that promised forgiveness, for instance, to those who pray before *The Calvary* exposed in the French Monastery in Champmol;[138] monumental crosses were erected near churches, at crossroads or at the edge of roads that were spreading everywhere in Europe. As a traditional theme of piety, the *Crucifixion* also retains a strong position in Transylvanian art. The oldest known *Calvaries* are from Deal Frumos and Merghindeal and are considered representative works of the late Gothic woodcarving.[139] The painted images seem to convey more about the implications of the devotional act.[140] In symbolically concise images, on neutral backgrounds that

suggest atemporality, only the principal characters of the episode are represented: the Redeemer between Mary and John the Evangelist (Vlaha). The sacred blood of Jesus, symbol of the Eucharist, is gathered by flying angels in chalices (Mediaș and Cluj) or by a donor (Homorod). In Hărman, the Crucifixion is at the center of a representation of universal salvation through the sacrifice of Jesus. Near the cross, the three states of the world – *oratores, bellatores, laboratores* – pray together with the symbolic characters of the Biblical parable, the customs official and the Pharisee,[141] with apostles, prophets and saints.

The year after the 1400 Jubilee, in which Pope Boniface IX granted one hundred days of indulgence to those who would visit St. Michael Church in Cluj, he ecouraged, with the same promise of forgiveness, pilgrimage to the image of *The Prayer on the Mount of Olives*, an image that decorated the exterior of the edifice.[142] Only a similar benefit from indulgences could explain, for instance, the presence on the outside walls of St. Sebaldus Church in Nuremberg of no less than six independent carved votive images of the *Agony of the Lord*, a theme whose obvious funerary significance in German art has already been shown.[143] The same composition in high relief, usually placed outside, on the southern wall of the choir, can be found in all important churches, it also being one of the most frequently represented iconographic themes of Gothic carved stone in Transylvania. To the image referred to by the papal document in Cluj, we should add those from Feldioara (1410-1420), Sebeș (1430),[144] Sibiu 1480, Baia Mare and Biertan, where it can be found among the other reliefs of the pulpit carved by Ulrich of Brașov in 1523-1524[145].

Concerning the devotional images, Mâle speaks about the iconographical theme of *Vir Dolorum*, which represents the vision experienced by St. Pope Gregory the Great in the Santa Croce of the Gerusalemme Church in Rome in the sixth century.

> If after confession, seven '*Our Fathers*', seven '*Hail Marys*' and seven short '*St. Gregory's prayers*' are said before a representation of Christ of Mercy [*Vir Dolorum*], 6,000 years of 'real forgiveness' would be obtained. One claims that St. Gregory himself obtained this favor from Jesus Christ. In the course of the fifteenth century, the Popes increased the by that time already amazing number of indulgences such that the number of years of forgiveness became prodigious: a manuscript from St. Geneviève's Library speaks of 14,000 years, while an altar from Aix-la Chapelle speaks of 20,000 years, and the manuscripts and *livres d`Heures* from the end of the fifteenth century speaks of no less than 46,000 years of indulgences. An

enormous number, but one which the Church, viewing everything from the perspective of eternity, considered too small. Under the representation of the *Christ of Mercy* from St. Léonard in Oise something even more surprising can be read. In case. it says, that after prayers are said in front of the image, you visit a graveyard, you would gain as many years of forgiveness as were bodies buried in the graveyard since the beginning. In all these instances, as can be well seen, the image of *Christ of Mercy* had to be contemplated.[146]

The indulgences explain the extraordinary spread of this image, mainly in the funeral art, first reproduced by the Italians in the fourteenth century after the Byzantine prototype, which is preserved even today in the Church where the miraculous vision took place. The pilgrims brought it to the North, and at the end of the fifteenth century it was spread through engravings.[147] A replica by the Flemish artist Israel van Mechlen bears the message: "This is a copy of the holy image of piety which Pope Gregory the Great had made of his vision."[148] A complex scheme attributed to the Florentine Master of Mercy, preserved nowadays in Bologna, makes more explicit the link between *Vir Dolorum* and forgiveness, by including in the lower part of the image two praying souls that await their salvation by the accomplishment of devotional acts.

In Transylvania *Vir Dolorum* – Jesus in his grave – was also one of the most frequent devotional images, represented in the mural paintings of the second half of the fourteenth century. These can be found at Vlaha, where they are closest to the original, Strei – above the main entrance and in the presbytery, Mălâncrav – twice, once in the east on the axe of the altar's apse and again on the northern wall of the choir, and in same place at Nemşa, this location being linked with the presence of the Holy Sacrament in the tabernacle. At Homorod, above the niche that sheltered the *sacramentarium,* on the northern part of the ancient choir of the church, a dead Jesus is present between Mary and John the Evangelist in the iconographic manner that is favored by Italians artists, the style itself disclosing the influence of the Trecento painting after Giotto. The emotional charge introduced by the presence of Jesus' Mother and his beloved apprentice, those who remained with Jesus until his death, is emphasized by the tender gesture of the Holy Virgin, familiar in representations of the *Pietà*, that amplifies the sense of Jesus' sufferings, mystically perpetuated after his death. One century later, *Pietà* itself

became an image endowed with special indulgences and a solemn mass was to be officiated on the first Sunday after the octave of the Ascension.[149] But the most frequent iconographic type of this theme in central Europe, according to Mâle, which represents the moment of St. Gregory's vision during the mass, is preserved only once in Transylvanian Gothic art, in the funeral Chapel *Corporis Christi* in Sânpetru, where canonical data are not respected. The saint officiates with the deacon Peter attending and keeping his papal *triregnum*; in the moment of the consecration of the host three angels in prayer appear as a symbol of the Holy Trinity. Jesus as Child appears in the correlated image of the Transubstantiation above the Holy Sacrament. At Sânpetru this image belongs to the cycle of *suffrages* for the salvation of souls from Purgatory, "which humanity, confident in the promises of St. Gregory the Great, will release through their prayers".[150] In the figurative sculpture[151] *Vir Dolorum* is the image that decorated for a long time the stone tabernacles, directly linked with the Eucharistic meaning of the theme; this happened at Bazna (1504), Tărpiu (1504), and Vorumloc (beginning of sixteenth century). In the paintings of the second part of the fifteenth century, the image becomes more complex, with a detailed presentation of the instruments of passion, Middle Ages Christians "meditating upon these instruments of suffering and death that saved humanity". Such representations have their origins in the liturgical collections of the fourteenth century in which appear the first hymns of "Christ's instruments of passion". Again the frequency of these mystical compositions was due to the promised indulgences, sometimes recorded near the images: "Those who gaze at these instruments in honor of the passion will gain 6,000 years of forgiveness".[152] Held by Jesus, on the predella of the Gothic altars (Mălâncrav and Cincu),[153] or displayed on the background of *Vir Dolorum* between angels (Sântimbru), the instruments of passion are developed, under heraldic influence, into the independent *Arma Christi* motif.[154] In Sighișoara, alongside the instruments of passion held by an angel – the cross, the crown of thorns, the nails, the whip, the lance, the reed and the sponge – other things also appear, "which tell one after the other all the scenes of the drama": the cock of Peter's denial and the ladder of the descent from the Cross. *Arma Christi* are literally represented in Biertan on a red shield, the symbolic color for the bloody sufferings of The Lord.[155] The shield is held by an angel who interposes it in front of the arrow of divine anger sent to punish a humanity full of sins (*pestbild*), also protected by the

cloak of the Mother of Mercy, in this image that emphasizes, shortly before the Reformation, the tenets of faith of the Roman Church.

In the late Middle Ages, Mary, Mother of God and Mother of the Church, the protector and advocate of all souls, is worshiped more intensely than ever. The daily prayer of *Ave Maria* was considered sufficient for redemption.

> According to the documents, if one recited the rosary three times a week, one obtained twenty-three years, twenty-three weeks, and twenty-three days worth of indulgences; if one recited the rosary three times a day, one obtained 168 years, 231 weeks, and 21 days; if one recited it three times a day for a week, one received a bonus of 150 years; and finally, if one recited it nine times a day for a year one was entitled to 15,492 years of indulgences.[156]

In late mediaeval images, Mary is venerated mostly as the *Mother of Mercy* and as the *Virgin of the Apocalypse*, in accordance with the words of the Holy Scripture: "And a great sign was shown in the sky: a woman dressed with the sun, having the moon under her feet and wearing on her head a crown of twelve stars". In a time of debates and controversies, *Maria in Sole* is the first formula of figuration of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception.[157] The inscription *Concepta sine peccato* that sometimes accompanies the devotional image confirms it as a symbolic representation of the belief that God created the Holy Virgin before time and that she was untouched by the original sin. The reading before the image *Maria in Sole* of the prayer *Ave Sanctissima Virgo Maria mater dei, regina coeli, porta paradisi* guaranteed 11,000 years of indulgences,[158] which explains its impressive spread in the second half of the fifteenth century by means of German engraving. In Transylvania, the Woman of the Apocalypse is represented in the iconographical variant *Virgo inter virgines*, between Barbara and Catherine (Hărman, 1500[159].) In the painting donated by king Mathias Corvinus to the parish Church in Brașov, one of the Transylvanian masterpieces from the end of the fifteenth century, the theme *Maria in Sole* between the same saints, is metaphorically linked with the theme of the garden of paradise –*hortus conclusus*, an ancient attribute of the Virgin inserted in the Litanies.[160]

After the first quarter of the sixteenth century, only a few devotional themes were still in existence, being contested even by certain religious currents, especially those inspired by Luther's predecessors.

> It was naturally a recurrent worry of the popular devotional books that concrete, simple people were unable to sustain the finer points of distinction in the use of images, the cult of saints, and the doctrine of indulgences, and it is likely that many did distort or oversimplify.[161]

After the Reformation, the Protestants, through their attacks against indulgences, obliged the Catholic Church to reconsider its traditions, leading to the disappearance of certain devotional themes.[162]

Between the year 1300 – the time of the oldest preserved figurative representations, and 1526 – the year of the battle of Mohacs and a turning point in the history of Eastern Europe, a period of major ideological changes that prepared the ground for the Reformation, Catholic Transylvanian art reflected the mentality of a complex society, with problems that belong, in all respects, to "Western Medieval civilization". Once the contours of the field are established, other themes could be added to those already considered within the limits of my paper, and approached by means of a similar exploration of sensibilities and mentalities through the visual arts of late Middle Ages Transylvania.

The main ensembles and iconographic themes mentioned in the text:

Brașov: The image of the *Virgin with the Child*, crowned by angels between saints is preserved in the tympanum of the south-east portal of Mathias Corvinus, donated by the king between 1477 and 1490.

Biertan: *The Prayer in the Garden of Ghetsemani*, an image that together with other scenes decorates the carved pulpit made by Ulrich from Brașov for the parish church, in 1524-1526. In the chapel of the Catholic Tower, part of the fortified ensemble of the church, the following scenes are conserved: *The Mystic Betrothal of St. Catherine* (outside), *The Annunciation*, *The Adoration of the Magi*, *The Last Judgment*, *St. George and the Dragon*, *Psychostasis*, *Arma Christi*, *Mater Misericordiae*. c. 1500.

Dârjiu: Paul from Ung painted *Psychostasis* as an independent scene in 1419, along with other images inside the parish church, of which the most important are: *The Cycle of St. Ladislas* and the *Conversion of St. Paul*.

Ghelința: The fragmentary ensemble preserved in the sanctuary of the Reformed church, the rare representation of *The Holy Family with St.*

Anne among Apostles, dating from the last decades of the fourteenth century.

Hărman: The funeral chapel preserves an ensemble dominated by three iconographic themes: *The Crucifixion*, *The Last Judgement* with the representation of the *Works of Mercy*, *The Parable of Lazarus*, and *Abraham's Bosom*; the *Glorification of the Virgin* with the scenes of the *Annunciation*, the *Nativity* in the rare variant *Defensorium Mariae*, *Coronatio Virginis* and *Maria in Sole Between St. Barbara and St. Catherine*, c. 1500.

Homorod: *Pietà*, a devotional image from the end of the fourteenth century, painted over earlier frescoes (1300) on the northern wall, near the niche of the tabernacle; *The Crucifixion with a Donor*, c. 1419.

Mălâncrav: *Vir Dolorum*, represented twice in the painting of the choir of the Apa family church, in an ensemble dominated by *The Christologic Cycle*, saints, including St. Christopher, and *The Holy Family with St. Anne*. In the same place an altar is also preserved, with the image of *Vir Dolorum* with the instruments of passion on the predella, and *St. George, St. Michael and the Dragon*, on the outer wings.

Mugeni: On the northern wall of the nave of the parish church, along with other earlier representations (the lives of St. Ladislau and St. Margaret), the *Last Judgement*, with peculiar iconographic details, painted at the end of the fourteenth century.

Mediaș: Inside St Margaret's Church, on the southern wall of the nave are painted scenes from the *Christologic Cycle* and *The Last Judgment*, as independent images (1420). The altar, dating after the 1480s, is dedicated to *Christ's Passion*, represented around the central image of the Crucifixion.

Sânpetru: In the *Corporis Christi* Chapel a coherent ensemble is preserved, with the following scenes: *St. Michael Punishing Lucifer*, *The Coronation of the Virgin*, *Deesis*, *The Martyrdom of St. Stephen and Lawrence*, *The Suffrages of the Souls in Purgatory* (*St. Gregory's Mass*, *Acts of Carity*, the *Transubstantiation*, *Psychostasis*). On the vaults the evangelists and the doctors of the Latin Church are represented, and on the arch the prophets. Dated ca. 1400.

Sighișoara: Among other images inside the Church "on the Hill": *Arma Christy*, *The Last Judgement* with the scenes of the *Paradise*, *Hell* and the *Limbo of Children*, *St. Christopher*, *Psychostasis* on the net vault (1483). At the basis of the western tower, Johannes Kendlinger from Sankt

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Wolfgang painted four passion scenes in 1488, and a disciple of his, scenes of St. Francis' life.

Strei: Above the main entrance to the small family church, painted at the end of the fourteenth century by a team led by master Grozie, originally from North Dalmatia, the *Vir Dolorum* image was painted; the same image inside, in the axe of the choir. Outside the sanctuary stands the huge image of *St. Christopher*.

Vincentius from Sibiu: Author of the image of the dying man – *Ars moriendi*, on the tympanum of an altar painted around 1520, now preserved in the Brukenthal Museum in Sibiu.

Vlaha: In the sanctuary of the parish church, the devotional images *Vir Dolorum* and *The Crucifixion* are preserved, dating approximately from the 1380s.

1. Sighişoara, the Church "on the Hill". The western wall of the nave.
The Last Judgement: *Deesis*, *Angels with the Instruments of the
Passion*, the *Resurrection of the Dead*, *Paradise*, the *Mouth of Hell as
Leviathan*, the *Limbo of the Children.* End of the 15th century

2. Sighișoara, the Church "on the Hill". The western wall of the nave.
The Last Judgement: *Paradise*, the *Mouth of Hell as Leviathan*,
the *Limbo of the Children*. Around 1500

3. Sighișoara, the Church "on the Hill". The vault of the nave.
St Michael. 1483

4. Sânpetru, the Funeral Chapel of the Parish Church. The northern wall.
The Suffrages for the Souls in Purgatory: Woks of Mercy. Around 1400

5. Sânpetru, the Funeral Chapel of the Parish Church. The northern wall.
The Suffrages for the Souls in Purgatory: The Eucharist. Around 1400

6. Mediaș, the Evangelic Church. The vault of the choir. *Jesus and His Church Symbolized by the Virgin: Evangelists, Doctors of the Catholic Church* and *Apostles* with scrolls with fragments of the Creed. Around 1500

7. Hărman, the Funeral Chapel. The southern wall. *Jesus and His Church*, detail: *Evangelists and Doctors of the Catholic Church* on the vaults, the *Creed of the Prophets and Apostles* on the walls. End of the 15ᵗʰ century

8. a. Sântana de Mureș, The Presbyterian Church. The choir. *Holy Family with Anna Mettercia Worshiped by Angels.* End of the 14th century

8. b. Sântana de Mureş, The Presbyterian Church. The choir.
Anna Mettercia. End of the 14th century

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9. Alma pe Târnava. The Presbyterian Church. *St George.* The southern
wall of the choir. Beginning of the 15th century

10. Strei, the Orthodox Church. The main entrance. *Vir Dolorum.*
End of the 14ᵗʰ century

11. Mălâncrav, the Evangelic Church. The triumphal arch.
Mater Misericordiae. 1405

12. Sighișoara, the Church "on the Hill". The triumphal arch.
Vera Icon. 1483

13. Sibiu, the Evangelic Church. The entrance into the sacristy.
The Prayer in the Garden of Ghetsemani. 15th century

14. Sighișoara, the Church "on the Hill". The choir. *Arma Christi.*
15th century

15. Hărman, the Funeral Chapel. The vault. *Maria in Sole.*
End of the 15th century

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16. Brașov, the Black Church. The south-eastern entrance.
Virgo inter virgines. End of the 15th century

NOTES

1   Émile Mâle, *L'art religieux du XIIIe siècle en France. Étude sur l'iconographie du Moyen Âge et sur ses sources d'inspiration*, Paris 1990, p. 11.

2   Victor Roth, *Geschichte der deutschen Plastik in Siebenbürgen*, Strassbourg, 1906, (herausg. von) Victor Roth, *Die deutsche Kunst in Siebenbürgen*, Sibiu, 1934; I. D. Ştefănescu, *L'art byzantin et l'art lombard en Transylvanie*, Paris, 1938; Bálogh Jolán, *Az erdely Renaissance. 1460-1541* [The Transylvanian Renaissance. 1460-1541], I, Cluj, 1943; Radocsáy Dénes, *A középkori magyarország falkepei*, Budapest, 1954; Virgil Vătăşianu, *Istoria artei feudale în ţările române* [The History of the Feudal Art in the Romanian Provinces], I, Bucureşti, 1959; Alfred Stange, *Deutsche Malerei der Gotik. Österreich und der ostdeutsche Siedelungsraum von Danzig bis Siebenbürgen in der zeit von 1400 bis 1500*, München-Berlin, 1961; Vasile Drăguţ, "Iconografia picturilor murale gotice din Transilvania", [The Iconography of the Gothic Wall Paintings in Transylvania] in *Pagini de veche artă românească*, Bucureşti, II, 1972; *Arta gotică în România* [The Gotic Art in Romania], Bucureşti, 1979; *Arta românească* [Romanian Art], I, Bucureşti, 1982.

3   *Documente privind istoria României* [Documents Concerning the History of Romania], seria C, Transilvania, Bucureşti, 1951; *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Deutschen in Siebenbürgen*, I-VII, Hermanstadt, 1892 - Bucureşti, 1991. My deepest gratitude goes to Gernot Nüssbacher, co-author of the sixth and seventh volumes and coordinator of the eighth, for his constant support and for the translation of the Latin texts.

4   Émile Mâle*, L'art religieux de la fin du Moyen Âge en France. Étude sur l'iconographie du Moyen Âge et sur ses sources d'inspiration*, Paris, 1949, p. II.

5   *Legenda Aurea,* the most used literary source of the medieval art was elaborated by the theologian, hagiograph and Dominican preacher Jacobus da Voragine, Bishop of Genova, around 1260. A major influence on artistic representations was also exercised by works such as *Meditationes vitae Christi*, attributed to St Bonaventura, The Visions of St Brigitta of Sweden etc. See Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Âge*, p. 28.

6   Famous in this sense is the contract between the French painter Enquerand Quarton and Jean de Montagnac for the panel of the *Coronation of the Virgin* finished in 1454, at Villeneuve-les-Avignon; see Michel Laclote, Dominique Thiébaut, *L'École d'Avignon*, Paris, 1985.

7   "Schongauer graveur. La gravure en Allemagne au XVe siècle", in *Martin Schongauer. Maître de la gravure Rhénane vers 1450-1491*, Paris, Musée du Petit Palais, 1991-1992, p. 84.

8   Sigismund of Luxembourg was the son of Charles the IV (1346 - 1378), the Emperor who made Prague the capital of the German Holy-Roman Empire.

His second son, Vaclav the IV, was King of Bohemia (1378-1419), while Sigismund, King of Hungary, became Roman King in 1410, King of Bohemia (1419-1421 and 1436–1437), King of Italy in 1431 and Emperor beginning in 1433.

[9] In 1355, the Romanians, predominant from an ethnic and demographic point of view, are mentioned for the last time in documents of the other Transylvanian nations: "*cum universus Nobilibus, Saxonibus, Syculis et Olachis*". In order to preserve their privileges, some Romanian *cnezial* families converted from Orthodoxy to Catholicism, finally leading to their hungarization. See Stephen Fischer-Galaţi, Dinu C. Giurescu, Ioan-Aurel Pop (coordinators)*, O istorie a românilor. Studii critice* [A History of the Romanians. Critical Studies], Cluj-Napoca, 1998, pp. 95-98, and Adrian Andrei Rusu, *Ioan de Hunedoara şi românii din vremea lui* [John of Hunedoara and the Romanians of his Time], Cluj-Napoca, 1999, where the problem of the Romanian Nobility and the consequences of the union of the Orthodox and Catholic Churches, after the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1436-1439) in Transylvania is widely treated.

[10] Carter Lindberg, *The European Reformation*, Massachussets, 2000, p. 25.

[11] *Cronicon Dubnicense*, written around 1358, attests to the great number of victims of the plague in these territories See Paul Cernovodeanu and Paul Binder, *Cavalerii Apocalipsului. Calamităţile naturale din trecutul României (până la 1800).* [The Apocalypse Knights. Natural Calamities in the Romanian Past up to 1800], Bucureşti, 1993. On a European level, around 30% of the population disappeared during the epidemic in 1348-1350. See Lindberg, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

[12] The Roman Church is torn by crises without precedent: the removal of the Papality headquarters in Avignon, the "Babylonian captivity" (1309-1378), the "great schism" (1378–1417), during which two or even three Popes dispute their legitimacy. Against this background appear the reformers John Wycliff in England and Jan Huss in Bohemia who, though condemned by the Church at Council in Konstanz (1414–1417), when the schism ends with the effective involvement of King Sigismund of Luxembourg, prepare the scene for the Reformation of the beginning of the sixteenth century. See Lindberg, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

[13] "Of war, plague and starvation, release us God", in Jean Delumeau, *Frica în Occident (secolele XIV-XIII). O cetate asediată* [Fear in Occident (Fourteenth – Eighteenth Centuries). A Besieged Fortress], Bucureşti, 1986, I, p. 274; see also Cernovodeanu and Binder, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

[14] Michael Baxandall, *The Limewood Sculptors of the Renaissance Germany*, London, 1980, fig. 140.

[15] The first conquest of the Turks in Europe was Gallipoli, followed by the whole Balkan Peninsula. The resistance of the countries from the north Danube kept the Turks out of central Europe for about 150 years. Turkish invasions in Transylvania in 1432, 1436, 1438, 1442, 1444 and so on.

16   Delumeau, *op. cit*, II, p.131.
17   Filippo Scolari or Pippo Spano (1369-1426), from Florence, Italy. Count of Timiş since 1404, supreme commander of the royal army, one of the closer counselors to King Sigismund of Luxembourg. Considered one of the greatest *strategists* of his time, being the central figure of the resistance against the Turks at the lower Danube after the death of Mircea the Old, prince of Walachia. See Ioan Haţegan, *Filippo Scolari. Un condotier italian pe meleaguri dunărene* [Filippo Scolari. An Italian *condotiere* on Danubian lands], Timişoara, 1997]
18   Drăguţ, *Arta*, p. 46 and 78.
19   Delumeau, *op. cit.*, II, 118.
20   Iancu of Hunedoara came from a Romanian (*cnez)* family, ennobled for military services by King Sigismund of Luxembourg. Until 1429 he was in the service of the Florentine *condotiere* Filippo Scolari. Between 1431 and 1433 he improved his military skill in Milan, before entering the service of the King. See Rusu, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-46. In 1441 Iancu became prince (*voïvoda)* of Transylvania, then governor of Hungary in 1446 and captain general of the kingdom in 1453. Starting in 1441, Iancu achieved a series of brilliant victories over the Turks, even on the south of the Danube in the territory of Serbia and Bulgaria. As governor of Hungary he created a common military system together with Walachia, Moldavia, Albania and certain Serbian forces. See Fisher, Giurescu, Pop, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-106.
21   Fisher, Giurescu, Pop, *op. cit.*, p. 106.
22   St Giovanni da Capistrano (1386-1456). As an "inborn inquisitor", he fought endlessly against the enemies of the Latin Church: *Fraticelli* in Italy, Hussites, Turks and Jews in central Europe. See Delumeau, II, p. 154.
23   Haţegan, *op. cit.*, p. 150.
24   Ivan Cloulas, *Lorenzo Magnificul*, Bucureşti, 1987, p. 318.
25   "Preserved still in a great number and spread over a large territory, the peasant fortresses of the fortified churches are the most important and original contribution that the Transylvanian architecture made to European heritage", in Drăguţ, *Arta,* p. 113. Nowadays, a group of such fortresses are monuments on the World Heritage List.
26   After the bloody repression of the rebellion the "*unio trium nationum*" was constituted – an alliance between the Hungarian, Saxon and Sikler Nobles against all *inner* and outer dangers, an act that in effect cancelled any rights of the Romanians in Transylvania See Fisher, Giurescu, Pop, *op. cit.*, p. 98.
27   In 1521 the Turks conquered Belgrade, an extremely important defensive position of Europe. In the Diets of the Empire in Speyer (1523) and Nuremberg (1524), the Hungarian delegates begged for help without success, one explanation being that "in Europe, all those who were not directly menaced were indifferent to the Turkish danger". M. P. Gilmore, *apud* Delumeau, *op. cit.*, II, p. 124.

28 Cernovodeanu, Binder, *op. cit.*, p. 39 - 40.

29 Gernot Nussbächer, *Din cronici și hrisoave* [From Chronicles and Documents], București, 1987, p. 55.

30 *Urkundenbuch*, VI, pp. 516-517, doc. 3901, *apud* Nussbächer, *op. cit.*, pp. 232-233.

31 Cernovodeanu, Binder, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38.

32 *1.4.4.8. Annorum domini numeris dum fluxerit iste – Hoc opus expletum est auxiliante deo – tempore quo triduo Gerhardi sit tibi sign – Nix gravis etboreas fregit et lapst – hui Opifex Jacobus – Kendlinger de s. Wolf. Apud* Cristoph Machat, *Die Bergkirche und die Mittelalterliche Baukunst in Siebenbürgen*, München, 1977, p. 20.

33 Otto Benesch, *The Art of the Renaissance in Northern Europe. Its Relation to the Contemporary Spiritual and Intellectual Movements*, Massachusetts, 1974, p. 10.

34 Benesch, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

35 Delumeau, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 7-8.

36 Mircea Eliade, *Istoria religiilor și credințelor religioase* [History of Religions and Religious Beliefs], București, 1988, III, p. 217.

37 Calpern, apud Lindberg, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

38 Lindberg, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

39 Philippe Ariès, *Essais sur l'histoire de la mort en Occident du Moyen Âge à nos jours*, Paris, 1977, p. 97.

40 J. Heers, apud Philippe Ariès, *Omul în fața morții* [Man Faced with Death], București, 1998, I, p. 262.

41 Le Goff, *apud* Ariès, *Omul*, I, p. 261.

42 Georges Duby, *Arta și societatea. 980-1420* [Art and Society. 980-1420] București, 1987, II, p. 106.

43 *Urkundenbuch*, V, doc. 2459. The king's donation was the ruined royal manor near Saints Peter and Paul monastery in Brașov.

44 In the early decades of the fifteenth century, Filippo Scolari's court in Timișoara and that of Oradea, where his cousin Andrea Scolari was bishop between 1409 and 1416, were the main centers of Italian art and culture in the area. In 1425, he invited Masolino da Panicale to decorate his funeral chapel in Székesfehérvár. "Indirect evidence" indicates the painter's presence in Timișoara and Oradea. Unfortunately, all the works created during this period that ended in 1427, were later destroyed. The *postumus* portrait of the *condotiere* along with those of King Sigismund and cardinal Branda Castiglione, papal legate in Hungary since 1410, were painted by Masolino, in the *Feast of Herod* in the baptistery in Castilione Olona, in 1435. But the best-known portrait of Pippo Spano is that by Andrea del Castagno, in the Villa Legnaia near Florence (today in the Uffizzi), included among the "uomini famosi" of the town. See Hațegan, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-142.

45   Bálogh, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-102. Nicholas Bethlen, member of the king's suite, was also the donor of the wooden painted ceiling in the church in Goganvarolea (around 1500), a masterpiece of Transylvanian art, now preserved at the National Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest.

46   *Idem*, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

47   *Urkundenbuch*, III, p. 301, doc. 1494.

48   5 November,1447, *idem*, V, doc. 2605.

49   *Ibidem*, V, 2616.

50   *Ibidem*, V, 2662.

51   *Ibidem*, VI, pp. 219-220, doc. 3432. The document also mentions "our house with *piscina* ", a golden belt with a dragon-shaped buckle, a *missale* and a chalice, as donations for the church in Sibiu, "a piscina with a yard" for the friars from Cluj and half of his possessions in Albeşti (a house with a yard and a mill) for the friars of Sighişoara. For pilgrimages to the same sacred places, Laurencio Wermenser of Cluj and his wife Agnes also made gifts in 1458. *Idem*, VI, 3155. See also Ariès, *Omul,* I, p. 265.

52   *Ibidem*, VI, 3325.

53   *Ibidem*, III, p. 301, doc. 1494.

54   *Ibidem*, VI, p. 54, doc. 3180. The donation consists also of candle wax.

55   *Ibidem*, VI, p.166, doc. 3350.

56   *Ibidem*, VI, 3256.

57   Part of the documentary information called on in this context was published in Dana Jenei, "Pictura murală a Capelei *Corporis Christi* din Sânpetru, jud. Braşov", [The Mural Paintings of the *Corporis Christi* Chapel in Sânpetru, district of Braşov], in *Ars Transilvaniae*, V, 1995, pp. 93-108.

58   Ariès, *Essais*, pp. 30-33.

59   Duby, *op. cit.*, II, p. 122.

60   *Idem*, pp. 93-108.

61   Ariès, *Omul*, I, p. 133.

62   *Idem*, p. 252.

63   Katharina Lukachy left in her testament of 1471 money for the St Elisabeth and Holy Spirit hospitals in Cluj, in *Urkundenbuch*, VI, 3879.

64   Jacques Le Goff, *Imaginariul medieval* [The Medieval Imaginary], Bucureşti, 1991, pp. 130-131.

65   Mâle*, Fin du Moyen Âge,* p. 71, fig. 35.

66   Jacques Le Goff, *Naşterea Purgatoriului* [The Birth of the Purgatory], I, Bucureşti, 1995, pp. 90-91.

67   *Idem*, *op. cit.*, I, p. 209 and Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Âge*, p. 407.

68   This theme was not mentioned in the previous bibliography.

69   Gervais Dumeiges, *Textes Doctrinaux du Magistére de l'Église de la Foi Catholique*, Paris, 1989, p. 506.

70   This theme was not mentioned in the previous bibliography. About the painter, see Gernot Nussbächer, „Künstlerische Interferenzen zwischen

Siebenbürgen und der Walachei zu beginn des 16. Jahrhunderts. Zum Werk des Hermannstädter Malers Vincentius", in *AusUrkunden und Chroniken. Beitrage zur Siebenbürgischen Heitmatkunde*, Bukarest, 1990, pp. 23-26.

71   Vasile Drăguț, *Picturile murale ale Bisericii reformate din Mugeni* [The Wall Paintings of the Reformed Church in Mugeni], in *SCIA*, 1964, 2, pp. 307-320.

72   Le Goff, *Imaginariul*, pp. 130-131.

73   *Idem*, p. 133.

74   *Ibidem*, p. 181.

75   Eliade, *op. cit.*, III, p. 217.

76   *The Holy Bible* [King James Bible], Cambridge University Press, n.d., p. 221.

77   *In infernus non est redemptio* - St Augustine, *apud* Jacques de Voragine, *La legende dorée*, Paris, 1907, II, p. 332. This assertion is sometimes written on scrolls accompanying the images of Hell. See Richard Cavendish, *Visions of Heaven and Hell*, London, 1977.

78   Le Goff, *Nașterea*, I, p. 68.

79   *Idem*, pp. 69-70.

80   Dumeiges, *op. cit.*, p. 512.

81   E. Kirschbaum, *Lexicon der Christlichen Ikonographie*, II, 1970, pp. 16-20.

82   Le Goff, *Nașterea,* II, p. 321.

83   *Idem*, p. 322.

84   Michel Vovelle, in *Les Âmes du Purgatoire ou le travail du deuil*, Paris, 1996, pp. 74-82, mentions the images of Purgatory from Notre-Dame-de Benva, Celle Macra, the detail of Enquerrand Quarton's *Coronation of the Virgin*; see also those analyzed in Michelle Fournié's studies for the region of Midi-Pirenées, and by Anca Bratu for Liguria. I must stress that, excepting The Mass of St Gregory and the images of the Liturgy of Souls present in the French illuminated manuscripts or in Spanish and German painting, such a display of the suffrages as in Sânpetru can be found only in south German painting: at Rothenburg – 1380, the closest to and relatively contemporaneous with the example under discussion, at Regensburg - 1480, at Augsburg - 1520 and in Austrian painting, at Pustertal -1525.

85   Vovelle, *apud* Philippe Ariés, *Images de l'Homme*, p. 168.

86   Jenei, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-108.

87   Nicolaus, the dean of the Diocese of Brașov was priest in Sânpetru between 1395 and 1416, when the painting was probably made; see also Gernot Nussbächer, *Kapelle in der Kirchenburg. Mittelalterliche Wandmalerei in Petersberg*, in *Karpatenrundschau*, Kronstadt, 41/13 Oktober 1994.

88   The previous references to the murals in Sânpetru interpret the iconography of the scenes on the northern wall of the chapel differently, without specifying the existence of this coherent cycle of images of the sacrifices for the souls of the dead in Purgatory.

89   His theological oeuvre played a fundamental role in the elaboration of the future concept of Purgatory.

90   I have already mentioned that the books donated by Jacobus of Roderbach to the Benedictine monastery St. Peter and Paul in Braşov include St Gregory the Great's *Homilies* and *Dialogs*, that attest to the interest for this kind of literature in Transylvania; see *Urkundenbuch*, VI, 3256. Count Nicolaus Apa asked in his will for 30 masses to be officiated in three churches after his death; *Urkundenbuch*, V, 2605.

91   Michelle Fournié, "Deux représentations méridionales du Purgatoire: Flavin en Rouergue et Martignac en Quercy", in *Annales du Midi*, T. 98, 175, 1986, p. 381.

92   Le Goff, *Naşterea*, I, p. 293.

93   In other representations of the Purgatory, the angels carry the gifts presented to the offertory of the liturgy for the dead: the bread, the wine and the candle, while St Michael is invoked for his power over the souls. See Picot, *op. cit.*, p. 422.

94   Duby, *op. cit.*, II, p. 92.

95   Vovelle, *op. cit.*, p. 71, fig. 22.

96   Two altars dedicated to the Archangel, dating from the first half of the fifteenth century, are preserved in Museo de Arta Cataluna in Barcelona and have as their central image, the *Mass for the Souls*. See Lamberto Font, Enrique Bague y Juan Petit, *La Eucaristia. El tema Eucaristico en el arte de España*, Barcelona, 1952, p. 125, fig. 56 and 57.

97   Fournié, *op. cit.*, pp. 363-385 and Marie-Pasquine Subes-Picot, "Les Peintures murales de Martignac à Puy l'Évêque", in *Congrès archéologique de France*, 1989, Quercy-Paris, 1993, pp. 404-428.

98   Martin Zlatohlávec, Jiøí Fajt, Jan Royt, Milena Bartlová, Hana Hlaváèová, *The Bride in the Enclosed Garden*, Prague, 1995.

99   Fournié, *op. cit.*, p. 380. Along with Martignac en Quercy and Enguerrand Quarton's painting, Sânpetru is another example of iconographic association between the themes of the Coronation of the Virgin and the souls in Purgatory, which would suggest the existence of a program in this sense. In this Transylvanian ensemble, Mary's intercession is emphasized by the presence of the *Deesis* under the image of the coronation.

100   Jean-Claude Schmidt, *Strigoii. Viii şi morţii în societatea medievală* [The Ghosts. The Quick and the Dead in Mediaeval Society], Bucureşti, 1998, p. 210.

101   Le Goff, *Naşterea*, II, p. 251.

102   Louis Réau, *L'iconographie de l'Art Chrétiene*, Paris, 1907, tome III, II, p. 789.

103   Le Goff, "Les Limbes", in *Nouvelle Revue de Psychanalyse*, 34, 1986, pp.151-166.

104   Le Goff, *Naşterea*, II, p. 78.

105   Le Goff, "Les Limbes", p. 166.

106   Vovelle, *op. cit.*, p. 80, fig. 26.

[107] This scene was not mentioned in the previous bibliography.

[108] I kindly thank my colleague Jánó Mihály for this observation. Graffiti of the *Hic fuit* type are preserved everywhere inside the medieval churches of Transylvania, the oldest being those from Mălâncrav (1404/1405) and Sânpetru (1462). See also Jenei, *op. cit.*, p. 44, and Gernot Nussbächer, *Kapelle in der Kirchenburg. Mittelalterliche Wandmalerei in Petersberg*, in *Karpatenrundschau*, Kronstadt, 41/13 Oktober 1994.

[109] Dana Jenei, "Tema Credo în pictura murală din Transilvania medievală" [The Theme of the Creed in the Medieval Murals from Transylvania], in *Ars Transsilvaniae*, Cluj-Napoca, 2000-2001.

[110] Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Age*, pp. 217-218.

[111] Dana Jenei, "Sântana de Mureș. Pictura murală a Bisericii Reformate" [Sântana de Mureș. The Murals of the Reformed Church], in *In memoriam* Radu Popa, Bistrița, 2003.

[112] *Anna, radix uberrima,/Arbor tu salutifera,/Virgas producens triplices/Septem onusta fructibus*. The late Western visual imagery preserves literal representations of Anna from whom grows, as from a tree of Jesse, a trunk with three branches – the three Maries, and seven fruits – Jesus with six of the apostles. The late images from around 1500 also show St. Joachim, Cleophas, Salomas, Zebedee, Alpheus, Joseph; see Mâle, *L'art religieux de la fin du Moyen Age*, pp. 217-218. Such an image is preserved on the central panel of the Transylvanian Renaissance altar in Șaeș (1520); see Gisela und Otmar Richter, *Siebenbürgische Flügelaltäre*, Thaur bei Innsbruck, 1992, plate LXII.

[113] Vlasta Dvoøácová, "La Légende de St. Ladislas découverte dans L'Église de Velká Lomnica. Iconographie, style et circonstances de la diffusion de cette légende", in *BMI*, 4, 1972.

[114] Vasile Drăguț, *Legenda "eroului de frontieră" în pictura medievală din Transilvania* [The legend of the "frontier hero" in the medieval painting in Transylvania], in *MIA*, 2, 1974. László Gyula: *A Szent László-legenda középkori falképei*, Budapest, 1993.

[115] Baxandall, *op. cit.*,,, fig. 140. This image shows at the same time the power of the prayer of the Rosary. In the Mass composed by Pope Clement VI in 1348 during the plague, the Holy Virgin is expressly called on to intercede; see Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Age*, p. 201. C. Reitter, in his *Mortilogus* (1508), implores: "Open your haven to the miserables, o Mother! Under your wings we the uncaring hide, safe from the black plague and its poisoned arrows". Delumeau, *op. cit.*, I, p. 238. The same text of the *Mater Misericordiae* panel is preserved in the Cathedral in Munich (1510): "*Tu que sola potes aeterni numinis iram flectere, Virgine, O, nos protege diva sinu*".

[116] *Martin Schongauer*, p. 202.

[117] Il nous garde de mort subite/Et quiconque le requiert/De bon cœur, il a ce qu'il quiert. *Livres d'Heures*, 1395-1400, in Mâle, *L'art religieux de la fin du Moyen Age*, p. 185 ; or, *Cristophori faciem dia quacumque tueris/illa nempe die mala morte non moris* (Buxheim, 1423), *Per te serena datur, morbi*

genus omne fugatur/ Atra fames, pestis Christi Christophore testis (Worms), in Paul Clemen, *Die gotischen Monumentalmalerei in der Rheinlande*, Düsseldorf, 1930, p. 107.

[118] Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Âge*, p. 189.

[119] Le Goff, *Nașterea,* II, p. 95.

[120] *Idem*, p. 121.

[121] *Ibidem*, p. 252 and John Bossy, *Creștinismul în Occident. 1400-1700* [Christianity in the West. 1400-1700], București 1998.

[122] Hațegan, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

[123] *Urkundenbuch*, V, p. 190, 2571.

[124] *Idem*, VI, 3343.

[125] In the letter of indulgence addressed to St Michael's Cathedral in Alba Iulia, Pius II remembers the atrocities committed by the "barbarian" Turks in Constantinople and in numerous other Christian places; *ibidem*, VI, 3281.

[126] In 1439, King Albert of Habsburg, allowed the citizens of Brașov to use the indulgence funds accorded by the Council in Basel for the fortification of the town; *ibidem*, V, 2332.

[127] *Ibidem,* V, 2709.

[128] *Ibidem,*V, 2976.

[129] *Ibidem*, V, p. 334, 2761. A similar content is also found in Carter Lindberg, *The European Reformation Sourcebook*, Boston, 2000, the documents *Unigenitus Dei Filius*, 1343, 1.10, p. 11 and *Salvator noster*, 1476, 1.11, pp. 11-12.

[130] Baxandall, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

[131] *Urkundenbuch*, V, p. 334, 2761. Jacob, bishop of Vidin grants 40 days of indulgence to those who visit with devotion the *Corpus Christi* altar in the parish church of Brașov.

[132] Le Goff, *Nașterea*, II, p. 87.

[133] Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

[134] Victor Adrian, *Biserica Neagră* [The Black Church], București, 1968, p. 13.

[135] Baxandall, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

[136] Mária Prokopp, *Italian Trecento Influence on Murals in East-Central Europe, Particularly Hungary*, Budapest, 1983, p. 68.

[137] Baxandall, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

[138] Adrian Rusu (coordinator), *Dicționarul mănăstirilor din Transilvania, Banat Crișana și Maramureș* [The Dictionary of the Monasteries in Transylvania, Banat, Crișana and Maramureş], Cluj-Napoca, 2000, p. 173.

[139] Duby, *op. cit.*, II, p. 116.

[140] The figure of the crucified Christ from Deal Frumos, preserved today at the Brukenthal Museum in Sibiu, was attributed to the artistic milieu of Veit Stoss; see Vasile Drăguţ, *Dicționar enciclopedic de artă medievală românească* [Encyclopedic Dictionary of Romanian Mediaeval Art], București, 1976, p. 78.

141   A *Crucifixion* from Bologna dated 1362, in spite of serious damage to the color layer, seems to contain in its lower part naked figures in flames, most probably penitent souls awaiting their salvation.

142   This theme was not mentioned in the previous bibliography.

143   Viorica Marica, *Biserica Sf. Mihail din Cluj* [St Michael's Church in Cluj], București, 1967, p. 7.

144   Mâle shows that the *Prayer in the Ghetsemani Garden* was an image represented "without end" on the German tombstones and in graveyards.

145   Probably originally placed in the same place on the outer wall of the church, now inside.

146   Gheorghe Arion, *Sculptura gotică din Transilvania* [The Gothic Sculpture in Transylvania] Cluj, 1974, p. 114.

147   Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Âge,* p. 100.

148   *Idem*, p. 101.

149   *Ibidem*, p. 99.

150   *Ibidem*, p. 127.

151   *Ibidem*, p. 103.

152   Arion, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

153   Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Âge*, p. 104.

154   Richter, *op. cit.*, plate LXI.

155   Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Âge*, p. 104.

156   This theme was not mentioned in the previous bibliography. The Master E.S. is, for instance, one of the artists who created the so-called *Passion Coats of Arms – Passionswappen*, devotional images in which on the surface of a shield all these elements are displayed.

157   Keith Moxey, "Seeing through Schongauer, in *Le Beau Martin, Études et mises au point.* Actes du colloque. Musée d'Unterlinden, Colmar, 1991. In the spreading of this devotion, but also connected to certain images of the Virgin Mary, an important role was played by the brotherhoods of the Rosary; see also Baxandall, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

158   The doctrine accepted by the Council of Basel in 1439, promoted by Pope Sixt IV in 1476, was proclaimed as a dogma at Sorbonne in 1496; see Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Âge,* p. 209.

159   Baxandall, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

160   This theme was not mentioned in the previous bibliography.

161   Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Âge*, pp. 213-214.

162   *Idem*, p. 58.

163   Mâle, *Fin du Moyen Âge,* p. 103.

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CIRCULATING IMAGES: THE TRANSLATION OF THE GLOBAL INTO THE LOCAL

I. THEORETICAL QUESTIONS REGARDING GLOBALIZATION

I.1. Globalization and hermeneutics

The impact of globalization is mostly considered in economic or socio-political terms. Ulrich Beck, for example, in an answer to the question 'what is globalization?', distinguishes between *globalism*, which is in fact a cover for neo-liberal ideology and reduces all the dimensions of globalization – ecology, culture, politics and civil society – to economic phenomena subject to the sway of the world market system; *globality*, which refers to our present perceptions of living in a world society, in which social relationships are not entirely integrated into and determined by nation-state politics; and *globalization*, which denotes the processes in which sovereign states are crisscrossed and undermined by transnational actors.(Beck:100-101).

Though the market, transnational actor and nation-state relations, and the new perceptions of a 'world society' will be of constant concern in our undertaking, this essay will shift the focus of analysis from the macro level to the micro level as regards the sense individuals make of globalization. The approach we have adopted is multiple and eclectic: it is informed by sociological and ethnographic studies, by the perspectives of cultural and media studies, and at the same time by a more singular approach derived from hermeneutics. From a hermeneutic perspective, globalization is conceived of largely in terms of a cultural translation. Support for this view has come from the widely acknowledged work of sociologists such as Jonathan Friedman, John Thompson and John Tomlinson. The latter turns to hermeneutics and translation when rethinking the idea of cultural imperialism and of Americanization. He rejects the thesis of the homogenization of culture as a consequence of globalization on the grounds that "culture simply does not transfer in this unilinear way. Movement between cultural /geographical areas always

involves interpretation, translation, mutation, adaptation, and 'indigenization' as the receiving culture brings its own cultural resources to bear, in dialectical fashion, upon 'cultural imports'" (Tomlinson, culture and globalization, 1999: 84).[1] Like Tomlinson, John Thompson questions the thesis of Americanization via the dissemination of mass media, a highly influential thesis advanced in the 1970s by Herbert Schiller. According to Thompson, the proponents of Americanization appear to ignore "the hermeneutic appropriation which is an essential part of the circulation of symbolic forms" (Thompson 1995:175).

It is this hermeneutic appropriation in global–local interaction that this essay will concentrate upon, while at the same time calling on the Romanian experience of exposure to the global media to adduce further arguments against the thesis of homogenization.

I.2. Walter Benjamin on translation

The perception of globalization in terms of cultural exchanges and of hermeneutic operations may benefit from the idiosyncratic views held by Walter Benjamin on translation. In his essay "On the Task of the Translator" (Benjamin 1968) Benjamin starts from the assumption that a translation is necessarily a betrayal of the original, a betrayal that is, however, valorized positively as a kind of a Derridian supplement. Though derivative, "issued from the afterlife of the work of art", translations enjoy a higher status than do the originals. They are essential to and almost a constitutive part of the originals, whose worth is measured in terms of their "translatability". The more "translatable" texts are, the more significant ("basic") they are considered to be. The original is thus deprived of its "auratic" position and the translated copies partake of the creative and cognitive process that is usually denied to them.

Benjamin also operates a reversal of positions: what comes *after* is more important than what was *before*. One could say that he anticipates the reversal Derrida introduced in *The Postcard*. There the positions of Socrates and Plato are reversed: it is Socrates who takes down notes while Plato is the inspiring source. Derrida deconstructs the opposition between the "before", the primary, the origin, the source, and "the after", that which is "post", the effect, the copy, the relay. (Derrida 1987)

As the original has been deprived of its auratic position, fidelity to the original in the act of translation becomes of secondary importance.

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Similarity to the original is the hallmark of a poor translation. Nor is transmission of the meaning of the work essential in translations. Benjamin's views on translations suggest an open-ended and indeterminate communication model, in which the work of art no longer functions as *the* source of meanings to be decoded and reproduced by faithful translations. What really matters is the continuous reconstruction by readers/translators of the effects a work of art can produce. Consequently, translations enjoy a considerable degree of autonomy from the original, almost displacing the original.

The autonomy of translations from the original is enhanced by the increased historicity of the former. Since what is translated is only the effect of the work upon a historically determined cultural and linguistic world rather than its textual meanings, a translation has to be renewed and updated periodically, so as to ensure its topical relevance to the audience. The periodic reconstruction of the work in the acts of translation is a prerequisite of the work's growth and development in its "afterlife".

What Benjamin further values about translations is the network of languages that they activate: the fact that they raise individual languages out of their isolation and connect them with other languages**.** The most important goal that a translation has to attain is "to serve the purpose of expressing the central reciprocal relationships between languages… Languages are interrelated in what they want to express and the kinship of languages is brought out by translations". (72) Translations raise the original to the higher realm of "pure language", where languages supplement each other. Translations point "to the predestined, hitherto inaccessible realm of reconciliation and fulfillment of languages".

The relationship between the original and its translation, both understood as fragments, is therefore not one of governance but of **coexistence** within a wider network. "The fragments of the original and of the translation must be put together as parts of a vessel". (78) Neither should have their identity occluded in the act of translation—"A real translation is transparent, it does not cover the original, does not block its light". The ideal of coexistence is attained by means of incorporation – "a translation, instead of resembling the meaning of the original, most lovingly and in detail incorporates the original's mode of signification". (78)

The primacy that Benjamin confers on translation in its relationship with the original is, therefore, not the result of a mere reversal of values. Translations involve an accretion in value and meanings of the original,

with the latter reaching a superior stage Most importantly, translations make the invaluable attempt at establishing interrelations between languages and reconciling them in a system that defies all hierarchical structures and confining boundaries.

It is possible to tease out a number of features that may be more relevant to cultural translations in global-local interaction than they are to the actual work of translating literary texts. Of course, the scale and quality of the type of translations involved in the local-global transactions differs widely from those of literary translations. To "translate" Benjamin's views into the jargon of globalization theorists, his essay insists on the localization of the original message and on its inevitable expansion and change in meanings.

The relationship between global and local texts is, if viewed from Benjamin's perspective, one of non-hierarchical coexistence. The mutual translation of the two types of texts activates networks between cultures and works towards their mutual interaction and reconciliation.

I.3. Cultural imperialism revisited

The faithful, subservient translation that Benjamin rejects can be taken as a version of cultural imperialism. The texts of the centre are faithfully reproduced at the margins. This would involve repression of the particularity of peripheral cultures and their assimilation by Western culture. The problem with the cultural imperialism theory is that such assimilation does not take place, as translation of the texts from the centre to the margins always involves some kind of adjustment to local conditions. Analysis of cross-cultural reception of famous American television serials, such as *Dallas* (Katz and Liebes 1991) or T*he Young and the Restless* (Daniel Miller 1995), indicates the large amount of cultural "reconciliation", of negotiation, that viewers perform when translating the hegemonic message in terms of their own local culture. The wide range of responses to *Dallas* recorded by Katz and Liebes fully supports the idea of a creative translation adjusted to local, historical conditions. (Some of the viewers changed the text of the serial completely so as to fit it to the requirements of their local culture: a few male Arab viewers in Israel, for example, were so keen on defending the institution of marriage that they were convinced that the person Sue Ellen sought shelter with was not her lover, but her brother.)

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Most globalization theorists disapprove of the homogenization arguments advanced within the theory of cultural imperialism. Ulf Hannerz, for example, dismisses the theory according to which globalization results in an increasing homogenization of the peripheral cultures, stating that it actually rehearses the arguments circulated in the 1950s against the impact of mass culture (Hannerz 2000). Hannerz refutes Schiller's thesis that Western media is introducing western ideology to the Third World in order to establish the supportive informational and ideological structure necessary for the subsequent conquest of global capital. The mistake that Schiller and his followers make is, according to Tomlinson, akin to the fallacy of the hypodermic needle model for interpreting the effects of mass culture or ideology. It rests upon the assumption of a passive, unreflexive audience that fully incorporates the messages circulated by the media, without subjecting them to any hermeneutical operations. (Tomlinson 1997, 2000) Cultural processes are thus misrepresented as unidirectional flows of power.

Though cultural imperialism has suffered sustained criticism on a wide front, the underlying fear of cultural invasion is still very much alive in both Third World countries – e.g. the banning of satellite dishes in many Arab countries - and in some Western countries. It is the fear of cultural imperialism that has led to the adoption of protectionist policies. The problem with these policies is that the paternalist attitude adopted in defending national cultures is not really representative of the desires of the entire population: for example, the right which the French government may have to speak for France when restricting broadcasting of American television programs or the use of foreign -mainly English - words in French is contested. Secondly, what is further called into question is the underlying assumption of such protectionist policies, the assumption of a pure, homogenous national culture that needs defending against invasion and contamination. Protectionist policies demonstrate that the debate over cultural imperialism is not yet over by a long way.

I.4. Americanization as McDonaldization

A recent and quite compelling argument in favor of the Americanization theory has been advanced by George Ritzer's book *The Mcdonaldization of Society.* Ritzer no longer starts from the spread of Western mass media, but from the global success of the McDonald's restaurants. He focuses on a set of economic and commercial practices

to consider the dissemination of the values of Western global capitalism. His thesis is that the economic practices underpinning the McDonald business and the related values of efficiency, control, predictability and calculability are increasingly permeating all sectors of society, including non-profit sectors, such as health and education. The global expansion of this process threatens homogenization of all cultures and their imprisonment in the "iron cage" of Western rationalization (Ritzer 1998:3). The only areas safe from Mcdonaldization are the poorest of areas, which lack the necessary resources. The denizens of such frustrated areas feel deprived and are most likely to clamor for the McDonaldization of their own societies.

It is interesting that, by and large, this was also the position adopted by many Romanian scholars in a debate recently published in the weekly paper *Dilema* (Dilema 2001). While the unrestricted penetration of "cheap" American mass culture (e.g. movies and pop culture) is generally bemoaned, the process of Americanization is praised, hoped for and strongly desired. The process of Americanization is spelled out in Ritzer's terms mainly as the dissemination of the values associated with Western rationalization and enterprise culture. A possible reshaping of our economic and social practices in these new terms is considered more than desirable. The danger of homogenization and assimilation is dismissed as either nationalist or radically leftist. Needless to say, there is no mention of any "iron cage". "I Am All for America and against China and Terrorism" – is the title of one of the essays, whose author, Caius Dobrescu, fully subscribes to the dichotomy of a global Americanized world and the opposite local Jihad, a dichotomy many theorists of globalization have been keen to deconstruct (Robertson 1995, Pieterse 1995, Friedman 1995, Hannerz 2000).

To be fair to the essays in *Dilema*, we ought to add that the Americanization they endorsed is highly selective. Like Benjamin's perception of translation, it is fully tuned to the local conditions in Romania. It is only the traditional Protestant values of American society that are selected; present day American mass culture and consumerism are either ignored or dismissed. American culture is judged from the perspective of the shortcomings of present Romanian society and its advantages and disadvantages are thus understood in entirely local terms. The very selection of the values the readers are urged to embrace suggests an inevitable hybridization. They are understood as desirable 'supplements' to the prevailing norms and practices in Romania: for

example, the cleanliness and smooth organization of McDonald's restaurants. Efficiency and predictability - two of the basic features of McDonaldization - are equally lacking in the Romanian economic and administrative system. We should not, therefore, throw out the baby with the bathing water, so to speak, by insisting on theoretical issues (such as the critique of cultural homogenization via Americanization) when they are not fully relevant to the basic interests of the people concerned. Tomlinson also admits that the process of cultural homogenization has its attractive aspects when it involves better food hygiene, health care services, and attitudes to tolerance (Tomlinson 2000). Ritzer's wholesale dismissal of Weberian rationalization actually betrays a Western bias in his universalizing gestures. Control, efficiency and predictability resulting from rational rules and regulations can be protective of the needs and interests of the populations and are definitely preferable to arbitrary individual will or chaotic organization. It should come as no surprise that these values are held up as the new norms in areas that want to become part of the globalization loop.

A further shortcoming of Ritzer's account of the globalization of McDonald's is that it omits the diversification inherent in the globalization of the McDonald's business. McDonald's products themselves have been diversified in order to meet local demands, with, for example, mutton 'maharajah' burgers sold instead of beef burgers in India. Further diversification occurs in customer use of McDonald's. It is not merely a place for eating fast, standardized American food. It is used also for the purposes of dating, celebrating children's birthdays, etc. Ritzer's employment of a grand narrative should be complemented with ethnographically "thick descriptions" of local experiences of going to McDonald's. Douglas Kellner insists on the need for a "multidimensional approach" to this phenomenon. (Kellner, 1999)

As with media texts, the import of practices or of consumer products cannot be devoid of the hermeneutic dimension of interpretation and translation. The local use of global products or practices always involves a process of creating meanings. This is the reason why culture is not just an appendix to globalization but is central and constitutive in its functioning (Tomlinson 1999). The various 'scapes' in globalization flows identified by Arjun Appadurai - technoscape, mediascapes, financescapes, ideoscapes and ethnoscape (Appadurai 2000, 95) - may be disjunctive but they all share a cultural dimension.

The pull towards fragmentation and hybridization counterbalances the push towards homogenization. Globalization, as different from cultural imperialism, should be understood as a de-centered, diffuse and self-contradictory process. Overall, as Tomlinson suggests,

> ....globalization may be distinguished from imperialism in that it is a far less coherent or culturally directed process. For all that it is ambiguous between economic and political sense, the idea of imperialism contains, at least, the notion of a purposeful project; the intended spread of a social system from one centre of power across the globe. The idea of globalization suggests interconnection and interdependency of all global areas, which happen in a less purposeful way. It happens as the result of economic and cultural practices which do not, of themselves, aim at integration, but which nonetheless produce it. More importantly, the effects of globalization are to weaken cultural coherence in all individual nation-states, including the economically powerful ones – the imperialist powers of a previous era. (Tomlinson 1991:175)

I.5. Cultural hybridization

McDonald's adapting to local needs in the global expansion of its chain of restaurants is a move typical of most of multinational companies. Robertson has called this 'glocalization', taking his cue from Japanese companies that have gone global and local at the same time. (Robertson 1995). 'Glocalization' and 'hybridization 'or 'creolization' of individual national cultures are the two ends of local-global interaction. In both instances the principle of cultural heterogeneity is asserted over that of homogeneity.

Although the idea of the hybridization of peripheral cultures fully sustains the model of globalization that most critics embrace, it too has been contested. Albrow, for example, prefers the idea of the coexistence of diverse cultures. (Albrow 1997a) The reason behind the reluctance to use terms such as creolization (Hannerz 2000) or hybridization (Pieterse 1995) is that they retain the negative connotations associated with their primary meanings. Creolization still has the flavor of miscegenation: it presupposes that at least one of the cultures was pure and homogeneous and subsequently became contaminated. Hybridization also connotes the initial existence of a pure stock.

If we reject the cultural essentialism behind the postulation of a pure core culture and accept that all cultures are already heterogeneous and therefore hybrid to some extent, then use of the term of hybridization in connection with cultural globalization is no longer justified. I believe that the hermeneutic insistence on processes of translation or shifts and mutation in the case of identity construction may provide a better way of avoiding these pitfalls.

Nor does mixture of cultures take place exclusively at the periphery. The centre-periphery dichotomy needs to be deconstructed, for one thing, since with more complex overlapping, disjunctive models prevail, where, according to Appadurai:

> For people of Irian Java, Indonesiation may be more worrisome than Americanization, as Japanisation may be for Koreans, Indianisation for Sri Lankans, Vietnamisation for Cambodians, Russianisation for the people of soviet Armenia and the Baltic republics. (Appaduarai 1993:328)

'Global cities', such as Los Angeles, London, and an increasing number of other western metropolises testify to the striation of western culture that has ceased to be homogeneous and has to accommodate a multitude of Asian or African traditions and practices. Globalization does not involve one-way traffic from the West to the rest but also includes reverse flows and processes of fragmentation and hybridization at the 'centre'.

Another aspect that the celebration of hybridism seems to play down is the unequal power relations between the cultures interlocked in the global-local interaction. Latin American scholars such as Jesu Marin-Barbero have insisted on the difference in capacity of legitimization available to different discourses and the practice of marginalizing, if not demonizing the traditions and practices that fall outside the scope of Western rationalism (Martin-Barbero 1999). The temporal dichotomy between pre-modern traditions and beliefs, which are looked down on as barbarian and backward, and modern practices and attitudes has now been re-designed in spatial terms. It defines the divide between the countries initiating the globalization movement (for the most part Western countries) and the rest. Local practices and knowledge, when not re-packaged as 'exotic' or 'natural' to make them marketable, tend to be repressed or banned. Cultural exchanges between "the West and the rest" are still a far cry from the ideal held up by Benjamin of the original and the translation coexisting together without occluding each other,

functioning as mutual supplements within larger networks. Practices of social, economic and cultural inequities are rapidly spreading as an integral part of the process of globalization.

Resistance to the injustices generated within global economic, social or cultural processes is still in an early stage. It is in need of a theoretical framework from within which to subject these processes to a radical re-thinking and to conceive ways of transvalorizing some of its basic tenets.[2]

The hermeneutic model of a creative translation seems to be well suited as a theoretical and critical instrument with which to undertake this constructive, oppositional critique of global-local interaction and of the norms that should govern it. It is better equipped to capture the complexity of the unpredictable, multidirectional and disjointed flows of present global processes than is the model of cultural imperialism.

I.6. De-territorialization

The redefinition of the local is of fundamental importance to the new processes. Localities are subjected to radical transformation because, as Giddens was among the first to point out, "they are penetrated by distanciated influences" (Giddens 1991: 187). As distant events and remote forces are interwoven with and shape local experiences, the 'phenomenal world' of our everyday life is subjected to a process of displacement or de-territorialization. That means that, to quote Giddens again:

> "...although everyone lives a local life, phenomenal worlds for the most part are truly global...in very few instances does the phenomenal world correspond any more to the habitual settings through which an individual physically moves. Localities are thoroughly penetrated by distanciated influences." (Giddens 1991: 187-188)

We are anchored in a given locality, but due to global connectivity, our experiences incorporate elements and events from remote cultures, which are rendered familiar and even closer to us than are events in our neighborhood. Giddens mentions the case of the political leader, whose life we know better than that of our neighbor's and who exerts an important influence both in our everyday life and on our imagination and beliefs. Other familial features of our local life, such as consumer goods, are not unique to this world but can be found in almost any place across

the globe. The idea is that these features have been 'placed' there by distanciated forces, such as multinational companies.

There is increasing awareness that the mastery of an individual's life plan, down to the level of establishing his or her daily routines, no longer depends on choices or the conditions of the local world. Rather it is determined by remote events, organizations and economic forces that even transcend national borders. At the same time there occurs a 'stretching of social relations' across vast distances in space and time. Giddens considers this "disembedding of the social system" – "the 'lifting out' of social relations from local contexts of interaction" - to be responsible for producing a radical shift from a pre-modern age to a modern age (or late global modern age).

In cultural terms, globalization involves a dislocation of culture from its local moorings. De-territorialization involves the weakening or dissolution of the connection between everyday lived culture and territorial location. (Tomlinson 1999: 128) The culture that informs a person's desires, attitudes and beliefs increasingly transcends and even escapes local and national boundaries. Consider the case of Romanian urban teenagers who en masse watch MTV and American movies, play computer games downloaded from the Internet, wear the 'universal' casual wear of jeans, sneakers and t-shirts, and identify with a globalized youth culture and youth community. They find it more difficult to identify with the relatively self-contained, localized Romanian 'classical' literature that is taught in schools and which relates in only a minor way with their concerns and interests. Special efforts have to be made to anchor their feelings and commitments to the local and the national. Carnivalesque celebrations of the victories by national or local soccer teams meet with more success. Cultures are no longer bounded by specific places; they have lost their 'natural' relationships to geographical and social territories (Garcia Canclini 1995).

De-territorialization produces the expansion of the cultural horizon and, at the same time, the weakening or the dissolution of the connection between everyday lived culture and territorial location. It can induce a destabilization or even a dislodging of traditional values. The supraterritoriality of globalization (i.e. the fourth global dimension added to experience) offers a distanced vantage point from which the local and the national can be judged and reassessed. This may result in self-reflective skepticism, or fear and anxiety at the loss of moral and epistemological certainties. A higher degree of openness to the world

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may be conducive to fundamentalist and nationalist tendencies. In the experience of large numbers of people, however, de-territorialization is an ambiguous blend of familiarity and difference, in which foreign, remote elements are rendered familiar and "at home". As such, it is not generally alienating and is taken smoothly in one's stride, culturally speaking.

What impact does this have on the processes of constituting cultural identity? Ien Ang argues that "in the increasingly integrated world system there is no such thing as an independent cultural identity; every identity must define and position itself in relation to the cultural frames affirmed by the world system" (Ang 1966:145).

I.7. The construction of global identities

Which concepts of identity are best suited to the understanding of the articulation between the globalization flows and the local constitution of cultural identities?

Giddens operates with an upgraded notion of the sociological subject developed by Mead, Cooley and the symbolic interactionists. In this view, which has become the classic sociological conception of the issue, identity is formed in the interaction between 'self' and society. Giddens insists on the idea of *self-identity*, which is the representation in form of biographical narratives of what the individual reflexively perceives his or her identity to be. Key to Giddens' concept is the idea of reflexivity— the individual reflexively understands his or her self— and the capacity of the self to build and sustain a continuous and coherent biography (Giddens: 53 and 244). This understanding of identity presupposes an unchanging core that can be further related to the idea of change. Giddens, and later Thompson, insist on self-identity as a design involving change and a continuous process of re-establishing order and continuity within the elements incorporated:

> The self is a symbolic design that the individual actively constructs. It is a design that the individual constructs out of the symbolic materials available to him or her, materials which the individual weaves into a coherent account of who he or she is, a narrative of self-identity. (Thompson 1995:210)

Though it is admitted that globalization is destabilizing in the sense of the self-conflict that the localized appropriation of global media can produce, insistence is placed on the coherence and reconciliation that

the self effects in the process of incorporating various, often clashing cultural resources. In fact, the individual assimilates only those resources that are congruent with the system of values and the frames he is accustomed to and avoids any "epistemological dissonance". This avoidance of dissonance forms part of the protective cocoon, which helps maintain ontological security (Giddens 1991:188).

Giddens and other the sociologists, such as Thompson or Tomlinson, rely upon the notion of a basic core self that provides continuity in the design of identity and radically denies any fragmentation of the self that derives from tension in the local-global interaction.[3] True to the rationalist thrust of their sociological tradition, they dismiss the intrusion of approaches from other disciplines that foreground the role of fantasies, affections and processes of identification. (Scholte 2000)

How can the radical change or the self-conflict brought about by globalization be accounted for? How can individuals incorporate symbolic resources that have a destabilizing potential? What induces them to accept the risks inherent in the de-territorializing the influence of globalization? How can we explain the co-existence of contradictory positions, such as fundamentalists using the Internet and global media to promote their views?

By negotiating between Marx and Foucault, Lacan and feminists, social thinkers working in a poststructuralist and postmodern tradition have come up with different notion of late modern identities, defined as shifting, plural and fragmented.

Stuart Hall has summed up the positions formulated and developed successively in this field, focusing on the articulation between discourses and the psychological mechanism that determines concrete subjects to adopt the subject positions with which the discourses address them. (Hall 1996a, 1996b) The notion of articulation suggests that this not a one-sided process. Hall traces the theoretical work on the issue of identity from the compelling theory of Althusser (ideology interpellates the subject and thereby determines the individual to adopt certain positions) and of Foucault (the subject is an effect of discourse, discourses have the regulatory power to produce the subjects they control), to the positions developed by postmodern feminists. If, as according to Foucault, the subject is produced through and within discourse, and discourses construct subject positions through their rules of formation, then why is it that certain individuals occupy some positions rather than others? A theory that relies exclusively on discourse fails to answer this important question. Hall

highlights the need to close the gap between the account of discursive regulation of subjects and their actual practices of self-constitution:

> A theory of what the mechanisms are by which the individuals as subjects identify (or do not identify) with the 'positions' to which they are summoned; as well as how they fashion, stylize, produce, and 'perform' these positions, and why they never do so completely, for once and all time, and some never do, or are in a constant, agonistic process of struggling with, resisting, negotiating and accommodating the normative or regulative rules with which they confront and regulate themselves. In short, what remains is the requirement to think of this relation of subject to discursive formation as an *articulation* (all articulations are properly relations of 'no necessary correspondence', i.e. founded on that contingency which reactivates the historical (cf. Laclau 1990:35) (Hall 1996b: 14)

In terms of our discussion of the effect of globalization we can develop the idea that a strictly Foucauldian view of the regulatory power of discourses suggests that present global discourses produce global subjects. This formulation smacks of a rudimentary theory of cultural imperialism in which global subjects are not uniform and homogeneous due to the inherent plurality and de-centeredness of global discourses.

The insistence on discourses can, however, account for the constitution of fundamentalist, hard-line traditionalists. They are an effect of the pressure of the global that produces a fierce assertion of local discourses. The discourse-based approach can also explain why global identities are in effect hybrids, resulting from the competition or, rather, struggle between global and local discourses and the respective subject positions they create. Hall raises the difficult question as to why some subjects adopt some of these positions while others adopt none, negotiate them or simply resist them (Hall 1996a). This question raises the issue of identifications and their role in the constitution of identity. Judith Butler's account of identification can be used to go some way towards accounting for the pressure exerted by the normative ideals circulated by global discourses:

> …identifications belong to the imaginary; they are phantasmatic efforts of alignment, loyalty, ambiguous and cross-corporeal cohabitations, they unsettle the I; they are the sedimentation of the 'we' in the constitution of any I, the structuring presence of alterity in the very formulation of the I. Identifications are never fully and finally made; they are incessantly reconstituted, and, as such, are subject to the volatile logic of iterability.

They are that which is constantly marshaled, consolidated, retrenched, contested and, on occasion, compelled to give way. (Butler 1993:105, quoted in Hall 1996:16)

Stuart Hall uses Bulter's insights to explain the pressure of 'compulsive Eurocentricism'. We can also employ it to understand the attraction it exerts on our imagination and our desires to "be integrated in Europe".

Identifications with representations offered by remote or global discourses always presuppose a process of translation since both the process of reception and identification are locally inflected. The disembedding that global identification produces is always accompanied by a certain degree of localization.

Global discourses offer alternative symbolic and identification resources that subjects can combine with the elements of their local background and which relativize and hybridize their values, attitudes and beliefs. Global resources may also simply coexist with traditional positions and with subjects shifting from one position to the other. Having conceived of identities as plural, we can accept that subjects can assume different and often contradictory positions.

Where globalization produces a strengthening of local identities as a defensive mechanism against de-territorialization, 'global' discourses are not necessarily rejected; having been subjected to the process of cultural translation they may re-enforce or be instrumental to traditional orthodox positions. This is, as I will further argue, the case with some of the images circulated in soap operas and women's journals.

II. THE IMPACT OF GLOBAL IMAGES UPON LOCAL IDENTITIES

II.1. Global TV

Global television is one of the major components of present media flows or of what Appadurai has called the "mediascape" of globalization. At the same time it is a leading resource in the construction and reconstruction of cultural identities and can be best discussed under the heading of cultural globalization.

The refiguring and restructuring of television under the impact of globalization has followed similar patterns as evidenced in other global

"scapes", i.e. de-regulation and de-centering. This has led to the erosion of the national institution of public television and to the fragmentation of the ordering impulse that used to make national TV an important component in the construction of the imagined community called nation.

Television is nowadays one of the most important sources of de-territorializing experiences: the co-existence of channels originating in remote and diverse places determines the penetration of the familiar every day world by distant events, processes and forces. The pluralization and globalization of TV programs has offered viewers a wide variety of cultural resources that has largely expanded their selves but has also been conducive to the production of fragmented, highly complex and even contradictory identities.

In economic terms, the globalization of television actually refers to the concentration of private televisions in the hands of a few transnational multi-media companies whose channels and programs have become ubiquitous. Fierce competition has determined public television stations to turn commercial. One serious consequence of this process is the tendency to subject large amounts of what used to be called (high) "culture" to the logic of the market.

II.2. Global TV and the spectacle of society

Global TV has been instrumental in the dissemination of consumerism. Its close association with the spread of Western consumer culture has largely accounted for the perception of globalization as cultural imperialism and has fuelled much of the resistance to it. It is principally consumerism, its values and the subjectivity it promotes, that Islamic states, for example, wished to oppose by banning satellite dishes.

The development of commercial television has meant that visual-based advertising has been placed in the forefront of its activities. Consequently, television is pivotal in the production and reproduction of what Wernick has called *promotional culture*, that is, a culture focused on the use of images to create commodity signs (Wernick 1991:184).

Television's promotion of images associated with the pervasive commodification of social life can be said to be central to what Guy Debord has called *the society of the spectacle* (Debord 1995). The spectacle, according to Debord, is the locus of inversion, appearance, simulacra and not substance being what matters. The void at the heart of the society of the spectacle is further determined by the colonization of

social life by commodities. Debord's iconoclastic criticism of the present postmodern visual culture is coupled with the in effect leftist critique of consumer culture and its materialist, market-based ethos. Images, defined as 'appearances', are all the more dangerous as they appeal to emotions rather than to reason. Their predominance is perceived as indicative of the crisis in Western rationalism as it gives way to narcissistic, hedonistic indulgence in a world of signs and simulacra.

In the eyes of scholars such as Debord or Baudrillard, spectacle and consumerism (i.e. the new visual culture efficiently promoted by global TV) threatens to dissolve all the certainties of the modern era. Sociologists such as Featherstone, however, while noticing the displacements effected, have also pointed out the continuity with the previous period that this present 'aestheticization' of every day life produces. The new 'de-control' and 'de-centering' is a 'controlled de-control', whereas the hedonist thrust in the promotion of leisure culture is based on old protestant values, such as hard work and discipline, that seem to have colonized the world of pleasure (Featherstone 1991). The proliferation of images, which is so unsettling to text-based thinkers, takes up and extends this ambivalence. As we shall see later in the discussion of soap operas, television promotes the consumption of reality constructed as spectacular or theatrical, in the sense of display, extravagance and excess.

The very texture of television material has changed dramatically over the last ten years, with a marked increase in the visuality of the medium. As a result of the fierce competition with cable television stations, American network television stations have dramatically increased the appeal of visual components, restructuring their programs and investing in highly theatrical, visually aggressive and stylistically self-conscious approaches (Caldwell 1999:7-15). The other television stations have gradually followed suit and started adopting this excessive visual style. This development has changed the status of television from being "a radio with pictures" that was basically listened to and occasionally glanced at (Morley and Robbins 1995, Ellis 1992), to a medium that is primarily visual. (Modern remote controls include a 'mute' button, which means that the TV set can be used with the sound off, while the main business of watching the images carries on. There is no button that switches off the images but keeps the sound.)

Thornton Caldwell has shown how television has appropriated the techniques of avant-garde cinema and of postmodern advertising to self-reflectively foreground its artificiality and theatricality. (Caldwell: 7-25,

90-105).[4] What Caldwell calls the "masquerade" of postmodern American television displays not only a concern to make the style of television more visual and more theatrical, but also, more interestingly, it promotes "the image as an image-commodity". (Caldwell: 92) Postmodern TV has turned into a medium perfectly adapted to the requirements of the new visual culture and suited to stage 'the spectacle of the society'.

II.3. Global programs: soap operas and telenovelas

The programs that broadcast in Romania that qualify as global and are of key importance to the dissemination of images of Western consumer culture are news programs, soap operas, TV serials and advertisements. My investigation of the local translation of global images will focus on soap operas, serials and telenovelas.

In an attempt to cover as many markets as possible, soap operas have recently developed an international style that has adopted some features of emerging postmodern television. These include a glossy and expensive look, seductive visual appearance (suggesting glamour and wealth), more action sequences and physical movement than in the traditional soap opera centered on talk, faster pace, the adoption of cinematic techniques and an emphasis on melodrama at the expense of a more "realistic" approach. The international style involves sacrifice of the localized elements that were the making of the initial success of the soap opera. For example, in Brazil and Columbia, telenovelas were initially used as instruments in the raising of a unified, modernized nation, displaying a high degree of local realism. Since narrow localization restricts the market, companies such as Globo TV adopted a more general, myth-based approach. American prime-time serials such as *Moonlighting, Miami Vice,* and in particular *Twin Peaks* opted for a daring postmodern "semiotics of excess", mixing styles and genres. *Twin Peaks* in particular mixes various conventions and is brimming over with meanings that seem irrelevant to the forward movement of the narrative, but which are part of the spectacle.

II.4. The bricolage available to Romanian audiences

My study of the soap operas broadcast on Romanian television channels has been largely audience centered: it was based on a sociological investigation including interviews and questionnaires that was conducted

over a period of three years. The interviewees were from Bucharest and the provincial town of Tecuci. The group of respondents included students (mostly from Bucharest University and some from the Academy of Economic Sciences), high school students from a school of disabled or socially disadvantaged children, as well as more mature women from various walks of life.

Romanian audiences are offered a relatively large mix of serials, soap operas and telenovelas. The US, as the centre of global media, has had to compete with media empires emerging on the periphery. While prime-time space is shared by British crime serials and American serials, such as *Melrose Place, Dynasty*, *Santa Barbara, Miami Vice* and *Cagney and Lacey*, the programs scheduled to show before the news program are the Latin American telenovelas of *Marimar, Café with Female Perfume, Nano,* or the US soaps *The Young and the Restless*, *The Bold and the Beautiful,* and *Passions*. The success of telenovelas in the 1990s has been so great that a special channel was launched (called *Acasa*) that offered viewers telenovelas almost round the clock. In the late 1990s viewers regularly followed both a telenovela and a US soap opera, though the ratings for telenovelas were higher.

The viewing experience of Romanian female audiences has thus been a kind of cultural bricolage, providing them with varied and at times contradictory visual and cultural resources.

If applied to the Romanian experience of soap operas, the thesis of cultural imperialism in the sense of Americanization proves rather limited. US normative images have had to compete rather unsuccessfully with the culturally peripheral but equally global Latin American representations of femininity. Studies of the viewing experience in other East European countries, notably in Russia (Baldwin 1996) have confirmed these findings and have reinforced the idea that global programs, such as soap operas, are contingent in their success upon both the specific conditions of reception and upon their own structural make-up.

While the images circulated may be global, the success of their reception is often only regional. US soap operas, for example, do well in the States, Canada and in many West European countries, though the British prefer to watch their or Australian own soap operas. Spain, Portugal and Italy are a good market for Latin American telenovelas, largely for linguistic reasons and due to the culture similarities. Telenovelas received the cold shoulder in the Czech Republic and in Hungary, but have an enthusiastic following in Romania, Russia, Bulgaria and China.

II.5. Utopian images

The main appeal for Romanian audiences of both prime-time and daytime serials is their utopian dimension. Here I am using Richard Dyer's influential essay "Entertainment and Utopia" (Dyer 1995) and Christine Geraghty's application of his concepts to soap operas (Geraghty 1999:116-122). Dyer points out that the image of 'something better' to escape into is related to the specific inadequacies in society. Both US soap operas and American telenovelas appeal to East European audiences on account of their projection of a world of abundance – glamorous settings and clothes, luxurious foods and fashionable women. Needless to say, the enjoyment of the projected abundance is set against the experience of need and scarcity, of dullness and ugliness the viewers want to escape from. Many of the interviewees disliked British serials on account of the plain, realistically presented female characters. This is exactly what they wish to get away from. I shall dwell further on the local reception of the abundance dimension in the projection of desirable modes of femininity.

Another utopian dimension identified by Dyer and Geraghty is energy. US and Latin American soap operas express energy primarily through their characters, most often the evil male characters, though there are also some fascinating evil female characters (like Alexis in *Dynasty*). Further aspects include intensity and transparency. Dyer identifies transparency as the sincerity of the characters. In the case of the Romanian reception of soap operas, I would suggest that transparency is experienced more in relation to the clear, unambiguous, often Manichean moral scheme of soap operas which appeal to the audience's melodramatic imagination. As Ien Ang and Jon Stratton have pointed out, the strategy of excess of melodrama only confirms the 'normality' of a pre-established order (Ang, 1995:126-127).[5]

Melodramas, and indirectly soap operas and telenovelas, are modern morality plays. In a transitional age of moral relativism, the normative perspective that soap operas offer is very comforting. The viewer's privileged position from which he or she can see through the scheming of the 'baddies' makes up for the inability to make sense of the local social and political life. The latter is obscure and perplexing and hardly allows women any scope for action over which they have full control.

The yearning of the Romanian female audiences for the experience of moral order is better gratified when viewing telenovelas than US soap

operas. The increased employment of melodramatic devices in telenovelas and the consequent higher transparency of the characters, coupled with a plot that has a clear teleological structure and a predictable closure, can be considered reasons behind the preference for telenovelas in the mid 1990s.

II.6. Identifications with images of ideal femininity

More accessible identification with images of normative femininity in telenovelas may provide another explanation for the preference for Latin American soap operas.

Romanian women, particularly those in older age groups and of lower-middle class backgrounds, find it difficult to identify with the positive female characters in the US soap operas, glamorous and successful as they may be. There is a cultural gap that often prevents identification. Many of the discourses circulated in soaps operas, and which these characters embody, are either little known to our viewers or do not resonate with their concerns. This is primarily the case of the discourse rights and of the individualistic attitudes adopted in this respect. Much of the vocabulary circulated, from terms such as sexual harassment to the familiar phrases of "I have a problem", "let's talk it over", lacks familiar cultural references in Romania. The slightly feminist or post-feminist positions adopted by characters like Cagney and Lacey, Dr. Quinn, Cybil or Susan do not cut much ice with Romanian female audiences. A position smacking of feminist self-assertion or career orientation is palatable only if coupled with parody or serious self-questioning. The cultural gap prevents Romanian audiences from being on equal footing with the characters. They feel they are lagging behind. Even the perfectly stylized bodies of the heroines are intimidating. Parodied characters fare a lot better as cultural differences are played down.[6] Feminist, or rather post-feminist, meanings come across mainly in comedies with characters that prove to have a great sense of humor and are shown as in fact quite vulnerable and inefficient (e.g. Cybil or Susan).[7]

The Cinderella, rags-to-riches stories of the Latin American telenovelas provide more venues of identification than do US soap operas or even prime-time serials. The telenovelas deal a lot with prospects of social mobility achieved via marriage and which does not involve hard work or any special skills or knowledge. The more disadvantaged young women in Romania, who on account of their poor education have only slim

chances in the labor market and who feel doomed to poverty and squalor, can easily identify and fantasize about heroines who owe their social success and wealth solely to love and marriage.[8] The powerless, often disabled, yet beautiful, pure and self-sacrificing heroine offers no difficulty in identification: she corresponds to traditional models of femininity and indirectly represents the position many of the Romanian viewers find themselves in.

The low social origins of the telenovela heroine and her very extraction from a Third World country create a more comfortable position for the Romanian audience. The latter indirectly looks down on the heroine as culturally and socially marginal and enjoys a certain degree of superiority, while fully sympathizing with her in her tribulations. [9]

Ien Ang's analysis of the work of the melodramatic imagination in soap operas (Ang 1995: 127) may provide a different approach to the fascination of women for the marginal, powerless heroines of the telenovelas. Ang explains the appeal of helpless victims like Sue Ellen in terms of the exploration and enjoyment of various modes of femininity that female viewers experience at the level of fantasy. Such experiences are not accessible in the every day world. It is only in a fantasy world that one can identify with a passive victim and not suffer negative practical or moral consequences. Why should Romanian female audiences emotionally invest in the vulnerable subject positions of helpless, suffering victims? Why not be attracted by the strong, independent and successful quasi-feminist or post-feminist US heroines? The economic and political marginalization of women in Romanian society in the feeling that remote global forces control their everyday world and career prospects, make moments of passive resignation more attractive than the continual effort of coping with adverse situations. The moral purity of the heroines the audience identifies with further clears the latter of possible feelings of guilt about having given up the struggle. Independent and successful women such as the US heroines that "make things happen" only increase the feelings of powerlessness and inferiority.

II. 7. A defense against de-territorialization

The mix of pre-modern and postmodern images in telenovelas suggests further reasons for their popularity in the countries of Romania or Russia.

Latin American scholars defend the important social and cultural role that telenovelas play in their postmodern, globalized, decentered society.

It could be argued that telenovelas discharge a similar function in the context of the unsettling "transition" period that Romanian audiences are experiencing.

Martin Barbero relates the continuing success of melodrama and telenovelas in Latin America to the process of de-terrritorialization within globalization. Telenovelas can be seen as a mechanism of defense against the dispossessing effects of de-territorialization and the imposition of new social and political institutions that are not in touch with basic forms of social life in Latin America. Telenovelas provide a form of recognition to the 'residual' forms of pre-modern social practices and social relations that cannot be assimilated into the new global structures and the logic of the market. The telenovelas' stubborn insistence on a primordial sociability (*socialidad*) within the extended family, or within a neighborhood organized on the principle of the extended family, countermands the cultural dispossession, the devaluation of social relations and the commercialization of life that is taking place under the influence of globalization (Martin Barbero 1996:227).[10] These residual elements are suppressed or at best relegated to the status of "barbarian" and anachronical. Melodrama offers these socio-cultural structures a form of recognition and facilitates their displaced, "anachronical" return to the public sphere (Martin Barbero 1999:29). Telenovelas are thus seen to mediate between the traditional social and cultural texture and the new commercialization of life.

I believe that telenovelas perform a similar function in Romania, where social life is increasingly exposed to the new commercial logic of the globalized age, while its underlying structure evinces a heterogeneous mix of pre-modern rural, modern urban, and socialist quasi-feudal social practices, values and attitudes (Sorin Alexandrescu 2001).

The genealogy of telenovelas provides further explanation for the appeal of telenovelas in post-communist countries, such as Romania and Russia. Telenovelas are thought to have played a crucial role in the fashioning of modern, nationally united Latin American societies and are the most important medium for reaching the mass of Latin American population (Lopez 1996, Straubhaar 1982, 1988). They initially emerged as the local version of American soap operas. Eventually they fully displaced them, achieving a triumph over the American media empire (Straubhaar 1982). In fact, telenovelas have displaced all other types of prime-time TV programming and now dominate the evening hours; their audience includes viewers of both sexes, much of the targeted audience

belonging to the more affluent sections of society, with the consequent emphasis on consumption. It is in Europe, as part of the localizing re-reading of global media and the de-valuation of cultural products coming from the "periphery", that telenovelas are demoted to the level of daytime soap operas, are gendered (i.e. feminized) and looked upon as cultural "trash". It is important to stress here the localization of the "global", the transcendence of the cultural imperialist import and the emergence of a powerfully "national", local genre. Interestingly it is this feature that will make telenovelas successful as "globally" circulated products.

II.8   An initiation in consumer culture

Telenovelas were initially designed to induce capitalist development and to create consumer ideals for a basically pre-modern society. In Brazil they served to support the economic policy of military governments and promote its positive image as agent of economic miracle. The Brazilian military government heavily sponsored TV Globo in promoting a genre that could make the values of consumer capital popular while preserving the given social hierarchy and reinforcing a highly conservative patriarchal morality. Nothing that questioned the economic and social policy of the regime or that contained a suggestion of the transgressive freedoms of Western consumer culture was permitted, while the basic ethos of capitalism was reinforced. These strict ideological constraints and the need to ensure popular support for the programs determined the producers to tap local traditions ranging from folk stories, myths and legends, to the photo-novelas and radio serials that had been immensely successful in Latin America (Martin Barbero 1996:277-281). The resulting mix of modern and postmodern images, of pre-modern oral traditions and the insistence on consumerism has made telenovelas highly appealing in areas that experienced traumatic socio-economic changes. Audiences of Eastern Europe have turned to telenovelas for initiation in the life style, consumerism and media environment of late modern capitalist societies, without having to face radical changes in their moral and social paradigms.

The conservative censorship imposed on the serials, which was gradually internalized and continued even after the fall of the military regimes, ensured that telenovelas were 'free' of the disturbing effects that the new changes bought about. Their 'purified' images bear no traces of the de-centering process and the social and cultural fragmentation

that produce much of the anxiety and insecurity of the present globalized age. These images are, however, overcharged with all the sensuousness and visual appeal that high tech consumerist media can muster. The global does penetrate the everyday world of the local, but takes the seductive form of glamorous Western consumer goods and life styles.

Telenovelas, not unlike US soap operas, are famous for the covert, 'in-program' merchandising of consumer goods. Covert advertising is further supplemented by big swathes of standard advertising broadcast in the five-minute breaks specially allotted to them. Telenovelas thus function as successful forms of the spectacle of Western consumer culture. This is beneficial to the transnational companies that sponsor the programs in direct or indirect ways and to the television stations that produce or purchase them and depend on the advertising revenues generated in the airing of the program. In Romania, telenovelas are an important source of revenue. "Telenovela salveaza televiziunea' ('Telenovelas are saving television') is the title of an article published in the Romanian financial journal *Capital* and which details the net profit television channels make from the advertisements broadcast during the more popular telenovelas.[11]

The seamless interlacing of modern/postmodern commercial images and pre-modern narratives, and consequently two types of temporalities[12], neutralizes any possible resistance to the changes produced by consumerism and the new global economic and social reality. The melodramatic structure and the traces of totalitarian censorship reassure the more nostalgic audiences that the old values and certainties are still in place.

III. GLOBAL JOURNALS

III. 1. Romanian versus British Cosmopolitan – more texts and fewer images

The same approach that combines textual readings with the investigation of audience response has been employed in the analysis of global journals. The interviewees belonged to the same groups as those that had provided feed-back on telenovelas.

Magazines with global circulation, such as *Elle* or *Cosmopolitan*, are structured on the principle of what Friedman has called "glocalization." As already mentioned, "glocalization" indicates how the global is from

the very beginning conceived as existing in hybrid, localized forms. Localization happens simultaneous with the production of the global and not only subsequently. Romanian versions of globally circulated magazines use the same format as the British, American or Russian ones, but they contain local material. Similar moves have been made in television where formats of shows, games and even soap operas have been circulated globally, while being injected with local elements, from landscapes and street names, to more substantive issues referring to inter-racial relationships.[13]

A brief comparison of the Romanian and British issues of the *Cosmopolitan* indicates the localization process introduced by the editors of the magazine. We will trace later on further negotiations in the act of reading and talking/gossiping about the journals and consider the contribution of the global images and discourses in producing changes in the construction of values and normative gender identities.

The Romanian issue of *Cosmopolitan* is half as thick as the British one, but is considerably more expensive in comparison to the average income of its female readers. The price itself places *Cosmopolitan* alongside *Elle* in the category of magazines that target the affluent elite of young and very young women. The price is further indicative of a hierarchy between the Western, more stylish and provocative journals, and the more homespun, cheaper, local magazines. I am not aware that the British *Cosmopolitan* enjoys any such privileges, though *Elle* and *Vogue* are definitely designed for upwardly mobile women.

The Romanian issue is half as thick because it has half as many advertisements. The reduced number of advertisements may well reflect the limited purchasing power of the readers, as well as the limited range of subject positions they are addressed in. An issue of the British *Cosmopolitan* typically includes advertisements for a wide variety of cosmetics, some detergents and household gadgets, and cars and furniture, banks and insurance companies. The Romanian issue advertises cosmetics (though not all brand names are represented, e.g. Calvin Klein, Yves Saint Laurent, Ralph Laurent are not present), detergents, such as *Persil,* and mobile phones. The relative absence of other commodities (cars, electronic equipment) or financial services indicates that they are not considered "feminine" and are mostly taken care of by males or are too expensive for the readers' financial means.

The limited number of advertisements further suggests that consumerism and consumer culture in Romania is still in its early stages. There are

relatively few large multinational companies operating on the Romanian market and there are a correspondingly limited number of potential consumers, that is, people for whom consumption is a way of shaping a lifestyle and a social and cultural identity. Romanian society has not as yet witnessed the shift that has occurred in post-Fordist Western countries from focus on the producer to focus on the consumer (Du Gay 1997). To begin with, the pervasive poverty in Romanian society makes discussion of consumer culture somewhat laughable as it ignores the predicament of the majority of the population.

The new (global) discourses that have been circulating along with new economic practices in the private sector have inevitably generated new subjectivities. To ignore the emergent subjectivities of the consumer or the enterprising subject that coexists with more traditional identities would be to deny the increasing heterogeneity of Romanian society, as well as to neglect the impact of economic and cultural globalization. [14]

Magazines like *Cosmopolitan* and *Elle* play an important role in the construction of the new subjectivities. Unlike their British counterparts these magazines have not set out solely to please their post-feminist, sophisticated readers. They also attempt to teach, mobilize and to shape new values and new identities. Their tone is often patronizing, if not imperative: the readers are urged, even told not to repeat the same mistakes and change their attitudes and practices. This tone is not resented as most of the readers look upon these journals as sources of a basic type of education that the school system fails to give. The texts teach young Romanian women basic skills required in the job market (how to write a CV, prepare for a job interview or find another, more gratifying job). As one of the more mature persons I interviewed remarked: "Lots of women of my generation would have been able to shape their lives in a more meaningful way, had they had access to the kind of information that journals like *Cosmopolitan* offer."

The importance of the text based information for the readers also accounts for the reduced quantity of images included. What all of the interviewees liked about *Cosmopolitan* were the informative and formative *texts*. The images were hardly ever mentioned. Unlike the public in the media and image saturated Western countries, and very much like that of other former communist countries, Romanian women of varying levels of education cherished books and favored text based information over visual information. A graduate student in the British Studies M.A. course complained about the large quantity of adverts in British journals: there

is little to read in them, which makes them boring. The larger space allotted to text-based information in the Romanian Cosmopolitan is the result of a shrewd localization policy of the journal.

III.2. The tension between images and texts

At the same time there is a tension between the tenor of many of the texts and the adjacent images: on the one hand, the texts project empowering modes of femininity and stress the need for change, while on the other hand, most of the images of the women appearing in advertisements re-enforce traditional notions of femininity, conceived of as "to-be-looked-at-ness" (Laura Mulvey 1975), as objects of the male gaze. The texts insist on self-assertion, energy and self-confidence in dealing with hostile circumstances. Inertia, fear of change, and the desire to look for shelter in the grooves of traditional values or forms of action are all brandished.[15] The images, however, glamorize passivity along with narcissistic pleasure.

The October 1999 issue urges its readers to "be like a man", to behave like a man and overcome the weaknesses and shortcomings that they acquire in the socialization process of "becoming women". The magazine relies on a pseudo-liberal feminist approach that valorizes male values and male patterns of behavior. The readers are told that traditional modes of femininity pre-determine them for failure in their social and intimate, emotional life. If they don't want to be losers, then they must behave and feel like the winners, that is, like men. Indirectly the text challenges traditional gender distinctions and proposes a more fluid and heterogeneous gender identity. The article was actually translated from English (i.e. it is a globally circulated text) with the names and a few details changed to give it a local flavor. The important localizing moment occurs in the choice of the picture illustrating the text. The picture stabilizes the fluid gender identity and reasserts gender distinctions.

The editors of the Romanian *Cosmopolitan* are fully aware of the great investment by Romanian readers in "femininity", often described as a "feminine", attractive appearance. The socio-economic development of Romanian society in the post-communist period has re-enforced sexual distinctions and foregrounded sex appeal and "feminine" appearance as the major, if not the only source of power for women.[16] To behave like a man, to be assertive, individualistic and self-confident like a man, is transgressive enough in the present traditional and highly patriarchal

system of values. But if this stretches to meaning looking like a man as well, it becomes totally unacceptable to a Romanian audience. Consequently the editors chose to illustrate the text with a photograph to allay these fears. The woman in the picture may be dressed in a black manly suit, but her blouse is unbuttoned and the sleeves and cufflinks are exquisitely stylish. She may be holding a cigar as a phallic symbol, but she is not smoking it. Her make up emphasizes her deep "feminine" sensuality, as do her mysterious eyes and her lasciviously parted lips. Her head tilted to one side conveys anything but determination. Rather it is the typical position that cover girls adopt. All in all, dressing like a man, "being like a man", seems to be the perfect recipe for increasing sex appeal. The caption in the corner of the picture asking readers to "Copy the manly attitude, full with the confidence of success" is either not referring to the photograph or is radically de-constructing the notion of manliness (*Cosmopolitan* 1999: 50).

Another example of the tension between image and text can be found in the way the Romanian *Cosmopolitan* dealt with domestic violence. Unlike Western issues that have fought similar battles in the past and have now reached a post-feminist stage in which its readers know all there is to know in the field, the Romanian issue takes it as a point of duty, as fulfillment of a mission to bolster all action in defense of women's rights. The leading article of the March 2000 issue set out to mobilize women in the taking of individual or collective action against domestic violence. However, there is no image attached to this article, no photograph of a battered woman; such an image would have jarred with the pleasant fantasies associated with consumerism that the journal is supposed to induce. Nor is there a picture of the demonstration against domestic violence that had taken place previously in Bucharest, which comes as something of a surprise as the staff of *Cosmopolitan* had taken part in the very same rally carrying banners with strong anti-violence slogans. Paradoxically, the image placed next to the article is that of a seductive advertisement for the latest Nina Ricci perfume. Clearly, the journal is simultaneously pursuing clashing policies: one policy is in support of the struggle for women's rights and has to deal with the gritty reality of women's oppression; the other promotes consumerism and aims to immerse readers in a utopian fantasy world of abundance and pleasure.

Reading between the image and the text produces two more directions of interpretation. The first stresses the bricolage quality of both the images and texts, where there is no need for a sense of coherence and consistency.

Texts and images can function on relatively independent, sometimes contradictory levels. The other direction exists in the creation of meaning through interaction of image and text at the syntagmatic level. The Nina Ricci advertisement has the reassuring effect of establishing an oppositional relationship between the privileged readers of *Cosmopolitan*, who can afford French perfume, and the poor, underprivileged women who suffer abuse. The identity of the *Cosmopolitan* reader is constructed through this oppositional difference. The glamorous images function as a defense mechanism against corrosive doubts in respect of the blurred or porous boundaries between the two categories of women. This implies that the economic and cultural gap between *Cosmopolitan* readers and ordinary women, who may be victims of abuse, might not be that great after all.

The images in the advertisements function as strategies of exclusion and take the edge off the more provocative texts (though it could equally be argued that they perform the function of seducing the reader to read the challenging texts that she might otherwise reject off hand). Images provide comfort by re-establishing certitudes and inherited values. This feeling of comfort and security is a necessary condition for the individual's participation in consumer culture.

III.3. The spectacle of consumer culture

I have written elsewhere of how the stressing of post-feminist values in "global" journals like *Elle or Cosmopolitan* can have an empowering effect on Romanian women, who, as a consequence, are made aware of new technologies of the self and tempted to depart from the traditional values of self-sacrificing and nurturing femininity (Nicolaescu 2000a, 1999). I would like to add to that that the journals in question were responsible for introducing a visually seductive and artistically elaborate treatment of commodities in the Romanian market. Commodities thus transcend their utilitarian condition and are displayed as aesthetic objects, the purchase of which indicates refinement, sophistication and class, not to mention financial power. The carnival of luscious and irresistible images with which both the British and Romanian issues of *Cosmopolitan* envelop their readers is designed to reinforce the identity of the hedonistic and individualistic consumer. The circulation of these journals in Romania promotes the aestheticization of the everyday life that Mike Featherstone speaks of. Global journals excel in performing a spectacle of consumer culture, a spectacle in which we are strongly urged to participate.

Unlike the British version, the Romanian issue of *Cosmopolitan* does not encourage the female gaze. There are fewer instances of the male body held up as an object of female gaze and desire than there are in British issues. When images of male nudes appear, a traditional excuse is always proffered. The March 2001 issue contains a blown up image of a male nude for the perfectly acceptable purpose of teaching the reader how to provide the greatest erotic pleasures to her partner. The female reader is apparently not placed in the male subject position of voyeur. Rather, the reader occupies the traditionally "feminine" position, from which she must strive to please her man.

The graduate and undergraduate students interviewed as part of this research responded with most enthusiasm to the carnival of images displayed in the magazines, despite finding the informative texts more useful. Ruxandra, an MA student in American Studies, confessed that *Cosmopolitan* filled in an important gap in her training. She values the skills that the journal tries to impart as well as the new gender identity it actively promotes. When she reads the journal and tries to shape her attitudes and actions according to its advice, she feels she is "inhabiting a new world". Much of the feeling of novelty is indirectly induced by the overt or covert advertisements in the journal. Douglas Kellner has perceptively pointed out that it is not only commodities that advertisements sell, but also a whole set of values (Kellner 1999). The glossy images are designed to seduce the readers into adopting the values and practices of capitalism and consumer culture. Together with the texts providing technical information on various commodities, images urge the reader to break with the older "inadequate" everyday practices and routines, to develop new technologies of the body, new life styles, new identities, all of which ultimately involve new patterns of consumption.

Most respondents liked the tables and question and answer formats in which information is conveyed. *Cosmopolitan* is particularly successful in disseminating Western rationalist, instrumentalist thinking that enables people to solve their immediate problems. Ian Aart Scholte argues that this kind of rationalism both underpins the latest boom of globalization and is one of its major effects. (Scholte: 93-95). The layout, in which most texts are in columns of various colors and fonts, with the interspersing of appealing pictures, reinforces the combination of rationalism and aestheticism that is typical of present day consumer culture.

III.4. The aura of the West

Dana, aged 35, a successful career woman working at Procter and Gamble, is less impressed by the educational side of the journal. "It is basic and may be useful to young and inexperienced women". Nor does she find much use for the fashion section, as it is not suited to the "smart and casual" style she wears at the office. Advertisements no longer fascinate her as they used to in the communist period when *Cosmopolitan* had to be smuggled into the country. At that time each and every detail was charged with significance and subjected to close scrutiny. The novelty of the world represented by *Cosmopolitan* has worn off. She doesn't find useful the presentation of international collections of haute couture. Rather, she is more interested in clothes that can be bought in local shops. If she knows where she can find them, she can then save time and energy when shopping. In general, local aspects have become more appealing than Western, global aspects as the utopian appeal of Western goods and the Western way of life has lost some of its utopian appeal. (Cf. Nicolaescu 1996a, 1996b)

Having said this, Dana is still an avid *Cosmopolitan* reader. When she misses an issue she is struck with panic as if she had missed some important event in her life. She keeps expecting to come across something that will provide a ground-breaking and eye-opening experience. The magazine holds out this promise for her. At the same time, she does not fully embrace the "*Cosmo*" values and its mode of assertive, if not downright aggressive femininity of the individualistic, pleasure and profit seeking new woman. She would like to negotiate a path between this mode of femininity and a more traditional mode that still allows scope for nurturing and caring for others.

Dana has a passion for the quizzes that help identify what category of personality she has (e.g. "Are you the adventurous type or are you a chicken?" October 1999). She works hard at the quizzes, though she knows that every time the result will be inconclusive for her.[17] The magazine projects a challenging cultural ideal of femininity that generates a certain degree of anxiety, even in a successful and highly self-confident woman such as her. Is she not assertive and dynamic enough? Is she is lagging behind in her career? Is she not sexy or feminine? The clash of values and ideals that the *Cosmopolitan* ideal of femininity is based on is deeply unsettling.

Details of the models that appear on the front cover also arouse an irresistible fascination in her. She wants to know all about her make up and what she likes to wear and eat, and how she takes care of her body. Dana, like most *Cosmopolitan* readers, unconsciously identifies with the glamorous cover girls: she likes them (they are constituted as objects of desire) and she wants to be like them. What is appealing to her is the representation of ideal femininity as spectacle, as exquisitely stylized appearance. She does not seem to be aware of the contradictions in the myth of beauty that the journal promotes: that she must be at one and the same time a successful career woman, who behaves and feels like a man, but also the glamorous object of male desire. It is in fact the exploitation of this mix of contradictory positions that makes *Cosmopolitan* attractive to Romanian readers. It suits well the conflicting demands made of them to both preserve their traditional gender identities and to make a clean break with those same identities and develop new aggressive attitudes and skills in order to survive in a tough market-oriented world.

In conclusion: both soap operas and journals circulate global images that perform various and often contradictory functions: they introduce new values (e.g. the values of consumer culture or post-feminism) and at the same time provide comforting reinforcements of traditional identities and social structures. Their impact may be one of de-territorialization and the expansion of the cultural resources used in the making of cultural and gender identities, but it is also one of buffering the unsettling effects of de-territorialization.

NOTES

1.   Tomlinson actually builds upon insights developed earlier by himself and Arjun Appadurai, (Tomlinson 1991, Appadurai 1990).

2.   Against the general background of the injustices generated by and through the processes of globalization, Jan Aart Scholte's otherwise highly perceptive and insightful critical introduction to these phenomena operates a distinction between the processes and forces of globalization and the neo-liberal ideology that has shaped them thus far. Scholte operates this distinction in order to formulate a strategy of resistance where the processes themselves cannot be undone but the ideology and values governing them can be changed (Scholte 2000). Whereas the strategy can prove useful in undertaking concrete immediate action, I believe that globalization cannot be dissociated from the neo-liberal *Weltanschauung* that has promoted it. Any action to redress the present imbalances and injustices has to consider a radical rethinking and transvaluation of the globalization processes themselves.

3.   Giddens discusses the diversifying of contexts of interaction in which individuals are caught up but explicitly denies a corresponding fragmentation of the self (Giddens 1991:190). Likewise Thompson (209-210). In a more radical and theoretically explicit move, Ian Art Scholte places himself in the tradition of western rationalism and discards post-structuralist thinking as marginal and of little impact on the thinking of globalization (Scholte2000: 93-95)

4.   The stylistic markers of postmodern television have been seen as: a) aesthetic self-consciousness/self-reflexivity, b) juxtaposition/ montage/ bricolage, c) paradox, d) ambiguity, e) the blurring of the boundaries of genre, style and history (Barker 2000:56). Caldwell points to the wide range of combinations of digital storage, mixing and matching that has been used in television to achieve shocking videographic effects. The "videographic exhibitionism" is coupled with a penchant for pastiche, the quotation of earlier films, or their restyling, all of which acknowledge the form itself (Caldwell: 92).

5.   "Melodrama's strategy of excess operates to assert - and naturalize - certain values by placing them under threat…the disruption caused by melodramatic excess will ultimately confirm the 'normality' of a pre-established order naturalized by realism (Ang and Straton: 127).

6.   Sitcoms, e.g. *Married with Children*, have had a much greater success. Parody brings American characters closer to the Romanian audience and diminishes the sense of inferiority. All the persons I have interviewed told me they found Peg Bundy to be funny. Most of the female viewers could identify and laugh with Meg. She was recognized as an embodiment of their own "illegitimate" wishes, projecting a topsy-turvy version of the reality of patriarchal relations

as Romanian women experience them. One woman, putting it bluntly, said "Meg is clever, while we are all a bunch of fools. We work our fingers to the bone and make do with very little, whereas she does not lift a finger and watches TV all day long or goes shopping for herself".

7   Any postmodern sophistication in the visual character of the programs renders participation more difficult since Romanian audiences, particularly older women, have not as yet acquired the visual skills necessary to read and enjoy such visual messages.

8   I base my data on interviews of female students from underprivileged backgrounds, studying in a special vocational school that trains them for modest and poorly paid jobs.

9   Kate Baldwin makes an extensive psychoanalytical analysis of the reception of a Mexican telenovela in Russia and indicates the multiple meanings of the word 'trash' as well as the mixture of feelings of superiority and empathy as reasons for the success of the soap opera (Baldwin 1996).

10   Martin Barbero goes as far as to wonder whether the basic plot of a melodramatic telenovela that hinges upon the misrecognition of the hero's identity does not a have secret connection with the cultural history of the Latin American sub-continent (Martin Barbero 1996:277). As the position of Romania is hardly any different, we may wonder whether Romanian viewers do not identify themselves as mis-recognized by the "centre", i.e. by Europe.

11   See *Capital* (1998) n4. P.21

12   Mattelart points out the unique combination of a long dure temporality created by the pre-modern narratives and the fast pace of postmodern advertisements introduced during the program in the designated slots (Mattelart 1992).

13   The costs of producing local programs and the risks that these programs might not be successful are thus avoided.

14   Mihaela Miroiu dedicates an interesting chapter to poverty and particularly to poverty among women in *Societatea Retro* (Miroiu 1999). I believe there is an unsuspected relationship between the new discourses circulated by the magazines and her appeal in favor of the construction of an ideology against poverty.

15   The April 2000 issue clearly spells out the shift in values that has occurred: the values of the past are centered around the family, marriage, children and care for spouse and children, while money and career are completely secondary; the values of young women of today have veered towards career, money and material satisfaction, freedom of movement, investment in the self and particularly in appearance. The shift is visualized in form of a table that dichotomously opposes the two sets of values. The table is further commented on at length in several paragraphs with indicative headings like "Career above everything". *Cosmopolitan*, April 2000, 20-23.

[16] This situation is widespread in most post-communist countries, where the economic development and foreign investments seemed to have been based on the reinforcement of sexual distinctions and of traditional models of gender identities. (See Jaqui True 1999)

[17] The quizzes are also localized and geared to the deontological dilemmas Romanian women face. Examples of such quizzes: "Find out what career you are suited for", December 2000, "Are you the adventurous type or are you a chicken?" October 1999.

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CONTEMPORARY METROPOLIS: PUBLIC URBAN SPACE, COMMUNITIES AND INDIVIDUALS IN URBAN REALITY

> *Our "sophistication" hides major symptoms of cowardice centered on the simple question of taking position – maybe the most basic action in making the city. We are simultaneously dogmatic and evasive. Our amalgamated wisdom can be easily caricatured: according to Derrida we cannot be* Whole*, according to Baudrillard we cannot be* Real*, according to Virilio we cannot be* There.
>
> Rem Koolhaas, Bruce Mau, *S, M, L, XL*

I began this project with the intention of searching for ways to [re]create valuable public spaces through urban design and planning. From the outset, I placed particular emphasis on the issue of green public spaces, understood as a specific case of urban space, placed between the city and nature, anthropic and virgin, social and savage etc. During my research on how urban design responds to social needs and how it might generate different attitudes and ways of using urban space - thus inducing degrees of sociability – I arrived at a conclusion I was not comfortable with, and was thus compelled to make some major changes to the project, including changing its point of departure and some of the ways in which the entire argument is developed.

As a result of my direct observation of various cities, contrary to the opinion of some architects and planners, I began to question the capacity of urban design to have real impact on social structures and behavior. This loss of confidence in these "great", "rational", well-intentioned and well planned solutions came about for a number of reasons and the result

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was that I redirected my inquiry towards other approaches to urban space and related issues. Mostly I began to have serious doubts about the potential success of grand-scale and controlled planning, particularly in respect of a "holistic" perspective on urban space in Romanian cities.

On the other hand, we can talk about the contemporary emergence of a general, far from friendly attitude towards the city. This can be observed at all levels: central and local administration, professionals involved in city building and planning, public media, visual arts, various sorts of literature, and citizen self-image. My argument is that we are confronted today with a shift between the "public image" of the city and its reality in terms of daily experience.

Therefore, I find myself in front of a completely inverted prospective of urban space. It is not a question of how to solve the problems related to urban space or how to build urban space. It is a question of finding out what urban space is after all, and what it should be, what problems need to be solved anyway, what are the [real] pressures and needs related to public space and by whom and how is this pressure being exerted?

I. THE CITY OF TODAY FROM A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Our contemporary cities are generally seen as strange organisms that we are no longer able to control. They appear fraught with problems, both new and old, that are the consequences of modern urbanism and explosive development of their territories.

Today our cities are characterized by: their ghettoization, rampant ethnic and class segregation, the dissolution of central ["downtown"] areas as political, economic, social and symbolic loci, desertification, an increase in the number of homeless, insecurity and violence on the streets, alienation of the inhabitants, and the new *blasées* characters and attitudes which characterize both the urban space and image. In all, it would seem that we are living in an age of general malfunction.

1. Architects, designers, planners - attitudes

Postmodern theory and critique, both in architecture and urbanism, denounces the lack of legibility of urban landscapes and the dullness of spaces as causes of alienation among inhabitants – as Venturi put it:

"less is bore". The main issue in contemporary attempts to rethink urban space became *the quality of space*, "le cadre de vie". In searching for a way out of the dead-end road of the modern and rational city, an entire series of "solutions" were proposed for the recreation of a city: by urban planning and control, by "guerilla architecture";[1] involving shattering the city into pieces, or by reinforcing its traditional centric structure and recovering the historical – and melancholy-picturesque; by advancing new and novel technologies of urban utopias dominated by "independent" deterritorialized cities, or by invoking regionalism as a technique for recovering the city's identity; or by implementing a variety of 'globalizing' strategies in an attempt to "deconstruct" the specificity of this or that culture.

While deploring the loss of public life and the coming to power of an all pervasive incivility, some architects (including Oscar Newman, Andres Duany, Peter Katz, and Peter Calthorpe) attempted to resist this "aggression" by means of a *defensive urbanism*, involving a more rigorous separation between public and private through the development of "controlled neighborhoods", "gated communities" or an "urbanisme affinitaire".[2] The periphery slowly acquired a strategic position in the development of the city, the peri-urbanization coming to represent the dominant model of macro-restructuring, at least in the case of the United States. Jacques Donzelot asks whether this trend might represent a sign of city's death or just an extension of the city as we know it.[3] Common to most of these experiments on the city's open body is the transformation undergone by the figure of *Man* into the *Individual*. In other words, it is asserted that one single common need came to be replaced by myriad desires awaiting gratification.

There are two main directions to these new approaches to architecture and urbanism: "historicist" and "revolutionary". While the former holds to a real or imagined past, the latter tries to "reinvent" the city. In both approaches, space plays a chief and thus unavoidable role.

New Cities *à l'ancienne*

In this case, which is illustrated by trends such as the Italian neorationalism, the Townscape movement, Neoclassicism, *l'arhitecture urbaine*, etc., the city is viewed as the place of memory that is both collective and able to actively participate in urban transformations.[4] Going deeper into the past, to a level that is all but impossible to transcend,

"archetypes" are rediscovered and reinterpreted to fit the city's new functions and dimensions. Why this thrust? As Charles Jenks puts it, "Eclecticism is the natural evolution of a culture with choice [...] Why, if one can afford to live in different ages and cultures, restrict oneself to the present, the local?"[5] Why not the past? Why not choose to simply "recreate the sense of historical identity and security" by preserving monuments and traditional architectural motifs and creating an "urban palimpsest" by incorporation of "historical clues".[6] This theoretical orientation, based on *typologies* and *monumentality,* is influenced by the work of Derrida and Lévi-Strauss as well as by theoretical work of architects and theorists such as Gordon Cullen, Leon and Robert Krier, Aldo Rossi, Paolo Portoghesi, and Christopher Alexander. In practice, this trend is reputed to have produced such spaces as the Pedestrian Pocket (low-rise high-density housing with mixed-use areas and mass-transit-oriented) and new monumental ensembles of which the best known are those by Ricardo Boffil (whose projects, such as Place Catalonia in Paris, smack of Mussolinian architecture). We can include here - with a grain of salt and nostalgia - the "Grands Projets" of Mitterand, as well as Stalinist and "ethnic" architecture from Eastern Europe. After all the similarities between Lunatcharsky's "right to columns" and Boffil's "Versailles for the people",[7] the taste for decorum and "classical" ornamentation ought to be noted.

In this view, public space is conceived either as more private and controlled (as in the Pedestrian Pockets), or as a representative space that attends to the "pride of the city", or that of the "people". First and foremost, these projects are envisaged either as anonymous, neutral spaces, as in the former case, or, as in the latter case, as a series of signature designs, intended more to be admired than to be used, and meant to be acknowledged as "the main event in itself", rather than host public events.[8] It is no wonder that postmodern architecture and urbanism were regarded by Huxtable as "an old pastiche". "The language of this stage-set architecture indulges in a rhetoric that still seeks to express in ciphers systemic relationships that can no longer be architecturally formulated."[9]

New Cities as *no more cities*

This trend is, on its most "aggressive side", the sheer figure of anti-architecture and anti-urbanism. For representatives of this direction, the recreation of the city requires a stage of strategically fashioned pre-

purification: firstly, urban planning was deemed guilty of excessively controlling space, destroying the diversity of habitation, and eliminating creativity.[10] At the same time, Robert Goodman called planners "soft cops",[11] while Rem Koolhaas wasted no time in announcing "the death of urbanism"[12] as such: "Liberated from its atavistic duties, urbanism, redefined as a way of operating on the inevitable, will attack architecture, invade its trenches, drive it from its bastions, undermine its certainties, explode its limits, ridicule its traditions, smoke out its practitioners".[13] Now liberated from its duties, the city is also supposed to have won its liberation from its location and time, thus opening itself up to its own temporality – the Archigram's Instant City.[14]

However, there is a "diplomatic" variant of this "no more city" view, which appears to be more open to negotiation with its opponents through interdisciplinary study and dialogue. To take the case in point, Paul Davidoff's suggestion of 1965,[15] which led to the opening and democratization of the planning system, generated a new trend in architectural thought. Therefore, it gave way to a new polemic. Consequently, in 1967 the American Institute of Planners decided to sponsor an interdisciplinary approach via a "new kind of urban generalism", whose aim was to open new vistas in architectural thought and practice beyond the physical form of space and envisaging of environmental and social issues. The immediate result was that in the make up of this approach, style became secondary to environment and the periphery became central. In planning, aesthetic considerations gave way to abstract contexts – such as economic and social issues – leading to the marginalization of architectural styles. Coincidentally, the periphery (i.e. outskirts, *banlieues*) advanced towards the center of the city – not in a "military" sense, but in a strategic one. Some see this multiplication as the loss of the elite character of the aesthetic value, an expedient formula by which to advance social agendas to which architecture becomes the servant, thus losing its former preeminence. It is claimed that "much of the transformation in the debate can be attributed to powerful feminist critiques"[16] which introduced forcefully, strengthened or recast a whole chain of dichotomies that were to occupy a preeminent place in the ensuing debates: male vs. female, workplace vs. home, public vs. private, city vs. suburb, etc. With them, and often transcending them, previously "silenced groups" – handicapped, children, old people, ethnic groups, etc. – found their own place in the new, more democratic planning system. In Ali Madanipour's words "the battle between modernist

and post-modernist thinking partly dwelt upon the dichotomy between order and disorder, […] between reason and the senses as a source of our understanding of the world."[17] The paradox here is that modernism is conceived in terms of planning being a solution for everybody, while planning also becomes an egalitarian and civic solution whose main role was to "give modernity" to everyone. Modernism saw itself as a democratic response to the social and even the ecological problems, presented to humanity as a poisonous gift by the new industrial city. In its reaction to modernism, postmodernism considered it to be the cause of major social problems, inequalities and environmental issues. We are faced, in the by now fashionable modern-postmodern debate, by what would appear to be the same claims, and a similar agenda, yet coming from two "opponents".

On whichever side of this divide, whether on the side of the 'pomods' or the 'mods', the new and polemical attitudes increasingly elicited community involvement in planning issues. It was not long before planners developed a number of community forum "techniques", and today there is a whole range of approaches to community-participation urbanism (Judy Rosener counted thirty-nine different ways of conducting such "exercises," which, she observed, are "viewed as being time-consuming, inefficient, irrational and not very productive").[18] Born of these debates on "democratic" methods, the questioning Hydra reared its head: who has the last word? "Citizen involvement" in the planning process has clearly gone beyond the age of innocence, and can now be used simply as an opportunity for manipulation or for justification and subtle imposition of any kind of "rational" project. The act of living our lives seems enmeshed with lies in the open-endedness of the question and in the fact that modernism and postmodernism are as easily converted into ideologies as they are in contemporary philosophy or sociology. Architecture has caught up with a dilemma that has already been the cause of nightmares and anxiety in others.

2. Sociologists, philosophers, analysts, anthropologists and their attitude towards space / urban space – once again from a theoretical perspective

New communication technologies, new virtual communities, and the shift experienced by public spaces from being of physical nature and form to an abstract, communicational form, brought "space" into the

midst of an unrelenting intellectual discourse. On becoming the central issue, public space saw its dimensions multiplied and its territoriality was lost together with its sensual character. In short, it found itself to be an immateriality. Above all, its defining relationship with private space was transformed into a fictive border. The two spaces became interwoven: on the one hand, public space continuously invades private space, through the media and political correctness, while, on the other hand, private space invades the public space through the abandoning of the public role in favor of a direct expression of the individual, as Richard Sennet has put it.

There are many voices in today's culture that deplore the lack of civility in our society and its fragmentation in a scattered landscape of independent and indifferent individuals. They blame the city for having destroyed the cohesiveness of the public sphere and the sense of belonging to a certain space or place. This critique is normally the product of analyses of the public life made in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which – nostalgically, rather than lucidly – invoke the period of the city's golden age. Now, it is a matter of how history is trimmed and retold. One way of reporting the past is to take the view that the nineteenth century, as a result of the expansion of the bourgeoisie and loss of power by the aristocracy, led to the death of public life and civility [Sennett, 1974]. Another way of retelling the same story, in which Baudelaire and Benjamin are unsurpassed champions, espouses the view that the "same" nineteenth century was, properly speaking, the age when the public was shaped. Neither of these views is nostalgia-free, nor are they free from the casting of a longing eye back to this not-so-remote "golden age" (even if, for Baudelaire, its goldenness was rotten and thus shinier in its availability for modern expression). However we look at it, the nineteenth century can be seen as the century of the public, if we agree that: (1) the twentieth century belonged to the masses and their lethal culture, and (2) the publicness of the eighteenth century is somewhat suspicious at best. Even Sennett admits that the "public" of the Enlightenment was no more than that of subjects acting in public spaces and imitating an otherwise private and now dying aristocracy, or, to repeat Habermas, a rising bourgeoisie acting in order to construct a public sphere and public opinion in the semi-privacy of salons, cafés and clubs.

Other voices, however, do not fall into the trap of utopian or nostalgic temptation with the same ease that is worthy of a better cause. For them, bourgeois life or a romantic aristocracy in decline are not regarded as

ideal societies. On the contrary, they maintain that a contemporary society, which is on its way to dissolution, is the ultimate stage in a natural evolution: the most important asset of our historical efforts to achieve emancipation.

Postmodern society no longer conforms to traditional perspectives of what a "real society" is. Rather, it is arranged as a collection of free people living autonomous lives, dedicated to their desire for a better life. Our age is regarded as one of *l'apres devoir*[19] – an age of freedom and (just) tolerance towards our co–citizens. Let it be said that this tolerance appears to be more of an indifferent attitude than a way of accepting and understanding the *other*(ness).

Today's society is presented as one of individual autonomy, in which our roles are multiple, adapted to a multiplicity of social models, all of them optional and equally legitimate, a society manically driven by cultural hedonism[20] for which any *askesis* would amount to posing or abnormality. In consequence, "Truth", "Justice" and "Good" etc. are regarded by some theorists as relative norms that fluctuate with different projects and contexts of our social lives.[21]

Therefore, in each place we have a different role to play and our responsibility becomes vague, relative to this role instead of our *persona*,[22] which is thus absent from social life. All this led to the idea of a total absence of the new individual form any kind of social activity. As Lipovetsky argues, even revolutions, i.e. collective battles (feminism, children's rights, urban habitat, etc.), are the direct result of changes in the development of taste and psychological traits, of the individualistic values. Thus we can consider the abandonment of the city center in favor of more controlled and more 'tranquil' areas as a (primarily) American purism directed against "pleasure and decadence", and we can see urban sprawl as social critique and not as the result of a Fordist production, economic opportunity and redefinition of the "American dream" in the industrialization perspective.

In this fragmented world, with no guarantees of moral behavior and no utopian concept of a perfect society or perfect human being, a world in which our multiplicity of roles controls daily life, it is no longer possible to create a coherent image in the public space; only "adequate" images can be created in public spaces. This results in the new image of a shattered urban space, a spatial organization conceived as a transit facility joining two points and ignoring the rest of the territory. On the other hand, the socio-spatial segregation is engendered by the quest for areas

where *the stranger* can be controlled, non-dangerous, for places where *fake meetings* (as defined by Sennet and Bauman), when they cannot be avoided, can at least take place without any consequences. Urban space is organized in semi-closed spaces for different classes, ethnic groups and generations, etc. Zygmunt Bauman describes the ideal and never achieved city as a series of fortresses with well-defended walls, connected by a labyrinthine net of "spaghetti" (streets, highways, and intersections).[23] This is why our cognitive space is constituted as an archipelago and is not of a contiguous form. Furthermore, at the same time, it becomes increasingly remote as our moral space as we become more irresponsible in terms of what concerns the space. The aesthetic space, usually represented through affection and experience, and which normally arrests our attention, is transformed, due to the lack of real subjectivity, into an imposed space,[24] like a representation of our environment (or its occultation or promotion), as an "unreal" space, proposed from outside.

Meanwhile, the development of the individualist culture we are witnessing, constitutes a negation of individuality as such. We need to be part of a group, to be recognized somewhere as "one of us", to represent and to be self-represented by a style, by an "attitude". We are living in a perfect dichotomy of the self and "I". While the "I", as an exterior form, as brand and as public image is exacerbated (even aligned with a kind of assumed "difference"), the self is, by the same mechanism of affiliation, annihilated, denied and transformed into a self shared by the group. The associativity has gained unforeseen dimensions: for example, the desire to be part of a group can determine ex-parents to persist in their role of summoners, years after their children have left school.

No mater how atomized our societies might seem to be, and how deserted our public spaces appear, they still function as civic spaces (sometimes the very absence of civic space can function as civic space), they are keeping their symbols (though sometimes this can mean denying and negating the proposed symbol). Public spaces still serve as locations of protests, celebrations or public political commentary. They can still maintain their civic dimension: for example, as long as the Parisian students march down St. Michel, demonstrations take place in front of the Brandenburg Gate, in Tiananmen Square or Piata Universitîții. For as long as governments continue to exercise the control over public spaces as a means to dominate society, we cannot really talk of the death of public spaces in their civic dimension.

3. An economic view: quantity and quality of the city

In the wake of modernity, the city dwelling can be considered to have been dominated by economic demands in an unprecedented way. That the city was both generated by and a generator of the economy – a territorial center that controls the market and manufacturing – is more than a mere platitude. However, industrialization brought with it new societies, landscapes and rhythms. Modernity was concerned with quantitative expansion and technological innovation in building production. This was in part due to the post-war reality, but also the result of new architectural and political ideologies.[25]

> "The social functions of urban life, political and economic, private and public, the assignments of cultural and religious representation, of work habitation, recreation and celebration could be *translated* into use-purposes, into functions of temporally regulated use of designed spaces. However, by the nineteenth century at the latest, the city became the point of intersection of a different kind of functional relationship. It was embedded in an abstract system, which could no longer be captured aesthetically in an intelligible presence".[26]

Today's city is considered to be more the result of economic changes and rules than of any other interactions. Spatial structure is generated by social segregation based on economic status and determines the way services are developed (schools, commerce, culture, etc.). The widening social gap, the restructuring trend in the labor market, mass culture, and affinities-based urbanism are considered the new forces within the city, the generating vectors of urban structure and space configuration.[27] The life in new affinities-determined suburbs is a question of personal choice. There is choice of location within the city, i.e. the choice of a personalized territorial structure within the urban space. Then there is also choice in terms of the facilities at that location and their quality. And finally, there is the choice of self-image through architecture. "Only the very poor, via public housing, are dominated by architects' values. Developers build for markets rather than for one man and probably do less harm than authorial architects would do if they had the developers' power".[28] The post-fordist era introduced a new qualitative dimension – "le cadre de vie"[29] – as a central issue in the social conflicts that were until recently oriented towards categorial and quantitave problems (this perspective can still be found in trade union movements). Henry Lefebvre[30] considers the urban

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social landscape to have been transformed into a landscape of class conflicts and exploitation and the urban phenomenon to be economically determined. He also describes postmodern society as a society that in order to survive has turned against industrialization and begun a quest for the values of pre-industrial city, mainly as a means of reconstructing the central role of public space.[31]

Nonetheless, the main transformation of the city as a consequence of economic imperatives is the transformation of the city itself into a commodity. Today's city is the most important consumer product and its image is the most important factor in attracting new investment and businesses. Though not up for sale, the city still obeys the rules of the market. Choosing a city is no longer a problem of territory or accessibility, it is first and foremost a matter of image. Seduction is the main urban service. Architecture and urbanism are but iconographies of the new city show.[32] Furthermore, by following market rules, the city is renovated by private developers in the rhetoric of "rolling back the state", or in property-led projects (e.g., Canary Wharf and Broadgate at Liverpool Street Station in London, and Battery Park in New York). On one hand, this creates a new segregation in the city and a new desertion of the affected areas, that are subsequently occupied by offices and services in accordance with market logic. This lack of housing causes entire areas to become "temporary" or daylight areas.[33] On the other hand, however, we can talk about the globalization in city making as urban development has become an industry like any other and most developers work in big cities (e.g., Olympia & York – the developers of both Canary Wharf and Battery Park.) The standardization of urban landscapes, started by the International Style, is being continued by this globalization trend in real estate and development and is spreading similar concepts of space and urban form more than any other form of communication and is normally considered the most important factor in this standardization of lifestyles.[34] Culture has been transformed into economic geography.

II. PUBLIC DISCOURSE AGAINST THE CITY

Where is it coming from and where is it leading to?

Different analyses, documentary films, evening news journals, statistics and studies talk of the city as a place dominated by danger, insecurity and violence, and opinions of this kind are yet more virulent in respect of

suburbs and the housing estates characterized by the ubiquity of the gray apartment blocks. If the city, its public space, is a stage, as Richard Sennett considers, then the star of the show today is *disorder*. Alongside ethnic and class segregation and urban sprawl, the urban riots of the 1960s and 1970s seem to be the central figures of this anti-urban[ity] discourse.

Moreover, one of the main aspects of this sort of media propaganda is the shift of philosophical discourse (abstract, objective, exterior) and the professional discourse (practical, involved, interior) on urban habitat and urban life. At the same time, these discourses are shifting from a daily reality *in situ*. While the former tends to be more pessimistic and to present the marginality (socially constructed and spatially represented) in darker colors, the latter is based on a more constructive attitude and on the quest for practical solutions on an urban and social level.[35] On the other hand, these "official" discourses are doubled by an identity construction discourse, influenced, if not generated by the first discourse, that revalorize and assume this negative image. This "second hand" city – as the periphery tends to be regarded – has begun to banish itself from a normal life, from a normal relationship with urban space; it seems to refuse to create its own places, landmarks, its own "positive" territoriality. It seems that even memory is bound to ugliness and uniformity and that it is impossible to introduce here any kind of significance. Now, even the inner prospective is as negative and accusative as the external. It is like a vicious circle of condemning and self-damning.

And simultaneously with the propagation of this vision of the peripheral inner city neighborhoods as areas of insecurity and perpetual danger, as places where the only events that take place are murder, rape and robbery, security networks were developed in the central, "civilized" areas. Security patrols, airborne patrols, security cameras, public guardians and private guardians, etc., all these measures only serve to emphasize in a quite artificial way the center-periphery differences and simultaneously blame "the outsiders" for the "desperate situation" of a city under terror. He who is not one of us should not be with us, sharing the same space. So we find ourselves in a vicious circle – the "incivility" requires security measures that provoke, in defiance, greater violence, and hence heavier measures and so forth. Not just a circle, but a downward spiral.

If, in most social analyses we find an over-valorization of eighteenth and nineteenth century societies in contrast to the contemporary individualism and state of dispersion of the communities, in urban planning

theories and analyses we find a thread to follow in terms of admiration for the "architecture of reason and order". But what does reason mean?[36] Is reason order, symmetry, and straight lines? Is pure geometry or abstract mathematics the only, or the most pervasive form of reason? Reason means a cause, the justification of a gesture. So a city of reason will be – at least from this "reasonable" point of view – a city inside which we can read its construction as an endless chain of causality other than "my will, my image, my power"! It will be a city where we will be able to find everything in its most natural and logical place and developing its most expectable and logical relations (whatever "logical" means in these times). As Leonard Duhl idealistically said: "La morphologie physique de chaque type de communauté exprimait les besoins psychologiques et les systèmes de valeurs de ses membres."[37]

Thus, one of the main tasks in our attempt to find new ways of [re]building our cities is to revise our attitude in respect of what is rational: to find what is really necessary, justified, logical, not from a geometrical point of view, but from the point of view of the city in itself. What might a city in itself be? What is the essence of a city? It can be found in its people and their lives, in its form: "When we deal with cities we are dealing with life at its most complex and intense. Because of this there is a basic aesthetic limitation to what we can do with cities: *a city cannot be a work of art.*"[38]

III. URBANISM IN TODAY'S CITY – IN PRACTICE

The practice of urban construction and reconstruction has two main lines of force of development: firstly, the recovery and revival of urban areas valorized as business centers and commercial areas, and secondly, the reconfiguration of the urban habitat in order to create "defensible spaces".[39] All of this involves reduced public investment in government building programs. The main issues of the new urban projects are *amenity*, *security* and – under the influence of some important critics such as Jane Jacobs or Krier – the *mixed uses* for revitalizing the areas and against out-of-town commercial development.[40]

Rehabilitation and revival projects for new commercial urban areas are mainly concerned with historical centers or abandoned ex-industrial areas close to the center, most of which are protected sites. The first of these we will call a "flagship" development, dominated by visual and

financial goals. The common features of these interventions are: functionality orientated towards offices, commerce and culture; strong symbolic revival; visual diversity and use of public art; the signature of the architect for publicity (e.g., Richard Rogers' Centre Pompidou in Paris or Thames-South in London, Rem Koolhaas' Euralille, the attempt to commission Richard Meier for the Opera de la Bastille in Paris, Herzog's and de Meuron's Tate Modern, Ricardo Bofill's Place de Catalogne in Paris, or Bernard Tschumi's La Villette), and the implementation of "manifesto" projects. This "historical eclecticism" often tries to rebuild the city centers as spaces of memory, to recreate them as fundamental spaces of the *new traditional city*, to recompose urban spatial structures based on plazas, squares, colonnades, radial nuclei - in order to assure "a sense of historical identity and security" as Gleye puts it.[41]

However, these efforts are developed in a strictly formal plan that avoids the social plan and the awareness of its transformations (as far as it is possible to create a break between these two dimensions of urban space). This recovering on a "linguistic" level of a geometrical morphology cannot find its meaning in the absence of the user. Such absence is in part due to the exile of citizens to the outskirts, to residential zones, and in part to the profound change in the city users and their demands. We can now talk about a re-signification in architecture-city relations. The prestige, the public image, the brand, and even the artist convey the most important messages of this new architectural language.

In terms of housing projects there are manifestations yet more complex than this. However, the central issue seems to be that of *security,* thereby replacing the *amenity* of the 1970s and 1980s. That said, large-scale public investment and housing projects have also made possible the creation of private-public consortia and small community projects that involve inhabitants in the planning. Decentralization and exodus to the suburbs completes the picture of 1990s housing.

Two points of view are relevant to security as a main concern in neighborhood planning. The first of these, supported by theorists such as Alice Coleman or Oscar Newman, proposes "the transfer of the communally-used space to private ownership"[42] and a clear separation between the private realm of the house and public functions, in parallel with heightened security measures (walls, fences, surveillance cameras, no entry signs, security patrols, etc.). The second point of view, originating from Jane Jacobs' vision, states the necessity of a strong relation between public and private spaces, in which the latter is seen as the *controller* of

the former. The only real control on society is society itself, and the only secure urban space is that which is used and popular.[43]

With the first vision emerged the concept of *defensible space environment* and defensive urbanism, in a hierarchy at the top of which was situated the *golden ghettos*[44] project, a kind of elective tripartite urbanism: *lifestyle* communities – focused on the search for nature and sport facilities, with emphasis placed on *loisir*; *prestige* communities – built on social segregation and looking to express the *difference*; *security zone* communities – the gated communities within closed, guarded and controlled access precincts. These communities represent spaces of a new unsociability that bring together an underclass with no awareness of class and which does not regard itself as part of a society.[45] Some solutions with a stronger social dimension were proposed and built around the *sustainable communities* concept. A more "urban" solution is the Pedestrian Pocket, proposed by the New Urbanism movement, which focuses on environmental sustainability and *community building*, but which, despite its declared "anti-CIAM" attitude, produces rather similar results: separated pedestrian walkways, green amorphous spaces only with better details, monotonous housing, and a rustic atmosphere. The second - Transit-oriented Development - is an adaptation of the Garden city concept for new suburban neighborhoods and includes mixed-use centers and mixed-type housing connected by a fast transit system.[46] Both participate in the suburbanization, either on the level of urban structure or of urban life(style).

The characteristic elements of the new urbanism in our cities today are to be identified in the creation of a new and rich image based on prestigious buildings, in the presence of public art on the sites of large public rehabilitation projects of urban cores, and in the search for a new level of comfort based on isolation and security in the housing development.

Public art – or art in the city

One characteristic of urban contemporary developments is the transformation of public space into a sort of museum. From the point of view of artists, this is normally seen as liberation from the spaces and conventions of art galleries and as an opportunity for a "real" relationship with the public. From the point of view of the developers and urban designers, however, this is viewed as a means for regenerating and creating place identity. Public art has been used for (re)vitalization of

anonymous and un-appropriated spaces, of which La Défense esplanade is one of the best-known examples. However, liberation of art from the exhibition curators is followed by adaptation to the developers' demands, which normally tend toward "neutral" and unrepresentative works of art, despite the "democratic" promotion made together with the local community. The relationship with the "framing" architecture is also ignored in most cases, both from the point of view of visual coherence and social context.[47] The idea of a permanent decryption of public art in various codes of mass culture is a weak one as the sculptures are most of the time perceived as "parachuted" or formal and thus only become urban furniture, a rabble of stupid expressionless objects instead of the desired artistic panacea. "The street is dead. That discovery has led to frantic attempts at its resuscitation. Public art is everywhere – as if two deaths make a life."[48]

A strong shift in the discourses and interests of the artists has been noticeable since they view themselves as social critics and constructors of new patterns of socialization,[49] but they have to respond to the developers' inclination towards "soft art", and face the indifference of inhabitants, who find in these "objects" a "terrain" in which to express their artistic energies. Frederic Jameson has suggested that "the political relationship between works of art and the societies they are located in can be determined according to the difference between replication (reproduction of the logic of that society) and opposition (the attempt to establish the elements of a utopian space radically different from the one in which we reside)."[50]

We can consider the presence of public art in the city as having been there *for ever*. What is still particular to this mixture of space and art is, despite the claims of some authors, its incapacity to create character and sense, to symbolize space from a social point of view. Some artists consider that the art of the cathedrals or of the architecture of other public buildings is artisanal and repetitive and, by way of contrast, regard contemporary public art as capable of subverting the previous currents and of creating a cultural awareness. However, the "old" works of art, embodied in buildings, do still function as symbols of cities. Victor Hugo metaphorically equated monuments with books of stones: "Le symbole avait besoin de s'épanouir dans l'édifice. L'architecture alors se développa avec la pensée humaine; elle devint géante à mille têtes et milles bras, et fixa sous une forme éternelle, visible, palpable, tout ce symbolisme

flottant".[51] And modern public art does not find its way into public consciousness and does not represent landmarks in urban space.

One example of the presence of art in urban space and its involvement in urban renewal is given by the re-conquering of derelict areas for artists' studios. Artists and students accept living in slums and poor areas, while, at the same time, they recreate a sense of socialization and even spur economic growth. This tradition of transferring abandoned neighborhoods to artists has a long history (e.g., from 1745, when the Luxembourg Palace in Paris was offered to Charles Parrocel, and after the French Revolution, when Parisian churches and monasteries were occupied by artists, to the huge success of the Andy Warhol's Factory in New York in 1950s and 1960s). Today, the same phenomenon can be seen in the recovery of derelict industrial areas (e.g., in Liverpool, where James Stirling's Tate Gallery was built in the Albert Dock, or in Marseilles, where the Le Panier minorities ghetto was transformed into an artistic district).[52] This new art districts are opened to the public through temporary exhibitions and installations, thus transforming the city into a real stage on which inhabitants can make and maintain contact with art in most significant ways and can experience events in the presence of art, instead of ignoring it in their daily contexts.

The quest for individual comfort

Postmodern society is defined by individualism, by the desire to attain a better (personal) life,[53] by a life devoted to the quest for (personal) comfort. But what is comfort? Comfort is not a new task in our lives; it has been one of the main driving forces of our entire evolution. What appears new is its reduction to an almost entirely physi(ologi)cal dimension. A bigger car, a bigger house, a bigger garden (big = beautiful = comfort = prestige = happiness = etc.), a longer holiday in a "more exotic" place (no matter how artificial, crowded or agitated), and a new fur coat; all can become sources of our comfort. It is as if all we need is to have a full plate and sit in a leather fauteuil in front of 50 - 100 television channels. This *quantitative* vision of the *quality* of life is also one of the main sources of the public-private dichotomy. Private space is that which assures comfort, security, pleasure and relaxation, while public space is a space of transit, uncomfortable disorder and sometimes danger. The quest for city pleasures, for the ontological experience of the city and urban space as the place of events and *situations*, is replaced by

immersion in wild adventures brought into the domestic realm through the media. The fear of outside experience, the obligatory detour on our way home to avoid the "ugly parts" of the city, the lack of communication, insecurity, the permanent felling of being misunderstood, and the lack of a place of your own, all of these do not seem to be considered uncomfortable. The mechanical and almost essential refuge taken behind the front door is not regarded as a restriction of our existence, but as a blessing. However, the general public will almost always stand behind the traditionalists. In the public eye, architecture is about comfort, shelter, bricks and mortar. For those for whom architecture is not necessarily about comfort and *Geborgenheit*, but is also about advancing society and its development, the shock device may prove indispensable [...] Architecture in the megalopolis may be more about finding unfamiliar solution to problems than about the quieting, comforting solutions of the establishment community.[54]

IV. PUBLIC, SOCIETY, COMMUNITY AND THEIR SPACES / URBAN TERRITORIES

What has become of public space in this society that is dominated by the individual and individualism? What are its limits and its features? A (re)definition of public space in the context of postmodern society is still difficult to set about due to the fluid and continuous redefinitions of spatial relations of which the only one that seems certain is the opposition between public and private. What can be considered a leitmotiv in urban and social theories and studies is a strange revalorization of rural and suburban spaces, almost tribal spaces, as melting pots of sociability, while the cities and their "no more public" spaces in particular are suffering from an inevitable and perpetual devaluation in this comparison with the far more "private" social territories.[55]

From a "technical" point of view, this definition of public space is made in terms of opposition to private space (that which is not private is therefore public) and focuses on two aspects:

- the legal – in terms of what is the public domain and what is the private domain;
- the functional – where there is public access and where access is controlled, such that the space, whether public domain or not, functions as a private.

Common sense dictates that "public space" should denote the system of open areas – streets, squares, plazas, parks and green areas. However, not all open spaces are public, and not all public spaces are open, as in *alfresco*. Kevin Lynch posed the questions as to how open spaces are, to what extent do they come under the control and use of the city's inhabitants, and how accessible they are from both a physical and psychic point of view.

At any rate, this common sense definition is superfluous and inaccurate so long as we are not able to equate the open and the public. Public space may not only be closed and non-urban. It may also be non-spatial from a geometrical and physical point of view. So we can have a wide range of visions of urban spaces from "all types of space between the buildings in towns and other localities […] geometrically bounded by a variety of elevations",[56] to visions like that of William Mitchell, who [re]creates in "Soft cities" in the virtual world an entire urban structure with neighborhoods, streets, communities and frontiers, and an urban life in E-Topia.[57] The bottom line is that public space is a "problem". It requires (a) resolution(s).

Public space and its publicness should be regarded from the point of view of segmentary social character (I am not referring here to the segregation phenomena, but to the variability of the different group scales with no negative connotation). We are talking about urban public space as a social product and about society as being in decline. In other words, we are talking about the sociability or un-sociability of a territory: what, in fact, is society when regarded in its relationship with space? Can we still regard a society as a whole and expect it to be represented by its entire territory? What do we actually mean by the practice of the city, the spatial practice? What does it mean to produce or generate a territory through daily practice? And who is producing it, and by following which strategy or logic? "Le terme de *projet transactionnel* signifie d'un côté la stratégie locale de la construction du territoire, car le territoire est génère à partir de l'espace, étant le résultat d'une action conduite par un acteur syntagmatique – acteur réalisant un programme".[58] Can society (abstract and general in its definition) be considered as an active actor in the (concrete and specific) urban space? If we can view urban sociability as a relational system developed in several parallel plans then we have:

- one-to-one relationships, the I and you level, that are still asocial, since the society in *sensu stricto* is rooted in a tripartite universe;[59]

- family and intimate group relations, based on common interests and desires, a sociability which is usually displayed in the private space;[60]
- territorial community relations determined by sharing the same daily space and place between private and public. Community's identity can be built on a rejection of the *other*, on an affirmation of and difference from outsiders, or on tolerance, mixture and affirmation of inner similitude despite the mixture (citizenship);
- de-territorialized community relations - the most common in modern society, shaped by common interest or self-expression and its transitory/temporary character;
- inter-communities, regional, national relations, etc. – the "large society" constructed by political means and a public official discourse.[61]

We should expect to see the same distinctions working on a territorial level; and while the "extreme" cases are relatively clear, the in-between cases are rather less so, because of the inappropriate definition of community (and the more or less implicit territoriality). For the community can be considered to range from one apartment block inhabitant, to a neighborhood, and to the city society itself.

In the traditional perspective public urban space is seen mostly as civic space, where the plazas, squares and main symbolic places of the city are regarded as target spaces, as "a destination, a purpose-built stage for ritual and interaction",[62] and used consequently for the hosting of "structured or communal activities" (festivals, riots, celebrations, bullfights, etc.). However, this vision of public space overlooks our daily life and our daily relations with(in) the city. This implies reducing public life to a series of meaningful events and using public space as an urban tool for arbitrating social conflicts, organizing "social harmony", or as a forum for democratic discussion.

There are two problems associated with this "polis"-inspired view of public urban space. One concerns the street, which is normally seen and conceived of as transit space, "spaghetti", corridor, and other kinds of socio-fugal spaces. On the one hand, the street is considered as not capable of becoming a *place* due to its non-homogeneous character and because, even if a given street has a strong visual identity, this still doesn't lead to a high imageability.[63] On the other hand, the street is perceived as an uncontrolled and unsafe space that is in conflict with

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inhabitants and is the exclusive place of the automobile. The corridor street with sidewalks, invaded by commerce and suffocated by housing, which had been eliminated in Le Corbusier's city, is almost considered as a panacea of social disorders by some, such as Jane Jacobs, who sees in "streets and their sidewalks, the main public places of a city, its most vital organs".[64] What is certain is that streets are a part of our lives and part of public space. They can be as civic as any other place and should no longer be considered the realm of the automobile, only accidentally traversed by people. Entering a street can signify a revolution or simply an encounter with a neighbor. To walk on the street means not only passing from one place to another, but while wandering we think, forget, dream etc., it is a time for getting rid of troubles and daily burdens.[65] In spite of all the theories in favor or against the street as a place for gathering and hanging out, the fact remains that the street is becoming increasingly absent from our lives. With the exception of pedestrian streets and zones, all other parts of the network are mostly given over to spaces of transit, of quick and directed, but indifferent movements. Grouping of the commercial spaces around plazas, inner plazas and inside malls etc. is leading to the disappearance of the street as a vivid space and, consequently, to a growth in feelings of insecurity.

The second problem comes in the form of the development of *loisir* as the other figure of public life. If the urban agora mentioned above, the space of public *action*, is related to the city as *polis* where *all citizens* share in a community and tradition, this second kind of public space, as one of *distraction*, is related to the city as *cosmopolis*, as the new Babylon, where the inhabitants belong to changing and shifting groups, where communities cease to be connected to a particular location, and more a way of expressing difference rather than belonging. These spaces of *having a good time* are at the same time spaces of public life and social contact without being public places. They are what Ray Oldenburg calls tertiary[66] spaces, as opposed to house, office and school as primary and secondary spaces. These are places such as taverns, beauty salons, bowling halls, bars and cafes. Further, we can consider this tertiary space as the cultural signature of a city or country, just as we know the English pub, the French bistro, the Parisians cafes, the German beer cellar, etc.; all of which are associated with various city cultures and forms.

These *loisir* public spaces, in response to new social behavior, form part of the transformation of the city into a consumer object; and the new, adapted urbanism – as image construction – has brought with it

what can be considered as the main tendency of public-private space relations in urban space: the privatization of public spaces, a privatization that has several forms and degrees which we can observe:

- from the perspective of property, as a concentration of what was always a public ceremony – the stroll, the *flânerie*, the losing of time – in private spaces such as malls, halls, etc.;
- from a "behavioral" perspective, as the occupation of public spaces by segregated groups, gangs and the homeless, who use these spaces as their private spaces and control public access;
- from the perspective of control, as control of public spaces by a private agent (though not by Jane Jacobs's socially aware *eye upon the street*[67]) as, for example, in Battery Park, New York, and many other spaces where security is assured by private guards and private companies, which will lead to the control of access to public space.

As a result of these changes we can talk of a disneylandization of public spaces, of an ersatz architecture which "draws citizens away from a democratic, public realm into plastic temples of consumption".[68] Cities thus became collections of "invented" spaces from all times and spaces, with no authenticity, but simply the products of tourism and commerce.

Another aspect that seemingly does not concern public space is that of the community involving politics of housing development, castigated as inefficient and futile. The main limitation of these politics doesn't necessarily come from the way they take people's opinions into consideration, which is mostly a problem of constructing dialog and of the interests of planners and architects. It comes from the fact that all of this urban politics represent ways of defining community, and, consequently, its space. Usually this auto-definition of community space is made by dint of strong opposition to public space, not necessarily from the point of view of territorial relations (clear delimitations, etc.),[69] but from a psychical and behavioral point of view, by social distinction, encouraging refusal of the presence of the other, and by "defensive tools", which lead to a "privatization" of private space.

Complex security measures dominate both private and public space, almost as if they exist as defense against each other. Instead of ensuring measures of "civil" sociability, they actually discourage attempts at a possible re-conquering and re-appropriation of the space. In fact, they tend to disregard the "humanistic" aspects of living and, being influenced by economical and financial imperatives, propose a visual recovery of the areas in question and a simultaneous desertion thereof by evacuating

the "indigenous" population to facilitate replacement of habitable spaces by modern offices and, in some lucky cases, office apartments. Thus a normal, real, natural and nonstop city is replaced by a "nine-to-five" city, while an entire mélange of people is similarly replaced by Yuppies. This is a new enclave, in which misery and disorder are replaced by design and emptiness.

Nonetheless, we still find a vivid city, full of colors, of people gathering and hanging out; we still find small "agoras" where men debate and relive (even more energetically than the "real thing") the most recent soccer game. We still find a very active civic space of symbolic territories, determined by political and civic use of public spaces, their being deeply linked in people's *public mind*.[70]

V. ROMANIAN CITIES AND THE AUTOCHTHONOUS SOCIAL "REALITY"

Despite the differences in the controlling forces, both in the East and the West the modernist project resulted in a perverted version of the same rational and hygienist model: an anonymity of urban structure and space, a continuous gray, un-differentiated, generic, standardized city independent of culture. The suburb, *la banlieue, le quartier dortoir*, the *satellite city* – all are the same everywhere. They have the same inner hierarchy, the same dull concept. Our cities today are spaces/territories equally dominated on social, symbolic and visual levels by the apartment block housing estates.

Fifty years of communism and their consequences for the cities

The new Romanian "city of peoples" was built either as an overnight effort (for which the Romanian expression is "*hei-rup*") in the shadow of some huge industrial facility, or by way of the bulldozer on old city's streets in a quest for their shy modernity. Never completely urban, never really modern (despite the huge efforts made to succeed in the modernity project), and never inhabited by an urban population, the post-war Romanian city developed in a rather chaotic way, emerging from a mixture of systematic planning and *ad hoc* administrative solutions.

As a huge heap of apartment blocks and nationalized old houses (where they survived), Romanian cities have been a cluster of no-man's-lands

for the last 50 years. Their public spaces were just a nightmare image of "enthusiastic" meetings, in the past or still to come, opportunities for the celebration of socialist accomplishments. Deserted concrete spaces, surrounded by insipid and depressing "convex" buildings, even the old plazas, that have now become anonymous, were no longer able to find their color and sense of existence. People experienced their "publicness" in their own private spaces. Daily existence struggled to find tranquility and freedom from the ubiquitous and always watching eye of Big Brother. Public and community life was strangulated even within circles of friends, something normally considered private. However, in places regarded as sources of decompression and self-recovery, even in what was supposed to be private, without a mask, no one was able to rid themselves of the "role". Even private space contained strangers and suspicion. The alternative, the choice of giving up the mask, was similar to assuming a kind of ultimate risk.

Daily communication was flooded with codes, with fake dissidence and childish feuds meant to impress. Every film watched "on video", every joke, every salami sandwich eater was a small act of "resistance". The bar, the cinema, the plaza, the store – all were hidden, reconstructed, reformed in private apartments. Everything was public and private at the same time. The city streets were nearly always empty, the whispers of public-private life could be heard from behind dark windows (otherwise the power cuts would always be greeted with cheers and yells by the children "out to play" – at least this is how some remember their childhood, when every aberration was a reason for grandiose adventure). All were strangers but friends simultaneously. There was a superimposition of a permanently suspicious attitude with solidarities of survival, both of which were generalized and petty. Equality was achieved: equally isolated, equally exposed, equally closed in concrete boxes, equally autistic. The few "actions" performed in public space were merely singular outbursts with no pretensions to coherence.

Communist urbanism is difficult to describe in terms of a normal planning. It was more of a developing strategy, a pathetic demonstration of our appetite for modernity (from an Eastern prospective) and the desired representation of state strength and will.[71] The result was a city represented more by the figures of the five-year plans, than by "flesh and bone". Public space, never very important in Romanian urbanism and represented up to that time by a handful of places full of automobiles (such as Piața Romană, Piața UniversitÎții, Piața Victoriei and Șoseaua Kiseleff in

Bucharest) and some streets crowded with people (such as Calea Victoriei and Blvd. Magheru, again in Bucharest), became the almost standard "civic center", ersatz huge soviet spaces. The emblematic *cappo d'opera* of the time was (and is still held to be) the Palace Hall Place, seen as accomplishment of the modern dream. Typically, there was no place for people "inside", the "place" being just a way towards the foyer, a space of transit in a time when gathering was an offence. However, from the point of view of "national style" (as the local variant of historicist postmodernism) the crown was taken by Satu Mare town hall and provides us with a "lesson" in the concret(e)izing of popular heritage in "folkloric hysteria".[72] The rest consist of prefab images in tacky, dull concrete, with some attempts at decoration. We find the same thing everywhere, the same "identity" image and message stating that we are "proud of who we are".[73]

Twelve years of democracy and its new constructions

Unfortunately, after twelve years, we still do not know where we are, or where we are going. Reality is changing too rapidly, yet it is far too slow in achieving our complex goals. In saying it is changing too quickly, I mean to say that we cannot be certain of the things that remain constant, nor of whether the decisions we take today will not be abandoned tomorrow for being "no longer adequate" for the changed conditions. It is too slow because even if no element remains unchanged, the complex of factors seems to remain (nearly) "as before" and we are still living with the feeling that there is nothing we can do or change – a fatalist view that is, however, very mediated and fashionable and at the root of all our nervous breakdowns.

We are now shifting in the opposite direction, being in possession of everything with no form of discernment. The "I've built my house as I wanted to or as I knew how to"[74] has changed to an "I do what I want and where I want to". This is not related to the ability of the administrative and justice systems to maintain order in public places. It is something that comes from within us, is related to our capacity to order our affairs, and from this inner space to go on to negotiate our external territories in terms of what and how, and with whom we share them. It is related to our capacity for leaving the "rurban" existence and becoming real urban people.

The post-revolution city is currently in a state of perpetual transformation, with no clear and coherent (visible) tendencies. Populations are migrating from city to city, i.e. between cities, but without creating a new demographic structure. The only phenomenon with some coherence and certainly with a character of generality is the permanent retracing of the public, i.e., private delimitation. It is a phenomenon older than democracy, that relies on the construction of a "home" in the concrete boxes called houses and apartments. The inhabitants are redefining their habitats, they are (re)building places, and are tending to occupy spaces of the city that are *not theirs*. Space is controlled through new and continuous negotiations of the I and the other, of micro and macro territories. Here we can take note of the following:

- "publicization" of private space through public access functions is achieved in the private space of the apartment or the house. There are offices, shops, hairdressers, drugstores etc., all of which are improvised in private spaces and have the strange atmosphere of something between a real service space and the kitchen of a "female householder";
- privatization of public spaces into private access spaces is effected by the frenetic extension of the habitat into the streets and interstitial spaces, never really used as public. From the simple parked automobile that blocks the sidewalk, to entire streets blocked by a more powerful citizen in search of his own tranquility (e.g. Rozmarin Street in Bucharest, which is controlled by a guard from the Ministry of Defense at the request of a private civilian);
- privatization of the public spaces into public access spaces is also effected by chains of kiosks, bars, terraces, small retail shops, and clusters of market stalls which occupy sidewalks, squares, green spaces and even pedestrian streets;

All of these are forms of reciprocal invasions of space in a complete ignorance of any notion of what is "ours" or "theirs", or of what is private, common, community or public – all categories that never seem to function as they should.[75]

Further to the chaotic transformation of public spaces we also find:

- privatization of the private space to be the root phenomenon of those mentioned above. The closed balcony with windows, *other* types of door, the different garage, the pink wall, huge opaque fences, the yellow façade with broken mirror and red roof, a

porcelain dog in front of the door with lions at the gate, house minarets, the overwhelming modern high-tech apartment block near the little old merchant's house falling apart etc., all forms of [re]affirmation of the owner's personality, of delimitation of private space, at times aggressive in nature. The inhabitant is recomposing, extending, enclosing and adorning his property, but also redefining its functions and, above all, abusing his property as might be done with any possession.

All these phenomena and tendencies of retracing space are connected by the [re]definition of the private and public that is related to the following essential aspects of Romanian space:

- the "historical" absence of the property,[76] an absence which is equally "active" in both rural and urban space and which was enriched and empowered in communism when property was regarded as a new "original sin" from which all inequalities and injustice emerge. To own a house, a place, was, in the few cases when it was still possible, castigation in front of a rootless and acculturated society. The absence of private space made construction of public space impossible. Hence the cities, along with all other spaces of all scales and sizes, were no-man's-lands, and not places at all at the end of the last "communist era";

- the collective habitat. I am not referring here to the "properly urban" collective habitat, which became in the 1920s and 1930s a sign of modernity and emancipation, but to the more collectivist habitat found in the small industrial cities built virtually overnight, or in the huge ensembles present in any big city; to the collective habitat that became during communism (and still is today) the dominant habitat – albeit not necessarily in terms of numbers, but in respect of image and feeling. A peculiar domesticity developed in these apartment blocks, in a form of residence which reached a new "inner complexity", similar to the complexity of the street in terms of life and function. There was a level of conviviality as of a public space, merchandise exchanges occurred in the proximity of normal commercial activity, the staircase became both public and private space, play area and living room, street and lumber box. Again, public-private differentiation was blurred. The blocks of flats succeeded in achieving the utopia of all cities and planners' dreams: the creation of a tolerant and almost natural, social heterogeneity. These "*quartiers-dortoir*" are now becoming

problematic in the presence of unemployment and poverty; otherwise, they could (though not always) be unexpected places of real sociability.

While the old city districts (which escaped the bulldozer) are slowly gaining a new and maybe even more eclectic and strange image as a result of new insertions, usually in a completely different architectural language than their surroundings, the "residential" areas are still in the "bedroom" phase, i.e. still sleeping in their own selves. Downtown areas are being filled with new glass and marble buildings of prestige, with the red roofs and multi-minarets of the new domesticity, and the improvised boutiques/kiosks of new commerce (though these are already in the course of demolition in some areas). They are also being filled by the new eclectic windows and doorways of bars, cafes, boutiques, and with the old charm of popular terraces and, above all, with people. It seems that our centers are finding their way easily, their being more a problem of time and money than of initiative, interest and ideas.

However, what has happened to those gray areas of apartment blocks? Beside the renegotiation of the private space in search of a better life, we can see a negotiation in terms of their relationship to the center. There are some districts that are defining (in the absence of mayoral intervention as in the Drumul Taberei area) new, *ad hoc* local centers, usually created in a very non-architectural and unconventional way. In most cases, this centrality is constructed by refusing the old centralized areas created by communist era systematization. It is hard to believe this is an aware and clear "manifesto" gesture; it is more a display of instinctive sanity on the part of the inhabitants. The typical conviviality of the staircase (distorted in any case by its verticality and social eclecticism), which is in many ways similar to the traditional *mahala* atmosphere, is now showing in the street. Being there, living in these districts (at least for a while) proves that it doesn't mater how gray, dull and cheap the houses and apartment blocks are because, on the small scale of micro-territories, there are many signs and gestures that both result in and generate space appropriation, that make places. They have signs and traces inherent to the daily use of space, to habitation. The space that we inhabit becomes, in a certain sense, our own, regardless of how strange or inadequate it is, or how much we might want to escape from it. Moreover, besides the whole mythology of insecurity, aggression and incivility in these districts, they have (during the day at least) an astonishingly civilized and friendly atmosphere. It might be said of these people that, owing to their relative

poverty and rural nature, and despite their heterogeneity (workers, professors, old ex-boyars, unemployed, doctors, pensioners, housekeepers, newly emerged yuppies, fresh parvenu louts etc.),[77] they are at times succeeding in building a closer and more active sense of community than exists in the central areas where inhabitants behave much more as strangers to each other.

VI. TOWARDS A NEW COMPREHENSIVE NON-URBANISM OR A MICRO-URBANISM ABOVE URBANISM

> *Virtually all theories about the city are true, especially contradictory ones.*
>
> Charles Jencks, *The city that never sleeps*

Our cities are loved but mostly hated, wanted and despised. The reasons for this are changing, as are the "traditions". The dissipation, fragmentation or even disappearance of big industry (or just the expectation that this will happen in future) has caused market reorganization, a diversification of services, a new distribution within the city, all of which have provoked in their turn an intimate modification of city life, street atmosphere, inhabitants and their relationship to the city territory. Daily rituals are changing. The city has a sort of neutrality – bars, terraces and malls are full of claimed (and real) poverty. What one might find intriguing is the total disinterest in image and design. People are everywhere; no matter how improvised the place, how bad what is on offer, people are using everything and every space "like there's no tomorrow".

In center-periphery relations, the idea of the image of the city developed around a symbolic and valorized center is an overwhelming stereotype. The center is of positive character and is surrounded by increasingly weakly configured areas, un-appropriated, non-symbolized, amoral, asocial spaces. Nonetheless, the peripheral groups of apartment blocks and poor housing still survive and are even developing (in housing district), disregarding the "official" view. This will not last for long, however, as the urban politics of the local and central administration is counting on their destruction and vanishing. When will this be possible? And what will we do until then? The whole of urban politics is based on the ideas of central renewal and more peripheral development. What will happen in the meantime? For once Bucharest's problems are matters

of where to build the huge new cathedral, a new Government building, a hotel for Parliament, a highway, the new gated community or "quartier français" (which will replace a forest), a new tower as a symbol of our powerful economy etc. In the meantime, the government is proposing a national housing program in order to create middle-class neighborhoods [for the nouveau riches the problem is solved] and working-class districts. When the entire world is faced with the huge, destructive and uncontrollable problem of social segregation, we are looking forward to it, as it were, provoking it officially.[78] Again we are encountering the same anti-city discourse, the same devaluation of city spaces as long as they are not "historical", as long as they are not part of our "collective memory". Can the city still provide support for this memory that we theoretically share? Are we still sharing our spaces? The destruction of the centers, the buildings that are erected all around us overnight cut out our common landmarks. We are no longer part of the same space. This does not necessarily imply that we are more like strangers than we were before, or that we no longer have a sense of place. However, it implies that Culture, Truth and Beauty etc. are being replaced by cultures (subcultures), truths and beauties, and that we are living in a world of multiplicity. The choice is ours.[79]

The question remains as to whether it is still possible to redeem these imposed spaces, these "prefab places". We surely cannot count on their destruction. This ultimate act is too remote a prospect to wait for, and we cannot delay regaining these places as "human" spaces within the city until the virtual moment of their disappearance (and their replacing by who knows what). Are these dull areas apt to receive a human dimension?

The chaotic invasion of public space, the social mixture, the traditional uncontrolled growth of our cities,[80] the unusual half indifferent, half excessively familiar sociability, the contrast between architectural monotony and homogeneity and the cultural diversity of inhabitants, the strange territoriality, and the peculiar, extremely local and personal appropriation strategies; all these together create an important potential. In addition to these traditional assets of our cities, there is also a new phenomenon of space "valorization" developing in contact with the proudly assumed sub-culture(s) of MTV "underground" mainstream hip-hop, rap and graffiti. Of a sudden, the *boy from the quarter* (district) discovered an astonishing similitude with the *ghetto boy*. Beyond "quality" of music, we discover the new identity construct discourse of the *pastoral*

urban marginal society which provides an inevitable balance of the "ghetto image constructed on the rejected individual in a money-oriented society discourse" and the "I will never leave my neighborhood of truth and my real quarter [district] buddies story". Somehow these sub-cultures (if sub-cultures really exist in a world without Culture and in which Cultural Studies and Visual Culture look to everyday life and everyday experience for the creation of new patterns of imagination and new dominating, even ever-shifting cultures)[81] are combining the official anti-city discourse and a *my city* identity-awakening discourse. On the other hand, we have the phenomenon of the "traditional" wooden churches[82] that is present in all of these urban districts (if not of wood, then as an improvisation in brick), a reactivation of a very traditional logic of the city, with the *mahala* around the church, and attempts at recreating neighborhood social clusters. The question is whether, based on these two "historical" and "innovative" attitudes to the "gray districts", we can build an "anti-urbanism" that would reach "from the very bottom to almost up" and would be able to undermine the "original" message of the apartment block architecture thus recreating a new sense of place. Can all these acts of aggression against space transform the "product" house into the "oeuvre" house for each of us? Maybe, by approaching the apartment block ensembles as empty shells to be filled with "homes", rather than as heaps of residential units to be kept or destroyed, we will achieve an urbanistic resolution by un-urbanistic (if not anti-urbanistic) means. Learning from "popular" culture does not detach the architect from his or her status in high culture. However, it may succeed in altering high culture to make it more sympathetic to current needs and issues"[83]

> To survive, urbanism will have to imagine a new newness. Liberated from its atavistic duties, urbanism redefined as a way of operating on the inevitable will attack architecture, invade its trenches, drive it from its bastions, undermine its certainties, explode its limits, ridicule its preoccupations with matter and substance, destroy its traditions, smoke out its practitioners. […] What if we simply declare that there is no crisis – redefine our relationship with the city not as its makers but as its mere subjects, as its supporters? More than ever, the city is all we have.
>
> Rem Koolhaas and Bruce Mau, *S, M, L, XL*

NOTES

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4. Aldo Rossi, "The Collective Memory", from *Architecture of the City*, 1966, in Malcom Miles, Tim Hall and Iain Borden, *The City Cultures Reader*, Routledge, London, 2000, pp. 172–173.

5. Charles Jenks quoted by Nan Ellin in *Postmodern Urbanism,* revised edition, Princeton Architectural Press, 1999, on "Historical eclecticism".

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11. Robert Goodmnan, *After the Planners*, Simon& Schuster, New York, 1971, quoted by Nan Ellin, *Postmodern Urbanism,* revised edition, Princeton Architectural Press, 1999.

12. Rem Koolhaas and Bruce Mau in *S, M, L, XL,* The Monacelli Press, Inc., New York, 1995, p. 967: "The death of urbanism – our refuge in the parasitic security of architecture – creates an immanent disaster: more and more substance is grafted on our starving roots" – an affirmation that generated a huge wave of contradictory reactions and debates.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 971.

14. Archigram, "Instant City", in Malcom Miles, Tim Hall and Iain Borden, *The City Cultures Reader* Routledge, London, 2000, pp.125-128.

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20   Gilles Lipovetsky, "Espace privé, espace public à l'age post-moderne" pp. 105-122, in *Citoyenneté et urbanité*, Ed. Esprit, Paris, 1991, pp. 110-111.
21   Zygmunt Bauman – *Etica Postmodernă* – Amarcord, Bucharest, 2000, p. 10.
22   *Ibid.*, p. 24.
23   *Ibid.*, p. 173.
24   Robert Ferras, *Ville paraître, être à part*, Reclus, Montpellier, 1990, p. 31 : "Espaces imposés? […] C'est la representation du milieu [ou son occultation, ou la promotion] qui nous est proposée, et pas le milieu lui-même".
25   Jonathan Charley, *Industrialization and the City: Work, Speed-up, Urbanization,* 1995, pp. 67-68, quoted in Malcom Miles, Tim Hall and Iain Borden, *The City Cultures Reader*, Routledge, London, 2000, p. 67.
26   Jurgen Habermas, "Modern and Postmodern Architecture", *apud* Neil Leach, *Rethinking Architecture*, Routledge, London, 1997, p. 233.
27   Saskia Sassen, "The New Inequalities within Cities", from *Cities in a World Economy*, 1994, pp.60-66 quoted in Malcom Miles, Tim Hall and Iain Borden, *The City Cultures Reader*, Routledge, London, 2000, p. 65.
28   Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, Steven Izenour, *Learning From Las Vegas*, MIT Press, Cambridge Massachusets, [1977] 1998, p. 154.
29   Jaques Donselot, *op.cit.*
30   Henry Lefebvre, *Le droit à la Ville*, Edition Anthropos, Paris, 1967.
31   Henry Lefebvre, quoted by Jaques Donzelot, *op.cit.*
32   Peter Hall, "Planning and Urban Design in the 1990s", in *Urban Design*, no. 56, October 1995, quoted by Tony Lloyd-Jones, "The Scope of Urban Design", in Clara Greed and Marion Roberts, *Introducing Urban Design; Interventions and responses*, vol. IV, *Exploring Town Planning* , Addison Wesley Longman Limited., Harlow, 1998, p. 33.
33   Marion Roberts, "Urban Design and Regeneration", in Clara Greed and Marion Roberts, *Introducing Urban Design; Interventions and Responses*, vol. IV, *Exploring Town Planning*, Addison Wesley Longman Limited., Harlow, 1998, p. 88.
34   Ali Madanipour, *op. cit.*, p. 142.
35   Gerard Althabe, "Promotion symbolique et logiques sociales", in Althabe, Gerard; Lege, Bernard; Selim, Monique, *Urbanisme et réhabilitation symbolique. Ivry, Bologne, Amiens*, Ed. Anthropos, Paris, 1984, pp. 13-70. Anthropological studies in Ilot San Lorento, HLM buildings in Sevrin, Ivry, Bellevue in Nantes; Floris Paalman in *Kidnapping the Bijlmer*, *apud* Sarah Bennett and John Butler, *Locality, Regeneration & Divers[c]ities*, vol. 1 in A*dvanced in Art & Urban Futures*, Intellect Books, 2000, a study on the new

sociability in Bijlmermeer in Amsterdam, also studied by Rem Koolhaas and Bruce Mau, *op. cit.,* pp. 860-887.

[36] Michel Foucault in *Space, Power and Knowledge*, quoted by Ali Madanipour, *op. cit.*, p. 76: "I Think the central issue of philosophy and critical thought since the eighteenth century has always been, still is, and will, I hope, remain the question: *What* is this Reason that we use? What are its historical effects? What are its limits, and what are its dangers?"

[37] Leonard Dhul, "Le point de vue d'un psychiatre", *apud* Francoise Choay, *L'urbanisme, utopies et réalités. Une anthologie*, Ed.du Seuil, Paris, 1965, p. 380.

[38] Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Pimlico Random House, London, 2000, p. 386.

[39] Oscar Newman, *Defensible Space: People and Design in the Violent City*, Architectural Press, London, 1973, quoted by Tony Lloyd Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

[40] Tony Lloyd Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

[41] Paul Henry Gley, *The Breath of History*, PhD dissertation, UCLA, 1983, quoted by Nan Ellin, *op. cit.,* Paul Henry Gleye identifies seven elements of responsible preservation: reconstruction of monuments: repetition of the traditional architectural motifs; reaffirmation of the center-periphery relation; incorporation of historical clues; retention of perceived city scale; adoption of historical design ordinance; retention of traditional land uses in town centers in order to create the desired sense of historical identity and security and a searched "urban palimpsest".

[42] Alice Coleman, *Utopia on Trial: Visions and Reality in Planned Housing*, Hilary Shipman, London 1985, and Oscar Newman, *Defensible Space: People and Design in the Violent City*, Architectural Press, London, 1973, both quoted by Nan Ellin, *op. cit.,* and by Tony Lloyd Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

[43] Jane Jacobs, *op. cit.,* pp. 39 – 65 ("The uses of sidewalks: safety").

[44] Jaques Donzelot, *op. cit.*

[45] *Ibid.*

[46] Both described by Tony Lloyd Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 35; see also Nan Ellin, *op. cit.*

[47] Marion Roberts, "Art in the Public Realm", in Clara Greed and Marion Roberts, *Introducing Urban Design; Interventions and Responses*, vol. IV in *Exploring Town Planning*, Addison Wesley Longman Limited., Harlow, 1998, p. 119, 121.

[48] Rem Koolhaas and Bruce Mau, *Generic City*, p. 1253.

[49] Malcom Miles, *Art Space and the City. Public Art and Urban Future*, Routledge, London, 1997.

[50] Frederic Jameson, "Is Space Political?" *apud* Neil Leach, *Rethinking Architecture*, Routledge, London, 1997, p. 259.

51   Victor Hugo, "La ville est un livre", in Francoise Choay, *L'urbanisme, utopies et réalités. Une anthologie*, Ed.du Seuil, Paris, 1965, p. 405.

52   Jesus Pedro Lorente, *Art Neighborhoods, Ports of Vitality*, apud Sarah Bennett and John Butler, *Locality, Regeneration & Divers[c]ities* – vol. 1 in A*dvanced in Art & Urban Futures*, Intellect Books, 2000

53   Gilles Lipovetsky, *op. cit.,* p. 109.

54   Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, MIT Press, Cambridge Massachusets, 1994, p. 247.

55   Richard Sennet, *Les Tyrannies de l'intimité,* Ed. du Seuil, Paris, 1979, p. 81.

56   Robert Krier, *Urban Space*, Academy Editions, London, 1979, quoted in Ali Madanipour, *op. cit.*, p. 10

57   William Mitchell, *Soft Cities, apud* Malcom Miles, Tim Hall and Iain Borden, *The City Cultures Reader*, Routledge, London, 2000, p. 320 and *E-Topia:Urban Life, Jim-but not as we know it*, MIT Press, 1999.

58   Octavian Groza quoting Raffenstein in *L'espace public et l'espace privé dans les villes roumaines*, pp. 53-58, Les Chaiers du Séminaire "Science Humaines" de Bucarest, No. 2, juin 1996, p. 53.

59   Zygmunt Bauman, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

60   Richard Sennett, *op. cit.*

61   Octavian Groza, "Les échelles spatiales de la territorialité roumaine", *New Europe College Yearbook* 2000-2001.

62   Spiro Kostoff,*The City Assembled*, Thames & Hudson, 1999, p. 123.

63   Yi-Fu Tuan, "Space and Place: A Humanistic Perspective", in J. Agenew, D. Livingstone, A. Roger, *Human Geography. An Essential Anthology*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford-Massachusetts, 1996, p. 447.

64   Jane Jacobs, *op. cit.*, p. 39

65   G. M. Cantacuzino, *Despre o estetică a a reconstrucției*, Paideia, Bucharest, 2001, p. 47 – "A merge pe stradă nu înseamnă numai a trece dintr-un loc în altul; umblând, omul vrea să se mai gândească, să uite, să viseze… adică să se regăsească un timp, dezbărat de povara grijilor."

66   Ray Oldenburg, *The Great Good Place: cafes, coffee shops, community centers, beauty parlors, general stores, bars, hangouts, and how they get through the day*, Paragon House, New York 1989, quoted by Tridib Banerjee, "The Future of Public Space", p. 9 – 25 in *Journal of the American Planning Association*, Winter 2001, Vol. 67 Issue 1.

67   Jane Jacobs, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

68   Michael Sorkin, *Variations on a Theme Park*, Noonday Press, New York, 1992,quoted by Lynn Hollen Lees, "Public Spaces – Social Aspects; City and Town Life", p. 443 – 466 in *Journal of Urban History*, August 1994, Vol. 20 Issue 4.

69   Jane Jacobs, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

70   Lynn Hollen Lees, "Public Spaces – Social Aspects; City and Town Life", p. 443 – 466 in *Journal of Urban History*, August 1994, Vol. 20 Issue 4.

71   Augustin Ioan, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

72   *Ibid.*, p. 155.

73   Octavian Groza, *L'espace public et l'espace privé dans les villes roumaines*, pp. 53-58, Les Cahiers du Séminaire "Science Humaines" de Bucarest, No. 2, juin 1996, p. 53 : "Pendant le socialisme, les projets transactionnels des villes roumaines n'ont fonctionné que comme des modèles réduits du projet national, souvent contre les besoins, en ignorant les spécifiques des territoires, dont les acteurs réalisaient partout le même programme."

74   G. M. Cantacuzino, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

75   Octavian Groza, *op. cit.*, p. 54: "… l'espace – territoire idéal que l'on veut imposer, est en réalité remplacé par une multitudes des territoires sémi-légaux, chacun ayant ses propres lois, conformément aux désirs de petits chefs impliques. Ces ersatz de territorialité, toujours en opposition les uns contre les autres, ne peuvent guère être assimilés à des mécanismes d'autorégulation des interactions établies entre les habitants et l'espace – territoire approprié. Ouvert au pires exces ou laissé à la plus grande indifférence des pouvoirs publics, un tel territoire est amoral."

76   Octavian Groza, « Les Echelles spatiales de la territorialité roumaine », *New Europe College Yearbook*, 2000-2001.

77   Bart Goldhoorn, "Struggle for Life", in *Archis* no 12, 1993, about the ensembles of apartment blocks in Eastern countries, quoted by Floris Paalman, *op. cit.*

78   Prime Minister, Adrian Nastase's discourse about ANL – National Housing Agency strategy for main cities – spring 2001.

79   Zygmunt Bauman, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

80   G.M. Cantacuzino, *op. cit.*, p. 55 "Anyway, what can be said is that Bucharest grew by chance/fate and that all sorts of citizens have done what they were able or willing to, without any protection from the State, without a master thought. Thus, the only Bucharest quality was, until now, its development in an almost absolute liberty, with ever broken regulations or in the most fantasist way. So, with all its sins, with its lack of monumentality, with the tangled streets, with the stylistic chaos, with its contradictions, with the tragic or funny aspects, with the its caricature modernism and its funny traditionalism, with either extremely occidental or extremely oriental aspects, Bucharest, the city of all the contrasts, is an authentic document for somebody who is looking for the truth about the Romanian urban planning tendencies."

81   Nicholas Mirzoeff, *An Introduction to Visual Culture*, Routledge, New York, 1999, p. 29.

82   Augustin Ioan, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

83   Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, Steven Izenour, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

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TRIBUTE TO VITRUVIUS

*Je demande à une idée ce qu'a été le prix
de la pensée, de penser cette idée.[1]*

INTRODUCTION

I set out to deal in this paper with the aesthetic category of the beautiful as reflected in the theory of architecture (whatever the theory of architecture may mean) – a huge and highly problematic subject, and as such an almost irresponsible choice. However, there are two arguments in my favor. The first comes from an old article in the *Secolul XX* magazine, which argues that if Romanians don't make universal issues their concern, Romanian culture will never trespass narrow national frontiers or become solid enough and interesting to others [to foreign cultures].[2] If one reflects, with this in mind, on Romanian architectural culture, one tends to conclude that it is still in a larval stage, represented, at its best, by a collection of essays, and that it has scarcely resorted to the primary sources of world architectural culture. Being seriously involved in the theory of architecture, itself a discipline in crisis, this seemed to me an acceptable reason to approach – by going to the sources – a topic whose avoidance does not demonstrate its obsolescence, but its over-problematic nature. This does not mean that I am going to overcome the provincial barriers encircling the Romanian architectural milieu. Most probably I will not, but it is worth trying, at least in order to whet the appetite of my students. The second argument comes from Umberto Eco. According to him, when choosing the subject of a one-year study, it is possible to make your choice in such a way that the final dissertation is transformed in "the starting point of an ampler research, meant to last for years on, supposing that you have the opportunity and the appetite for this endeavor".[3] The grant I received via the New Europe College has afforded me the opportunity of taking into account both points of view. It provided the necessary means (the cultural ambiance and the material

resources) to take the first step in the investigation of the sources of European architectural culture.

This year I studied in particular the French architectural treatises of the 16th century up to the end of the 19th century, and the Italian treatises of the Renaissance. Over time I discovered two aspects that I consider important for the future development of this work.

The first is that to follow the destiny of the beautiful only is not sufficiently relevant from my architectural perspective. It became clear to me that, at least in relation to architectural theory, it is more meaningful to pursue the aesthetic perspective as a whole, rather than study the category of the beautiful in isolation.[4] Adorno put it convincingly in referring to aesthetics in general:

> The definition of aesthetics as the theory of the beautiful is so unfruitful because the formal character of the concept of beauty is inadequate to the full content [Inhalt] of the aesthetics. If aesthetics were nothing but a systematic catalogue of whatever is called beautiful, it would give no idea of the life that transpires in the concept of beauty. In terms of the intention of aesthetic reflection, the concept of beauty draws attention to something essential to art, without, however, articulating it directly.[5]

For architectural theory this is even more important and this statement relates to my second aspect.

While perusing the old treatises, an amazing thing came to the forefront: although in the treatises there are special areas reserved for architectural beauty (often the most expanded ones), the way it is dealt with is so obviously partial that the conclusions are far from satisfactory. Many architectural features are avoided without explanation, though they are quite obvious. In a way, there was, and still is, a sort of discrepancy between the aesthetic perspective in theory and the way aesthetic intentions are dealt with in the architectural design. Despite this, critical work on this matter is rare. As Roger Scruton, one of the few contemporary theorists concerned with the aesthetics of architecture, put it, "For the most part, it is almost impossible for someone without a specialized education to express in words the beauties of architecture; if terms like 'proportion', 'harmony', 'space', 'atmosphere' spring to mind, it is not as a rule because any clear general idea is associated with them."[6] I should add that this is difficult even for architects, for the same reason. Oddly enough, today, when theoretical debate in the arts has transferred its

interest to "visual culture", possibly as "a way of liberating discussion of art and of opening it up to society and culture",[7] architectural issues are avoided, despite the fact that it is architecture that, at a first glance, frames the development of visual culture[8] and is one of the main producers of daily images. There seems to be a systematic misunderstanding of aesthetic issues in architecture (from both inside and outside the profession), akin in many respects to a form of blindness.

This reminded me of a possibly similar phenomenon, identified by Arthur Koestler in a nonconformist book on cosmology.[9] He was interested in the process that makes the creative man blind to realities that, once discerned by a visionary mind, become commonplace. This strange cecity occurs not only in the minds of the "ignorant and superstitious" masses – to use Galileo's expression – but is more obvious and paradoxical in the case of Galileo himself, and other geniuses such as Aristotle, Ptolemy and Kepler. According to Galileo, it is the mythical force and the comfortable fixity of Plato's and Aristotle's cosmological conceptions that are to a large extent responsible for the long-lasting blindness in this field.[10] This idea sent me back to Vitruvius.

VITRUVIUS

Tout n'est pas dit sur l'architecture[11]

The writings on Vitruvius are certainly more numerous than on any other architect, an honor that Vitruvius himself would never have dreamt of. However, biographical details are scarce, and "we know almost as much about Vitruvius as we know about Shakespeare".[12] Should Pliny the Elder never have made mention of it, his name would not have been safeguarded either, since the author does not mention it in his treatise.[13] Similarly, his *prenomen* and *cognomen* (Pollio) are uncertain too.

According to recent studies, the socio-professional structure to which Vitruvius Pollio belonged – an *ordo* (status group) of *apparitores* and *scribae* – represented the technical and bureaucratic middle bourgeoisie of the municipalities in central and septentrional Italy, and was characterized by competence and morality: ambitious people, thoroughly educated and brought up with a profound respect for traditional values.[14] This *ordo* represented the main reservoir of clerks for the administration and magistracy in the period at the end of Republican Rome. Under Caesar,

Vitruvius belonged to the *decuria* of *scribae armamentarii.* He served in the water supply services (*cura aquarum*) and, for his *studium* (zeal and devotion), he was granted a *favor* (imperial benevolence), a pension, when he retired from active life. This endowment allowed him to crown his experience with *De architectura*, probably written between 30 and 28 B.C.[15] *De architectura*, a *munus* for Augustus, allowed the virtuous civil servant, once comfortably retired, a way to volunteer his services:

> I have furnished a detailed treatise (conscripsi praescriptiones terminatas) so that, by reference to it, you [Caesar] might inform yourself about the works already complete or about to be entered upon. In the following books I have expounded a complete system of architecture (omnes disciplinae rationes).[16]

This was the main significance of the Vitruvian project: a self-imposed duty to bring order to the theoretical and practical knowledge accumulated over centuries of building activity, whose loss was felt as imminent. This state of mind, related to the crisis of republican values, characterized overall Roman intellectual activity for two generations and gave birth to various reviews and systematizations of the precepts in philosophy, civil law, jurisprudence, agricultural techniques, grammar etc., under the sign of a normative unity. Alongside Cicero, Varro, and others, Vitruvius contributed to this cultural effort. On the other hand, *De architectura,* much like Horace's *Ars poetica*, continues the direction of the numerous isagogic texts in prose or in verse throughout Antiquity, aiming at the practical finality of a handbook.[17] Starting with this,

> the main goal of the normative aspects of his discourse, which endeavors to organize […] for the first time, in a complete and rigorous *corpus* all the knowledge of the profession, is to define the art of building and to promote a correct practice. Obviously, the result of this ambition is to freeze in unique formulae a sort of orthodoxy of plans, forms and decors, which cannot accommodate the extraordinary vitality that characterizes the innovative forces in the architecture of that period.[18]

As G.M. Cantacuzino put it, from the perspective of the architectural practice of the Hellenistic Rome, Vitruvius' work, being mainly retrospective, is born already obsolete.[19]

Nor is the Vitruvian project indisputable in what concerns its general theoretical pretension. Françoise Choay demonstrates masterly why *De*

architectura's interest is primarily "archaeological" (various kinds of archaeologies, among which the archaeology of thinking), and why the treatise cannot be compared to a real conceptual construction of the act of building, as the Albertian oeuvre would be, fifteen centuries later.[20] Moreover, as will be shown later, for Vitruvius, architecture does not include city-making, although there are many references in the text to urban design.

Nonetheless, if we accept that the theory of architecture "comprises any written system of architecture, whether comprehensive or partial, that is based on aesthetic categories",[21] then, notwithstanding the undeniable limitations of the treatise, *De Architectura* cannot be denied the prestige of being the first writing in European architectural theory we have.

From the perspective of this research (the aesthetic perspective in architectural theory), the Vitruvian project is doubly important.

Firstly, *De architectura* is the only significant architectural treatise that has survived from Antiquity.[22] Vitruvius, having no philosophical pretences, collects and processes from an architectural point of view the ideas that were probably the most representative of the ancient – Greek and early Hellenistic - aesthetic mentality. Hence, he is the source of authority in what concerns the genesis of the aesthetic perspective in architectural theory. If he had distorted certain ideas (though we have the control of other contemporary sources), this is of little importance since this study is not concerned with highlighting the aesthetic conceptions in Antiquity; it only aims to locate the starting point of the ideas concerning beauty in architecture, ideas that will be followed and consistently developed later in the theory of architecture.

Secondly, fifteen centuries later, *De architectura* was resuscitated, read and interpreted with avidity.[23] Alongside Cicero, Horace, Aristotle, Plato and Euclid, Vitruvius becomes part of the "classical bookshelf" of the Renaissance humanists and architects. Alina Payne has demonstrated how the Vitruvian text offers comforting bridges with the theoretical bodies of other arts and enters a play of intertextuality as an expression of "harmony between key texts of classical culture".[24] Moreover, "as the only text on architecture, its language – translated, mediated, polysemous – circumscribed all architectural thought and controlled it".[25] *De architectura* will be used as both a key to understanding the architecture of Antiquity, and as a supreme argument of theoretical authority. As Françoise Choay has put it, the treatise was to acquire over time an

unprecedented paradigmatic value: "by means of a metonymic process, the book that could offer the key to a long ago vanished practice becomes the key to the contemporary practice".[26]

From that moment on, no architectural treatise can really be "free of Vitruvius". Its rhythmical resuscitation will stop only with the denial of history brought on by the Modern Movement, and, even then, not entirely. That is why no critical presentation of architectural theory can be wholly argued without recourse to Vitruvius. In particular, the aesthetic ideas encompassed by or based on the Vitruvian treatise will influence very strongly the subsequent theory of architecture. Thus, re-reading *De architectura* is never fruitless.

DE ARCHITECTURA LIBRI DECEM

What he [Vitruvius] *handed down was in any case not refined, and his speech such that the Latin might think that he wanted to appear a Greek, while the Greeks would think that he babbled Latin. However, his very text is evidence that he wrote neither Latin nor Greek, so that as far as we are concerned he might just as well not have written at all, rather than write something that we cannot understand.*[27]

De Architectura libri decem has a clearly encyclopedic character and it can be supposed that it expresses the aesthetic mentality and the practical experience of Roman builders at the end of the Republic; the architectural panorama it presents is thus so broad that it can hardly be exhausted. By means of a more systematic approach we can detect several degrees of generalization: (i) general theoretical questions, principles, concepts; (ii) prescriptive and normative questions; (iii) strictly technical matters. These are developed in terms of the following themes: (1) architecture, its legitimization and constitutive principles; (2) the architect, his knowledge and skills; (3) categories and concepts concerning architectural beauty, which constitute, at the same time, both design rules and methods and criteria of appreciation; (4) practical and technical knowledge concerning architectural design and building activity (building types, various types of interior spaces, building materials and methods). They all form what Vitruvius calls *ratiocinatio* (theory), which *sets forth and explains things wrought in accordance with technical skill and methods (quae res fabricatas sollertiae ac rationis proportione demonstrare*

atque explicare potest).[28] The first three could be seen as the area of concepts, a more or less "philosophical" view of architecture, from the outside; while the last group comes from the opposite direction, from inside the *fabrica,* which is *continued and familiar practice (usus meditatio), carried out by hands using such material as is necessary for the purpose of a design (cuiuscum generis opus).*[29] It should be noticed that, in the Vitruvian text, *fabrica* is the first to be mentioned in the constitution of the knowledge of the architect.

The difficulty arises from the fact that in the treatise things are neither entirely unambiguous nor fully organized. Regarding technical matters, the systematic intention is clearer. Here, Vitruvius is in control, his experience of building sites affords him certainty. Things are totally different with the matters that have a more abstract character, such as the so-called *attributes* (in the French tradition) of architecture – *firmitas, utilitas* and *venustas* – or the concepts that Vitruvius named *components* of architecture – *ordinatio, dispositio, eurythmia, symmetria, decor, distributio*, followed by *proportio, intercolumnum, species, statio,* etc. These concepts, that later bred the theory of architecture, some of which remained crucial concepts for a long period, are mentioned in the treatise in an apparently erratic and thus confusing manner. The discourse is not consistently structured from general ideas to their particularization, and, as a result, the ideas often appear in unexpected places, sometimes like sparkling intuitions that are abandoned, to be later taken up again and detailed under other titles. Whether they are the author's own intuitions or are picked up from earlier less historically fortunate writings is of little importance, since Vitruvius is a legendary figure.

Still, *De architectura* is a reality that, on first reading, appears to be a puzzling collection of issues of various degrees of generality and covering many semantic fields, of matters belonging to various areas, whose coherence does not seem to go beyond the simplest addition. It seems that all he had found out he collected indiscriminately. There is much evidence to corroborate this hypothesis: there is no obvious logic to the succession of the books, there is a lack of consistency between the prefaces and the books, definitions are confusing, buildings are confused with military devices and gnomonics, theoretical continuity is disturbed by means of anecdotal details, the writing is often obscure, etc.[30] Add the fact that Vitruvius' Latin is not of the best literary quality, being excessively contracted and thus the cause of much confusion,[31] and Alberti's appreciation in the motto might be thought to be true.

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However, Alberti must not be taken *à la légère*: his irony expresses the condescension and irritation of the humanist educated at the exclusive University in Bologna towards a "modest technician" trained on military building sites, who gave him trouble with his books. Later he infers and suggests that Vitruvius must not be read in a contemporary key, but otherwise. This is what this study will attempt to achieve.

THE VITRUVIAN ORDER

The most obscure aspect of the treatise is its structure, though Vitruvius actually claims that his work is systematically organized. The problem lies in finding out whether *De architectura* is based on a reasonable conceptual structure, whether there is a rationale behind its arrangement that is able to enhance the meaning of the concepts and ideas it gave birth to. To this end, three areas will be investigated closely: (1) the succession of the ten books; (2) the coherence of the first book; and (3) the relationship of each book with its preface.

1.

Vitruvius divides his treatise into ten books. He does not give them titles, but endows them with prefaces. The logic of their succession, if any, would represent the first level of coherence of the treatise.

The hypothesis of the loss of some books, or of the ulterior confusion of book numbering will be excluded from the outset: the ten prefaces confirm the number and the order of the books.[32] The possible loss of the titles will also be excluded as they can be corroborated by the large amount of untitled manuscripts dating from the Middle Ages and the early Renaissance.[33]

Instead of titles we use the content of each book as summarized by Vitruvius himself in the prefaces:

Book I [*General*]: *on the services of architecture (officio architecturae), the definitions of the craft (terminationibusque artis), and about ramparts and the allotments of sites within the ramparts[34]*.

Book II [*Building material and the means to use them*]: ... *I will preface somewhat respecting the methods of building (aedificiorum rationibus), whence they took their beginnings (initia) and how inventions grew (eorum inventiones)[35] and the employment of materials in building (operibus*

utilitates) and with the excellences (virtutibus) which they naturally possess.[36]

Book III [*Ionic order*]: …*the arrangement of temples (aedium sacrarum dispositionibus), their different kinds (earum generum varietate), how many styles of design there are, and the details which belong to them severally (quasque & quod habeant species earumque quae sunt in singulis generibus distributiones). Of the three orders, I taught, in reference to the Ionic order, those rules which, by the use of proportion, furnish the most exact adjustment of the modules (ex tribus generibus quae subtilisimas haberent proportionibus modulorum quantitates ionici generis moribus, docui).*[37]

Book IV [*Corinthian and Doric order*]: ... *of the Doric and Corinthian orders generally (Doricis Corintiisque institutis), their distinctions and properties (discrimen & proprietates).*[38]

Book V: [*Municipal edifices*]: … *the arrangement (dispositiones) of public places (publicorum locorum).*[39]

Book VI: [*Private buildings*]: *the calculations (ratiocinationes) involved in private buildings and the adjustment of their proportions (commensus symmetriarum).*[40]

Book VII [*On surfaces and floors*]: *how they [buildings] are finished (de expolitionibus) in such a way (quibus rationibus) as to combine durability (firmitatem) with elegance (venustatem).*[41]

Book VIII [*On water*]: …*about the discovery of water, the qualities of its special sources, the methods of water supply and of testing water before using it.*[42] (VIII,Pref.,13)

Book IX: [*On dialing*]: *the methods of dialing* and their mathematical logic.[43]

Book X: [*On machines*]: ...*what the principles of machinery are, and the rules which guide them (quae sint principia machinarum, ordinata praeceptis explicare).*[44]

At this juncture, some aspects may be highlighted:

(1) The "parasitizing" of the structure of the treatise by apparently non-architectural aspects (hydraulics, gnomonics, war machines), is a false problem, since in Vitruvius's time knowledge concerning these fields was part of the diffuse competences of the ancient architect, as is clearly stated in Book I: *The parts (partes) of architecture are three: Building (aedificatio), Dialling (gnomonice), and Mechanics (machinatio).*[45] This specific knowledge is imparted at the end of the treatise in Books VIII-X

and does not interfere with the other books. Otherwise, Vitruvius is very explicit as to this discrimination between the books. Among the few indications he makes as to the way he conceived the organization of his treatise, in the Preface to the Book VIII, he refers to Books I-VII as a distinct body that presents the theories and reasons of building, (*rationes aedificiorum,* translated into English *methods of building*)[46].

Consequently, Books VIII-X can be excluded from this study. What remains is a presentation – consistent as information – of the art of building (*aedificatio*) that is the part of architecture that has made up the profession since the Renaissance.

(2) However, Vitruvius proposes another discrimination within the theory of building, which suggests a possible hierarchy. In the preface to Book II, Vitruvius refers to the *proportions and symmetries of sacred buildings,* of *public buildings and of private buildings*, as if they were the obvious final goal of the treatise, a goal that he is forced to postpone until Book III.[47] The reason for this postponement will be discussed later; for the moment, the only fact that matters is that in this way, Books III-VI form another distinct group inside the first body. In group III-VI, Books III and IV constitute, in their turn, a close unit (another group), where *I will speak of the temples of Gods (deorum inmortalium aedibus sacris) and will set them out in detail in a proper manner (perscriptas exponam).*[48] It is obvious that the manner in which Vitruvius joins the topics together is subordinated to the underlying principles of the building types. Given this logic and by means of the way he emphasizes them and their order in the succession of books, the suggested hierarchy is: sacred buildings, public buildings, and private buildings. We may conclude that the only logic of the treatise is that of an elementary pragmatism: firstly, of the types of activities included in the sphere of architecture, then, within the activity of building (*aedificatio*), of the building types.[49]

(3) If we accept that this logic is the only one that determines the structure of the treatise, we must accept that Books I, II and VI are excluded from this reasoning. This perhaps because Book I, being the introductory book, may be given a privileged position; but there is no obvious explanation for the exclusion of books II and IV. Although the hypothesis is not impossible, we must remember that Vitruvius, when deferring the important topic of detailing the sacred buildings to Book III, leaves the reader to infer that some particular reason had forced him to interrupt the succession of a simple and obvious logic. In this respect, a more attentive examination of Book I may be of help.

2.

Book I acts as the only one where the author explicitly announces the presence of certain general concepts. This is, therefore, the site where we are more likely to find the key to Vitruvius' systematization.

The book is divided into chapters, yet their number varies according to the different manuscripts and editions. As far as we know, only the division into books can be attributed to Vitruvius; the splitting into chapters is the work of the copyists. According to Granger, it was Fra Giocondo, the first editor of Vitruvius (after Sulpitius), who supplied the titles of the chapters.[50] Other editors and translators proposed different names and divisions of the chapters, but the differences are not very important in this case. Nor is the paternity of the titles. However, the chapters will be taken into consideration, since this is the printed form of the treatise, the form that spread all over the world and molded architectural thinking.

The content of the book and the different chapter structures are given for the Romanian edition (that in this respect followed Choisy's edition where the chapters are numbered 1-12), the Latin edition Laet/Wotton[51] (chapters numbered 1'-6'), and the English translation, the Loeb edition (chapters numbered 1''-6''), as follows:

1. *Despre educația arhitecților (On the training of architects)*;

1'. *Quid sit Architectura, & de Architectis instituendis* ;

1''. *On the training of architects.*

> Architecture consists in practice (*fabrica*) and theory[52] (*ratiocinatio*), which comprise together the architect's knowledge.
>
> The architect has to master both parts of this knowledge, and to be gifted and eager to learn.
>
> His educational requirements are listed.

2. *Din ce anume lucruri se compune arhitectura (On the things that compose architecture)*;

2'. *Ex quibus rebus Architectura constat* ;

2''. *Of what things architecture consists.*

> The six concepts: *ordinatio, dispositio, eurythmia, symmetria, decor, distributio.*[53]
>
> Only the first three are defined, not very explicitly. The author continues the explanations in other books, especially in what concerns *eurythmia.*

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3. *Despre edificiile sacre (On sacred buildings)*

> Definition of *symmetria* through examples. The concept is substantially summarized in Books III and IV.
>
> Definition of *decor,* with examples.

4. *Despre părţile lucrărilor, băi şi ferestrele lor (On the parts of the works, baths and windows)*;

On doors and windows in baths and elsewhere.

> Other examples of *decor.*

5. *Despre particularităţile locurilor şi ale materialelor (On the specificity of places and materials)*;

On the qualities of sites and supplies for the works.

> Definition of *distributio* with examples.

6. *Despre părţile arhitecturii (On the parts of architecture)*;

3'. *De partibus Architecturae in privatorum & publicorum aedificiorum distributionibus, & gnomonicem & machinationis;*

3''. *On the parts of architecture.*

> The parts of architecture: Building (*aedificatio*), Dialling (*gnomonice*), Mechanics (*machinatio*).
>
> Building is divided in two parts: public buildings and private buildings.
>
> The role assigned to public buildings is threefold: defense, religion and convenience (public utility).[54]
>
> They all have to take into account and observe strength (*firmitas*), utility (*utilitas*) and grace (*venustas*), which are defined in their turn.

7. *Despre constituţia animalelor şi salubritatea locurilor (On the constitution of animals and the hygiene of sites)*;

4'. *De electione locorum salubrium, & qua obsint salubritati, & unde lumina capiatur;*

4''. *On the sanitation of sites.*

> Conditions of hygiene for the sites where cities are to be built, and the reasoning.

8. *Despre cercetarea ficaţilor animalelor pentru a cunoaşte calitatea aerului (On inspecting the livers of animals to test the quality of the air).*

> Traditional practices to detect the hygiene of a site and the reasoning.

9. *Despre municipii (On cities).*

> The precedent as reason for a hygienic place for a city.

10. *Despre temeliile zidurilor și așezarea turnurilor (On the foundations of walls and the placing of towers);*

5'. *De fundamentis murorum & turrium.*

> Planning conditions of the chosen area, the reasoning, the fortification of the city and the acts they require: foundations of defense walls, gates, towers, walls.

11. *Despre repartiția lucrărilor care sînt în interiorul zidurilor orașelor și despre orientare, pentru ca vînturile vătămătoare să fie îndepărtate (On the distribution of the works inside the walls and on orientation, in order to eliminate the effect of harmful winds);*

6'. *De divisione operum, quae intramuros sunt, & eorum dispositione ut ventorum noxii flatus vitentur.*

> The planning of the city inside the walls (streets and squares) and the conditions required (especially considering the winds): customary practices of planning and the reasoning.

12. *Despre alegerea locurilor pentru uzul comun al populației (On the choice of the sites for common use).*

> The "zoning" of the city and the correct location of various urban spaces: fora, sacred buildings, other public places, housing areas; as the tradition and experience has confirmed them.

Some aspects are worth mentioning here as follows:

(1) Clearly, Vitruvius wants to announce and assert in this first book the most general matters regarding architecture. However, it does not contain the main concepts that define the structure of the text, excepting the concept of *architecture* that, along with the definition of the architect, opens the book.

(2) There is no substantial coherence between the titles of the chapters and their content in any of the editions consulted (though in the Laet/ Wotton edition the division is simpler).

(3) With regard to the succession of chapters, at least one fracture is noticeable in the primary logic of things (in the Romanian/Choisy edition there are many), i.e., between matters belonging to a general theory of architecture and the practical issues concerning city building (and other types of building works in the Romanian/Choisy edition).

(4) The text covers topics with different degrees of generality, whose collection in one book does not reflect any clear rationale.

It is evident that Vitruvius is not a speculative writer. However, he is far from simple-minded. Although definitions are not complete, examples are within his reach with the help of which he can explain matters, a method that he often employs successfully to this end. It is for this reason that I think that Vitruvian logic should not be underestimated and that we must search for it in less obvious places. Otherwise, as will be shown later, Vitruvius insists on his having reasons for the arrangement of the books[55]. In case of Book I, what is most disturbing is the division into chapters, and especially the titles given to the chapters. If we leave aside the division into chapters, and read the text fluidly, we can understand him in a different light, as in the following:

1. On the architect and of what his general knowledge consists. (cf. 1/1′/1″).

2. On what the architect must know and use in his design, specifically, *ordinatio, dispositio, eurythmia, symmetria, decor, distributio*. The six terms are defined in turn and explained through examples in the clear sense of their use in a project in order to obtain a certain effect. (cf. 2-5/2′/2″).

3. On the types of activities that are incumbent upon the architect, among which only building is detailed by means of building types. All have in common the fact that they must observe the conditions of *firmitas, utilitas, venustas*, whose definitions follow immediately. (cf. 6/3′/3″). All things brought into discussion until this moment concern only the design of an architectural object. There is not the least allusion to the city.

4. On the detailing of the customary operations and practices preceding the construction of an architectural object that is to be taken into account in order to ensure optimal environmental conditions for the architectural object. Most of them are somewhat traditional "planning" practices. They are described following a logic from the exterior to the interior, from the surrounding nature to the city: the choice of a hygienic site, fortifications as interface between the city and nature, the *intra muros* planning, the requirements concerning the positioning of various building types within the city. (cf. 7-11/4′-6′/4″)

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Read this way, Book I acquires coherence. It unveils its role of general announcement of theory and background to the activities whose finality is *aedificatio*. Only the mixture of technical details and conceptual matters of a more abstract character remains confused and confusing. In this respect the following comments become useful:

(1) Put in contemporary terms, the content of this book may represent an introduction to a theory of architectural design (referring exclusively to the architectural object) with a normative, operational and instrumental character. It was impossible for Vitruvius to formulate it in this manner. The Vitruvian conception belongs to the ancient tradition, in which the fine arts were seen more as craftsmanship, as factual technique, than as mental project. Thus, the distinction between design and material achievement is missing. This distinction was not perceived, conceptualized or valued as such (within or outside the profession), although in practice and on the building sites, there was certainly a difference between the *architékton* (master-mason)[56], master of *ratiocinatio*, and *fabri/téktones* (common workers/builders) and *demiourgoi* (craftsmen), whose competence was *fabrica*. In effect, until the Renaissance, art was valued as dexterity, as the skill of production according to certain rules. From around Aristotle's time or even that of the sophists, it was thought that whoever practices an art must be endowed with inborn capacities (*natura*), knowledge (*doctrina*) and experience (*usus*).[57] Vitruvius was concerned with the systematization of the doctrine/body of reasons/considerations referring to architecture (*ratiocinatio*), yet not before granting priority to practical experience (*fabrica*). In this context, in the absence of the distinction between designing and making mentioned above, his systematization could only be perceived as more confusing than it really was since he mixed elements that are today separated into distinct fields of human activity.

There is nonetheless some care to distinguish between these fields that, by virtue of the ancients' understanding of *ars/techné*, Vitruvius does not emphasize sufficiently. It is encompassed inside the concept of *compositio*, a notion whose career in architectural theory was to be very durable.[58] The concept is not defined as such. However, as far as Vitruvius uses it in the treatise, it means the design process, the elaboration of the work.

(2) It is also clear that Vitruvius realized the differences between the design/making of an architectural object, on the one hand, and the

territorial planning and urban design/making, on the other; however, this question overwhelms his conceptual capacities. His theory is concerned exclusively with the architectural object (its design and making), that is *aedificatio* (Building). At the same time he infers the superior level of generality occupied by planning (territorial and urban), as well as the fact that the success of architectural objects depends to a large extent on the planning decisions that precede its building. Consequently, issues of this nature (whether conceptual or pragmatic) are determined by "prerequisites" of the design/making of the architectural object, which is by no means a theoretical blunder. It is a clever conceptual simplification. With the same logic, Vitruvius assigns these matters to *natura,* something difficult to understand from our point of view. His reasons are, however, transparent: this way, they can be motivated, regulated, administrated by means of the tradition, through the rule of the precedent, of the decantation of previous experience. Thus, they come at least partially under *decor* and *distribution*, which endows them, once more, with the right to a place in the economy of this first book.

(3) The general concepts (including those that refer to aesthetic value) constitute, in their turn, another category of "prerequisites". This time they are prerequisites of all design activity (*aedificatio*, ship making, dialing, war machine making) that belongs to the realm of architecture in antiquity. Hence, Vitruvius assigns this category a higher position, a superior level of generality, than he does to the planning matters that refer only to the design/making of buildings (*aedificatio*).[59]

With these matters settled, we can re-read the first book: Architecture, knowledge of multiple disciplines and of erudition (*scientia pluribus disciplinis & variis eruditionibus ornata*) is born (*nascitur*) of experience/practice (*fabrica*) *and* theory/doctrine (*ratiocinatione*). The architect, a man endowed with a certain cleverness/inventiveness (*ingeniosum*) and self-discipline (*ad disciplinam docilem*), must be thoroughly educated in both specific theory and in many other fields, and must also have practical experience. To be able to design/make architecture, he must know how to apply/use/maneuver the six constituents of architecture: *ordinatio, dispositio, eurythmia, symmetria, decor, distributio.* With their help he can create any object that enters the sphere of architecture. *Aedificatio* (suggested to be the most important part of architecture) is concerned with several types of buildings. Each building has to observe the conditions of *firmitas, utilitas* and *venustas.* At the same time, for the building design/

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making, the architect needs to comply with another series of conditions belonging to *natura* (nature: territory and climate). They form the foundation, on the basis of tradition and experience, of certain planning decisions. The success of the building depends on both series of conditions (or prerequisites). This is a summary of the *rules of the art*, and the internal rationale of the Book I.

Some conclusions can now be drawn:

(1) The present form of Book I is the result of two overlapping logic schemes. The first, in the background, is the logic of the discourse that presents coherently a theory of building design. The other, governing the chapters, is that of the modest practical matters: it follows a strictly pragmatic logic, and highlights the specific operations of design/making of a building (sacred buildings, doors, windows, rooms), and of the preparatory action (planning practices) in building design. As these operations appear accidentally in the continuity of the discourse, this second logic plays the role of an index of practical issues; it is less rigorous than the first, it presents itself differently, depending on the interpretation of the copyist/translator/editor, but, by being expressed by titles, it is brought to the foreground. Therefore, it hides the logic of the discourse to the point of disorientation.

In all probability, the second logic scheme has been imposed on the original text. However, it is not irrelevant to the author's original aim in so far as in the preface to Book V Vitruvius allows us to infer the key to this ambiguous systematization in intentional layers: after some lamentation as to the difficulties of writing on architecture and dealing *with topics unfamiliar and obscure to many* (*inusitatas & obscuras multis res*),[60] he decides *to write in short compass* in order to ease the reading. The organization of the treatise aims to effect such an order:

> I fixed their arrangement so that the inquirer (reader) has not to collect them one by one, but that from one corpus and in the several books they might get the explanations of the several subjects (generum).[61]

From this perspective, the copyists, translators and editors of the treatise only extended the author's pragmatically oriented will, by means of the chapter headings.

(2) If the logic of the discourse is mainly that of the design, then we could extend it to the other books. They are meant to detail the issue of building design, in the order settled by the first book: *aedificatio*(I-VII) with sacred (III-IV), public (V), and private (VI-VII) building types, followed by the other parts with a more "engineering-like" character(VIII-X), which are not of particular interest to this study.

(3) The same logic introduces a sort of discrimination among the general principles of building design, some of them being preferentially correlated to certain building types. For instance *symmetria* is closely linked to the sacred buildings, which results from the chapter I, 3, as well as from Books III and IV, where the concept is detailed and enriched. Likewise, Books III and IV –generally regarded as dedicated to the orders of columns – appear more coherent if read from the perspective of the design of sacred buildings/temples, to which the orders of columns were originally related. Within the design of temples, the orders of columns represent the only specific and meaningful difference; otherwise their compositional rules (*symmetria*) are similar.

(4) Although not so obvious, this logic explains the positioning of Book III within the economy of the treatise. The theory (the reasoning) of building design, *ratiocinatio*, is rooted in *fabrica*, the first to be mentioned in the treatise while enumerating the architect's knowledge. *Fabrica* is the processing of the matter, which, in turn, belongs to *natura.* It means that the "prerequisites" of building design cannot be complete outside this issue. Not only is building design meaningless without knowledge of the materials and their elementary implementation, but, more importantly perhaps, the materials are themselves part of *natura,* and, in this hypostasis, they anchor architecture in the lineage of original gestures. Thus, they acquire an originating function. Vitruvius's rationale is quite simple: firstly, architecture and building design are defined by means of what the architect must know, then they are rooted in *natura*, through *fabrica.* Once more, Vitruvius insists on the fact that he has not been careless in assigning a certain position to this book:

> 8. But if anybody raises objections about the arrangement of the whole work, because he thinks that this book should have come first, let him not think I have erred, if I believe in Reason. When I wrote this comprehensive treatise on architecture (corpus architecturae), I thought in the first book to

set forth with what trainings and disciplines architecture was equipped, and to determine by definitions its species (terminationibus eius species) and to say from what things it sprang. And so I there pronounced what there ought to be in an architect. Therefore in the first book I discussed the office of the architect (de artis officio). In this book [Book II] I will treat the material things of nature, and what uses they have. For this book does not declare whence architecture arises (nascatur), but whence the kinds of building have originated (origines aedificiorum sunt institutae), and by what ways (quibus rationibus) they have been fostered and, by degrees, advanced to their present finish (hanc finitionem). 9. So therefore the arrangement of this book is in its order and place.[62]

Although paradoxical, this book, supposed to be the most technical account (the author himself presents it as such in the preface II,P.,5, cf. supra.), is actually the main attempt to ground architecture philosophically on the basis of the remotest tradition:

I will follow the approaches of antiquity to Nature herself (rerum naturae), and in particular of those writers who have committed to their manuals the beginnings of the humanities (initia humanitatis), and the record of inventions (inventiones perquisitas). Therefore I will set forth the matter as I have been instructed by them (quemadmodum ab his sum institutus).[63]

The paradox arises only from the fact that the summary of the book (in the preface) belongs to the logic of the pragmatic approach (the index logic), while the content of the book is inscribed in the discursive logic of building design theory. Therefore, Book II finds its place and acquires a double meaning: on the one hand, due to the demonstration of the origins of the building (II, 1 and 2), it represents the mythical moment of architecture; while on the other hand, by means of the technical information contained in chapters 3-10, it completes the prerequisites of building design/making and their implicit theory, which are both dependent on *fabrica*.[64] This is the only book where Vitruvius feels compelled to make use of erudite philosophical knowledge, of physics and natural sciences etc., something which does not spare him from a certain ridicule.[65]

3.
This philosophical moment of the treatise introduces the third direction to be investigated in this study: the relationship of the text to the prefaces.

Here, the first discouraging aspect is the apparently minimal connection of each book to its preface. The only obvious link is to be found in the final paragraphs, where Vitruvius summarizes the content of the previous books and announces the main topic of the one to come. As for the rest, excepting the preface to Book I, which contains a dedication to Augustus and states the aim of the treatise, the prefaces can be considered short moralizing "essays" that refer to the function of the treatise and its opportunity, to the architect and to his status. Hence, they are more connected to the whole of the treatise than to the given book they were nominally intended to introduce. They are in the form of first person narratives. Thus, the direct implication of the author's architectural and human experience is clearly present along with his erudition and morals, his natural disposition and frustrations. They present a certain continuity of their own and thus constitute a kind of independent narrative that looks at the treatise through different eyes, in a more philosophical manner, and speaks with another voice which addresses Caesar humanly, and, through him, all readers.

In all probability, the prefaces were written later than the books, on the occasion of their editing; therefore their incongruity can be explained to a certain extent.[66] It is possible that the division of the text into books took place concomitantly, and this may also be true of the initial division into chapters (even without the titles). The real cause is of little importance. Rather what matters is that the prefaces confer on the treatise a special literary character. From this perspective, the treatise can be seen as an explanatory discourse transformed in a narrative in order to be less boring to the reader:

For thus the mind will be able to receive them more conveniently.[67]

To this end, the author intervenes intermittently in the first person, transforming the objective discourse into a narrative: he participates in a direct manner, with his opinions, advice, and, more importantly, meaningful anecdotal contributions.[68] Anecdotes - short moralizing stories and legends – are also inserted in the discourse of the books; their function there is either to legitimate various practices or to reinforce certain assertions, or simply to play a mnemonic role. It can be argued that this narrative insertion in the prefaces and the anecdotal moments within the architectural discourse introduces a third layer of systematization in the treatise, that belongs exclusively to the logic of the narrative. This layer

is worthy of separate investigation and thus will not be dealt with in this study. Suffice it to say that its presence in the treatise, though disturbing at first sight, has an important functional role and introduces another logical layer to the already complicated and ambiguous Vitruvian systematization.

The systematization of Vitruvius' treatise is not that of a philosophical approach to architecture. Although the author makes heroic attempts to make use of his erudition, he remains an architect and an architect only. There are no general, abstract concepts that structure his treatise. Rather, it is the necessities of architectural design/making, which subordinate the forms. The order of the treatise results from the overlapping of three logical layers, all of which are pragmatically oriented. The first follows the rationale of an operational theory of building design/making and determines the continuity of the discourse throughout the treatise. The second has a strong instrumental character. It functions as an index of the pragmatic issues (various types of building works). It controls the division into books, and later into chapters. Used by generations of copyists/translators/editors, it was emphasized excessively, driving to despair generations of readers and exegetes. The third, the literary layer, has a specific functional character. It relies on the technique of the narrative and functions intermittently, interrupting the first two layers, though totally independent of them: it legitimizes and reinforces them, offers them accessibility. Of the three layers of logic, the third is the least innocent. It possesses a hidden militant character in respect of the implicit aim of the treatise, the condition/status of the architect.

In conclusion, the three systematizing formulae function concomitantly throughout the treatise, with no tuning related to the content brought into focus, which leads to confusion. For instance, as has been already shown, in Book I – the book of principles - where the conceptual content is of a larger degree of generality and abstraction, the pragmatic logic of the index is highly parasitic and disturbing. The more specialized and technical the content becomes and the more the general principles fade, the easier the tuning of the systematization and of the issues presented. Hence, the observation that only the technical parts of the treatise are systematically presented,[69] though indisputable in its evidence, is not actually true. However, in general, the systematization of the pragmatic matters is more readily accessible than are the abstract, conceptual issues.

This re-reading is not intended to overestimate the Vitruvian systematization (Vitruvian in the sense that it is not the work of the copyists,

as De l'Orme suggests).[70] It is complicated and heavy, it breeds confusion, and probably overwhelms its author, at least some of the time. None of the three logical schemes is really suited for theorizing architecture as a form of aesthetically intended mental creativity, as we understand it today. From this point of view, the result can appear quite disappointing. But this is not what Vitruvius must have set out to achieve.

What is more interesting from our point of view is that, since Vitruvius does possess a certain logic of the discourse and as things are not collected randomly in the treatise, the concepts he carved out for the future theory of architecture gain in strength. Moreover, the way he introduces the concepts in the treatise (context, moment, order) may give them additional meaning: the order of their emergence may reflect a hierarchy, and their use in certain contexts may enrich them.

PARTIAL CONCLUSIONS

> *Sed tamen his voluminibus editis, ut spero, etiam posteris ero notus.*[71]

This re-reading is carried out from the unilateral perspective of the logic of the Vitruvian writing. In order to investigate the place the Vitruvian legacy comes to occupy in architectural thinking in general and in its aesthetics in particular, we require a more complete image of the treatise. Therefore, a second re-reading is necessary, this time from the perspective of the concepts that Vitruvius created for posterity. This paper is of insufficient length to allow for this new re-reading. Nonetheless, at this point, it is permitted to give some hints concerning the influence of *De architectura* on future architectural thinking.

From a strictly theoretical point of view, Vitruvius' treatise is a very far-reaching writing: it refers only to the building design/making, and its focus is normative and pragmatic. Yet, from its limited perspective, it has an undeniable inner coherence, even if it is not very obvious. However, it was not understood in this way, though this was probably the real intention of the author. Generally, its understanding and interpretation oscillated between two extremes, which biased the message of its author.

On the one hand, there is the reading in the sense of a limited pragmatism. Most important in this sense is the strictly practical information on how to design or build various types of buildings and their

constituent parts. This aim was so important that the rest of the treatise, and its coherence, mattered no longer. The division into chapters and their titles is irrefutable proof thereof. Nonetheless, the treatise is more than a source of practical information.

On the other hand, Vitruvius was read under the sign of an ideality that is similarly improper to his treatise. As has been pointed out, the impact of the debate between philosophers, philologists and architects on the character of an already erudite architecture, quoting Plato, places the Vitruvian studies on the same level as the platonic studies, and "transforms the relative value of the Vitruvian text – as witness – in an absolute value".[72] For the moment, we can spotlight two aspects of this paradigmatic value that the Vitruvian treatise acquires.

It is undisputable that Vitruvius created an architectural language/terminology, probably without precedent. This linguistic task was part of a general endeavor to adapt Latin to abstract thinking, partly through giving normal, concrete words more sophisticated abstract meanings, partly through Latinizing Greek words used in philosophy, rhetoric, etc. The abstract terminology that Vitruvius used in his treatise to characterize architecture acquires the same paradigmatic value. The explanation, clarification, and enrichment of the six concepts become the theoretical core of architectural aesthetics and, through it, of architectural theory in general. On the other hand, the three conditions to which Vitruvius subjects the architectural object, *firmitas, utilitas, soliditas,* undergo a more spectacular development. They become structuring rules of architectural discourse, treated separately, and thus breaking the internal unity of the object as well as that of architectural thinking.

The extent to which *De architectura* was responsible for this and what part was played by a biased reading of the treatise are questions still to be answered. At any rate, the ingenious mind of Alberti, the true genitor of both the theory of architecture as an autonomous creative activity, and of the modern architect, points to the limits of the Vitruvian treatise and to its obsolescence. However, posterity had it another way: the prestige of the antiquity turned out to be stronger than Albertian intuition. We still pay tribute to Vitruvius.

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NOTES

1   STEINER, George, SPIRE, Antoine, quoting Kierkegaard in *Barbarie de l'ignorance,* Editions L'Aube, 2000, p. 56.

2   PLEŞU, Andrei, *Rigorile ideii naţionale şi legimitatea universalului,* in *Secolul XX* 240-41-42/1981.

3   ECO, Umberto, *Cum se face o teză de licenţă,* Pontica, 2000, p. 14; (original Italian edition: *Come si fa una tesi di laurea*, Bompiani, 1997).

4   In what concerns this larger aesthetic perspective, I adopted Eco's approach in *Arta şi frumosul în estetica medievală*, accepting as aesthetic any discourse (with a certain systematic attempt, and using certain philosophic concepts) on phenomena regarding beauty and other connected aesthetic categories, the art of architecture, the creation and the appreciation of aesthetic value in architecture, taste, its judgement and the critique of its judgement. See ECO, Umberto, *Arta şi frumosul în estetica medievală*, Meridiane, 1999, pp.6-7 (original italian edition: *Arte e bellezza nell'estetica medievale,* Bompiani editore, 1997).

5   ADORNO, Theodor, *Aesthetic Theory*, Gretel Adorno & Rolf Tiedermann, Editors, in Theory and History of Literature, Volume 88, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA PRESS, Minneapolis, 1997.

6   SCRUTON, Roger, *The Aesthetics of Architecture*, Princeton University Press, 1979, p. 18.

7   DACOSTA KAUFMANN, Thomas, "Visual Culture Questionnaire", in *OCTOBER*, 77/1996, p. 48.

8   LANVIN, Silvia, "Visual Culture Questionnaire", in *OCTOBER*, 77/1996, pp. 50-51.

9   KOESTLER, Arthur, *Lunaticii. Evoluţia concepţiei despre univers de la Pitagora la Newton*, Humanitas, 1995; (original English edition: *The Sleepwalkers,* 1959).

10 KOESTLER, *op.cit.* pp. 12-15 sqq.

11 From LAUGIER, Marc-Antoine, *Essais et Observations sur l'architecture*, Pierre Mardaga éditeur, 1979, introduction by Geert Bekaert, p. III.

12 KRUFT, Hanno-Walter, *A History of Architectural Theory from Vitruvius to the Present*, Princeton Architectural Press, 1994, p. 22; also GRANGER, Frank, *Introduction,* p. xiii, in VITRUVIUS, *On Architecture*, translated by Frank Granger, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, 1998.

13 GRANGER, Frank, *Introduction,* p. xxv, in VITRUVIUS, *op. cit.*

14 GROS, Pierre, *Les architectes grecs, hellénistiques et romains* in CALLEBAT, Louis, *Histoire de l'architecte*, Flammarion, Paris, 1998, p. 34 sqq.

15 COSTA, Traian, *Vitruviu, omul şi opera,* in VITRUVIU, *Despre arhitectură,* translated by G.M. Cantacuzino, Traian Costa, Grigore Ionescu, Ed. Academiei RPR, 1964, pp. 10-11.

[16] VITRUVIUS, *On Architecture, ed. cit.*, I, P., 3, pp. 4-5.

[17] COSTA, Traian, *op. cit.,* p. 9.

[18] GROS, P, o*p. cit.,* p. 36.

[19] CANTACUZINO, George Matei, *Introducere în opera lui Vitruviu*, Ed. Meridiane, 198, p. 40. See also RYKWERT, J., in ALBERTI, L.B., *On the Art of Building,* MIT Press, 1997, p. IX.

[20] CHOAY, Françoise, *La règle et le modèle,* Editions du Seuil, Flammarion, 1980.

[21] KRUFT, Hanno-Walter, *op. cit.,* p.15

[22] Later writings, as the compendium of Cetius Faventius *De divertis fabricis architectonicae*, or *De re rustica* of Palladius (Rutilius Taurus Aemilianus) are simple compilations of Vitruvius. Cf. KRUFT, H-W, o*p. cit.*, p. 30.

[23] On Vitruvius during the Middle Age, see Kruft, H-W, *op.cit.*, pp. 30-40; ECO, Umberto, *Arta și frumosul în estetica medievală*, Meridiane, 1999.

[24] PAYNE, Alina A., *The Architectural Treatise in the Italian Renaissance,* Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp. 52-53.

[25] Idem.

[26] CHOAY, Françoise, *op. cit,* p. 222.

[27] Cf. ALBERTI, L.B., *De Re Aedificatoria,* [*On the Art of Building in Ten Books*], translated by Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach, and Robert Tavernor, Cambridge, Massachusetts; London, England, The MIT Press, 1996, VI, 1, p. 154.

[28] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.,* I.1.1, pp. 6-7.

[29] Idem.

[30] The confusing aspect of the treatise has been noticed by many authors of treatises and translators: see for example ALBERTI, or Phillibert DE L'ORME.

[31] COSTA, T., *op. cit.*

[32] COSTA, T., *op. cit.*

[33] Regarding the frequent use of the treatise at the beginning of the Renaissance, see KRUFT, *op. cit.* p. 39.

[34] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.,* II, P, 5, pp. 4-5.

[35] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.,* II, P, 5, pp. 4-5.

[36] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.,* III, P., 4, pp. 156-157.

[37] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.,* IV, P, 2, pp. 200-201.

[38] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.,* IV, P, 2, pp. 200-201.

[39] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.,* V, P, 5, pp. 254-255.

[40] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.,* VI, P, 7, vol.2; pp. 8-9.

[41] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.,* VII, P, 18, vol.2; pp.78-79.

[42] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.,* VIII, P., 4, vol.2; pp.136-137.

[43] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.,* IX, P, 18, vol.2; pp. 210-211.

[44] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.,* X, P, 4; pp. 272-273.

[45] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.,* I, 3, 1, pp. 32-33.

[46] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.* VIII, P, 4, vol. 2, pp. 136-137.

[47] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.,* II, P, 5, pp.76-77: "*Now since in the first book I have written on the services of architecture, and the definitions of the craft, also*

about ramparts and the allotments of sites within the ramparts, there should follow the arranging of temples and public buildings and also private ones, in order to explain of what proportions and symmetries they ought to be. Yet I thought I ought to put nothing before, until I had first considered the supplies of building material, from the assemblage of which buildings are completed..."

[48] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.* III, P, 4, pp. 156-157.

[49] See also, PAYNE, Alina, *op. cit.*

[50] GRANGER,F., *Introduction,* pp.xxi-xxv, in Vitruvius, *ed. cit.*

[51] VITRVVIIS Pollioniis *De architectura Libri Decem. Cum notis, castigationibus & observationibus Gulielmi Filandri integris; Danielis Barbari excerptis, & Clavdii Salmasii passim insertis. Praemituntur Elementa architecturae collecta ab illustri Viro Henrico Wottono Esquite Anglo...,* Ioanne de Laet, Antwerp, 1649.

[52] Granger translates *ratiocinatio* with *technology*, which does not translate the real meaning; we will translate it with *theory*.

[53] Granger's translations are: *Order, Arrangement, Proportion, Symmetry, Decor and Distribution*. In particular, *Order* for *ordinatio* and *Proportion* for *eurythmia* introduce confusion in the understanding of Vitruvius's text. We will therefore use the Latin expressions.

[54] The Latin word is *opportunitatis,* translated in different ways, although, as results from the rest of the text, it refers to what we call public buildings.

[55] The main idea is not a critique of Vitruvius, but a re-reading of the treatise as closely as possible to the initial meaning it gave to the issues being studied, in his specific historical context.

[56] The first to mention the term is Herodotus, for Eupalinos of Megara, the architect of the aqueduct of Samos, cf. CALLEBAT, Louis, *op. cit.*

[57] TATARKIEWICZ, Wladislaw, *Istoria esteticii,* vol.1, Ed. Meridiane, 1978, and *Istoria celor șase noțiuni,* Ed. Meridiane, 1981.

[58] ROWE, Collin, *The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa and Other Essays,* MIT press, 1976, pp.59-88.

[59] There is a certain ambiguity here, their application being however demonstrated especially for buildings; but this is not a very important issue.

[60] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.,* V, P, 8, pp. 252-255.

[61] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.,* V, P, pp. 254-255: *ita enim expedita erunt ad intellegendum. Eorumque ordinationes institui, uti non sint quaerentibus separatim colligenda, sed e corpore uno et in singulis voluminibus generum haberent explicationes.*

[62] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.,* II, 1, 8-9, pp. 84-87.

[63] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.,* II, P, 6, pp. 76-77. This last sentence will have a long career in the theory of architecture. To my knowledge, the last to use it was Gromort; see GROMORT, Georges, *Essai sur la théorie de l'architecture*, Ch.Massin éditeur, 1996.

[64] In all three editions Book II has the same number of chapters, with the same titles.

[65] Especially in the first two chapters, then sporadically in the others.

[66] COSTA, T., *op cit.*, p.10.

[67] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.*; V, P, 2, pp. 252-253.

[68] Such insertions are to be found in later authors of treatises, for instance FILARETE, in his *Tratatto di architectura*. This becomes a literary technique whose acme is reached in Francesco Collona's *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili.*

[69] KUFT, H-W, *op. cit.*

[70] DE L'ORME, Phillibert, *Premier tome de l'architecture,* Paris, 1567

[71] VITRUVIUS, *ed. cit.*,VI, P, 5, pp .6-7: "Thus little celebrity has come my way. Yet, by publishing these volumes, my name will reach, I hope, to after times."

[72] CHOAY, Françoise, *op. cit.*, pp. 221-222. See also WITTKOWER, Rudolph, *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism,* W.W.Norton & Company, 1971, and PAYNE, Alina, *op. cit.*

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THE ORNAMENTAL DIMENSION: CONTRIBUTIONS TO A THEORY OF ORNAMENT

> *Est ornatus mundi quidquid in singulis videtur elementis, ut stellae in coelo, aves in aere, pisces in aqua, homines in terra.*
>
> Guillaume de Conches [1]
>
> *Il fallait être peint pour être homme; celui qui restait à l'état nature ne se distinguait pas de la brute.*
>
> Claude Lévy-Strauss [2]

ARGUMENT

The concern for ornament might seem extravagant, if not obsolete and marginal. And yet, the impressive number of issues relating to this topic that came to light in recent decades testifies to the particular fascination it exerts upon the postmodern sensitivity. In its traditional acceptation, ornament was first theorized in the arts of language (rhetoric, poetics), and then in architecture. Its becoming a bone of contention marked the modern split between reason and sensitivity, the useful and the beautiful, structure and revetment. The effort to reconcile industry and the applied arts has kept ornament at the core of the aesthetic debate, and the end of the 19th century and the whole of the 20th century saw concomitantly its banishment and the revealing of entirely new understandings or *modi operandi*, together with an increased interest of philosophers, art theorists, anthropologists and sociologists.

Most theorists agree that the question of ornament cannot be set in proper terms unless it is studied in a precise historical context since the significations, acceptations and functions of ornament are changing permanently. However, the presence of certain constants that can be traced in the evolution of ornament and within its innumerable avatars belongs to a hypothesis – which this study intends to turn into a thesis –

of the existence of a general ornamental dimension with a multiplicity of expressions, rather than a succession of different culturally-determined conceptions on ornament. Finding an eventual common denominator, or an invariant substratum of the infinite variety of ornamental species, would contribute to a more substantial and comprehensive definition of ornament and its essential nature, and the specific intention that can turn almost everything into ornament. The identification of constant properties or aspects in the study of the main functions of ornament, its use as means of expression and the way it is perceived – analyzed in various domains and historical periods – is meant to create the framework for a possible *Homo ornans.*

Although focused on the field of visual arts, and in particular the so-called "arts of the environment" (architecture, landscaping, urban, interior and industrial design, and fashion), this study will use the term "ornament" in its widest sense, allowing the syncretic inclusion in a single category of such varied items as a judge's robes, a piano improvisation, a capital, a literary description in a novel, a tattoo, a streamlined radio-set, a pagoda in an English garden, and a wallpaper pattern.

A   UNIVERSAL CONCEPT

"What is ornament?" This has remained a practically unanswerable question due to the complex, protean and paradoxical nature of the concept. Viewed ironically, it might appear easier to first find out what isn't or what couldn't be an ornament, since any object, gesture or phenomenon, in a certain context, may act as an ornament or acquire an ornamental value. A song in a non-musical film, a bullet worn as pendant, a painting on the wall, an old flat-iron used as a vase, a rooftop advertising billboard; all these are but ornaments. For Saint Augustine, the penitence of the sinful slave whose punishment is to clean the drains becomes their ornament by his very shame, thus purifying and re-balancing both human soul and place.[3] For Bossuet, God made of men *"ces belles lumières de l'esprit, ces rayons de son intelligence, ces images de sa bonté"* not for their own happiness, but as decoration of the universe, as an ornament of the present century.[4] For Kant, everything is ornament that brings an increase in the satisfaction of taste solely by its form, such as the frames of paintings, draperies of statues, colonnades around palaces, and a woman's ballroom evening dress.[5] For Heidegger, ornament, understood

as *Zier (*in its ancient sense of *parure*) is the glitter that makes things appear and become part of a unique assemblage, part of the presence.[6]

An exhaustive effort of gathering and cataloguing the existing definitions and acceptations (still to be done) would probably prove that, even in the classical treatises of rhetoric and architecture, ornament is defined vaguely, metaphorically, incompletely, or indirectly, by means of the functions assigned to it. The content of the term has always slipped out of grasp and eluded the rigor of scholars, remaining *überflüssig,* as in Georg Simmel's characterization of ornament itself.

Unlike the far more "innocuous" *décor* or decoration, ornament has often been treated as a universal concept or endowed with the broader and more profound connotations of the magical, esoteric, sacred or even diabolical. Also, as Elisabeth Lavezzi notices, its capacity for modifying and multiplying itself renders almost impossible the integral seizure in a discourse of this "polymorphous and versatile object" connected with the metaphor of the divine creation.[7]

Ananda Coomaraswamy's etymological analysis of the Greek *kosmos* and of its Latin translation, *ornamentum,*[8] explains eruditely the origin of the sacred aura of ornament, progressively eroded by the ascent of rationalism. The ancient *kosmos*, meaning "order" and also "ornament" (as equipment or embellishment), establishes relevant aspects which henceforth will constantly characterize, more or less explicitly, any understanding of the concept: the connection operated by ornament between the structured unity of the whole and the structuring power of the significant detail, on the one hand, and simultaneously between the intelligible truth of the universe and its manifestation in perceptible phenomena, on the other. Christian tradition preserves and perpetuates this original content of universality in referring to God's creation of living beings – in order to occupy the already created world – as a "work of adornment", *ornatus mundi.*[9] In particular, the cosmology of the School of Chartres (12th century) distinguished between the creation of the world (*creatio*) and its subsequent adornment by God (*exornatio*), which compares God to an architect and to a goldsmith that perfects his work.[10] A third aspect of the concept is thereby emphasized, closely related to the preceding two: the connection between work (*opus*) and ornament as between creation and its sense-giving accomplishment or enhancement.

In the first architectural treatise since antiquity, *De re aedificatoria* (edited in 1486), Alberti preserves this status of a universal concept by devoting four of its ten books to ornament. At first sight, Alberti operates

a "modern" distinction between ornament and construction on the one hand, and ornament and beauty, on the other. However, as Alina Payne has shown, "the move to isolate ornament in an architectural context – something that Vitruvius had certainly not done – cannot be attributed to a form of structural rationalism *avant la lettre* or to a conception of ornament as a secondary or lesser category", but to the influence of "the treatises on rhetoric where the choice and arrangement of ornament ranked as the truest sign of an orator's artistry and the category *ornatus* was independently and systematically structured".[11]

Alberti's definition of ornament as "a form of auxiliary light and complement to [innate] beauty"[12] might echo, according to Joseph Rykwert, "the scholastic tag about beauty itself being the light of truth".[13] But beauty is intellectual, whereas ornament is "corporeal" and its task is that of welding the abstract model to the concrete reality of the work. For Alberti, ornament appears as the necessary link between idea and phenomenon, between the perfection of beauty and the imperfections of brute matter.[14]

No other treatise of the Renaissance and classical theory gives such a broad interpretation to the concept of ornament, though it remains, more or less explicitly, an essential component of beauty and *decorum*. Paradoxically, within the apparently continuous process of reducing ornament to the status of a dispensable accessory, starting with Claude Perrault and culminating in its condemnation by Adolf Loos, a parallel counter-trend, less concerted and coherent, grows in a renewed recognition of ornament as a universal concept. For instance, John Ruskin, in sustaining the Gothic cause, returns to a certain divine sense of ornament as "the expression of man's delight in God's work".[15] God's creation appears as the model of every ornament, whose function is to please man.

The less moralizing *fin de siècle* aestheticism, especially in its expression in French culture, asserts the preeminence of ornament in nature as well as in art, and, by associating it with the art for art's sake movement, founds a sort of legitimacy for the latter. "Everything, in nature is ornament", stated the printmaker, painter, ceramist and theorist Félix Bracquemond in 1885: "from a simple agent of embellishment […] ornament has been transformed and elevated by its principle even to becoming the complete essence of art."[16] And Mallarmé exclaims: "*La Décoration, tout est dans ce mot.*"[17] In his *Théorie de l'Ornement* of 1883, Jules Burgoin makes the distinction between decoration, that can be either added or inherent to form, and ornamentation, defined as "the

power of invention and creation beyond the necessary and utilitarian form" and seen as "purely and solely art".[18]

In the same period, the most prominent art historians and theorists begin to identify in ornament the origin and essence of all art (Riegl, Worringer), the "purest and most unobscured" cultural expression of a people, "the point of departure and the fundament of all aesthetic considerations of art".[19] The problems raised by ornament appear now, as Rae Beth Gordon remarked, "at the very heart of the aesthetic experience: limits and their transgression, illusion and reduction, pleasure and tension, harmony and confusion, excess, marginality, and the notion of 'pure art'."[20]

Concern for the question of ornament in the cultural context of postmodernism, circumscribed by the effort of reconsidering the traditional values rejected by modernity, results in a corpus of heterogeneous theoretical issues which, as a general tendency, converge in recognizing the universality of the concept. Sociological studies identify manners, fashion and language as ornamental systems in social life, or even speak about an "ornamental pact" (opposed to the social contract), acting as the general binder of a community and integrating each person, gesture or thing in a convention which represents society itself.[21]

In the theory of architecture, ornament appears as "a natural and universal system of communication that can present a valuable segment of human thought."[22] In fact, contemporary architects began to resort to the forgotten values of local or historical tradition, of collective and individual identity, of closeness to materials and crafting details, all of them based on ornament, in order to reestablish a communicative link with their users. The well-known architect-designer, Ettore Sottsass, considers the term ornament to mean everything and nothing at the same time, since all his decisions, from choice of materials and techniques, to the positioning of windows and doors, already come "under the heading of decoration"; however, as an operative definition, ornament would be everything that is "added on" and passes beyond practical necessity, but becomes necessary "so as to broaden the perception and use of architectonic spaces",[23] that is to increase the communicative function of architecture and man's attachment to his environment.

A complex interdisciplinary study mainly concerned with the passage from modernity to postmodernity (*Critique de l'ornement de Vienne à la postmodernité,* directed by Michel Collomb and Gérard Raulet, 1992), which proposes ornament as a fundamental criterion for the analysis of

the artistic, architectural and literary phenomenon, offers eloquent examples of this renewed understanding of the general dimension of ornament. Thus, according to François Schanen, "most linguists incline to think that any use of the language is an act of ornamentation, meaning that the signifiers are the expression, the 'clothing' of what is understood as cognition, signification, sense [...] i.e. the ornament of a spiritual world made of representations of reality and of experience." But "the linguistic means of expression [...] also *in-form* the content",[24] so that ornament also pervades the territory of the *signified,* articulating the entire field of the communication process and representing "a permanent and structuring constituent of the work of art".[25]

The question as to whether each art, or art in general, is ultimately ornament[26] joins the philosophical statement of the ornamental (decorative) essence of art postulated by Martin Heidegger and Hans-Georg Gadamer, as discussed further on. 20th century researches in anthropology, psychology and aesthetics also draw conclusions that lead to the assumption of a natural human predilection for ornament. Our reductive and schematizing perception of physical reality, analyzed by the Gestalttheorie and interpreted as a psycho-physiological predisposition, might be seen as a "*mise en fome ornementale*" or "*aperception ornementale*" of the world,[27] which, by stripping the *Gestalt* of its accidental traits and reaching its primary meanings, produces an aesthetic pleasure similar to the one produced by ornament.

In the same vain as the previous assertions, this study intends to bring further arguments for the existence of a transcultural and transchronological "ornamental dimension" that can be detected in the way man relates to reality. From this perspective, ornament appears as the paradigm of the specifically human need of "more than enough",[28] i.e., for transcending the primary necessities of his biological existence – a paradigm that acts from the scale of minor detail up to the meaningful organization of physical space and the general condition of art.

THE FUNCTIONS OF ORNAMENT

Study of the main functions of ornament (or of the major aspects of its generic manifold function) remains a necessary step in construing a comprehensive definition. Some of the best arguments in favor of the existence of a general ornamental dimension also proceed from the

analysis of the evolution or variation of these functions, with the possible discovery of transgressive constants or elements of continuity.

The four main functions that will be emphasized are closely interconnected, and remain available to any ornamental species, though in varying proportions. Together, they achieve the complex *modus operandi* which describes ornament essentially as a means of producing, articulating and enhancing meaning.

The symbolic (representational) function appears as the generating function of ornament, which actually does not originate from a ludic or aesthetic impulse (however undeniable), but from a need for efficiency. Ornament was probably created as an indispensable accessory to public and private rituals or ceremonies, and became the sense-giving detail of the things, beings and places involved in the symbolic scenography of human existence. As a material bearer of ritual, social or cultural significations, ornament endows the objects with the necessary investiture to perform efficiently the function assigned to them within an already established system of order.

The world can exist without ornament, but cannot function properly. Thus, "the pair of eyes painted on the prow of a boat in ancient Greece or in New Guinea is as essential to a safe journey as the proper shape and wood for the boat 'itself'."[29] Similarly, the architectural frames of windows and portals are as important for our perception as the reinforcement of the structure around the openings for the actual resistance of the wall. The "decorative" expression of structure becomes a psychological necessity, particularly in the case of special constructive problems (large openings, spans or heights), and consequently the structural form becomes ornament.

Ornament amplifies or completes the bearing object and its function, connecting the physical form to a metaphysical content. For example, the Greek order is more than a supporting structure providing stability and equilibrium: it is a "poetic" expression of stability and equilibrium, the architectural ornament *par excellence*. Similarly, at the very core of modernism, Mies van der Rohe's steel grid (e.g. at Lake Shore Drive or at Seagram Building) is a refined ornamental device concealing the reality of the fire-resisting concrete layer and displaying the metaphor of an ideal, immaterial metallic structure.

In his fundamental study of the matter,[30] Coomaraswamy showed that, according to its etymological origin and to its function in the traditional

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cultures, "cosmetic" ornament refers to the necessary equipment which empowers their bearer to fulfill its social or ritual task, and not to a gratuitous or superficial prettification. The modern age has marked a progressive decline and impoverishment of the symbolic function related to the depreciation of the transcendent support of the *Weltanschauung*. And yet, even in our time, the judge's robe, the king's crown or the mayor's chain are the requisite accessories for attributions that need to be not only exercised, but also represented.

The symbolic function of ornament is still at work, connoting values, concepts or categories: ideological contents and connected abstract notions (Justice, Liberty, Progress, and the modern State), social or individual status, corporate identity, practical or representational functions of buildings and objects, subjective interpretations of design themes. According to Theodor Adorno, as to what regards purposeful objects, "there is barely a practical form which, along with its appropriateness for use, would not therefore also be a symbol"; all the more so since psychoanalysis and mass psychology have demonstrated that "symbolic intention quickly allies itself to technical forms, like the airplane" or the car, thus providing a psychological basis for ornament which undercuts aesthetic principles and aims.[31]

The ideological and communicative value of ornament underwent substantial development during the French Revolution, when Phrygian caps, cockades and other symbols became the most frequent motifs in decorating buildings and objects. As pointed out by Stéphane Laurent, this "political appropriation of ornament" was to mark the 19th and 20th centuries, becoming propaganda, particularly during the dictatorial regimes, and creating powerful emblems that proliferated in public places, on coins, flags or printed materials – from Napoleon I's bee and eagle to Stalin's five-pointed star, Hitler's swastika or the Roman fasces of the Vichy government, with the axe and the sheaf of wheat. "After 1945, the suggestive power of ornament assumes a more commercial dimension", inaugurating the age of logotypes - mainly developed in the field of graphic imagery.[32] Also an interesting modern hypostasis of the symbolic function can be detected after the First World War in social realism, in close connection, as Kenneth Frampton has remarked, with the need of representing the authority and ideology of the State, which could not be satisfied by the modernist tendency of reducing any form to an abstraction.[33]

Subordinating itself to the object and making no sense without it, genuine ornament is never an end in itself. Similarly, in classical and medieval rhetoric, eloquence is considered not as art for art's sake, but as the art of effective communication.[34] A naked object, not "invested" by ornament, is merely utilitarian and devoid of any signification or unable to fulfill its purpose; at the same time, excessive or inappropriate decoration prejudices the efficacy of an object and becomes truly superfluous, even immoral.

Here, the symbolic function of ornament joins the ancient concept of *decorum*, which designates convenience, appropriateness, fitness-to-purpose. Its moral and social implications have generated in classical architecture "a theory of representation of social structures through built form"[35] and turned ornament into an instrument of social integration, as in the case of clothing and jewelry. A decoration was not admired for its intrinsic beauty, but for being assigned to a building, object or person entitled to it. As Cordemoy wrote in his treatise: "*Car il serait contre le bon sens […] que des portiques bien entendus et bien magnifiques régnassent le long des halles ou des boucheries et que de superbes vestibules ou salons servissent à introduire le monde dans les magasins des marchands.*"[36]

However, representing is, according to Hans-Georg Gadamer, an ontological role of architecture, as well as of the other arts that it embraces, and here ornament plays an essential part. For Gadamer "ornament is not primarily something by itself that is then applied to something else, but belongs to the self-presentation of its wearer. Ornament is part of the presentation. But presentation is an ontological event; it is representation."[37] Ornament is not, or no longer, a symbol, as in Riegl's famous aphorism,[38] but preserves, as a reminiscence of its origin, a symbolic dimension in "representing" the meanings assigned to objects.

The qualifying (adjectival) function. Within its class, each object is particularized by a sum of qualities or "accidents" that can be regarded as ornamental. "Ornaments are the necessary accidents of essence, whether artificial or natural", as Coomaraswamy has pointed out,[39] which suggests the interconnection of the symbolic and of the qualifying function. And further: "Ornament is related to its subject as individual nature to essence […]. Ornament is adjectival; and in the absence of any adjective,

nothing referred to by any noun could have an individual existence, however it might be in principle."[40] The initial connection established by the two major senses of the Greek *kosmos* between unity and multiplicity actually corresponds to the ornamental function of transposing the general into particular, the essential into phenomenon, the typological into morphological. This very function unites the abstract model of an object with the concrete decorated object itself, as well as the theme to its development in music or poetry.

Alberti's architectural treatise clearly presents ornament as the main agent charged with the projection of the mental model (the *lineamenta* or lineaments, also identified by Panofsky with "form" as essence), participating in the concept of Beauty, into a particular object. The ornamental work operates the necessary differences between spaces, buildings and parts of buildings, by choosing the most appropriate variants from all the possible projections of the required lineaments. For instance, the vault as a possible variant of roof is an archetypal form which, in its turn, can offer multiple variants of shape (barrel, spherical, cross vaults) or material (stone, brick);[41] furthermore, on a minor level of ornamentation, the architect can choose the surface articulation – painting or patterns with quadrangles, octagons and other regular polygons.[42]

Alberti's familiarity with the figural arts and the language arts allows him to establish a close relation between ornament and *inventio* that is later sanctioned by the treatises of the late Renaissance (Cellini, Lomazzo, Serlio). By the third decade of the 16th century, at the height of mannerism, ornament becomes the essential means of displaying inventive virtuosity and appears in the theoretical discourse of architecture and the other arts "as the domain of the painter's boundless imagination creating a fictional world of visual delight as copious as nature".[43] Late 19th century "mannerism" exalted ornament as the art that "contains the greatest degree of creativity", although "one commonly does not attach [to it] a large enough philosophical importance".[44]

In fact, ornament can be equated with formal invention, either *ex novo*, i.e. giving shape to an innovative idea, or as an interpretation of "past solutions deposited and synthesized schematically in the <type>".[45] It is by an ornamental treatment that different objects within a category/ class manifest themselves as individual expressions of a common intellectual scheme, e.g. the Italian *palazzi* of the Renaissance and Baroque period which, though sharing the same pattern (the compact

rectangular block with a square inner court), differ from one another and exhibit well-defined identities due to a great variety of decorative systems.

By virtue of both symbolic and adjectival functions, ornament engenders the representational stratum necessary to any individual or group for expressing his/its identity. Along with the eradication of ornament in its traditional acceptation, the uniformity and standardization imposed by the industrial production of objects, buildings and environments, as well as by the egalitarian ideology of the Modern Movement, resulted in alienation and kitsch. There is no better example for the failure of the modernist project than the experiment at Pessac (1926), a residential complex near Bordeaux, where Le Corbusier's standardized houses, designed as perfect *objets-types* meant to satisfy essential and typical human requirements, totally ignored the equally human need for expressing cultural and individual meanings; the housing was transformed afterwards by its inhabitants into "homes" by the ornamental addition of traditional or personalizing details, i.e. pitched roofs with wooden gables, stepped cornices, colored window shutters, hanging flower-stands, beveled corners for the openings.[46] The end of the modernist utopias was marked precisely by the concern for the particurarizing significations of the environment, which explains the revival of interest in the façade as a decorated plane liable to exalt individual values, cultural memory or the *genius loci.*

The ordering function. Ornament as a signifying detail represents the reflection of the whole in the part, of the general order in the individual phenomenon (according to the preceding adjectival function), and conversely a structuring factor for the physical reality, often perceived as chaotic or amorphous. The ordering principle contained in ornament refers both to a formal and to a social order. The latter aspect is in fact the first to have been theorized in rhetoric and subsequently in visual arts as *decorum*, a concept later translated as convenience and closely related to the representational function. The formal aspect of the order established by ornament, though permanently pervading the artistic phenomenon of all times and intuitively experienced by artists and aestheticians, did not find a substantial theoretical argumentation until Ernst Gombrich's *The Sense of Order* (1979).[47] Nonetheless, as we have seen, the "sense of order" appears as immanent to the nature of ornament in the etymological sense of the word itself, in Greek and also in Latin, connoting both aspects

of order.[48] This complex understanding of ornament as a principle of order can be detected up until the age of the Enlightenment, when the "modern" apprehension of its subordinate and additional character prevailed.

With the concept of *decorum*, classical theory articulates the conception of a harmonious and coherent universe in which everything has a well-determined place and significance established once for all. The divine order is materialized in the order of society and art, and made manifest through ornament, which is conceived according to the paradigm of *parure*.

Developing the Greek concept of *prepon*, Cicero defined *decorum* as a distinct aspect of eloquence (*elocutio*) – the other being *ornatus* or the means of expression – which concerns the congruity between the rhetorical discourse and its destination as to place, time or type of audience (varying in condition, dignity, authority, age).[49]

Vitruvius's *decor*, which is probably much indebted to the rhetor's *decorum* and shares its association with Beauty and its social and moral implications, is a complex aesthetic category that demands that the aspect of a building be correctly composed with appropriate details, according to authority.[50] The building will find its place in the overall order by means of a rigorous selection of ornaments, controlled by three agents of authority: convention or suitability of form to content (namely the personality of the god to whom the temple is dedicated), custom or the repeated use of certain combinations of forms (e.g. the specific elements of the architectural orders), and nature or the appropriate relation with the context (more in the sense of utility than ornament).[51] For Vitruvius, *decor* refers to the strict observance of the social and cultural conventions, as well as the artistic canon – all represented by generally accepted ornamental themes.

Alberti's theoretical system does not include the Vitruvian *decor* as such, but nonetheless focuses upon the necessity of coherence between ornament and the external (extra-architectural) factors which command the reception of a building: its destination and its relationship with the urban or suburban context. Ornament becomes the main criterion for classifying buildings since the second part of the treatise, which is entirely devoted to it, is structured by building types (i.e. functions) and by their required ornamental treatment. It also provides the necessary means for representing the hierarchical system of social-political relations and for highlighting its well-established values of dignity and civic order.

Classical theory further develops the concept of *decorum* as *bienséance* or *convenance*, mainly focusing upon the legitimacy of any assigned ornament and condemning its excess and vulgarization (though that was already in process). When Laugier recommends "*beaucoup de propreté et de commodité, point de faste*"[52] for poor housing, he sees in the absence of ornament not an economic or hygienic requirement, as we might expect from one of the first promoters of rationalism in architectural theory, but the distinctive investiture of a status, a necessary manifestation of social hierarchy. The posterity of *decorum* permeates the whole modern period, grounding the functionalist premises of the Arts & Crafts movement and functionalism itself, although the fitness-to-purpose refers no longer to a God-given order of things, but to a secular order determined by social-political, ethic, aesthetic and practical reasons.

As to the formal aspect of the ordering function of ornament, which is also responsible for the relation between whole and parts, it operates on the level of the aesthetic dimension of reality, particularly in the artistic field, and is therefore connected with the decorative function.

In fact, ornament is the essential means of articulating an artistic composition with regard to coherence, variety, hierarchy and unity. This is obvious, especially in architecture, music and literature, where ornament, in the traditional acceptation of motif or trope is easier to identify than in the figural arts.

The ordering force of ornament is visible in differentiating and hierarchizing the elements of a composition by the choice and the disposition of the iconographical and decorative motifs, the materials and their treatments, by the degree of the detailing or the craftsmanship involved. For instance, at Campidoglio, Michelangelo reinforced the emphasis of the central building, Palazzo Senatorio – already established through the axial symmetry of the composition – by distinctive ornamental traits: the tower, the two-sided frontal stair sheltering a fountain, and, above all, the colossal order displayed on the monumental pedestal of the entire rusticated ground-floor, clearly subordinating the lateral palaces with their porticoed colossal orders rising directly from the ground.

Ornament also constitutes the material support for the syntactic rules that control the joining together of the architectural elements, e.g. the articulation between column and architrave through the capital, between wall and roof through the cornice, or between opening and wall through the frame. Coherence and unity of an architectural object or space is achieved through the use of moldings or repetitive motifs. In Islamic

architecture, compositional order and unity is obtained by repeating the same symbolic theme, the *mihrab* (a niche that marks the liturgical orientation towards Mecca) on different scales: as a monumental portal, as a window or blind arcade, or as a diminished and infinitely multiplied motif (the *muqarnas* or stalactites). A most ingenious ornamental device was used by Bernardo Rossellino at the piazza in Pienza, the first example of urban design since Antiquity, in order to structure a heterogeneous mix of medieval and early-Renaissance buildings: the white stone stripes of the pavement join the wall pilasters of the newly-built church and *palazzo*, thus projecting the square grid into a third dimension and creating a spatial network that visually connects the disparate objects. (The same idea appears later at the Medici Chapel by Michelangelo, where the three-dimensional grid emphasizes the geometrical perfection of a homogeneous space.)

Since the end of the 19th century, the ordering function continues to be exercised both by the traditional and by the new hypostases of ornament. Of particular relevance are the new structures and their exaltation as ornamental systems (from Auguste Perret's classicizing concrete grid to the latest aerial cobwebs of high-tech architecture) or the sophisticated detailing which establishes a dialogue between different scales and generates the full text of a spatial organization (as in the work of Carlo Scarpa). Probably the most spectacular example of ornament as principle of order, however, is to be found in Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie Houses (1892 – 1915), where the same laws of organic growth operate on different levels of complexity: in the decoration of the stained glass windows, the shape of the inkpots or candlesticks, the disposition of the wall panels or in the articulation of volumes and spaces.

In each art, the structuring rules of syntax and composition form an abstract framework which organizes the elements of a work of art in the same way a pattern organizes ornamental motifs. By submitting to the ordering matrix, the elements of the composition, whether simple or complex, acquire an ornamental status, which they transmit to the whole. The more regular and striking the scheme, the more "decorative" becomes the work, even in the figural arts, as shown in the chapter on ornament as expression.

The decorative function has most recently been ascribed to ornament by virtue of its ludic and hedonistic component, and also of its capacity to turn a common object (person, thing, context, action) into an aesthetic

object. As a material component of the environment, ornament appeals to the senses and contributes highly to the creation of a sympathetic relationship between man and reality and a meaningful "frame" or setting for his existence.

Work and its product have always constituted a source of pleasure, together with the sensuality of materials and textures. Medieval admiration for the variety and multiplicity of Nature represented not only a means of adoring God in his material manifestations (particularly from the 12th century onwards and for the school of Chartres), but also a recognition of the joy of creation, which man was allowed to share with God. Besides, as Ernst Fischer has noted, since ornament is a reflection of the order of nature in our conscience, an essential role for the sentiment of pleasure it provokes revolves around the principle of order.[53] The revelation of this cosmic harmony that is also reflected in the ordering function appears as a major source of the aesthetic pleasure produced by ornament, irrespective of its symbolic or representational content.

The decorative function could be equated to the satisfaction of purely aesthetic needs recognized by anthropologists as even (partially) motivating the body adornment practiced in most tribal cultures (yet traditionally considered a matter of symbolic signification).[54] The aesthetic reason in theory for ornament can be regarded as a gratuity or pleasure of the material form *per se*, reminiscent of the Kantian idea of the disinterestedness (*Interesselossigkeit*) of aesthetic pleasure characterized by the suspension of any practical interest and content. Ornamental motifs such as the Greek frieze, the scrolls for frames or on wall-paper, and the musical fantasies without a theme; all are examples chosen by Kant to illustrate the concept of *free beauty* (*pulchritudo vaga*), which forms the basis of his famous thesis of the aesthetic autonomy of art. But identification of a "decorative" (i.e. non-representational) type of artistic beauty, purely consisting in the harmony of form and opposed to the "functional" beauty of a satisfactory representation of the subject, can be traced back to Aristotle, and then to St. Bonaventura and St. Thomas.[55]

The complementarity of pure form and content is also the source of the famous dichotomy established by American art critic Bernard Berenson of the "decorative" and the "illustrative" aspects of a work of art.[56] Berenson defined as *decoration* the elements of a work of art that are addressed directly to senses (color, tone) or stimulate imaginative sensations (form, movement, composition), achieving the actual aesthetic function, whereas *illustration*, equated with the "subject" (iconographic

content, anecdote, narrative), would belong to the extra-aesthetic field. Although no rigid separation of the perceptible and the conceptual aspects can actually break the unity of a genuine work of art, the definition of decoration implied by this distinction is most fertile in the study of ornament and its functions. For instance, it is verifiable that "mimetic" realism in an artistic or literary work usually appears in an inverse ratio to its "decorative" character, manifested as formalism, stylization, abstraction or symbolism. Furthermore, the classical ornaments derived from naturalistic models, such as the vine-scroll or the palmette (which, as Riegl has shown, originated in the Egyptian lotus and engendered the Corinthian acanthus),[57] are completely devoid of their figural content when "set into work" and follow strictly the intrinsic laws of artistic composition. But this "ornamental principle" is not restricted to decorative arts: it constitutes a major component of the aesthetic attitude, an agent of transformation essential for interpreting and metamorphosing reality in art.

Since modernism painting has "discovered" and emphasized the experience of covering the canvas the same way as decoration "fills the space". The painting was no longer Alberti's "opening in the wall", but a covered surface, liable to be multiplied infinitely, like a wall-paper motif (as in the cases of Andy Warhol, Claude Viallat or Niele Toroni) or to transform the spatiality of a room (from Whistler and Mondrian to Daniel Buren). The error of considering the covering of a surface as the only merit of a work of art led, in the writing of Pierre Francastel, to the confusion between *"le savoir du décorateur"* and *"le sentiment décoratif"*.[58] The former would consist in an embellishment by filling a previously defined surface, whereas the latter would be defined as "a sentiment of the aesthetic nature procured by displaying in space a work of art with its colors and lines",[59] i.e. the pleasure provoked by the perception of pure material form.

The hedonistic character assumed by the decorative function was and still is regarded as defining in respect of the concept of ornament. According to one of the latest prononucements on this topic, "ornament is the only visual art whose primary if not exclusive purpose is pleasure".[60] Whether innate or having appeared at an early stage of cultural development, the faculty of aesthetic pleasure has been always connected to the ornamental attitude. Without insisting on the arguable limitation to the domain of art, and since obviously not every ornament is entitled to aspire to an artistic status, but to an aesthetic one (e.g.

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fashion accessories, hand-made or industrial decoration of useful objects), the hedonistic dimension is indeed fundamental.

Ornament as decoration inherits the ambiguous condition of the aesthetic pleasure, situated, as admitted by St. Thomas Aquinas, half way between biological sensuousness and the intellectual character of the moral sentiments. Aesthetic pleasure is considered a privilege of man, the only being capable of appreciating sensible beauty (St. Thomas), but also a *mira, sed perversa delectatio* (wonderful, but perverse delight, according to Hugues of Fouilloi, a member of the Cistercian order) and sometimes a dangerous enemy of pious meditation.[61] The dark side of ornament and its association with evil are ancient themes: the artisan and his "ornamental" productions, though sacralized in Plato's *Timaios*, "carried with them a constellation of notions that include artifice, ruse, trap (the labyrinth of Daedalus), seduction, charm, veil, secret".[62] Also, in rhetoric, the Asiatic style was criticized by the Atticists for its elaborate imagery, rhythms and turns of phrase, supposed to diminish the faculties of logic, reason and taste.

In any case, until the modern age, the aesthetic experience, not subordinated to ideal or spiritual ends, was generally regarded, in a Platonic filiation, as inferior, but managed progressively to consolidate its status as a consequence of Renaissance individualism and the rise of Empiricism – with its stress on the sensorial and subjective character of beauty. The 18th century, which understood (and undertook) the pursuit of pleasure as wisdom and its production as virtue, according to Étienne de Senancour's famous formula, founded an authentic philosophy of pleasure. In his *Dictionnaire d'Architecture* (1788-1825), Quatremère de Quincy defined ornament as raising "that which had been dictated by necessity to the realm of pleasure",[63] still preserving for it a certain "aristocratic" aura. Later, in the context of a consolidated bourgeois system of values, William Morris understood that to make men pleased with the objects they necessarily use constitutes one of the great tasks of decoration. From a vehicle of meaning, ornament had become an instrument of pleasure or, more precisely, an instrument for turning useful objects into objects of pleasure.

On the other hand, the complementary attitude of blaming ornament by moral and social criteria could always be sensed in the classical rules of *decorum*, which, in the 18th century, were still reproving as senseless the classical ornaments assigned to "vulgar" purposes or the exotic motifs of gothic (*sic*) and Moresque. The end of classical theory witnessed the

ascent of new principles of *auctoritas* such as, for instance, the ideological reasons which condemned the rococo caprices as symbols of the decadent Ancien Régime and promoted the moral regeneration of society through the return to the primary simplicity of the origins or past models of virtue – namely Athenian democracy and the Roman republic. As Rousseau wrote at the end of the 18th century, "ornamentation is no less foreign to virtue, which is the strength and vigor of the soul".[64]

In the theory of architecture, *decorum* was replaced by rationality, mainly understood as truth to structure, function and materials, and having a strong ethical component. From Lodoli and Laugier to Viollet-le-Duc and then to Le Corbusier, the rationalist doctrine proposed a new type of beauty (and of aesthetic pleasure), founded by necessity and rejecting the artifice of the applied ornament.

Furthermore, the aesthetic puritanism of modernism, refusing "to betray us into delight" (to use the words of Ruskin's prediction), pretended that all we need is the essential, attainable exclusively by subtraction: the suppression of pleasure, i.e. of ornament.

Adolf Loos's radical assertions, although recognizing that "the urge to ornament one's face , and everything within one's reach is the origin of fine art", assimilated to crime the modern creation and use of ornament, and proclaimed that "to seek beauty in form and not in ornament is the goal toward which all humanity is striving".[65] The elitist and highly moral axiom of modernism, "less is more",[66] exiled traditional ornament in mass culture and kitsch, despising its primitivism and *mauvais goût*. Recalling Loos, Le Corbusier wrote: *Le décor est d'ordre sensoriel et primaire ainsi que la couleur, et il convient aux peuples simples, aux paysans et aux sauvages ( ). Le décor est le superflu nécéssaire, quantum de paysan.*[67]

It is most probable that the commonly invoked superfluity of ornament, often associated with excess and immorality, is due to the erroneous reduction of ornament to the decorative function and to its progressive transformation, during the modern age, into mere "decoration" (through the erosion of the symbolic dimension).

By admitting that it was the decorative component that was targeted with the accusation of superfluity and the modernist anathema, the fact that ornament has survived and found new possibilities of manifestation demonstrates both its complex nature, which exceeds the purely decorative ends, and the universality of its decorative function, still active

since it responds to ever-lasting needs and extends itself to the very condition of art.

Hans-Georg Gadamer stated the ornamental essence of all art, understood both as "representation" and as "decoration" (as mentioned before, when speaking of the symbolic function). "Even the free-standing statue on a pedestal", wrote Gadamer, "is not really removed from the decorative context, but serves the representative heightening of a context of life in which it finds an ornamental place […] The nature of decoration consists in performing that two-sided mediation; namely to draw the attention of the viewer to itself, to satisfy his taste, and then to redirect it away from itself to the greater whole of the context of life which it accompanies."[68] Gadamer's definition is relevant both for grasping the decorative function of ornament, which implies the aesthetic pleasure, and for apprehending the essential nature of ornament and its *modus operandi.*

EXPRESSION AND PERCEPTION

The four functions of ornament analyzed so far prove a double orientation: each exerts both upon the bearer (the supporting object: person, thing, act or context) and upon the observer (the perceiving subject). Ornaments are not self-referential, they make manifest or enhance the meaning of an object, qualify and individualize it within its class, organize its appearance or inscribe it in a given system, and, last but not least, they simply and solely adorn it. In fact, ornaments complete the objects and give them an expressive form, turning them from the status of object *per se* to that of object-for-the-subject. At the same time, by acting as stimuli for the observer, ornaments clarify and improve his perception, then connect him to the object and its context. Thus, the meaning of objects is translated into the language of perceptual expression and becomes accessible to the subject, who, in turn, experiences a more intense relationship with his *milieu* (as physical environment and ethereal network of significations).

Ornament as expression. Aberti is perhaps the first to have intuited the expressive nature of ornament within the mediation it operates between intelligible form and perceptible materiality. By constructing or highlighting the sensible appearance in accordance with the sense or

meaning assigned to an object, ornament becomes synonymous with expression, generically defined as "the process of 'translating' a certain entity by another entity with an observable character".[69] It is an expressive image or sign with an increased communicative value, which transcends the mere practical needs of communication, though not necessarily acquiring an artistic dimension.

We might conclude, with a tempting *jeu de mots*, that content is mental and expression is orna-mental, which is generally true, but not completely. The frontier between the formal and the semantic aspects of a sign (or system of signs) is hard to trace, and in the process of perception they act inseparably. The content can be shaped by the means of expression or can have its own ornamental value, whereas expression has its own semantic charge. Concrete forms are never innocent: even in the highest degree of abstraction represented by an ornamental pattern, they are endowed with meaning, by becoming associated with our past experiences – be they personal or belonging to our cultural and biological memory.[70]

Ornament can also be equated with expression because it acts as a particular type of sign, whose original content fades almost completely in favor of the meaning it has to embody or enhance in a given context. Its own content being reduced or inessential, the ornamental sign acts as pure expression, although its form cannot be totally devoid of its primary sense and is, in fact, chosen precisely for its signifying potential. The best example is the vine-scroll motif, which departs from the mere figural representation of a vegetal element and, combined in a rhythmic pattern, becomes a hieroglyph of its initial sense or simply an abstract image of an essential aspect of reality (dynamism, organicity). However, its concrete content made it appropriate at the beginnings of classical Antiquity, mainly for bacchic rituals and decoration of drinking vessels (e.g. the cantharus or the thyrsos), and in the Middle Ages, by a typical process of re-semantization, for a symbol of Christ.

Ornament as expression does not refer necessarily to the artistic field.[71] However, the most relevant illustrative material for the ornamental value of expression is to be found in art. Not only in literature, architecture and the applied arts, but also in the figural arts and music, ornament is the basic constituent of what we usually call "stylistic manner", or simply "style". Whether figures and tropes, vocabulary and repertory of motifs, texture and chromatics, technique and organizing schemata, syntax and composition, all artistic devices can be regarded as means of expressing

or emphasizing a content in order to raise aesthetic emotions, i.e. as ornaments.

In the current acceptation, ornament has insinuated itself in easel painting - along with the new conception of the image proposed by Romanticism – as a conventional representation or as a personal vision of the artist which departs from the mimetic canon and inaugurates the way to abstraction (e.g. the scroll motif in Philip Otto Runge's series of etchings *Die Zeiten*).[72] However, it is not only modern art that is progressively invaded by the decorative spirit, which replaces the narrative and the representational with stylization and abstraction, but the whole tradition of pictorial illusionism is also based on ornamental "methods".

The reality of an object can be rendered in an infinity of manners: photographic, conventional, stylized, distorted, deconstructed, in *sfumato* or *chiaroscuro,* privileging volumes or surfaces, contours, masses or colors. Such manners or devices enhance the appearance of the object, in fact an ornamental revetment of reality which best suits the artist's intentions of communication. In his *Critique of Judgement*, Kant considers drawing (contour) to be essential, and whereas the appeal of colors and of sounds can be added (*hinzukommen*), they are only ornaments (*Zieraten*), *parerga*.[73]

Iconographic content itself may also make use of ornamental devices other than the proper representation of jewelry or decorations, of symbolic or allegoric figures: drapery (remarked by Kant as ornament for statues), attitude, mimicry of faces, gesture, movement or rest, foliage, elements of landscape, shadows, reflection in water or mirror. Analyzing the landscape in the Florentine Quattrocento, Alison Cole shows that, in the workshop practice and in manuals such as Cennino Cennini's *Il Libro dell'Arte*, iconographic elements are used "ornamentally" as pre-existing conventions, literary allusions or pure embellishments. Mountains and rocks are important "because from Byzantine times onwards they have denoted the biblical *locus* in general", while "fruits, flowers, fishes and birds are the ornaments of nature (embraced by the term *ornamenti* or 'usual (*consueto*) decoration' in Quattrocento contracts), and landscapes can be embellished with these as and when the painter sees fit."[74] In Botticelli's *Primavera*, an "ornamental naturalism, so in tune with contemporary Florentine taste" (grass carpeted with copious flowers, a dense grove of orange trees, simultaneously blossoming and fruiting, dark radiating foliage of myrtle – the tree sacred to Venus) turns the landscape into a gracious and attractive setting "as elaborately rich and decorative

as the Nederlandish tapestries so prized by the Medici" and similar to "a painted panel used to decorate a room".[75] Also, on the confines between content and manner, the Hellenistic *figura serpentinata* – from *Laocoon* and the *Belvedere Torso* to Michelangelo's *Captives* for the Julius II tomb and his *ignudi* on the Sistine Ceiling – explicitly suggests the ecstatic passion of the human soul through its torsion and flame-like spiraling movement of the body;[76] it is a formal configuration most fitted to convey a spiritual meaning, a complex ornamental device which Mannerism will often turn into sophisticated decorativism.

However, the most evident interference of the ornamental in any art appears as an ordering and decorative function on the level of its *ars combinatoria*, i.e. of the system of rules and structural principles (usually designated as grammar, syntax, composition or pattern) which organize and assemble the elements of a work of art into a single whole. Gian Paolo Lomazzo, in his *Trattato dell'arte della pittura, scoltura et architettura* (1584), asserts that the secret of painting consists in an abstract scheme that orientates the work, whereas the forms should follow a regular ornament arisen from symmetry and doubling.[77]

The organizing scheme generally associated with ornament is "pattern", so that any structure of order manifesting a pronounced regularity and liable to be referred to as "pattern", from the scale of the minor decorative motif to that of the entire artistic or architectural work and even of urban design, receives an ornamental connotation and, above this, acquires an ornamental value for the whole composition. In fine arts, the symbolic or the purely decorative works usually tend towards a clear manifestation of pattern, while deliberately departing from the naturalistic approach of reality. Thus, the geometrical stylizing and the biaxial symmetry of the famous prehistoric idol known as *Venus of Lespugue* enables the exclusion of the female image from the real world and its projection in a supernatural range, while turning it into a highly decorative object. History of art proves that the mimetic representation and the rigor of pattern are not incompatible, yet their demands are mutually restrictive.

Analyzing the attraction for primitivism experienced by the modern world, Ernst Gombrich develops Goethe's remarks about the superiority of the primitive masters, whose respect for symmetry, orderly distribution and lucid composition, accompanied by a certain rigidity and stiffness of style, enabled them "to fulfill the most exalting task of the figurative arts: the task of decorating a particular space such as an interior".[78]

In the three-dimensional purposeful arts (architecture, industrial and furniture design), syntax can remain purely utilitarian, dictated by functional or structural reasons, as in the current production of buildings and objects of use, or can turn into an "ornamental" syntax when an intention of surpassing mere utility raises the material support of the relations between elements (joint, seam, articulation) to the rank of ornamental detail. The simple problem of joining together two surfaces has multiple solutions, and it is at this point that the ornamental detail may occur. The intersection of the two planes can remain unmarked, a simple edge, as in the "vulgar" syntax of the utilitarian object or in the minimalist, but stylish modernist idiom; the edge can be rounded, as in the streamlined aesthetics of the 1930s, faceted or stepped; it can even be annulled, as in the exploded syntax of Neoplasticism, or, on the contrary, emphasized by a linear element (a tore, a rope, a colonnette, a corner pilaster). For instance, in the stone buildings of Ancient Egypt, the vertical edges and the horizontal bases of the concave cornices were underlined by a continuous astragal, a decorative reminiscence of the archaic building technique in wood, reed and clay. Similarly, the crystalline volumes of Josef Hoffmann's Stoclet Palace in Bruxelles (1905-1911), coated in thin marble-slab veneers, are contoured with linear bronze moldings that articulate a refined graphics, accentuated by the a-tectonic continuity of the identical horizontal and vertical profiles (not specific to architecture, but current in decorative and graphic arts).

The arguments above are meant to illustrate the global dimension of the analyzed concept, by drawing attention to the ornamental value of what we call expression (in both artistic and extra-artistic fields), and reciprocally to the omnipresence of ornament as a fundamental expressive means in the process of communication.

Figure and ground. Paradoxically, in spite of its defining ancillary condition as means of expression and necessary accessory, ornament is usually perceived as an event in a neutral structure. This can be either the supporting object or a context, which ornament enhances and invests with a certain meaning, status or identity (e.g. an antique piece of furniture in a modern interior). Events experienced by man, generally connected with social life (family, group, community), are always marked/ accompanied by "ritual" accessories and settings which materialize the status of event and favor the raising up to a superior emotional range, corresponding to the significance of the occasion. Hence ornament

introduces the necessary differences and accents in man's existence, as well as in his environment. A church in a residential area can be interpreted in an ornamental key, as Alberti had poposed:[79] it is an urban event through its meaning for the community, as well as through its physical revetment, actually the architectural form, which provides an appropriate frame for experiencing the sacred, and a dignified landmark for the built environment.

Mainly referring to the decorative motif, Hans Sedlmayr noticed the essence of ornament as a model against a background, which is also available for the scale of a monument and of its site. The formal characteristics of the ornamental motif – clarity and precision of the line work, texture, color – or of the monument – a distinct shape or silhouette, size, position, materials, architectural treatment, entitles them to the status of figures contrasting with an unstructured or homogeneous background. The figure-ground relationship, established by the Gestalt psychology as fundamental for our perception of reality, appears therefore as an important instrument for the study of ornament.

Paradoxically, the relations between figure and ground are best emphasized in the equivocal case of the reversible figures, which turn into ground when fixed for a long time. The approach of ornament as a figure interacting with the ground is liable to clarify its intrinsic ambiguity of being simultaneously a superfluous accessory and an essential attribute, a means and an accomplishment, frame and centre, expression and event

The wood and ivory frame that surrounds the three centimeters in diameter of the objective lens first used by Galileo for his telescope offers an interesting example of specifically ornamental reversibility. The frame, evoking the reliquaries of the late 17th century, "calls attention to an object that could otherwise be easily missed, and gives it the character of a revered relic".[80] By limiting our field of vision to the exterior contour of the frame, we react firstly to the strong stimulus of the elaborate frame and read it as figure, but subsequently we focus on the lens, by virtue of one of the rules in perceptual psychology which predicts that surrounded shapes are seen as figures unless no other factors intervene.[81] The frame is alternatively perceived as figure and ground, and moreover, if we enlarge our visual field, embracing the surrounding space (probably a neutral exhibiting panel), the entity that results from adding the ornament to the object becomes a single figure against the new background.

It follows that the contradictory perception of ornament is partly due to the figure/ground reversibility, but also to the shift of the reference

system or the scale (by enlarging or reducing the perceptual field). In the case of a framed window, for instance, in repeating the perceptive pattern above in reverse order, we begin by considering it as a figure with the wall as background, an ornament of the façade, while by "zooming" to the scale of the frame and limiting to it the visual field we may experience successively as figure either the frame (the ornament proper) or the opening (the supporting object); a further reducing of the visual field to an element of the frame (pediment, cornice, colonnette) is also possible, involving the same process on a diminished scale.

The mutual switch of figure and ground is most evident in the case of the passage between exterior and interior space: the architectural shell of a church, perceived from outside as a positive figure (monument) framed by its context, becomes itself an ornamental frame or background for the altar, and for the liturgical ritual as well. Likewise, the procedure of the reversible figures in concentric visual fields can be applied on an urban scale since, as Alberti was hinting, a street or square can be regarded as an ornament of the city, and similarly a monument, an ornament of urban space, an architectural element (portico, dome, portal, window, column, frieze) an ornament of a building, a detail (profile, joint, motif) an ornament of an element, etc.[82] The ordering function of ornament manifests itself at several levels, generating a hierarchic structure which allows the observer to discover successive layers of signification within the unity of a complex whole.

According to Rudolf Arnheim, "successful patterns are organized in such a way that all details are understood as elaborations – *diminution* was the term used by the medieval musicians – of superordinate forms, and that these, in turn, similarly conform to their superiors."[83]

On each level, what had been previously perceived as figure or event at a superior scale becomes the background or context of a new figure or event lower down the scale. This shift of perspective might explain why the same object may appear both as ornament and as ornate, and why an ornament of any type can simultaneously be treated as a centre of interest, with its supporting object as background, and as a marginal element, subordinated to a higher centre represented by the same object.

The paradigm of the concentric fields of perception offers a possible solution to the ornamental *aporia* when completed by the ontological paradigm of the unity of ornate and ornament – "*unité indéfectible de l'orné et de l'ornant*" – suggested by the two meanings of the term *ornamentum* (a means of ornamenting and the result of the act of

ornamenting) which correspond to the meanings of the suffix -*mentum*.[84] An object that receives an ornament increases in its being and becomes itself an ornament for its immediate context in a dynamic process of enriching reality. The symbolic function of ornament proves here its axiological dimension since only significant objects worthy of attention and concern are ornamented in order to invest our gestures with the sense of ritual legitimacy we are unconsciously longing for.

CONCLUSION: THE ORNAMENTAL PARADIGM

Analysis of the functions of ornament and the specific binomial expression/perception has attempted to provide valid arguments for the thesis of a general ornamental dimension, characteristic for man's relation to reality and his very condition. This would explain why, despite the continuous metamorphosis (otherwise a typical ornamental device) of its acceptations, hypostases and significations, ornament is a constant presence in man's historical evolution, which it interlaces in an endless arabesque.

Any definition of ornament as a universal concept would certainly appear as vague and incomplete by dint of attempting to cover all its *genera*, functions and domains. At any rate, any such definition should include elements characterizing ornament as a sign (or system of signs) that articulates, emphasizes or makes manifest a signifying aspect of an object (phenomenon) and/or marks its specific place within a particular context, generally implying an aesthetic intention. A more concise, but percussive formula, inspired by Heidegger's definition of art as "setting-into-work of truth",[85] would be that of "ornament as setting-into-work of meaning", which suggests equivalence with the concept of expression, and implicitly the mediating role of ornament. As expression or vehicle of meaning, ornament turns the idea into a phenomenon, making the former comprehensible to the observer. In the process of perception, acting as event, it draws the attention of the observer to itself in order to redirect it towards its supporting object (or context), understood both as concrete presence and as abstract representation. In fact, in this second type of mediation, ornament relates man to the physical reality of his environment, as well as to the metaphysical reality of his significations.

However, ornament is not only a binder, a means or an instrument. It can also be regarded as an accomplishment. More than simply

embellishing, it completes and perfects the object, revealing its true finality and enabling it to participate efficiently in the harmony of the whole. Ornament always brings a surplus, "more than enough", a vocation of exceeding the practical needs.

Commenting upon this condition of *parergon*, which Kant attributed to ornaments such as the colonnades around palaces or the drapery of statues,[86] Jacques Derrida wrote: "*Ce qui les constitue en* parerga, *ce n'est pas simplement leur extériorité de surplus, c'est le lien structurel interne qui les rive au manque à l'intérieur de l'ergon. Et ce manque serait constitutif de l'unité même de l'ergon, sans ce manque, l'*ergon *n'aurait pas besoin de* parergon. *Le manque de* l'ergon *est le manque de* parergon, *du vêtement ou de la colonne qui, pourtant, lui restent extérieurs.*"[87] Derrida finds an ontological, or rather teleological legitimacy for ornament, which, by supplying a structural lack within the object, would become essential for restoring and achieving the unity of the existent. The need for ornament is thus sanctioned as fundamental since it corresponds to an intrinsic and not a superficial requirement.

The paradox of the essential inessential results from our logical incapacity of accepting simultaneously as essential both the *ergon* and the *parergon*, and all the more so since the latter refers to the sensible appearance. Under the impact of the platonic tradition reinforced by the Christian spirituality, philosophy has accustomed us to favor the essence and the metaphysical in the deficit of the appearance and of the physical, identified with falsehood, deceit and vanity. Belonging to the phenomenal aspect of things and shaping their appearance, ornament does not necessarily embody or enhance their proper essence; most frequently, ornament expresses the abstract content of the status or place assigned to an object (or to an aspect of an object) in a particular context, hence changing its reality and meaning.

Therefore, ornament is indeed essential to the construction of the sensible appearance and of its supersensible framework of significations, but remains an artifice subordinated to the object and peripheral to its essence, i.e. an inessential accessory.

The solving (and dissolving) of this contradiction inherent to the nature of ornament, previously considered in terms of perception (as figure/ground and ornate/ornament reversals), was also examined by Gianni Vattimo *via* Heidegger in terms of "weak ontology" (or centre/periphery reversal). In following Heidegger, Vattimo shows that ornamental art, traditionally regarded as marginal,[88] is an intrinsic part of the work of art, which is

itself an example of "weak ontology" and has a decorative nature. For Heidegger, as Vattimo remarks, ornament "becomes the central element of aesthetics and, in the last analysis, of ontological meditation itself", actually a paradigm of "weak ontology". Being is no longer defined by its "strong traits" (reason mainly), it "is not the centre which is opposed to the periphery, nor is it the essence which is opposed to appearance, nor is it what endures as opposed to the accidental and the mutable", but it becomes "an unnoticed and marginal background event".[89]

Postmodern thought promotes paradox and legitimates it since in response to the radicalism of modernity it has learnt to consider the world not in terms of opposition, but in terms of difference,[90] not in black and white, but in full color. In this context, the return to ornament is emblematic for the rehabilitation of "weak" values such as *bien-être* and *joie de vivre*, pluralism and ambiguity, ludic and hedonistic, as well as for the postmodernist intention of reconciling man with his environment and with himself.

We might add that ornament, as man's first mark upon the world, is a manifestation of his detachment from his animal nature, achieved not only by means of his "strong traits" (rationality, creativity, symbol, sociability), but also by a superfluous or "ornamental" impulse to heighten the content of life and to frame it congenially (and, for that matter, jovially), which could be designated as the ornamental dimension. Moreover, from the perspective of man's biological existence, the "strong traits" also appear as inessential, i.e. as "weak" and ultimately "decorative". Ornament is seemingly the paradigm of the paradoxical human condition; strong in his weakness, sublime in his vanity, is man not the accomplishment of Creation and its minor detail that leads to God? Or in St. Augustine's words: "…the road is provided by one (Christ) who is himself both God and man. As God, He is the goal; as man, he is the way."[91]

NOTES

1   Guillaume de Conches, *Glosae super Platonem*, Texte critique avec introduction, notes et tables, pur Édouard Jeuneau, Paris: J. Vivrin, 1965, p. 144: "The *ornatus mundi* (beautiful order of the world) is all that appears in each of its elements, such as the stars in the sky, the birds in the air, the fish in the water, the men on the earth."

2   Claude Lévy-Strauss, *Tristes Tropiques*, 1955.

3   Cf. St. Augustine, *On free will*, III, 27, quoted in G.S., "Saint Augustin: Le pêché orne la chair", in A*rchitecture d'Aujourd'hui* no. 333*,* 2001.

4   Quoted by Daniel Roche, "Piranèse et la splendeur obscurcie", in Didier Laroque, *Le Discours de Piranèse,* Les Éditions de la Passion, Paris, 1998, p. XVI.

5   Cf. Emmanuel Kant, "Critique de la faculté de juger", I, §14, in *Œuvres philosophiques,* trans. J.-R. Ladmiral, Pléiade, Paris, 1985, vol. II, p. 986.

6   Cf. Martin Heidegger, *Aufenthalte*, 1983, quoted in Didier Laroque, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

7   Cf. Elisabeth Lavezzi, "L'ornement en architecture et en peinture dans les dictionnaires des Beaux-arts de Félibien, Marsy et Pernéty, et dans le dictionnaire d'architecture d'Aviler", in *L'Ornement* (collective volume, in print).

8   Ananda Coomaraswamy, "Ornament", *Selected Papers I. Traditional Art and Symbolism*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1977, p. 241 ff.

9   *Ibid.,* p. 250.

10   Cf. Wladyslaw Tatarkiewicz, *History of Aesthetics*, trans., Ed. Meridiane, București, 1978, vol. II, p. 294.

11   Alina Payne, *The Architectural Treatise in the Italian Renaissance*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999, p. 75.

12   Leon Battista Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, trans., MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, 1989, Book VI, 2, p. 156.

13   Joseph Rykwert, "Inheritance or Tradition?", in *Architectural Design,* Vol. 49, no. 5-6, 1979, p. 3

14   Cf*. ibid.*, p. 2.

15   John Ruskin, T*he Stones of Venice*, vol. I, ch. 20, quoted in Hanno Walter Kruft, *A History of ArchitecturalTheory*, trans., Princeton Architectural Press, New York, 1994, p. 332.

16   Quoted in Rae Beth Gordon, *Ornament, Phantasy andDdesire inNnineteenth-century French Literature*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1992, p. 1.

17   Stéphane Mallarmé, "La Dernière Mode", 1874, quoted in Stéphane Laurent, 'Petite chronique de l'ornement', in *Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* no. 333, 2001, p. 54.

[18] Jules Burgoin, quoted in Rae Beth Gordon, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

[19] Wilhelm Worringer, quoted *ibid.*, p. 27.

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] Cf. Louis Maitrier, *La localisation (le privé / le commun / le public). Recherches sur les fonctions sociales de l'ornement, comparaisons entre le XVIIIème et le XXème siècle en France.*, PhD thesis, 1998, unpublished, pp. 341-343.

[22] Kent Bloomer, *The Nature of Ornament – Rhythm and Metamorphosis in Architecture*, W. W. Norton, New York, 2000, p. 12.

[23] Cf. Ettore Sottsass, "Nécessité de la décoration", in *Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* no. 333, 2001, p. 87.

[24] Quotations from François Schanen, "D'une ombre à l'autre: ornement et référence dans l'oeuvre poétique de Georg Trakl", in Michel Collomb et Gérard Raulet (dir.), *Critique de l'ornement de Vienne à la postmodernité*, Méridiens Klincksieck, Paris, 1992, p. 74.

[25] Michel Collomb and Gérard Raulet, "Présentation", *ibid.*, p. 17.

[26] Cf. Marianne Charrière-Jacquin: "*Ne peut-on pas dire à la limite que toute littérature est ornement? Et le […] problème se pose dans les mêmes termes en musique…*" , *ibid.*, p. 48; also Burghart Schmidt: *"…l'architecture est par elle-même déjà ornemen*t.", ibid., p. 250.

[27] Cf. Jacques Le Rider, "L'écriture à l'école de la peinture. Hofmannstahl et les couleurs", *ibid.*, p. 96.

[28] The expression was coined by the architectural critic and theorist Talbot Hamlin in the essay "The International Style Lacks the Essence of Great Architecture", in *The American Architect*, January 1933: "The root of any great architecture […] is spontaneity, delight in form. It is a superfluity – almost always a sense of "more than enough". It is a play of creative minds that makes living and building a delight as well as a task."

[29] Rudolf Arnheim, *The Dynamics of Architectural Form*, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1977, p. 250.

[30] Cf. n. 8 above.

[31] Theodor W. Adorno, "Functionalism Today", in Neil Leach (ed.), *Rethinking Architecture*, Routledge, London and New York, 1997, p. 10.

[32] Stéphane Laurent, *op. cit.* (cf. n. 17 above), pp. 54-55.

[33] Cf. Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture, a Critical History*, Thames and Hudson, New York, 1985, p. 247.

[34] Cf. Ananda Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

[35] Alina Payne (taking over a remark from John Onians), *op.cit.*, p. 56.

[36] Jean-Louis de Cordemoy, "Nouveau Traité de toute l'architecture" (1706), quoted in Jack Soulillou, *Le Décoratif*, Éditions Klincksieck, 1990, p. 20. For the conventions of dress and etiquette mainly in the Renaissance, cf. Jane Bridgeman, "*Condecenti e netti*…: beauty, dress and gender in Italian Renaissance art", in Frances Ames-Lewis and Mary Rogers (eds), *Concepts of Beauty in Renaissance Art*, Ashgate, Aldershot, England, 1998.

[37] Hans-Georg Gadamer, "The Ontological Foundation of the Occasional and the Decorative", in Neil Leach (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 136.

[38] "…every symbol bears in itself the predestination of becoming an ornament." Alois Riegl, *Stilfragen*, 1893, quoted in Ruxandra Demetrescu, foreword, in Alois Riegl, *Istoria artei ca istorie a stilurilor*, trans., Editura Meridiane, București, 1998, p. 15.

[39] Ananda Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, p. 244, n. 4.

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 252.

[41] Leon Batista Alberti, *op. cit.*, Book III, 14, p. 84-85.

[42] Ibid., Book VII, 11, p. 222.

[43] Alina Payne, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

[44] Théophile Gautier, quoted in Rae Beth Gordon, *op.cit.*, p. 5.

[45] Giulio Carlo Argan, "On the Typology of Architecture", in *Architectural Design* no.33 (December 1963), p. 565.

[46] On Pessac cf. Philippe Boudon, *Pessac de Le Corbusier*, Ed. Dunod, Paris, 1977.

[47] Ernst Gombrich, *The Sense of Order: A Study in the Psychology of Decorative Art*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1979.

[48] Cf. Ananda Coomaraswamy, op. cit., pp. 249-250, and also Claude Moussy, "Le vocabulaire de l'ornement en latin classique", quoted in Didier Laroque, op.cit., p. 118, namely: "*On explique habituellement* ornare *comme un ancien* ordinare, *qui n'est plus attesté.*"

[49] Cicero, "De Oratore", quoted in Jack Soulillou, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

[50] *"Decor autem est emendatus operis aspectus probatis rebus compositi cum auctoritate".* Vitruvius, *De Achitectura. On Architecture*, William Heinemann, London and Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusets, 1983 (I,2,5).

[51] Cf. Alina Payne, *op.cit.*, pp. 35-41.

[52] Marc-Antoine Laugier, *Essai sur l'architecture*, Pierre Mardaga éditeur, Bruxelles, 1979, p. 169.

[53] Cf. Ernst Fischer, *Kunst und Menschlichkeit*, Viena, 1949, quoted in Georg Lukács, *Estetica*, trans., Editura Meridiane, București, 1972, vol. II, p. 146.

[54] Cf. Carol R. Ember, Melvin Ember, *Anthropology*, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey, 1992, pp. 440-442.

[55] Cf. Wladyslaw Tatarkiewicz, *op.cit.*, vol. II, p. 258.

[56] Bernard Berenson, *Mittelitalienische Malerei*, München, 1925, trans. *Pictorii italieni ai Renașterii*, Ed. Meridiane, București, 1971, pp. 128-132.

[57] Cf. Alois Riegl, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

[58] Quoted in Jack Soulillou, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

[59] *Ibid.*

[60] James Trilling, *The Language of Ornament*, Thames & Hudson, London, 2001, p. 14.

[61] Cf. Wladyslaw Tatarkiewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 227, 249-250, 358, 371.

[62] Rae Beth Gordon, *op.cit.*, p. 24.

63   Quoted in Philippa Lewis and Gillian Darley, *Dictionary of Ornament*, Macmillan, London, 1986.

64   Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discours sur les arts et les sciences*, Gallimard, Paris, 1986, p. 4.

65   Quoted in Rae Beth Gordon, *op. cit.* p. 25.

66   Modernist slogan proposed by Mies van der Rohe, possibly inspired from Robert Browning's poem *Andrea del Sarto.*

67   Le Corbusier, *Vers une architecture*, Éd. Vincent et Fréal, Paris, 1958, p. 112.

68   Hans-Georg Gadamer, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

69   Cf. Roland Doron and Françoise Parot (dir.), *Dicţionar de psihologie*, Humanitas, Bucureşti, 1991.

70   The significations attributed to forms in the process of perception can be distributed on three levels corresponding to the analogous levels of experience: general or natural significations (suggestions of weight, movement and sensorial qualities of materials), related to our bodily experiences and common to all men as biological individuals; conventional or symbolic significations, shared by the members of a cultural group and sanctioned by use; and individual significations, due to the personal experience of each man. Cf. also ThomasThiis-Evensen, *Archetypes in Architecture*, Oxford University Press, Oxford and Norwegian University Press, Oslo, 1987.

71   The problem of the relative situation of ornament, aesthetic expression and art constitutes the topic for a separate discussion. Without attempting to define rigorously art or aesthetic attitude, my arguments start from the premise that the domain of the "aesthetic" is much broader than art and includes it, but is distinct from the domain of ornament, though having a large zone in common. Ornament is not a mere aesthetic category, it tends rather towards a wider anthropological dimension, comprising social, cultural, symbolic, normative, cognitive and pragmatic aspects.

72   Cf. *Ornament and abstraction*, catalogue and explicative notes of the exhibition, Beyeler Foundation, Riehen, June 10 – October 7, 2001.

73   Cf. Emmanuel Kant, "Critique de la faculté de juger", I, §14, *op. cit.*, p. 983, 986.

74   Alison Cole, "The perception of beauty in landscape in the quattrocento", in Francis Ames-Lewis and Mary Rogers (eds), *op.cit.*, p. 31.

75   *Ibid.*, p. 30.

76   Cf. *ibid.*, p. 150-155. The *figura serpentinata* is defined as "a calculated construction of the movement of the body to obtain the maximum of torsion in the minimum of space", p. 150.

77   Cf. Alina Payne, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

78   Ernst Gombrich, "The Priority of Pattern", in *The Listener,* 1 March 1959, p. 311.

79   "…a well-maintained or a well-adorned temple is obviously the greatest and most important ornament of a city; for the gods surely take up their abode in the temple." Leon Battista Alberti, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

80 James Trilling, *op. cit.*, p. 12.
81 Cf. Rudolf Arnheim, *op. cit.*, p. 74.
82 Alberti had the intuition of the zooming perspectives in the analysis of ornament. On the scale of the territory, it consists in works of landscaping or transforming the site: sculpting rocks (e.g. the Mount Athos as an effigy of Alexander), creating artificial islands or canals, planting trees, erecting monuments or exploiting the natural attractions (promontories, grottoes, springs) (VI, 4, pp. 160-161). On the urban scale, "The principal ornament to any city lies in the siting, layout, composition, and arrangement of its roads, squares and individual works"(VII, 1, p. 191) and in an appropriate distribution of the zones and facilities; also every public building (temple, triumphal arch, theatre, circus, port) is actually an ornament for the city, as well as the porticoes, statues or obelisks. On the scale of the building and of any object, the "chief" ornament is a convenient partition (VI, 5, p. 163), which acts as a principle of composition. However, in the whole art of building the column remains undoubtedly the principal ornament, which has grace and confers dignity (VI, 13, pp. 183-4), but the openings (VI, 12 p. 180) and, for the wall and the roof, the revetment (VI, 5, p. 164) also bring great delight to the work.
83 Rudolf Arnheim, *op. cit.*, p. 252.
84 Baldine Saint Girons, "Le petit cercle de la paix", in Didier Laroque, *op. cit.*, p. XVIII.
85 Martin Heidegger, "Art and Space", in Neil Leach (ed.), *op. cit.*
86 Cf. n. 5 above.
87 Jacques Derrida, *La vérité en peinture*, Éd. Flammarion, 1978, p. 69.
88 An art that "is the object of a strictly lateral interest on the part of the spectator", unlike a major art which "points openly and self-reflexively to itself". Gianni Vattimo, "Ornament/Monument", in Neil Leach (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 158.
89 *Ibid.*, pp. 159-160.
90 Cf. Gérard Raulet, "Stratégies consensuelles et esthétique postmoderne", in Michel Collomb and Gérard Raulet (dir.), *op. cit.*, p. 206.
91 St. Augustine, *Concerning the City of God against the Pagans,* trans., London, 1972, pp. 694-695.

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DOGMA, CANON, TRADITION – RESOURCES OF CONTEMPORARY SACRED ARCHITECTURE

1. THE CRISIS

1.1. A GENERAL VIEW OF ECCLESIASTICAL SPACE

If Christian religious architecture is currently in crisis, then one of the main issues in this crisis touches upon the categories of people involved in its use and in its making: the believers, as direct users, the clergy, both as beneficiaries and users, and the architects, as authors and mediators of the discourse. From the believers' point of view, the architecture of the church appears to come second place to the issues that are to them of real importance, such as its material presence and the proximity of a priest often called on to perform various "services"; their needs are basically material and rarely spiritual. From the point of view of the clergy, a "good church" must conform to functional needs and to models, most of which are arbitrarily selected, though in the end regarded as true archetypes.[1] From the architects' point of view the church is an architectural program that needs to be renewed, even if the reference points do not appear clearly.

We can thus note the various perspectives of the categories involved. What appears as a difficulty to one is the immutable reference point for another. As for the rest, the issue is simply of no interest to them. For instance, the formal inertias expressed in church architecture over the last 200 years have been criticized by some architects, yet they represent the only valid models for the majority of the clergy, while laity does not seem to show any interest in the problem. On the other hand, the relation between tradition and innovation is still a latent source of conflict between architects and the clergy.

The connection of man to the sacred in general, and to the Church in particular has been undergoing such a change that ecclesiastical architecture itself became a variable, and this led to very personal representations of what could be considered the ideal place of worship. Beyond the confessional restrictions there are certain elements that have immediate influence on the individual's options (the ethnic group, the geographic region, the cultural background and the proximity to the place of origin). Thus, the place of worship has now become a very personal and individual matter. That notwithstanding, we cannot blame a very specific type of architecture for not conforming with high ideals as long as it fulfils certain tasks. On Easter and Christmas and sometimes even at Sunday services, people attend church, the sacraments performed in each church are valid, carpeting maintains warmth, electric candles give off no smoke and the plastic flowers never wither. Why should we talk of the holiness of the Church Fathers when the priest has a price list for the services performed? Why should we make reference to icons that most people will never see when images of Jesus playfully winking offer proof of a humanity no Ecumenical Council could explain better? Why should we look for revealed architectural models when a postcard bearing "Greetings from Suceava"[2] is much more efficient in showing what a church should look like than is a vision of a 4th century saint? The answers to all these questions rely on the fact that the church is not just the gathering place of believers (though it is also *domus ecclesiae*), but also the house of God and that there are rules and symbols to its architecture that must be known.

One aspect of religious architecture concerns the dilemma of the architects caught between firm clerical opinions, the secularization of society, and the presumptions of their own profession. A lack of communication with the clergy and the absence of mutual confidence normally introduce tension to any potential dialogue.

1.2. ARCHITECTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON ECCLESIASTICAL SPACE

Most architects work with different definitions that are not always explicit and that are normally expressed in terms of two main conceptual options: the functional and the formal. They come across one another both in theory and practice.

1.2.1. "THE FUNCTIONAL" PERSPECTIVE

In the functional perspective, the distinction between *domus dei* and *domus ecclesiae* shifts the emphasis from "the house of God" to "the house of man". "The first church" is considered to be "the large upper room",[3] where the Christians gathered to celebrate the Last Supper, as the house of God cannot be built by human hands. Based on some interpretations of the Bible,[4] and on the Christian world of the early centuries,[5] this scission has some immediate consequences for architecture: on the one hand, it leads to the annulment of all hierarchies of interior spaces of the church, while on the other hand it implies the loss of sacred meaning. "The multifunctional churches" of the 20th century are hall-type spaces (photo 1), with no precise destination, as fit for concerts, conferences and meetings as for religious services. In the Middle Ages churches also performed several functions; however, most human activity was placed under the sign of the Sacred. Today, the same building might shelter the town hall, while at the same time being a place sometimes used as a church,[6] and this is not because civil power has submitted to religious power, but because the profane has invaded the territory of the sacred.

It is common practice to define the church as the sum of the functions it covers. Thus, it becomes "a praying machine" where people, away from their "living machine", sometimes take refuge. Architect Barry Byrne's statements are relevant to this attitude. In 1929 he was explaining the building principles for a church as follows: *The way of architecture is from the ground up; from the general to the particular. Function is first; building second. In a Catholic church, then, what are the functions? First, the altar. It is primary. The church building exists to house it, the celebrants at it and the people who come before it. The building structure surrounds these with walls, covers them with the span of a roof. This is a church. […] The modern church is for the people who build it and of the day that produces it. It fulfils the functions and the use of its structures, it is a church in the truest sense of that word.*[7] An extreme position was stated by Philippe Bruneau (former Director of Centre d'Archéologie moderne et contemporaine, Université de Paris-Sorbonne) in an article published in *Techniques&Architecture* review.[8] In his opinion ecclesiastical space houses parts of everyday human activity: sleeping, eating (the *Eucharistic snack*), entertainment (the religious service as theatre show), education (through books and images), hygiene (the baptistery), shopping (books,

booklets and reviews displayed to the visitor); the church is nothing more than the "flat" where the believers gather together.

In conclusion, sooner or later a functionalist approach will lead to the secularization of the Church as institution and, in consequence, to the secularization of the place of worship, and, therefore, references will mostly be in terms of quantities: sizes, dimensions, capacity, and surfaces.

1.2.2. "THE FORMAL" PERSPECTIVE

Formal approaches can have two types of results: either a sterile mimesis, or a funny invention. Orthodox space refers to so-called models, often generated by images altered by the memory of a presumed tradition: walls decorated with niches, useless rosettes or many high towers. To collate a type of church from Maramureș with a residential district of Bucharest does not provide the answer to preserving tradition, nor is it a potential start for a renewal of this tradition, and the economic argument is unconvincing since the interior decoration is ostentatious, quality being replaced by quantity.

The historicist revivals that nourished the fantasies of the architects are tributary to the same formalist discourse and only generate copies. A different type of approach might exploit formally answers to questions such as: *Have you ever thought what it would be like to live inside a giant sapphire?*[9] The result was The First Presbyterian Church (Connecticut), built in 1958 by Wallace Harrison – a transparent building whose interior resembles a great tent with walls of jewels. Other attempts, despite their intentions, did not surpass the same formalist level: the star–church (architect Otto Bartning, 1922) or a Christian tower of Babel (architect Dominikus Böhm, 1923).

1.3. PARADOXES

In a relative world and a secularized Church, religious architecture sometimes finds itself in unusual situations.

1.3.1. MUSEUM-CHURCHES can inspire profane pilgrimages and the esthetic emotion becomes a substitute for religious experience. It is hard to say whether Matisse's Vence Chapel is appreciated as a place of worship or as a space for the display of precious stained-glass windows.

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Similarly, visitors to Le Corbusier's Ronchamp Chapel (initially conceived as "the" total work of art) include both Christian believers and art lovers (and there is no intention of drawing a border between these two groups). Previously churches were known by the saint they were dedicated to. Today they unofficially receive the name of the architect. The diversity in approaches is due to the various languages practiced by architects, rather than to different interpretations of faith, dogma or religious tradition. Thus, when Steven Holl designs a Jesuit chapel for a University in Seattle, his religious knowledge is less important than the orchestration of the sky domes oriented towards the cardinal points; when architects Bernardo Fort Brescia and Laurinda Spear are in charge of the design of a new church in Miami, we learn more about their playful architectural language than about the religious *habitus* of the Hispanics in Florida; if Eliado Dieste builds three new churches in Alcala diocese, then the matter of utmost interest is the adjustment of his ceramic structures to technological constraints, rather than the real liturgical needs due to the demographic boom in Corredor del Henares.[10]

1.3.2. DISNEYLAND CHURCHES. Alain Besançon once criticized the state of French contemporary sacred art[11] by placing it between two poles: that of being too abstract for the ordinary Christian, and that of being excessively popular. The latter was the result of representations of the Virgin Mary that resembled Barbie dolls or Snow White, and in order to be politically correct, they at times borrow Asian or African features…

The Orthodox Church has the option of moving closer to the believers at any cost, and this is not only just a metaphor. It may seem strange that a priest was able to build up a small business inside the mortuary chapel next to his church, whose profit came from selling cigarettes and chocolate.[12] It may also seem strange to sell (and buy) phosphorescent icons from markets in the very heart of the city. Now plastic flowers and electrified crosses are quite fashionable in many a church, and, in a similar vain, I recently discovered big golden clocks placed proudly on the iconostasis or in one of the apses of some churches. They must be measuring the time left to the Last Judgment…

1.3.3. FAST-FOOD CHURCHES. If there are drive-in cinemas and drive-in MacDonald's, then we can hardly argue with the idea of the drive-in church if the services performed there bring full satisfaction to

the clients! In the 1960s, the architect Richard Neutra built the first drive-in church in Garden Grove, California, while his wedding chapels in Las Vegas are highly acclaimed and have become one of the main attractions of the city. Efficiency and promptness makes everyone happy!

One conclusion is that we are faced today with at least three levels of perception of a church: as direct presence in peoples' lives (the Church), as part of a constructed tissue that influences and is influenced by its environment, and as architectural object. The link between these conditions is religion, as *religious architecture is not a matter of architecture, but a matter of religion.*[13] We shall focus our interest in the following on the last two mentioned aspects.

2. THE SITE

2.1. CENTRAL ORGANISATION VS. LINEAR ORGANIZATION

Locating a site for a church is a difficult task in the absence of any vision that might identify beyond any doubt the correct place to build a sanctuary. It is hard to discover the potential a particular location might have to offer something different from the rest of the territory since the web of consecrated spaces no longer organizes towns, and sites for a church are established according to the same criteria as for supermarkets. The superposition of layers succeeding each other on the same site (even under different forms) certifies the existence of a distinct place and its temporal continuity. On the other hand, ritual consecration cuts out a piece of the profane territory, resulting in a sacred space as "efficient" as the revealed space.

A less ordinary choice was the site for one of the two orthodox churches in Barcelona, which was placed in the inner court of a housing unit. The configuration of this site contains a particular message: placed in the heart of a bigger house, safe from external touch, the church is the Centre itself of the community, both physically and spiritually. *Axis Mundi* is close to everyone.

In a seemingly similar example, in the Bucharest of the 1980s, some churches were moved from their original locations to the precincts of newly built communist apartment blocks. The similarities stop here, however, as there are some essential qualitative differences. In the case

of the church in Barcelona, the church was meant to be put there, in a place previously consecrated; in Bucharest, the locations were violently imposed by means of negation of the original site**.** The difference can be concisely defined: protection versus suppression.

Every sanctuary is placed in the centre of the world. The tradition of the temple situated in the centre of the town or village can no longer be followed in the absence of the entity that the centre is supposed to organize, i.e. the congregation. The town plans of old Bucharest show how the parishes were organized around the churches.[14] Razing of the churches also meant the canceling of the physical territories they organized. The attempt to build new apartment blocks without any form of center was bound to fail.

In the last decade, a huge number of churches have been built. Now, more important than their centrality, is their need to be visible: placed mainly on the side of streets, the new churches state their presence, though they can hardly organize their neighborhoods (photo 2)**.** The need for isolation, together with the need for visibility, means that the newly built churches of the Russian Old Believers (who were persecuted until recently) are placed not inside, but outside the villages. Another culture and another reading code show that a church outside an English town or village, for example, may have two meanings: either the settlement has been moved or the church has been placed on a pre-Christian site.[15]

2.2. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT - BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The two churches (Church of the Light and Church on the Water) by the Japanese architect Tadao Ando are consequences of the configuration of the sites. The first site is urban, strictly bound by two streets, which has immediate influences on architecture: the exterior of the church is blind and the only opening of the nave is a cross-shaped cutting (photo 3). The second site is a natural site and the architect followed all the steps of a consecration ritual: a continuous wall marks the boundaries and cuts the sacred space out of the profane territory. Access is gained beneath a three-dimensional cross and the way leads through a dark tunnel to the nave, which is spectacularly opened to nature by a wall entirely of glass. The view is focused on a cross, which was placed outside, on an artificial pond (photo 4). Both interventions are rather theatrical and they are meant to guide the visitors from their ordinary space to another space one would be at pains to define as mystical, religious, spiritual or simply different.

Mark Rothko's chapel at the University of St. Thomas, Houston, makes two statements: as an architectural object, it correlates the space and the works displayed in a very particular way; as an element of the urban tissue, it is also part of an experiment: *The University has bought up lots of early twentieth-century bungalows on the surrounding streets which are then painted the same grey all over, as if made from a special material or carved from single blocks. The whole enterprise is a reinterpretation of the suburb as a single work of art, and like a Mondrian it is asymmetric in detail but rigorous underneath.*[16]

2.3. SITE AND MONUMENTAL SCALE

The scale of a church often symbolizes the power of an institution (the Church, the State, and the City). In the 19th century, the Cathedral of Christ the Savior in Moscow was meant to be at the same time a temple, a monument and a national museum. After two architectural competitions and successive changes in architects and styles, the opening of this church designed for 15,000 people was planned to coincide with the coronation of Alexander the 3rd in 1883. After 1917, the new communist regime applied the then latest method of destruction - that was dynamite - to erase all trace of the cathedral. Simultaneously, they proceeded to erase its memory. Beginning in 1922, four competitions for the never to be built Palace of Labor were held for the same site, with the final solution suggesting a building two and a half times higher than the original cathedral. Though commenced in 1937, building was abandoned in 1942, and in 1960 a swimming pool was built on the same site. The building of a new cathedral that started after 1990 is now doing the work of repairing the tragedy of the sacred-profane, full-empty, presence-absence confusion. *How could they ever repent for the "crime" they committed? Scale seemed to be the only answer – an enormous building to repent for an enormous crime.*[17] For over two hundred years this site continued to be a battlefield for ideas, the territory of the powers that be, be that the Church, the monarchy, the communist regime or the post communist state. Its consecration, its profanation and its exorcism become key elements in building new identities.

At the beginning of the 21st century discussion of the Patriarchal Cathedral in Bucharest was re-ignited and a competition was staged to establish a winning project. For now, we shall focus on the issue of the site. In 1999, the first competition took place for a central site situated in

Piața Unirii, the lowest point of the city and as such not appropriate for the location of the most important sanctuary of the nation. Though vehemently objected to by the architects, the site seemed to have been irrevocably consecrated by the presence of Pope Paul II who personally laid a cross at that location. The results of this first competition were irrelevant and never taken into consideration. Three years later, in 2002, another competition was held, this time for a different site. The newly proposed site faced Casa Poporului (House of the People), now known as Palatul Parlamentului (Palace of Parliament), on the Unirii Boulevard that leads to Piața Alba Iulia. The future cathedral will have an impressive perspective. Controversy still separates the architects, but the decision for this site seems to be final.[18] From an urban point of view, the configuration of the site and its neighborhoods asks for monumental scale, however the pedestrian paths and connecting roadways present something of a problem. On the other hand, the spiritual potential of the place can hardly be "measured". There is no question of preserving the sacredness of the space, as there was no previous sanctuary known at that location, thus nothing validates this precise option. Nonetheless, the "palimpsest place" is not the only possible choice for the site of a new church. Therefore, the question still stands and only the architectural object itself will confirm the legitimacy of the place.

3. THE OBJECT

Views that regard the church as an architectural object are various. Two categories of influences generate differences stemming on the one hand from the effects of the physical and cultural background (different evolutions of societies and communities, geographical space, historical moment, technologies), and, on the other hand, from specific dogmatic and liturgical constraints. Beyond some particular positions, there are certain convergent discourses, at least from a theoretical point of view. But they are shaped in architectural language in quite different manners.

3.1. CONVERGENT THEORETICAL DISCOURSES

3.1.1. BACK TO THE ORIGIN

Protestantism, in ignoring the Holy Tradition and the Sacraments,[19] considers the Bible the unique source of the revealed truth and the Word

the only means of spreading it. The consequences for sacred space result from the privilege accorded to the act of listening that replaces the act of seeing – the image is a potentially idolatrous object. Inside the temple, the centre of the space is the place where the Bible is read and the sermon pronounced. The Eucharistic table replaces the altar and is also the place of the Bible. There are no hierarchies of interior spaces. Great austerity and a lack of decoration are significant features. The temporal reference point is that of the Last Supper.

One of the landmarks of Roman Catholicism is the gothic style. Unfortunately, it was taken over and reworked, mainly formally, by various *revivals* that flourished in particular during Romanticism. Meanwhile, Orthodoxy leans upon so-called models, dating mostly from the 18th or 19th centuries, despite the support found in the theology of the ancient Church Fathers, and constantly ignores the rich architectural resources of the first Christian millennium.

Thus, despite the seemingly common discourse of going back to the origin, none of these denominations is looking towards a potential model offered by the Undivided Church. It is there that the principles of catholicity that all claim to express are to be found, and could be taken as a starting point. As a meeting point for the transcendental world and the world of the senses, the church will rely on a final reality. If this reality is unique, then its representations will naturally be fundamentally similar. The resemblance of all faces of all saints in all icons is not about stereotypes, but about an archetype that they all mirror: the portrait of Christ. In architecture, the first Christian millennium shows that sanctuaries are generated by reference to the same model, which is reflected in various ways, without, however, leading to identities because similar elements are associated with a great variety of solutions.

A few churches built in the same period (9th century) show that their "common looks" cannot be explained by typologies (which are different), nor by their attachment to geographic regions (which are also different – Spain, France, Byzantium). The complex of churches in Terrassa, Spain (Santa Maria, San Miguel and San Pedro), was built between the 4th and 9th centuries in the former Egara diocese (photo 5). The church in Germigny-des-Près, Loiret, France (806), belongs to a particular typology – that of the tripartite western chevet (photo 6). The Church of the Dormition, Skripou, Boetia (874), belongs to the domed Greek cross plan typology, which is typical of Byzantine architecture of the Middle Period (photo 7).

3.1.2. SIMPLICITY

In the case of the Catholic Church, the appeal to simplicity and minimalism coincides with the Modern Movement in architecture that promotes sobriety and austerity. In the Catholic world, one of the purposes of the Liturgical Movement and later of the Vatican II Council was to convert the believer from a passive observer to an active participant in the Liturgy. Physical barriers that used to impose a hierarchy on the interior spaces of a church were abolished, priests turned their faces towards the believers, and wood replaced stone for the altar table in a return to the symbolism of the Last Supper. A consequence of the need for identical visibility and acoustics for everybody was the reduction of the dimensions of the sanctuary. The purpose of architecture was to encourage a sense of community, and this was also one of the aims of the Modern Movement. In 1951, English architects Alison and Peter Smithson proposed a design for the Coventry Cathedral competition, writing in the report that accompanied their entry that *the building of this cathedral will finally explode the fallacy that Modern Architecture is incapable of expressing abstract ideas and will prove that only Modern Architecture is capable of creating a symbol of the dogmatic truths of the Christian faith.*[20] Practice, however, does not always show the difference between the simple and the simplistic, between austerity of forms and poverty of message. (The opposite of this, which has almost the same consequences, is the excess of familiarity, the agglomeration of small colored objects that transform the church into a useless overcharged vestibule of eternity. To bring the Church closer to people does not mean degrading it. Fortunately, and practice confirms this, there are ways to bring people into the church precisely because they are looking for another, maybe not always conceptualized, but nonetheless present dimension, and not for a sense of familiarity that might come from embroidered towels, plastic flowers and photocopied icons.)

While the Protestants discouraged both abstract and figurative art, the Catholic world connected to the modern movements in art and architecture of the 1950s. In France, Père Couturier gathered around the Church famous artists of the time who contributed to the completion of the churches of Assy, Vence, Audincourt, Ronchamp and La Tourette. Unfortunately, these buildings are not able to overcome their "artistic condition", as they are known first of all as monuments of architecture or as art galleries and only secondly as places of worship and devotion. In fact, Le Corbusier

himself admitted to his intention of conceiving the Ronchamp Chapel as a total work of art in which image and sound worked together. For the design of Vence Chapel (photo 8), there was constant and close collaboration between Henri Matisse and Père Couturier and besides the object itself, an impressive book was left behind that was like a diary of the birth of a building.[21] In another famous example, this time with the Rothko Chapel in Houston, one of the purposes of building the chapel was to accomplish *the dream of Mark Rothko that his paintings should be seen alone where they can expand to fill the viewer's whole visual field.*[22]

The Church should endeavor to constantly encourage artists to come closer to sacred art as its space should not be conceived as a museum, nor guided only by the goodwill and enthusiasm of the parishioners. As first steps towards a desired conciliation between clergy and artists and architects, direct dialogue, common language and mutual confidence in each other's abilities would be very helpful.

3.1.3. THE SPECIFIC DIFFERENCE

Despite their compatibility, discourses on the simplicity of a church and the "specific difference" produce, paradoxically, opposite results. On the one hand, churches come to identify themselves with their surroundings for the sake of simplicity, completely ignoring the specific difference in comparison with the contiguous buildings. On the other hand, in the name of freedom from dogmatic constraints, something much too different arises. This latter case is often the result of exclusively formal inventions, far away not only from *domus dei*, but from any decent appearance of the *domus ecclesiae.* Meanwhile, Christian denominations seem to agree on the importance of the particularity of religious architecture as compared to lay architecture. *The exterior of a church should not attempt to imitate contemporary secular buildings either in its proportions, its structure or its decoration. Nor should it try to catch the attention of the passer-by with the architectural equivalent of the cries of the marketplace. The aim should instead be to announce in a manner which is both dignified and eloquent the totally different nature of what lies within the church – totally different because of its belonging to another world – and yet at the same time to allow the building to take its place harmoniously within its surroundings.*[23]

Non-theological works confirm the demand for a different approach to ecclesiastical architecture: *Since religions are concerned with reality*

… the church building must strike the notes of honesty and authenticity in design and materials. Against the disorder of the world it must show coherence; against worldly strife and confusion, it must be a place of peacefulness and rest; to strident and disruptive affluence it must present the challenge of simplicity and austerity.[24]

A case in point is to be found in Orthodox space in the latest book[25] by the Romanian icon painter Sorin Dumitrescu. One of the main topics in this book deals precisely with the issue of the church as "something else", as "another" realm that is not necessarily better or prettier, but "different" and consequently subordinated to other rules and orders. Inside a church we should identify *another* beauty, *another* wealth and *another* intelligence, unrelated to the outside world.

3.1.4. AN ECUMENICAL SPACE?

Practice shows us that there is normally no space left to cover the distances between us, even if those things that bring us together seem more significant than those that separate us. Contemporary ecumenism has not yet found a significant architectural discourse, though plans are afoot. By way of example, we can take the Abraham Centre (photo 9) built in Barcelona by the Catalan architect Agustí Mateos for the Olympic Games in 1992. The building was planned for use by believers of all religions and the fish was chosen as the symbol to express this ecumenism. However, the refined silhouette, the sensual curves and the bright material - all orchestrated in an elegant architectural object - do not compose a church. This led to tension between the architect and the priest, who placed a cross on the entrance façade, ignoring the architect's concern for the purity of his work.

Another example is the church built in 1992 at Roubaix by French architects Olivier Bonte and Philippe Escudié (photo 10). This space was designed with no specific denomination(s) in mind and its ecumenism is expressed by an interior tree-pillar that sprouts twelve branches above. The return to the symbol of the Tree of Life can be read on several levels (the Centre of the world, the *Axis Mundi*, the connection of the Old and the New Testaments, the unity of faith etc.), but it does not guarantee the sacredness of the space. Thus, due to an absence of particular signs, no denomination that used it has actually appropriated this architecture.

It is hard to say what an ecumenical church ought to look like or, indeed, if such a church is possible. The still standing churches of the

first millennium offer a potential direction to follow because they emphasize precisely those features that are common to all Christian denominations. Nevertheless, it is now hard to detect these identical roots since the differences appear to be decisive. However, despite these circumstances, architecture might still offer some of the tools required for the comprehension of theological tradition and liturgical meaning.

3.2. DIFFERENCES

Besides the proximity of Christian denominations, every specific place of worship is governed by dogmatic and liturgical differences and, as a result, the distinct trajectories followed by the Christian denominations find their reflection also in religious architecture.

3.2.1. PROTESTANTISM

The Protestant contribution is less present in the area of the image, and the architecture of the temple, which has its roots in Catholic architecture, is no longer a sacred space, but a place where the believers simply gather; the true holiness and the true prayer are to be found inside each individual, while exterior expressions of faith are less important. One of the main elements of dogma that separates Protestants from Catholics and Orthodox is that in Protestantism the true Church is invisible, it is the community of saints where the Gospel is studied and the Sacraments cared for. The architecture of a Protestant temple usually contains no distinctive features from the surrounding buildings. Hence, an Evangelical church from Barcelona is aligned with the street, and the *graffiti* that "decorate" its façade are the same as those of its neighbors (photo 11). The design of the MVRDV team of a church in Holland draws attention to itself because of a cross placed at the entrance to the church, whose horizontal arm "shelters" an electronic thermometer (photo 12)**.**

3.2.2. CATHOLICISM

In the Catholic world, Vatican II suggested a series of principles of liturgical reform and renewal with a direct impact on architecture. From that moment on certain general issues govern the church building: the physical dimensions of liturgical space are reduced in order to establish a closer relationship between clergy and lay people, and the nave, as

the main space where believers gather, should afford equal access to the altar. This latter is the highest point of the space, while the pulpit should be positioned so as to spontaneously focus the attention of the believers.[26]

The Catholic Church seems to allow great freedom to the artists precisely because no explicit references regarding the physical form are made. The absence of recommendations regarding hierarchies of spaces will generally lead to a hall-church typology in which the unique interior space of the nave is "dressed" in various exterior shapes and materials.

3.2.3. ORTHODOXY

In Orthodoxy, the religion of the architect can still be considered decisive to his ability to design a place of worship. The Orthodox Church generally prefers an architect at least officially belonging to the Orthodox faith. The attitude of the Catholic Church is different. Six well-known architects[27] were invited to enter the competition for the symbolic Church of the Year 2000 in Rome. No experience of ecclesiastical design was requested, nor was the architects' faith considered relevant (in fact, three of those selected were of Jewish background). However, the absence of an open competition afforded the Vicariate of Rome the "cover" of a famous name as a guarantee for quality, though the religion of the architect was not one of the selection criteria.[28] Architect Richard Meier won the competition (photo 13).

Romania has undergone changes in the last decade. The enthusiasm of the early 1990s was not strengthened through a more sustained theoretical reflection.[29] The best way in practice to discover new approaches in Romania lies with the architectural competition, as it does all over the world. In Romania, this practice was abandoned after several enthusiastic years. This was in part due to the fact that winning entries were never built or, worse still, were replaced by other designs, more convenient for the client.[30] Consequently, the credibility of the idea has diminished, as has the number of competitions accordingly.

A useful comparison can be made of two competitions held within twelve years of each other, i.e. the Orthodox Cathedral in Suceava (1990) and the Patriarchal Cathedral in Bucharest (2002). Both competitions had two stages. In Suceava, six entries were selected for final judgment, while in Bucharest, three designs entered the final stage. The remarks of the juries and the debates that then took place are important because

they afford access to some of the rare official statements by the Orthodox Church regarding religious architecture.

In Suceava, the main remarks of the jury at the end of the first stage indicated that: 1. The functionality of a place of worship is liturgical and catechetical and is represented by the main interior space. 2. Sacred architecture must express the two spiritual messages: that of being the House of God and that of being the Gate to Heaven. The plan of the nave symbolizes the Ark of Noah, but the cross plan may also be used. The winning entry[31] (photo 14) is a delirious mixture of theological ignorance and architectural clumsiness, which, surprisingly, was appreciated by both clergy and architects for its so-called orchestration of functions, for the preserving of the interior atmosphere and for the quality of the volumes. The ridiculous and useless scaffolding that was to crown the building was nothing less than the symbol of the scales of Jacob, purporting to carry the idea of the scales of virtues and of spiritual ascent. The other designs swing between a stiff traditionalist mimesis (photo 15) and a provincial modernity (photo 16).

In the case of the Bucharest competition, some explanation is required before proceeding to any comments: 1. The 2002 competition was preceded by another competition in 1999, the main difference being the change of the proposed site from Piața Unirii to the Alba Iulia Boulevard. 2. The competition brief suggested a basilical plan typology; however, the central plan typology should not have been excluded since there still exist a remarkable number of (mainly Byzantine) churches that owe their monumentality precisely to the configuration of the plan. 3. The short length of the first stage of the competition (less than three months) for a design of huge complexity discouraged many talented architects from participating. In the end the final number of entries was eighteen, out of a total of eighty application forms that were requested. We shall abstain here from questioning the very opportunity of such a building: since the decision to build it is final, the result is now far more important than endless debate around some of the initial issues.

The designs adhere to three approaches and consequently to three categories of architectural language. They are: a historicist-eclectic one (photo 17), a so-called modern, but un-orthodox one (photo 18), and one that attempts to harmonize both dogmatic and architectural constraints. Fortunately, the first two prizes were chosen from amongst the very few proposals belonging in the last category. The first prize, won by architect Augustin Ioan (photo 19), plays on two effects: the material used would

be translucent rock that filters light, and the sliding entrance gates would be decorated entirely by two monumental icons. The volumes would be minimalist, purged of any residual ornamental elements. The second prize, won by architect Florin Biciușcă[32] (photo 20), was for a design based on the intelligent orchestration of basic volumes that are defined by specific materials and colors. The volumes are articulated so as to reduce the huge dimensions and achieve a human scale. The third prize, won by architect Nicolae Vlădescu (photo 21), illustrates historicist nostalgias and seems to be the unfortunate twin of Casa Poporului (the House of the People), placed on the opposite side of the boulevard. At the end of the second stage, the winning entry was that of architect Augustin Ioan.

Beyond the immediate impact of the first prize, this competition represents a crucial moment in contemporary Romanian religious architecture. The choice of the two first entries (selected by a jury including both architects and representatives of the clergy) indicates the official intention of the Church to promote an ecclesiastical architecture that finally interrupts the tiresome circle of formalist inertias of the last two hundred years. The existence of such a precedent should have a decisive influence on future religious architecture because the modernity of these designs is nothing else than another (contemporary) face of church building tradition.[33]

At this point it is important to examine the issue surrounding the potential models to be taken into account in order to avoid dangerous deviations from Christian dogma, as well as a "typifying" in sterile architectural forms.

4. THE MODEL

4.1. USE OF THE MODEL

The meaning of the term "model" is complex. It can mean: archetype, standard, example, rule, essential representation of a process or system, structure of values, criteria or principles. Furthermore, the "model of a sacred space" will be considered as a web of reference points, not necessarily architectural objects, which are able to generate various structured forms and to ensure permanent contact with the reality beyond the sensitive world.

Tradition and innovation seem to be bound to the place of worship. Apparently they deny each other, both in the East, which is never tired of reiterating the same meaningless shapes, and in the West, which is always ready to catch the challenging shift.

There is enough room for both tradition and innovation in sacred architecture. The conflict between restraining tradition and liberating creativity is a false dispute. To hide a gift, meaning to annul potential growth, is as useless and dangerous as to ignore it, by taking upon oneself an *ex nihilo* creation. To create out of nothing is no longer possible since the world has already been created, but one can work to continue this genesis. Every form of sacred art tries to go beyond appearances and to reveal, even if only in part, the essence of the object. The model is placed between tradition and innovation. Sacred architecture makes no exception.

The model will be sought inside the Church and the place of worship will be different from the outer space. Beyond objective influences that cannot be neglected, an implicit model governs the place of worship, coming from the dogma and rituals of each denomination. This is what the Temple is supposed to "translate" from the invisible space of utterance to the material space of building.

4.2. THE BIBLICAL MODEL

When we suggest the Temple of Jerusalem as a model for a church, our intention is not to recommend a rebuilding of this sanctuary. Throughout history, architecture has been confronted by a number of similar attempts,[34] down to proposing it as a school exercise to students. In my opinion, to take the biblical Temple as a model for the ecclesiastical space means to examine the spatial configurations and their articulations, as they appear in written descriptions. At the same time, one might find an alternative to the current determinist position that places the origin of the Christian church exclusively in the Roman basilica.[35] There are, in fact, two sides to this issue: on the one hand, there is the origin of the church, while on the other, there is the model it refers to. The history of architecture never mentions the Temple of Jerusalem as a crucial moment and the model is usually treated almost exclusively in terms of material origins, sources and influences. The object-model is no doubt a "face" of the "model", in certain circumstances we shall refer to later.

The sanctuaries of the Old Testament (the Ark of the Covenant, the Temple of Solomon) have their origins in revelations, where God Himself offers the model to the builder. The New Testament does not seem to refer explicitly to a certain type of sacred space. Moreover, the gathering of believers seems to be possible anywhere, inside or outside the city, and not in a sacred space. What was later to become the church apparently had quite a different origin and that was to change, mostly within Protestantism, the view on the sacred space.[36] Considered to be the first church, "the upper room" seems to be only the place where the Christians gathered to celebrate the Last Supper because the house of God cannot be built by human hands: *God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands.*[37] However, a church goes beyond physical space and belongs also to a transcendental level; its nature is double - both material and spiritual. And if *the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands*[38] this is not the refusal of material buildings, but rather the call for sources and resources other than human.

It is known that the Old Testament is the pre-figuration of the New, that there are symmetries and analogies between the two, and architecture is no doubt also present in the New Testament. The Temple of Solomon appears under the name of "the first covenant" and its description is summarized in Hebrews 9:1-8: *Then indeed the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and earthly sanctuary. For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lamp stand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary. And behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant. And above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services. But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance. The Holy Spirit indicated this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing.*

The validity of the model of the Temple as a sacred space is not under question, its essential elements are simply being summarized and the

origin, the model and the source of the place of worship are mentioned, together with the fundamental presence that makes the essential difference between Old Law and New Law, i.e. Christ: *Not with blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once and for all, having obtained eternal redemption.*[39] As long as Christ is present among people He does not need a temple because He *is* the temple. It is important to notice that the description of the model of the temple comes after His death and resurrection, in other words, after His physical presence on earth. In the same way, the city of the end of time, the New Jerusalem, is the true house of God, which has no temple inside because *the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.*[40]

Thus it is appropriate to speak about the house of God on earth during the time of Jesus' *symbolic* presence among man, which is *before* the birth of Christ and *after* resurrection. There is an obvious similarity between things on earth and things in Heaven, the former being the projection of the latter: *For Christ has not entered the holy place made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.*[41] Finally, inside the celestial City, the Temple and the Most Holy Place coincide with *the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb.*[42] Moreover, the Old Law and the New Law are explained in architectural terms: *By faith [Abraham] dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; For he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*[43] The course of man from the fall from Heaven to the gates of celestial Jerusalem is nothing other than wandering through the world since leaving the garden till entering the City – an architectural place of outer order, in harmony with the peace inside.

4.3. THE DOGMA

How can we establish a relationship between Christian dogma and the place of worship, in particular between Orthodox dogma and the church?

Dogma is an immutable truth, revealed by God, formulated thereafter by the Church, and preached to Christians for redemption. Knowledge that was not previously revealed cannot become dogma; neither can revealed knowledge become dogma if not defined by the Church as such. In this respect, the place of worship is canonically defined and not

dogmatic, though the question of the influence of dogma on ecclesiastical architecture still stands. I will now dare to comment on a few issues.

The Church is the extension of Christ in people, the Heavenly Jerusalem to be revealed at the end of time. The physical space that embraces the believers is also a church and both are "receptacles" where the Holy Trinity is present. If the relationships within the divine trinity are at the same time a model for human relationships, then architecture should be governed by the same principles. The way grace descends from the Father, through the Son, to the apostles, and further to the entire clerical hierarchy, is one of the relationships that architecture should represent. The best-known way to achieve this is, for instance, with the four pendants (the four painted evangelists) that support the dome of the Pantocrator. The same association of "support", "discharge", and "hierarchy" appears in some medieval miniatures where Atlas, who supports the skies, stands for the four evangelists.

The Creed of Nicaea and Constantinople assigns four features to the Church: Unity, Holiness, Universality and Apostolic meaning. The Church is one – united, but not uniform. The architectural meaning of unity is not evenness, but a common denominator of all places of worship. The difference that a church should express in comparison to its neighborhood should ensure avoidance of the extreme attitude that causes a church not to be perceived as a church. Keeping the right balance is difficult to translate in material forms, so this must be taken into account. Churches built in different times and geographical areas show that unity is not a matter of style, historical period or even denomination, but one of concept (photos 22-28). It is not the object of this study to pass comment on the various meanings of unity in other Christian denominations; suffice it to say that Catholic unity is more of a calling around the Pope, whereas the Protestants consider unity to be the Invisible Church of all believers of all times, dead and alive.

Holiness in architecture was associated with that part of the church where the Ark of the Covenant was kept, and later, with the idea of the church as the house of God Himself, where God dwells and speaks. The Spanish theoretician Luis Fernandez Galiano wrote that *hoy las formas sagradas son profanas: las formas del culto han dado lugar al culto de las formas, y los templos se han desplazado del dominio de la teologia al territorio del arte.*[44] It is true that religious architecture has turned from the territory of religion to that of art, but we do not consider the holiness

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of a place to be a matter of form, as it is acquired in the first place as a consequence of the consecration ritual. However, holiness is a matter of symbols that have different forms, uttered or material, used in theological as well as architectural language.[45] Unlike the Orthodox and the Catholics, Protestants only assign holiness to the Grace and the Word of God.

The Church is Universal because it embraces the entirety of space and time and all peoples, unlike heresy, that is local and transient. The defining of dogma first appeared when Christianity was confronted in the early centuries by the danger of heresy, though a "heretical architecture" was not purposefully built. "Universal" has currently been replaced by a term of Greek origin,[46] the meaning of which is a whole whose essence does not change after splitting, a whole whose essential features are to be found in its smallest parts. In architecture, a modulating system with divisions and sub-divisions, multiples and sub-multiples is one possible way to relate the whole to the individual parts, and vice versa. The practice is far from new and the study of "sacred geometries" is well known. Proportions themselves do not certify the sacredness of the space and the procedure has also been used throughout history for lay architecture. What I intend to suggest is an orchestration of all the elements of a church such that they make one conscious that things are *"on Earth as in Heaven"*. Protestantism assigns Universality, as well as Unity, to the Invisible Church.

Finally, apostolic meaning shows that the true Church is the one that has preserved what Christ taught, in the same way that the apostles communicated it. This attribute is closely connected to the Holy Tradition. Since the Church is hierarchically organized, relations established between spaces and volumes (ordination-subordination, main-secondary, downside-upside, etc.) can also express the hierarchy in ecclesiastical architecture. There are precise moments in history when the hierarchy of spaces was determined due to elements of ritual and liturgy. For example, at the beginning of the 6th century, the Visigoths conquered Spain, by 560 their court had been established in Toledo, and in 587 the Visigothic king Rekhared converted to Catholicism. They had a particular type of liturgy, not known nowadays, which influenced the interior space of places of worship whose partitions are reminiscent of Byzantine churches[47] (photo 29). The (peripatetic) Carolingian liturgy had its origins in the Gallic tradition and was rich in processions, leading to the bipolarity of some churches (the monastery of Centula, 790-799; Saint-Riquier Church; Fulda

Church). The pilgrimages caused the creation of radial chapels around the choir in order to permit simultaneous religious services and worship of relics of different saints. All these elements are part of the ritual. However, they cannot be separated from Christian dogma because liturgical theology is determined by dogmatic theology. The Protestants find Apostolic meaning by identifying what they teach with what the apostles taught and, as they do not allow any ecclesiastic hierarchy, their temples mirror this: they are not considered sacred and the space has no hierarchical distributions.

4.4. THE OBJECT – MODEL

Closer than a revealed model, most often another architectural object is regarded as bearer of the imprint of the archetype and as the source of work to come. The approach is actually the personal option of the architect because the same object can generate a copy, or it can function as a model for a future design. There are normally two directions that can be followed. On the one hand, a level of reading that deals strictly with the forms produces a result that is also focused on the form, whereas on the other hand, a level of reading that addresses the "origins" of the object, its inner structure and articulations might provide the start for a richer design. Given these circumstances, innovation based on tradition may find its place, even if (apparently) constrained by dogma and canon (photos 30–33).

One type of church often, though unfairly, regarded as a model, is the wooden church of Maramureș. This is a typology which appeared under very particular conditions (in respect of historical period, geographic area and cultural background). It is a somewhat "closed" model, because it doesn't allow for future investigations that might lead to original creations rather than to copies (photos 34–35). What really promises high potential are not the wooden churches of Maramureș, but simply those wooden churches whose composition in terms of forms and symbols is remarkably rich.

Among contemporary tools, architects use the "quote" (photo 36) and the "*collage*" that refer, more or less explicitly, to an object, a style or a certain period.

4.5. SUGGESTION FOR A "THEORETICAL MODEL" OF AN ORTHODOX CHURCH

In place of conclusions we shall try to suggest a theoretical model for an Orthodox church.

A church, as well as an icon, shows the *final destination* – the transcendent world, which is different from the world of the senses and has its own rules, other than those familiar to us. Therefore, with an icon, the composition is organized in height and not in depth with regard to the surface on which it is painted. The vanishing point is not behind, but in front of the painting, inside the viewer. Therefore, the altar of a church – the most Holy Place that represents the essence of the other world – is not accessible to everybody because it is governed by other rules than those familiar to us. The continuous relationship between space and image thus reveals the final place in architectural and iconographic terms. The terrestrial imprint of the building is, or should be, different from the plan above in order to express the difference between here and there, near and far. Movement is controlled by axes that are determined by moving forward in two directions, in the horizontal plane and in the vertical plane. Both the altar and the dome are physically inaccessible and they represent the promised world. In other words, all ways lead towards the same final destination.

The liturgy, the icon and space work together to represent not only the transcendent reality, but also the potential *paths* of redemption. The model as support indicates not only the final destination, but also the path to be followed. The place of worship is a sequence of spaces that relate the world of the senses to the transcendent one. There are thresholds, stops, openings that mark the way and control the interior space and volume; the route cannot run evenly and without emotion towards an indifferent end, there are certain rules to follow and stages to cover and thus hierarchy becomes essential. The iconostasis is an element usually perceived as a barrier. Situated at the border between the nave and the altar, it does not close the way, but purifies the sight and prepares it for viewing the beauty to come. Also, it protects the unprepared from seeing beautiful but awe-inspiring truths. It is not opaque, but transparent or rather translucent, because the icons open to realities inaccessible in other ways.

The gradual progression of light is not accidental and the semi-darkness is not an artifice. It emphasizes the light inside the icons (or in the golden

imperial mosaics), it slows down the rhythm of the procession, focuses attention and sets immaterial boundaries between inside and outside. Another meaning of the light is the shadow that hides the mystery, not the doubt. In a lecture entitled *Espacio sacro: el ultimo refugio de la sombra*, Antonio Puerta spoke of the different meanings of light in the East and the West: *Mientras los occidentales apreciamos el brillo del metal, resultado de una cultura de la luz y del crystal, en Oriente valoran el paso del tiempo por los metales, la patina sobre la plata o el cobre, la penumbra y la opacidad.*[48] The sacred space is the meeting place of two worlds, it separates without splitting, it brings together without standardizing and thus there results a tension defined also by the hues of the light.

Furthermore, the relationship between light and substance is not casual. Each material has different vibrations and symbolic meanings, and it is important to understand the ways in which matter works naturally. The power of a wall could be expressed in brick as well as in stone, concrete or metal. Technically, building a glass dome does not present a problem, the question is whether a given dome should be made of glass or not. *There are many things we might know, but not all of them are useful*, says the Apostle Paul - and this is where ecclesiastical architecture is placed, between the infinity of potential things to be accomplished and the restrictions set by the wish to accomplish valuable things.

Photo 1. Catholic church, Tokio, arch. Fumihiko Maki

Photo 2. New built Greek Catholic church in Bucharest,
placed on the border of the street

Photo 3. Church of the Light, arch. Tadao Ando

Photo 4. Church on the Water, arch. Tadao Ando

Photo 5. Church Santa Maria, Terrassa, Spain, 4th – 9th century

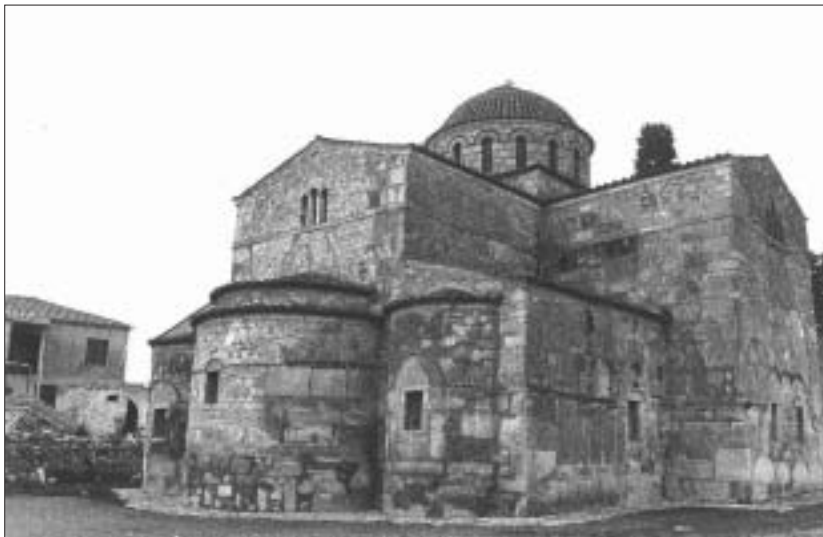Photo 6. Church in Germigny-des-Pres, Loiret, France, 9th century

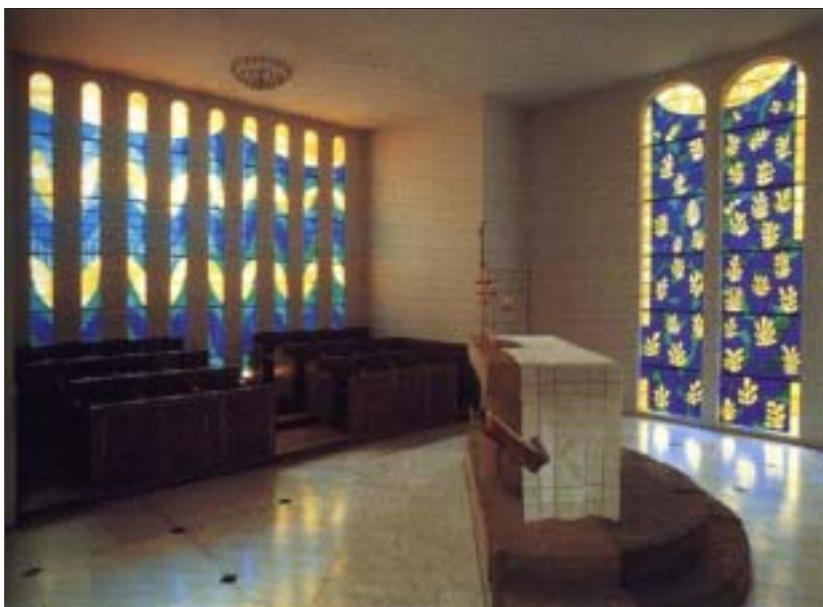Photo 7. Church of the Dormition, Skripou, Boetia, 9th century

Photo 8. Vence Chapel, Henri Matisse

Photo 9. Abraham Centre, Barcelona, arch. Agustí Mateos

Photo 10. Church, Roubaix, arch. Philippe Escudié, arch. Olivier Bonte

Photo 11. Evangelic church, Barcelona

Photo 12. Evangelic church, Holland, arch. MVRDV
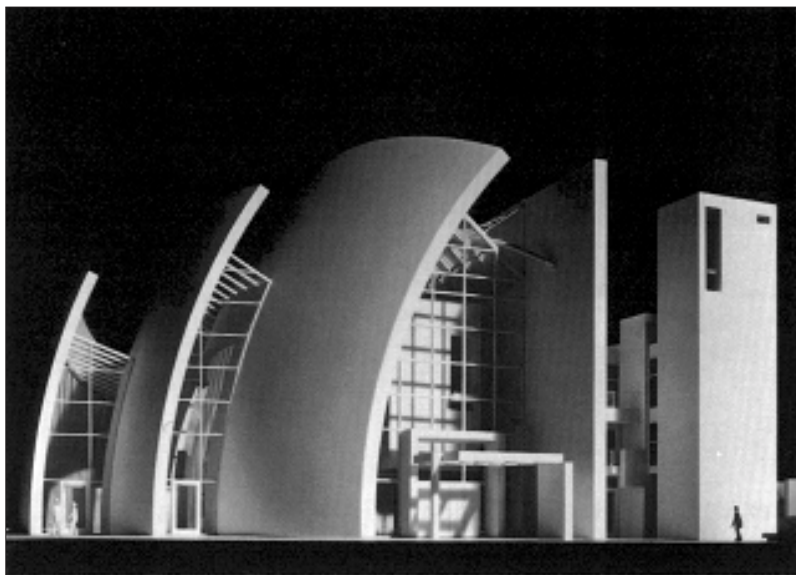
Photo 13. Winning design for the Church of the Year 2000,
arch. Richard Meier
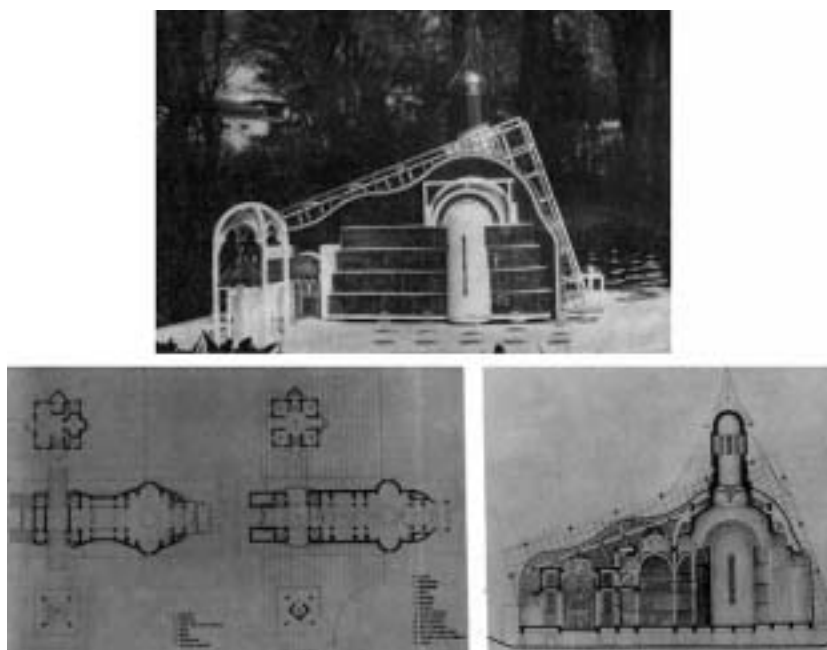
Photo 14. Winning design for the Orthodox Cathedral, Suceava,
arch. Constantin Gorcea
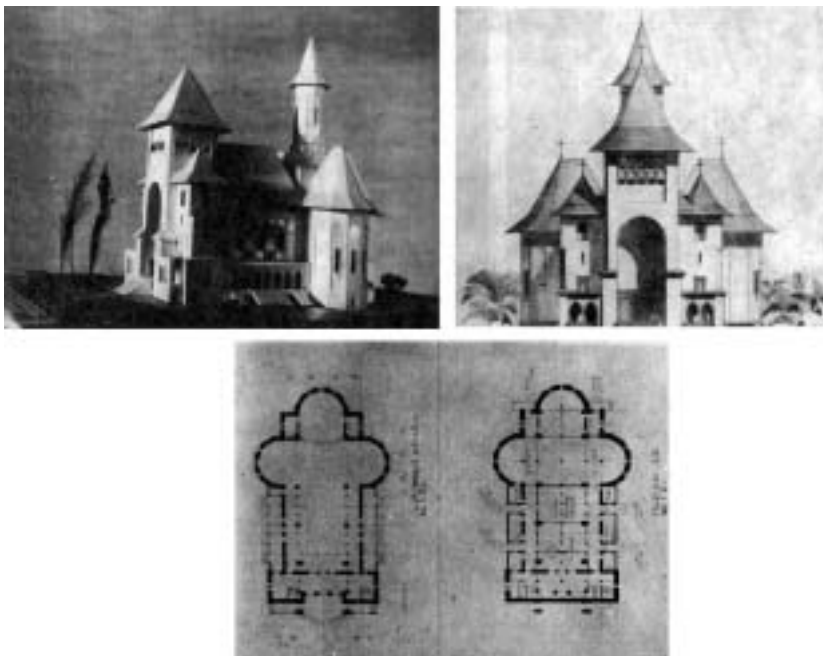
Photo 15. Design for the Orthodox Cathedral, Suceava,
arch. Nicolae Diaconu
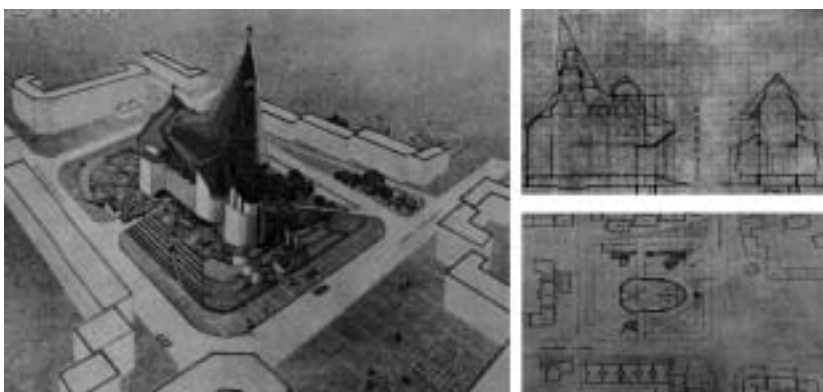
Photo 16. Design for the Orthodox Cathedral, Suceava,
arch. Doru Olaş
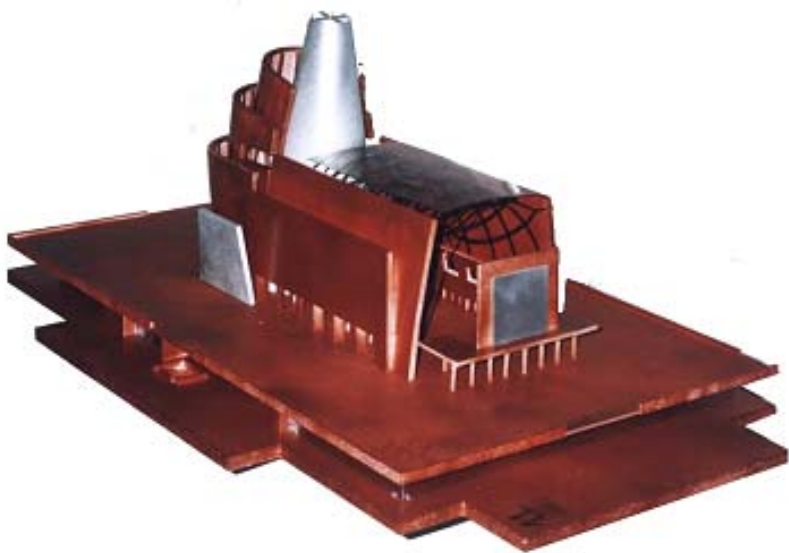
Photo 17,18. Designs for the Patriarchal Cathedral, Bucharest

Photo 19. Design for the Patriarchal Cathedral, Bucharest – 1st Prize, arch. Augustin Ioan

Photo 20. Design for the Patriarchal Cathedral, Bucharest – 2nd Prize,
arch. Florin Biciușcă
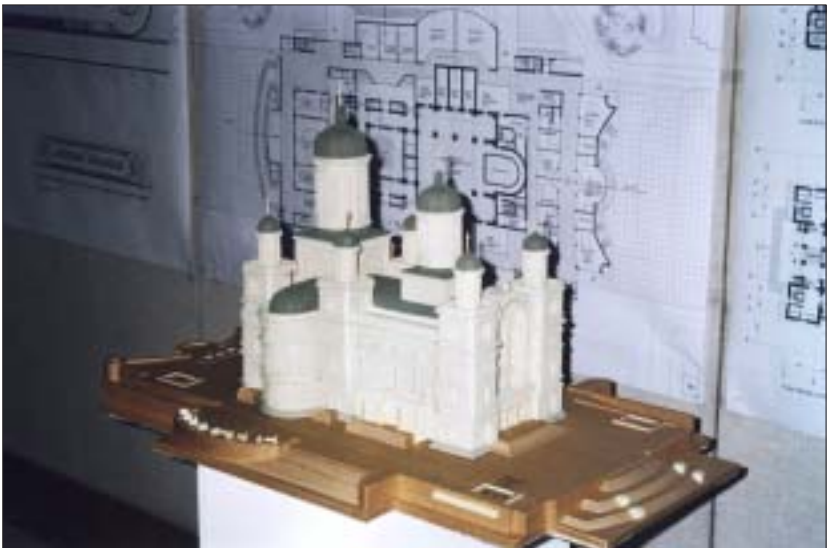
Photo 21. Design for the Patriarchal Cathedral, Bucharest – 3rd Prize,
arch. Nicolae Vlădescu

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Photo 22. Ticino, 1990-1996, arch. Mario Botta
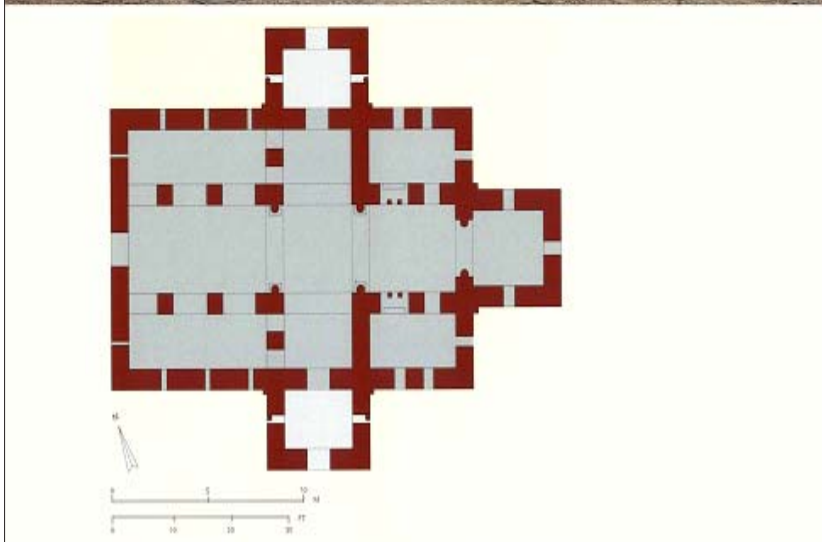

Photo 23. Manikata, arch. Richard England

Photo 24. San Pedro de la Nave, Zamora, 7th century

Photo 25. Vistabella, 1918, arch. J.M. Jujol

Photo 26. Catholic church, arch. Imre Makovecz

Photo 27. Traditional Norwegian Church

Photo 28. Design for an Orthodox Greek church, Zürich,
arch. Herzog & de Meuron

Photo 29. Santa Cristina de Lena, Oviedo, 9th century – original
Visigothic interior pieces

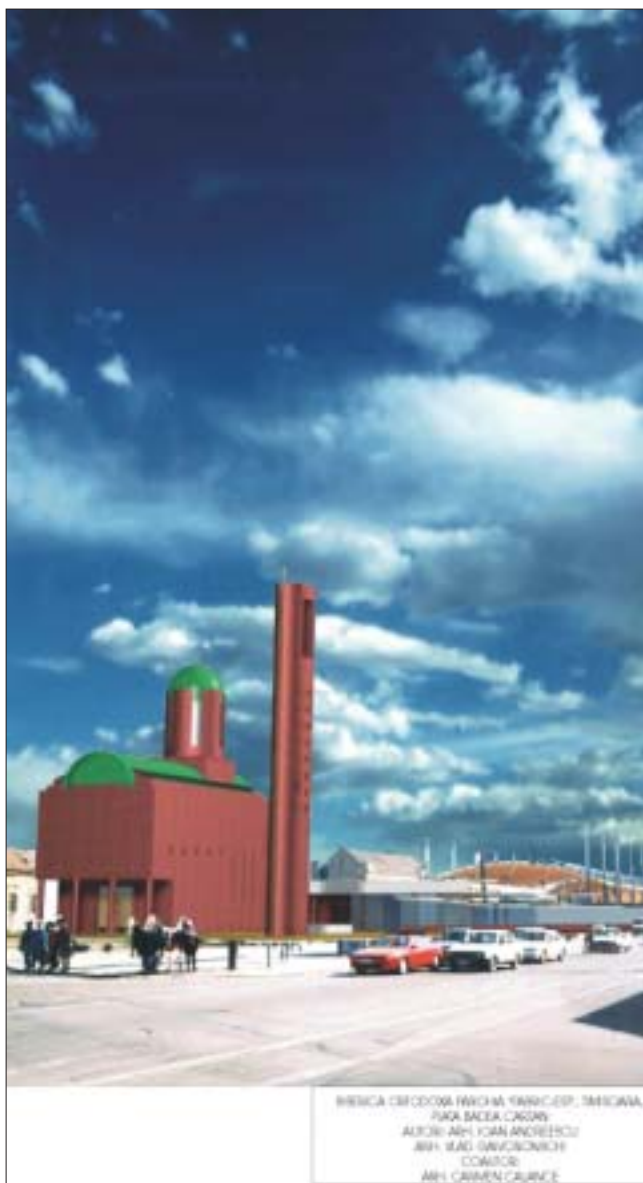Photo 30. Design for an Orthodox church, arch. Florin Biciușcă

Photo 31. Design for an Orthodox church, arch. Ioan Andreescu,
arch. Vlad Gaivoronschi

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Photo 32. Catholic church, Vucova, arch. Radu Mihăilescu
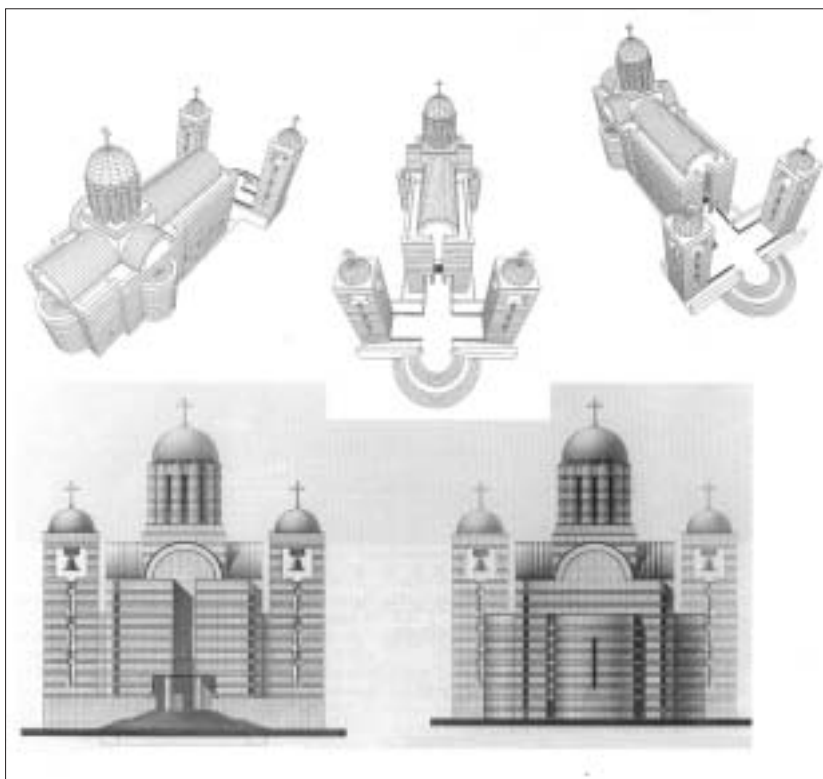
Photo 33. Winning design for the Church of the Heroes,
arch. Dan Marin, arch. Zeno Bogdănescu

Photo 34. Traditional wooden churches from Maramureș

Photo 35. Contemporary wooden church in Bucharest

Photo 36. Monastery, Canada, arch. Dan Hanganu

NOTES

1   The typology of churches from monasteries of Northern Moldavia or the wooden churches from Maramureș are constantly imported in different areas (in Romania or even abroad, inside Romanian communities) with no concern for the cultural background or the history of each particular place.

2   Suceava is a city in Northern Moldavia known for its old and very particular churches.

3   "And He sent out two of His disciples and said to them, "Go into the city and a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him. Wherever he goes in, say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says, "Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?"' Then he will show you a large upper room, furnished and prepared; there make ready for us." (Mark 14:13-15; see also Luke 22:10-12)

4   "God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands." (Acts 17:24)

5   It appears that during the early centuries Christians gathered in "improvised" churches in dwellings, but it seems that not every house would have been suitable for such a use.

6   Architect Pierre Fauroux built a church/town hall at Valbonne, France at the end of the 1980s. The two institutions coexist in a closed envelope with no exterior signs that would indicate a hierarchy. Inside the envelope, each is independent, with its own circulation system.

7   Heathcote, Edwin; Spens, Iona, *Church Builders*, London: Academy Editions, 1997, p. 54.

8   Bruneau, Philippe, "Qu'est-ce qu'une église?", in *Techniques&Architecture,* 405, décembre 1992.

9   Heathcote, Edwin; Spens, Iona, *Church Builders*, London: Academy Editions, 1997, p. 57.

10   For more details see "Iglesias de autor – del signo religiosa a la identidad artistica", in *Arquitectura Viva* 69, pp. 38-39.

11   See Besançon, Alain, *Trois Tentations dans l'église,* Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1996.

12   The shop still exists in Bucharest, near the church on Barbu Vacarescu Street.

13   Gio Ponti to Richard England in Heathcote, Edwin; Spens, Iona, *Church Builders*, London: Academy Editions, 1997, p. 52.

14   For more details, see Harhoiu, Dana, *București, un oras intre Orient si Occident (Bucarest, une ville entre Orient et Occident)*, București: Editura Simetria, 1997.

15   See Harbison, Robert, *Thirteen Ways,* MIT Press, 2001, p.140.

16   See Harbison, Robert, *Thirteen Ways,* MIT Press, 2001, p.152.

17   See Chibireva, Natasha, *Airbrushed Moscow,* in *The Hieroglyphics of Space*, edited by Neil Leach, London: Routledge, 2001, p.76.

18   By the time this text was edited, the officials of the Church have once again contested the decision of the jury that they have previously approved, so the site remains uncertain and it oscillates from one location to another, from Parcul Carol (apparently the option of the clergy) to Parcul Tineretului or Parcul Izvor (two possible sites suggested by the City Hall).

19   They only accept and recognize the Baptism and the Last Supper.

20   Heathcote, Edwin; Spens, Iona, *Church Builders*, London: Academy Editions, 1997, p. 63.

21   Matisse, Henri; Couturier, M.-A.; Rayssiguier, *La Chapelle de Vence*, Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1993.

22   Harbison, Robert, *Thirteen Ways,* MIT Press, 2001, p.152.

23   *Point three* of the "Guiding principles for the design of churches according to the spirit of the Roman liturgy" issued by *The German Liturgical Commission, apud* Heathcote, Edwin; Spens, Iona, *Church Builders*, London: Academy Editions, 1997, p. 41.

24   Turner, Harold, *From Temple to Meeting House*, Mouton Publishers, Haga, 1979, p. 344.

25   Dumitrescu, Sorin, *Chivotele lui Petru Rareş şi modelul lor ceresc*, Bucureşti: Anastasia, 2001.

26   More details on the topic of the influence of Vatican II on church building can be found in the chapter *Concreciones prácticas de la constitución sobre la Sagrada Liturgia para los artistas en la proyección de una nueva iglesia* by Dr. Julián Lopez (bishop of Ciudad Rodrigo from 1994, professor of Sacred Liturgy at Facultad de Teologia del Norte de España and Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca) published in *Arte sacro: un proyecto actual. Actas del curso celebrado en Madrid, octubre, 1999*, Granada: Fundación Felix Granada, 2000.

27   Richard Meier, Tadao Ando, Frank Gehry, Santiago Calatrava, Günter Behnisch, Peter Eisenman.

28   In this respect we should mention other remarkable examples: asked if the architect of a church should be an active Christian, Le Corbusier answered: *Foutez-moi le camp!* That didn't stop him from building Ronchamp Chapel or La Tourette Monastery. Paolo Portoghesi built a mosque in Rome after building a Catholic church in Salerno, Mario Botta designed a synagogue despite his fame as a church builder, and Herzog & de Meuron, who are not Orthodox, won the competition for an Orthodox Greek church (unfortunately never built) in Zûrich.

29   Remarkable exceptions are the books of the Romanian architect Augustin Ioan, among which we will mention: *Visul Lui Ezechiel,* Bucureşti: Anastasia, 1996; *Bizanţ după Bizanţ după Bizant*, Constanţa: Ex Ponto, 2000; *Spaţiul sacru*, Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 2001; *O (nouă) estetică a reconstrucţiei*, Bucureşti: Paideia, 2002.

30   An example is the competition held for the Church of the Heroes of the 1989 Revolution, won by the architects Dan Marin and Zeno Bogdanescu; another church was built instead.

31   The authors are architect Constantin Gorcea, architect Dan Spineanu, architect Constantin Stroescu, engineer Mihai Jitanic.

32   The authors of the winning entries, architect Augustin Ioan and architect Florin Biciușcă both teach at "Ion Mincu" University of Architecture and Urban Planning. They are authors of important books on the theory of architecture and coordinators of the two-year post-graduated program "The Anthropology of Sacred Space".

33   As it was mentioned before, the Church has radically changed its position concerning both the site and the design of the potential Cathedral, so that the original optimism of this text has seriously diminished. The incapacity to take a final and irrevocable decision and the hesitating (yet sometimes almost aggressive) attitude prove that after all the Church does not have reasonable arguments to support its point of view and at the present it is not prepared to assume the achievement of such an important goal.

34   One of the best known attempts at a reconstitution of the Temple of Jerusalem was made by Juan-Baptista Villalpanda (1596 – 1604) in the 2nd volume of a work written together with another Jesuit – Jerónimo Prado; the historical background was particular: King Philip the 2nd of Spain, who financed the research, fancied himself as King of Jerusalem; hence, the parallels made between his palace-monastery (El Escorial) and the Temple. In 1642 the Rabbi Jacob Jehuda de Leon produced a wooden model reconstruction of the Temple and in 1694 the architect Johann Jakob Erasmus of Hamburg finished another wooden model. (A summary of the interpretations regarding the Temple of Jerusalem can be found in RYKWERT, Joseph, *On Adam's House in Paradise: the Idea of the Primitive Hut in Architectural History*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, The MIT Press, 1997, the chapter on "The Temple of Jerusalem, or Vitruvius revealed".) Among contemporary studies, we will mention MARCH, Lionel, *Architectonics of Humanism,* London: Academy Editions, 1998, chapter "Judaïc Heritage".

35   The issue of the origin of the church is controversial. Among non-clerical works in this field we will mention Ioan, Augustin, *Khora,* București: Paideia, 1998, the chapter *"Lapis exilis" – argumente pentru reconsiderarea comparatismului architectural* ("Lapis exilis – arguments for reconsidering architectural comparatism").

36   See note 3.

37   Acts, 17:24.

38   Acts, 7:48.

39   Hebrews, 9:12.

40   Revelation, 21:22.

41   Hebrews, 9:24.

42   Revelation, 21:22.
43   Hebrews, 11:9-10.
44   "Today sacred forms are profane: the forms of cult left room to the cult of forms and temples passed from theology into the territory of art", Luis Fernando Galiano, "Sagrada Forma", in *Arquitectura* Viva, nr.58, 1998, p. 3.
45   One of the works that makes the connection between theology and architecture, between God, Man and the built church is the *Mystagogy* of Saint Maxim the Confessor.
46   *Sobor*.
47   The newly Christianized kings followed the model of the Court of the Byzantine Emperor.
48   "While Westerners appreciate the brightness of metal as a result of a culture of light and glass, in the East they value the passing of time over metal, the patina of silver and copper, the half-light and the opacity." Puerta, Antonio, "Espacio sacro: el ultimo refugio de la sombra", in *Arte sacro: un proyecto actual. Actas del curso celebrado en Madrid, octubre, 1999*, Granada: Fundación Felix Granada, 2000, p. 159.

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MATERIAL CULTURE, TRADITION
AND COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES

An understanding of the role material culture plays in the formation and reproduction of collective identities is much needed by archaeologists, especially by those working in the culture-history paradigm, who see themselves as historians and, one way or another, have to account for the reconstruction of the past with the collective actors expected of them.

The normative culture concept

In order to make collective identities from artifacts and features, culture-historical archaeology has for a long time used a fairly simple theoretical device: culture was understood as a set of interrelated rules followed by everybody and material culture as an outcome of following those rules with the result that "scharf umgrenzte archäologische Kulturprovinzen decken sich zu allen Zeiten mit ganz bestimmten Völkern oder Völkerstämmen".[1] Ethnic identity, the only collective identity that really mattered for Kossinna, appeared to be visible in the distribution patterns of artifacts and features.

From this perspective, the link between the archaeological record and ethnic identities seemed unbreakable and it was on this link, guaranteed by the passivity and conformity of people and their products to cultural rules, that the methodology of culture-historical archaeology was built. One could safely assume that every culture unit, i.e. every ethnic unit characterized by a distinct set of rules, would impose them on people and artifacts.

However, empirical evidence soon showed the archaeologists' task to be more complicated than that:

1. Distributions of types and features seldom overlap, so archaeologists had to assume that only some artifact or feature categories or types are ethnically "expressive".

2. Artifacts and features originating from historically known contexts can have a distribution that is in no way relatable to any ethnic entity; this has introduced a healthy consideration for how they entered the archaeological record.

However, these observations did not result in a challenge to the normative concept of culture within culture-historical archaeology. That occurred only in the early 1960s with the beginning of a new archaeological tradition in the United States (Binford 1962).

Replacing the "archaeological culture" concept is recognized as a difficult task by many, and, as research on the archaeological understanding of collective identities develops and diversifies, it is becoming clear that we are not likely to get such a simple theoretical device soon, indeed we may never do so. Rather, "we must be prepared […] to commit ourselves to a rigorous long-term pursuit of the anthropological study of material culture" (Dietler and Herbich 1998: 234-235). Thus archaeologists would have to deal with issues beyond the scope of culture-historical archaeology and which are unlikely to be accepted as legitimate concerns by most of its practitioners. It remains to be seen if culture-historical archaeology can give up the normative culture concept without losing its identity.

The profound changes in the conceptualization of society since the times of Kossinna and the progress made in understanding the formation processes of the archaeological record (e.g. Schiffer 1987) make it impossible that archaeological patterns could ever be directly related to social patterning. Cultural patterning can no longer be regarded as being directly expressed in the patterning of the archaeological record[2] and archaeologists must now also face the problems encountered by social scientists in the study of living societies, and not only the artificial order which has been imposed by them on the past. Most important is that of looking beyond the "*donné tel qu'il se donne*"[3]. Irrespective of what we hope to find out about ancient societies from artifacts and features, we should be aware that they were variously involved in accounts that imposed views on and about social reality.

This is particularly significant for the understanding of ethnicity and its relationship to material culture. Although contemporary nations have far more efficient means of imposing uniformity and far more difficult tasks to perform, ethnic identities, as with national identities, start as projects, and the way, and to what extent they succeed should be a matter of investigation.

Agency and beyond

As a reaction against different sorts of determinism – cultural determinism, the once fashionable structuralism and the again fashionable evolutionism – agency is at the forefront of debate in the social sciences and is also gaining momentum in archaeology (e.g. Dobres and Robb 2000), where it is used not only as a more realistic representation of social action, but also as an alternative to the passive role assigned to material culture within traditional archaeology and in other deterministic traditions. However, the danger Bourdieu noticed in interactionist interpretations[4] of imagining free agents, unfettered by any structural constraints at the moment of their interaction, remains and discussion about the agency of material culture has at times developed in the direction of fetishism[5], towards conceiving artifacts as real actors, to the point that artifacts are conceptualized as persons or as having messages of their own and even exchanging messages among themselves without any human participation (Schiffer 1999).

Recent emphasis on the agency of/agency in material culture as a replacement for the perspectives on material culture based on style analysis is surprising given the two major attempts made in the 1970s to overcome the structure-agency duality (Bourdieu [2000]1972 and Giddens 1979). The work of Bourdieu, popularized from the 1980s onwards by post-processualists, seems to have been more influential. However, his highly complex theorization of social reality has entered archaeological research mostly as "concepts", in particular "habitus" and, more recently but to a lesser extent, "doxa". What social reality make these concepts easier to understand? They assume the existence of a group of interconnected persons, and if this group is not accurately specified, the holistic culture concept can step back in. This was not Bourdieu's intention. He denoted the term "field" to be the entity with which habitus and doxa are in complex and necessary relationships and emphasized that the relationship between habitus and the fields is the only one that allows proper consideration of individual agents and individual action (Bourdieu 1987 [1983]: 61). Interestingly, "field" appears to be almost completely absent from archaeological literature on ethnicity and this might allow for the survival of an unexamined socio-cultural (ethnic?) unit to which habitus and doxa are referred.

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Habitus

By going beyond dichotomies, such as structural determination/ individual creativity or conscious action/individual or collective unconscious[6], the conceptualization of cultural transmission as habitus by Pierre Bourdieu (see 1980b, esp. pp. 91-95) seems the best available framework for understanding the variability and creativity possible in a given setting. It has the quality of emphasizing the relative autonomy of traditions and of offering the possibility to investigate their horizontal connections in respect of becoming a "style de vie" for a social group. In rejecting the representation of cultural transmission as the action of rules under the authority of tradition or of rational choice, the concept of habitus represents the tensions between the relative independence of practice and the pressures of the structured contingent which make human action regular, without being the product of rules, and patterned although individuals are unique.[7]

It seems significant that habitus is frequently understood as group habitus[8], although in coining this concept one of Bourdieu's main goals was to overcome the opposition between individual and society, habitus being the embodiment of the social and the individualization of the social (Bourdieu 1987[1986]: 43). Group habitus is an abstract set of dispositions which can only be experienced in individuals who, owing to their normally belonging to several social groups, and even if these positions tend to be clustered, never fully realize them. The crosscutting of social groups in the individual habitus is one of the most challenging facts archaeologists have to recognize. It is also worthy of note that paradoxical differences exist within social groups: if a good place in a group supposes an adequate habitus, a very good place usually means a position of authority from which one can act according to his or her habitus, even against the norms of the group.

Habitus allows an understanding of individual action without making humans the powerless reproducers of structure, or masters of their lives. Individuals appear as they are in real life, irreducible – except in special circumstances – to their groups, simply because they belong to several, and because their perception of that is shaped by a unique life experience. Hence, belonging to a group does not make one an interchangeable element of that group, nor does it determine actions. However, it orients them. Not only do individuals differ in their enthusiasm for integrating in groups – as in Groucho Marx's joke: "I don't care to belong to a club that

accepts people like me as members" – but groups themselves, even if they belong to the same category, also differ in how demanding they are towards individuals,[9] in how uniform they are supposed to be. It might be correct to assert that groups in contemporary societies are less demanding than they were in pre-modern societies, but this does not mean we should imagine them to be similar to modern totalitarian societies.

Agency and the anthropology of knowledge

An anthropology of knowledge of the kind suggested by Fredrik Barth (2002) is particularly suitable to the study of situated, interacting agents, within a group. What keeps an ethnic group together is not just shared knowledge about the group's identity. Particular kinds of knowledge and action lead to the articulation of persons in a collective identity, shared but not from the same perspective. Identity appears here as a symbol everybody recognizes while assigning a different content to it, following different traditions of interpretation. The problem of the relationships between collective identities and material culture thus becomes a problem of the relationship between the individuals producing and those using artifacts, their actions being oriented by their life experience and positions within traditions of production, use and interpretation.

Much of the work done within culture-historical archaeology focuses on discontinuities. These seem to be in particular need of explanation, whereas the continuity of a tradition does not require explanation, as this is what people normally do.

Tradition has the property of signifying both cultural transmission and a certain perception of the way it is carried out, in which the conceptualization of change is difficult. This ambiguity plays a role in the choice of "tradition" (particularly in "ceramic tradition") as a replacement for "archaeological culture" within the paradigm of traditional archaeology, a choice which appears to avoid the bankrupt correlation between ethnicity and culture, empirically impossible to sustain. However, it conveys other properties of the old paradigm as in the example of the relationship between cultural uniformity and ethnicity, in which cultural uniformity is seen as "natural", as the automatic conformity with rules, with no explanatory devices for internal change. Thus the holistic concept of culture is preserved, undiscussed – as *pars*

pro toto a material tradition can still be conceived as a product of those collective identities. [10]

The transmission of knowledge, as conceptualized by Barth, implies a relationship between "a corpus of substantive assertions and ideas", the media used to communicate them (words, artifacts, actions) and the "instituted social relations" which make the environment in which "it will be distributed, communicated, employed and transmitted" (2002: 3). This is an analytical distinction. The three aspects of knowledge

> appear together precisely in the particulars of action in every event of the application of knowledge, in every transaction in knowledge, in every performance. Their mutual determination takes place at those specific moments when a particular item of substantive knowledge is cast in a particular communicative medium and applied in an action by an actor positioned in a particular social organization: their systematic interdependence arises by virtue of the constraints *in realization* that these three aspects impose on each other in the context of every particular application. Specific micro-circumstances will thus determine how the mutual influences between the faces of knowledge are affected, and to the extent that we can identify repetitive, persistent effects of mutual constraint and influence in these particular realizations of knowledge, we have identified processes of mutual determination between the three named aspects of knowledge (Barth 2002: 3).

This is confirmed by the observation that certain knowledge contents and communication styles are required in social situations characterized by a constant referral to the social position of the agents.[11]

The perspective suggested by Barth "makes us give the necessary close attention to the knowers and to the acts of the knowers – the people who hold, learn, produce, and apply knowledge in their various activities and lives" (Barth 2002: 3). It is a change from the systemic conception, which offers archaeologists the hope to reconstruct the whole from an undeterminable part of its transformed fragments, to an investigation of how

> the forms of *coherence* or systematicity [are] achieved in various traditions of knowledge, depending on how items in the corpus are constituted, how these items are householded in the social organization, and the degree of precision and force with which messages are cast in the media and representations that are employed. (Barth 2002: 3)

Material culture as a medium of communication raises particular questions. Artifacts mean nothing by themselves:

It is only when they are interpreted through practice that they become invested with meanings and may then act as props for the strategies of social life. (Barrett 1994: 167)

Therefore the reliance of culture-historical archaeologists on material culture continuities as "natural" should be replaced with an examination of the relations existing between these continuities and the continuity of interpretation, something likely to appear as pointless to those who still believe that the "true meaning" is hidden somewhere in the artifacts.

Knowledge and its transmission are affected by constraints arising from the properties of the medium in which the knowledge is cast and which affect the ideas that can be conveyed through forms of representation that are felicitous, limited, or impossible in respect of those ideas in that medium (Barth 2002: 3). This cautions us against going too far with the textual analogy that allows for use of analytic techniques that are otherwise inaccessible, but also subjects us to the risk of forgetting that artifacts are not only very poor texts, but have a specificity which lies in the realm of non-verbalized routines (Wittgenstein 1969: #204), that is, that of non-verbal cultural transmission, of non-verbal cognition, a world differently controllable by authority than that of the discourse.

Barth's perspective on the transmission of knowledge is particularly suited to the understanding of how meanings come to be attached to artifacts, during daily interaction or during special ceremonies in which they are expressed according to the social position of the participants. These events are not restricted to the interaction which takes place in the production process or to that linked with it in various ways. They extend to all the uses and all the interpretations of uses the artifacts might have. In archaeological analyses of ethnicity, as well as in ethnoarchaeological work, material culture traditions are treated as being of the same kind as production traditions. Thus, if we are to understand the roles artifacts play in signifying identity, we should follow the process of apprenticeship and the influences on the production of particular shapes and particular designs (e.g. Wallaert-Pêtre 1999). Traditions of production are just one part of the story. There are also traditions of consumption and traditions of interpretation – meaning stabilizing traditions – which, again, can be closely related to the production processes or be fairly independent

thereof. The recent focus of ethnoarchaeological research on production tends to obscure this, despite the fact that one might expect the archaeologists' everyday practice of attaching meanings to ancient artifacts to prevent this.[12] This is not just something characteristic of a discipline that needs to create meaning. It happens every time an artifact is perceived outside the tradition of interpretation in which it was created. Even in simpler societies, differences in knowledge are salient and essential to the functioning of society (see Barth 2002: 1-2). They are to be found everywhere in complex societies. We should therefore expect that which must be known in order to produce artifacts and that which constitutes their interpretation in the same society not to be the same thing. We cannot expect someone with access to secret lore to see the artifacts involved in its reproduction in the same light as someone who is not initiated therein.

This process of attaching meaning is obvious in the widespread use of imported objects as status markers. Besides evoking power by the control of the outside world (Helms 1988) and status by the quality of the materials and craftsmanship, they are symbolic blanks, empty containers waiting to be filled with local meanings which, to be efficient, must transcend the local, communicate with the world outside and above.

Style and tradition

After more than twenty years of debate on style among archaeologists, which – as noticed by Dietler and Herbich (1998: 245) – has reproduced the structure-agency debate in the social sciences, some (e.g. Boast 1997) have come to think that the concept of style is worse than useless.[13] Others try to interpret it within an evolutionary framework, while others attempt to recast the old debate in terms of doxa-agency, falling into the trap of the structure/agency duality, a duality also present in the primordialist-instrumentalist polarization of the discussion on ethnicity.

The study of uniformities in material culture from the perspective of style is still necessary. The widespread belief that, through uniformities, we can gain access to social uniformities should not be abandoned, though the question as to what kind of uniformities and how they come into being is a matter that needs further investigation. If action and practice are given the attention they deserve, then we cannot ignore the fact that they are patterned, structured, at least in the sense given by Bauman.[14]

Much discussion about the patterning of material culture among archaeologists from the mid 1970s to the mid 1990s has revolved around the concept of style (see Hegmon, 1992, for a review and Carr, 1995, for a collection of articles on the subject). Stylistic behavior is universal[15] and it has no inscribed social correspondent except sociality itself.[16] As a particular way of doing things, style gains meaning in the process of referral to how things have been done and how they should be done.[17] This leads to the failure to define style as having only a particular social function, such as communication, as boldly suggested by Wobst (1977): the range of functions, i.e. meanings, which can be attached to ways of doing things is wider (for a critique of Wobst's views on style see Hegmon 1992: 520-521 and Sterner 1989: 451). Shared meaning, instead of being at the origin of style, "is ultimately the result of style – in fact, of only some rather specialized and not well-understood stylistic phenomena" (Davis 1988: 381).

Although social correlates of stylistic uniformities can be observed only in the present, archaeologists have for a long time neglected this kind of research considering it irrelevant to the understanding of the past. Indeed, the differences between pre-modern societies and contemporary societies in the production and use of identical or stylistically similar artifacts are dramatic. Mass, industrially produced, and rapidly changing styles can hardly be compared with non-industrial styles,[18] their quantity and variety have precluded any comprehensive comparative study, with the notion of style being restricted mostly to art and fashion.

These differences justify ethnoarchaeological research. From the beginning of its development there existed an inbuilt tension between its focus on what seems comparable with ancient societies, i.e. contemporary pre-industrial societies, and the already developed critique of the inference by analogy,[19] a tension which continues to raise doubts about the usefulness of the discipline. However, before rejecting ethnoarchaeology, we should not forget that much archaeological interpretation relies on analogy with the limited, biased, methodologically undisciplined personal experience of the archaeologist, transformed in rigid common-sense reflection, while historical and ethnographic accounts say very little about material culture.[20]

If previous ethnographic work has largely ignored material culture or treated it as an unimportant aspect of daily life, with some notable exceptions, ethnoarchaeologists have tended to emphasize the role of material culture, oblivious to what the natives might think about it, and

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paid less attention to the rest of the society, which frequently appears in their papers only in the form of short systematic descriptions. This is particularly damaging to studies on material culture and identity where the production and use of artifacts may appear as the paramount and even unique method of constructing various identities or appear as meaningless in this respect, while other means of constructing identities are ignored.

Ethnicity, power, and material culture

Ethnoarchaeological research has also paid little attention to the relationship between material culture and power, although culture-historical archaeologists recognized the manifestation of political and religious authority in their antiquities quite some time ago. Objects and styles used by the dominant groups have been identified, their diffusion under particular social conditions documented, but they have been understood mostly as passive expressions of status. This is particularly the case with the political elites, who display a cross-cultural taste for imports. These uses of material culture were believed to have little to do with the ethnicity, thus reinforcing the nationalist notion that ethnicity, conceived as conformity, is located in "popular culture".

This belief in cultural uniformity as a generative background for ethnicity has been successfully challenged by Fredrik Barth (1969, 1995). His understanding of ethnicity as "the social organization of culture difference" maintains that instead of searching for a deep ethnic configuration that structures a cultural whole and is recognizable in all its forms, we should expect ethnic difference to be signified by only a part of the cultural repertoire, in which "overt signals or signs – the diacritical features that people look for and exhibit to show identity, often such features as dress, language, house-forms, or general style of life –" and "basic value orientations: the standards of morality and excellence by which a performance is judged" can be analytically separated (1969: 14).

There is no stable relationship between the two and "one cannot predict from first principles which features will be emphasized and made organizationally relevant by the actors" (Barth 1969: 14). Later, Barth points out that the "overt signs" should not be considered arbitrary (1994: 14). All cultural creation, including the production of artifacts, is a reaction

to the already existing: "every artifact is the product of human intentionality, but that intentionality itself is conditioned by the existence of previous objects" (Csikszentmihalyi 1993: 21).

Archaeologists studying styles have looked for ethnicity in the coherent formulation of the two categories distinguished by Barth, assuming that the "overt signs" are expressions of the "basic value orientations", possibly understood as "deep style", though they should perhaps be understood as diacritics as well: what distinguishes them from the "overt signs" is mainly their nature of evaluative principles, and if they are structured, it does not denote the "cultural structure" of that society.

Styles used as diacritics are well documented by ethnoarchaeological research, although Barth's suggestion (1994: 16) that difference in scale might explain why complex societies tend to use a few salient, contrasting diacritics, while small groups are more likely to rely on shared images, has not yet been tested empirically. It is not only the size of complex societies that makes the use of shared images less likely owing to communication problems. In contemporary societies these problems can be solved by education and mass media. Their internal differentiation, however, signified by styles, makes the task of devising an encompassing ethnic style particularly difficult, and a limited number of symbols provides a more accessible solution.

In all societies there are some people more involved than others in the articulation of societies by "the social organization of culture difference". An understanding of ethnicity could start from what these people are doing, while avoiding a voluntaristic perspective. Every human being is born and educated with a multitude of ways of thinking and acting, which makes judgment of their actions as only the result of autonomous deliberation implausible. In other words, individual deliberation develops and manifests itself as a social product. It is more realistic to see in "the social organization of culture difference" a result of the action of privileged actors acting in an environment that shapes their views on the possible and the desirable, taking into account that this action can have unintended consequences. These limitations may lead us to reformulate the study of the involvement of political actors in creating and maintaining identity as whatever action might be attributed to them for that purpose. A trap that must be avoided is that of conscious versus unconscious action. Whatever their justification, some actions are recognized by us as significant to group identity, and consequently it does not matter whether they are performed explicitly for that purpose.

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This creates an apparent contradiction of a subjective definition of ethnicity, by which it is a self-ascriptive category (Barth 1969: 13). However, this definition did not aim to claim that ethnicity is the product of purposeful action, but to challenge the "objective" views on ethnicity, based on lists of traits. There was nothing "ethnic" in cultural signifiers before it was introduced, for whatever purpose.

The extension of the range of actions involved in the maintaining of ethnic meanings beyond the purposeful allows for consideration the full diversity of the views generated by social positioning that people have about collective identity. One can then reasonably ask whether behind what commonly is attributed to the power of "tradition" there is only one form of power or authority. Is the power at the origins of styles responsible for assigning and maintaining their meaning of one nature? And is it so for all people?

If ethnicity is built through human action and not a generative principle inscribed in the origins of the group, then we should expect collective identities to be constituted by a succession of actions, promoted by authoritative discourses, within one or several traditions. Most ethnoarchaeological works I have read do not attempt a horizontal description of what supports group identity, of how, if ethnicity is believed to be expressed in material culture, traditions of manufacture and use are related to the other traditions supporting group identity. Instead of assuming the coherence of traditions inside an ethnic unit, we should investigate how traditions and the ways of reproducing them are related within a group, or even structured, if that proves to be the case. I see no reason why they should not be effective in supporting the identity of a group without being related, or parts of a structure, or manifestations of a "deep structure".

Contemporary archaeology has repeatedly attempted to study ethnic phenomena either in isolation or in contrast, without examining the different forms of interaction between "us" and "them". These forms of interaction are thought to be something peripheral to the continuous expression of ethnic identities, although "our" identity is expressed in order for "them" to perceive. It seems more reasonable to give up the assumed stability and predictability of such expression and to consider the effects of the interplay between internal developments and outside events might have on it. The outside events could be of a variety of natures and they should be considered from the perspective of the paramount importance of the dichotomizing essential for the continuity

of ethnic identity. Restricting these observations to material culture, we can expect the phenomenon of imports completely or partially replacing local repertoires to affect the capacity of ethnic signifying of some artifact categories, and, particularly in complex societies, unpredictable interactions in the world of the meanings attached to artifacts.

Could the internal dynamics of group identities change the signification of particular categories of artifacts? We have reason to believe that this may happen, particularly in those circumstances in which traditions that support identity have a low degree of coherence, thus making them available for appropriation by emerging social groups and individuals.

Contrary to the view shared by most culture-historical archaeologists, traditions have a relative autonomy and specificity, which in many ways makes them incompatible. What could the mostly non-verbalized traditions of crafts from pre-industrial societies have in common, for instance, with those which legitimate power in the form of oral or written epic poetry? In Bourdieu's terminology they are different fields, as is knowledge, implicit and explicit, and the habitus required for them. What could link them? If we are able to demonstrate the existence of "deep style" then we will have to explain how it came into being and it is probable that we will conclude that it is the result of articulating actions and not from/of unconscious reproduction. Although there are many cases in which the relationship between political leadership and material production are explicit (Helms 1993), the common ground on which identity is built has no cross-cultural basis. The study of ethnic coherence must examine the articulation of these traditions, with the limitations imposed by their nature, and significant differences are to be expected between household production and other forms of production organization or between forms of religious or political authority.

Ethnicity and the past

If group identity that transgresses family and class borders can be called ethnic identity, then can we say that this concept covers all the major features of such phenomena from the present and the past? We have no means to prove this. Traditional concerns about ethnic identities have placed them above and beyond how societies actually work; apparently we can ignore almost everything about a society and still be certain about its identity. In a nationalistic framework this is explained

by the primordial nature of identity and is used to infer endlessly about the past using the alleged cultural intimacy with "our" ancestors. Whether we use "the best" or the most academically popular definition of ethnicity, we cannot work out its properties outside the historical context. We have to pursue our research using a highly flexible concept that describes not what ethnicity is, but what it is about, allowing us to discover phenomena dissimilar in many ways to what we are accustomed to see as "peoples" or "ethnic groups".

The use of the term "ethnic" groups identities into a category of phenomena of the same order. This does not mean societies, but only ways of distinguishing social realities, developed in particular circumstances and fulfilling various functions in relation with other group identities and other social phenomena. These social phenomena, some of which are taken for human universals by culture-historical archaeologists, may interact with the workings of ethnic identity. Personhood, for instance, includes the fractal person concept described by Roy Wagner. This is different from the "Western" view of the individual opposed to the society (Gell 1998: 140) because it represents individuals as existing "reproductively by being 'carried' as part of another" and as engendering "others by making themselves genealogical or reproductive 'factors' of these others."[21]

Culture-historical archaeologists have also to give up the comforting idea that an understanding of the past is possible without any concern for the present, that we can detach ourselves from our societies and look "objectively" at those from the past, that antiquities have nothing to do with the meaningless everyday artifacts we are surrounded by. Only in living societies can we observe how material culture is involved in the formation and maintaining of ethnic identities. Despite vigorous claims to the contrary, culture-historical archaeology does bring the present into the past, though unfortunately not by studying contemporary material culture and identities, but by unreflectively using dominant views on society, i.e. mostly nationalist views, which function as the social theory that such archaeologists reject.

Of course, the present has no ready answers for us. We have good reason to believe that we cannot simply extrapolate the relationships between material culture and identities we observe in contemporary complex societies. Their patterns of mass production and consumption, the control of collective identities through specialized and efficient means, have created a wide array of uses of material culture for constructing

personal and collective identities, all imposed or suggested through education systems and the mass media, where restrictions on the meanings artifacts can have – from registered trademarks to national monuments – are so clear and redundant that we are not able to use them to understand the relationships in simpler, pre-modern societies.

While both archaeologists and ethnoarchaeologists – particularly those following the *chaîne opératoire* approach – emphasize practice in recent approaches, frequently research still focuses on the search for the expressions of collective identities in material culture as recognizable patterns, with little attention paid to the social life of things, especially to what archaeologists are best trained and equipped to document, i.e. long sequences of objects issued from the same technological tradition or having other similarities, and material genealogies that create the impression of gradual change and that everything else goes along with it, including the traditions of their interpretation. We need a perspective which will enable us to understand the change in traditions, their relationships and their interpretation. The essentialist approach should be replaced with concern for historical and political specificity in the production and use of material culture: "objects are not what they were made to be but what they have become" (Thomas 1991: 2). The identity of things is not to be conceived as given in their fixed material form, but as assigned and more or less stabilized in a context of interaction between different traditions. We cannot fail to notice that the same can be said of social groups.

It appears that we should stop expecting a replacement for the once trusted but now bankrupt interpretative device of culture-historical archaeology: the equivalence of cultural uniformity with ethnic identities. Even if we discover how material culture is involved – in all sorts of societies – in building and maintaining ethnic identities and we can state confidently that a settlement belonged to people with this identity, and a cemetery to people with that identity, what can we really say about them knowing this identity? The answer would be almost nothing if we refrain from attributing to them all the characteristics nationalist traditions have ascribed to ethnic units, because societies and people are not born by identities; these are just used in ways we have no means to infer from them. Therefore, the quest for ethnicity appears meaningless without an understanding of society, unless we really require classificatory boxes with more attractive labels than A, B or C, which will be filled only by current ideologies The focusing on identity of culture-historical

archaeologists is limited to the origins, following the implicit idea that this is where the generative principles are to be found, although "[e]ven an ethnic group that exhibits considerable continuity and stability over long periods of historical time will nevertheless change in fundamental ways" (Kohl 1998: 232). If we want to discover something else than what nationalist ideologies know already without the need for archaeological research, we should examine the processes by which identities persist as labels while the traditions supporting them and their uses change.

NOTES

[1] Kossinna 1920[1911]: 3.

[2] See Patrik 1985 on the "physical" and "textual" models of the archaeological record.

[3] Bourdieu 2000[1972]: 238-239 – "Poser que la science ne peut être qu'une conceptualisation de l'expérience commune […] c'est […] identifier la science de la société à un *enregistrement du donné tel qu'il se donne*, c'est à dire de l'ordre établi. On est en droit, encore une fois, de se donner pour objectif de produire un *account* des *accounts*, à condition d'avoir clairement à l'esprit la fonction qui est impartie, dans la pratique, à tout *account*: le pouvoir constitutif qui est accordé au language ordinaire ne réside pas dans le language ordinaire mais dans le groupe qui l'autorise et lui donne autorité [….]"

[4] Bourdieu 2000[1972]: 238 – "[…] en ne prenant en compte dans l'analyse que ce que les pratiques et les représentations doivent à la logique des interactions symboliques et, en particulier, à la représentation que les agents peuvent se faire, par anticipation ou par expérience, de l'action d'autres agents auxquels ils sont directement confrontés, l'intéractionisme réduit les relations entre des positions dans les structures objectives à des relations intersubjectives entre les agents occupant ces positions: en excluant ainsi tacitement tout ce que doivent à ces structures les interactions, et les représentations que les agents peuvent en avoir, il assume implicitement la théorie spontanée de l'action qui fait de l'agent ou des ses représentations le principe ultime de stratégies capables de produire et de transformer le monde social […]"

[5] For the use of the concept of fetishism as an opening towards an internal critique of archaeological practice see Cumberpatch 2000.

[6] See Bourdieu 1987[1986]: 20 – "[…] des conduites peuvent être orientées par rapport à des fins sans être consciemment dirigées vers ces fins. La notion de habitus à été inventée, si je puis dire, pour rendre compte de ce paradoxe".

[7] See Bourdieu [2000]1972: 227-228 on rules and their use for understanding societies of which we know little: "Aussi longtemps qu'il ignore les limites inhérentes au point de vue qu'il prend sur l'objet, l'ethnologue se condamne à reprendre insconsciemment à son compte la représentation de l' action qui s'impose à un agent ou à un groupe lorsque, dépourvu de la maîtrise pratique d'une compétence fortement valorisée, il doit s'en donner le substitut explicite et au moins semi-formalisé sous la forme d'un *répertoire de règles* ou de ce que les sociologues mettent dans le meilleur des cas sous la notion de « role », c'est-à-dire le programme prédétérminé des discours et des actions convenant à un certain « emploi »".

8   One extreme example is G. C. Bentley who goes as far as to consider "structured habitual practice" as "a deep structure" (1991: 170; see 1987: 29).

9   See, for instance, Nock 1932 on the differences between being a pagan and being a Christian.

10   The usual conceptualization of tradition as a simple "handing down" (The Random House College Dictionary. Revised edition, 1975) obscures the variability of cultural transmission between the static and the fluid, operating in different modes, such as those sketched by Henry Glassie (1995: 406-409): tradition by repetition, by dismemberment of the entities and preservation of the essences and by preservation of "a certain spirit".

11   Bourdieu 2000[1972]: 232 – "On est en droit de supposer que c'est tout le contenu de la communication (et pas seulement la langue employée) qui se trouve modifié, inconsciemment, par la structure de la relation entre les locuteurs. […] c'est tout un langage, un type de plaisanteries, un ton, parfois même un accent, qui se trouvent comme objectivement appelés par certaines situations et qui sont tout au contraire exclus, en dépit de tous les efforts d'évocation, en d'autres situations. […] Charles Bally montre bien que le contenu même de la communication, la nature du langage et de toutes les formes d'expression employés (maintien, démarche, mimique, etc.), et surtout, peut-être, leur style, se trouvent affectés par la référence permanente à la structure de la relation sociale entre les agents qui l'accomplissent et, plus précisément, à la structure de leurs positions relatives dans les hiérarchies de l'age, du pouvoir, du prestige et de la culture […]"

12   The increased emphasis on style as *modus operandi*, as opposed to the previous approaches to style as *modus operatum*, to which the archaeologists' interest in pattern recognition corresponds, should not prevent us from observing that finished products are involved, in antiquity as now (perhaps even more so now), in the construction of social relations between people who ignore altogether how they were produced. Of course, the *modus operandi* approach is also appropriate for the study of the social life of artifacts, not only for their production.

13   It is true that some approaches to style lead one to suspect that the holistic culture concept has survived in "deep styles", in "vernacular styles", in assumptions that bounded structures of some sort underlie ethnic groups.

14   Bauman 1999[1973]: 41 – "[…] we assume for the moment, that we all agree on what we mean when using the term 'structure', as, broadly, an antonym to 'disorder'. In this broad sense we can say, that culture as a generic quality, as a universal attribute of mankind as distinct from all other species, is the capacity to impose new structures on the world".

15   Against this view see Boast 1997: 174 – " […] 'style' in not a universal, but a contemporary way of speaking about the world, a way of speaking that is dependent on a Cartesian dualism that few of us would accept as more than an historically situated 'view of the world'. […] style is not a characteristic of

material culture, but is a result of a contemporary way of conceptualizing material culture." I do not see why we should feel compelled to oppose style to function as Boast claims (1997: 175): style does not demand that "we look at things in the world as first doing a job and then carrying meanings."

16 See Mauss 1930: 470 — "Le domaine du social, c'est le domaine de la modalité" (apud Dietler and Herbich 1998: 238).

17 See Sackett (1977: 370) "a highly specific and characteristic manner of doing something [...] always peculiar to a specific time and place" and Hodder (1990: 45). See also Kroeber 1948: 329: "for things to be done well they must be done definitely" (quoted by Sackett [1990: 35-36])

18 Should we expect in pre-modern societies instrumentalizations of styles as "imposition de la dernière différence légitime, la dernière mode" or through the transubstantiation operated by "la griffe"? (Bourdieu 1980a: 202 and 204)

19 Wylie 1985: 80 – "Analogical inferences are all, by definition, 'ampliative'; they inevitably claim the existence of more extensive similarities in their conclusions than has been or could be established in the premises, thus, they are always liable to be in error".

20 See David and Kramer 2001: 1-2

21 Wagner 1991: 163, apud Gell 1998: 140. For a questioning of the cross-cultural variability of the person concept see Shweder and Bourne 1984.

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IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD
Community centers as a means for rehabilitation of housing districts. The case of Bucharest

> *In today's nomadic society, which is undergoing a process of relocation, the role of certain places as a source of identity cannot be the same as it was in the pre-digital era; places no longer point their inhabitants towards certain historical traditions and values.*
>
> Françoise Choay [1]

General considerations

The topic of this article was born of the many current discussions concerning Bucharest and its present condition, as opposed to that of the 'marvel' city that it once was.[2] One of the most problematic issues currently under consideration is that of the housing districts built in the socialist era.[3] These are large areas, mostly situated at the periphery of the city, but which over time have started to attack the city of Bucharest as a whole. This came about because the architecture of these districts is closely linked to the social dimension of the areas; a city is made of its people, and people move around, are influenced by and influence their environments.

A full account of the housing districts of Bucharest cannot possibly be narrated in a relatively small paper, such as this is; however, this research will try to identify the main periods in which these districts took shape, underlining their characteristics in terms of construction, social strata and the gradual change in the space-community relationship. In this context, some authors maintain that community manifests itself in more

than just the physical space which can be shaped by design or planning interventions.[4] I agree completely with this point of view. However, physical space is an initial precondition in order that people manifest themselves. If this space does not meet the needs of the people, its positive features should be identified and in some way recovered.

The actual aim of this paper is to identify ways in which to rehabilitate these condemned housing districts. I am not concerned here with a discussion of the buildings themselves. I am interested in the spaces between the blocks, the leisure areas – that are deserted, in the opinion of many, but in practice this is not altogether true – and all the possible spaces in the district where change could make a difference to the lives of the inhabitants. Thus, this paper will discuss the possibility of creating community centers, where people can engage in dialogue on various matters of interest.

The plans and texts consulted for this research were mainly taken from *Arhitectura* magazine, the most complete source of architectural data relating to the socialist period. Commentaries in this review and others that can be found in different books and articles of the socialist period ought also to be read, bearing in mind that information contained therein will not necessarily be accurate or the criticism harsh enough since the communist regime of the day permitted only that which suited its aims. Others sources include World Bank reports, compilations of data on Eastern European ex-communist countries and their housing policies, articles on current trends in town-planning, as well as accounts of Bucharest by foreign travelers, new post-communist approaches to the totalitarian society and the results of a social inquiry completed in 1993, which compares the ways of life 'before' and 'after' the events of 1989. Hopefully, these sources will provide a large and comprehensive basis for the solutions and conclusions reached by this paper.

1. The birth of the housing districts

a) Models

The housing districts as we know them today were based on certain urban models.[5] The term *urbanism* is no older than the 19th century[6] and basically refers to a corpus of solutions to city problems. The traditional city of that time was undergoing rapid growth owing to unparalleled

demographic expansion and mass industrialization: it became 'narrow', unhealthy, with a confusing urban structure. Creating domiciles for the increasing urban population was among the most important issues of the day since housing was very limited and of extremely low quality. Some solutions were initially proposed by the theoreticians of the 19th century (including economists, doctors or even philosophers), rather than by the architects, who were more concerned with loftier issues, such as style.

Two main models resulted from the thoughts of the theoreticians. These can be classified as the *progressive model* and the *cultural model*.[7] For the purposes of this paper, I will refer mostly to the first model because this can be agreed to have been at the origins of the Romanian housing districts. Suffice it to say that both models tried to address the problems created by the developing industrial city. However, the solutions they advocated turned out to be mere utopias,[8] e.g. Fourier's phalanster (progressive model)[9] or the return to vernacular architecture advocated by Ruskin and Morris (cultural model),[10] and consequently the proposed schemes were not put into practice.[11]

Nonetheless, these ideas greatly influenced the architects of the following decades. Tony Garnier imagined a whole industrial city,[12] which was very rational, based on future-oriented principles such as hygiene (clean air, water, sun-light available for everybody) and efficiency. Beauty was not a priority for the progressists, for whom it was much more important that housing solutions observe type-needs (thus generally valid) for a type-individual. In fact, the type-order thus created was considered beautiful as it addressed these needs. However, it was somewhat ascetic and rigid, and possibilities for new interventions were completely neglected – even forbidden, in theory, as the solutions provided were considered optimal and, therefore, final.

There are, of course, many other examples - too many to be recounted here - that eventually led to a solution that was almost universally embraced after the Second World War.[13] Functionalism reached its climax with Le Corbusier's *Unité d'Habitation*, which is - as he put it – '*a machine for living*'.[14] Garnier's scheme of the industrial city was developed by Le Corbusier into 'la ville radieuse', with a separation of the city functions into different zones. A whole area of this new type of city is dedicated to housing, that was to be divided from the areas of light and heavy industry by a green belt. This housing had to incorporate not only the apartments themselves, that were the living spaces of families and individuals, but also commerce, sports and educational facilities, as in the case of the

unité d'habitation in Marseille.[15] Interestingly, Le Corbusier tries this time to include in a vertical scheme (as opposed to Garnier's horizontal scheme for the city) an integrated existence[16] of a maximum number of functions linked to the housing function.

These examples were applied not only in Western societies, but also in Eastern Europe. Furthermore, socialist countries have had to experience yet another type of reality following the Second World War: that of 'socialist realism', based on a Soviet model. Romania was no exception to the rule, and Bucharest can be considered as a case study in this respect. Today's housing districts are the result of a sustained policy of creating housing for the working class implemented in the socialist spirit. A chronological approach[17] helps in identifying issues such as the initial design intentions in different periods of the socialist regime and how were these intentions carried out.

b) Housing districts in Bucharest

In order to understand how the city grew in the socialist years and, moreover, how this affected the whole structure of the city, it will be useful to refer to a scheme for Bucharest,[18] which describes the main housing developments (figure 1). The plan also shows the former so-called 'cheap housing:[19] the one-family house, each on its own private piece of land, built as either a detached, semi-detached or terrace house. After the Second World War, the communist regime began nationalization of private property and, at the same time rebuilding areas that had suffered bomb damage,[20] started construction of the collective housing. These were more appropriate to the egalitarian aspirations of the communist regime, which declared that workers should be given a decent home and that all accommodation should be the same, to prevent the creation of discrepancies in society.[21] The first to appear were the *cvartal* and, shortly afterwards, the *microraion*.[22] The architecture of this collective housing follows the lines of the traditional city scale, balancing the public and the private space (though that could scarcely be called 'private' as these buildings had only tenants). On the whole, the *cvartals* strongly resemble the imaginative view of Fourier's phalanster (figure 2). Apartments consist of one or two small rooms and include a kitchen and sanitary facilities. The front yard is closely connected to the adjoining street and the main facades were quite imposing, respecting the Soviet socialist realism style. The backyard was used either in a traditional way (e.g. for drying laundry

or as a playground for children) or – if it was part of the precinct itself - became a small park, which developed over time into a relatively pleasant area (now including trees and bushes). However, all the schemes lacked a use for the service areas, which are in effect non-existent, with the exception of a few *cvartals* that have shops on the ground floor.

The end of the Stalinist period and the 1960s saw a degree of relaxation, which affected all areas of existence, political, social, and economical. In architecture there was a certain opening towards the Western rationalist urbanism, which was in effect promoted through the principles of the Athens Charter.[23] Functionalist apartment blocks - following the example of *l'unité d'habitation* (figure 3), but containing for the most part only apartments, and none of the other functions proposed by Le Corbusier[24] - were built in the peripheral zones of the city on the free areas near the newly built industrial areas.[25] These big ensembles were to house huge numbers of peasants who had come from country to the city after being offered employment in the context of mass industrialization. Location at the periphery had its own advantages. Firstly, the infrastructure already created to serve the local industry could also be used to supply the apartment blocks. Secondly, the distance between home and workplace was relatively short, facilitating transport. These are the possible economic explanations that account for the location of housing next to industry, however unhealthy such closeness might seem today. An ideological explanation owes its origin to Soviet literature, which was still influential in the period and states that, since the population of socialist cities was made up mainly of the working class, the homes of the workers should be close to their place of work: "the laws governing the principle of the working people's accommodation should be grounded in the principle of work itself, […] so we have to consider their workplace."[26] Nonetheless, a positive aspect of these districts is that the apartments can boast of that minimum of functionalist comfort (e.g. running water, central heating), which was lacking in the traditional country household. Thus, living in a block in the city, together with having a decent job, suddenly became quite appealing to many.

In the beginning, the districts were reasonably well planned; the necessary distance between apartment blocks so as to provide sufficient sunlight and ventilation was respected according to the initial rationalist principles.[27] Soon enough, however, by 1975, a new idea came to prominence: the flanking of boulevards with rows of apartment blocks, ten floors high, with the aim of rendering the boulevards more important.

Worse still, the major earthquake of 1977 devastated the city of Bucharest and the resultant damage provided justification for a program of demolishing that eventually spread to most of the city, irrespective of any need thereof.[28]

The zealous construction of apartment blocks did not stop there. On the contrary: some older districts were made more dense by the construction of additional apartment blocks between already existing blocks,[29] and most new *housing complexes* were planned from the very beginning to have a denser urban frame – something which was also 'helped' by a law passed in 1980 that introduced the requirement to define the boundaries of a city.[30] These housing complexes combined the apartment blocks of a big ensemble with the bordering of the boulevards and were essentially quite similar in structure. They also introduced an apparent social dimension to life in the housing districts through the construction of services, such as shops, schools and kindergartens or cultural points (cinemas and culture houses, community centers with multipurpose halls). However, this is somewhat debatable since the big ensembles already had such facilities themselves.[31] Nevertheless, some authors claim that this difference in terminology (*large ensemble* versus *housing complex*) is necessary and that is due to the fact that the housing complex – compared to the dispersed structure of the big ensemble - could be defined, according to the differences in the texts of new laws passed in that period,[32] as "a unit dimensioned and structured organically and rationally, which benefits from a social life, with a certain autonomy from other neighboring housing complexes".[33]

These schemes continued until 1989, when the communist regime fell. Concrete shells of apartment blocks left unfinished remained as they were for a while. Some of these were acquired by companies and for the most part turned into offices. More recently, a few such apartment blocks were completed by the National Lottery and the apartments offered as prizes to winning players. But there is no coherent strategy to continue with a housing policy (be it the same or a different one) for the benefit of the many people who must share one apartment with their parents and children, nor has there been any serious consideration of rehabilitation schemes by the local administration, politicians or even private companies.

As mentioned above, chronology helps only in placing the housing districts in the context of the Romanian socialist reality. There are many other matters, such as the social migrations, which led to a different

social structure for the city, not to mention the near impossible task of defining Bucharest due to this massive change in its architectural heritage. These affect the whole city and should be taken into consideration if any serious steps towards a rehabilitation plan are to be made. The problems engendered in relation to these housing districts will be discussed in the following chapter.

2. Problems of the housing districts: the socio-psychological dimension

The architecture of a given period cannot be approached without taking into account many other areas of the society. Architecture, therefore, goes hand in hand with the economic development of the town or city in question and indeed of the whole country. This development determines population migrations, which, in turn, affects the housing stock. Other major events exert their own influence in these matters. The Second World War was such an event for the period under study here.

This is not true of Romania only. It also happened in all the countries of Eastern Europe. Again looking at matters chronologically, the war "had a devastating effect upon the housing stock of the region [and] added to this, was a large influx into the towns during and immediately after the war."[34] The report of a mission to Romania by the World Bank in 1979 identified some specific periods to be taken into account when dealing with housing and migration of the rural population to the towns. For instance, due to the post war situation, in 1950-1953 "urban employment increased without a parallel increase in housing and urban services, thereby suppressing migration to towns".[35] Some years passed before economic policy was reconsidered and agriculture - i.e. rural areas – benefited financially; there was an "accompanying decrease in the rate of urbanization [which] also eased the housing shortage".[36] However, there was renewed industrialization in 1958-1965, with an expansion of the heavy industry located near towns and cities. This continued up to 1978[37] and consequently there was renewed migration to towns and cities, this time in large numbers. As a matter of fact, between 1948 and 1975 the "urban population increased by 147 percent, [and] in 1975, the size of Bucharest was 7.1 times the size of the next largest city, Cluj-Napoca."[38]

A significant chart in the same World Bank report[39] shows that by around 1970, people who had migrated from rural areas to towns and cities constituted a major percentage of total migrations in the country. Furthermore, "the migration rates […] were highest among those between the ages of twenty and twenty-four", and "60 percent of those arriving in urban areas were between the ages of fifteen and twenty-nine."[40]

This brings us to a partial conclusion, which is of great use in this study, that today, the majority of the population residing in the big housing districts built during the socialist era are the first generation to live in the city (of those who came from rural areas). This is important as, by means of simple calculation, their respective ages can be obtained, ranging currently from 45 to 60 years of age. They continue to live in apartment blocks in these districts since the general housing stock has not been supplemented with affordable apartments since 1989. In fact, they often are forced to live together with their children (the second generation), and sometimes even with their grandchildren (the third generation) – thus quite often three family generations can be found in the same apartment. This makes for a very crowded environment, and there is much accumulation of tension in these districts. These tensions are juxtaposed with the hardships of the daily life, which in turn is due to the transition to a market economy and democracy.

At this point, I would like to turn to the quality of architectural and urban space. Not only did the architecture of the apartment blocks themselves suffer from the "standardized designs, where the main priority [was] a minimal use of materials",[41] but the residual space between buildings and the services in the area were not properly considered in the planning of the districts.

Firstly, the apartments had to observe the main rule that "[they] should not contribute to waste of resources through 'over-dimensioning' and 'over-finishing'".[42] Apartments built in the period up to the 1960s had one or two rooms.[43] Later, however, "the share of apartments with three or more rooms increased, while the number of one-room apartments fell substantially".[44] Some studies show there to have been an "improvement in living standards during the 1960s and 1970s because apartments had become larger and better equipped."[45]

One of the important factors shaping the new social structure of the housing districts was the way in which flats were allocated. There were waiting lists and priority was given to skilled workers from large companies

and young families with many children.[46] Most of these were the very same peasants who had come to town and did not meet the criteria of urban civilization; their rural way of life mixing with that of the former urban periphery, which itself cannot be considered civilized in the true sense of the word).[47] The result was a generalization of the periphery on both an urban and social scale, and although the regime pursued the homogenization of society through the hegemony of the urban working class,[48] social segregation is still very apparent in the city.[49]

On a second but equally important level, came the services in the housing districts, e.g. education, health and culture, shops and catering facilities.[50] In the 1960s, when these services were becoming a necessity, it was the *school* that was considered most important[51] and obviously could not be lacking in a *'microraion'*. In fact it was the school factor that defined the radius of a functional unit in socialist urban planning, according to which children were not supposed to walk more than a kilometer to the school in the neighborhood. Later, *commercial units* were similarly considered to be local centers that defined a zone, as were also local *cinemas* and the *culture houses*, which included multifunctional halls (used mainly for communist propaganda events) and libraries (used for group readings of political-ideological texts).[52] We can conclude at this point that the principles governing planning were geometrical-rationalist, with a powerful ideological component, rather than socially oriented.[53] Articles written at the time criticized (albeit mildly) the planning of the districts for having lost its preoccupation with "those urban spaces of a small community where people can intervene and make them more personal in order to express their belonging to that community and territory".[54] What more can be said of the vague mixture of 'individual comfort' and 'collective satisfaction', which at that time were indicators of social integration?[55]

We can agree, therefore, that real social life was not necessarily encouraged, despite propaganda statements to the contrary. I would go further to say that the lack of proper meeting places was a deliberate policy of the period.[56] The image today of the housing districts is for the most part the result of powerful ideological factors – a matter agreed on by many authors, both foreign and Romanian. There was a formulation of principles in favor of the strictest economy in building that "has inhibited architectural innovation generally, creating the distinct impression that housing economics are a vehicle for ideologically-motivated social engineering to limit the independence of the individual".[57] Furthermore,

"it is important to understand the radical nature of these plans because they led to the intrusion of the state activity into every aspect of social and domestic life, and which had control over housing policy and the building program as one of its key long-term policy instruments".[58]

Space is one of the most important factors that can shape a person's profile and therefore instruments of psychology were widely employed to create a new type of society.[59] In the same sorts of apartments, different kinds of people were forced to cohabit. It was similar to squeezing shapes with differing forms into the same square box. It is a person's personality and psychological profile, not mention education and real needs that determine the form of the person as shape in this analogy. Add to this rural-urban social interference and a pretty accurate picture can be painted of the mix existing within the communities of the housing districts.

Despite this no effort was made to reconcile social differences - on the contrary. Before the emergence of housing districts, the majority of people lived in traditional house-and-garden units, either in villages or towns, and this translated into an inhabitant typology based on a specific spiritual matrix. But the traditional is inevitably opposed to the new, and the Party was set on creating the socialist *new man.* As was to be expected, this mixture gave birth to a hybrid man whose spiritual matrixes were distorted by the move to new living areas. This happened precisely because it was man, as a *spiritual entity*, that was absent from the collective housing program.[60] Man was considered only as a 'work force', the city being the place where this 'work force' needed to live,[61] and nothing more.

These ideas were so viciously propagated in the period, that the population eventually came to see the city only as an "excessive agglomeration", in which the specific differentiating mark between town and village was *the apartment block.*[62] In fact, the apartment block is a small town in itself, offering a level of comfort that does not exist in traditional village homes (running water, central heating, modern furniture etc.) For many inhabitants of districts, a house is seen as a spiritual refuge, whereas the apartment is just the substitute to be lived in due to lack of other options (i.e. a house with all the above stated facilities cannot be afforded).[63]

This reinforces the idea mentioned above that "the replacement of the bourgeois individualism embodied in the individual private house with collective housing, an expression of the socialist collectivism, […]

is an argument which proves that urbanism has served some very clear political purposes."[64] This replacement of the firm concept of *the individual* with the vague term of *the collective* is one of the main factors that contributed to a reversal of values,[65] whose scale of effect is hard to reverse. This is why it is so difficult today to find ways to rehabilitate the housing districts, both figuratively and literally speaking. Their social lives follow complicated paths. Some are grounded in the socialist behavioral patterns that still exist; others have adapted to the new life style of a free-market economy, which has brought freedom of movement, new ideas, the Internet and the fluctuation of money (more for the more enterprising, less for others). More importantly, it is also a question of the conflict of generations, as mentioned above, and which is an aspect that should not be ignored.

The new society – and regime – should at least try to reconcile some of these aspects. Otherwise, the people will not agree to participate and share responsibilities in the real rehabilitation of the many housing districts (which can neither be demolished nor left as they are). The following chapter will try to identify possible solutions for rehabilitation. It will not attempt to discuss ways of physically repairing the buildings as that is a topic in its own right and worthy of a PhD.[66] Admittedly, the rehabilitation of the buildings is probably the main problem of the districts and needs to be addressed urgently with a coherent complex policy. With regard to its interests and limited length, this paper will only investigate ways of revitalizing these existing areas from a social point of view and by considering functions and architectural spaces where people can interact and form new relationships.

3. Solutions for improving the quality of life in the housing districts

In order to consider answers to the specific issues raised above, it is first necessary to define the terms used in the equation: district, neighborhood, working class, community center. The first two terms are somewhat similar, the *district* being commonly understood as an area defined spatially, by *neighboring* locations, and socially, by group identity and practices.[67] The following section will deal with definitions and an elaborate discussion of the latter two terms.

There is an obvious difficulty in finding the right equivalents in different languages for terms that relate to the city. By way of example, Françoise Choay considers the English *urban neighborhood* to be equivalent to the French *urbain de proximité* (local urban area), which defines "the closely-knit and diverse networks which have traditionally constituted the centers and districts of traditional towns as well as certain suburbs and outlying neighborhoods built in the twentieth century".[68] Admittedly, she relates to French and English in a dialogue between herself, as a French woman, and the interviewer, who is English. Nonetheless, in the same manner, I think it appropriate to correlate this difference in terminology to this paper, which is in fact in English, whereas its subject is the Romanian reality.

Thus, the Romanian term for district is *cartier*, which derives from the French *quartier*. The term has been in use since the 19th century and it designates – as does the English *district* - a part of the city enclosed within an administrative boundary.[69] There are similarities between the French and Romanian definitions, as there are between French and Romanian life styles – so we could consider the text of Pierre Mayol, which refers to *le quartier*,[70] as a basis for understanding the Romanian term. According to Mayol, *le quartier* is a place where social commitment is manifested, that is an act of coexisting with different partners (e.g. neighbors, shop owners and assistants, etc.).[71] This place therefore constitutes a matrix of the social environment, as it is – for the inhabitant – a portion of urban space, in which a person is recognized by other actors who are playing the same game.[72]

The term *neighborhood* itself suggests a certain homogeneity, a link to tradition, the relevance of space in organizational processes and the tight link between people and space.[73] If this is so, can we speak today of neighborhoods in the socialist housing districts? Has the space of the districts influenced the people, who in turn have left a mark upon this space? In time, the socialist housing district has become a reality that has its own governing rules, a sort of internal organization. Is this organization able to find ways to develop a decent neighborhood?

These questions can only be answered if the term *working class* is also addressed. All over Europe, the majority of the populations living in big apartment block ensembles have traditionally been working class people. A recent European study on culture and neighborhoods found that today, due to changes in the urban economy and labor market, the "working class nature of the [districts'] population is becoming a minor

identity factor compared to the ethnic and cultural characteristics of neighboring inhabitants".[74] In Romania, the ethnic component is not currently very strong, but the cultural crisis most definitely is, for politico-ideological reasons already described. Besides this, there is another important feature to be considered: the kind of social life which existed in the housing districts in the socialist years is inevitably starting to fade due to the different perceptions of the different generations of the post-communist reality. Different sets of relationships are created, two social universes coexist, as do the guidelines of 'before' and 'after' 1989, which unsurprisingly separate most explanations of daily facts.[75]

"One of the fundamental principles of psychology, with a major educational value, postulates that – in order to form new moods, structures and behavioral patterns in an adult individual – it is first necessary to devalue his/her old moods, structures and behavioral patterns by forcing him/her to renounce them".[76] The communist regime achieved this. Long-term policy instruments left deep scars in people's behavior and altered a whole social structure. Could it be done in reverse, even if it takes longer than the first time? Recuperating real values and re-installing normality is normally more difficult than their destruction by force. New action must be firm, but carried out in a different manner than in the socialist period. Still, how can people be *gently forced* into something good?

Possible solutions for enlivening social life in the Romanian housing districts would have to be based on a complex analysis of this set of problems. The spiritual matrix defined in the previous chapter would have to be juxtaposed with the matrix of the social environment, as described by Mayol. However, both of these contain so many hybrid elements that it would still be difficult to find particularities that will still work.

In my opinion the key to easing existing conflicts lies in the creation of community centers in the housing districts. But what sort of community centers? As already mentioned, this term is difficult enough in itself to define. The English *community center*, being the best-known example, is basically a multipurpose building where different age groups can meet and carry out a range of activities (figure 4). It is an establishment run voluntarily in most cases by members of the community and is a place where they can establish a dialogue on various matters of interest. The center must fulfill certain requirements in terms of location, as well as the internal functional requirements illustrated in the scheme. It must be

near the center of the neighborhood it serves. Access to at least one bus route and a public car park must be assured. Good connection by footpaths is important and proximity of shopping centers should be considered, as this may encourage use of the community center as crèche and cafe. Finally, the center should be located near a school for workshop and sports facilities, and close to a park for summer activities requiring changing rooms which can be found in the center.

Of course, this model would not be completely realistic in the Romanian environment as it is based too much on English reality. Neither can Christopher Alexander's well-known pattern language[77] help in establishing the needs of a multi-service center specific to a Romanian community. Furthermore, this community center would resemble too closely the culture houses of the socialist period, with their multifunctional halls and libraries, and as such might not be the proper answer to the problem. However, a kind of a community center has recently been established in some housing districts in the form of a program initiated by a number of parish churches to respond to the spiritual and social needs of the community.

Before exploring the several variants proposed by the priests of these churches, it should be mentioned that the big ensembles were originally built without any provision for spiritual life, as the church did not suit the communist ideal of society, promoting, in fact, opposite values. Not only were they not considered as an architectural type in the urban design of the rationalist districts, but the whole parish based structure – so typical of Bucharest (figure 5) – was shattered, no more so than in the 1980s which saw the deliberate demolishing of many churches. The parish structure had served as the organizing system of the administrative territory, in which the parish church was the geometrical and spiritual center of defined zones.[78] The accounts of several foreign authors writing about Bucharest also identified the parish unit with the small district called *mahala*.[79] The parish unit used to be relatively small, sometimes consisting only of a few houses around a church, a cemetery for the deceased of the community, a pub, tobacco shop, dressmaker's and a guardhouse.[80] Unfortunately, the dissolution of these traditional units started with the development of the new modern districts of the 19th century (a development which was cut short in Romania) and continued with the socialist housing districts, which represent the extreme limit of this de-structuring process.[81]

Some behavioral patterns of the *mahala* were nonetheless preserved in the housing districts, along with rural dwelling practices. Thus trying to recuperate the idea of the parish unit – in as far as it is possible – is not a bad idea. Some churches are already trying to implement this and I have taken three examples, each one typical of a specific housing area (figure 6).

Dobroteasa church is situated on Calea Văcărești, an old street in Bucharest that was transformed in the late 1980s into a forest of apartment blocks. Historically, the church stands near a once famous spring that is now blocked. It was the place the inhabitants of old Bucharest came to get good water to "combat anemia and weakness, which follow a febrile state".[82] Due to fire, the old church was replaced by a 19th century building. Between the Wars, an active religious association[83] would feed the poor in the parish and provide daily shelter and meals for orphans and poor students of the community. Some 200 persons could benefit from this social establishment built on the grounds of the church. With the regime changed, the land was confiscated and the establishment shut down. The church's current priest has managed to obtain legal papers which validate the boundary of the property and intends to raise funds to build several buildings, including a social establishment, a kindergarten, basic medical facilities, student accommodation and even a meeting hall for the use of the parish community. The construction would cover a surface of 3,400 square meters on a site fortunately still free of construction (see figure 6, above image on left).

Another example is that of *Sf. Vineri Titulescu church*. Its religious name is followed by the name of its location, on Titulescu Boulevard. The site is part of the area bordered by apartment block mentioned in Chapter 1. The church's current priest has gone one step further: he has set up a social establishment on the left side of the parish house behind the church (see figure 6, middle). Unfortunately, there is no free land around the church for building any extensions, but the semi-detached house provides the community with some services that had existed previously, such as social assistance.

One very interesting case is that of *Pogorârea Sf. Duh church* in the Balta Albă-Titan district (figure 6, bottom of page). This is a new church, built after 1989 on public land in Titan Park.[84] The site adjoins the main street and it is only big enough to hold the wooden church, a small edifice for burning candles, a book and candle shop, and a small open chapel in front of the church entrance. The church was designed in a

maramuresan style by an old architect.[85] Unfortunately the architect died before its completion and his plans were strictly respected when the building was finished. The wooden structure of the high roof cannot sustain much weight and the attic cannot be used. However, the inside of the spire is used: it has six levels of approximately 50 square meters, each linked by a staircase. These levels perform different functions: the first (and largest) level is used as a meeting room for the parish committee; the second is a small library endowed with a few computers (with Internet access) – the books, both religious and literature, were provided by parishioners. Other levels are used as meeting spaces for poetry and philosophy groups or as classrooms for teaching offered for free to the poor children in the community. The church also organizes pilgrimages to various monasteries in the country, the journeys being both in pursuit of religious guidance and artistic and architectural education. One recent activity of the church concerns a social program to integrate orphans into foster or adoption families.

The great advantage of this type of centers (with the church as spiritual and social organizing structure) is that funds are normally easy to obtain. Communities that contribute are mostly made up of believers who act for the good of their church and the community. Sometimes nonbelievers also participate when they see the results the donations achieve. This does not always apply to fund-raising in communities, which suffer from the general lack of trust engendered by many an unfortunate financial transaction in the post-communist period.[86] These kinds of churches, that involve themselves in community life, can help rebuild the feeling of belonging to the community on a re-interpreted traditional parish structure.[87]

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On the other hand, the public space and the particularized private space of the district mix due to the practical daily use of this space.[88] This general observation applies in the case of the Romanian housing districts, especially in the time-space relation. This is understood as the proximity level between home and other points of interests in terms of *walking distance* – which goes hand in hand with the socialist urban planning of the housing districts in which service units (schools, commerce and cultural points) define the radius of a functional unit.

Another idea for developing a community space involves schools. Socialist school design was of course standardized, as were other buildings.

Consequently, with very few exceptions, all schools in housing districts look the same, having: a U-shaped building, classrooms on the outer edge and corridors on the inner side of the U, facing an internal open courtyard. This courtyard is mainly used as an outdoor playground in good weather and as an assembly space for celebrations and prize giving at the end of the academic year; it is also separate from the handball or basketball courts that most schools also have.

As this is my profession, I could not help considering some architectural solutions to improve the use of the school outside school hours. I thus arrived at the idea of a light structure to be built in the courtyard, which could be used as a multifunctional hall for various activities by the people of the local area: youth, adults, children or parents. This solution has several advantages. Firstly, as the schools are well positioned in the area (see previous chapter), they can act as centers of the respective areas – following the principle of location. Furthermore, the design of the hall can be integrated with the building and its form (and dimensions and cost) tailored to suit the needs of the community after consultation with the architects. Finally, the hall could be rented out by the school management, which could help build a school fund.[89]

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Lack of spaces for the social interaction that is essential to a normal community life is one of the major problems facing the housing districts. In France (which, spiritually, has a matrix of daily occurrence closest to Romania), the continuity between the 'inside' (apartment) and the 'outside' (city)[90] is ensured by two kinds of spaces: *the café* (for men) and *the boutique* (for women). As it is here that social contacts are made and news is exchanged, these spaces function as outlets that succeed in re-balancing the social atmosphere between the world of work and that of intimate life.[91] In socialist times, there were no such places outside the blocks themselves. This role was filled by the kitchens in the apartments.[92] Men would invite fellow neighbors for a drink and women would have coffee in the kitchen. Such an intrusion into private life of a family was actually thought of as beneficial in those times, when entertainment was scarce and the kitchen provided a warm intimate place (both literally, due to heating economy in the period, and figuratively). The apartment was *the* social space. People living on the same floor developed special relationships and the neighborhood of the floor has proven the most powerful of all. The many neighborhoods in an apartment block with several floors can be preserved by use of other relational channels. This

often means the children: children make friends easily and can bring their families closer.[93] Thus, families can jump from the status of neighbor to that of family friends, the main advantage of which is an alternating baby-sitting scheme.[94]

Another (outdoor) space which has acted as a social coagulator, and which still does, is the park. Although the big parks of the housing districts have been condemned "as a source of anxiety, crime, and lack of comfort," in which "the inhabitants are deprived the possibility of the social contacts essential to daily life",[95] in practice it is in the parks that children play, youths walk or jog, and grandparents and mothers exchange news (especially of their children), and many times talk leads to friendships.

One particular lady, Corina M., has recently put together all the information she could gather and developed a project for a mothers' center. 30 years old and the mother of three, Corina left her job as a physicist due to household responsibilities. Her interests had changed and she found herself surrounded by at times overwhelming problems. She started to study psycho-sociology at the university, and with the new perspectives this gave her she grew interested in establishing a center to help women cope with the challenges of motherhood. This club was to have a daily program and would perform several functions: there would be a consultation room for the psychological counseling of mothers (run by appointment), a meeting room with a kitchen for mothers to have coffee and talk and await consultation, a playroom for children, where children could play under supervision (no educational pretensions) while their mothers are in consultation or engaged in other activities. These activities could be artistic, which would invest in women's creativity and helping them to feel motivated and useful. For example, if a woman wishes resume playing the piano again after having given it up on becoming a mother, she would be able to rehearse at the center and give a concert to raise money for other community activities. Similarly, mothers might paint pictures at the center and hold an exhibition to sell the paintings for modest amounts for the benefit of the center.

As part of her research, Corina made an inquiry with the women of her district. The results show that women would be happy to participate in the activities of such a center. This could be set up first as a pilot project, with funding from a financing program (e.g. PHARE) and then developed into a network, if successful. The center could be based in an apartment, or be made up from the larger space of two or three adjoining flats on the same floor, in which case the flats should have a flexible

construction – pillar and beam – to facilitate the necessary repartitioning. This would continue the 'tradition' of the floor neighborhoods formed in previous decades, solve the baby-sitting problem that arises when mothers engage in other activities, enhance dialogue between members of the same community in terms of continuing relationships already established in the park or forming of new relationships, and ease households tensions due to generational conflict or the pressure of motherhood.

***

The three solutions proposed by no means cover all existing possibilities. We cannot afford to behave as if life went on as usual, as older spatial orders like the neighborhood run the risk of disappearing because they are unable to find ways of preserving and adjusting their special intensity in new fragmented social environments.[96] The *shopping malls* are the newest form of entertainment space in Bucharest. Here people meet or go to see and be seen. They have become centers of peripheral areas and have revitalized them. An example of this kind is the Bucharest Mall in Dudești, a former 'ghettoized' area inhabited by gypsies. The Mall has radically transformed the area. A 'natural implant' in terms of new population has occurred as prices for apartments have grown: people of higher social standing have moved to the area,[97] which has become an extension of the city center. The same is expected to happen in the Balta-Albă area where a French company is planning the construction of a large shopping complex in a part of the park[98] (though, a recent newspaper article highlighted opposition by local people to any interference with the park).[99]

One current idea in planning is the challenge of creating more satisfactory central spaces in the new urban areas on the edge of cities.[100] Reduction of human activities down to the level of the work/sleep pattern has been proven wrong. The attraction of the city in terms of its cultural institutions has proved stronger.[101] Could the generalized periphery introduced by the communist regime be turned into a network of district centers linked to the city center? This idea should be considered by the public administration, politicians and other bodies involved in the process of city development.

Conclusion

Common opinion has it that Bucharest is a collage-city.[102] Many different communities can be encountered due to the variety of housing and areas of the city. In the socialist period the social mixture became even greater in both the districts and center of the city, despite the purpose of the program for socialist reconstruction of the towns, which was to 'eradicate of the contradiction between center and periphery'.[103]

Bucharest's housing districts are alienating spaces, which extend their influence beyond their physical limits. The motivation behind this research was to meet the need of real dialogue among members of today's Romanian society. The art of coexisting with different partners (discussed earlier) should lead to such *dialogue*. Learning to respect others in both public and private spaces is the main requirement for a healthy society that aims to move forward and leave the scars of communism behind. Such dialogue can only exist in places where people meet to share their various experiences.

Rehabilitation of the housing districts should therefore consider the creation of a varied architectural environment, as opposed to the standardized shapes advocated in years past. This could be the alternation of blocks of flats with areas of detached houses wherever there are large surfaces of unused land. Examples of this can already be seen in the Balta Albă-Titan and Fundeni districts. There must also be creation of new services, e.g. shopping malls, centers for mothers, multipurpose halls etc., which should respond to the real needs of a de-structured and disoriented society in which groups are trying to define their new positions. These services can either be placed in newly built edifices or existent spaces could be renovated to suit the given functions (e.g. schools, apartments). The latter solution might appear more appealing at first glance on financial grounds. In Glasgow, for example, a city with housing districts and problems similar to those in Romanian, cultural projects involving children have brought life to the most deprived peripheral neighborhoods.[104] If they can do it, why cannot we?

On the other hand, Bucharest is a city that has never had big plazas. In the pre-war period, Bucharest was made up of small communities centered around churches and organized on a parish structure. Re-consideration of this structure may lead to re-establishment of small district centers which would act as focal points for the community. The big ensembles do not operate as big neighborhoods in their entirety. Small

neighborhoods exist at various levels, in which people pursue relationships established previously or make new friends, as a result of an influx of new interests.

The lack of a *feeling of belonging*, whether accepted or contested, is probably due to the traditional type of urban Bucharest property.[105] In general, however, people tend to belong somewhere. They need to recognize others and be recognized in their turn in order to structure their daily existence. The neighborhood as *lieu de la reconnaisance*[106] should be understood in terms of space defining characters. It is all the more important to have neighborhoods, as they can also be an antidote to the so-called cyberspace of today's society, which is always on the move.[107] Place is still a source of identity. Each district has its own types of people; researches conducted by social scientists at this level are still few in number and sorely needed. A multitude of solutions to a variety of problems in distinct areas can offer a real alternative to pre-determined answers to a complex issue that deserves farther investigation.
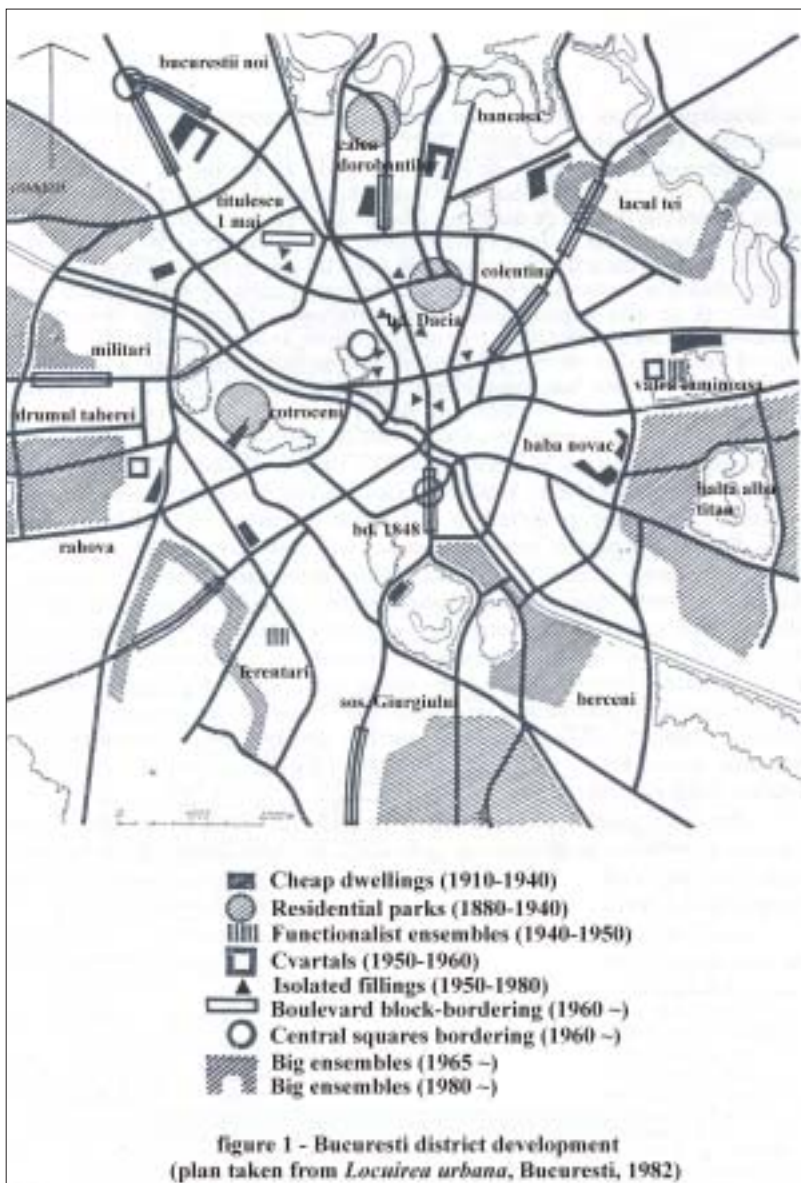
Cheap dwellings (1910-1940)
Residential parks (1880-1940)
Functionalist ensembles (1940-1950)
Cvartals (1950-1960)
Isolated fillings (1950-1980)
Boulevard block-bordering (1960 ~)
Central squares bordering (1960 ~)
Big ensembles (1965 ~)
Big ensembles (1980 ~)

figure 1 - Bucuresti district development
(plan taken from *Locuirea urbana*, Bucuresti, 1982)

Figure 1. Bucharest, district development
(source: Derer, Peter - *Locuirea urbană*, București, 1982)
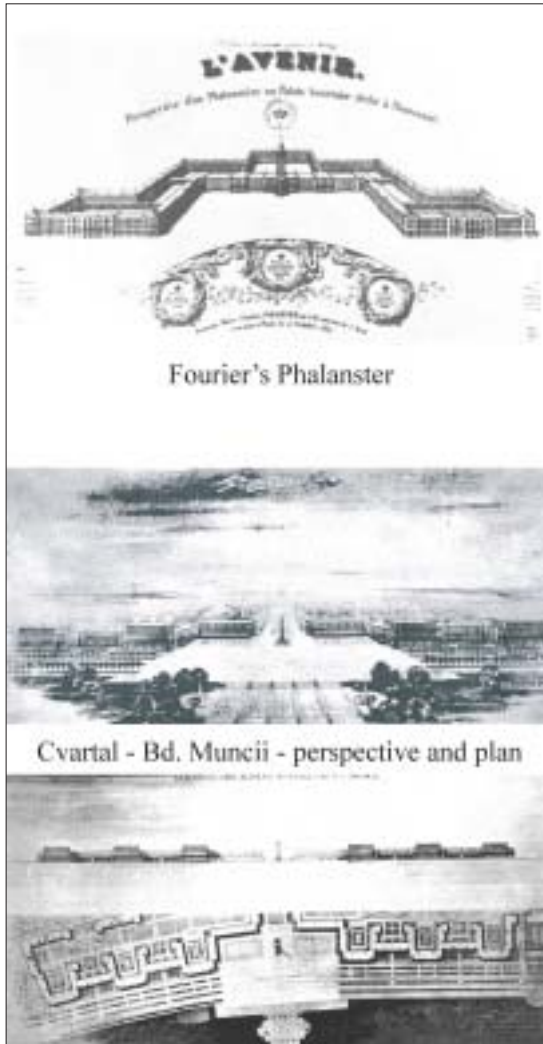
Figure 2
▪ Fourier's phalanster (source: Considerant, Victor-Prosper – *Description du Phalanstere et considérations sociales sur l'architéctonique*, Guy Durier, ed., Paris, 1979)
▪   Cvartal – Muncii Boulevard, Bucharest, perspective and plan (source: *Arhitectura* magazine 7/1955)

Unité d'habitation - Marseille

Balta Albă - Titan - blocks

Figure 3
- Le Corbusier - Unité d'habitation, Marseille (source: author's photo)
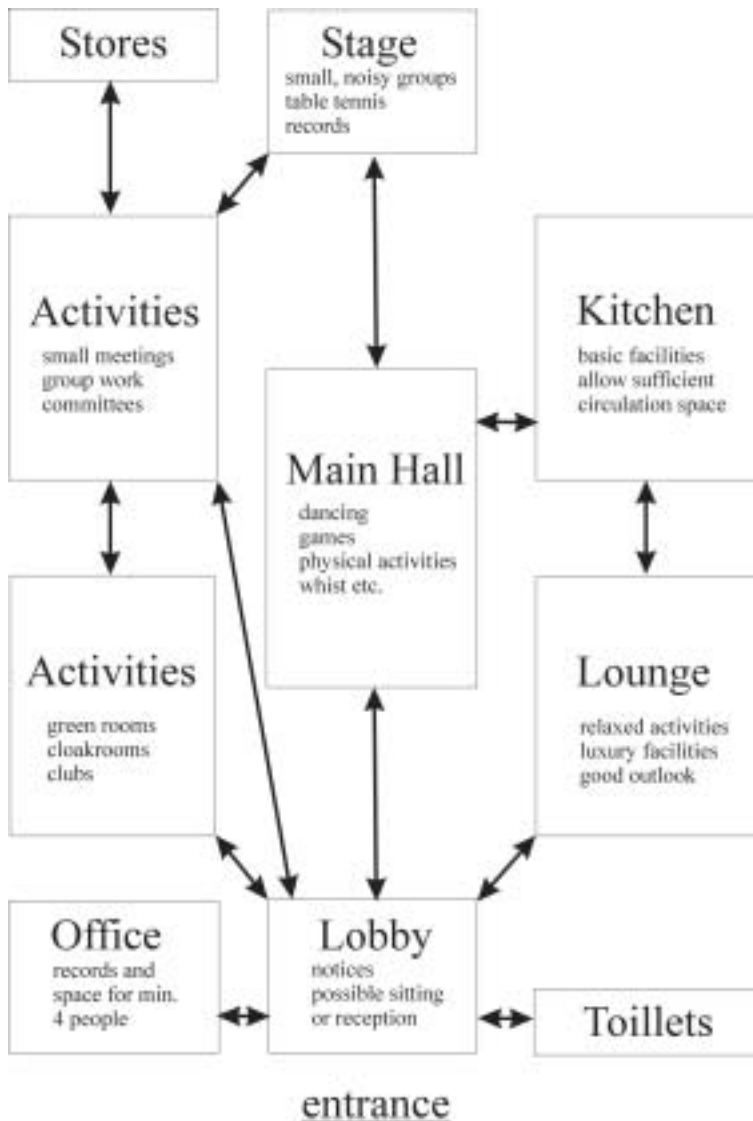- Blocks in Balta Albă-Titan district, Bucharest (source: author's photo)

Figure 4. An English community center scheme (source: *Building a Community Centre*, National Federation of Community Associations, London, 1969).

Figure 5. Parishes in Bucharest – detail of eastern part and complete
plan of the city (source: Harhoiu, Dana – *București, un oraș între
Orient și Occident*, Ed. Simetria, București, 1997)

Figure 6. Three churches in Bucharest: Dobroteasa (above), Sf. Vineri –
Titulescu (middle), Pogorîrea Sf. Duh – Titan (bottom)
(source: author's photos)

NOTES

1. Françoise Choay's commentary in *Culture and neighborhoods*, volume 4, Council of Europe Publishing, 1998, p. 73.
2. There is an idyllic view of Bucharest as being '*le petit Paris*' of the pre-communist period, which is still preserved mainly due to nostalgia. We do not propose to debate here this issue; for different books and articles on Bucharest, see the bibliography at the end of this paper. Although most of these discussions cannot be easily localized - as talks and commentaries about Bucharest are frequent in all media, milieus and classes – it is worth mentioning that issues such as *București*, Secolul XX, no. 4-6/1997 have approached the city from various angles.
3. A recent debate on the rehabilitation of housing districts around the country (including Bucharest) was initiated by the Association of the Chief Architects of the Cities (Corpul Arhitecților Șefi de Municipii).
4. For ample discussion of neighborhood design and the shaping of a community, see Talen, Emily, "The Problem with Community in Planning", in *Journal of Planning Literature*, Nov. 2000, vol.15, Issue 2, p.171, 13p.
5. Urban models are discussed by Choay, Françoise in *L'Urbanisme, utopies et réalités*, Éditions du Seuil, Paris, 1965, pp. 7 – 83.
6. Apparently, architect Cerda from Barcelona was the first to use the term 'urbanism'.
7. "Le modèle progressiste et le modèle culturaliste", Choay, Françoise, *L'Urbanisme*, op. cit.
8. For detailed examples (illustrated commentaries) of the two models, see Teodorescu, Ioana, "Cartiere de blocuri. Modele și practică", in *Octogon*, no. 10/ 2002, pp. 21- 26.
9. See Considerant, Victor-Prosper, *Déscription du Phalanstere et considérations sociales sur l'architéctonique*, Guy Durier, ed., Paris, 1979.
10. See the works of John Ruskin, such as *The Poetry of Architecture* (1837) and *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849) or William Morris' *Lectures on Socialism* (1883-1894) and *Lectures on Art and Industry* (1881-1894).
11. With the exception of the work colonies founded by Robert Owen in Scotland (New Lanark) and in the United States (New Harmony), as far as the progressive model is concerned. As for the cultural model, Ebenezer Howard's garden city followed the line of Ruskin and Morris and favored the idea of individual rather than collective property supported by the progressists; the garden-city model was quite successful in England, but its green belts around the city are contested nowadays, as they act as a sort of defensive wall, prohibiting city expansion, see *Culture and neighborhoods*, op. cit., p. 49.
12. Garnier, Tony, *La cité industrièlle*, London, Studio Vista, 1969.
13. This happened mainly because there was a need to rebuild the cities quickly following the war damage suffered in many European countries.

14   'La machine à habiter' is a concept found in most of Le Corbusier's works, such as *Vers une architecture* (1923), *Urbanisme* (1925), *La Charte d'Athènes* (1933) etc.

15   This is the most 'luxurious' and the best preserved among Le Corbusier's buildings of this kind, and was also redone recently. See Teodorescu, Ioana, op.cit.

16   Derer, Peter – "Reflexe urbanistice ale transformării modului de locuire", in *Arhitectura* 3/1971, p. 20.

17   Details of the housing districts of the socialist period were compiled by Peter Derer from various issues of *Arhitectura* magazine, which provides a large collection of plans and commentaries of the time in this respect. See Derer, Peter, *Locuirea urbană*, Ed. Tehnică, București, 1985.

18   Taken from Derer, Peter, *Locuirea urbană*, op. cit., p. 170. I am indebted to Prof. Derer who graciously agreed to let me publish the scheme in this paper.

19   This housing was built in 1910-1940 for the lower-middle class (e.g. teachers and clerks) and were relatively cheap at the time; later, it turned out they were a better alternative to living in an apartment block and their price increased drastically in the socialist years.

20   Collective buildings with private apartments also existed before the communist era, but their use was somewhat different: the buildings were constructed in central areas, the big apartments being occupied mostly by lawyers, architects, professors etc.; on the other hand, the smaller apartments and studios apartments were a sort of city refuge for those who lived in the outskirts of the city and wanted to stay in the city overnight.

21   It was never planned that the communist elite should live in collective housing; rather they abusively occupied the residences of the former upper classes.

22   It is hard to find an equivalent in English for the two words, all the more so because their usage in the architectural literature is relatively confused as they are juxtaposed around the 1960s. The *'cvartal'* is usually a precinct of apartment block of about 3 or 4 stories, whereas the *'microraion'* is an imported Russian concept which defines the basic urban unit of the larger housing district and covers "housing, industry, services and recreational facilities" (Sillince, J.A.A., ed., *Housing Policies in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, Routledge, London, 1990, p. 151). As such, some works of the period consider the *'microraion'* to be "the smallest structurally complex unit with an autonomous level": Derer, Peter – *Locuirea urbană*, op. cit., p. 150.

23   The Athens Charter is a document which resulted from the talks on housing issues at the International Congress of Modern Architecture in 1933. It was mostly Le Corbusier who supported these principles, one of whose palpable results is the *unité d'habitation*, *The Athens Charter*, Grossman Publishers, 1973.

24 See above for the description of Marseille *unite d'habitation*.

25 Although this was in accordance with Le Corbusier's 'ville radieuse', interestingly enough a decision of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party of USSR on 1 August 1932 adopted the "principle of separation of functions in the city plan", which meant exactly the "creation of industrial zones separately from housing districts, with a protection zone in-between", see Velescu, Oliver, "Ideologia 'restructurării urbane'" 1944-1972 (I), in *Arhivele Totalitarismului*, in no. 17, 4/1997, pp. 68-69.

26 Iakovlev, V.E., *Amplasarea întreprinderilor industriale în orașe*, translated from the Russian, Bucharest, 1954, quoted in Velescu, Oliver, "Ideologia 'restructurării urbane'" 1944-1972 (I), op. cit., p. 66.

27 Such is the case of the *Balta Albă-Titan, Drumul Taberei,* and *Berceni* districts (see figure 1).

28 An example is the whole of the residential area of *Uranus*, based on the traditional type of housing (small houses with gardens), which were removed to make room for Nicolae Ceaușescu's megalomaniac area around the former Victoria Socialismului boulevard (now Unirii boulevard) and Casa Poporului ("The People's House", which ironically now houses the Romanian Parliament).

29 Due to increasing density in Romanian cities, see Sillince, J.A.A., ed., *Housing Policies in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union,* op. cit., p. 152.

30 This meant that cities could no longer expand outside this perimeter, so everything that was to be built had to be built inside the newly defined borders.

31 My opinion is that this is only a question of false terminology - typical of the communist regime – in terms of the definition of the difference between the former 'mare ansamblu' (big ensemble) and the later 'complex de locuit' (housing complex). In effect, they are one and the same thing because apart from the new density, they are not very different in structure, the same blocks being employed as housing units and the same sort of services available in a similar area.

32 Laws no. 57, 59/1974 and 37/1975.

33 Rău, Romeo and Mihuță, Dan, *Unități urbanistice complexe*, Ed. Tehnică, București, 1969. But, as Peter Derer also notes (in *Locuirea urbană*, op.cit., p. 157), this definition overlaps with the term 'microraion'.

34 Sillince, J.A.A., ed., *Housing Policies in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union,* op. cit., p. 36.

35 Tsantis, Andreas C. and Pepper, Roy, *ROMANIA - The Industrialization of an Agrarian Economy under Socialist Planning*, (Report of a mission to Romania by the World Bank), The World Bank, 1979, p. 460.

36 Ibid, p. 461.

37 The report for the World Bank finishes in the year 1978, and also takes into account the earthquake in 1977.

38 Tsantis, Andreas C. *ROMANIA - The Industrialization of an Agrarian Economy under Socialist Planning*, op. cit., p. 135.

39 Ibid, p. 136.

40 Ibid, p. 137.

41 Ibid, p. 290.

42 Ibid, p. 288.

43 In Romania, the number of rooms in a house/apartment does not refer to bedrooms only, but also includes the living/dining room; kitchen and bathrooms are considered as facilities and therefore do not count towards the number of rooms.

44 Tsantis, Andreas C., *ROMANIA - The Industrialization of an Agrarian Economy under Socialist Planning*, op. cit., see table 12.12 at pp. 298-299.

45 Sillince, J.A.A., ed., *Housing Policies in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, op. cit., p. 164.

46 Turner, Bengt, ed. (with Jozsef Hegedus and Ivan Tosics), *The Reform of Housing in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, Routledge, London 1992, p. 227, and Velescu, Oliver, "Ideologia 'restructurării urbane'" 1944-1972, in *Arhivele Totalitarismului*, (II) in no. 18, 1/1998, p. 69.

47 Velescu, Oliver, "Ideologia 'restructurării urbane'" 1944-1972 (II), op. cit., p. 71.

48 Turner, Bengt, ed., *The Reform of Housing in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, op. cit., p. 219.

49 Sillince, J.A.A., ed., *Housing Policies in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, op. cit., p.156. On the heterogeneity of housing districts, see the social enquiry in block 311 in Militari district, Bucharest, in Mihăilescu, Vintilă (with Viorica Nicolau, Mircea Gheorghiu, Costel Olaru), "Blocul - între loc și locuire", in *Revista de Cercetări Sociale*, 1/1994, pp. 70-89.

50 Sillince, J.A.A., ed., *Housing Policies in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, op. cit., p. 152.

51 Derer, Peter, *Locuirea urbană*, op. cit., p. 150.

52 Strat, Cătălin, "Tehnici de propagandă comunistă în România", in *Arhivele Totalitarismului*, (I – period 1945-1960) in no. 22-23, 1-2/1999, pp. 226-241 and (II – period 1961-1962) in no. 24-25, 3-4/1999, pp. 219-229.

53 Peter Derer criticizes this, as well as the lack of social cultural centers in the neighborhoods: "the too slow coagulation of neighborhood social relations", in *Locuirea urbană*, op. cit., p. 162. The critique is quite vague and ambiguous though, which is understandable for the period when the book was published (1985).

54 Matei, Adriana, "Mutații sociale determinate de schimbările conceptului de locuire în condițiile urbanizării", in *Arhitectura* 1/1979, p. 56.

55 Derer, Peter, *Locuirea urbană*, op. cit., p. 178.

56 In the socialist period it was thought that meetings could degenerate into political manifestations.

57   Sillince, J.A.A., ed., *Housing Policies in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, op. cit., p. 136.

58   Turner, Bengt, ed., *The Reform of Housing in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, op. cit., p. 218.

59   Golu, Mihai, "Dimensiunea psihologică a totalitarismului. Cazul regimului comunist", in *Arhivele Totalitarismului*, no. 19-20, 2-3/1998, pp. 75-84.

60   Velescu, Oliver, "Ideologia 'restructurării urbane'" 1944-1972 (II), op. cit., p. 70.

61   Quoted from Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej's speech at the 3rd Congress of the Romanian Worker's Party, in Velescu, Oliver, "Ideologia 'restructurării urbane'" 1944-1972 (II), op. cit., p. 63.

62   Mihăilescu, Vintilă, "Blocul – între loc și locuire",op. cit., p. 74. For a survey of students in 2002, see also Teodorescu, Ioana – "Loc plăcut, loc neplăcut", a study on the quality of places, to be published later at Ed. Polirom, in a collection of the works of a symposium held in Iași, Romania, entitled "Teritorii, scrieri și de-scrieri".

63   Mihăilescu, Vintilă, "Blocul – între loc și locuire", op. cit., pp. 74-75.

64   Velescu, Oliver, "Ideologia 'restructurării urbane'" 1944-1972 (I), op. cit., p. 64.

65   Golu, Mihai, "Dimensiunea psihologică a totalitarismului. Cazul regimului comunist", op. cit., p. 76.

66   Tănase, Raluca, *Analiza unui set de disfuncționalități majore și soluții ale urbanismului operațional pentru construcția, renovarea, întreținerea și administrarea locuințelor și zonelor de locuit* (marile ansambluri), PhD thesis, completed in June 2002 at the Technical University of Construction in Bucharest.

67   *Culture and neighborhoods*, op. cit., p. 23.

68   Ibid, p. 69.

69   The more popular term in Romanian used to be '*mahala*' – a term also employed by French authors such as Ulysse de Marsillac or Paul Morand (see bibliography) – but I shall discuss this later, in connection with the parish (*parohie*).

70   Certeau, Michel de (with Luce Giard & Pierre Mayol), *L'invention du quotidien; 2. habiter, cuisiner*, Ed. Gallimard, Paris, 1994. The part dealing with *Habiter* (Living) is written by Pierre Mayol, pp. 15-185.

71   Ibid, p. 17.

72   Ibid, p.18.

73   *Culture and neighborhoods*, op. cit., p. 23.

74   Ibid, p. 108.

75   In a social inquiry conducted after 1989 in a Romanian housing district, people mostly sorted information in terms of this time aspect: "before, it was like that, today it is like this". See Mihăilescu, Vintilă, "Blocul – între loc și locuire", op. cit, p. 80.

76 Golu, Mihai, "Dimensiunea psihologică a totalitarismului. Cazul regimului comunist", op. cit., p. 81.

77 Alexander, Christopher, *A Pattern Language Which Generates Multi-Service Centers*, The Center for Environmental Structure, California, 1968. The book presents a network of activities and patterns resulting from the practice of designing, which are analyzed separately and then recomposed to suit a new design idea, on the basis of sequences. These sequences offer the designer different sets of relationships and help in prioritizing patterns which should be considered in the design process.

78 Harhoiu, Dana, *București, un oraș între orient și occident*, Ed. Simetria, București, 1997, p. 31.

79 The term *mahala* appears in the 17th century, signifying a district as a structural element of the city. For an introduction to the matter, see Voiculescu, Sanda, "Parohia – spațiu de agregare religioasă, socială și urbanistică", in *București*, Secolul XX, no. 4-6/1997, pp. 146-153. For foreign authors describing the *mahala*, see Marsillac, Ulysee de, *Bucureștiul în veacul al XIX-lea*, Ed. Meridiane, București, 1999, p. 87, 124 and Morand, Paul, *București*, Ed. Echinox, Cluj, 2000, pp. 125-132.

80 A German traveler's note in 1856, in George Potra's *Bucureștii văzuți de călători străini*, 1992, p. 112.

81 Voiculescu, Sanda, "Parohia – spațiu de agregare religioasă, socială și urbanistică", op. cit., p. 152.

82 Marsillac, Ulysee de, *Bucureștiul în veacul al XIX-lea*, op. cit., p. 249.

83 *Asociația Frățiorii Domnului* – information kindly provided by father Sima, the present priest of Dobroteasa church, as all the other data on the proposed recreation of the parish ensemble.

84 It is to the merit of priest Adrian Niculce that he persuaded the Administration of Public Land to rent the church this piece of land and mobilized the whole community to contribute to the funding of works.

85 Maramureș is a northern county of Romania. The illustration on figure 6 shows the wooden church (which is typically *maramuresan*) with its high spire and open exonarthex on three sides.

86 Bankruptcy of state-owned banks, funds and societies, some due to the transition period and others to frauds and swindles.

87 An idea also supported by Sanda Voiculescu in the conclusion to her article on the parish, op.cit.

88 Certeau, Michel de, *L'invention du quotidien*, op. cit., p.18.

89 The Reform of Education, which was initiated in 1997 and co-funded by the World Bank and the Ministry of National Education, had a particular component which dealt with the development of school management and finance.

90 "Le 'dedans' (du logement) et le 'dehors' (de la ville)" - Certeau, Michel de, *L'invention du quotidien*, op. cit., p. 21.

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91   Ibid, p. 38.
92   Mihăilescu, Vintilă, "Blocul – între loc şi locuire", op. cit., pp. 80-81.
93   Ibid, p. 80.
94   Ibid, p. 81.
95   Derer, Peter, *Locuirea urbană*, op. cit., p. 152.
96   *Culture and neighborhoods*, op. cit., p. 62.
97   This idea is also advocated in *Culture and neighborhoods*, op. cit., p. 55.
98   *** "Vânzătorii de apartamente din Titan vor să urce preţurile" (title: "Apartment sellers in Titan to raise prices"), in *Capital* (Secţiunea Investiţii), no.23/ 6 June 2002, p. 37.
99   *** "Parcul IOR va distrus de 'betoane'", in *Libertatea*, 24 June 2002, p. 5. The article is tendentious (title reads: "The IOR park will be destroyed by concrete"); the answers seem to indicate people's irritation with an unformulated question that has to be guessed at: "would you like your park to be turned into a district center?" This is, in fact, not true, as the section of the park under discussion is a piece of land not currently in use and surrounded by a tall fence; the rest of the park will remain un-changed.
100   *Culture and neighborhoods*, op. cit., p. 53.
101   Velescu, Oliver, "Ideologia 'restructurării urbane'" 1944-1972 (I), op. cit., p. 69.
102   Quoting from Pierre von Meiss in Voiculescu, Sanda, "Parohia – spaţiu de agregare religioasă, socială şi urbanistică", op. cit., p. 146.
103   Velescu, Oliver, "Ideologia 'restructurării urbane'" 1944-1972 (I), op. cit., p. 68.
104   *Culture and neighborhoods*, op. cit., p. 54. See also Glendinning, Miles and Muthesius, Stefan, *Tower Block: Modern Public Housing in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland*, Yale Univ Press, 1994.
105   Voiculescu, Sanda, "Parohia – spaţiu de agregare religioasă, socială şi urbanistică", op. cit., p. 148.
106   Certeau, Michel de, *L'invention du quotidien*, op. cit., p. 23.
107   Françoise Choay's opinion in *Culture and neighborhoods*, op. cit., p. 73.

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LECTURES AND SEMINARS IN THE GE-NEC PROGRAM
October 2000 – May 2002

December 1, 2000	Seminar	**Prof. Ian JEFFREY** Goldsmith College, University of London ***Marcel Broodthaers and Subject Matter***
December 1, 2000	Seminar	**Prof. Ian JEFFREY** Goldsmith College, University of London ***Post-Modernism in Art in general and in Britain in particular***
Deccember 5, 2000	Seminar	**Prof. Ian JEFFREY** Goldsmith College, University of London ***Post-Modern Documentary Photography***
January 5, 2001	Seminar	**Prof. Michael Ann HOLLY** Department of Visual and Cultural Studies, University of Rochester, USA & **Prof. Keith MOXEY** Department of Art History, Barnard College and Columbia University, USA ***Open Discussion on Art History and Visual Studies***

January 12, 2001	Lecture	**Prof. Keith MOXEY** Department of Art History, Barnard College and Columbia University, USA ***Nostalgia for the Real: The Troubled Relation of Art History and Visual Studies***
January 15, 2001	Seminar	**Prof. Keith MOXEY** Department of Art History, Barnard College and Columbia University, USA & **Prof. Michael Ann HOLLY** Department of Visual and Cultural Studies, University of Rochester, USA ***Questionnaire on Visual Culture***
January 16, 2001	Lecture	**Prof. Michael Ann HOLLY** Department of Visual and Cultural Studies, University of Rochester, USA ***Mourning and Method in Art History***
January 25, 2001	Lecture	**Prof. Dr. Hans BELTING** Institute for Media Studies, Karlsruhe, Germany ***Images in Anthropological Practice***
January 26, 2001	Seminar	**Prof. Dr. Hans BELTING** Institute for Media Studies, Karlsruhe, Germany ***Open Discussion***

February 26, 2001	Lecture	**Prof. Victor STOICHIȚĂ** Séminaire d'Histoire de l'Art, Faculté des Lettres, Université de Fribourg, Switzerland
		The Picture that Kills
February 28, 2001	Seminar	**Prof. Victor STOICHIȚĂ** Séminaire d'Histoire de l'Art, Faculté des Lettres, Université de Fribourg, Switzerland
		Introduction to Questions of Hermeneutics of the Image
March 1, 2001	Seminar	**Prof. Victor STOICHIȚĂ** Séminaire d'Histoire de l'Art, Faculté des Lettres, Université de Fribourg, Switzerland
		The Limits of Reading: Giotto and the Text
March 5, 2001	Seminar	**Prof. Victor STOICHIȚĂ** Séminaire d'Histoire de l'Art, Faculté des Lettres, Université de Fribourg, Switzerland
		The Limits of Interpretation: Aspects of Portraiture in Mannerist Art
March 7, 2001	Seminar	**Prof. Victor STOICHIȚĂ** Séminaire d'Histoire de l'Art, Faculté des Lettres, Université de Fribourg, Switzerland
		The Limits of Representation: Mystic Experience and Spanish Painting in the Golden Age

March 8, 2001	Seminar	**Prof. Victor STOICHIŢĂ** Séminaire d'Histoire de l'Art, Faculté des Lettres, Université de Fribourg, Switzerland
		Panofsky's Limits: Helen of Troy and Her Double
March 12, 2001	Lecture	**Prof. Steven MANSBACH** Department of the History of Art, Pratt Institute, New York, USA
		Methodology and Meanings in the Modern Art of Eastern Europe
March 13, 2001	Seminar	**Prof. Steven MANSBACH** Department of the History of Art, Pratt Institute, New York, USA
		Free discussions on the preceding lecture
March 16, 2001	Lecture	**Prof. Steven MANSBACH** Department of the History of Art, Pratt Institute, New York, USA
		Modern Arts and Baltic Identities
March 26, 2001	Lecture	**Prof. Wolfgang KEMP** Kunstgeschichtliches Seminar, Universität Hamburg, Germany
		Late Roman Art: A Comparative Approach to Pagan, Jewish and Christian Art (I)

March 28, 2001	Lecture	**Prof. Wolfgang KEMP** Kunstgeschichtliches Seminar, Universität Hamburg, Germany *Late Roman Art: A Comparative Approach to Pagan, Jewish and Christian Art (II)*
March 30, 2001	Lecture	**Prof. Wolfgang KEMP** Kunstgeschichtliches Seminar, Universität Hamburg, Germany *Late Roman Art: A Comparative Approach to Pagan, Jewish and Christian Art (III)*
April 2, 2001	Lecture	**Prof. Wolfgang KEMP** Kunstgeschichtliches Seminar, Universität Hamburg, Germany *Late Roman Art: A Comparative Approach to Pagan, Jewish and Christian Art (IV)*
April 4, 2001	Lecture	**Prof. Wolfgang KEMP** Kunstgeschichtliches Seminar, Universität Hamburg, Germany *Late Roman Art: A Comparative Approach to Pagan, Jewish and Christian Art (V)*

May 19-26, 2001	Lectures	**Prof. Jean-Claude SCHMITT** École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Groupe d'Anthropologie Historique de l'Occident Médiéval, Paris, France & **Prof. Jean-Claude BONNE** École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Groupe d'Anthropologie Historique de l'Occident Médiéval, Paris, France *A group of 30 students and young specialists in medieval art traveled to Ipoteşti for a one-week study trip to the painted monasteries in the North of Moldova, where lectures on the medieval image given by Professor Schmitt and Professor Bonne alternated with visits to medieval monuments in the vicinity*
May 20 2001		Departure from Bucharest, with visits on the way to the Neamţ and Probota monasteries
May 21 2001 (morning)	Lecture	**Prof. Jean-Claude SCHMITT** École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Groupe d'Anthropologie Historique de l'Occident Médiéval, Paris, France ***Introduction à l'image médiévale***

May 21 2001 (afternoon)	Lecture	**Prof. Jean-Claude BONNE** École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Groupe d'Anthropologie Historique de l'Occident Médiéval, Paris, France
		L'orenemental dans l'art du Moyen Age
May 22, 2001		Visits to the monasteries of Voroneț and Humor
May 23, 2001		Visits to the monasteries of Suceviţa and Moldoviţa
May 24, 2001 (morning)	Lecture	**Prof. Jean-Claude SCHMITT** École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Groupe d'Anthropologie Historique de l'Occident Médiéval, Paris, France
		Les programmes enluminés des psautiers des reines de France Ingeburge de Danemark et Blanche de Castille au début du XIIIe siècle
(afternoon)		Visit to Suceava
May 25, 2001 (morning)		**Prof. Jean-Claude BONNE** École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Groupe d'Anthropologie Historique de l'Occident Médiéval, Paris, France
		Le sacre royal français d'après un manuscrit enluminé du XIIIe siècle

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(afternoon)		Visit to Dragomirna, Pătrăuți, Părhăuți and Arbore
May 26 2001		Departure to Bucharest through Bacău, Adjud, Târgu Frumos
October 2, 2001	Lecture	**Prof. Mieke BAL** Department of Humanities, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands
		The Genius of Rome: Putting Things Together
October 4, 2001	Lecture	**Prof. Ernst van ALPHEN** Department of Literary Studies, University of Leiden, The Netherlands
		Playing the Holocaust
October 5, 2001	Lecture	**Prof. Ernst van ALPHEN** Department of Literary Studies, University of Leiden, The Netherlands
		Imagined Homelands: Re-mapping Cultural Identity
October 5, 2001	Lecture	**Prof. Mieke BAL** Department of Humanities, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands
		Performance and Performativity: On the Contemporary Artist James Coleman

November 15, 2001	Lecture	**Prof. Marjorie PERLOFF** Sadie Dernham Patek Professor Emerita in the Humanities, Stanford University, USA ***The Conceptual Poetics of Marcel Duchamp***
March 18, 2002	Lecture	**Isabelle MARCHESIN** Maître de conférences à l'Université de Poitiers ***La sémiotisation de l'univers chrétien : végétal et architecture dans les portes de Hildesheim***
March 19, 2002	Lecture	**Isabelle MARCHESIN** Maître de conférences à l'Université de Poitiers ***Iconographie musicale et exégese patristique : l'instrument de musique comme signifiant du son musical***
March 22, 2002	Lecture	**Isabelle MARCHESIN** Maître de conférences à l'Université de Poitiers ***Les lettrines et les phonèmes***
March 28, 2002	Lecture	**Isabelle MARCHESIN** Maître de conférences à l'Université de Poitiers ***L'image comme préparation à la lecture psalmique***

March 29, 2002	Lecture	**Isabelle MARCHESIN** Maître de conférences à l'Université de Poitiers *Le frontispice du triple psautier de Cambridge*
April 22, 2002	Lecture	**Professor Dr. Henk W. van OS** Art and Society Chair, University of Amsterdam *My Experience as a Presentator of Art on TV*
April 23, 2002	Lecture	**Dr. Gary SCHWARTZ** Director, CODART (Curators of Dutch and Flemish Art) *The Ins and Outs of Dutch Painting: On Interiors and Landscapes, and Their Mutual Ties*
April 24, 2002		**Professor Dr. Henk W. van OS** Art and Society Chair, University of Amsterdam & **Dr. Gary SCHWARTZ** Director, CODART (Curators of Dutch and Flemish Art) Visit to the National Museum of Art with a group of students; free discussion around some of the works in the museum

April 25, 2002	Lecture	**Dr. Gary SCHWARTZ** Director, CODART (Curators of Dutch and Flemish Art) ***The Temple Mount in the Lowlands: On the Temple of Solomon in Dutch Art and Scholarship***
May 8, 2002	Seminar	**Stephen MELVILLE** Professor, Department of Art History, The Ohio State University ***Object and Objectivity in the History of Art IArt History and Criticism***
May 9, 2002	Seminar	**Stephen MELVILLE** Professor, Department of Art History, The Ohio State University ***Object and Objectivity in the History of Art II*** ***Absoluteness and Finitude***
May 10, 2002	Seminar	**Stephen MELVILLE** Professor, Department of Art History, The Ohio State University ***Object and Objectivity in the History of Art III*** ***Attachment, Detachment, and Displacement***

May 13, 2002	Seminar	**Stephen MELVILLE** Professor, Department of Art History, The Ohio State University ***Object and Objectivity in the History of Art IV*** ***The Experience of Art***
May 14, 2002	Seminar	**Stephen MELVILLE** Professor, Department of Art History, The Ohio State University ***Object and Objectivity in the History of Art V*** ***Some Institutions***
May 20, 2002	Seminar	**Jean-Paul MOREL** Professeur d'archéologie a l'Université de Provence, Directeur du Groupement de Recherche « Le Pont Euxin. Recherches en Mer Noire » ***Archéologie et histoire : quelques expériences***
May 21, 2002	Lecture	**Jean-Paul MOREL** Professeur d'archéologie a l'Université de Provence, Directeur du Groupement de Recherche « Le Pont Euxin. Recherches en Mer Noire » ***Une colonisation grecque dans l'Occident méditerranéen : les Phocéens***

May 27, 2002	Lecture	**Jean-Paul MOREL** Professeur d'archéologie a l'Université de Provence, Directeur du Groupement de Recherche « Le Pont Euxin. Recherches en Mer Noire » ***Les mosaïques romaines, un univers fascinant***

NEW EUROPE COLLEGE

Institute for Advanced Study

The *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, 1990-1991 Romanian Minister of Culture, 1997-1999 Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs). Since its founding, the community of fellows and alumni of the college has enlarged to over 200 members. In 1998, the *New Europe College* was awarded the prestigious *Hannah Arendt Prize* for its achievements in setting new standards in higher education and research. In 1999, the Romanian Ministry of Education officially recognized the *New Europe College* as an institutional structure of continuous education in the humanities and social sciences, at the level of advanced studies.

Aims and Purposes

- to create an institutional framework with strong international links, offering young scholars and academics in the fields of humanities and social sciences from Romania and South-Eastern Europe working conditions similar to those in the West, and providing a stimulating environment for transdisciplinary dialogues and critical debates;
- to foster, through its programs and activities, the development and reform of the Romanian higher education;
- to promote contacts between Romanian and regional scholars and academics with their peers worldwide;
- to cultivate the receptivity of scholars and academics in Romania towards methods and areas of research as yet not firmly established here, while preserving what might still be precious in a type of approach developed, against all odds, in an unpropitious intellectual, cultural and political context before 1989;

- to contribute to forming a core of promising young academics, expected to play a significant role in the renewal of Romania's academic, scholarly and intellectual life.

As an institute for advanced study, NEC is not, strictly speaking, an institution of higher education, although it has been consistently contributing to the advancement of higher education in Romania through the impact of its programs and of the activities it organizes under its aegis. In order to further enhance its support for the development of the higher education in Romania, NEC has initiated as of 2003 the NEC-LINK Program, thus also having a direct presence in the major universities in the country.

Fellowship Programs

NEC Fellowships (1994 – to present)

Each year, ten NEC Fellowships for outstanding young Romanian scholars in the humanities and social sciences are publicly announced. The Fellows are chosen by an international Academic Advisory Board, and receive a monthly stipend for the duration of one academic year (October through July). The Fellows gather for weekly seminars to discuss the progress of their research projects. In the course of the year, the Fellows are given the opportunity to pursue their research for the duration of one month abroad, at a university or research institution of their choice. At the end of the grant period, the Fellows submit a paper representing the results of their research. These papers are published in the "New Europe College Yearbook".

RELINK Fellowships (1996-2002)

The RELINK Program targeted highly qualified, preferably young Romanian scholars returning from studies abroad to work in one of Romania's universities or research institutes. Ten RELINK Fellows were selected each year through an open competition; in order to facilitate their reintegration in the local research milieu and to improve their

working conditions, a support lasting for three years was offered, consisting of: a monthly stipend, funds in order to acquire 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.

The GE-NEC Program (2000 – to present)

As of the academic year 2000-2001 the *New Europe College* organizes and hosts a program supported by the Getty Grant Program. Its aim is to strengthen research and education in the fields of visual culture by inviting leading specialists from all over the world to give lectures and hold seminars for the benefit of Romanian MA students, PhD candidates, and young scholars. The program includes two senior and two junior fellowships per year for Romanian scholars, who undergo the same selection procedures as all the other fellows of the NEC administered programs. The GE-NEC Fellows are fully integrated in the life of the College, receive a monthly stipend, and are given the opportunity of spending one month abroad for a research trip.

NEC Regional Fellowships (2001 – to present)

As of October 2001, the New Europe College has expanded its fellowship programs to include scholars from South-Eastern Europe (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, and Turkey). This newly added regional dimension to our programs aims at integrating in 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 regional level. With the prospect of the European integration, and in complementing the efforts of the European Union to implement the Stability Pact, the New Europe College invites academics and scholars from the Balkans to cooperate towards overcoming the tensions that have won this region an unfortunate fame over the last decade.

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The NEC-LINK Program (2002 - to present)

Drawing on the experience of its NEC Fellowships and RELINK Fellowships Programs in connecting with the Romanian academic milieu, NEC initiates in the 2002 a new program, that aims to directly contribute to the advancement of higher education in major Romanian universities. Eight teams consisting of a visiting academic and one from the host university will offer joint courses for the duration of one semester in the fields of the humanities and social science; the NEC-LINK courses need be new ones and meet the distinct needs of the host university. The academics participating in the Program will receive monthly stipends, a substantial support for ordering literature relevant to their course, as well as funding for inviting guest professors from abroad, and to organize scientific events.

The Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Religious Studies towards EU Integration

As of 2001, the Austrian *Ludwig Boltzmann Gesellschaft* funds - within the framework of the New Europe Foundation – a newly created institute, that focuses on the extremely sensitive issue of religion related problems in the Balkans (and beyond) from the viewpoint of the EU integration. Through its activities the institute intends to foster the dialogue between distinctive religious cultures (Christianity, Islam, Judaism), as well as between confessions within the same religion, trying to investigate the sources of antagonisms and to work towards a common ground of tolerance and cooperation. To this end, the institute hosts international scholarly events, sustains research projects, brings out publications, and strives to set up a topic relevant library in Romania, intended to facilitate informed and up-to-date approaches in this field.

The *New Europe College* hosts an ongoing series lectures (an average of 30 per academic year) given by prominent Romanian and foreign academics and researchers, aimed at an audience of specialists and students in the fields of humanities and social sciences. The College also organizes national and international seminars, workshops, and symposia.

Financial Support

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

The Swiss Science Agency

The Federal Ministry for Education and Research of Germany

The Federal Ministry for Education, Science, and Culture of Austria

The Romanian State – indirect financial support, through tax exemption for fellowships

Zuger Kulturstiftung Landis & Gyr – Zug, Switzerland

Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft (DaimlerChrysler-Fonds, Marga und Kurt Möllgaard-Stiftung, Sal. Oppenheim-Stiftung and a member firm) – Essen, Germany

Volkswagen-Stiftung – Hanover, Germany

Stiftung Mercator GmbH – Essen, Germany

The Open Society Institute (through the Higher Education Support Program) – Budapest, Hungary

The Getty Grant Program – Los Angeles, U.S.A.

The Ludwig Boltzmann Gesellschaft – Vienna, Austria

Fundaţia Anonimul - Bucharest, Romania

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Dr. David GUGERLI, Professor for History of Science, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich, Switzerland

Dr. Daniel DĂIANU, Professor, Academy of Economic Sciences, Bucharest, Romania

Dr. Mircea DUMITRU, Dean, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Bucharest, Romania

Dr. Dieter GRIMM, Rector, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin; Professor of Law, Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany

Dr. Gabriel LIICEANU, Professor of Philosophy, University of Bucharest; Director of the *Humanitas* Publishing House, Bucharest, Romania

Dr. Andrei PIPPIDI, Professor of History, University of Bucharest

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