

# New Europe College *Ștefan Odobleja* Program Yearbook 2016-2017



---

ANDREEA CHIRIȚĂ  
ADRIAN GOR  
DAN-ALEXANDRU ILIEȘ  
MARIA IROD  
CLAUDIU OANCEA  
MIRCEA-LUCIAN SCROB  
TUDOR GHERASIM SMIRNA  
ADELA TOPLEAN  
RADU TUDORANCEA

---



New Europe College  
*Ștefan Odobleja* Program  
Yearbook 2016-2017

Editor: Irina Vainovski-Mihai

This volume was published within the Human Resources Program – PN II, implemented with the support of the Ministry of National Education - The Executive Agency for Higher Education and Research Funding (MEN – UEFISCDI), project code PN-II– RU–BSO-2016

### **EDITORIAL BOARD**

Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Andrei PLEȘU, President of the New Europe Foundation, Professor of Philosophy of Religion, Bucharest; former Minister of Culture and former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania

Dr. Valentina SANDU-DEDIU, Rector, Professor of Musicology, National University of Music, Bucharest

Dr. Anca OROVEANU, Academic Coordinator, Professor of Art History, National University of Arts, Bucharest

Dr. Irina VAINOVSKI-MIHAI, Publications Coordinator, Professor of Arab Studies, “Dimitrie Cantemir” Christian University, Bucharest

Copyright – New Europe College  
ISSN 1584-0298

New Europe College  
Str. Plantelor 21  
023971 Bucharest  
Romania

[www.nec.ro](http://www.nec.ro); e-mail: [nec@nec.ro](mailto:nec@nec.ro)

Tel. (+4) 021.307.99.10, Fax (+4) 021. 327.07.74

New Europe College  
*Ștefan Odobleja* Program  
Yearbook 2016-2017

ANDREEA CHIRIȚĂ  
ADRIAN GOR  
DAN-ALEXANDRU ILIEȘ  
MARIA IROD  
CLAUDIU OANCEA  
MIRCEA-LUCIAN SCROB  
TUDOR GHERASIM SMIRNA  
ADELA TOPLEAN  
RADU TUDORANCEA



# CONTENTS

**NEW EUROPE FOUNDATION  
NEW EUROPE COLLEGE**

7

**ANDREEA CHIRIȚĂ**

STAGING LU XUN IN CONTEMPORARY CHINESE THEATRE  
THE AESTHETICS OF MORALITY IN RETHINKING VERSIONS  
OF REALITY ON THE EXPERIMENTAL STAGE

21

**ADRIAN GOR**

RETHINKING THE ICONIC IN THE AGE OF SCREEN  
TECHNOLOGIES A BYZANTINE HIEROTOPIC  
PERSPECTIVE ON SEEING IMAGES AS PRESENCE

49

**DAN-ALEXANDRU ILIEȘ**

ACCÉDER À LA FELICITÉ

QUELQUES REMARQUES PRÉLIMINAIRES SUR LES PENSÉES  
POLITIQUES DE FARABI ET DE MAÏMONIDE

75

**MARIA IROD**

KIRCHENKRITIK IN ZEITEN DER RHETORIK DES POPULISMUS  
EINE DISKURSANALYTISCHE ANNÄHERUNG AN HANS KÜNG

129

**CLAUDIU OANCEA**

POPULAR MUSIC AND OFFICIAL CULTURE IN  
1980s SOCIALIST ROMANIA

163

**MIRCEA-LUCIAN SCROB**

DEVELOPMENTS IN FOOD CONSUMPTION IN SOCIALIST ROMANIA  
DURING THE 1960s AND 1970s: IMPLICATIONS FOR A REEVALUATION  
OF CONSUMERS' EXPERIENCES UNDER SOCIALISM

197

**TUDOR GHERASIM SMIRNA**

ROMANIAN ECHOES OF THE *CURRENCY VERSUS BANKING* DEBATE –  
FROM UNIFICATION TO THE CREATION OF THE NATIONAL BANK

235

**ADELA TOPLEAN**

THE IMPACT OF SECULARIZATION AND SPIRITUALIZATION  
ON DEATH MEANINGS AND PRACTICES,  
AMONG CONTEMPORARY ROMANIANS

273

**RADU TUDORANCEA**

POPULATION MOVEMENTS, DISPLACEMENT AND REFUGE  
DURING WORLD WAR I IN ROMANIA (1916-1918)

307



# NEW EUROPE FOUNDATION NEW EUROPE COLLEGE

Institute for Advanced Study

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

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

Since 1994, the NEC community of fellows and *alumni* has enlarged to over 600 members. In 1998 New Europe College was awarded the prestigious *Hannah Arendt Prize* for its achievements in setting new standards in research and higher education. New Europe College is officially recognized by the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research as an institutional structure for postgraduate studies in the humanities and social sciences, at the level of advanced studies.

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

dialogue and critical debates. The academic programs NEC coordinates, and the events it organizes aim at strengthening research in the humanities and social sciences and at promoting contacts between Romanian scholars and their peers worldwide.

### **Academic programs currently organized and coordinated by NEC:**

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

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

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

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

- ***The Europe next to Europe Fellowship Program (since October 2013)***

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

- ***The Pontica Magna Fellowship Program (since October 2015)***

This Fellowship Program, sponsored by the VolkswagenStiftung (Germany), invites young researchers, media professionals, writers and artists from the countries around the Black Sea, but also beyond it (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine), for a stay of one or two terms at the New Europe College, during which they will have the opportunity to work on projects of their choice. The program welcomes a wide variety of disciplines in the fields of humanities and social sciences. Besides hosting a number of Fellows, the College will organize within this program workshops and symposia on topics relevant to the history, present, and prospects of this region.

- ***The GERDA HENKEL Fellowships Program (starting March 2016)***

This Fellowship Program, developed with the support of Gerda Henkel Stiftung (Germany), invites young researchers / academics working in the fields of humanities and social sciences from following countries: Afghanistan, Belarus, China (only Tibet and Xinjiang Autonomous Regions), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan, for a stay of one or two terms at the New Europe College, during which they will have the opportunity to work on projects of their choice.

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

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

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

published several volumes comprising individual or group research works of the RELINK Fellows.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- ***The Black Sea Link Fellowships Program (2010 - 2015)***

This program, sponsored by the VolkswagenStiftung, supported young researchers from Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as from other countries within the Black Sea region, for a stay of one or two terms at the New Europe College, during which they had the opportunity to work on projects of their choice. The program welcomed a wide variety of disciplines in the fields of humanities and social sciences. Besides hosting a number of Fellows, the College organized within this program workshops and symposia on topics relevant to the history, present, and prospects of the Black Sea region.

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

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

\*\*\*

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

### **In the past:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The goal of the *ethnoArc* project (which started in 2005 under the title *From Wax Cylinder to Digital Storage* with funding from the Ernst von Siemens Music Foundation and the Federal Ministry for Education and Research in Germany) was to contribute to the preservation, accessibility, connectedness and exploitation of some of the most prestigious ethno-musicological archives in Europe (Bucharest, Budapest, Berlin, and Geneva), by providing a linked archive for field collections from different sources, thus enabling access to cultural content for various application and research purposes. The project was run by an international network, which included: the “Constantin Brăiloiu” Institute for Ethnography and Folklore, Bucharest; Archives Internationales de Musique Populaire, Geneva; the Ethno-musicological Department of the Ethnologic Museum Berlin (Phonogramm Archiv), Berlin; the Institute of Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest; Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin (Coordinator), Berlin; New Europe College, Bucharest; FOKUS Fraunhofer Institute for Open Communication Systems, Berlin.

- ***Business Elites in Romania: Their Social and Educational Determinants and their Impact on Economic Performances.*** This is the Romanian contribution to a joint project with the University of Sankt Gallen,



entitled ***Markets for Executives and Non-Executives in Western and eastern Europe***, and financed by the National Swiss Fund for the Development of Scientific Research (SCOPES) (December 2009 – November 2012)

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

- **UEFISCCDI – CNCS (TE – Project) Critical Foundations of Contemporary Cosmopolitanism**, Team leader: Tamara CĂRĂUȘ, Members of the team: Áron Zsolt TELEGDI-CSETRI, Dan Dorin LAZEA, Camil PÂRVU (October 2011 – October 2014)
- **PD – Project: Mircea Eliade between Indology and History of Religions. From Yoga to Shamanism and Archaic Religiosity (Liviu BORDAȘ)**  
Timeframe: May 1, 2013 – October 31, 2015 (2 and ½ years)

### **Ongoing projects:**

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

- **IDEI-Project: Models of Producing and Disseminating Knowledge in Early Modern Europe: The Cartesian Framework (Vlad ALEXANDRESCU)**  
Timeframe: January 1, 2012 – December 31, 2015 (4 years)
- **TE -Projects:**
  - Pluralization of the Public Sphere. Art Exhibitions in Romania in the Timeframe 1968-1989** (Cristian NAE, Daria GHIU, Verda POPOVICI, Mădălina Brașoveanu)  
Timeframe: October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016 (1 Year)
  - Turning Global: Socialist Experts during the Cold War (1960s-1980s)** (Bogdan IACOB, Raluca GROSESCU, Corina DOBOȘ, Viviana IACOB, Vlad PAȘCA)  
Timeframe: October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2017 (2 Years)
  - Museums and Controversial Collections. Politics and Policies of Heritage Making in Post-colonial and Post-socialist Contexts** (Damiana OȚOIU, Gruia BADESCU, Simina BADICA, Felicity BODENSTEIN, Anna SEIDERER, Margareta VON OSWALD)  
Timeframe: October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2017 (2 Years)

- **Bilateral Cooperation: *Corruption and Politics in France and Romania (contemporary times)***

**Silvia MARTON – Project Coordinator, Constanța VINTILĂ-GHIȚULESCU, Alexandra IANCU, Frederic MONIER, Olivier DARD, Marion FONTAINE, Benjamin GEROME, Francais BILLOUX**

Timeframe: January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2016 (2 years)

### **ERC Starting Grant:**

- ***Record-keeping, fiscal reform, and the rise of institutional accountability in late medieval Savoy: a source-oriented approach – Castellany Accounts***

**Ionuț EPURESCU-PASCOVICI**

Timeframe: May 1, 2015 – April 30, 2020 (5 years)

### **ERC Consolidator Grant:**

- ***Luxury, fashion and social status in Early Modern South Eastern Europe***

**Constanța VINTILĂ-GHIȚULESCU**

Timeframe: July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2020 (5 years)

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

\*\*\*

### ***Present Financial Support***

The State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation of Switzerland through the Center for Governance and Culture in Europe, University of St. Gallen

The Federal Ministry for Education and Research of Germany

The Ministry of National Education – The Executive Agency for Higher Education and Research Funding, Romania

Landis & Gyr Stiftung, Zug, Switzerland  
Private Foundation, Germany  
Fritz Thyssen Stiftung, Köln, Germany  
VolkswagenStiftung, Hanover, Germany  
Riksbankens Jubileumsfond, The Swedish Foundation for Humanities and  
Social Sciences, Stockholm, Sweden  
Gerda Henkel Stiftung, Düsseldorf, Germany  
European Research Council (ERC)

\*\*\*

### ***New Europe College -- Directorate***

Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Andrei PLEȘU, President of the Foundation  
Professor of Philosophy of Religion, Bucharest; former Minister of  
Culture and former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania  
Dr. Valentina SANDU-DEDIU, Rector  
Professor of Musicology, National University of Music, Bucharest  
Dr. Anca OROVEANU, Academic Coordinator  
Professor of Art History, National University of Arts, Bucharest  
Lelia CIOBOTARIU, Executive Director  
Marina HASNAȘ, Consultant on administrative and financial matters

### ***Administrative Board***

Dr. Ulrike ALBRECHT, Head of Department, Strategy and External  
Relations, Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Bonn  
Dr. Katharina BIEGGER, Head of Admissions Office, Deputy Secretary,  
Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin  
Emil HUREZEANU, Journalist and writer, Ambassador of Romania to the  
Federal Republic of Germany, Berlin  
Regula KOCH, Director, Landis & Gyr Stiftung, Zug; President,  
Wissenschafts- und Kulturzentrum NEC Bukarest-Zug  
Dr. Dirk LEHMKUHL, Chair for European Politics, University of St. Gallen;  
Director of Programmes International Affairs & Governance, Center for  
Governance and Culture in Europe, University of St. Gallen  
Dr. Florin POGONARU, President, Business People Association, Bucharest

Dr. Jürgen Chr. REGGE, Formerly Director, Fritz Thyssen Foundation, Cologne

Dr. Heinz–Rudi SPIEGEL, Formerly Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft, Essen

***Academic Advisory Board***

Dr. Edhem Eldem, Professor of History, School of Arts and Sciences, Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, Turkey

Dr. Luca GIULIANI, Rector, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, Professor of Archaeology, Humboldt University, Berlin

Dr. Dieter GRIMM, Professor (emer.) of Law, Humboldt University, Berlin

Dr. Daniela KOLEVA, Permanent Fellow, Centre for Advanced Study, Sofia;

Associate Professor of Sociology, St. Kliment Ohridski University, Sofia

Dr. Vintilă MIHAILESCU, Professor of Anthropology, National School of Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest

Dr. Ioan PÂNZARU, Professor, Department of French Language and Literature; Former Rector of the University of Bucharest

Dr. Ulrich SCHMID, Professor for the Culture and Society of Russia, University of St. Gallen; Head of the Center for Governance and Culture in Europe, University of St. Gallen

Dr. Victor I. STOICHIȚĂ, Professor of Art History, University of Fribourg

Dr. Alain SUPLOT, Director, Permanent Fellow, Institut d'Etudes Avancées de Nantes; Chair, Collège de France

**NEW EUROPE COLLEGE**

Str. Plantelor 21, București 023971

Tel.: (+4) 021 307 99 10; Fax: (+4) 021 327 07 74; e-mail: [nec@nec.ro](mailto:nec@nec.ro);  
<http://www.nec.ro/>





## ANDREEA CHIRIȚĂ

Born in 1980, in Târgoviște

Ph.D., University of Bucharest

Thesis: *Chinese Black Humor in Yu Hua's Fiction*

Lecturer, University "Lucian Blaga" of Sibiu, Faculty of Arts and Letters,  
Anglo-German Studies Department, Chinese Department

Scholarships:

2003-2006: Fudan University, Shanghai

2016: Beijing Languages and Cultural Studies University

2014: Leiden University

Participation to conferences in Russia, UK, Denmark, Romania, China

Fields of interest: Chinese theatre studies, Chinese translation studies,  
Contemporary Chinese literature





# STAGING LU XUN IN CONTEMPORARY CHINESE THEATRE THE AESTHETICS OF MORALITY IN RETHINKING VERSIONS OF REALITY ON THE EXPERIMENTAL STAGE

## Abstract

The paper investigates the aesthetic modes in which Chinese writer Lu Xun has been staged in China throughout the last century, and how the performing of such powerful symbol of Chinese modernity redefines the concept of realism within the contemporary Chinese performance discourse. At present, the theatre scene experiments with a multitude of possible social realities which are of a moral condition, meant to redirect Chinese decayed social realities on a path to self-awareness and self-rediscovery of the beauty of morality. Rising state-powered Neoconfucianism, meant to revive patriotism and a sense of morality among the Chinese youth, theatre makers manage to challenge its genuinity through a much more authentic approach to redefining the human soul, a cause at stake for contemporary Chinese theatre.

**Keywords:** Chinese avant-garde, Chinese theatre, Lu Xun, realism, postdramatic theatre

## Lu Xun and the Chinese spoken drama theatre. An introduction:

During the last couple of years, contemporary Chinese experimental theatre has been challenged by cutting-edge plays that criticize the decayed Chinese moral landscape, doomed, in the words of Chinese theatre makers, by the “happy union between two evil forces”: “western money worship cult and eastern totalitarianism” (Wang, 2016: XIX) The fear of “losing our national intelligence, humanity and soul” (Wang, 2016: XVIII) caused by the brutal intrusion is so great, that non-commercial theater, in its most extreme ways, embarked on a moral cruise of re-formulating, within the limits of censorship, new aesthetic forms of social criticism; they are all

meant to re-beautify reality through an artistic understanding and living of life.<sup>1</sup>

Reinventing Lu Xun<sup>2</sup> on stage, as a way of responding to the challenges brought by the perpetual disintegration of moral values in the context of modernity is not, however, just a recent trend. Only three years after Lu Xun's death, in 1939, director Huang Zuolin 黄佐临 (1906-1994) and Chen Mengshao 陈梦韶 brought Lu Xun on stage in an attempt to both canonize and humanize this revolutionary figure, emblematic for defining China's troubled modernity. Ever since, Lu Xun has been constantly reinvented within the realm of theatre, from a mainly mimetic-realist mode to more and more daring experimental forms; this constant switch of Lu Xun's theatrical representations attest to and reflect the permanent changing socio-cultural Chinese landscape and the historic contingencies that push theatre on a path to complex modernization and of redefining its epistemic structure.

My study makes a hermeneutical investigation into different modes in which Lu Xun and his literary legacy have been adapted to stage from the end of the Republican China, at the end of the thirties, up to the present time. I will focus especially on how these very different versions of Lu Xun, constructed by directors belonging to various generations, reflect the cultural chronotopes of their staging background, as well as the fluctuating concept of realism, so dear to the Chinese theatre makers. The main part of my analysis emphasizes nevertheless the work of Chinese *New Theatre Wave* 新浪潮 director Wang Chong, initiator of *Théâtre du Rêve Expérimental* 薪传实验剧<sup>3</sup> and an emblematic figure for the new aesthetic trends characterizing the independent theatre visions in contemporary China. Analyzing from a comparative East-West aesthetics paradigm Wang's staging of *The Great Master* 大先生<sup>4</sup>, I argue that the director manages to come up with a renewed way of constructing the multiple versions of theatrical realities that juxtapose trans-historically politics and everyday life on the question of Chinese society lack of moral integrity.

Wang's theatre aesthetic quest is not about realism *per-se*, nor is it limited to a local Chinese specific type of realism, but about how global audiences may interpret it and endow it with sense, in a world in which there is no clear-cut demarcation line between what is real and what is not. "It is not about the spoken words, it is not about realism. It is all about what are the world's problems and the sophisticated ways in which we can understand our world" states Wang in one of his in an interview from 2015<sup>5</sup>; he manages to implement theatre techniques that make the

old versions of Ibsenite morality conceptualizations of Lu Xun on stage succumb to a much more genuine and complex understanding of the paradoxes and multi-angled perspectives from which the Chinese writer and reality itself need to be explored. Shooting and staging at the same time, adopting a multimedia perspective of representing the reality, Wang proposes hybridized products of postdramatic techniques that catalyze on the beauty-morality symbolic interrelation that define the Chinese traditional aesthetics.

### **Realism and tradition in Chinese modern theatre**

Before making a short incursion into the plain realist plays that have characterized the staging of Lu Xun throughout the last century, it is important to clarify the hermeneutical conceptualizations of cultural realism in China.<sup>6</sup> Ever since the May 4<sup>th</sup> movement, realism, in its naturalistic understanding, has been viewed as the liberating and national salvation and emancipation tool. At the beginning of the Republic, literary realism was responding to the social necessity of China's epistemic reinvention; realism represented a way of redefining the revolutionary self, as well as the concept of 'freedom'. During Mao's era (1949-1976), realism meant pure reflection of reality destined to serve common people or propagandistic aims, originating into the Soviet type of socialist realism.<sup>7</sup> In the eighties and the nineties, realism switched to be a way of diverting the self from social realism, taking a much more individualized understanding of the personal experience.<sup>8</sup> During the last decade, realism embarked on a more political interventionist stance. The concept underwent a massive conceptual transformation and turned into "realist spirit", namely the ability of the human mind to get the essential, abstract framing of pluri-realities defining the new cosmopolite world. The new version of realism, which is the engine of Wang Chong's *The Great Master* play "truly faces the inner side, observes the world independently and reveals true feelings about the world." (Wang Chunchen 2011: 75). In one word, as it is reflected within the theatre of young rebellious Chinese directors as well, reality in its artistic forms is only an "interpretation" and "representation" of what we make of it. Realism in contemporary China is a psychological necessity opposed to the destabilizing forces of every-day life controlled by technology and neoliberal values. No matter how experimental he gets, Wang Chong's theatre embrace of reality is a

way of “exploring and responding to the culture of the artificial” (Ulrike Garde 2013: 179). Wang simultaneously exploits the interaction between media, multimedia, the symbolic characters on stage and the audience, to come up eventually to a realization of what real people in an artificial world are like. He challenges the audience to make the difference between genuine and non-genuine, to trigger or rediscover their lost inner sense of a moral but non-dogmatic self. The audience is thus endowed with the very important purpose of “creating authenticity” (Garde 2013: 186) or rediscovering it in a fresh, even attractive light. Wang Chong and his theatrical vision which hybridizes formalistic theatricality with filmic intermedial techniques don’t solely aim at pushing the boundaries of new aesthetic forms in Chinese theatre, but also to make performance aesthetics capable of rendering and uncovering, through mediation, paradox and conflict, a clean-cut authentic self. As one notices in what follows, this self, brought forth by the staging of Lu Xun throughout the decades, is being equated with two principles very dear to Chinese literati ever since China’s first entanglements with modernity: freedom<sup>9</sup> 自由 and soul 灵魂.

### Short history of Lu Xun’s works stagings

From the very first adaptation and staging of Lu Xun short stories, the concepts of freedom, emancipation and moral revolution were pervasively the dominant ones behind these performances. The only adaptation on stage of any of his work on stage during his lifetime is *The True Story of Ah Q* 阿 Q 正传 adapted by Chen Mengshao 陈梦韶 (1903-1984), published in six scenes and performed by a theatre group in Xiamen. Although the play was supposed to be accessible to the masses, in sync with the recurrent ideology regarding the usefulness of art, the director chose to stage it in the writer’s birthplace Shaoxing, stirring up even Lu Xun’s dissatisfaction. Chen’s adaptation was meant to be “representative for the proletariat and for the non-educated class. The people who really understand *AhQ* say he is a laborious worker, those who don’t say he’s a pickpocket. Those who know truly understand *AhQ* say he has got humanism, those who do not, say that he is obscene, those who really know him, say he is innocent, those who do not, say he is a thug who should die.” (Chen in Fan, 2009: 65) Just like the literary debates would support the concept of literature as reflection of reality with the aim of saving and strengthening the newly born Chinese state, theatre would

display a similar vision. After Lu Xun's death, Tian Han 田汉 was the first to adapt Lu Xun's work, which was again a version of *AhQ* published in 戏剧时代 *Theatre Times* (Vol. 1 Nr. 1-2) in 1937. Class struggle is the center theme of this play which mixes narratives from different other works of Lu Xun, such as *Kong Yiji*, *Homeland*, *Medicine*, *Diary of a Madman* etc.

If these first incipient adaptations are imbedded within the emerging Marxist ideologies of class struggle dominating the Chinese cultural narrative during the first decades of the last century, Hong Kong Cultural Department brought the play to another level and introduced the question of "the soul" 灵魂. *The Soul of People: Lu Xun* 民族魂鲁迅 is the name of the pantomime play staged in 1940 in Hong Kong the first to promote Lu Xun himself as main character, instead of his fictional characters.<sup>10</sup> The play brings together two important discourses essential for defining the following evolution trends in conceptualizing realism in Chinese theatre. Little by little, the existence of Lu Xun gets rid of its revolutionary stiff hero aura while embracing that of a flesh and blood human constructed on stage as a moral illuminator. The concept of moral self-engineering through a lucid attitude on life became more and more pervasive, transforming the Chinese infatuation with realism on stage into a space of social solidarity. "Theatre for the people"<sup>11</sup> 民族话剧 is a consequential narrative dominating the present cultural landscape of China, marred by atrocious consumerist understanding of life.

The 1981 version of *AhQ* directed by Chen Baichen 陈白尘 brought on stage yet another revolutionary vision of Lu Xun's cultural significance at the end of the century. Patriotic driven themes are inserted within the play and the dichotomy Chinese moral values-Western decayed ethics became a central theme of redefining the moral force of *AhQ*. Scene five, describing the horrific violence inflicted by "the foreign devils" on Zhao Taiye speaks volumes about the ideologies dominating the early eighties cultural Chinese landscape in China. Not far from this year, "the campaign against the spiritual pollution" brought on by excessive promotion of Western cultural values in China would kick off, reinforcing the self-victimization historical discourse that still defines the country's strategy of historical approach to its past two hundred years. Moreover, the play combined the 话剧 *huaju* spoken drama tradition with the Chinese traditional drama form of 戏曲 *xiqu*, in an obvious gesture of revitalizing the Chinese traditional culture, an attempt to make the native drama genres adapt to the needs of the contemporary Chinese society. What disturbs director Chen most, however, is the redefinition of the concept

of revolution, as he reiterates a prominent official and scholarly narrative, namely that the Chinese Republican revolution failed in its attempt of fully destroying tradition and adopting Western values. "The remaining evil from the feudal class, he says, stole the revolution (...) and they use its name to get closer to the poverty-stricken people." (Chen in Gu 1981: 6).

In 2001 Zhang Guangtian<sup>12</sup> (b. 1966) 张广天 brought forth a very risky version of Lu Xun's life in his unconventional musical play *Mister Lu Xun* 鲁迅先生. Just like other previous plays, Zhang's mixed aspects of Lu Xun's biography with aspects of his works, which resulted into a revolutionary performance, reflecting the director's leftist leanings. At the beginning of the new millennium, Marxist "revolutionary spirit" would define the postcolonial Chinese discourse, one which opposed the organic structure of Confucian morality to the commodified values of the West. Zhang Guangtian explained that "the audience wanted to experience a Lu Xun that we had created together". Hence, "what appears on stage is most definitely not Lu Xun, but rather an aspect of each person's inner sense of justice." (Davies, 2013: 324) Critics often stigmatized the play for its heavy commercial, market-oriented aspects, while the revolutionary spirit, Zhang claimed to have created seemed for them little convincing. It is possible, however, that most of critics were not ready yet to see the canonical figure of Lu Xun at the center of an experimental play, set on de-canonizing and, to a certain extent, trivializing, the saint aura of China's most emblematic modernity figure. Zhang Guangtian's mission with the play was, however, to destroy the mystic, hero-like aura of the Master, to humanize him, to shock, to give a moral lesson to the intellectual elites who often positioned themselves to the writer in accordance to what the political tides would see as orthodox or not: "I have directed *Mister Lu Xun* in order to poke fun at people, to piss off certain people, which is in fact my profession: pissing people off." says Zhang in an interview in 2006 for *China Newsweek*, complaining about the double standards that characterized the intellectuals' embrace of Lu Xun during the Cultural Revolution:

What is getting on my nerves is that in the seventies, some people used to be ardent admirers of Lu Xun; afterwards, they have noticed some new trends, so they started to judge him. I don't want to hear these voices, but the Red Guards belong to this kind of gang of accusers. So they have damaged Lu Xun, so I sing him and glorify him even by using *gaodaquan*. I shamelessly declare him to be good. I want to make these people feel

ashamed with themselves. I have conceived this play under the form of epic theatre *shishiju* and I am sure you don't want to see this kind of play". I am sure you don't find this kind of language appropriate for describing the Cultural Revolution. I want to enact that language and show it to you. If Mister Lu Xun is only superficial and essentialized, what has that got to do with me? All I care about is that these people are pissed now, they suffer, so I am happy. (...) They now started to reconsider Lu Xun. (...) Lu Xun has always fought against servility and, in the end, we have become his lackeys or we have become the lackeys of slanderous people. An independent fighter has never inspired his comrades, but won the applauses of thousands of audiences and their support, which is exactly the tragedy of Lu Xun. (*Zhongguo Xinwen Zhoukan* 2006 (41) :32)

Staging Lu Xun's life through orchestra, choruses and a mix of traditional Chinese music genres was for Chinese theatre an aesthetic novelty. The ideological political statement behind this play prevails nevertheless over its form and artistic value. Zhang clearly divides the characters on stage into morally good and bad. The positive ones, such as those depicting Xu Guangping, Liu Hezhen, Feng Xuefeng or Rou Shi<sup>13</sup> always interpret traditional folk songs while the negative ones perform traditional folk opera songs. Such an obvious division between good and evil, new and old, morality and immorality was not at all a novelty within the Chinese theatre praxis. Even so, most of the traditional audience found the play too unconventional and loose. Despite all conflicting reviews of the play, Zhang Guangtian "investigates, gives you headaches, he is experimenting and is thinking deeply", while the musical construction of the performance aims at "advocating simplicity" and "letting the music enter peoples' hearts". (Xiong 2001: 7-8).

Zhang's version was arguably the first play in which Lu Xun gets humanized features to his heroic figure, making room for other directors to engage more seriously on this project and construct a much more vibrant, real character, relevant for present China, as it is the case with female dramaturg Zheng Tianwei's 郑天伟 and her play *Impermanence, The hanging woman* 无常, 女吊. The play was staged also in 2001 at Beijing People's Art Theatre 北京人艺小剧场 and it mixes parts of Lu Xun relevant short stories, such as *The Wine Shop*, *The Story of the Hair*, *Impermanence*, *The Hanging Woman*. The high level of abstract representation of the performance prompted the critics to pinpoint it as "an existentialist play, exploring the depths of human life" and "offering a contemporary philosophical perspective on life and death." (Shan 2001:6) The ideological aim of the

play was to “reflect the cultural landscape that defines history and reality”, while the character of Lu Xun himself “has got a deep sense of the absurd”. (Shan 2001: 66-67)). From a dramaturgical point of view, the language is beautiful, limpid and simple. The main characters, recycled from Lu Xun’s works, Jiansheng and Zijun are fully adapted to the needs of the contemporary world, estranged from the literal meaning that Lu Xun has originally endowed them with. The quest for moral beauty springing out from the characters’ dialogue, their philosophical dissection of life, are however allusive to Lu Xun’s quest for the self in a surgeon-like manner, as the following monologue on behalf of Juan Sheng highlights:

I am a human being too, a simple human being. But they take me for a fool. Wait for me to become a real fool indeed and they will consider me a fool yet again; not only human being but a great human being; what people think of as virtuous is depriving the world of real virtue. I really don’t know what year, what month, what day, this world of no virtues will come to an end.<sup>14</sup> (in Shan 2011: 8)

The first part of the new millennium has indeed been marked by the rise of Neoconfucian morality, as a strategy of battling Western powers’ cultural hegemony<sup>15</sup>. What Zheng’s play manages to do though is to let aside Zhang Guangtian’s patriotic leftist obtuseness and to combine, without fearing to lose the Chinese cultural identity, patterns of both Confucian and Western morality. The characters questioning of the moral sense of the world has got existentialist value but the heightened emotional perspective adds on a touch of beauty specific to the Chinese definition of beauty, like this short monologue of Jiansheng, who complains about the pressure poverty puts on love: “Poverty and hunger are like chlorinated lime. Always floating, it is like the deep purple of love until it changes into pale red and from pale red to white.” (Shan 2001:67) Director Wang Yansong 王延松 specifically claims his infatuation with Western existentialism that he tries to adapt to the Chinese cultural landscape and societal needs. He endows it with more optimism and draws on the somber, grotesque background of Lu Xun’s short stories a silver-lining reminiscent of Chinese construction of black humor, which is a blend of despair and hope. The director tries hard, as he himself admits, to divert this “absurd comedy” 荒诞喜剧 “from the Western sense of absurd”: “The characters in the play have a pretty happy disposition”, he states, “and it is hard to categorize them.” (Shan 2001:8) The mix of hope and hopelessness, which is crucial for the construction



of a Chinese sense of dark humor, is another trait of the play: "I hope that the audience will watch most of the play in silence. I also need the audience's laughter, but not that kind of joyful, innocent laughter (...) and I hope that after laughing, the audience will have more complex feelings." (Shan, 2001:6-7) It is also interesting how this version of *The Hanging Woman* deals aesthetically with the question of separating reality from a dreamlike world, tracing the demarcation line between the palpable here and now and the world of ghosts. The entrance for the audience inside the theatre is marked through a door on the top of which hangs written the following sign: "ghost entrance" 魂门关. Entering the ghost door marks not just the realm of Chinese tradition, which saw within the occult an occasion for clarifying and reestablishing the adequate ethics within the mortal world. The ghost world is also a more distinct projection of reality and of what realism is supposed to mean in contemporary China. It is the tension between what is imagined as reality and what reality is, in fact, and what one can do in order to readjust this reality to our primary sense of adequate understanding. The decorum also recreates a natural landscape populated by both human beings and their *alter-egos* in the shape of lucid ghosts, or, in the words, of the Chinese critic, "the *qi* of the ghosts covers up and disguises the depressed human heart". (Shan, 2001:67) The play was meant to trigger "spiritual shock" among the audience, who was more used with a commercial type of theatre exposure.

In 2010, in Hong Kong, Olivia Yan comes with a new version of Lu Xun, this time again through the voice of his most emblematic character, *AhQ*. Yet again, *AhQ* became the symbol of the moral revolution needed by the Chinese society. The main character mixes in commercial fashion a post-dramatic type of comedy, in which the characters are being half modern in terms of clothing, while their faces are painted following the Shaoxing Opera principles, white, the symbol of deceiving, being the predominant color. The play's synopsis turns *AhQ*'s multi-faceted persona into a type of survival experience, linked to present society issues of alienation:

*AhQ* or rather the remnants of *AhQ* lives here. The revolution has ended (or has it?) Some say he has not died. He has changed his appearance and made his fortune in the city. Some say he cannot die, he has become a monk... Amituofuo. Some say he is a revolutionary hero! A statue has been erected in his village. Go see it! Some say he impregnated a woman who delivered quadruplets, looking exactly like him. Some say he has never existed: he is but a fictitious character invented by an irritating writer by the name of Lu Xun<sup>16</sup>. (Olivia Yan 2011).

Finally, in 2012, Li Jianjun<sup>17</sup> (b. 1978) 李建军 comes with an experimental performance of “A madman’s diary” 狂人日记 aimed at being performed in small theatre venues and at challenging completely the concepts of real and reality in theatre. The diary’s entries are performed as dialogues or monologues while the chorus and singers are narrating the epic line of the story, reminiscent of the Greek tragedy chorus and of traditional *Chuanqi* opera. “The confrontation between the struggling madman and the masses” is yet another comment on China’s decaying moral landscape and people’s need to rationalize it. The experimental form of the play, although modernizing while also empowering the Chinese contemporary theatre field, triggered quite heavy criticism for its heightened level of conceptualism and hyper-stylized performance praxis, hard to be grasped by a general audience. Yan Liu simplistically dismisses the play as “something that China does not really need” (Wen 2012: 56), pleading for a more understandable and traditional type of theatre, one that “benefits the inner organs” (57). The play is characterized by strong physicality, as it is the case within the postdramatic theatre canon, as if to attest, just like director Li displays in his performative construction, that “The physical body is the point of interaction and frontline between ourselves, as individuals, and the outside world.” (Zhao, Huber 2014: 108). Li stands for the idea of spiritual freedom through the struggles of the madman, a type of freedom that he clearly dislocates from the pseudo-freedom brought forth by consumption or heightened eroticism.

### **Staging Lu Xun and its contribution to rethinking a neorealist performance praxis in China**

In conclusion, the eighty years of continuous staging of Lu Xun uninterruptedly redefine the Chinese understanding of theatrical reality and the fluctuant ideologies characterizing its dynamics. From mimetic reality, at the beginning of the Republic, theatre switches to a more and more abstract understanding of it, along with the historical changes and challenges that China undergo along almost a century of political turmoil. The contemporary scene, avid for even more reality on stage, stylizes the concept and equates it with a return to morality through beauty, and an artistic understanding of moral life. Theatre’s conceptualization of reality always fluctuates in accordance with the Western theatre scholarship, challenging the Chinese dramatic landscape, from Artaud’s

theatre of cruelty to Grotowsky's ritual theatre, the French and Russian avant-garde or Robert Wilson's Zen Buddhism grasping of artificiality as a way to approach reality on stage. However, Chinese theatre makers never give up on tradition, and that is not a simple political agenda derived from postcolonial frustrations, as one might easily think. Chinese independent theatre scene is faced with the emerging and appropriations of Western avant-garde techniques of representing reality adapted to the Chinese continuous shifting realities; this trend is doubled by the need of aesthetically conceptualizing the reality of performance within a moral framework and within rhizomic<sup>18</sup> East-West reasoning of interpretations.

### **Wang Chong's *The Great Master* and the many versions of contemporary China**

A new "aesthetic of the soul"<sup>19</sup> disguising sensitive political issues arises within the forms of most daring avant-garde theatre forms, as it is the case of Wang Chong's directing of *The Great Master* 大先生, written by Li Jing 李静 and put on stage by the latter in 2016 at the National Theatre in Beijing. The play has been staged nine times before being censored and its production stopped abruptly. The play has got indeed strong political connotations; the background is dominated by an immobile statue alluding to a faceless Chairman Mao, on the top of which lies a huge screen projecting real-time edited images shot on stage, while the actors are interpreting their roles. The whole performance is thus being surveyed by the gigantic screen which selectively displays certain details from within the actual action. But unlike other of Wang Chong's plays, in which a whole cinematic crew is working on stage while the actors perform their part, in *Da Xiansheng* there is only one shadow-catcher cameraman, leaving the stage clear and easy to follow.

It is obviously easy to politicize this play, given that the script is filled with metaphors alluding to the idea of revolution, freedom and soul.<sup>20</sup> The pervasive and overwhelming screen has a double role: society surveillance and authoritarian powers are being subverted by the audience failing to grasp where the demarcation line between reality and non-reality lies. In other words, the real-artificial blurring line dominates and destabilizes the violent reality hiding within the symbolism of Mao-surveillance screen-like figure. The many layers and versions of reality undermine the controlling powers dominating the Chinese society, caricaturing its

inflexibility and exposing its monstrous nature. "Digital technologies, together with neoliberal economic relations have given birth to radically new ways of manipulating and articulating lived experience." (Shaviri 2010: 2); in Wang Chong's case, his unique use of technology means at destabilizing, through intermediality and juxtaposing of film and theatre the fixity and lack of flexibility of socio-political forces dominating China; Wang does so by contrasting them with the multiplicity and various ways of questioning and searching for the essence of reality.

The political understanding of Lu Xun on the background of contemporary China can not be questioned indeed; but this obvious vision comprising Wang Chong's and dramaturg Li Jing's representation of nowadays China through Lu Xun goes also beyond the intention of a fierce political statement and brings forth a very mature "aesthetics of social engagement"<sup>21</sup>; it is rather an aesthetic of the soul that breaks the doctrine lines of Neoconfuciansim and delve into its deepest emotional side. *Da Xiansheng* scrutinizes the question of soul within a tricky political context, a theme very recurrent within many forms of independent Chinese contemporary theatre. Li Ning's 李凝 *Dictionary of the Soul* 灵魂词典 staged at The Wuzhen Festival in 2016 or Li Jianjun's *One beautiful Day* 美好的一天 staged at *Penghao Theatre* in Beijing in 2014 bring forth a type of living aesthetics engaged with rethinking, in a genuine manner, the question of morality. The concept of soul *xinling* 心灵, that the young independent directors explore in their plays, represents the core part of their aesthetic staging practices; the assault of morality within the contemporary avant-garde performance scene is the result of artists' purpose to form up a valid civil society through theatre, to deconstruct the hypocritical discourse on harmony and reconstruct a genuine one instead, able to make the Chinese theatre a true space of social solidarity. This emerging aesthetic of the soul is a variation of the ecocriticism discourse that took Chinese arts and academic thinking by storm within the last two decades; central is no more our relationship with man-brutalized nature, but our relation with ourselves and the community around.

Director Wang strives to reconstruct a new Chinese soul by going back to the moral quality of beauty, by "finding the roots of morality and beauty in the power of judgement and its reflective function" (Helmut 2006:105). The nation and soul-saving project is not didactic in nature, despite the fact that the director takes an utilitarian take on life.

The fact that Wang Chong chooses Lu Xun to explore and recalibrate the dynamics of a new Chinese soul, politically and socially engaged, is

no coincidence; as it has been exemplified in the first half of the paper, *The Great Master* represents the ideological shift of Chinese generation as regarding the moral condition of China throughout the entanglements of history and politics. The figure of Lu Xun is directly related to the new wave of nation-defining narrative among the Chinese youth nowadays; Lu Xun represents an alternative voice of freedom within a cyberspace, a medium which could easily mislead youngsters into the mere illusion of freedom. Lu Xun is that counter-discourse that derides people's illusion of freedom and which triggers them to truthfully search for it inside their inner selves. Lu Xun is a discourse on freedom tolerated by the government, a narrative that theatre makers exploit massively in a subversive, yet enlightening manner. Yu Shicun synthesizes perfectly the importance Lu Xun has, along with foreign modes of theatre, in helping the Chinese new youth find their own independent voice:

When intellectuals are absent from the public life, when things happen but there is silence about it, except from the help from the French, English or German world, we, the common folk, borrow and use the language of Lu Xun, we imitate Lu Xun's words and speak up. This phenomenon not only lets the youngsters expand their ideas in writing but it is also an exercise for the young generation to assert themselves. (Yu 2016)

### **Playwright Li Jing and her political statement under the disguise of “revolution of the soul”**

In what follows I approach the play from a dramaturgic perspective, exploring the narrative procedures that playwright Li Jing adopts while producing a highly abstract, yet humanized vision of Lu Xun. Li comes up thus with a completely personalized understanding of Lu Xun, managing to bring humanness and familiarity to the writer whom she loves to paraphrase, as “China's most familiar stranger”. (Li 2015)

Despite the social acid commentary and allegorical nature of such performative reinvention, given how strongly Lu Xun is embedded into the Chinese consciousness of Lu Xun as a national orthodox hero, exploring him theatrically seems to be, officially, a safe practice. Re-canonizing Lu Xun seems however to reconstruct the aesthetic of a desirable Chinese soul that brings on stage the very basic ingredients for a genuine one:

freedom, sacrifice and love of the other. Although playwright Li Jing puts many wise-didactic words into her historic characters' mouths, the effect of this narrative strategy is reverse, namely, it destroys the lack of substance characterizing the bravado discourses of fabricated heroes. Li Jing goes straight to a much stronger heroic cord, humane and sensitive, left unexplored by the official discourse. The play takes place in the year of Lu Xun's death, 1936. At the very beginning, the audience witness Lu Xun dying, while his shadow parts with his body. This is the moment shadow catchers enter the stage and change Lu Xun old-fashioned scholarly clothes with a shirt, shoes and jeans and have him re-wander through different episodes of his life, emphasizing his relations with friends, ideological enemies or family. The focus is on a very complex language, which destroys ideological clichés. Playwright Li Jing does so by making characters speak in seemingly wooden language, but with a very emotional vibe attached, humanizing it. It is extraordinary indeed the way director Wang Chong contributes to giving authenticity to a monologue like the following one concerning the idea of sacrifice for the others:

Lu Xun: I'd rather betray myself than betray your tears. I'd hold them in my palms, I wouldn't let them drop down on voiceless ground. I wouldn't let one more tear drop down. This is my snake-poison vow. This is my crazy secret. *Da Xiansheng*, 22)

Monologues are mostly endowed with ideological meaning in this play, but the cadence of phrasing, the limpid words making up big emotional discourses clearly display themselves as "physical, motoric acts of speaking", "a self-evident process" of reciting (Lehman 2006: 147). A text brimming with emotional artificial slogans gets new life on stage, as if to expose its fabricated texture but also to extract from within its most visceral meaning, like this monologue depicting the gruesome death of the young revolutionary (Lu Xun as a child), performed by a very young actor no older than nine:

**Death executioner** (to the young man in black): On your knees! (The young man doesn't make a move nor does he say anything) On your knees! (The young man does not make a single gesture) I said on your knees! (He opens the fire, the young man falls on one knee. The executioner is agitating his hands in the air, and sings happily). The first bullet to your left foot, to make you kneel-down on one knee, trembling. (Fires) The second bullet,

on your right foot to make you fall on both knees, coughing. (The young man falls on both knees. (Fires) The third bullet, to your crotch (chuckles) so that your *yang* parts deprive you of a wife (Fires). The fourth bullet, to your belly! (Fires) The fifth bullet, to your heart, so that your heart may never burn. (Fires while dancing) The sixth bullet, to your throat, to make you hold up your brain. (As if reading, fires) The seventh bullet, to your left eye, so that you die staring at me. (Fire!) The eighth bullet to your right eye, so that I am the last person you ever remember. (Fire!) The ninth bullet, to your forehead, to leave you with a wound that turns you dumb. (Fire!)(...) (*Da Xiansheng*: 44)

“Words are floating in space by themselves” (Lehman 2006: 147) while the speaker of such violent acts becomes an irrelevant presence; that turns the text into something no more than “auditive structures” (Ibid) holding both political and personal fragmentary connotations. The calm and lack of affection with which the monologue is uttered makes it overcome the heaviness of a dramatic exploration in front of the audience, while its surprising artificiality brings it closer to the dehumanized psyche of the killer pronouncing them. It is in fact the paradox of articulating painfully violent texts in a horrifyingly calm artificial demeanor, and thus exposing their raw psychological structure. The same goes with the cynical but wannabe ethical remarks on behalf of the judge, who moralizes the death of the revolutionary young man:

**The Judge:** Determined to fight for freedom? But in the end who lost his freedom? Who’s the one falling on his knees, brains smashed allover? You! You, young man! Holding a flag beautifully written on, you came threatening and attacking my chair, thinking that overthrowing my chair would restore freedom. You were wrong, you innocent young man! Chairs can’t change! The only ones that change are the people standing on these chairs and those kneeling before them. Keeping this chair is like keeping a desert island in the middle of a sea of wronged ghosts. This isle can never sink, bones and skeletons are raising its altitude. I’m sitting right on this island which means you lost. And I won. (...) I’m only a puppet. Yes, a puppet. And you must forgive puppets. And understand them. (*Da Xiansheng* 43)

Slogans, emotional statements and crass theatricality turn into genuine feelings that challenge the audience to think them over and scrutinize not the characters on stage, but themselves. Wang reaches this effect through the intermedial use of camera on stage, mediating the plethora of emotions

at stake through an abundance of images that ultimately challenge the audience's self-moral reconsiderations. When the revolutionary young man gets killed in gruesome manner, what is being edited on the big Mao-portrait shaped screen dominating the stage is Lu Xun's close-up shock at the site. There's a clearly moralizing issue at stake in this choice, but a sense of deep sadness and awareness of humanity's precarious condition displaces the lack of authenticity of a regular moral discourse:

**Lu Xun:** Trust me, this is paradise. Everything is ok...whoever tells you that, don't trust him, even if that person is me. On the contrary, that should make you realize you have arrived into the worst of hells. You have lost the right to question it because it is heaven. You have lost the right to oppose it, because it is heaven. This kind of phrase can only support those people loving chairs. I scrutinize myself deeply in a void mirror. But no, the mirror is not void. I can see you and you and you in my eyes. (...) You can throw over the chair of guilt but you can't find a pretext to grab it and sit on it again. Children, bare that in mind. (he dies)

**The fatty:** How stupid!

**The skinny:** Indeed, nothing but a bag of bones. (*Da Xiansheng*, 78)

There is no camera intermediality performed during the above monologue picturing the death scene of Lu Xun. As if director Wang wanted to tell his audience, for the first time throughout the performance, that what you see is what you get. The last part of the play, filled with ideological and moral discourses has no need any longer to recompose its multidimensional perspectives through intermediality. One is left with the impression of witnessing a classical piece of theatre. Again, this is an illusion, a trick, and intermediality starts inoculating the mind of the audience, who may now see certain details and perspectives of the reality on stage without the help or on behalf of the director. The reality of Lu Xun's death or Lu Xun's soul revolution is now seen maturely through the eyes of the audience who might have already gotten the core learning lesson of this play. It is a play about self-discovery through the humanization of an ossified hero and about what one might do with this self-discovery in real life, outside the theatre. Lu Xun's monologue might be filled with moral slogans hard to convince but it is precisely their assumed theatricality that makes them meaningful; his very last words are not signs sent to the audience, but shared feelings of compassion. The intermedial camera on stage disappears because there are no more spectators to the play. Everyone is involved in it, the audience, the actors, the technical



crew, the gigantic screen which turns off and regains its static, unmovable position, everyone is active part of the play now.

Wang's Lu Xun is also a product of shared time in history. As the director claims, the technical staff of the play is comprised of people from three generations, each bringing their own contribution to the historic representation of the performance. But all the events, going back and forth through the stream of consciousness into different aspects of Lu Xun's biography are not mere facts, but what Lehman calls "images of contemplation" (Lehman 2006: 157), inviting the spectator to scrutinize them and invest them with personal meaning. Wang himself straightforwardly places his hopes on self-moral scrutinizing on behalf of the audience, as it was the case with other plays he has staged, such as *Ghosts 2.0*, an adaptation of Ibsen's work to Chinese realities: "I hope audiences will be introspective about humanity, after watching it" (Wang 2014)

The way Wang chooses to elaborate his performance through the means of puppets 傀儡, as opposed to Lu Xun's vulnerable flesh and blood persona, speaks volumes about the artistic purposes in patterning his characters this way. At a first glance, it might seem that Lu Xun's real body on stage is in dichotomy conflict with the artificiality of a human-made body, such as that of a puppet. But just like the projected real-time edited video images complement the stage performance in a *yin-yang* relationship, the flesh-and-blood body and that of the puppets complement each-other. Wang brings into stage multitudes of puppets, all very creative and energized by complex emotions. The semi-grotesque puppet depicting the mother of the young revolutionary, from the eyes of whom a pair of hands comes out gesticulating aggressively or Skinny's caterpillar body, the funny umbrella shaped body of Zhou Zuoren, symbolizing Lu Xun's brother liberal visions, or Fatty's ability to raise up his own head are all endowed with heavy political and psychological symbolism.

When the revolutionary young man gets killed, the caterpillar-like figure of Skinny surrounds his body criticizing his reckless courage, which is exactly the image chosen to be conveyed on camera, as well. Blurred images of China's recent history are unfolding in psychedelic fashion in the puppet's huge, alien-shaped eyes; it is a shocking image which builds upon the gigantic discrepancy between the puppets almost ridiculous shape and her power of featuring through the eyes a whole history of national cruelty. Skinny's caterpillar body is the repository of an entire century of violent Chinese history. Her long multi-legged body that

absurdly, and grotesquely surrounds the corpse of the young man killed by his own irrational revolutionary idealism. The calmness of this grotesque scene is also distancing the audience from the awareness of watching a real-time experience; stillness makes thus the audience aware of the process of constructing an artificial moment like this, through the help of intermediality. Still, emotions are real and it is the very artificiality of the scene that empowers its hard-to-tame revelatory feelings. The very thin line between virtual violence and real violence is perfectly rendered throughout the performance, whenever the camera chooses certain surprising aspects to be displayed on screen. Yet again, the virtual and real violence of this scene complement each-other.

The use of technology - although compared to other of Wang plays, is limited in *The Great Master* -, has also the purpose of destabilizing the sense of time and place. As stated before, in this play, Lu Xun is the product of three generations and his trans-historical complexity surfaces at any given time throughout the performance. Playwright Li Jing often states that her Lu Xun is a present day Lu Xun, a man any of us would like to talk to on the phone and confess their deepest thoughts and concerns. At a closer look, however, Lu Xun is a flesh and blood human being, a victim exposed to all vulnerabilities of China's recent history, as shown also in an interview with the director:

"What *The Great Master* is all about is if Lu Xun were still alive, if his ghost could look into the present Chinese history, how would he answer, how would he comment and judge, and what his vision would be. ... One may say that Lu Xun's spirit could continuously live up to the present day and what we can see on stage is exactly this spirit." (Wang in Li Jing *Da Xiansheng*)

Time and space do not matter anymore also because the constructed figure of Lu Xun can be displaced by the audience needs or imagination to any Chinese social chronotope. The young man gets killed by bullets while what one sees on the screen is Lu Xun's painful grimaces, followed by Skinny's crawling body next to the corpse. "Media becomes" thus "visible as media" (Niebelink 2010: 225) and what derives from it is a surprisingly logical process. The performance-screening dislocation generates a process of thought-emotion relocation and then a feeling of self-awareness, which is the ultimate artistic goal of the play.

Most of the critical discourses analyzing the play, including that of the director and playwright, as well as academic ones raise the question of 'soul' 心灵 *xinling*, formed of body 肉体 *routi* and feeling 情感 *qinggan*,

as the 'central theme of the play' (Li 2015: 102). Li Jing goes as far as to state that 灵魂 *linghun*-soul is a concept still strange to the Chinese people as, she farther states, 'from early childhood I have only heard the word "thing" 事 *shi* instead'. "This work is about the paradox of love and freedom", it's about sacrificial love similar to that of Jesus dying on the cross (79). Despite the Christian Messiah like figure of Lu Xun, the genuine reinterpretation and the reconstructing of a much more credible morality is rather based on old Chinese traditions that brings to question the 君人 *junren*, the nobleman who is modest and lucid in his relation with the other. Her reconfiguring of altruism is built on a Christian understanding of universal love; what Li Jing does is in fact to find a middle ground that builds on a paradox, that is perfect dialogue between heightened emotionalism and a rational lucid mind. The way Li Jing questions the morality of nowadays China thorough Lu Xun's conceptualization as a contemporary human being hides, within notions like "soul" and "spirit", subversive political criticism focused on China's double standard political discourse on social equity, endowed with universal value.

Director Wang Chong redefines the question of soul as moral entity that fights constraints and refuses to turn into a puppet, thus getting obviously political in constructing the social symbolism of the play. Chairs are a pervasive symbol throughout the play, chairs that grow into the flesh of the characters. The very last scene preceding Lu Xun's death shows the Great Master mounting on a ladder along Mao's gigantic bust to his head, where he snatches the big chair which replaces the statue's facial features and brains and throws it away. Only after eliminating the lust for power, may one discover the beauty of the soul, that Li Jing searches so avidly for throughout her courageous play. "Imagination of the soul" is another formula used by Lu Xun academic experts, this time, who analyze this play. The soul, in their vision, takes the shape of a mirror which reflects both the historic and the present social landscape of China. (*Da Xiansheng* 79). In the context of a heavy Neoconfucian moralizing narrative that dominates China's contemporary reemergence of national emancipation in a global world, Li Jing's work subverts these very narratives, attacking their lack of feeling. The hypocrisy between the beauty of the neo-leftist national building discourse and the cruel neoliberal reality is replaced by playwright Li and director Wang with an aesthetic of beauty that empowers the grotesque with emotions and makes palpable, on the Chinese stage, the transformative moral force of their politically disguised performance vision.

## Conclusions:

The fact that Lu Xun's life and works have been continuously reinvented and readapted to the constantly fluctuating needs of the Chinese society shows that his character has always been a catalyzer of Chinese modernity, which reinvents itself, within the realm of Chinese theatre again and again. From purely naturalistic displays of consciousness, as it was the case at the beginning of the last century, to commercialized forms or cutting-edge techniques meant to modernize the Chinese theatre, Lu Xun has been a disseminator of mind-opening ideas that help China recalibrate its theatre discourse on the global stage. As it is the case with Wang Chong's theatre praxis, the heavy intermediality of his plays that build up rhizome-like visions of Chinese history may not be a shockingly new technique within the postdramatic discourse on theatre. But the paradoxical ways in which Wang plays with notions of surveillance/reality/imagination of reality/desired reality/possible reality in a complementary manner, which aims at disturbing the audience and making them reach lucidity and rationality through an intellectual assault on emotion, is rather unique; it also goes back to Wang's cultural background, one dominated by meaning and emotion coming out of randomness, paradox and nonsense. It comes natural to all young directors discussed in this paper to bring forth their Zen Buddhist background into the play, even unconsciously, proving that tradition lies also in China's epistemological foundation, and therefore, in the every-day living practices and simple gestures.

The new Chinese independent theatre is thus making the youth realize that morality in theatre is not solely an abstract notion, but rather "as real and as palpable as gravity". (Billioud 2012) And this time around, Chinese theatre makers manage to keep perfect balance between artistry and moral engagement.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Wang Xiang 王翔 is the producer and artistic director of Nanluoguxiang Theatre Festival in Beijing, promoting the idea of “theatre of the people for the people”; The quoted passage is taken from his 2016 Festival “Manifesto”: *We Are Still Alive, Warmly, Nobly and Artistically*, in which Wang complains about the hard conditions of making independent theatre in China as well as about the invasion of commercialized plays, a phenomenon which needs to be cut off by a more active engagement with “matters of the soul” on stage.
- <sup>2</sup> Lu Xun 鲁迅 (1881-1936) is “the father of Chinese modern literature” and deeply associated with the iconoclasm of May 4 Movement 1919;
- <sup>3</sup> The avant-garde theatre group in Beijing has been led by artistic director Wang Chong (b. 1982) promoting forms of intermedial, experimental theatre; he brings performance and real-time shooting and editing on stage, while exploring the many versions of reality.
- <sup>4</sup> 大先生, personal translation *The Great Master*; in certain English reviews, the title can also be translated as *Mr. Big*. The play was staged nine times at Beijing National Theatre, but its production stopped in Shanghai due to censorship problems caused by its heavy political content.
- <sup>5</sup> <http://english.cri.cn/7146/2015/11/02/3481s902315.htm>
- <sup>6</sup> See, for instance, Wang Dewei, *Fictional Realism in Twentieth Century China*, 1992 arguing for very diverse forms of realism developed in the fiction of Mao Dun, Lao She and Lu Xun.
- <sup>7</sup> See Bonnie S. McDougall’s *Mao Zedong’s Yan’an Talks on Literature and Art*, 1980; during the famous 1942 Yan’an Talks, art and literature are clearly stated to have mimetic representation of reality while literature was meant to be serving as a socialist propagandistic tool.
- <sup>8</sup> See Peter Button *Configurations of the real in Chinese Literary and Aesthetic Modernity*, Brill, 2009
- <sup>9</sup> In 2003 Yan Fu translated into Chinese *On Liberty* by John Stuart Mill, under the title 群己权界论 a work which greatly impacted China’s modernity and emancipatory nation saving ideals powered by the concept of freedom 自由.
- <sup>10</sup> More on the Hong Kong version in “Zhongguo xiandangdai huaju wutaishang de Lu Xun zuopin”, Fan Jiarong, *Wenhua Yishu Yanjiu*, 2009 (2): 5
- <sup>11</sup> Wang Xiang promotes the concept of theatre for the people carried on by his annual Nanluoguxiang Theatre Festival in Beijing.
- <sup>12</sup> Zhang Guangtian is a famous Chinese playwright and avant-garde musician, his most famous directed play being Che Guevara *Qie-Gewala*, in 2000, promoting anti-Americanization and new-leftist nationalist feelings. His play *Mister Lu Xun* is well documented in articles like “Zhang Guangtian: Lu Xun qishi genwo meiguanxi” *Zhongguo Xinwen Zhoukan*, 2006 (41) or “Zhang Guangtian: Lu Xun Xiansheng Tage lai”, *Xiju zhi jia* 2003

- <sup>13</sup> Each character represents Lu Xun's true love, his feminist students and his writer friend, who died at the hands of nationalists for holding leftist views.
- <sup>14</sup> Excerpt from Drama Literature *Xiju Wenxue*, "Xiaozhong de beiai, Kan Huaju Wu Chang, Nü Diao you gan", 2001 (12): 67
- <sup>15</sup> See for instance Paul S. Chong, *Postcolonial Imagination*, Hong Kong, 2014.
- <sup>16</sup> See *Shixian Juchang The Theatre practice* <http://www.practice.org.sg/en/past-performance/the-story-after-ah-q/> The play was staged in 2011 for The China Theatre Festival in Hong Kong.
- <sup>17</sup> Chinese avant-garde independent theatre director, founder of The New Theatre Youth Group 新青年剧团, whose plays such as *One Beautiful Day Meihao de yitian* or *A Madman's Diary* have participated at domestic and international theatre Festivals.
- <sup>18</sup> Reference to the rhizome structure of feeling debated by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*, 1980.
- <sup>19</sup> Artistic Director Wang Xiang, Dramaturg Li Jing, director and performer Li Ning are only a few of the voices shaping the independent contemporary theatre scene and coming up with the "aesthetic of the soul" concept, derived from the ecocritical narrative, which is very popular in China's academic field during the last 2 decades.
- <sup>20</sup> Although well received by the Chinese theatre critic reviewers, certain reviews criticize *Da Xiansheng* for being "too political" as Bei Xiaojing would state on his *weibo* account [http://www.weibo.com/2641162085/Dp7AQxK16?from=page\\_1005052641162085\\_profile&wvr=6&mod=weibotime&type=comment#\\_rnd1500037184491](http://www.weibo.com/2641162085/Dp7AQxK16?from=page_1005052641162085_profile&wvr=6&mod=weibotime&type=comment#_rnd1500037184491)
- <sup>21</sup> The aesthetic of engagement has been first recycled by Arnold Berleant which heavily influenced the Chinese theoreticians rethinking of Chinese traditional aesthetics and its ability to relate to the Western world as a soft-power tool. Other forms derived from this East-West contact which helped Chinese aesthetics rediscover its strong potential for postmodernity is "the living aesthetics", also present within the Chinese aestheticians' discourse such as Pan Fan, see *Aesthetics of Everyday Life*, Liu Yuedi, Cambridge Scholars, 2014.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ARTAUD, Antonin. *Selected Writings*, University of California Press, 1976.
- BERLEANT, Arnold. *The Aesthetics of Environment*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992.
- BILLIQUOD, Sebastien. "Thinking through Confucian Modernity, A study of Mou Zongsan Moral Metaphysics", *Modern Chinese Philosophy*, Vol. 5, Ed. Makeham, J. Australian National University, Brill, 2012.
- BUTTON, Peter. *Configurations of the Real in Chinese Literary and Aesthetic Modernity*, Brill, 2009;
- CHAN, De Serena. *The Thought of Mou Zongsan*, Brill, 2010.
- CHEN, Xiaomei. *Acting the right part: Political theatre and popular drama in contemporary China*, University of Hawaii Press, 2002.
- CHENG, Xiangzhan. "On the Four Keystones of Ecological Aesthetic Appreciation", *East Asian Ecocriticism*, Simon, C, Won-C. eds, Springer, 2013: 220-240.
- CHONG, S. *Paul Postcolonial Imagination, Archeological Hermeneutics and Comparative Religious Theology*, Chinese University Press, Hong Kong, 2014.
- CHECKNER, Richard. *Performance Theory*, Routledge, 2006
- DAVIES, Gloria. *Lu Xun's Revolution, Writing in Time of Violence*, Harvard University Press, 2013
- DELEUZE, GUATTARI. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, University of Minnesota Press, 1987 (1980).
- FAN, Jiarong. "Zhongguo xiandangdai huaju wutaishang de Lu Xun zuopin" (The works of Lu Xun on stage), *Wenhua Yishu Yanjiu* (Culture and Arts Research) 2009 (2): 5
- FERRARI, Rossella. *Pop goes the Avant-garde : Meng Jinghui and Chinese Avant-garde Theatre*, Seagull Books, 2012: 365 p.
- FEI, Faye Chunfang. "Chinese theories of Theatre and Performance, from Confucius to the Present", The University of Michigan Press, 2002
- GU, Wenli. "Zai Chuangzao de Shiguo, Ping Chen Baichen Gaibian de Huajujuben AhQ Zhengzhuan", *Renmin Xiju* (People's Theatre), (1981), 10: 7-8.
- HE, Keren. Interview with Wang, Chong. Lu Xun, xiandai wenxue shang zui da IP, Li Jing ban huaju "Da xiansheng", *Fengkuang Wenhua*, 15.03.2016 accessed 07.2016  
[http://culture.ifeng.com/a/20160315/47877685\\_0.shtml](http://culture.ifeng.com/a/20160315/47877685_0.shtml)
- HSIUNG, Yuwen. "Expressionism and its deformation in contemporary Chinese Theatre", 2014, *Asian thought and Culture*, Vol. 63: 146p.
- JORG, Huber., Zhao.C. *The Body at Stake: Experiments in Chinese Contemporary Art and Theatre*, Bielefeld, 2013.
- LAUGHLIN, Charles. *Contested Modernities in Chinese Literature*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- LEHMAN, Hans, T. *Postdramatic Theatre*, Taylor and Francis, 2006.

- LI, Jing. *Da Xiansheng*, (The Great Master), Zhongguo Wenshi Chubanshe, 2015.
- LI, Zehou. *The Chinese Aesthetic Tradition*, University of Hawai'i Press, 2010.
- LIU, Yuedi *Aesthetics of Everyday Life*, Cambridge Scholars, 2014.
- HELMUT, Wenzel Christian. "Beauty in Kant and Confucius: a First Step" *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 2006, 33 (1):95-107
- GROTOWSKI, Jerzy. *Towards a Poor Theatre*, Ed. Barba Eugenio, Routledge, 1968
- MC. DOUGALL, Bonnie. *Mao Zedong's "Talks at the Yan'an Conference on Literature and Arts"*, University of Michigan 1980.
- NIEBELINK, G., MERX. S. "Presence and Perception: Analysing Intermediality in Performance." In: Sarah Bay-Cheng, Chiel Kattenbelt, Andy Lavender and Robin Nelson (eds.) *Mapping Intermediality in Performance*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. 218-229.
- SHAN, Min. "Xiaozhong de beiai. Kan Huaju Wuchang, Nudiao" (The sadness within tears: watching theatre plays *Wuchang*, *Nudiao*, *Xiju Wenxue* (Drama Literature), (2001) 12: 66-68.
- SHAVIRO, Steven. Post-Cinematic Affect: on Grace Jones, Boarding Gate and Southland Tales, *Film Philosophy* 14 (1): 2010.
- WANG, Chong. Interview in Crienglish.com 20.01.2017  
<http://english.cri.cn/7146/2015/11/02/3481s902315.htm>
- WANG, Chong Interview with Xu Lin, "Multimedia Play has the Charm of Old Movie", *China Daily* 09.05.2014  
<http://wo.chinadaily.com.cn/view.php?mid=113704&cid=97&isid=1547>  
acc. 10.12.2016
- WANG, Chunchen. "Realism in Contemporary Chinese Heart", Huber, Chuan (eds.) *New Thoughtfulness in Contemporary China: Critical Voices in Arts and Aesthetics*, Transactions Publishers 2011.
- WANG, Dehou. "Huajumen wai kan Lu Xun" (Watching Lu Xun from the theatre's door), *Zhongguo Xiju* (Chinese Theatre) 2001 (10): 12-12.
- WANG, Dewei, *Fictional Realism in Twentieth Century China*, Columbia University Press, 1992.
- WANG, Xiang. "Women hai huozhe, yao yishu wenai, gaogui, yishude huozhe" The 7<sup>th</sup> Beijing Nanluoguxiang Performing Arts Festival, 2016: I-XXIX.
- WEN, Yanliu. "Kan ZHongguo Houxiandai Xiju de Xianshi Huanjing, Ziyou Huaju Kuangrenriji Tanqi" (The Real Environment Chinese Postmodern Theatre, The Case of Independent Play A Madman's Diary), *Zhongguo Xiju*, (Chinese Theatre), 2012:56-58.
- XIONG, Wei. "Zhang Guangtian: Lu Xun Xiansheng Tagelai" (Mr. Lu Xun on musical rhythm), *Xiju Zhijia*, 2001 (3):7-8.
- YAN, Olivia. *The Story After AhQ, AhQ Houzhuang*, Chinese Theatre Festival 2011  
<http://www.practice.org.sg/en/past-performance/the-story-after-ah-q/>  
acc. 09.09.2016



- YANG, Chunmei "Lun Xinshiqi yilai xijuzhong de fengxingxiang", Hainan Shifan Daxue (Hainan Normal University), PhD, 2013
- YU, Shicun. *Fasheng Lianxi zhi Lu Xun*, (The Practical Voice of Lu Xun), 2016<http://www.v4.cc/News-2327310.html> acc. 12.12. 2016
- ZENG, Fanren. "Wo guo dangdai shengtai meixue de yanjiu de xin fazhan" (New Developments in the Research of Chinese Environmental Aesthetics), *Shandong Daxue Wenyi Meixue Yanjiu Zhongxin*, 11.09.2011
- ZHANG, Guangtian. "Lu Xun qishi gen wo meiyou guanxi" (Lu Xun has got nothing to do with me), *Zhongguo Xinwen Zhoukan*, 2001 (41):32

### Theatre Plays

- LI, Jing. WANG, Chong *The Great Master, Da Xiansheng* 大先生, Beijing National Theatre, 2016.
- LI, Jianjun. *One Beautiful Day, Meihao de Yitian* 美好的一天, Wuzhen Theatre Festival 2014.
- LI, Jianjun. *A Madman's Diary* 狂人日记, Penghao Theatre, 2012 Beijing
- TIAN, Gebing. Paper Tiger Theatre Studio in Beijing, *A Madman's Diary*, 狂人日记, 2014, Beijing
- CHEN, Guangtian. *Mr. Lu Xun, Lu Xun Xiansheng* 鲁迅先生, 2001
- LIN, Zhaohua. *Old Stories Retold, Gushi Xinpian* 故事芯片, 2001

### Selective Chinese web Sources

- Wang Chong iqiyi TV Interview [http://www.iqiyi.com/v\\_19rr9clwes.html](http://www.iqiyi.com/v_19rr9clwes.html) accessed 05.06.2017
- Wang Chong suizao Bu yiyang de Lu Xun (Wang Chong creates a different type of Lu Xun) [http://ent.ifeng.com/a/20160315/42589905\\_0.shtml](http://ent.ifeng.com/a/20160315/42589905_0.shtml) accessed 07.06.2017
- Kan Da Xiansheng ruhe jiedu Lu Xun (How to understand Lu Xun from Da Xiansheng, Guang Ming Ribao, 12.10.2015[http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2015-10/12/c\\_128306479.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2015-10/12/c_128306479.htm) accessed 05.04.2017 [https://baijia.baidu.com/s?old\\_id=396506](https://baijia.baidu.com/s?old_id=396506)
- Renmin Ribao, Da Xiansheng Huanwei Lu Xun Ben Xing Xiang 28.09.2015 (Da Xiansheng gets back to the original Lu Xun) [http://culture.ifeng.com/a/20150928/44748990\\_0.shtml](http://culture.ifeng.com/a/20150928/44748990_0.shtml) accessed 19.05.2017
- Da Xiansheng yong biao'anshi bu yiyang de Lu Xun (Da Xiansheng brings forth a New Lu Xun) 05.10.2016 <http://www.xijucn.com/huaju/20161005/81741.html> accessed 12.06.2017
- Wu, Haiyun. New Play on Lu Xun attracts praise, controversy, 11.04.2016 <http://www.sixthtone.com/news/730/praise-and-controversy-new-play-lu-xun>





## ADRIAN GOR

Born in 1979, in Iasi

Ph.D., Concordia University

*Thesis: A Symbolic-Realistic Guide for Image-Makers: Performing the Contemporary Byzantine-Inspired Iconic Vision from the Spectacle*

Artist in Residence, Berlin Art Institute Germany, (2017)

Artist in Residence, Ottawa School of Art, Canada (2016)

Artist in Residence, GLO'ART, Belgium (2016)

### **Professional Memberships**

- College Art Association (CAA)
- Universities Art Association of Canada (AAC-AAUC)
- American Academy of Religion (AAR)

### **ARTWORKS in Permanent Collections**

- Ottawa School of Art Permanent Collection
- Glo'Art Collection, Lanaken, Belgium
- Wesley Theological Seminary Art Collection, Washington DC, USA

### **Art Exhibitions**

Arnica Artist Run Centre, Kamloops, BC, Canada, two-person show,  
January 14 - February 24, 2018

Archives Gallery 112, Ottawa, Canada, one-person show,  
May 2 -June 23, 2018

“ArtSpring”, Berlin, Germany, group show, 16-18 June 2017.

Participation to international conferences in Banff (Canada), Halifax (Canada),  
Syracuse (USA)

Invited lectures delivered at Concordia University

Several articles published in peer-reviewed journals

# RETHINKING THE ICONIC IN THE AGE OF SCREEN TECHNOLOGIES A BYZANTINE HIEROTOPIC PERSPECTIVE ON SEEING IMAGES AS PRESENCE

## Abstract

This article offers a Byzantine iconographic understanding of creativity to reveal how today's screen technologies may activate an iconic vision—a feeling of (divine) invisibility as present in the physical space. In using the Byzantine theology of the icon in conjunction with Marion's phenomenology of images, it outlines a symbolic and realistic mode of seeing that expose the ongoing metaphysical issues of representation. These views on images underline how the illusory aspect of televisual images and their appearance of real-presence can mark the end of metaphysics of presence, and consequently the impossibility of having an iconic experience. In this regard, a parallel is made between Lidov's hierotopic description of the Hodegetria icon and Verhoeff's performative inquiry into mobile touch screens to define a iconic (symbolic-realistic) vision that reconsiders the evocative/creative aspect of televisual images.

**Keywords:** iconic vision; televisual image; Byzantine icon; Jean Luc Marion; linear and reverse perspective

## Introduction

The metaphysical interrogation of televisual images shows a fixation with their power to objectify human identity and hinder real creative experiences. As the social theorist John Lechte observes, the concern in visual criticism is that digital technology can be used to manipulate images to the point of eliminating all references to a real signified.<sup>1</sup> For this reason, Jean-Luc Marion claims that the consequence of this technological change in the referential status of images is to see 'our world in its accomplished state of idolatry' (2004, 82). The question, however, is *how* to understand creativity in light of an ongoing quest for innovation

of the (omnipresent) televisual screen. If the image is referenced in a way that is indistinguishable from its screen technology, it means that today's viewers lose the imaginative capacity to recall actual events. I propose, then, in this article to reveal the relevance of Byzantine theology of the icon, formulated in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries, for understanding the creative limits of televisual images.

Before discussing the Byzantine canonic mode of seeing icons, it is important, here to begin by posing the following question: what is a creative vision? For now, I would respond from Marion's phenomenological perspective by saying that a creative vision forms when images are given in intuition as new phenomena, beyond a viewer's finite mind and intentional gaze. And, Marion refers to five modes of phenomena's *givenness* in intuition that overwhelm the objectifying effect of human intentionality: the event, flesh, idol, icon, and revelation (2002, 228-247). All these examples of phenomena, dubbed as *saturated phenomena*, are appearances that are over-full with intuition, i.e., whose appearances cannot be taken completely into account by a subject's intentional gaze. Most relevant for my discussion, the idol and icon are appearances that signal the presence of an invisible signified through various intensities of light in visibility, which in turn stimulates viewers' creative capacity to evoke an image.

The contemporary (televisual) context in which Marion redefines the theology of icons (true images) and idols (false images) is not specifically focused on the idea of an image as a creative vision. He is more concerned with debunking conventionally established images of truth—also referred as metaphysical concepts that objectify reality—in order to overcome the long-running dispute over the real-presence of a signified in a frame for representation.<sup>2</sup> According to systematic theologian, Robyn Horner a pressing issue in Marion's critique of metaphysics is whether or not any form of invisibility (signifieds), coached in theological terms, has any place in today's philosophical discourse around un-representable phenomena (2011, 335). So, Marion takes up the phenomenological challenge of speaking about the (im)possibility of the invisible to enter the visible phenomena, outside the theological realm and of the metaphysical iconoclasm between philosophical aesthetics and theological beliefs. Correspondingly, he moves away from moral debates regarding the reality of a divine image versus the falseness of an idolater's image by placing the icon (true images) and idol (false images) on the same side of unconstituted *givens*.<sup>3</sup> This move is done in his book, *Crossing of the Visible* by focusing

on painting as the central concern of phenomenology: phenomenality, or the power by which appearances appear. Instead of asking what is an image of truth or untruth, which only invites for iconoclastic disputes, Marion takes the idol and icon as exemplary of two competing models for understanding phenomenality. The first model (illustrated by the idol and “linear perspective”) holds that phenomena appear when they are constituted by a subject’s intentional gaze, where an onlooker constructs space and controls things within that space as objects. And for Marion, the idol phenomena take the form of paintings, from naturalistic depictions in a linear perspective as in Albrecht Durer’s work to abstract work like in Malevitch’s suprematist compositions. Interestingly enough, both abstract and naturalistic paintings are seen on the same continuum and as opposed to icons. The second model (illustrated by the icon and “paradox”) holds that phenomena appear of their own accord when they meet an intentional gaze with their own power to appear, thus overtaking the power of the subject who attempts to constitute them. Here, an onlooker does not construct space or control things, but the onlooker is shaped by the phenomenon that “looks back” at her/him.

This presentation of the idols and icons in *Crossing of the Visible* relates to Marion’s critique of television screens as the ultimate stage of idolatry. In his phenomenological, secular turn of developing the aesthetics of the idol and icon (a shift that is influenced by his Catholic background), Marion ironically maintains a theological ground (Horner, 2005, 125). Particularly, he sees the television screen as an intensification of the idol (in the theological sense of an illusory image) where to an even greater extent than a painted idol a subject-onlooker can get lost in pure visibility, acting as a voyeur taking pleasure in seeing while not being seen. In other words, Marion takes an iconoclastic view of contemporary televisual culture, claiming that the technological image removes all connections to a concrete signified, thus leading to a loss of genuine experiences and ultimately to the objectification of human identity. For this reason, the concept of the icon is posed as a possible solution in counteracting the objectifying power of the televisual idol.<sup>4</sup>

While the idol as painting can have a beneficial outcome on viewers’ imagination by challenging human intentionality with an *excess of visibility*, the televisual idol limits creativity by resuming phenomena to the expectations of an intentional gaze. More specifically, the painted idol maintains a link to a signified and adds a new perspective on it, such as in contemplating nature through a painted landscape or a person from a

portrait. Every painting acts as an *excess of visibility* (an addition to what nature already gives in a phenomenal form) that challenges or becomes unbearable for the human gaze due to the endless possibilities of a phenomenon's appearance. However, the challenge that the painted idol poses for the gaze will always remain under the horizon of the constitutive power of the viewer's "I" and so not effective enough in countering the extreme version of contemporary idolatry induced by the technological screens. Marion, then draws attention to the icon. The icon becomes even a greater challenge for the gaze as it places the phenomenon into a reverse perspective by exposing it through an "excess of light" that overwhelms the expectations of the viewers' intentionality (Marion, 2000, 197). This iconic creation of images depends on an invisible (divine) intentionality, which (paradoxically) visibly reveals itself in reaction to human intentionality. Subsequently, the icon turns into the best antidote for the idolatry of the televisual spectacle.

This paper continues Marion's similar task in the *Crossing of the Visible* of applying the theology of icons/idols to a critique of screen media, but from a different, Christian Orthodox perspective. It considers Alexei Lidov's Byzantine notion of hierotopy—a term that merges two Greek words *hieros* (sacred) and *topos* (place, space, notion), which consequently reveals what Marion did not consider: the creative and participatory facet of television screens (2006a, 12-13). While he uncovers the evocative potential of the idol at the pictorial level (a topic that will be developed in the next section), his phenomenological turn stops at seeing the televisual image within the limits of iconoclastic thoughts. Hierotopy will help to push further his phenomenological considerations by exposing *when* and *how* televisual screens may induce an iconic vision. This is not only contrary to Marion's iconoclastic view, but it also clarifies why Marion has been widely criticized for dematerializing the idea of an iconic vision, especially when investigating the *givenness* of the phenomenon according to the process of *phenomenological reduction*.<sup>5</sup> Hence, why he never appends to the noun "icon" the adjective "Byzantine", as understood and practiced in the Christian Orthodox tradition.

To that end, it is sufficient to underline here that Marion's (Catholic) view of the Byzantine icon facilitates the possibility to research the semiotic structure of creativity at the iconic level outside the theological realm. He picks up on the Incarnational logic of the image to explain that the icon is neither an *eikōn* nor an *eidolon* for the reason that it escapes the logic of referentiality between a signifier and signified (2004, 83-85). In short, in



Plato's view of mimesis, an *eikōn*-appearance (image) refers to an imperfect material copy of a real invisible model (Forms) and the *eidōlon*-appearance (idol or false being) to an illusion of something non-existent or without essence.<sup>6</sup> The *eikōn* is once and the *eidōlon* is twice removed from the reality of Forms (Marion, 2004, 79). The iconophile's thought (that loves the icons) disengaged from this referential mode of seeing to argue that an image is not the same with the temporal phenomena of materiality. The icon, then, stands for the participation of matter as an imprint of Christ's human form, which presents Him in His absence. While Marion resumes this form of participation at the contemplative vision between the crossing of two invisible gazes, the hierotopic analysis also incorporates the practice of venerating the icon in tangible, lived situations. In doing so, the hierotopic approach enables a Byzantine-inspired critique of the televisual image that moves beyond the Marion's iconoclastic approach. And, this not only helps to see more concretely what type of creativity and presence really remains following the commoditization of the image, but it contributes to contemporary debates about image making with a performative, practical analysis of the subtle aesthetic line between the idolic and iconic creativity.

### **Marion's phenomenology of contemporary idols and icons**

Marion states that the perspectival capability of the human gaze and its ability to address an *intentional object* (a referent of consciousness) in spatial perspective becomes more than just a "historically situated pictorial theory" (2004, 4). It turns into the essential phenomenological mode of being in the world. The process of taking perspective parallels the "aim of intentionality" in Husserlian phenomenology, which is essential for having real experiences, beyond the pure illusions of the televisual spectacle (Marion, 2004, 12). The perspectival gaze stems "from the production of the visible by the invisible" in a similar fashion as "the intentional object results from a production of experience by intentionality" (Marion, 2004, 13). Applied to a painting, the intentionality of a gaze forms an ideal [irreal/*irréel*] space in the flat surface of a canvas whereby the visible increases proportionally with the gaze's insertion of the invisible into the painted linear perspective (Marion, 2004, 5). If in ordinary vision the invisible stimulates the visible to perceive a space in which we are able to move and perform physically, the invisible in a painted perspective works only

to create an ideal sense of three-dimensionality. However, Marion does not consider the irreal space produced according to the logic of mimesis as deceptive (or idolic in a theological sense) when compared to the physical perspective of the ordinary vision, as both types of spaces are products of the intentionality of our gaze. In actuality, the irreal space provides more visibility than the physical space by stimulating the perspectival gaze to expand the ordinary perception of phenomena through the infusion of invisibility into the flatness/materiality of a canvas. With this non-iconoclastic attitude towards the phenomenology of the perspectival gaze, Marion redefines the idolic painting as a “remarkable achievement” of extracting from ordinary/natural visibility “blocks of the visible” (with no previous aesthetic meaning) to satisfy and even exceed the expectations of the desiring gaze (2004, 25, 33).

While for Marion a painting always creates an image that is contingent on the principle of taking perspective, the televisual image, instead, destroys all references to an actual time and space of an original event. Phenomenologically speaking, it prevents the experience of the world by blocking the aim of intentionality to move in perspective from a signifier to a signified. It follows, then, that in the case of the televisual image the intention of the gaze is absorbed into an “unending flow of time” and spaces, as broadcasted in news with no relation to each other via internet or cable TV connection (Marion, 2004, 48). And this televisual effect of the image, that eliminates the role of time and perspective in producing and organizing visibility, stops the gaze into a frozen image to be advertised (like in a TV commercial) as real-presence. In the case of the painting, the intentional gaze is always at play between a signifier and a signified according to the visual structure of an abstract and/or naturalistic perspective.

Although Marion sees in the painted idol an alternative aesthetic experience to the televisual spectacle, he ultimately aims at opening the painting’s phenomenality to take up the role of the icon, which is a type of painting that “formulates above all an—perhaps the only—alternative to the contemporarily disaster of the image” (2004, 87). So, in *The Crossing of the Visible*, Marion develops an aesthetic view of the Byzantine icon as a kind of redemption to the mediated image in today’s televisual culture. Particularly, the icon has a form of visibility that “participates in a resurrection...[which] imitates Christ, by bringing the unseen [the invisible] to light” (Marion, 2004, 27). This Christological insight (inspired by John Damascene’s writing on the icon) allows Marion to reflect on how the

icon's phenomenality releases the image from the mimetic logic of the idol. On the one hand, the idol glorifies the image as a *new spectacle*, which "doubles in the visible what the original keeps in the visible" (83). In other words, the idol enhances the visibility of the signifier to the point of competing with what it signifies—thus, dazzling the viewer's gaze by fulfilling the human desire for real-presence. Despite the fact that this misleads the viewer to take the signifier for the signified, the idol painting still maintains a sense of referentiality, which allows for a semi-access to the signified. But, with the advent of televisual technology, the idol culminated into completely eliminating all references to the signified by exposing itself instead as real-presence. On the other hand, the icon does not create a *new spectacle* because its "visible spectacle (a painted face) is radicalized to its prototype, type of an invisible counter-intentionality (a gaze in person)" (Marion, 2004, 84). Subsequently, the aesthetic boundary between the idol and icon is founded on the power of the iconic gaze to disrupt the viewer's (idolic) intention of gazing at his/her own desires as if really present in the tangible space. Though painted in the visible as a type, the iconic gaze remains absent as a prototype. Therefore, the viewer's gaze is directed through the icon's materiality—more specifically, in the direction of the *two painted eyes* of the iconic face—towards a referent that remains beyond the reach of the constitutive aim of the referential gaze or thinking subject. As opposed to the idol, which only reveals a sense of otherness according to the referential measure of the human perspective, the icon inverts the logic of perspective into a counter-intuitive experience that acknowledges the viewer as a divine gift (an *unconstituted* phenomenon). Said differently, in front of the icon the viewer escapes the objectifying effect of the idol over the *other* and discovers himself/herself exposed to a gaze that cannot be enclosed in the idolic, "rigid distribution of the visible in the sensible and the invisible in the intelligible" (Marion, 2004, 85).

Bram Leven, however, has pointed out that despite Marion's aesthetic approach to the idol/icon, his phenomenological theory of the image remains limited to an iconoclastic gesture of "condemning the televisual image" (2005, 61). For Marion, as for many critics who affirm the objectifying effect of the spectacle, the medium of the televisual screen seems to be mistaken for its image. But, as John Lechte notes, the problem with "transferring to the image the qualities of its object" is that it resumes the meaning of the image (even in its idolic televisual form as real-presence) to only that which is visible. The question, thus, remains:

can the televisual screen make present an electronic image that, while critiqued as pure illusion, acts as an absent/invisible signified. This is a question about the referential nature of images in general, which I propose to explore next through three types of creative visions: the symbolic, realistic, and symbolic-realistic. While the first two visions expose the metaphysical issues of representation, the third type tests Marion's phenomenology of painting at the Byzantine level of making an icon. The reason for this practical turn is the creative vision of constructing an icon that was established after the Byzantine iconoclasm. It refers to a tangible, performative aspect of the icon, which was overlooked by Marion—namely that the icon exists in an actual place from where it engages the viewers as direct participants. By emphasizing the crossing of *invisible* gazes in the icon's interaction with the viewer, Marion did not only become subjected to being critiqued for his tendency of vaporizing materiality, but in fact led his theory of painting to be inflexible in analyzing the metaphysical limits of the televisual image.

### **Idolic creativity: the symbolic and realistic visions**

The plausibility of a Byzantine iconographic reflection on the visible and invisible dimensions of televisual images can be estimated when Marion's phenomenology of painting is used to consider two key aspects of an artistic vision: the symbolic and realistic modes of taking perspective. And by following these modes of seeing, I argue, the manifold views in which a new phenomenon is given in today's screen-mediated images can be contextualized by a practical iconographic knowledge that complements Marion's dematerialized version of the icon.

In presenting the challenge of seeing iconically, Marion connects the metaphysics of the image as real-presence to the Platonic-symbolic and Nietzschean-realistic opposing positions on visible phenomena (2004, 78-83). Precisely, these two views about reality place the image in a mimetic rivalry between two spectacles: the visible-perceptible and invisible-intelligible. While Plato initiated the metaphysical iconoclasm, which mistrusts the reality of an image as a mimetic representation of an immaterial origin, Nietzsche freed the image from its unreal status by reversing the Platonic relation of similitude between the visible and invisible. That is, the image is not an imperfect symbolic imitation of an invisible Form, but becomes the real, visible itself. On the account of the

two metaphysical extremes, a creative vision is considered naturalistic when it maintains a spatial contiguity with a material referent (as objectively as possible) through the artist's rendition of shadows, colors, textures, etc. The aim here is to generate a natural (realistic) vision to see the referent in a linear perspective as if really present. An abstract creative vision involves, instead, the symbolic framing (an expressive-aesthetic treatment) of a conceptual or material referent in a way that the viewer's reception is directed towards interpreting what the referent is intended to mean, rather than its 3D appearance in the physical space.

A painting might accept or reject the representation of a linear perspective depending on its emphasis on either the visibility of a referent (naturalistically illustrated such as in the work of the Renaissance painters) or the invisibility of a referent (as exemplified by the abstraction of perspective in the work of the Suprematist painters).<sup>7</sup> So, according to the principle of taking perspective, the naturalistic and abstract aesthetic approaches appreciate the visible according to the pictorial rendition of a referent. The naturalistic painting engages the intentional gaze to play its role of creating invisibility (a spectacle) through the illusion of depth in a painted surface. It particularly does so by inviting the intentional gaze to stage an object in the depiction of a linear perspective. In reverse, the abstract painting is the idolic "instance of total visibility" that prevents the conscious intervention of the perspectival gaze from constructing an intentional object (Mezei, 2013, 288). With its lack of intentional objects, it manifests the invisible referent independently from any acts of consciousness. Marion states that the viewer cannot see in Kazimir Malevich's *Suprematist Composition: White on White* any recognizable material objects, thus his/her gaze is not able to find a place in its visibility to insert the invisible—all the viewer sees is a white square on a white background. Malevich wished to represent pure reality, and in doing so, he liberated the image from the conscious intervention of the viewer and his/her subjective (impure) aesthetic needs. Accordingly, the gazing aim is resumed to recognizing what is already present in the painting without deploying the invisible. In contrast to a naturalistic painting, abstract painting does not allow the invisible to play between "the aim of the gaze and the visible but rather, contrary to the gazing aim, [the invisible manifests] in the visible itself—and is merged with it, inasmuch as the white square is merged with its white base" (Marion, 2004, 19).

In summary then, an artist provides an *excess of visibility* by depicting a referent through various degrees of linear perspective: from abstract

to naturalism. Both aesthetic approaches emphasize unseen visibilities beyond what we already see through the ordinary vision of the physical world. But these artistic visions also reveal the viewers' metaphysical tendency of seeing images as real-presence, which inhibits the iconic phenomenon of bringing to the *real visible* more invisibility than what is already constructed within the limits of viewers' intentional gaze. On the one hand, the Platonic-symbolic vision claims the reality of the image as invisible and outside of the linear perspective. This has the effect of cutting off the invisible from the material in order to value the visible as a resource for symbolic meaning, which, in turn, leads viewers (through a mental process) beyond the realistic vision of the world. On the other hand, the Nietzschean vision, places the image inside the linear perspective in order to reclaim it as visible, thus having the effect of trapping the invisible in the material. This realistic type of image does not point towards a supersensible Platonic world that enforces predefined symbolic values, but to a paradoxical realistic vision that also incorporates the symbolic vision within the perceptible world. It is this later Nietzschean anthropocentric interpretive lens that Marion believes drives our relationship with the televisual screens. The image became, more precisely, *eidôlon*-appearances of pure simulations of reality in which everything turned into an instrument for mirroring human desires under the horizon marked by human perspective.

Thus, my aim in the next section is to show that if the performative level of making a Byzantine icon is applied to the phenomenology of painting, visual criticism acquires a new framework of analyzing to what extent the televisual spectacle may be an extreme version of idolatry. The question is: having in mind that human vision is bound to a perspectival gaze in both the iconic and idolic visions, to what degree does the televisual spectacle references itself in order to completely prevent a creative experience? In light of this question, I seek to show that by using Marion in conjunction with the hierotopic aspect of the Byzantine icon, the phenomenological approach to a creative vision opens up the possibility for a practical venue in exposing the metaphysical workings of the image.

### **Iconic creativity: the symbolic-realistic vision**

In contrast to the linear perspective that governs the construction of a naturalistic/abstract painting, the icon constructs a reversed perspective

that brings a surplus of invisibility to the visible. While the idol adds more visibility to the ordinary vision, it does not add anything new to the perspectival gaze itself. Said differently, the painting (as idol) does not create new visibility in addition to what the intentional gaze already perceives and organizes on its own.

From a Byzantine theological view, the reverse perspective of the icon follows the formula: *God (as prototype) sees the viewer and the viewer sees God (as type)*. And the transitive quality of the verb *sees* is guaranteed by the economical (Incarnational) relation uttered by Christ himself: 'He who has seen Me [type] has seen the Father [prototype]' (John 14, 9). From Marion's extreme version of iconolatry drawn from patristic writers, the icon's visibility needs to withdraw before the believer's gaze to allow the invisible gaze of the iconistic face to pass through the icon. The icon's visibility is eliminated in the same manner as Christ's visibility was effaced through His crucifixion. Instead of reproducing the bodily wounds of Christ and lay emphasis on His physical pain, the Cross refers to a visible trace (*type*) or an opening in Christ's body to unveil the invisible (the Father). Likewise, the empty space of the pupils painted on the surface of the icon designates an opening through which the invisible gazes can peer. Of particular importance to the icon's phenomenology is the inclusion of the human figure according to the demands of the "two dots of basically black paint" (the divine pupils belonging to a saint or Christ) in delivering the gaze of the other (Marion, 2004, 83). The dark void of all human eyes are, for Marion, the only part of the human body that offers nothing to be constituted by intentionality. And for this reason, the phenomena of the painted black pupils do not represent the dark space from the inside of the biological human eye. They are the mark of unforeseeable phenomena, which add a sense of invisibility that exceeds the viewer's intuition and capacity to make meaning (including metaphysical knowledge). This iconic type of invisibility differs from the invisible employed in a naturalistic perspective or the sheer visibility of an abstract painting, by manifesting the otherness of an opposing intentionality.

In response to Marion's designation of the human eyes as the central point of attention in the icon, this paper argues that the Byzantines found a more complex, mobile vision. The main attention should not be only on the human eyes as the gate to eternity, but also on the entire physical environment in which the veneration of the icon takes place. Alexei Lidov provides a particular example of the Byzantine vision, which he calls *hierotopy*, in the case of the miraculous icon of Hodegetria (Pointing

the Way) of Constantinople. Traditionally believed to have been painted by Saint Luke the Evangelist, the Hodegetria icon presents the Virgin holding the Child Jesus on one side, and on the other, the crucified Christ. According to various written accounts from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the icon was used in weekly rites to perform miracles in the Hodegon outdoor market place in the center of Constantinople. Since the late 13<sup>th</sup> century, the Hodegetria icon and the scenes of the miraculous events became a popular Byzantine iconographic theme. For example, in the icon *The Glorification of the Virgin* from the Cathedral of the Dormition in Kremlin, Moscow, the Hodegetria icon is depicted flying above a figure dressed in red with his arms spread out in a crucified position.<sup>8</sup> The red garment symbolizes the sacred status of those who carried the icon during the rites around the market place. On the left and right sides of the central figure in red, a crowd of worshipers is depicted as witnessing a miracle. Lidov quotes a Latin text from the 12<sup>th</sup> century that underlines the mobile aspect of the iconic vision in creating a sacred space:

On the third day of every week the icon was moved in a circle with angelic power in full view of the crowd, as though snatched up by some kind of whirlwind. And it carried about its bearer with its own circular movement, so that because of its surprising speed it almost seemed to deceive the eyes of the spectators. Meanwhile everyone, according to their tradition, beat their breasts and cried out 'Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison (Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy)' (2006b, 352)

The icon-bearers' activity in the rites is to geographically delineate a sacred space within a commercial, urban place. For this reason, the Hodegetria icon turns into a spatial icon through a combination of surrounding phenomena (from the crowd to material objects) that all contribute to forming a hierotopy. The icon is performed through liturgical rituals beyond its materiality as a flat pictorial image to the point of transforming the entire urban place within the sacred circle into an iconic vision. In this hierotopy, everything (from the icon to the crowd and the visible world) coexists as a collection of spatial iconic images. While the visible border of the sacred space is marked by the icon's materiality in the physical space of the city, the invisible border is marked symbolically at the level of the icon's screen. Lidov comments that the icon miraculously rotated in the air creating a visual effect in which the two images of the icon appeared as one (2006b, 354). The movement of the icon produced



a whirlwind effect before the crowd's eyes inducing an iconic vision that imitates the divine vision. That is, God sees every side of the icon simultaneously by defying the logic of the linear/Cartesian perspective—the divine vision is not limited to time and space. Therefore, in addition to the divine pupils, the Byzantine iconic vision is a (symbolic-realistic) mode of seeing that incorporates the entire space between the visible (realistic) and invisible (symbolic) borders.

According to Lidov, the circling of the market square by the icon-bearers is a re-enactment of the Hodegetria rite performed by the patriarch Sergius I during the Avars' siege of Constantinopol in 626. And the Byzantine victory over the Avar army is attributed to the divine intervention through the Hodegetria icon. It is believed that during the events of the siege, the patriarch carried the icon around the city walls (demarcating a sacred space) with his arms stretched out in a crucified gesture without touching the icon's frame—a sign of the icon's purity of not being touched by human hands. The patriarch's crucified position mimics the Crucifixion painted on one of the sides of the icon. The depiction of the Virgin Mary, from the other side, emphasizes the mimetic significance of Christ by pointing with Her right hand toward the Child Jesus (the path for creating a sacred space). This mimetic behavior is particularly significant in understanding the difference between the symbolic and realistic aspects of an idolic vision and the symbolic-realistic mode of performing an iconic vision. While the symbolic and realistic modes of seeing invite for (static) contemplation based on the referential distance between a signifier and signified, the symbolic-realistic vision breaks that distance through an active, Incarnational mode of imprinting or mapping the signified in the physical space as sacred. While the symbolic and realistic modes of seeing invite for (static) contemplation based on the referential distance between a signifier and signified, the symbolic-realistic vision breaks that distance through an active, Incarnational mode of imprinting or mapping the signified in the physical space as sacred.

When Patriarch Nicephorus (ca. 750-828 CE) questioned the mimetic logic of the image inherited from the Greek philosophical tradition, he disputed that the icon's reference to a model implies a direct relation of identity, in the sense that the goal of a copy is always to replicate an original. What the icon offers, instead, is a novel way to deal with the iconoclastic issue of real-presence in representation through God's Trinitarian logic of relations between persons (God as one will, but triple in organization: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). In brief: the

theological structure of the icon reveals the triple union of the divine persons by subsuming “the properly imaginal character of...the Son and his redemptive iconicity” (Mondzain, 2005, 27). The icon’s formal likeness (also called the Son’s artificial image or type) of the Son’s natural image (which is identical to the Father’s divine essence) brings to the beholder’s presence the invisible face of the Father (the prototype) through the Holy Spirit (the “source of the incarnational operation”) (Mondzain, 2005, 27). It follows then that the natural image is the essential similitude between the Son and Father, apart from the Son’s incarnate form. Moreover, the icon carries His human form, which closely links the human nature to the image of God. Humanity is the image of Trinity and this “imaginal... relationship of similitude” defines the formula of the Byzantine icon. By the same token, Nicephorus understands the Incarnation not as an “in-corporation” but as an “in-imagination” (Mondzain, 2005, 77). It is a “christic mimetic...act by which the image [of the human] rejoins the image [of the divine], because it is the image [of the human and divine] that is the prototype” (Mondzain, 2005, 84).

According to the theology of in-imagination, the Hodegetria rites (from the patriarch Sergius I’s rite to the icon-bearers’ weekly rites) do not reduce the redemptive image of the crucified Christ to a mere matter of resemblance between the real and the imagined Son—like through a referential distance in a painted idol. For there are not two Sons, one invisible and another visible. Similarly, the meaning of the Cross in the rites does not function as a dematerialized counter-intuitive experience in a Marionian sense. The Cross takes the performative-mimetic model of organizing the hierotopic event. Patriarch Sergius I imitates the type (Cross) before the beholders’ eyes in order to simulate the divine presence of the prototype (absence) within the city walls of Constantinople. It is a mimetic event that activates the participation of the crowd in the rite of carving with the material part of the icon (the screen) a sacred space in the urban environment. Likewise, the icon-bearers, who performed the weekly miracles in the Hodegon Square from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, did not aim to represent a historical event. For the people participating in the rites, it was not a matter of being informed about the Avars’ siege of Constantinopol or the Roman crucifixion of Christ (as depicted on the icon) by comparing the real/original event to the staging of that event in the Hodegon market. Instead, they mimetically renewed the patriarch Sergius I’s participation in the icon’s performance of the prototype to become conscious, via the icon, of the divine image. Such Byzantine

form of creating spatial imagery is perpetuated in contemporary liturgical processions through the iconographic depiction of the icon-bearer as shown in *The Glorification of the Virgin*. With his arms in a crucified position and miraculously carrying the levitating icon, the central figure in red functions for today's believers as a mnemonic device (as well as a mimetic device) that ceases to work as a referent. The icon becomes the image of Christ in His absence that enables the viewer to participate and acknowledge the lack of His real-presence.

The Incarnational function of the icon draws attention to the likeness between the divine and humans, which makes humanity an integral part in the historical manifestation of the Trinitarian economy. The role of humanity in fulfilling the Incarnational economy is, then, to evoke with all bodily senses their shared image with God. And this Byzantine mimetic behavior attains a creative mode of combining visual and audible media (from architecture to chants, liturgical objects and paintings) in which the image turns from a signifier into the highest form of knowing human nature as a divine mystery.

### **Idolic creativity: the televisual image from real presence to interactive presence**

Lecthe points that in the critique of digital images, the old stationary media, such as painting, is mostly seen as irrelevant for understanding the current state of televisual culture. The image is associated with the digital format, which dematerializes and de-contextualizes it through the omnipresent Internet and screens. This split between the traditional and technological media is primarily based on the assumption that the image is the same with its medium. Therefore, with the emergence of the new informational technology and mobile (touch) screens, the image acquired a new interactive medium that can be considered as having nothing to do with the static materiality of old media.

Taking my cue from the media theorist, Nanna Verhoeff's performative theory of mobile screens, I propose to reassess the presence of a televisual image in a creative vision using the notion of hierotopy. Verhoeff explains that the development of mobile digital technology has brought a visual mode of navigation that creates *screenspaces* by merging vision and mobility, the virtual and physical domains with a sense of narrative and agency. She calls this dynamic form of vision *performative cartography*

(Verhoeff, 2012, 133). Referencing Michel de Certeau's theory of space, Verhoeff differentiates between the notion of place and space: "every place can be turned into space by the practice of narrative" (2012, 93). Comparing to fixed cinematic/televisual/photographic/painted screens, which produce images (on-screen space) into predefined geographical coordinates (off-screen space), the mobile (touch) screen becomes a software-based mediator that turns the act of seeing into a performative act of making/cartographing space. This performative mode of transporting both the viewer and screen through places generates narrative events as autonomous spaces—that is, without being contingent on any predefined meaning. Recent portable pocket screen gadgets such as smartphones and computer tablets include various input and output devices for digital signifiers, wireless connectivity, camera, GPS receiver, and direct tactile access to multitasking interfaces that act as multiple (conceptual and visual) points of view. Media critic, Brett T. Robinson explains, for instance, that these "vital" functions of mobile devices elevated the status of the iPhone to "sublime descriptors like 'Jesus phone'" (2013, 61). All these features, then added to the portable and tangible aspect of the mobile (touch) screen, immerse the viewer's senses into a navigational spatial relationship with the screen as a physical site for making, communicating, and experiencing images within places—places yet to become meaningful spaces. Verhoeff suggests that this active mode of making images or seeing in motion by appropriating places through narrative (visual) experiences turned out to be the fundamental feature of contemporary vision.

The idea that the technological vision is mobile and the image is concurrently formed with the viewer's direct participation, in a temporal/spatial field of representation, parallels the Byzantine symbolic-realistic vision of crafting a hierotopic space. However, by turning to Marion's concern regarding the televisual screens, it is essential at this point to reflect on the impact of screen technologies in shaping human vision (and implicitly an iconic/idolic vision). The consumptive visual regime of the spectacle, made omnipresent by the rise of technological screens in the media industry, has been widely criticized for exposing viewers to a Nietzschean mode of seeing—the constitution of phenomena in a visual or conceptual perspective so well addressed by Marion, especially in the *Crossing of the Visible*. With the concepts of performative cartography in mind, the interactive power of the digital image appears to induce today's idolatry by erasing the connection to a prior reality that was once aesthetically experienced through old static media. The user of touch

screens not only acquires a tangible freedom for creative abilities (artistic or scientific), but also obtains an intimate (idolic) relationship with his/her own desires that interferes with the referential nature of the image. From a phenomenological stance, the human vision's idolic tendency towards the image might be explained by the "directed movement" of the intentional gaze towards an intentional object, which simultaneously makes present the (idolic) invisibility through the perspectival gaze (Horner, 2005, 28). And with the interactivity of digital screens, as Lechte argues, "the image no longer has to be a recording of reality but can be completely autonomous because it is fabricated in a computer" (2011, 361). The digitization of the image appears then to induce a universal state of iconoclastic suspicion over the nature of knowing and image making.

In writing on the history of recording media, Brian Winston states that the challenge to capture the evidence of a referent in the world (its real existence) relies on the scientific status of the technological screen to provide an objective/realistic/analogous perception of nature (1995, 40-42). The documentary value of the camera-instrument as a "nonliving agent" depends on the realistic mode of seeing, which perceives that the scientific recording device (from the early photographic/cinematic media to the latest digital devices) does not lie and that its naturalistic mode of representation is the most authentic way to measure captured data (to confirm the real-presence of a signified) (Moran, 1999, 11-12). However, viewers doubt the recorded document of a historical event or concrete object when it is linked to the mistrust in human intervention or intentionality. The digital manipulation of the image, facilitated by screen technologies, challenges the faith in a recorded representation to the point of claiming the death of the referent. This is the basic concern underpinning Marion's critique of the televisual image, an idolic mirror that stops the gaze to create its own spectacle with its own reflection (1991, 11-12).

Nevertheless, the question is if the televisual spectacle has the power to induce a new phenomenon, beyond the metaphysical tendency towards real-presence. And if so, how can this creativity be critiqued without limiting the conversation to the iconoclastic debates between the symbolic and realistic visions? This question is essential in outlining a Byzantine framework for understanding the televisual image. The beginning of an answer would be to complement Marion's icon and idol (as *saturated phenomena*) with the Byzantine hierotopic understanding of the image as present, yet completely transparent. By making a parallel between hierotopy and Verhoeff's analysis of the mobile vision, I aimed to show

that the symbolic-realistic vision challenges visual criticism to consider the limits and possibilities of the creativity enabled by technological screens in light of the mystery of Christ's in-imagination. Precisely, it provides an Incarnational vision of the union between the screen, representation, and viewer in a material and spatial arrangement that simultaneously activates an imaginary world and a concrete touchable experience. The focus, therefore, is on the viewer's ability to virtually co-create the spatial construction of visibility, which reveals that the image is neither a Platonic/static picture of reality, frozen in time, nor a material temporal form. The image is an evocation of something absent in a perceptual sense, which is actualized or in-imagined (as in a hierotopy) by the viewer through haptic visuality. In relation to the mobile use of technological screens, the notion of hierotopy highlights that the image is concurrently created with the touch of the screen (wood panel) and the intentional movement of vision. It also shows where the creative (performative) experience of the frame for representation lies and how this interactivity brings together the object, representation, and viewer. Thus, if the creative act is an event of making new meaning (beyond what is already objectified by the viewer's gaze and already offered in a spectacle), then the practice of the Byzantine mimetic act can offer an important avenue for seeing how (and if) contemporary screens interact in a non-predefined and creative way.

As a consequence of the Incarnational logic of the image, the attention shifts from *what* an image represents to *how* a phenomenon is spatially in-imagined as a site for creative expression. Strictly speaking, the hierotopic vision does not stop the phenomenological critique of the televisual screen culture to a problem of representation. For example, similar to the use of the portable Byzantine icon in delineating a hierotopy, the movement of vision in relation to the mobile technological device is not only a matter of explaining the human's ability to travel from point A to point B (a physical action). Like the icon, the mobile screen produces a simultaneity of multiple points of view in the process of creating a *screenspace*. The Hodegetria icon presents a double-sided painted screen, which according to the historical accounts provided by Lidov, induces a compounded vision by wondrously rotating in the air, and the (touch) screen offers multiple application interfaces. This indicates, as Verhoeff states, "a collapse between making images and perceiving them" that disrupts dualistic notions (such as copy/model) and the Cartesian distance between observer and observed (2012, 13).

So, does the hierotopic nature of the image as spatially distributed in a particular time and place apply to the televisual image? In response, I would recall Marion's account of *saturated phenomena* and underline that the idolic and iconic gazes start from the same intuitive aspect of human vision, which is always in search for the invisible by addressing an intentional phenomenon (objects and meanings). That is, both are perspectival visual experiences that aim beyond perception to evoke a sense of meaning. However, the problem with today's screen culture was that it freezes the experience of seeing to a contemplative/informative mind-set or to a particular perspective, which leads the viewer to his/her ultimate reduction as a mere instrument in the dynamics of capitalist production and distribution systems. But if the visual experience is considered as a movement in space, then the critique cannot be resumed to a matter of connecting the notion of image to meaning via the perception of a referential sign. In following the contribution of the mobile vision to the intuitive experience of invisibility in visibility, the image acquires the imaginal aspect of the Incarnation as directly connected to meaning.

### **On the fine line between idolic and iconic creativity**

The Byzantine aesthetic view opens up a potential interdisciplinary field of research on the mobility of a creative vision that is yet insufficiently explored and which may offer an alternative to the televisual image as metaphysics of real-presence. My argument is that the type of image that emerged with the Byzantine icon is a mode of evoking a referent (real or imagined) through a type of mimesis that avoids its reduction to its medium or, conversely, to its exclusion from materiality. And what the hierotopic inquiry brings to the discussion surrounding the presence of televisual images is how the Byzantine image avoids the metaphysical error of separating "two worlds"—one of the imaged and one of the image" (Lechte, 2011, 356).

Given the parallel between the interactivity of new media and the Byzantine icon, it can be seen how Marion's critique of the televisual spectacle mistakes the image for its screen of representation. Even if the spectacle is objectified as a reality in its own image, the idolic desire to travel (imaginatively) into a virtual time and space is perceptually connected with the physical space in which the screen operates. Simply said: there is no image (in an idolic or iconic format) without merging

the virtual and physical time and space. The hierotopic reading of mobile (touch) screens provides a concrete example of how the televisual image is formed through sensory-based spatial experiences that combine both the material and immaterial (digital) worlds (Lechte, 2011, 134). But, should the construction of an iconic versus idolic image depend on the fascination with the latest technological innovations? I believe not. Regardless of technological advances, the viewer is already physically immersed in the mystery of an image through movement in space. The symbolic-realistic line of inquiry that needs to be addressed here is how viewers engage with screens (both old and new) as the target of metaphysical iconoclasm. For this reason, I have contextualized, through symbolic and realistic reflections, the hierotopic relevance of the Byzantine icon for shifting the metaphysical/critical eye at the pictorial (sensorial) level of thinking about invisibility. First, the goal of my Byzantine-inspired critique was to add an Incarnational knowledge to Marion's phenomenology of *givenness*. Second, my intention was to place the viewer inside of what it means to see iconically and ask if the phenomenology of an idolic vision demands a total transparency of the image. This is particularly important in light of the changing media technologies that reposition the viewer as an active, creative participant in relation to the spectacular images, made ever-present through screens.



## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> According to the contemporary semiotic interpretation images, the signifier refers to the material aspect of an image and the signified stands for what it represents, e.g. an object, event or person that is absent from the viewer's physical space during the act of looking at the image (Chandler, 14).
- <sup>2</sup> For the art historian Jaś Elsner, "iconoclasm in all premodern contexts from antiquity to the Byzantine iconoclastic controversy was about 'real-presence.' The damage done to the image is an attack on its prototype, at least until Byzantine iconoclasm, and it presupposes some kind of assault on real-presence as contained in the image" (2012, 369).
- <sup>3</sup> Horner clarifies that Marion endorsed the theological difference between the idol and icon up until his phenomenological works: *Being Given* (2002) and *In Excess* (2002). Moreover, *The Crossing of the Visible* (2004) is a central work in presenting the theological ground of Marion's developing aesthetics of the idol and icon (Horner, 2005, 125).
- <sup>4</sup> In providing a historical account of the image from theater and cinema to televisual/digital screens, Marion states that the former screens of representation (theater and cinema) keep a sense of reality. Although theater provides us with images originated from fiction, the actor's body, performing in front of his/her viewers, is always present. In the case of cinema, although the medium of film prevents the viewer in having a sensible experience with what is referenced in the screen, the actors can still be seen in reality, such as in film festivals. Televisual image instead, disconnects the real from screen by eliminating the original time and space of the events. While cinematic or theatrical events imply that a viewer would sit and watch for a certain duration, the televisual screen has removed "this time; there is neither a first nor a last showing: without interruption the electron gun bombards the screen and there reconstitutes the images, day and night, around the clock...." (Marion, 2004, 48). The homogenization of reality with fiction is also accentuated by the broadcasting of various events from different regions of the world that gives a distorted sense of space—a clutter of spaces that attains its own reality as a TV screen.
- <sup>5</sup> Marion redefined Husserl's concept of *phenomenological reduction* as a way of "letting appearances appear in such a way that they accomplish their own apparition, so as to be received exactly as they give themselves" (2002b, 7). Nonetheless, several scholars have made the case that Marion seems to offer a symbolic formulation of the *phenomenological reduction*, which is not practically applied in 'concrete lived situations' (Rawnsley, 2007, 691). More exactly, the human body appears to disappear in the aim of the subjective intentionality to reduce any "outside conditions" (both conceptual or material) that prevent a phenomenon to be given unconditionally (Rogers, 2014, 191). Some of the critics who questioned

- Marion's tendency to vaporize materiality are: Peter Joseph Fritz (2009), Steven Grimwood (2003), Andrew Rawnsley (2007) and Brian Rogers (2014).
- <sup>6</sup> As an argument about what an image should be during the Byzantine iconoclasm, concepts of the idol and icon were disputed under a framework of representing reality that resonated with the Platonic issue of imitating an invisible essence through an appearance embedded in the material world. Byzantine iconoclasm took place between 730 and 843 CE and involved a critical response to the devotional practices surrounding icons and their physical destruction. Besançon explains that the "iconic arguments relied both on the biblical prohibition and on the Greek philosophical critique" (2000, 3). In his analysis of John Damascene's doctrine of the image, Schönborn states that "it has been asserted time and again that the Eastern Church derives its concept of the image from Plato's doctrine of Idea and Phenomenon" (212). For more on the influence of the Platonic theme of representation within iconoclasm see: Alain Besançon (2000: 1-5), Jaś Elsner, (2012: 369), Christoph von Schönborn (1994: 161, 229-30), Marie-José Mondzain (2005: 73), and Bissera V. Pentcheva (2006: 636).
- <sup>7</sup> Here, the interpretation of the naturalistic and abstract painting is strictly made in light of the phenomenological principle of taking perspective. However, the difference between the symbolic and realistic visions cannot be made clear-cut when applied to abstract and naturalistic art. Depending on the metaphysical belief, a naturalistic painting can also be seen as visualizing an imaginary referent. This would imply a break in the relationship between the visibility (presence) of an artwork and the invisibility (absence) of a referent. Similarly, an abstract painting can be seen as simply referencing its own materiality (as Clement Greenberg described it), thus disrupting the reference to an invisible something. In this way, the abstract appearance (without a linear perspective) prompts the realistic vision of the visible world in its concrete, measurable materiality and the naturalistic depiction of objects (in a linear perspective) stimulates the symbolic vision as if seeing in an invisible universe. Additionally, according to the Platonic/symbolic perspective, the critique of the image concerns its mimetic resemblance to a signified meaning. For instance, this means that the naturalistic or abstract representation of a chair is illusory. The 'true' chair is never present in a physical form. Conversely, the Nietzschean/realistic perspective regards the image as dissociated from the Platonic Forms to the point where it acts as its own signifier, in the sense that the image is both the signified and signifier. From this realistic perspective, a naturalistic or abstract painting is seen as real as long as its meaning is constituted by the power of the intentional gaze.
- <sup>8</sup> *The Glorification of the Virgin (Akathist Hymn to the Most Holy Theotokos)*, Russia, Novgorod School, 14th century, 78" x 60". Digital image available from: <http://www.gettyimages.ca/detail/news-photo/the-glorification-of-the-virgin-14th-century-russian-icon-news-photo/464420229?Language=en-GB> (accessed July 2, 2017).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Besançon, Alain, *The Forbidden Image: An Intellectual History of Iconoclasm*, trans. Jane Marie Todd, U of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2000
- Chandler, Daniel, *Semiotics: The Basics*, Routledge, London and New York, 2007
- Elsner, Jaś, "Iconoclasm as Discourse: From Antiquity to Byzantium", in *Art Bulletin* 94(3): 368-394, 2012
- Fritz, Peter Joseph, "Black Holes and Revelations: Michel Henry and Jean-Luc Marion On The Aesthetics Of The Invisible", in *Modern Theology* 25(3): 415-440, 2009
- Grimwood, Steven, "Iconography and Postmodernity", *Literature & Theology* 17(1): 76-97, 2003
- Horner, Robyn, *Jean-Luc Marion: A Theo-logical Introduction*, VT: Ashgate Pub. Co., Burlington, 2005
- , "Jean-Luc Marion and the possibility of Something Like Theology," *Culture, Theory and Critique*, 52(2-3): 335-350, 2011
- Ieven, Bram, "The Crossing of the Visible, Jean-Luc Marion", in *Journal of Visual Art Practice* 4(1): 59-61, 2004
- Lechte, John, "Some Fallacies and Truths Concerning the Image in Old and New Media", *Journal of Visual Culture* 10(3): 354-371, 2011
- Lidov, Alexei, *The Comparative Hierotopy*. ed. A. Lidov, Moscow, 2006a
- , "Spatial Icons. The Miraculous Performance with the Hodegetria of Constantinople", pp. 349-372 in *Hierotopy. Creation of Sacred Spaces in Byzantium and Medieval Russia*, Progress-tradition, Moscow, 2006b
- Marion, Jean-Luc, *God Without Being, Hors-Texte*, trans. Thomas A. Carlson, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1991
- , "The Saturated Phenomenon", pp. 196-7 in *Phenomenology and the 'Theological Turn': The French Debate*. trans. Bernard G. Prusak, Fordham University Press, New York, 2000
- , "The Idol and Distance: Five Studies", trans. Thomas A. Carlson in *Perspectives in Continental Philosophy*. ed. John D. Caputo. Fordham University Press, New York, 2001
- , "In Excess: Studies of Saturated Phenomena" trans. Robyn Horner and Vincent Berraud, in *Perspectives in Continental Philosophy*. ed. John D. Caputo. Fordham University Press, New York, 2002a
- , *Being Given: Toward a Phenomenology of Givenness*. trans. Jeffrey L. Kosky, CA: Stanford University Press, Stanford, Calif, 2002b
- , *The Crossing of the Visible*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2004
- Mezei, Balazs, M., *Religion and Revelation after Auschwitz*, A&P; C Black, USA/UK, 2013
- Mondzain, Marie-José, *Image, Icon, Economy: The Byzantine Origins of the Contemporary Imaginary*. trans Rico Franses. Stanford University Press, Stanford, Calif, 2005

- Moran, James, "A Bone of Contention: Documenting the Prehistoric Subject," pp. 255-273 in *Collecting Visible Evidence*, Jane M. Gaines and Michael Renov (eds), University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1999
- Pentcheva, Bissera V., "The performative icon," *The Art Bulletin* 88: 631-655, 2006
- Rawnsley, Andrew, "Practice and Givenness: The Problem of 'Reduction' in the work of Jean-Luc Marion," *New Blackfriars*, 88(1018): 690-708, 2007
- Robinson, T. Brett, *Appletopia: Media Technology and the Religious Imagination of Steve Jobs*. Baylor University Press, US, 2013
- Rogers, Brian, "Traces of Reduction: Marion and Heidegger on the Phenomenon of Religion", in *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 52(2): 184-205, 2014
- Schönborn, Christoph von, *God's Human Face: The Christ-Icon*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 1994
- Verhoeff, Nanna. *Mobile Screens, The Visual Regime of Navigation*, Amsterdam Univ. Press, Nederland, 2012
- Winston, Brian, *Claiming the Real: The Documentary Film Revisited*, British Film Institute, London, 1995



## DAN-ALEXANDRU ILIEȘ

Né en 1979 à Bistrița

Doctorat en philosophie, cotutelle entre l'Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne  
et l'Université Babeș-Bolyai (Cluj-Napoca)

Thèse : *Sur le chemin du palais. Esotérisme, cosmologie et pensée politique  
dans l'introduction et la conclusion du Guide des égarés*

### **Bourses et distinctions**

- 2000-2001 Erasmus-Socrates
- 2002-2003 - Bourse du gouvernement roumain
- 2004-2007 - Bourse Allocation recherche A.U.F.  
(Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie)
- 2013 - Bourses Albin Salton et Frances A. Yates  
au Warburg Institute, Londres

### **Livre :**

*Sur le chemin du palais. Réflexions autour de deux chapitres du « Guide des  
égarés » de Maïmonide, Cerf, 2016, dans la collection « Patrimoines »,  
avec une préface de Rémi Brague*



# ACCÉDER À LA FELICITÉ QUELQUES REMARQUES PRÉLIMINAIRES SUR LES PENSÉES POLITIQUES DE FARABI ET DE MAÏMONIDE

## Résumé

Notre étude se propose de discuter quelques points des doctrines politiques de deux des plus grands penseurs du Moyen Âge, Farabi et Maïmonide. La discussion de ces doctrines sera menée en suivant un problème précis, celui du lien qui existe entre politique et cosmologie. Pour ce faire, nous avons édifié notre démarche en suivant trois questions majeures, à savoir 1) les traditions intellectuelles dont les deux philosophes se considèrent les héritiers 2) l'importance décisive de la pensée politique dans l'ensemble des deux pensées, relevant de l'héritage platonicien de la philosophie politique dans l'Islam médiéval, ainsi que 3) l'importance de la cosmologie dans la conception de la communauté idéale. Sans prétendre d'épuiser la discussion des pensées politiques dans les deux cas, notre enquête se veut un point de départ d'une étude plus substantielle de philosophie comparée, ayant comme objet deux des repères les plus importants de la tradition philosophique méditerranéenne.

**Mots-clés :** philosophie médiévale, science politique, cosmologie, philosophie de l'Islam.

## Introduction

L'influence<sup>1</sup> que Farabi exerça sur Maïmonide est bien connue, et ce, depuis la vie même de Maïmonide, depuis sa fameuse lettre à son traducteur provençal du *Guide des égarés*, Samuel ibn Tibbon, dans laquelle le maître juif dit son admiration pour les écrits de Farabi<sup>2</sup>. Cette influence est encore discutée, se faisant sentir dans les détails les plus divers de l'œuvre de Maïmonide<sup>3</sup>. Ce pourquoi, il nous faudra préciser dès le début que notre étude ne se veut nullement une étude des sources, même si, au bout de notre courte démarche, nous espérons avoir montré

au lecteur à quel point les deux pensées sont proches, et comment Maïmonide aurait pu faire usage, en les modifiant, de certains thèmes propres à Farabi. En revanche, notre étude vise à une mise en parallèle et à une comparaison des deux pensées, sur un point précis : la pensée politique. Mais même là, il nous faudra préciser que le sujet que nous allons traiter discute seulement un détail des deux doctrines politiques, à savoir, la question du lien existant entre la politique et la cosmologie, de la manière dont le domaine trans-politique de la cosmologie ordonne la conception de la politique, devenant son objet d'imitation. Nous ne traiterons, ni des ouvrages purement législatifs, comme par exemple le *Mishneh Torah* de Maïmonide ou le mystérieux résumé des *Lois* de Farabi, ni des ouvrages purement philosophiques (les commentaires de Farabi sur l'*Organon*, le long traitement de la question du statut du monde dans le *Guide*). Nous allons nous limiter aux seuls écrits et extraits où le lien entre cosmologie et politique apparaît avec évidence.

Pour mettre en évidence d'une manière aussi complète que possible ce lien, notre analyse va se déployer en trois étapes. 1) Dans un premier temps, nous allons traiter des deux traditions intellectuelles dont se revendiquent nos penseurs. 2) Ensuite, nous allons essayer de montrer à quel point le traitement de la politique, intégrée dans les deux traditions, n'est pas seulement une « branche » d'un système de pensée, mais se trouve au cœur même de chacune des deux démarches. 3) Nous allons également essayer de mettre en évidence le contexte cosmologique des deux approches du politique. Enfin, dans une brève discussion conclusive, nous allons rapidement esquisser la conception du destin posthume des âmes dans les deux pensées. Il nous faut cependant préciser qu'un sujet aussi vaste ne peut être traité à fond en quelques pages. Ce pourquoi, nous considérons notre démarche comme une série de remarques préliminaires d'une étude plus ample, qui reste à faire.

Notre présentation suit une tendance d'une partie de la recherche du domaine, qui envisage la pensée juive dans son contexte historique déterminé, celui de la pensée de l'Islam médiéval, où le terme « Islam » est à comprendre, non pas comme désignation de la religion musulmane, mais de l'aire de civilisation où cette religion était prépondérante. Cette pensée influence d'une façon décisive les approches des penseurs juifs (qui écrivent pour la plupart en judéo-arabe), avant l'avènement de la chrétienté sur la scène philosophique, qui entraîne un déplacement des penseurs et traducteurs juifs au nord de la Méditerranée, ainsi que la perte de l'arabe parmi les philosophes juifs<sup>4</sup>.



Mentionnons en ce sens quelques-uns des détails de ce que notre étude ne pourra pas analyser, détails liés à la transmission de la philosophie grecque de l'Antiquité tardive à la civilisation de l'Islam naissant. Elle fut pour la plupart l'œuvre des syriaques, qui traduisirent des ouvrages grecs en arabe, parfois via le Syriac<sup>5</sup>. Le centre des traductions était Bagdad, la nouvelle capitale abbaside. Pour ce qui est de la philosophie, la place éminente fut attribuée à Aristote (et à ses commentateurs), considéré, par la plupart des penseurs de l'Islam, comme le sommet de la philosophie<sup>6</sup>. Pour nous tenir aux seuls ouvrages politiques, nous disposons de la version arabe de *l'Éthique à Nicomaque*, qui contient cependant un faux « septième livre »<sup>7</sup>. En revanche, la *Politique* semble ne pas avoir été traduite, bien que des extraits de cet ouvrage aient bien pu être connus<sup>8</sup>. La *Rhétorique* et la *Poétique* furent traduites avec l'ensemble de l'*Organon*, dans lequel ces ouvrages étaient inclus depuis l'Antiquité tardive<sup>9</sup>. Platon bénéficia de moins d'attention de la part des traducteurs. On suppose que des commentaires importants des ouvrages platoniciens, comme le *Résumé des Lois* par Farabi, ou le commentaire d'Averroès sur *la République* (dont des fragments ont été cependant connus), se fondaient principalement sur des résumés de Galien<sup>10</sup>.

À partir du corpus des ouvrages grecs traduits, les Arabes construisirent une philosophie originale, qui comporta plusieurs étapes. Pour faire simple, nous allons partager la philosophie de l'Islam en quatre périodes, suivant Gerhard Endress. Dans cette perspective, Farabi appartient à la deuxième étape (post-kindienne), celle de l'école de Bagdad. Maïmonide appartient à la quatrième et dernière étape, celle andalouse, qui a comme figure tutélaire son presque contemporain et concitoyen, Averroès. Il s'inscrit dans le groupe de « disciples » andalous (indirects) de Farabi (comme Ibn Bāğğa ou Averroès)<sup>11</sup>.

## I) Les traditions

Nous allons commencer notre étude par une comparaison des deux ensembles textuels, afin de mettre en évidence les traditions intellectuelles dont les deux penseurs se veulent être héritiers. Comme nous allons le constater, tandis que Farabi se considère l'héritier d'une tradition d'apprentissage philosophique tirant son origine de la pensée d'Aristote lui-même, Maïmonide se veut le restaurateur d'une tradition perdue d'exégèse philosophique de la Bible.

## 1) Farabi : d'Alexandrie à Bagdad, la tradition transmise

La vie de Farabi (ca. 870-950) est peu connue. Probablement d'origine persane, il serait né dans un village de frontière du monde iranien (Fārāb) en Transoxiane, dans l'actuel Kazakhstan. Sa préparation en philosophie eut lieu principalement à Bagdad, où il suivit peut-être les cours des Aristotéliens chrétiens. Il quitta la capitale abbasside en 942, pour des raisons inconnues, dues probablement à ses conflits avec le pouvoir politique. Il s'installa à Damas, jusqu'en 948, lorsqu'il entreprit un voyage en Égypte pour y retourner, à la fin de ses jours. Il y mourut en 950<sup>12</sup>. Son œuvre comprend, outre les écrits politiques dont nous allons nous occuper dans la présente étude, un grand ouvrage sur la musique, ainsi que de nombreux commentaires sur l'*Organon* aristotélicien<sup>13</sup>. Il aurait été probablement oublié, si Avicenne n'avait remis son nom « sur le marché philosophique », en avouant, dans son autobiographie, son admiration pour le penseur qui l'aurait aidé à comprendre les buts (*agrād*) de la *Métaphysique* d'Aristote<sup>14</sup>. Il lui fut donné le nom de « second maître », premier philosophe d'importance après le Stagirite.

Pour notre démarche, il est important d'apercevoir la manière dont Farabi se rapportait à la tradition philosophique. La réponse commence à s'esquisser partant d'une courte remarque sur le nom de la philosophie (*ism al-falsafa*). Il s'agit d'un nom étranger, introduit dans la langue arabe (*daḥīl fī al-'arabiyya*), dont l'origine est grecque-païenne (*yunānī*). La traduction appropriée de φιλοσοφία serait, par conséquent, « la prédilection pour la sagesse » (*īlār al-ḥikma*)<sup>15</sup>. La philosophie (littéralement : « cette science », *hādā al-'ilm*) aurait existé anciennement (*fī al-qadīm*) chez les Chaldéens, d'où elle passa, d'abord chez les Égyptiens, ensuite chez les Grecs anciens (*al-yūnāniyyīn*)<sup>16</sup>, ne cessant de se transmettre<sup>17</sup> chez les Syriques (*al-siryāniyyīn*), pour atteindre enfin les Arabes. Farabi esquisse ici un mouvement cyclique de la philosophie : apparue en Chaldée, la philosophie retournerait à son lieu d'origine, la Syrie-Iraq, chez les Arabes<sup>18</sup>.

La manière dont la philosophie serait passée des Grecs vers les Arabes ressort plus clairement d'un petit texte, devenu célèbre, qui nous a été transmis par le médecin Ibn Abi Usaybi'a, dans son *Histoire des médecins*. Il s'agit d'un extrait qui traite « de l'apparition de la philosophie » (*fī ḡuhūr al-falsafa*), et qui a joui d'une attention particulière de la part de la recherche arabisante. Avant de le commenter, nous allons le résumer brièvement<sup>19</sup>.

Selon Farabi, la transmission de la philosophie du monde grec aux Arabes, aurait suivi quatre étapes. 1) La philosophie<sup>20</sup> se répandit aux temps des rois grecs (*fi ayyām mulūk al-yunāniyyīn*), après la mort d'Aristote à Alexandrie<sup>21</sup>, jusqu'à la fin des jours de « la femme » (*al-mar'a*), *scil.* Cléopâtre. Après la mort d'Aristote, l'enseignement (*al-ta'lim*) demeura inchangé (*bi-ḥālī-hi*), pendant les règnes de treize rois ; durant cette période, douze enseignants se seraient succédés, dont le dernier<sup>22</sup> fut Andronicos. 2) La deuxième phase commença avec la prise de l'Égypte par Auguste, « ...le roi des Romains ; il la (*scil.* Cléopâtre) vainquit, la tua, et s'empara du règne ». Auguste entreprit également le premier travail d'édition des ouvrages d'Aristote. Andronicos fut employé pour mener à bien ce travail. Une partie de ces livres demeurèrent sur place, alors que d'autres furent amenés à Rome. Auguste prit Andronicos avec lui dans la capitale impériale, laissant un enseignant à Alexandrie. Ainsi « ... l'enseignement se déroula en deux endroits ; il fut ainsi, jusqu'à ce qu'advint la chrétienté (*al-naṣrāniyya*). » 3) C'est alors que l'enseignement de Rūmiya cessa (*baṭala*)<sup>23</sup>. Il continua à Alexandrie, jusqu'à ce qu'il subît des restrictions, lorsque le roi de la chrétienté « se mit à considérer cela (*naẓara...fi dālika*) » :

Les évêques (*al-asāqifa*) se réunirent; ils s'entretenaient sur ce qu'il fallait laisser en place de cet enseignement, et sur ce qu'il fallait supprimer. Ils furent d'opinion que, des livres de logique, on enseignerait jusqu'à la fin des figures assertoriques (*al-aṣkāl al-wuḡūdiyya*)<sup>24</sup>, mais non pas ce qui suit, car ils étaient d'opinion qu'il y avait là-dedans quelque chose de nuisible à la chrétienté, tandis que ce dont ils autorisaient l'enseignement était tel qu'il contribuerait à l'apologie de leur religion (*'alā nuṣrat dīni-him*). La partie publique de l'enseignement (*al-zāhir min al-ta'lim*) resta dans ces limites, alors que le reste de ce qui était étudié (était enseigné) à l'abri des regards (*mastūran*) (notre trad.).

4) Les choses restèrent ainsi jusqu'à l'avènement de l'Islam, après une longue période de temps (*bi-mudda ṭawīla*). L'enseignement passa (*intaqala*) alors d'Alexandrie à Antioche, en y restant pendant longtemps (*zamanan ṭawīlan*), jusqu'à ce qu'il n'y eût qu'un seul enseignant. De lui apprirent deux hommes, l'un de Merv, l'autre de Harran, qui partirent d'Antioche, en prenant les livres avec eux. Chacun d'eux eut deux disciples : celui de Merv eut comme disciples Ibrahim al-Marwazi et Yuhanna ibn Haylan ; celui de Harran, Isra'il l'Évêque, et Quwaira<sup>25</sup>. Ces quatre allèrent à Bagdad. Deux d'entre eux se laissèrent accaparer

par leur religion (à savoir, le christianisme)<sup>26</sup>, alors que les deux autres continuèrent l'enseignement. C'est l'enseignement de Marwazi que suivit Matta ibn Yunan. À cette époque, poursuit le récit, on apprenait jusqu'à la fin des figures assertoriques<sup>27</sup>. Farabi dit avoir « ...appris avec Yuhanna ibn Haylan, jusqu'à la fin du *Livre de la démonstration (Les Analytiques Secondes)* ». Ce qui venait après les figures assertoriques, s'appelaient

...la partie qui ne faisait pas l'objet d'une leçon publique, jusqu'à ce que cela fit l'objet d'une leçon publique. Lorsque la matière passa aux enseignants des musulmans (*ilā mu'allimī al-muslimīn*), il devint habituel d'étudier des figures assertoriques jusque-là où quelqu'un en était capable. Abu Nasr, finit le texte, a dit qu'il a étudié jusqu'à la fin du *Livre de la Démonstration* (notre trad.).

Nous pouvons à présent saisir les articulations essentielles de notre texte. Il fait partie du plus large complexe narratif « d'Alexandrie à Bagdad »<sup>28</sup>. L'écrit a été amplement traité par la recherche contemporaine, depuis son édition et sa traduction par Moritz Steinschneider<sup>29</sup>, et surtout depuis l'étude pionnière de Max Meyerhof<sup>30</sup>. Dans sa première partie, Farabi essaie de créer une chaîne de transmission de l'enseignement philosophique partant du Stagirite lui-même. Ce suite à quoi il fait Aristote mourir à Alexandrie, aux temps des rois ptolémaïques, ce qui pourrait rejoindre des légendes orientales sur Alexandre ; des restes de ces conceptions tardo-antiques seraient présentes dans le nombre des rois et des enseignants<sup>31</sup>. Il fait d'Auguste l'initiateur du premier travail de rédaction du corpus aristotélicien, opéré par Andronicos, ainsi que l'initiateur d'un deuxième endroit d'enseignement philosophique à Rome. L'idée d'une restriction de l'enseignement philosophique par les chrétiens, pourrait représenter une réminiscence de l'idéologie anti-byzantine des Abbasides, initié par le calife Ma'mun. Cette dernière consistait dans une dévalorisation des Byzantins, comme les représentants d'un empire obscurantiste, opposé à la transmission de l'héritage grec-païen, dont les vrais continuateurs auraient été les Abbasides<sup>32</sup>. La seconde partie du récit passe de l'étude de la philosophie en général, à la question de la transmission de l'*Organon* aristotélicien. Le philosophe fait, « entre les lignes », l'éloge de ses maîtres chrétiens, responsables pour la transmission privée des écrits logiques du Stagirite. En revanche, il ne mentionne le nom d'aucun calife abbasside, qui aurait aidé à la diffusion de cette tradition philosophique alexandrine.

La véracité de ce récit a été mise en doute par la recherche, qui parle actuellement d'une tradition « fictive » (G. Strohmaier) ou « problématique » (Joep Lameer)<sup>33</sup>. Farabi exclut de son récit des philosophes importants, tels Razi ou Kindi. Il présente un héritage sur le point d'extinction, alors que les études logiques étaient répandues dans la région, grâce aux enseignements syriaques, sans qu'il y ait eu des interruptions dans cette transmission, se faisant parfois ἀπὸ φωνῆς (comme fut aussi le cas des œuvres de Farabi lui-même)<sup>34</sup>.

Farabi se présente comme le vrai héritier d'une tradition philosophique s'enracinant dans l'enseignement d'Aristote lui-même. De la *vraie* philosophie, à croire une autre de ses affirmations, où il ajoute Platon à Aristote. Il y affirme qu'il est question d'une philosophie *unique* transmise par les Grecs, et appartenant aux deux maîtres, ce qui pourrait constituer une allusion à la tradition tardo-antique de « l'harmonisation » des enseignements des deux fondateurs, dont il nous est resté un ouvrage, probablement de lui. Cette technique consistait à montrer, non pas l'identité des deux doctrines, mais leur concordance, face aux attaques des différents adversaires de la philosophie. Si pendant l'Antiquité tardive Platon jouissait d'une supériorité par rapport au Stagirite, dans la pensée farabienne le rapport entre les deux penseurs est bien moins clair<sup>35</sup>. Une remarque qui clôt l'*Accession* ajoute un détail important. Les deux fondateurs auraient présenté, non seulement des systèmes philosophiques, mais également la manière de rétablir la vraie philosophie une fois qu'elle serait corrompue ou qu'elle se serait éteinte<sup>36</sup>. Bref, Farabi se fait passer comme l'unique héritier dans une chaîne de transmission philosophique allant d'Alexandrie à Bagdad.

## 2) Maïmonide : de Jérusalem à Cordoue, la tradition disparue

Heureusement pour nous, la vie et l'activité de Maïmonide (1138-1204) sont mieux connues que celles de son prédécesseur. Né à Cordoue en 1138, Maïmonide appartenait à une importante famille juive de la capitale califale. En 1148, il y eut changement du régime, menant à la chute des Almoravides, et à la prise de Cordoue par les Almohades. C'est dans les circonstances troubles de cette époque que la famille quitta la ville. On les retrouve installés à Fez vers les débuts des années 1160. En 1165, la famille quitta le Maghreb pour se rendre en Terre Sainte, alors sous domination croisée. Après une visite aux lieux saints du judaïsme, la famille partit en Égypte, s'installant à Fustat, après un bref séjour à

Alexandrie. Maïmonide mena une activité de cour importante, auprès des Ayyubides, qui remplacèrent les Fatimides en 1171. Il mourut en Égypte en 1204<sup>37</sup>. Son œuvre comprend deux compilations de la Loi juive, de nombreuses lettres et traités sur différents aspects du judaïsme, ainsi que des traités de médecine. Elle porte la marque de son Andalousie natale, à laquelle il se réfère constamment avec fierté<sup>38</sup>. *Le Guide des égarés*, dont nous allons discuter quelques extraits, qui est considéré par une partie de la recherche comme son chef-d'œuvre, a été rédigé pendant la fin de la période égyptienne (ca. 1180-90). La langue de l'ouvrage est le judéo-arabe, le livre étant écrit en lettres hébraïques (ce qui suscita les remarques critiques d'Abd al-Latif al Bagdadi<sup>39</sup>). Il est question d'un ouvrage d'une nature bien particulière, ce qui a amené Sh. Pinès à considérer qu'il s'agit d'un écrit unique, constituant à lui seul une espèce à part entière<sup>40</sup>. Pour faire simple, disons qu'il est question d'une œuvre d'exégèse biblique, qui se propose de déchiffrer le sens profond des deux principaux récits bibliques, *Le Récit du Commencement* (Genèse) et du *Récit du Chariot* (Ézéchiél I et X). Le sens profond de ces récits est censé être identique à la physique et à la métaphysique<sup>41</sup>.

Le point que nous allons traiter maintenant concerne la tradition exégétique dont Maïmonide se considère le dépositaire. Pour ce faire, nous allons nous rapporter à un ensemble narratif, que l'on pourrait appeler, par une analogie avec l'ensemble que nous venons de mentionner, « De Jérusalem à Cordoue ». Il s'agit d'une série d'extraits du *Guide* que nous avons discuté ailleurs<sup>42</sup>, qui traitent de la question de la transmission de cette tradition. Malheureusement, à la différence du complexe narratif « d'Alexandrie à Bagdad », nos passages n'ont pas bénéficié de la même attention de la part de la recherche spécialisée. Une mise en parallèle des deux ensembles nous semble pourtant d'une importance décisive, afin de mettre en évidence les ressemblances, mais aussi les différences, entre les perspectives de deux penseurs.

Nous allons commencer par quelques observations d'ordre historique, que Maïmonide fait à l'égard du *kalām*. Comme nous allons le constater, ces remarques peuvent bien avoir été inspirées par les idées que nous avons dégagées dans les extraits farabiens que nous venons de résumer<sup>43</sup>. Dans *Guide*, I, 71<sup>44</sup>, dans un contexte de discussions philosophiques que nous allons mettre en évidence par la suite, Maïmonides parle de la genèse du *kalām*. Le peu qui se trouve dans le *kalām* juif, nous dit-il, aussi bien des Guéonim que des karaïtes, au sujet de l'unité de Dieu aurait été emprunté aux *mutakallimūn* musulmans, surtout aux Mutazilites. Ceux-

ci, à leur tour auraient suivi les Grecs et les Syriacques chrétiens, et plus précisément, leurs disputes contre les opinions des philosophes. Ceux-ci inventèrent le *kalām*, qui était une méthode purement apologétique de défense de la religion. Le *kalām* fut par la suite adopté par les Musulmans, qui s'inspirèrent des travaux des gens tels Yahya le Grammairien (*scil.* Jean Philopon) ou Yahya ibn 'Adi. La principale critique que Maïmonide adresse aux partisans du *kalām* c'est de ne pas orienter leur pensée afin qu'elle s'accorde avec ce qui existe.

Sarah Stroumsa a rapproché nos extraits du texte de Farabi que nous venons de résumer, mais aussi des fameux passages de *l'Énumération des sciences* (chapitre 5) dans lesquels Farabi donne une description peu flatteuse des adeptes du *kalām*. Ces derniers auraient pour seul but la défense de leur religion par tous les moyens et au détriment de la vérité. Maïmonide aurait combiné les deux textes : il suit Farabi<sup>45</sup>, aussi bien dans la perspective d'une restriction de la part des Chrétiens de l'étude de la philosophie pour des raisons apologétiques, que dans la description du *kalām* comme un système purement apologétique<sup>46</sup>. Il est tout à fait intéressant de remarquer que Maïmonide mentionne ici Jean Philopon comme un représentant typique du *kalām* chrétien. Il faut rappeler que Farabi réfute ce dernier dans un texte célèbre, précisant néanmoins que les intentions de Philopon auraient été différentes de ses prises de position. Son attitude aurait pu être justifiée par un souci de se soustraire au sort malheureux de Socrate et d'éviter un conflit avec sa communauté religieuse, sachant à quel point les opinions religieuses sont éloignées de la nature des choses (*ḡibā' al-umūr*)<sup>47</sup>. Quant à l'association de Yahya ibn 'Adi (m. 974) avec les débuts de l'Islam, elle semble bien représenter une « erreur volontaire »<sup>48</sup> de la part de notre auteur : Ibn 'Adi vécut bien après les débuts du *kalām*.

Notre extrait fait partie d'un chapitre qui commence par quelques observations décisives. Après avoir traité, à travers l'explication du radical hébraïque *RKB*, d'un sujet de métaphysique, à savoir, la question du gouvernement du ciel par Dieu<sup>49</sup>, Maïmonide commence notre chapitre en affirmant que

... les nombreuses sciences que possédait notre nation pour l'établissement de la vérité<sup>50</sup> dans ces matières se sont perdues, tant par la longueur du temps que par la domination que les nations ignorantes<sup>51</sup> exerçaient sur nous, et aussi parce que ces sujets, ainsi que nous l'avons exposé, n'étaient point livrés à tout le monde...

Puisque même le *fiqh* était soumis à des restrictions dans sa transmission, n'étant pas mis par écrit, à plus forte raison ne pouvait-on mettre par écrit ces secrets de la Loi, qui ne se transmettaient que « d'élite à élite ». C'est là la cause qui fit disparaître des grandes racines

...au sujet desquels on ne trouve que quelques légères remarques et indications<sup>52</sup> dans le Talmud et les Midraschôth, et qui ne sont qu'un petit nombre de noyaux entourés de nombreuses écorces ; de sorte que les hommes se sont occupés de ces écorces, ne soupçonnant pas qu'il y eût quelque noyau caché dessous<sup>53</sup>.

Les sujets métaphysiques relevaient des « secrets de la Torah » (*sitrê Tôrah*), dont une brève énumération nous est donnée auparavant dans le traité<sup>54</sup>. Ces secrets devenaient accessibles à l'aide d'une exégèse dont les contenus étaient transmis à l'intérieur d'une élite<sup>55</sup>. Or, la longueur des temps, ainsi que la domination de la part des communautés religieuses ignorantes, firent que ces grandes racines de la religion juive se soient perdues<sup>56</sup>. Il ne subsisterait d'eux que quelques « remarques et indications », expression qui reprend le titre d'un fameux ouvrage d'Avicenne. Chez ce dernier, les *isārāt* désignent une manière particulière de transmission, semblables aux « têtes des chapitres » de Maïmonide<sup>57</sup>. La discussion du *kalām* qui suit montre clairement que ces matières, relevant de la métaphysique, ne pourraient être redécouvertes à l'aide de la littérature théologique, à savoir le *kalām* juif. Là encore, Maïmonide pourrait suivre Farabi, qui a, le premier, nettement distingué entre *kalām* et métaphysique, contre ceux qui « se sont imaginés aussi que la science métaphysique et la science de l'unicité de Dieu (*'ilm al-tawhīd*, à savoir, le *kalām*) sont numériquement une seule et même chose. » Le passage vise peut-être Kindi, et un extrait, sans doute rhétorique, de sa *Philosophie première*, où ce dernier identifie l'objet de la philosophie première à la connaissance de l'unicité divine<sup>58</sup>.

Deux autres extraits du *Guide* viennent compléter cette perspective. Dans un premier, en parlant des sujets astronomiques, Maïmonide reprend ces idées : les méchants d'entre les nations ignorantes ont détruit les sciences des Juifs, de sorte que ces derniers sont retournés à l'ignorance. C'est à cause de cela que « ces matières philosophiques » parurent étrangères à la Loi juive, bien qu'il n'en soit pas ainsi<sup>59</sup>. Dans un second extrait, Maïmonide parle de nouveau de la science métaphysique. Celle-ci serait disparue, à cause de sa transmission orale d'un chef à l'autre.



Une remarque de grande importance est faite ici : il s'agit cette fois, d'une extinction totale de ce savoir, car rien n'en a été transmis dans un livre. Le penseur aurait redécouvert ce savoir exégétique grâce à la seule lecture des textes prophétique, des discours des sages talmudiques, ainsi qu'au moyen de « ce que je possède des prémisses spéculatives (*ma'a mā 'ind-ī min muqaddimāt naẓariyya*) » ; nul maître ne lui aurait transmis ces idées, et nulle révélation ne serait descendue sur lui<sup>60</sup>. Les « prémisses spéculatives » dont parle Maïmonide appartiennent à la philosophie. Puisque le savoir ne peut venir des textes bibliques ou du Talmud, qui sont l'objet de l'exégèse, l'origine de la redécouverte ne peut appartenir qu'aux prémisses philosophiques, qui représentent la clé exégétique par excellence.

À bien analyser nos extraits, nous pouvons conclure que la transmission du savoir exégétique « de Jérusalem à Cordoue » a été totalement interrompue. À la différence de son prédécesseur, Maïmonide décrit ici un savoir entièrement perdu. Il n'est pas le dernier dépositaire d'une tradition, menacée de disparition, néanmoins continue, mais d'une tradition *entièrement éteinte*, à cause de l'Exile juif, ainsi que des conditions de sa diffusion. Dans ce contexte, il est intéressant de remarquer qu'ailleurs, en parlant d'une tradition orale sur la venue de Messie, le maître juif parle d'une transmission ininterrompue, tirant son origine dans les milieux du Second Temple<sup>61</sup>. Il y affirme avoir connaissance ('*inda-nā*) d'« un récit étrange (*riwāya ǧarība*) », dont la transmission irait jusqu'au début de la *galuth* de Jérusalem (*ilā awwal ǧâlûti-nā min Yerûšalāim*), comme il fut dit : « ...les exilés de Jérusalem répandus en "Espagne" » (*w<sup>e</sup>-ǧâlul Yerûšālam ašer bi-Sfârad*) (Obadia, I, 20). *Sfârad* indique en fait, non pas l'Espagne, comme le suppose Maïmonide, mais Sardes, même si le nom finit par désigner la péninsule ibérique. Mais le but de cette spéculation pourrait être politique : donner pour la venue du Messie « une date assez proche pour que le peuple ne perde pas courage. »<sup>62</sup>

La démarche de Maïmonide vise à légitimer son exégèse : étant donné son caractère inhabituel, qui repose dans sa nature philosophique, il lui faut, en même temps la faire passer comme l'interprétation par excellence de la Torah, et donner les raisons de son étrangeté (à savoir, qu'elle semble nouvelle, parce qu'en fait elle s'est perdue). Néanmoins, il ne dit rien sur la riche tradition philosophique de l'Islam, nullement disparue, dont il fait largement usage, bien au-delà de « quelques prémisses spéculatives », laquelle représente à la fois la clé exégétique, que le contenu caché des livres bibliques qu'il interprète.

\*

Jusqu'ici nous avons discuté les rapports des deux penseurs par rapport aux traditions dont ils se revendiquent. Elles représentent deux tentatives de légitimation, utilisant des démarches contraires. Farabi se veut l'héritier par excellence de *la Philosophie*, étant le dernier représentant d'une tradition qui mène au Stagirite lui-même. Il avance donc l'idée que « d'Alexandrie à Bagdad », la philosophie a été l'objet d'une *transmission ininterrompue*. Maïmonide se veut l'héritier d'une tradition d'exégèse biblique de nature philosophique, *la tradition exégétique par excellence*, fondée par les auteurs bibliques. Mais celle-ci se serait entièrement perdue, nulle chaîne de transmission ne subsistant à l'époque de Maïmonide. « De Jérusalem à Cordoue », il s'agit d'une *tradition non-transmise*, qui doit être redécouverte. Derrière le soi-disant « anhistorisme » du Moyen Âge, on peut déceler, dans les deux cas, une conscience aiguë de la situation historique propre au monde médiéval et de ses traditions intellectuelles<sup>63</sup>.

## II) La félicité, finalité de la science politique

Dans la deuxième partie, nous allons analyser la manière dont les deux penseurs conçoivent le phénomène politique. Comme nous allons le constater, Farabi parle de « science politique », alors que Maïmonide édifie sa pensée politique à travers une analyse des buts de la Loi juive. Néanmoins, les deux insistent sur la finalité propre à la politique, qui est identique à l'acquisition de la félicité.

### 1) Farabi : définitions de la science politique. La politique comme voie vers la félicité

Nous allons à présent exposer quelques détails de la théorie politique de Farabi. Pour ce faire, nous allons essayer de saisir les traits spécifiques de la science politique qu'on trouve dans les différents ouvrages du philosophe. Et principalement, dans son *Énumération des sciences* (*Iḥṣā' al-'ulūm*), ouvrage dans lequel est percevable l'influence des écoles philosophiques de l'Antiquité tardive<sup>64</sup>. La description succincte de la science politique (*al-'ilm al-madanī*) dans le fameux chapitre <sup>565</sup>, concerne 1) l'investigation des actions (*al-a'fāl*) et des modes des vies<sup>66</sup> volontaires, et des dispositions acquises (*malakāt*), des qualités morales (*al-aḥlāq*), des inclinaisons (*al-saḡāyā*) et caractères (*al-šiyam*)<sup>67</sup>, qui

mènent à la réalisation de ces actions et modes de vie. La description se poursuit par la distinction entre les buts (*al-ġāyāt*) des différentes actions et modes de vie. La science politique explique que parmi celles-ci, les unes représentent la vraie félicité (*mā hiya fī (bi-) al-ḥaqīqa sa'āda*), qui n'est pas réalisable dans cette vie<sup>68</sup>, les autres ce qui est présumé (*maẓnūn*) être la félicité, sans que ce soit le cas. Les actions et modes de vie vertueuses doivent nécessairement se réaliser dans les cités et les nations et être pratiquées en commun. Or, tout cela n'est possible que par une manière de gouvernement (*bi-riyāsa*) qui vise à ce qu'elles soient réalisées et préservées. Un métier/art royal (*mihna malikiyya*) est ainsi demandé pour les établir ; « et la politique (*al-siyāsa*), affirme Farabi, est l'opération de ce métier (*fī'l ḥādīhi al-mihna*) ». La manière de gouvernement suit la double description des félicités : soit elle vise la réalisation de la vraie félicité, soit elle s'emploie dans la réalisation des félicités présumées. L'art royal vertueux demande deux facultés : l'une qui vise les règles universelles (*al-qawānīn al-kulliyya*), l'autre qui vise les conditions particulières existant dans les différentes cités. De ce fait, cet art présuppose deux parties, étant analogue à la médecine, laquelle comprend à son tour, une connaissance théorique des universels, s'accompagnant d'expérience.

2) La philosophie politique (*al-falsafa al-madaniyya*) étudie les seules règles universelles. Car elle ne s'occupe pas de la réalisation effective des actions et de modes de vie, qui relèvent d'une autre faculté, puisque les états et les occurrences qui sont à déterminer sont, en elles-mêmes, indéfinies et illimités.

3) Farabi reprend ensuite la description de « cette science » (*ḥādā al-'ilm*). Elle comporte deux parties, l'une consacrée à la connaissance de la félicité réelle dans sa différence avec les félicités présumées, qui détermine la manière dont les modes de vie, actions etc. doivent être distribuées dans les cités, l'autre consacrée à leur ordonnance et à leur réalisation et préservation. Elle offre aussi une description des arts royaux non-vertueux et de leur manière d'agir<sup>69</sup>. Elles sont comme des maladies pour l'art royal vertueux, tout comme les actions et modes de vie non-vertueux sont des maladies pour les cités vertueuses. La science politique explique aussi la façon dont les actions et modes des cités vertueuses risquent de dégénérer. L'art royal vertueux demande, à la fois la possession des sciences théoriques et pratiques (*al-'ulūm al-naẓariyya wa-l-'amaliyya*) et la faculté qui dérive de l'expérience politique effective, laquelle a affaire aux conditions particulières existant dans chaque communauté, en rapport avec chaque circonstance et occurrence. Farabi ajoute que

la cité vertueuse (*al-madīna al-fāḍila*) ne peut rester vertueuse que par une chaîne ininterrompue de rois ayant les mêmes qualifications, ce qui ne pourra se faire qu'au moyen d'une espèce particulière d'éducation politique<sup>70</sup>. L'extrait finit par une description de ceux dont la gouvernance est ignorante (*ḡāhiliyya*). Ceux-ci ne possèdent ni les sciences théoriques, ni les sciences pratiques, mais seulement l'expérience requise dans la réalisation de leurs poursuites (plaisirs, honneurs, etc.).

Au bout du bref résumé de notre extrait, nous pouvons discuter les idées qui s'en dégagent. Il nous faudra tout d'abord constater que le texte contient deux descriptions presque identiques de la science politique. La première contient une description plutôt non-philosophique, tandis que la seconde est introduite juste après la mention de la philosophie politique. Le dernier traducteur en anglais laisse sans réponse la nécessité de cette répétition<sup>71</sup>. Remarquons seulement que « la technique des répétitions » représente un trait de l'écriture ésotérique de Maïmonide<sup>72</sup>. Elle se caractérise par les ajouts qu'elle suppose ; ce qui est « répété » dans la seconde occurrence n'est jamais identique avec l'affirmation première, de petits détails changeant souvent le sens de cette « répétition »<sup>73</sup>. La seconde énumération vient après l'établissement de la philosophie politique comme partie théorique de la science politique. Elle « ajoute » essentiellement l'idée de la dégradation du régime vertueux et de sa transformation selon des modes de vie et des actions « ignorantes », ainsi que celle de sa possible réinstauration. La description des rois non-vertueux à la fin de l'extrait doit être lue à la lumière de la petite remarque concernant la philosophie politique, qui comprend la partie théorique de la science politique. Les rois « ignorants » n'ont besoin ni de philosophie théorique, ni de celle pratique. Comme l'affirme le texte, ceux qui promeuvent de tels régimes ne peuvent aucunement être appelés rois. Une conclusion s'impose, plus ou moins « entre les lignes » : les vrais rois, en tant qu'hommes politiques, doivent nécessairement être des philosophes. Le seul régime politique vertueux est celui philosophique, ce qui ne ressortait nullement de la première description. Un dirigeant ne possédant pas de connaissances philosophiques fait partie du vulgaire, même si on peut se méprendre et considérer intelligent celui qui n'est, en fait, dans le meilleur des cas, que prudent. Ce qu'un extrait des *Aphorismes choisis* l'affirme explicitement : « La prudence est ce que le vulgaire appelle du nom d' "intellect". Lorsque cette faculté se trouve dans l'homme, celui-ci est appelé "intelligent" » (notre trad.)<sup>74</sup>.

L'extrait décrit les divers régimes politiques comme résultat des actions et des modes de vie des citoyens. C'est là une caractéristique de la pensée politique classique, dans laquelle le gouvernement émane des modes de vie<sup>75</sup> qui représentent ses buts, à la différence de la pensée politique moderne, où les modes de vie se constituent à partir du gouvernement. La pensée politique classique s'enracine, et trouve son point de départ dans la vie effective des hommes<sup>76</sup>. Nous retrouvons aussi une distinction récurrente chez Farabi, à savoir celle entre les félicités présumées, et la vraie félicité, laquelle, selon C. Genequand, tire ses origines des premières lignes de *l'Éthique à Nicomaque*<sup>77</sup>. Nous apprenons ainsi que c'est seulement à l'aide d'un art royal vertueux que la vraie félicité s'accomplit. Le fait que le but de la politique soit la félicité commence à nous donner un aperçu de l'imbrication qui existe entre politique et métaphysique, étant donné que le but du politique semble bien consister en quelque chose de « trans-politique », la félicité étant l'expression la plus haute de la vertu intellectuelle<sup>78</sup>. Comme on le verra, ce lien s'établit à travers la cosmologie. L'allusion à la dégénérescence du régime vertueux pointe vers les considérations de Platon dans la *République*. Il est intéressant de remarquer également l'analogie qui est introduite entre la science politique et la médecine<sup>79</sup>. Comme cette dernière, la politique ne peut s'appuyer sur des principes exclusivement théoriques. Tout comme la médecine, qui suppose, outre la connaissance des principes généraux de la biologie humaine, un savoir fondé exclusivement sur les particularités de chaque cas, la politique aussi suppose une connaissance des circonstances singulières, des différents contextes de la vie politique. C'est là un des thèmes majeurs de la notion de prudence chez Aristote<sup>80</sup> : le caractère indéterminé propre à ce savoir, thème qui a été magistralement traité dans le livre de Pierre Aubenque consacré à ce sujet<sup>81</sup>. Cette analogie sera reprise par d'autres penseurs, comme par exemple Averroès dans son commentaire de la *République* de Platon. Dans cet écrit, le philosophe cordouan considère que des livres comme *l'Éthique à Nicomaque* appartiennent à la première partie de la science politique, qui s'occupe des principes de l'action, tandis que des écrits comme la *République* relèvent de la seconde partie de cette science, laquelle prend en charge la réalisation effective de ces principes<sup>82</sup>. On remarquera enfin que le portrait d'un philosophe-roi dévoile une constante de la philosophie politique en Islam, dont Farabi fut le fondateur, à savoir, le platonisme politique<sup>83</sup>. Pour Farabi, ce fut bien Platon le vrai fondateur de la science politique, bien que ce fût Aristote qui accomplit ce que Platon n'a pas pu faire, à cause

de son âme, trop portée sur la vie contemplative<sup>84</sup>. Le modèle holiste de la *République* et des *Lois* étant plus consonant avec l'idée d'une révélation-Loi, propre au judaïsme et à l'islam (à la différence d'une révélation-foi, comme c'est le cas dans le christianisme), ce « choix platonicien » a été considéré par Strauss comme délibéré quant à l'exclusion de la *Politique* d'Aristote des traductions arabes<sup>85</sup>. L'ouvrage d'Aristote est en revanche plus consonant avec l'idée chrétienne de la séparation entre politique et théologie, ce qui pourrait expliquer son adoption par les penseurs chrétiens d'avant la Renaissance, au détriment des ouvrages platoniciens<sup>86</sup>.

Notre discussion sur la question de la science politique chez Farabi devra s'arrêter ici. Faute d'espace, nous avons dû nous limiter à la seule description de notre extrait. Précisons néanmoins que d'autres discussions de la science politique se trouvent ailleurs dans l'œuvre de Farabi. Tel est le cas avec *Le livre de la religion*, qui comprend deux descriptions de la science politique, semblables à nos passages<sup>87</sup>. Tel est également le cas de *La philosophie de Platon*, texte qui contient une définition de « l'art pratique » qui met en place la conduite/ mode de vie recherché(e), aboutissant à la félicité ; cet art est l'art royal ou politique. Platon se serait occupé de la description de la cité menant ses habitants à la félicité (dans la *République*), et des conduites vertueuses que ces habitants devraient suivre (dans les *Lois*)<sup>88</sup>.

## 2) Maïmonide : de la science politique à la Loi divine

Dans son ouvrage de jeunesse, *Le traité de logique*, dont l'attribution à Maïmonide a fait l'objet de plusieurs prises de position de la part de la recherche<sup>89</sup>, l'auteur consacre le dernier chapitre (chap. 14) à la description du système des sciences. On y trouve une brève remarque sur la science politique. Après avoir introduit la distinction, d'origine aristotélicienne, entre philosophie théorique et philosophie pratique (qui s'appelle également philosophie humaine ou science politique<sup>90</sup>), Maïmonide offre, en fin de chapitre, une description des parties de la science politique (*al-'ilm al-madanī*). Celle-ci comprend quatre divisions, à savoir, l'éthique, le gouvernement du ménage (l'économie), ainsi que la direction de la cité, suivies par la direction de la grande nation ou des nations<sup>91</sup>. Après une description de l'éthique et de l'économie, on trouve une discussion de la science politique, laquelle est

...une science qui fournit aux habitants (de cette cité), la connaissance de la félicité véritable (*ma'rifat al-sa'āda al-ḥaqqīyya*), en leur fournissant la démarche pour l'atteindre (*al-sa'y fī taḥṣīli-hā*)...

Cette science fait savoir aux habitants le malheur véritable, comment s'en garder, et comment, par l'exercice de leur mœurs, rejeter les félicités présumées (*al-sa'ādāt al-maẓnūna*). De même, cette science fixe des règles (*qawānīn*) de justice, au moyen desquelles s'ordonnent les communautés humaines.

Les savants des communautés religieuses (*milal*) disparues, poursuit le texte, fabriquaient, en tenant compte de la perfection de chaque individu d'entre eux, des directions et des règles (*tadābīr wa-qawānīn*) par lesquelles leurs rois dirigeaient leurs sujets ; ils les appelaient lois (νόμοι/*nawāmīs*), et les nations se dirigeaient selon ces lois. Les philosophes ont sur toutes ces choses de nombreux livres qui ont été publiés ; et peut-être ce qui n'a pas été publié est-il (encore) plus nombreux<sup>92</sup>. Mais en ces temps-ci, finit le texte, il n'y a pas besoin de toutes ces choses, je veux dire les gouvernements et les lois, et le gouvernement des hommes (se fait) par les commandements divins (*bi-l-awāmīr al-ilāhiyya*)<sup>93</sup>.

Dans un premier temps, nous retrouvons la division tripartite, d'origine aristotélicienne, de la philosophie pratique, en éthique, économie et politique proprement dite, division qui sera reprise par d'autres penseurs de l'Islam médiéval<sup>94</sup>. À cette nuance près que la politique est à son tour divisée en gouverne de la cité, et de la grande nation et des nations. Ce dernier passage a suscité des discussions de la part de la recherche, comme ce fut le cas des études de H. A. Wolfson, ou L. Strauss, qui s'appuyaient, tous les deux, sur les traductions hébraïques de l'écrit. Depuis que la version originale a été retrouvée, cet extrait a reçu l'interprétation appropriée dans l'excellente étude de J. L. Kraemer, consacrée au chapitre 14 de notre traité<sup>95</sup>.

Comme nous pouvons le constater, notre passage suit en bonne partie les extraits de Farabi que nous venons de résumer. L'objet de la politique est la vraie félicité, que le penseur juif distingue des félicités présumées, en suivant son prédécesseur musulman. La finalité de la politique semble, une fois de plus, transcender le domaine politique. Maïmonide assigne, lui aussi, l'accession à la félicité à la science politique<sup>96</sup>.

La science politique décrit aussi bien la finalité de la politique, que les manières effectives par lesquelles on peut l'atteindre, ce qui correspond

peut-être à la division de la science politique, en une partie consacrée aux règles générales, et une autre à leur réalisation effective. Mais la partie la plus intéressante consiste dans l'affirmation que l'on trouve dans la dernière partie de notre passage. Elle consiste dans l'opposition entre les *nomoi* des nations disparues, à savoir les nations païennes<sup>97</sup>, et leur remplacement par les commandements divins à l'époque des religions monothéistes. Il semble bien que désormais, la pensée politique se traduit dans des lois religieuses, censées remplir toutes les requies de la science politique.

C'est exactement la perspective que Maïmonide défend dans son *Guide*. Il parle, plusieurs fois, des buts de la Loi juive. De toutes les lois, elle seule est une loi parfaite, comme il fut dit : « La Loi de l'Éternel est parfaite (*Tôrat YYY temîmāh*) » (Psaumes, XIX, 8). Sa perfection dérive de son équité ; elle évite tous les excès qui pourraient nuire à la perfection de l'homme relativement aux mœurs et à la spéculation, à la différence des *nomoi* des communautés religieuses anciennes (*nawāmīs al-milal al-sālifa*). C'est la seule Loi qui peut s'appeler *šarī'a ilāhiyya* ; tout ce qui est en dehors d'elle en fait des régimes politiques (*al-tadbīrāt al-madaniyya*) est l'œuvre de seuls gouvernants (*mudabbirūn*), et non pas de prophètes. Tel est le cas avec les *nomoi* des Grecs (*nawāmīs al-yūnān*), ainsi que des divagations des Sabiens (*haḡayānāt al-šāba*) et d'autres<sup>98</sup>.

L'analyse de la Loi se poursuit dans le chapitre suivant. Après avoir rappelé que l'homme est un être sociable par nature (*al-insān madanī bi-l-ṭab*)<sup>99</sup>, qui doit se réunir avec ses semblables, la discussion se poursuit par une observation concernant la grande variété des individus humains, qui exige un gouvernant capable de rassembler les humains dans une seule société, selon un critère d'adaptation qui comprendrait tous les individus. Par conséquent, la Loi « ...bien qu'elle ne soit pas naturelle, possède une entrée dans la (chose de) la nature »<sup>100</sup>. Le critère par lequel se distinguent les régimes se fondant sur les *nomoi*, et ceux qui émanent d'une loi divine, c'est que les premiers ont une visée strictement politique (bon ordre de l'État, éradication de l'injustice, etc.) sans égard aux matières spéculatives (*umūr naḡariyya*), au perfectionnement de la faculté spéculative (*takmīl al-quwwa al-nāṭiqā*), et aux opinions (*al-ārā'*), qu'elles soient saines ou malades<sup>101</sup>. Leur seul but est d'atteindre une quelconque félicité présumée (*sa'āda mā maḡnūna*). À la lumière de ce qui vient d'être dit, on peut bien conclure que la Loi divine est celle qui prend en charge la vraie félicité, dont le contenu est suggéré en passant : l'appropriation des matières spéculatives et le perfectionnement de la faculté rationnelle<sup>102</sup>.



Ailleurs dans le *Guide*, la Loi juive est considérée comme ayant deux buts, à savoir, le bien-être de l'âme (*ṣalāḥ al-nafs*) et le bien-être du corps (*ṣalāḥ al-badan*). Le second vise l'accomplissement des nécessités vitales, qui ne peut se faire autrement que par l'association, car l'homme est un être sociable par nature. Le premier consiste dans l'acquisition des opinions saines (*āra' ṣaḥīḥa*) selon la faculté de chacun. La suite du texte identifie ce but (qui est maintenant appelé « perfection dernière ») au devenir rationnel en acte, à savoir la possession de l'intellect en acte (*al-'aql bi-l-fi'l*). C'est par cette seule perfection qu'on obtient l'immortalité (*al-baqā' al-dā'im*)<sup>103</sup>.

Comme nous venons de le constater, Maïmonide suit en partie les observations de Farabi. Sauf que dans son cas, il y a un changement de perspective. À la place de la science politique, c'est la Loi juive qui prend en charge l'accomplissement de la vraie félicité de l'homme. Elle est identique à l'accomplissement de la perfection théorique<sup>104</sup>. La perfection théorique est assignée au second but de la Loi. Dans cette perspective, la Loi divine dépasserait les *nomoi*, qui visent le seul bien-être social et corporel, c'est-à-dire l'une des félicités présumées<sup>105</sup>. Ce qui va dans le sens de la tradition dont Maïmonide se veut l'héritier : non pas une philosophie, mais un savoir exégétique, capable de percevoir le sens caché de la Loi, ou « la science de la Loi dans sa réalité ».

\*

Nous avons ainsi achevé notre deuxième partie. Au bout de nos descriptions, nous commençons à comprendre les approches du phénomène politique par les deux penseurs. Farabi se conforme à la tradition dont il se veut l'héritier. Il s'agit de la philosophie transmise « d'Alexandrie à Bagdad ». Cette tradition contient une science politique de nature platonicienne, qui pose comme but du politique l'accession à la félicité. Cette dernière n'est pas assignée à la poursuite solitaire du philosophe, mais devient le but ultime de la communauté politique qui se fonde à travers l'art royal vertueux. Quel est le lien entre politique et félicité, nous allons le comprendre dans notre dernière partie.

Maïmonide définit le phénomène politique principalement à travers une description des visées de la Loi, suivant en cela la tradition de la pensée médiévale juive, dans laquelle la politique ne constitue pas un domaine indépendant du domaine de la Loi<sup>106</sup>. Il s'inscrit ainsi dans la supposée tradition exégétique qui, « de Jérusalem à Cordoue », se serait perdue. La Loi juive contient le savoir politique par excellence, lequel a comme but la réalisation de la félicité humaine à travers la perfection

intellectuelle. Comme nous l'avons montré, il est question, là aussi, d'un lien entre politique et métaphysique. Mais là où le Musulman établit la philosophie *tout court* comme religion universelle de l'humanité, le Juif conçoit ce lien à l'intérieur du judaïsme, en consonance avec les objectifs plus limités de sa démarche<sup>107</sup>, qui se propose d'offrir une apologie de la religion juive.

### III) Le contexte cosmologique du politique

Dans cette troisième partie, nous allons analyser brièvement le contexte cosmologique du politique. Comme nous allons le constater, les deux penseurs conçoivent le meilleur régime à travers une analogie avec le système cosmologique. C'est de là que provient la conception d'une religion-image de la philosophie chez Farabi, ou le partage du judaïsme entre une couche extérieure et un niveau ésotérique chez Maïmonide.

#### 1) La cité cosmologique de Farabi. La religion comme image de la philosophie

Farabi est l'héritier des cosmologies de l'Antiquité tardive. Puisque ce n'est pas la cosmologie qui fait l'objet de notre étude, nous allons juste en rappeler quelques traits principaux. Nous allons nous rapporter principalement au *Régime politique*, qui en comprend les développements les plus subtiles. La *Cité vertueuse*, l'autre grand ouvrage « cosmologique » de Farabi, dont le *Régime* serait une « annexe », n'est pas, à ce qu'il semble, une œuvre purement philosophique, mais plutôt performative, consacrée au recrutement de l'élite philosophique, et remplie de lieux de contestation (*mawāḍi' al-'inād*), que les disciples éclairés sont censés percevoir<sup>108</sup>. Sa structure et son contenu pourraient se comprendre partant des discussions de la littérature théologique de son époque<sup>109</sup>.

La cosmologie de Farabi est structurée selon un processus d'émanation, qui part du Premier, pour s'achever avec la région sublunaire, processus qui comprend de différents degrés d'existants de dignités ontologiques différentes<sup>110</sup>. La structure de la cité se plie sur la structure de l'univers, ou chaque partie est liée à celle qui la précède et à celle qui la suit. C'est au chef de premier rang qu'incombe l'institution de cet arrangement analogique. Alors,

Quand les choses se passent ainsi c'est que les parties qui composent la cité sont en état de cohésion, de composition harmonieuse et sont ordonnées hiérarchiquement selon l'antériorité des unes et à la postériorité des autres. <Ces parties> deviennent <alors> semblables aux étants naturels (*taṣṭru ṣabīha bi-l-mawğūdāt al-ṭabī'īyya*) et de leur hiérarchie (*wa-marātibī-hā*), semblable elle aussi à la hiérarchie des étants (*ṣabīhan ayḍan bi-marātib al-mawğūdāt*) qui part du Premier (*al-awwal*) et se termine avec la matière première et les corps élémentaires<sup>111</sup>; leur cohésion et leur composition harmonieuse <deviennent> semblables à la cohésion et à la composition harmonieuse entre les différents étants ; et celui qui gouverne (*wa-mudabbir*) [ou « le roi (*malik*) de » selon un autre manuscrit], cette cité (*tilka al-madīna*) devient semblable à la Cause première (*ṣabīhan bi-l-sabab al-awwal*) en vertu de laquelle existe toute la série des étants (*llaḍī bi-hi wuğūd sā'ir al-mawğūdāt*) dont les rangs, ensuite, s'abaissent continûment, peu à peu, <parvenant ainsi à ceux qui> sont chacun <à la fois> dirigeant et dirigé (*fa-yakūnu kull wāḥid min-hā ra'īsan wa-mar'ūsan*), jusqu'à ce qu'on aboutisse à ces étants possibles (*al-mawğūdāt al-mumkina*), auxquels n'appartient aucune autorité (*lā ri'āsa la-hā aṣlan*), mais qui sont ancillaires et existent en vue d'autre chose : il s'agit de la matière élémentaire et des corps élémentaires<sup>112</sup>.

Nous n'avons pas à nous arrêter sur l'analogie qui existe entre la structure ontologique qui appartient à la Cause Première et selon laquelle se déploie l'univers<sup>113</sup>, tant à son niveau immatériel (la chaîne des intelligences séparées), qu'à son niveau matériel (les corps célestes et les corps sublunaires), et la structure de la cité produite par l'action volontaire du gouverneur, qui range les habitants de la cité d'une manière analogue aux hiérarchies cosmologiques. Mentionnons en passant des endroits où Farabi introduit une autre analogie, à savoir celle entre le corps humain et le corps politique. La communauté politique est conçue comme un ensemble intermédiaire entre le microcosme et le macrocosme<sup>114</sup>. La *ri'āsa* cosmologique et celle politique se rassemblent, nous faisant comprendre ainsi le lien entre cosmologie et politique.

Le but de la cité vertueuse est la félicité. La félicité doit se comprendre en termes intellectualistes. Elle consiste dans l'actualisation complète de l'intellect humain, qui atteint ainsi le degré de l'intellect acquis<sup>115</sup>. Rappelons dans ce sens que l'homme appartient à ces substances possibles qui ont besoin d'actualisation pour arriver à leur destination ultime, laquelle consiste, comme nous venons de le dire, dans la perfection intellectuelle<sup>116</sup>. À ce processus participent les corps célestes, mais surtout l'Intellect agent, l'intelligence séparée gouvernant le monde sublunaire.

Il est cause efficiente et finale de l'intellect humain. Il attire ce dernier vers sa plénière actualisation. Le perfectionnement de l'homme est équivalent au perfectionnement de l'ensemble du monde sublunaire. Car l'homme (« l'animal rationnel ») est l'être le plus parfait dans la hiérarchie sublunaire, dont il fait partie. C'est pourquoi, pour comprendre le but de l'homme, il faut d'abord connaître celui du monde en son entier (*al-ğarađ min kull al-‘ālam*) : « il doit être une partie du monde, parce que son but est nécessaire à la réalisation du but ultime du monde entier (*al-ğarađ al-aqṣā min kull al-‘ālam*)<sup>117</sup>. Le monde sublunaire ne peut s'accomplir et atteindre sa perfection *qu'à travers le perfectionnement complet de l'être humain*, à travers la félicité intellectuelle.

Cette conception n'arrive pas cependant à répondre à une question qui nous vient à l'esprit dès qu'on analyse les extraits que nous avons discutés auparavant. Il y était dit, que la réalisation de la félicité relevait d'une visée communautaire, étant assignée à la science politique. Or, nous avons affaire ici à la description d'une activité contemplative qui transcende en quelque façon la cité. Elle peut être parfaitement accomplie en dehors de tout cadre communautaire. S'il s'agit de la réalisation des plus grandes possibilités de l'être humain, elle serait en consonance avec l'idée d'un sage autarcique, tel qu'il est présenté dans l'*Éthique* d'Aristote. Nous n'arrivons pas à déchiffrer la nécessité du « retour à la Caverne » du philosophe. Il faut donc se demander en quel sens la félicité ultime peut devenir, non pas l'œuvre du roi-philosophe et de ses égaux, mais le destin d'une communauté historique, étant l'objet, non pas d'une activité contemplative solitaire, mais d'une pratique de nature politique<sup>118</sup>.

Pour offrir une réponse à notre question, il nous faut discuter brièvement le concept de religion chez Farabi. Le perfectionnement intellectuel, qui comprend la connaissance de la totalité de l'univers doit être rendu accessible à l'ensemble du genre humain, afin que l'activité du roi vertueux puisse se ressembler parfaitement à celle du Premier, qui établit par l'effluve qui part de lui les structures ontologiques de l'univers. Or, ces connaissances que possède le roi ne peuvent être transmises en tant que telles à tous les citoyens. Les hommes ont des natures innées très différentes<sup>119</sup>. Peu d'entre eux seront capables de suivre une argumentation philosophique. Et c'est bien là qu'apparaît la nécessité de la religion.

La conception de la religion et de son lien avec la philosophie se fonde sur une théorie de l'imitation très complexe, qui ne pourra être exposée ici dans tous ses détails. Mentionnons seulement la reprise par Farabi de l'analogie à trois termes de Platon, dans un cadre de syllogistique

aristotélécienne. Le terme moyen (B) assure la continuité entre sensible et intelligible, plus clairement, assure une *participation* du sensible à l'ordre intelligible<sup>120</sup>. Les matières philosophiques seront accessibles aux seuls gens qui pourront se les représenter d'une manière appropriée (*taṣawwuru-hā*), telles qu'elles sont, tandis que ceux qui n'en sont pas capables, auront à se les représenter (*taḥyīlu-hā*) par des « images » et par des imitations (*ḥayālātu-hā wa-miṭālātu-hā*). Ces imitations seront plus ou moins proches de l'objet imité, variant d'une classe d'hommes à l'autre, ainsi que d'une cité à l'autre<sup>121</sup>. Ce pourquoi, il peut y avoir une multitude de nations et de cités vertueuses, ayant des religions (*milal*) différentes, qui visent cependant à une seule et même félicité (*sa'āda wāḥida bi-'ayni-hā*). Ceux qui peuvent percevoir les choses elles-mêmes sont appelés Sages (*al-ḥukamā'*) ; ceux qui les reçoivent par voie d'imagination, croyants (*al-mu'minūn*)<sup>122</sup>.

La religion est une imitation de la philosophie, comme l'affirme un extrait de l'*Accession*, dans lequel Farabi attribue cette conception aux Anciens (*al-qudamā'*). Ce qui est appréhendé par l'esprit tel qu'il est et par voie de démonstration certaine (*'an burhān yaqīnī*) est appelé philosophie, alors que ce qui est appréhendé par voie de similitude (*bi-miṭālāti-hā*) est appelé religion, qui est une sorte de philosophie populaire, endoxale, ou extérieure (*al-falsafa al-qā'i'a al-mašhūra al-barrāniyya*)<sup>123</sup>. La théorie de la nécessité d'une institution d'analogies sensibles pour la présentation aux masses des intelligibles sous forme d'images devint un lieu récurrent en philosophie arabe, étant reprise par des penseurs aussi différents qu'Avicenne ou Ibn Tufayl<sup>124</sup>.

La religion représente une institution symbolique qui doit s'adapter à chaque fois aux traits naturels et aux habitudes de chaque nation particulière dans laquelle elle est instituée. Ce pourquoi, la religion peut varier d'une nation à l'autre, alors que ce qu'elle représente au niveau des images, à savoir la philosophie, est unique. De là s'ensuivent deux conclusions. Premièrement, que la philosophie doit nécessairement précéder temporellement la religion. Il faut d'abord que la philosophie vraie soit établie et connue par le législateur, pour qu'ensuite il puisse instaurer la bonne religion, en choisissant le système approprié d'imitation<sup>125</sup>. Deuxièmement, que la religion est entièrement subordonnée à la philosophie, puisque c'est à partir de l'acquisition des intelligibles philosophiques que les images religieuses peuvent être instaurées de façon appropriée<sup>126</sup>. Ce système complexe de subordination ressort d'un passage des *Lettres* :

Il faut que l'art du *kalām* et l'art du *fiqh* soient chronologiquement postérieurs à la religion (*muta'ahhīratāni 'an al-milla*), que la religion soit chronologiquement postérieure à la philosophie (*muta'ahhīra 'an al-falsafa*), que les facultés dialectique et sophistique viennent chronologiquement avant (*tataqaddamāni*) la philosophie, et que la philosophie dialectique et la philosophie sophistique précèdent la philosophie démonstrative. La philosophie, d'une façon générale, vient chronologiquement avant la religion, suivant l'exemple de l'utilisateur des instruments qui précède dans le temps les instruments. Et [les facultés] dialectique et sophistique viennent chronologiquement avant la philosophie, suivant l'exemple de la nourriture de l'arbre qui précède le fruit, ou suivant l'exemple de la fleur de l'arbre qui précède le fruit. La religion précède le *kalām* et le *fiqh* à la façon dont le maître qui fait usage du serviteur précède le serviteur, et l'utilisateur de l'instrument précède l'instrument (notre trad.)<sup>127</sup>.

Il est intéressant de remarquer comment ce rapport de précédence-subordination est conçu ici. Les facultés dialectique et sophistique précèdent la philosophie de la manière dont la nourriture nécessaire à l'arbre précède ses fruits, ou comme la fleur précède le fruit. L'exemple n'est pas choisi au hasard. La philosophie surgit « naturellement » d'un sol pré-philosophique qui la nourrit, elle n'est que le point final du développement des facultés humaines. Par contre, la relation entre philosophie et religion, et entre celle-ci et ses deux branches est définie en termes instrumentaux, étant semblable à la façon dont celui qui fait usage d'un instrument a la précédence sur l'instrument, ou à la façon dont le maître a la précédence sur le serviteur. Cette fois, il s'agit d'une institution politique, qui « ne va pas de soi », « naturellement », ne relevant en rien du hasard. La subordination de la religion à la philosophie ne surgit pas spontanément, étant le résultat d'un choix politique, relevant de l'art royal possédé par le philosophe<sup>128</sup>.

Nous pouvons à présent conclure notre très brève description de la façon dont Farabi conçoit la communauté humaine vertueuse<sup>129</sup>. La cité vertueuse doit imiter la hiérarchie cosmologique. La position du gouvernant de la cité est analogue à celle de la Cause Première. Le gouvernant est le philosophe-roi pouvant acquérir l'ensemble des intelligibles qui mènent au perfectionnement intellectuel. Il est également l'instituteur d'une religion imitative, qui offre des images de la vérité, en conformité avec les habitudes et les traits de chaque communauté humaine<sup>130</sup>. Ces images sont conçues elles aussi d'une manière platonicienne : loin d'être de simples simulacres, elles participent aussi à la réalité intelligible qu'elles

décrivent, tout comme chacune des entités cosmologiques participe, selon son niveau, à la nécessité ontologique du Premier. Tout comme l'effluve partant du Premier parcourt la totalité de la hiérarchie cosmologique, la cité vertueuse sera parcourue elle aussi, par l'enseignement religieux instauré par son fondateur-philosophe. Nous pouvons ainsi répondre à la question que nous venons de poser plus haut. La félicité est incluse dans la science politique, moyennant l'instauration de la religion. Cette dernière représente l'activité politique par excellence, par laquelle la philosophie devient, non seulement une pratique contemplative solitaire, mais un système politique capable d'amener l'ensemble de l'humanité aussi proche que possible de sa destination finale. La philosophie devrait s'actualiser dans chaque être humain, selon la possibilité qui lui est propre<sup>131</sup>. Le but suprême du philosophe-roi, dont la domination devrait, dans l'idéal, s'éteindre à la terre entière<sup>132</sup>, consistera dans une conversion du sensible vers l'intelligible, ayant comme but d'amener l'humanité tout entière vers la félicité<sup>133</sup>, de la même façon que la Cause première gouverne l'ensemble de l'univers. Dans ce sens, la politique est l'instrument sotériologique par lequel l'humanité entière arrive à accomplir ses plus hautes possibilités.

## 2) Maïmonide : les voies divines d'un judaïsme cosmologique

Il n'y a pas, dans la pensée de Maïmonide, aucune description d'une quelconque « cité vertueuse », comme c'est le cas chez Farabi. Cela est tout à fait compréhensible : étant membre d'une religion sans cité<sup>134</sup>, Maïmonide n'avait pas de raisons pour concevoir la forme idéale d'un gouvernement à présenter comme alternative aux régimes politiques existants. On trouve néanmoins dans son ouvrage des descriptions d'une société juive idéale, ordonnée à l'intérieur de la « haie de la Torah ». Comme nous allons le constater, ces esquisses sont très semblables à celles de Farabi que nous venons de parcourir brièvement. Elles se fondent sur une approche cosmologique, que nous allons décrire brièvement sans avoir la prétention d'épuiser ce problème<sup>135</sup>. Un premier extrait se trouve dans *Guide*, II, 11, qui a comme intention de montrer que

...le régime (*al-tadbīr*) s'épanche (*yafīḍu*) de la divinité (*min al-ilāh*), qu'Elle soit exaltée, sur les intellects (*al-'uqūl*), selon leur ordre successif, que les intellects, de ce qu'ils ont eux-mêmes reçus, épanchent des bienfaits et des lumières (*ḥayrāt wa-anwār*) sur les corps des sphères célestes, et que les sphères enfin épanchent des forces et des bienfaits (*quwwā wa-ḥayrāt*)<sup>136</sup>

sur ce (bas) corps qui naît et périt, en leur communiquant ce qu'elles ont reçu de plus fort de leurs principes.

L'extrait se poursuit par quelques remarques supplémentaires. Celui qui communique un bien (le donneur- *mufīd*)<sup>137</sup> ne le fait pas en vue de celui qui reçoit, car, dans ce cas, ce qui est inférieur serait le but de ce qui est supérieur. L'effluve cosmologique suit la façon de l'homme tellement riche qu'il peut enrichir d'autres, sans rien perdre de sa richesse<sup>138</sup>. Il en va de même pour l'univers, avec l'effluve qui part de l'être divin (*al-fayḍ al-wāṣil min-hu ta'ālā*) pour produire (*li-tğād*) la chaîne des intelligences séparées, qui s'achève avec l'Intellect agent. Chaque intelligence produit une sphère ; la production finit dans le monde sublunaire, avec la matière première et les quatre éléments, qui reçoivent des forces venant des sphères célestes<sup>139</sup>.

Jusqu'ici, nous avons dégagé le portrait sommaire d'une cosmologie de l'émanation semblable au système de Farabi. Il nous faudra chercher à présent l'autre terme de l'analogie, à savoir le rangement hiérarchique de la société. Il se trouve dans les chapitres consacrés à la prophétie<sup>140</sup>, laquelle joue un rôle plus important que chez son prédécesseur musulman. Parlant du prophétisme, Maïmonide introduit une différence entre le prophète qui n'a pas la force de s'adresser aux gens après avoir eu la révélation (*al-wahy*), et celui qui

...est inspiré de manière à être contraint (*yağibu an*) de faire un appel aux hommes, de les instruire, et répandre sur eux (une partie) de sa perfection (*wa-yafīda 'alay-him min kamāli-hi*). Il t'est donc clair que, sans cette perfection surabondante, on n'aurait pas composé de livres sur les sciences, et les prophètes n'auraient pas appelé les hommes à la connaissance de la vérité/du Vrai (*ilā 'ilm al-ḥaqq*)<sup>141</sup>. En effet, un savant n'écrit rien pour lui-même, afin de s'enseigner à lui-même ce qu'il sait déjà ; mais il est dans la nature de cet intellect de s'épancher perpétuellement (*tafīdu abadan*) et de s'étendre d'un (individu) qui reçoit cet épanchement (*min qābil ḡālīka al-fayḍ*) à un autre qui le reçoit, jusqu'à ce qu'il arrive à un individu au-delà duquel son influence ne saurait se répandre, et qu'il ne fait que perfectionner...<sup>142</sup>

Nous retrouvons ici le second terme de notre analogie. Maïmonide parle de nouveau en termes émanationnistes : l'Intellect agent s'épanche sur l'intellect prophétique, lequel à son tour continue cet épanchement. Tout comme dans le cas de la perfection surabondante de l'être divin, le



prophète crée une hiérarchie d'apprentissage qui part de lui, pour finir aux derniers degrés d'humains, incapables d'enseigner à d'autres. Ailleurs dans le *Guide* on trouve, comme chez Farabi, des analogies entre la hiérarchie sociale, le monde et le corps<sup>143</sup>.

Quant au phénomène prophétique, il est compris en termes intellectualistes : il s'agit de l'effluve (*fayḍ*) qui part de Dieu pour se répandre, au moyen de l'Intellect agent (*bi-wisāṭa al-'aql al-fā'āl*), d'abord sur la faculté rationnelle (*ilā al-quwwa al-nāṭiqa awwalan*), ensuite sur l'imagination (*ṭumma 'alā al-quwwa al-mutaḥayyila*). C'est là, nous dit Maïmonide, le plus haut degré de perfection de l'espèce humaine, ainsi que la plus haute perfection de la faculté imaginative<sup>144</sup>. Le don de la prophétie nécessite des dispositions dans la personne du prophète, même s'il peut ne pas advenir, à cause de la volonté divine<sup>145</sup>.

Le fait que dans la prophétie soient en jeu à la fois la faculté rationnelle et l'imagination nous ouvre la voie de la compréhension de la doctrine de Maïmonide sur la structure de son judaïsme. Elle ressort le mieux de sa fameuse exégèse de Proverbes XXV, 11, sur « les pommes d'or dans des filets d'argent »<sup>146</sup>. Maïmonide explique que l'or représente le sens intérieur (*bāṭin*) du Livre Saint, tandis que les filets d'argent représentent le sens obvie (*zāhir*) des paroles bibliques. Cela est en consonance avec le début du traité, qui pose comme buts du traité l'explication des noms bibliques (qui sont des homonymes, des métaphores et des amphibologies), ainsi que l'élucidation du sens caché des allégories bibliques<sup>147</sup>. Mais le détail le plus important ressort de l'affirmation de Maïmonide, selon laquelle « ...il faut aussi qu'il y ait dans son sens extérieur quelque chose qui puisse indiquer à celui qui l'examine ce qui est dans son intérieur, comme il en est de cette pomme d'or qui a été couverte d'un filet d'argent à mailles extrêmement fines... ». On voit bien se dessiner la théorie farabienne du rapport entre philosophie et religion comme image de la philosophie. Sauf que dans notre cas, la ligne de partage passe à l'intérieur du judaïsme, divisant celui-ci en une couche extérieure (le « filet d'argent »), qui s'adresse au lecteur non-philosophe, et en une couche intérieure (la « pomme d'or »), accessible aux seules élites philosophiques. Au même temps, le sens obvie du texte biblique se trouve dans une relation de ressemblance avec son sens caché.

Comme son prédécesseur musulman, Maïmonide partage ses coreligionnaires en élites et masses, à travers une exégèse de Psaumes, XLIX, 3 : « Aussi bien les hommes vulgaires que les hommes distingués (*gam-bnē ādām gam-bnē-īš*) », où il explique que le mot *ādām* est « un

nom pour désigner « le vulgaire (*li-l-ğūmhūr*), je veux dire la masse (*a'nī li-l-āmma*) à l'exclusion de l'élite (*dūna al-ḥāṣṣa*)... »<sup>148</sup>. Ce qui est attesté par la suite du texte, où Maïmonide affirme que le message extérieur de la Bible renferme des choses utiles à l'amélioration de l'état des sociétés, alors que le sens intérieur contient « les croyances ayant pour objet le vrai dans sa réalité » (*ibid.*) : alors que l'amélioration des sociétés relève de l'enseignement des masses par les images appropriées, représentant l'aspect politique des enseignements bibliques, l'appréhension du « vrai dans sa réalité » a affaire aux doctrines accessibles aux seules élites.

Les activités prophétiques imitent l'ensemble du monde, gouverné par Dieu. La conduite pratique de l'homme parfait comprend la connaissance du monde, qui conduit, par les signes qui y sont semés, à la connaissance du divin<sup>149</sup>, mais aussi l'imitation des actions par lesquelles Dieu se manifeste dans le monde<sup>150</sup>. Le prophète-philosophe est à la fois contemplatif et homme d'action. Cela ressort le plus clairement de sa géniale exégèse de l'échelle de Jacob (Genèse, XXVIII, 13 sq.), où il interprète les ascensions et les descentes des anges dans un sens platonicien : le prophète, « ...après être monté et avoir atteint certains degrés de l'échelle, descend ensuite avec ce qu'il a appris pour gouverner les habitants de la terre et les instruire (*li-tadbīr ahl al-arḍ wa-ta'līmi-him*) ... »<sup>151</sup>.

Il y a cependant plusieurs différences entre les doctrines des deux penseurs.

1) D'abord, le « scepticisme » de Maïmonide, qui est devenu un sujet de recherche depuis les études que Sh. Pinès a consacré à ce problème. Suivant la crise andalouse des sciences, et le conflit sans issue entre astronomie ptoléméenne et physique aristotélicienne, Maïmonide considère que ce n'est que la partie sublunaire de l'univers que l'on peut connaître. Ainsi le monde de la physique sublunaire devient le seul objet sûr de l'imitation de l'activité pratique du prophète<sup>152</sup>.

2) Mais l'aspect le plus intéressant est représenté par le rapport entre philosophie et religion. Comme nous venons de le montrer, Farabi avance l'idée que la philosophie doit précéder la religion dans le temps. Néanmoins, se produisent des situations atypiques, comme lorsqu'une religion se fonde sur une philosophie corrompue, ou qu'une religion soit transférée d'une nation à une autre sans la philosophie, que la philosophie soit transmise après la religion, ou que la philosophie soit transférée dans une communauté dont la religion se fonde sur une philosophie corrompue<sup>153</sup>.

Or, la situation du judaïsme selon Maïmonide semble présenter plus qu'une analogie à ce que décrit Farabi. Il avance l'idée d'une religion supposée vertueuse, dans laquelle cependant les traditions d'exégèse philosophique manquent<sup>154</sup>. Nous avons vu comment Maïmonide essaye de résoudre ce problème. Il suppose un judaïsme originaire de nature philosophique, qui se serait perdu à cause des catastrophes survenues dans l'histoire des Juifs. D'où le risque d'avoir affaire à une religion déstructurée, ayant perdu le lien avec la philosophie. Par conséquent, l'auteur doit « ouvrir les portes du *ta'wīl* » et monter sur les fils des allégories bibliques pour percer au sens ésotérique, de nature philosophique<sup>155</sup>. Une comparaison avec le *Livre des lettres* s'impose, afin de mettre en évidence la solution proposée par Maïmonide dans son explication de la situation de la religion juive, à la lumière de ce que Farabi décrit comme des rapports défectueux entre philosophie et religion.

Nous avons ainsi offert un bref résumé du contexte cosmologique du phénomène politique chez Maïmonide. Faute de place, nous devons arrêter ici notre présentation, sans pouvoir entrer dans d'autres aspects de la pensée politique de Maïmonide, le plus intéressant étant constitué par son explication de la fondation de la religion juive dans son conflit avec la religion originelle païenne de l'humanité, le « sabéisme ». D'autant plus que les Sabiens représentent un thème récurrent pour les penseurs, historiens et hérésiologues arabophones<sup>156</sup>.

\*

Comme nous venons de le constater, les deux penseurs ont une approche similaire concernant le phénomène politique. Farabi avance la conception de la philosophie comme religion universelle de l'humanité. Les différentes religions vertueuses sont des copies plus ou moins fidèles de la philosophie unique. Cette philosophie-religion est fondée sur la cosmologie, la structure de la cité idéale étant analogue à la hiérarchie cosmologique. La présence d'une approche cosmologique de la politique a conduit D. Gutas à la thèse, discutable, de l'inexistence d'une philosophie authentiquement politique chez Farabi : suite à son approche, il décrit sa cité en termes naturalistes, sans offrir aucune description proprement politique (analyse des constitutions) dans ses ouvrages<sup>157</sup>. Maïmonide suit la conception de son maître, à cette différence près qu'il reste à l'intérieur du judaïsme. Son judaïsme est lui-aussi de nature cosmologique, le prophète ayant comme but l'imitation des actions par lesquelles Dieu se manifeste dans la création.

Dans les deux cas, nous avons affaire à une perspective qui combine la cosmologie avec la pensée politique, la communauté politique étant analogue à l'univers dans lequel Dieu se manifeste à tous les niveaux en offrant une cohérence au tout. Dans le cas de la politique, cette cohérence est réalisée par l'instauration de la religion-image de la philosophie. Les deux penseurs dévoilent en même temps la conception d'une sagesse éternelle (philosophie, judaïsme cosmologique), mais également la façon dont cette sagesse doit s'accommoder aux circonstances changeantes de l'histoire humaine.

L'idée de l'analogie entre cosmologie et politique est refusée par l'école straussienne. Les auteurs de cette orientation semblent considérer que la cosmologie n'est qu'un « écran de fumée », une façon de faire passer une pensée simplement politique, une pensée dans laquelle la métaphysique n'a pas de place. Cela va dans le sens de Strauss, qui appelait la philosophie politique du nom de « philosophie première », le vrai substitut d'une métaphysique inexistante<sup>158</sup>. Elle reste l'apanage d'une communauté philosophique restreinte, vivant dans une « tiny city »<sup>159</sup>, n'ayant jamais un aspect communautaire, mais les traits d'une élite cachée, à la façon de celle décrite par Allan Bloom dans son interprétation du *Marchand de Venise* : Belmont et Portia y semblent représenter des métaphores pour l'endroit idéal patronné par la philosophie, où les élites de l'humanité se trouvent réconciliées par-delà les religions historiques<sup>160</sup>. Faute de place, nous nous contentons de la seule mention de cette approche. Sa discussion sera poursuivie dans des études futures.

## **Conclusion. La finalité trans-politique du politique chez Farabi et Maïmonide**

Dans le but de finir notre enquête, nous allons mettre en évidence la finalité de la science politique, telle qu'elle est conçue par nos deux penseurs. Celle-ci peut être résumée par une seule formule, d'origine aristotélicienne : l'immortalisation de l'homme au moyen du perfectionnement intellectuel, menant à la félicité<sup>161</sup>. Chez Farabi, cette conception est présentée dans ses traités cosmologico-politiques, étant décrite comme une séparation de l'intellect par rapport à la matière. Les âmes séparées des vertueux se ressemblent à une âme unique, malgré le fait que ces hommes puissent être éloignés dans le temps et l'espace. Une fois séparées du corps par la mort, leurs âmes, désormais

immatérielles, se conjoignent les unes aux autres, de telle façon que leur plaisir s'accroît par ces conjonctions. Nous avons ici comme un miroir transcendant et trans-politique de la cité vertueuse ; l'au-delà est conçu comme une conjonction des intellects séparés, résultat du dessein (providentiel) de l'Intellect agent<sup>162</sup>. Maïmonide suit la tendance moniste des Andalous, à commencer avec Ibn Bāḡḡa. Pour lui, l'âme séparée du corps après la mort matérielle est unique ; la multiplicité des âmes intellectuellement perfectionnées s'absorbe dans un intellect unique qui subsiste perpétuellement. Contrairement à son prédécesseur, la multiplicité (ou plutôt, « l'uni-pluralité » d'origine plotinienne) des âmes séparées semble exclue de la vie postérieure<sup>163</sup>. Cependant, dans les deux cas la finalité du perfectionnement intellectuel de l'homme est équivalente à l'acquisition de l'immortalité. À quel point cette poursuite de l'immortalité à travers la félicité est une tâche communautaire, relevant de la politique, nous venons de le constater dans les lignes qui précèdent.

La question de l'immortalité de nature intellectuelle inscrit les deux pensées dans une approche philosophique. Il était donc prévisible que cette perspective allait susciter l'opposition des penseurs religieux, comme ce fut le cas des attaques de Ghazali contre les philosophes, auxquels Averroès dut répondre, surtout en ce qui concerne l'épineux problème de la résurrection des morts. Ce fut aussi le cas de Maïmonide, qui eut à affronter les attaques du Gaon de Bagdad. Il répondit dans son *Traité de la résurrection des morts*. La conception farabienne de la philosophie comme religion ultime de l'humanité pose des problèmes en ce qui concerne ses rapports avec la religion islamique. Il en va de même avec la conception du judaïsme par Maïmonide, comme l'ont montré les deux controverses maïmonidiennes, concernant la légitimité des études philosophiques. Des soupçons concernant la nature réelle de son approche de la religion juive existaient dès la rédaction du *Guide*; elles peuvent expliquer l'étrange affirmation d'un musulman visitant le Caire et ayant connu Maïmonide, à savoir 'Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi, qui affirmait que Maïmonide « ...composa un livre pour les Juifs qu'il intitula *Kitāb al-Dalāla* [...] Je l'ai lu, et l'ai trouvé mauvais (*sū'*), car il corrompt jusque dans leurs fondements les lois révélées et les articles de foi, utilisant pour ce faire ce qu'il croyait apte à les améliorer. » (notre trad.)<sup>164</sup> Cela pose le problème des relations tendues entre philosophie et religion dans le monde de l'Islam médiéval, qui mena à une certaine marginalisation des philosophes. Elle pose aussi le problème de la relation de nos philosophes avec les « livres

penseurs » de l'Islam. Mais ce sont là des discussions qui dépassent le cadre de notre enquête<sup>165</sup>.

\*

Nous pouvons ainsi achever notre étude. Nous avons essayé de mener une recherche comparée des deux pensées, ayant comme but de mettre en évidence le lien qui existe entre politique et cosmologie, entre la question de l'organisation de la société humaine et la félicité comme problème politique. L'enquête s'est construite en trois étapes, en suivant trois problématiques. Dans un premier temps, nous avons analysé les traditions intellectuelles dont les deux penseurs se considèrent les héritiers. Comme nous venons de le constater, Farabi se veut l'héritier de la philosophie du Stagirite, reprise des derniers Alexandrins. Maïmonide se veut le restaurateur d'une tradition d'exégèse biblique perdue, de nature philosophique. Dans le cadre des deux traditions, la pensée politique joue un rôle de première importance. Farabi conçoit la science politique comme la science qui offre à l'ensemble de l'humanité le chemin de la félicité. Maïmonide parle plutôt des visées de la Loi, sa démarche se situant à l'intérieur du judaïsme. Mais chez lui aussi il est question de guider ses coreligionnaires vers la destination de l'homme, équivalente à la perfection intellectuelle. Dans un troisième temps, nous avons montré l'enracinement cosmologique des deux pensées. C'est sur le modèle d'un Dieu gouvernant l'univers que la félicité devient l'enjeu d'un destin politique, et non pas la pratique privée d'une élite philosophique.

Les deux démarchent dévoilent des ressemblances structurales importantes. Maïmonide se situe dans le cadre tracé par la pensée de Farabi, suivant l'idée d'un lien entre politique et métaphysique-cosmologie. Mais il varie d'une manière géniale les approches de son génial maître. Là où le premier conçoit une tradition continue de la *translatio studiorum*, le second parle d'une tradition perdue. Là où le premier débat du rapport entre philosophie et religion, le second traite de la différence entre la couche extérieure et le message ésotérique du judaïsme. Là où Farabi traite des buts de la science politique, Maïmonide analyse les visées de la Loi. Là où le Musulman conçoit une cité encore à réaliser, le Juif traite de l'organisation idéale d'une « loi sans cité ». Enfin, là où le premier conçoit la vie postérieure comme identique à une conjonction des âmes vertueuses, le second considère l'immortalité d'une façon moniste.

En suivant une tradition classique de nature platonicienne, les deux penseurs offrent, chacun à sa façon, les descriptions du meilleur régime politique. En tant que telles, les deux démarches supposent cet effort

extraordinaire de l'ensemble de la pensée politique antique et médiévale, qui vise à la réalisation de la meilleure vertu humaine dans un cadre communautaire. Que cette visée représente une tâche immense, peut-être irréalisable dans les circonstances politiques de toute époque historique, c'est une chose de laquelle tous les deux se rendaient parfaitement compte. On peut à cet égard songer aux affirmations pessimistes de Farabi sur les « étrangers », et sur l'exode qui s'impose aux sages résidant dans des cités corrompues, ou encore aux injonctions de Maïmonide à la solitude et l'isolement<sup>166</sup>. Dans cette perspective, nos démarchent dévoilent les traits de toute la pensée politique des Anciens, à la fois trop « idéaliste » et (néanmoins) noble dans ces aspirations. Car, comme l'affirmait Strauss : « In spite of its highness or nobility it [à savoir, la philosophie] could appear as Sisyphean or ugly, when one contrasts its achievement with its goal. Yet it is necessarily accompanied, sustained and elevated by *eros*. It is graced by nature's grace. »<sup>167</sup>.

Ce que nous espérons au bout de notre parcours, c'est d'avoir mis en évidence les traits d'une tradition de pensée de philosophie politique qui trouve sa place parmi les acquis les plus nobles de la tradition méditerranéenne, de l'Antiquité au Moyen Âge. Que cette tradition n'ait qu'un intérêt « antiquaire », ou qu'elle présente encore des potentialités à réaliser, c'est une question qui va bien au-delà des enjeux de cette étude.

## Liste d'abréviations :

### Littérature Primaire:

1. *EN*, *EN<sub>ar</sub>* = ARISTOTE, *Éthique à Nicomaque*, tr. fr. par J. Tricot, Paris, Vrin, 1997 (nouvelle édition) (=EN) ; *The Arabic Version of the « Nicomachean Ethics »*, édité par Anna A. Akasoy et Alexander Fidora, traduit par Douglas M. Dunlop, Leyde-Boston, Brill, 2005 (=EN<sub>ar</sub>).

2. *Accession* = FARABI, *L'accession à la félicité (Taḥṣīl al-sa'āda)*, version arabe éditée par Jafar al-Yasin, dans *Al-Farabi. Al-a'māl al-falsafiyya*, Beyrouth, Dar al-manahel, 1992, p. 119-197; tr. anglaise par Muhsin Mahdi, *The Attainment of Happiness*, dans *Alfarabi. Philosophy of Plato and Aristotle*, New York, Cornell University Press, 2001<sup>3</sup>, p. 13-50.

3. *Armonia* = FARABI, *L'armonia delle opinioni dei due sapienti, il divino Platone e Aristotele (Kitāb al-ḡam'...)*, édition du texte arabe et traduction italienne par Cecilia Martini Bonadeo, Pise, Edizioni Plus, 2008.

4. *Cité* = FARABI, *La cité vertueuse (Mabādī' ārā' ahl al-madīna al-fāḍila)*, édition et tr. anglaise par Richard Walzer, *Al-Farabi on the Perfect State*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1985.

5. *Lettres* = FARABI, *Alfarabi's Book of Letters (Kitāb al-ḥunūf)*, éd. M. Mahdi, Beyrouth, Dar al-Mashreq, 1990<sup>2</sup>.

6. *Religion* = FARABI, *Livre de la religion (Kitāb al-milla)*, éd. du texte arabe par M. Mahdi, dans *Book of Religion and Related Texts (Kitāb al-milla wa-nuṣūṣ uḥrā)*, Beyrouth, Dar al-mashreq, 1968, p. 41-66 ; tr. anglaise par Charles E. Butterworth, *The Political Writings. « Selected Aphorisms » and Other Texts*, Ithaca et Londres, Cornell University Press, 2001 p. 87-113.

7. *Régime* = FARABI, *Le Livre du régime politique (Kitāb al-siyāsa al-madaniyya)*, édité par F. M. Najjar, Beyrouth, 1993<sup>2</sup> ; tr. fr. par Philippe Vallat, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 2012.

8. *Histoire* = IBN ABI USAYBI'A, *Histoire des médecins ('Uyūn al-anbā' fī ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbā')*, éd. Nizar Rida', Beyrouth, Dar maktabat al-haya, 1965.

9. *Guide* = MAÏMONIDE, *Le Guide des égarés (Dalālat al-ḥā'irīn)*, édition par I. Joël du texte de Munk, Jérusalem, Junovitch, 1931 (judéo-arabe); *Le Guide des égarés*, tr. fr. par Salomon Munk (1856-1866), Paris, G-P Maisonneuve et Larose, 1981, 3 volumes.



10. *Logique* = MAÏMONIDE, *Traité de logique* (*Maqāla fī šinā'at al-manṭiq*), texte judéo-arabe (éd. I. Efron), avec introduction et traduction par R. Brague, Paris, Desclée de Brouwer, 1996, collection « Midrash ».
11. TB = *Talmud du Babylone*, nombreuses éditions.

### Littérature secondaire:

1. *El* = *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (New Edition), Leyde, Brill, 1986-2009.
2. *IPhM* = Heidrun Eichner, Matthias Perkams et Christian Schäfer (éd.), *Islamische Philosophie im Mittelalter. Ein Handbuch*, Darmstadt, WBG, 2013.
3. *MUSJ* = *Mélanges de l'Université « Saint-Joseph »*.
4. *SFIM* = Cristina D'Ancona, (éd.), *Storia della filosofia nell'islam medievale*, Torino, Einaudi, 2005, 2 vol.
5. *HJPh* = STEVEN NADLER, et T. M. RUDAVSKY, (éd.), *The Cambridge History of Jewish Philosophy. From Antiquity through the Seventeenth Century*, Cambridge University Press, 2009.
6. « Complex » = Dimitri GUTAS, « The “Alexandria to Baghdad” Complex of Narratives. A Contribution to the Study of Philosophical and Medical Historiography among the Arabs », *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale*, X, 1999, p. 155-93.
7. « Sources philosophiques » = Shlomo PINÈS, « Les sources philosophiques du “Guide des Perplexes” », tr.fr. par R. Brague dans Shlomo PINÈS, *La liberté de philosopher. De Maïmonide à Spinoza*, Paris, DDB, collection « Midrash », 1997.
8. « Literary Character » = LEO STRAUSS, « The Literary Character of the *Guide of the Perplexed* », dans *Persecution and the Art of Writing* (1952), Chicago et Londres, The University of Chicago Press, 1988<sup>2</sup>, p. 38-94.
9. *École* = Philippe VALLAT, *Farabi et l'école d'Alexandrie*, Paris, Vrin, 2004.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Pour les abréviations, voir « Liste des abréviations », à la fin de notre étude. Nous citons toujours à partir des originaux arabes. Néanmoins, pour aider la lecture des non-spécialistes, nous indiquons ensuite les pages correspondantes des traductions fiables en langues européennes (ex. : *Accession*, p. 181(=arabe) / 43(=trad.)), et ce, même là où nous proposons nos traductions françaises des textes analysés. Nous nous sommes permis des simplifications dans l'utilisation des noms des auteurs étudiés (ex. : « Farabi », au lieu d'« Al-Fārābī »). Les translittérations de l'arabe sont parfois simplifiées, notre texte n'étant pas un texte d'analyse philologique. Notre traitement de Farabi (commentaires et traductions), doit beaucoup au savoir de Philippe Vallat, l'un des meilleurs spécialistes du domaine. Nous voudrions le remercier, tout en précisant que les limites de nos interprétations nous incombent. La finalisation de cette étude n'aurait pas été possible sans un stage (mai 2017) dans la bibliothèque de l'Institut Warburg de Londres. Nous remercions tout le personnel de l'Institut (surtout Charles Burnett) pour avoir aidé nos recherches.
- <sup>2</sup> Discutée par Shlomo PINES « Sources philosophiques », p. 93-6.
- <sup>3</sup> À titre de seul exemple, voir Georges VAJDA, « À propos d'une citation non-identifiée d'al-Fārābī dans "Le Guide des égarés" » (1965), repris dans D. Gimaret, M. Hayoun et J. Jolivet (éd.) *Études de théologie et de philosophie arabo-islamique à l'époque classique*, Variorum Reprints, Londres, 1986 sur *Guide*, II, 15, p. 203-4/126-7, discussion sur Aristote, *Topiques*, I, 11, 104b 15 sq. Le texte auquel fait référence Maïmonide a depuis été édité. Voir *Kitāb al-ğadal*, dans *Al-manṭiq 'inda al-Fārābī*, III, Rafiq al-'Ajam (éd.), Beyrouth, Dar al-mashreq, 1986, p. 81-2.
- <sup>4</sup> Pour des résumés en ce sens, voir Sarah STROUMSA, « The Muslim Context », *HJPh*, p. 39-59 ; Joel L. KRAEMER, « The Islamic Context of Medieval Jewish Philosophy », dans Daniel H. Frank et Oliver Leaman (éd.), *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Jewish Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 38-68. Pour des approches plus philosophiques, voir Rémi BRAGUE, « Das gegenseitige Verhältnis von Philosophie und Islam », *IPhM*, p. 67-95 ; Leo STRAUSS, « How To Begin to Study Medieval Philosophy », dans *The Rebirth of Classical Political Rationalism*, Thomas L. Pangle (éd.), The University of Chicago Press, 1989, p. 207-226.
- <sup>5</sup> Pour un excellent aperçu d'ensemble, voir Matthias PERKAMS, « Die Übersetzung philosophischer Texte aus dem Griechischen ins Arabische und ihr geistesgeschichtlicher Hintergrund » *IPhM*, p. 115-42; Dimitri GUTAS, *Pensée grecque, culture arabe* (1998), tr. fr. par Abdesselam Cheddadi, Paris, Aubier, 2005 ; Cristina D'ANCONA, « Le traduzioni di opere greche e la formazione del corpus filosofico arabo », *SFIM*, I, p. 180-252 ; « Gerhard ENDRESS, « The Circle of Al-Kindī. Early Arabic Translations from the Greek

- and the Rise of Islamic Philosophy », dans G. Endress et Remke Kruk (éd.), *The Ancient Tradition in Christian and Islamic Hellenism...*, Research School CNWS, School of Asian, African and Amerindian Studies, Leyde, 1997, p. 43-76; Cleophea FERRARI, « La scuola aristotelica di Bagdad », *SFIM*, I, p. 353-74.
- 6 Comme seuls exemples, voir KINDI, *Philosophie première*, dans *Œuvres philosophiques et scientifiques d'al-Kindî*, Roshdi Rashed et Jean Jolivet (éd.), Leyde, Brill, 1998, p. 13 sur *Mét.* α 993a30 ; FARABI, *Lettres*, § 143, p. 151-2 ; MAÏMONIDE, *Guide*, I, 5, p. 19/46 ; AVERROËS, *Grand Commentaire de la « Métaphysique »*, éd. par Maurice Bouyges, s.j., Beyrouth, Dar al-Mashreq, 1990<sup>3</sup>, p. 9-10, Comm. 2 sur *Mét.* α 993a30 sq., avec l'excellente étude de David WIRMER, « Ibn Rušds (Averroes') Auffassung von Philosophie und ihre Kontexte », *IPhM*, p. 314-39. L'appréciation de la pensée du Stagirite est résumée par DANTE dans les fameux vers de *la Divine comédie*, où il appelle Aristote « (i)l maestro di color che sanno » (« Inferno », IV, 131).
- 7 Voir *EN<sub>arr</sub>*, l'introduction de Douglas M. DUNLOP, p. 1-109.
- 8 Sh. PINÈS, « Aristotle's *Politics* in Arabic Philosophy », *Israel Oriental Studies*, V, 1975, p. 150-60, réimpr. *The Collected Works II. Studies in Arabic Versions of Greek Texts and in Medieval Science*, Jérusalem-Leyde, Magnes Press-Brill, 1986, p. 146-156; R. BRAGUE, « Note sur la traduction arabe de la *Politique* d'Aristote. Derechef, qu'elle n'existe pas », dans Pierre Aubenque, (éd), *Aristote politique*, PUF, Paris, 1993, p. 423-433.
- 9 Henri HUGONNARD-ROCHE, « Remarques sur la tradition arabe de l'*Organon* d'après le manuscrit Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale ar. 2346 », *Glosses and Commentaries on Aristotelian Logical Texts. The Syriac, Arabic and Medieval Latin Traditions*, Londres, The Warburg Institute, 1993, p. 19-28.
- 10 Sur les *Lois*, voir Steven HARVEY, « Did Alfarabi Read Plato's *Laws*? », *Medioevo. Rivista di storia della filosofia medievale*, XXVIII, 2003, p. 51-68. Sur la *République*, David C. REISMAN, « Plato's *Republic* in Arabic. A Newly Discovered Passage », *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*, 14/2004, p. 263-300. Le commentaire sur les *Lois* de Farabi a été édité par Thèrese-Anne Druart, « Le sommaire du livre des "Lois" de Platon (*Ġawāmi' Kitāb al-Nawāmīs li-Aflāṭūn*) par Abū Naṣr al-Fārābī » dans *Bulletin d'Études Orientales*, 50/1998, p. 109-55; trad. anglaise par Charles Butterworth, dans *Alfarabi. The Political Writings*, II, Ithaca et Londres, Cornell University Press, 2015, p. 129-73.
- 11 « L'Aristote Arabe. Réception, autorité et transformation du Premier Maître », *Medioevo*, 23/1997, p. 1-42.
- 12 Pour des présentations biographiques, voir Ph. VALLAT, *École*, 11-25 ; *id.*, « Abū Naṣr al-Fārābī, portrait d'une époque », *Épître sur l'intellect*, tr. fr. par Philippe Vallat, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 2012, p. I-Lii (introduction) ; Dimitri GUTAS, « Farabi I. Biography », *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, éd. en ligne : [http : /www.iranicaonline.com/articles/farabi-i](http://www.iranicaonline.com/articles/farabi-i).

- 13 Pour des présentations générales de ses œuvres, voir Muhsin MAHDI, article «Alfarabi», dans Leo Strauss et Joseph Cropsey (éd.), *History of Political Philosophy*, Chicago et Londres, The University of Chicago Press (1963), 1987<sup>3</sup>, p. 206-227; Cleophea FERRARI, « Al-Fārābī und der arabische Aristotelismus », dans *IPhM*, p. 218-32 ; Cecilia MARTINI BONADEO et C. FERRARI, dans *SFIM*, I, « Al-Fārābī », p. 380-448 ; R. WALZER, « Early Islamic Philosophy », *The Cambridge History of Latter Greek and Early Islamic Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, 1967, p. 643-69.
- 14 *The Life of Ibn Sina*, éd. et trad. anglaise par William E. Gohlman, Albany, New York, SUNY Press, 1974, p. 32 sq. : « J'ai lu le livre de la Métaphysique, mais je n'ai pas compris ce qui s'y trouvait ; le propos de son auteur (*ğaraḍu wāḍi 'i-hi*) restait pour moi enveloppé d'obscurité ». Après avoir lu le traité de Farabi, « les buts de ce livre (*agrād ḡālīka al-kitāb*) » lui seraient, « sur le coup (*fi al-waqt*) », devenus clairs. Voir D. GUTAS, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition*, Leyde, Brill, 1988, p. 238-54 (avec une trad. partielle du texte de Farabi, p. 240-2) ; FARABI, *Sur les buts d'Aristote dans chaque traité du livre caractérisé par les lettres (Fī-agrād al-ḡakīm fī kulli maqāla min al-kitāb al-mawsūm bi-l-ḡunūf)*, *Rasā'il al-Fārābī*, Damas, Dar-al-yanabīa, p. 23-27 ; tr. fr. par Thérèse-Anne Druart, *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale*, 24/1982, p. 38-43 ; tr. it. par C. Martini-Bonadeo, *SFIM*, « Al-Fārābī », p. 440-3.
- 15 Voir IBN ABI USAYBĪ'A, *Histoire*, p. 604. Sur le contexte plus large à l'intérieur duquel il faut inclure cet extrait, voir R. BRAGUE, « Sens et valeur de la philosophie dans les trois cultures médiévales », *Au moyen du Moyen Âge*, Les Éditions de la Transparence, Chatou, 2006, 57-75.
- 16 À savoir, païens. *Yūnān* (« Ioniens ») rend d'habitude Ἰωνες ; voir *El*, s.v. « Yūnān », XI, 343-5 (Franz ROSENTHAL).
- 17 *Wa-lam yazal ilā an intaqala*. Sur l'utilisation de *intaqala*, voir *École*, p. 35-36; 40, n.1.
- 18 *Accession*, p. 181/43 ; voir *Lettres*, II, § 156, p. 159 : *wa-l-falsafa al-mawḡūda al-yawma 'inda al-'arab manqūla ilay-him min al-yūnāniyyīn*. Voir aussi M. MAHDI, « La religion et la vision cyclique de l'histoire », dans *La fondation de la philosophie politique en Islam. La cité vertueuse d'Alfarabi*, tr. fr. par François Zabbal, Paris, Flammarion, 2000, p. 309-324.
- 19 L'original se trouve dans IBN ABI USAYBĪ'A, *Histoire*, p. 604-5. Il y a plusieurs traductions modernes de ce texte, que nous avons consultées : Nicholas RESCHER, « Al-Fārābī on Logical Tradition », *Studies in the History of Arabic Logic*, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1963, p. 21-7 (traduction et commentaire) ; Franz ROSENTHAL, *The Classical Heritage in Islam*, trad. anglaise par Emile et Jenny Marmorstein, Berkeley- Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1975, p. 50-1 ; Gotthard STROHMAIER, « "Von Alexandrien nach Bagdad"- eine fiktive Schultradition », dans Jürgen Wiesner (éd.), *Aristoteles. Werk und Wirkung. Paul Moraux gewidmet*, vol. II, Berlin-New York, Walter de Gruyter, 1987, p. 381-2 (tr. allemande); D. GUTAS, « Complex », p. 58-67 (tr. anglaise).

- 20 Littéralement « la matière philosophique » (*amr al-falsafa*). GUTAS traduit par « philosophy as an academic subject », expliquant le choix de sa traduction ; « Complex », p. 158, n. 13.
- 21 Littéralement : « et après la mort d'Aristote, elle (s'est répandu) à Alexandrie (*wa-ba'da wafāt Aristū'ālīs bi-l-Iskandariyya*) ». GUTAS supprime le *wa-* ; le texte devient ainsi, « après la mort d'Aristote à Alexandrie » (« Complex », p. 159, note 16).
- 22 Le texte porte *aḥadu-hum*, « l'un d'entre eux ». G. STROHMAIER corrige en *āḥīru-hum*, « le dernier d'entre eux » (« der letzte von ihnen »). Voir *ibid.*, p. 381, n. 6.
- 23 Selon Sarah STROUMSA, cette affirmation représente en fait une allusion à la fermeture de l'école d'Athènes par Justinien en 529 ; *Rūmiya*, désignerait, non pas Rome, mais Constantinople. Voir « Al-Fārābī and Maimonides on The Christian Philosophical Tradition: a Re-Evaluation », *Der Islam*, 68/1991, p. 267-8. Voir *El*, s.v. « Rūmiya », VIII, 612-3 (R. TRAINI) : souvent « Rome » représente plutôt la description de Constantinople.
- 24 C'est-à-dire, jusqu'au *Premières Analytiques* I, 7. Voir G. STROHMAIER, *ibid.*, p. 385-6. Pour la compréhension appropriée de cette restriction, voir « Complex », p. 181-7.
- 25 Sur ces personnages, tous associés à l'école des Aristotéliciens de Bagdad, voir Fritz W. ZIMMERMANN, *Al-Farabi's Commentary and Short Treatise on Aristotle's « De Interpretatione »*, Londres, Oxford University Press, 1981, « Introduction », p. Cv-Cxii, ainsi que les renvois de l'article de Meyerhof, ci-dessous.
- 26 *Tasāḡala bi-l-dīn/bi-dīni-hi* (*Histoire*, p. 605, 1, 2 et 3). Pour la signification de cette expression, voir Ph. VALLAT, *École*, p. 371 ; *id.*, *Épître sur l'intellect*, p. Xi, n. 5. Il s'agit d'Isra'īl et de Yuhanna.
- 27 Sur la traduction de cet extrait, voir Ph. VALLAT, *École*, p. 17-8, n. 3, à comparer avec D. GUTAS, « Complex », p. 166.
- 28 Voir, e.g., AL-MAS'UDI, *Kitāb al-tanbīh wa-l-iṣṙāf*, M. J. de Goeje (éd.), Leyde, Brill, 1894, p. 121-2 ; trad. angl. par D. GUTAS, « Complex », p. 158-67. Gutas ajoute les récits sur le même sujet, du médecin musulman Ibn Ridwan et du médecin juif Ibn Ḡumay'.
- 29 *Al-Farabi (Al-Farabius), des arabischen Philosophen Leben und Schriften*, Académie Impériale des Sciences, Saint Pétersbourg, 1869, p. 86-8 (tr. all.) et 211-3 (éd.) [*non vidi*].
- 30 M. MEYERHOF, « Von Alexandrien nach Bagdad. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des philosophischen und medizinischen Unterrichts bei den Arabern », *Sitzungsberichte der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Berlin, 1930, p. 389-429, surtout p. 394 et 405 (trad. de notre extrait), 407 (trad. de Mas'udi), p. 413-4 (sur Isra'īl, Quawaira, Yuhanna ibn Haylan et Marwazi), ainsi que p. 416-9 (sur Farabi et Yahya ibn 'Adi), et généralement p. 413-26 (sur les grands Bagdadiens).

- 31 G. STROHMAIER, *ibid.*, p. 382-4.
- 32 D. GUTAS, *Pensée grecque, culture arabe*, p. 138-53, qui fait mention de notre ensemble narratif.
- 33 G. STROHMAIER, *ibid.*, surtout les conclusions, p. 387-9 ; J. LAMEER, « From Alexandria to Baghdad : Reflections on the Genesis of a Problematic Tradition », *The Ancient Tradition in Christian and Islamic Hellenism...*, p. 181-91 (qui insiste sur le récit de Mas'udi).
- 34 D. GUTAS, « Aspects of Literary Form and Genre in Arabic Logical Works », dans Charles Burnett (éd.), *Glosses and Commentaries ...*; N. RESCHER, *ibid.*, p. 25-6; Ph. VALLAT, *École*, p. 12.
- 35 *Accession*, p. 196-7, 49-50 ; *Armonia*, p. 36-7 (le but de l'ouvrage). Nous ne pouvons entrer dans le vaste thème concernant la technique de la concordance. Sur ce thème, dans l'ouvrage farabien et dans le monde tardo-antique, voir : C. MARTINI-BONADEO, « Introduzione », *Armonia*, p. 1-14 ; G. ENDRESS, « "La Concordance entre Platon et Aristote", l'Aristote Arabe et l'émancipation de la philosophie en Islam médiéval », Burkhard Mojsich et Olaf Pluta (éd.), *Historia Philosophiae Medii Aevi. Studien zur Geschichte des Mittelalters*, I, Amsterdam-Philadelphia, R. B. Grüner, 1991, p. 237-57, surtout p. 249-54; Ilsetraut HADOT, *Le néoplatonicien Simplicius à la lumière des recherches contemporaines. Un bilan critique. Avec deux contributions de Philippe Vallat*, Sankt Augustin, Academia, 2014, p. 141-9.
- 36 *Accession*, p. 196-7/49-50.
- 37 Pour des ouvrages modernes traitant de la biographie et des travaux de Maïmonide, voir Herbert Allan DAVIDSON, *Moses Maimonides. The Man and his Works* (2005), Oxford University Press, 2010<sup>2</sup>, p. 3-121; J. L. KRAEMER, *Maimonides. The Life and the World of one of Civilization's Greatest Minds*, New York, Doubleday, 2008; *id.*, « Moses Maimonides : An Intellectual Portrait », dans Kenneth Seeskin (éd.), *The Cambridge Companion to Maimonides*, Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 10-57; *id.* « Maimonides' Intellectual Milieu in Cairo », dans Tony Lévy et Roshdi Rashed (éd.), *Maimonide, philosophe et savant (1138-1204)*, Louvain, Peeters, 2004, p. 1-37 ; Shlomo Dov GOITEIN, « Moses Maimonides, Man of Action. A Revision of the Master's Biography in Light of the Geniza Documents », dans Gérard Nahon et Charles Touati (éd.), *Hommage à Georges Vajda*, Louvain, Peeters, 1980, p. 155-67; Paul B. FENTON, « A Meeting with Maimonides », *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, XLV, 1982, p. 1-5; Mauro ZONTA, *Maimonide*, Rome, Carocci Editore, 2011, p. 15-29.
- 38 Voir, e.g., *Guide*, I, 71, p. 122/338. Pour un aperçu de la culture philosophique andalouse d'avant Averroès, voir Marc GEOFFROY, « La formazione della cultura filosofica dell'Occidente musulmano », *SFIM*, II, p. 671-721.
- 39 Voir Simon HOPKINS, « The Languages of Maimonides », Georges Tamer (éd.), *Die Trias des Maimonides. Jüdische, Arabische und Antike Wissenskultur*,

- Berlin-New York, Walter de Gruyter, 2005, p. 85-106. Nous allons revenir à la remarque d'Abd al-Latif al-Bagdadi en fin de notre étude.
- 40 Sh. PINÈS, « Sources philosophiques », p. 128. Voir aussi L. STRAUSS, « Literary Character », p. 38-46.
- 41 *Guide*, I, Introd., p. 3/9 ; II, 2, p. 176/49-50 ; II, 29, p. 243/226-7 ; III, I, Introd., p. 297/3. Sur les buts de l'ouvrage, voir Steven HARVEY, « Maimonides in the Sultan's Palace », dans J. L. Kraemer (éd.) *Perspectives on Maimonides. Philosophical and Historical Studies*, Oxford University Press, 1991, p. 52-60.
- 42 Nous nous permettons de renvoyer le lecteur à nos brèves observations dans *Sur le chemin du palais. Réflexions autour de deux chapitres du « Guide des égarés » de Maïmonide*, Paris, Cerf, 2016, p. 131-7.
- 43 Pour cette mise en parallèle, voir S. STROUMSA, « Al-Fārābī and Maimonides on the Christian Philosophical Tradition... », p. 276-81 et 284-6.
- 44 *Guide*, I, 71, p. 121-123/335-345. Sur le rapport de Maïmonide au *kalām*, voir Michael SCHWARZ, « Who Were Maimonides' Mutakallimūn ? Some Remarks on *Guide of the Perplexed*, Part 1, chapter 73 » ; 1<sup>re</sup> partie dans *Maimonidean Studies*, 2/1991, p. 159-209 ; 2<sup>e</sup> partie, *Maimonidean Studies*, 3/1992-3, p. 143-172.
- 45 Contrairement à D. GUTAS, étant donné la manière extrêmement complexe dont Maïmonide traite ses sources, nous avons du mal à croire que notre extrait « ...has nothing to do with the Complex (i.e. le complexe narratif "d'Alexandrie à Bagdad") » (« Complex », p. 157, n. 6).
- 46 S. STROUMSA, *ibid.*, p. 279-80.
- 47 *Réfutation de Jean le Grammairien (Al-radd 'alā Yahyā al-Nahwī)* texte ar. éd. par M. Mahdi, dans Sami A. Hanna (éd.), *Medieval and Middle Eastern Studies. In Honour of Aziz Suryal Atiya*, Leyde, Brill, 1972, p. 271-84 ; trad. angl. et commentaire par M. Mahdi, *Alfarabi against Philoponus, Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 26/1967, p. 233-60. Note passage se trouve § 8, p. 276-7/256-7.
- 48 S. STROUMSA, *Maimonides in his World. Portrait of a Mediterranean Thinker*, Princeton University Press, 2009, p. 29-31 (et généralement p. 26-28, consacrées à l'attitude de Maïmonide à l'égard du *kalām*).
- 49 *Guide*, I, 70 p. 118-21/ 323-32, principalement une exégèse de TB, *Ḥagiga*, 12b et Psaumes, LXVIII, 5 où Dieu est appelé *rôḳeḅ bā-'Arāḇôt* ; voir *Guide*, III, 6, p. 307/ 34 (*al-sulṭān ḥīna rukūbi-hī*), sur TB, *Ḥagiga*, 13b.
- 50 *Tahqīq ḥaḍīhi al-umūr*. Sut *tahqīq* comme méthode d'investigation opposée à ce qui est reçu par voie de tradition, voir D. GUTAS, *Avicenna...*, p. 187-94 ; Amélie-Marie GOICHON, *Lexique de la langue philosophique d'Ibn Sīnā*, Paris, DDB, 1938, entrée 172, p. 84-5 (s.v.). C'était une méthode usuelle pour Maïmonide ; *Guide*, II, 24, p. 229/195 : « ...le comble de ma prédilection pour l'établissement de la vérité (*ḡāyat īlār-ī li-l-tahqīq*) ».
- 51 L'expression utilise est *al-mīlal al-ḡāhiliyya*. Normalement, *ḡāhiliyya* désigne la période historique d'avant l'islam. Sur le lien entre *ḡālūt* et *ḡāhiliyya*, voir

- F. ROSENTHAL, *Knowledge Triumphant. The Concept of Knowledge in Medieval Islam*, Leyde, Brill, 2007<sup>2</sup>, p. 32-5.
- 52 *Tanbīhāt yaṣīra wa-iṣārāt*. Il s'agit d'une citation approximative du fameux ouvrage avicennien ; voir L. STRAUSS, « Literary Character », p. 50, n. 46.
- 53 *Guide*, I, 71, p. 121/ 332-5.
- 54 *Guide*, I, 35 p. 54 /132.
- 55 Sur la dualité élite-masse, voir *Guide*, I, 14, p. 27/ 64, sur Psaumes XLIX, 3 ; *El*, s.v. « Al-ḥāṣṣa wa-l-ʿamma », IV, 1098-1100 (M. A. J. BEG).
- 56 Soit-dit en passant, l'utilisation du terme *ḡāhiliyya* devrait être rapproché de l'utilisation qu'en fait Farabi, qui l'interprète dans un contexte politique comme désignant ceux qui sont étrangers, non pas à la révélation islamique, mais à la philosophie ; *Régime*, p. XVI-XVII ; p. 94/ 201-2, avec n. 642.
- 57 D. GUTAS, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition*, p. 307-11 ; *id.*, « Aspects of Literary Form... », p. 52. Gutas envoie à FARABI, *Armonia*, p. 43, sur la méthode ésotérique d'Aristote (*Avicenna...*, p. 308). Pour une mention des *iṣārāt* par AVICENNE, voir e.g. *Metafisica (Al-ilāhiyyāt)*, X, trad. it. avec textes arabes et version latine, par Olga Lizzini, Milan, Bompiani (2002), 2006<sup>2</sup>, [p. 443 de l'éd. du Caire]= p. 1018. Sur la technique des « têtes des chapitres », voir *Guide*, I, *Introd.*, p. 3/9-10.
- 58 Voir FARABI, *Sur les buts...*, p. 23/ 40 (tr. fr.) ; p. 441 (tr.it.) ; p. 240 (tr. angl.) ; KINDI, *Philosophie première*, p. 15 ; GUTAS, *ibid.*, p. 243 sq., 249-54.
- 59 *Guide*, II, 11, p. 192/ 96-7.
- 60 *Guide*, III, *Introd.*, p. 297-8/ 5-6.
- 61 Voir *Épître à Yemen*, éd. Isaac Shailat, *Iggerot ha-RamBam*, I, Maaleh Adumim, 1988, p. 105 ; tr. angl. par J. L. Kraemer, dans R LERNER, *Maimonides' Empire of Light. Popular Enlightenment in an Age of Belief*, Chicago et Londres, the Univ. of Chicago Press, 2000, p. 124-5. Voir *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2<sup>ème</sup> édition, Détroit, Thomson Gale et Jérusalem, Keter Publishing House, 1996, XIV, s.v. « Sepharad », p. 1164.
- 62 R. BRAGUE, *La Loi de Dieu. Histoire philosophique d'une alliance*, Paris, Gallimard, 2005, p. 239.
- 63 Voir R. BRAGUE, « Eorum praeclara ingenia. Conscience de la nouveauté et prétention de continuité chez Farabi et Maïmonide », *Bulletin d'Études Orientales*, n° 48, 1996, pp. 87-102.
- 64 Comme l'a montré D. GUTAS, « Paul the Persian on the Classification of the Parts of Aristotle's Philosophy ; a Milestone Between Alexandria and Baḡdād », *Der Islam*, 60/1983, p. 231-67, surtout, p. 255-60 (sur les chapitres sur la logique de l'*Énumération*). Sur l'histoire de la transmission de cet ouvrage, voir M. ZONTA, *La "Classificazione delle scienze" di Al-Fārābī nella tradizione ebraica*, Torino, 1992, p. XIII-XXII (contient l'édition de la traduction hébraïque médiévale, avec une traduction italienne).
- 65 Voir, parmi les éditions de cet ouvrage, *La Statistique des sciences*, éd. Uthman Amin, Le Caire, Librairie anglo-égyptienne (1931), 1968<sup>3</sup>, p. 124-



30 ; *Catálogo de las ciencias*, éd. et trad. espagnole par Ángel Gonzáles Palencia (1931), Madrid, 1953<sup>2</sup>, p. 91-9 (ar.). Pour les traductions : trad. anglaise par Fauzi Najjar, dans R. Lerner et M. Mahdi (éd.) *Medieval Political Philosophy : A Sourcebook*, The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963, p. 27-30; tr. angl. par Charles Butterworth, dans *Alfarabi. The Political Writings*, Ithaca et Londres, Cornell University Press, 2001, p. 76-80, dont nous allons suivre la division en trois parties de notre extrait.

<sup>66</sup> U. Amin : *sunan* (p. 124) ; Á. Gonzáles Palencia : *siyar* (p. 91). *Siyar* représente la bonne variante.

<sup>67</sup> Pour la transmission et la traduction de quelques-uns de ces termes dans les différentes terminologies philosophiques, on se rapportera à la très érudite étude de M. ZONTA sur ce sujet. Voir *Saggio di lessicografia filosofica araba*, Brescia, Paideia, 2014, article « Azione », p. 66-70; article « Possesso » p. 208-13.

<sup>68</sup> Mais, poursuit le texte, « dans une autre vie, après cette vie, qui est la vie dernière (*al-ḥayāt al-āḥira*) » (U. Amin, p. 124 ; Á. Gonzáles Palencia, p. 92). Le même terme, « vie dernière », est utilisé dans *l'Épître sur l'intellect*, à l'instant où Farabi décrit l'avènement de l'intellect acquis. Voir *Risāla fī l-'aql*, éd. du texte arabe par Maurice Bouyges (1938), Beyrouth, Dar al-mashreq, 1983<sup>2</sup>, p. 31; tr. fr. dans *Épître sur l'intellect*, p. 51.

<sup>69</sup> À l'endroit où il est question de la manière dont se déploient les arts royaux non-vertueux, l'édition Á. Gonzáles Palencia a : « Cela se trouve dans le livre *Būlīṭīqā*, et dans (ou « qui est » (*wa-huwa [fī]*) le livre « *La Politique* » (ou « de la politique ») d'Aristote (*kitāb al-siyāsa li-Aristūṭālīs*), et aussi dans le livre de la politique (*scil. La République*) de Platon, et dans les livres de Platon et d'autres. » (p. 96 ; repris aussi par U. Amin, p. 128).

<sup>70</sup> Idée qui est reprise par Averroès dans son important commentaire sur la *République* de Platon. Voir *Averroes on Plato's « Republic »*, trad. de la version hébraïque de Samuel ben Juda de Marseille par Ralph Lerner, Ithaca et Londres, Cornell University Press, 1974, 2005<sup>2</sup>, 2<sup>ème</sup> traité, p. 102.

<sup>71</sup> Voir l'introd. de Ch. BUTTERWORTH, dans *The Political Writings*, p. 73; Joshua PARENS, *Leo Strauss and the Recovery of Medieval Political Philosophy*, University of Rochester Press, 2016, p. 77-8. Voir cependant Ch. BUTTERWORTH, « Al-Fārābī's Introductory Sections to the *Virtuous City* », dans Y. T. Langermann et J. Stern (éd.), *Adaptations and Innovations...*, Peeters, 2007, p. 32-3; M. MAHDI, « Science, philosophie et religion », *La foundation ...*, p. 116-24.

<sup>72</sup> L. STRAUSS, « Literary Character », p. 62-64, et p. 64, n. 79, avec une référence explicite à Farabi.

<sup>73</sup> À comparer *Guide*, III, 17 et III, 23 (les théories sur la Providence), *Guide*, III, 51, début, pour les deux énumérations des degrés d'hommes.

<sup>74</sup> Voir *Fuṣūl muntaza'a*, éd. F. M. Najjar, Beyrouth, Dar al-Mashreq, 1971 § 42, p. 58. Pour la trad. anglaise, de Charles Butterworth, voir *Selected*

- Aphorisms*, dans *Alfarabi. The Political Writings*, Ithaca et Londres, Cornell University Press, p. 33. Voir aussi *Lettres*, § 139, p. 149 : *wa-mulūk al-ğumhūr hum aḡdan min al-ğumhūr* ; *Épître sur l'intellect*, p. 4-7/2-9, sur la confusion entre intelligent (‘*āqil*) et prudent (*muta‘aqqil* = φρόνιμος), avec les importantes explications de Ph. VALLAT, *ibid.*, p. LV-LXIII. « Prudent » peut néanmoins être rendu par ‘*āqil*, voir e.g. *EN<sub>ar</sub>*, II, 1107a2, p. 173.
- 75 Renvoyons à cet égard à l'étude de Charles GENEQUAND, « Loi morale, loi politique : Al-Fārābī et Ibn Bāğğā », *MUSJ*, 61/2008, p. 491-514. Il y remarque, en se référant à la traduction arabe de l'*Éthique* à *Nicomache* que *sīra* (« conduite », « mode de vie ») traduit πολιτεία, un concept relevant bien de la politique, plutôt que d'une morale « privée » (p. 499 sq.).
- 76 Thomas PANGLE, *Montesquieu's Philosophy of Liberalism. A Commentary on the « Spirit of Laws »* (1973), Chicago et Londres, The University of Chicago Press, 1989<sup>2</sup>, p. 48-9; L. STRAUSS, « On Classical Political Philosophy », *The Rebirth of Classical Political Rationalism*, p. 49-62.
- 77 *Ibid.*, p. 496-7; voir *EN*, I, 1094a sq.; *EN<sub>ar</sub>*, p. 113. Pour le même couple conceptuel, voir *Religion*, p. 43-4/ 93-4 ; 52/101 ; *Accession*, p. 185-6/45.
- 78 Voir *EN*, I, 13, 1103 a 3-7 ; *EN<sub>ar</sub>*, p.153 (sur la différenciation entre vertus intellectuelles et morales), *EN*, II 1103a 15-20 ; *EN<sub>ar</sub>*, p. 155 etc. On pourrait alors parler de la métaphysique comme « infrastructure du politique ». Voir Ph. VALLAT, *Régime*, p. XXI-XXV.
- 79 À laquelle fait aussi allusion *Religion*, 57-9/104-6.
- 80 Laquelle est nommé comme telle dans *Religion* 59/106 (*ta‘aqqul*). Voir *EN<sub>ar</sub>*, p. 614 (φρόνησις = *ta‘aqqul*, mais aussi *ğihn*, ‘*aql*, *fahm*).
- 81 *La prudence* chez Aristote (1963), Paris, PUF, 2009<sup>5</sup>.
- 82 Voir Averroes on Plato's « *Republic* », 1<sup>er</sup> traité, p. 4.
- 83 Qui a été déjà saisi par L. STRAUSS, dans les fameuses dernières lignes de sa *La Philosophie et la Loi*, tr. fr. par R. Brague, dans *Maïmonide*, Paris, P.U.F., 1988, p. 141-2. Voir aussi Richard WALZER, « Platonism in Islamic Philosophy », dans *Greek into Arabic. Essays on Islamic Philosophy*, Oxford, Bruno Cassirer, 1962, p. 243-8 (sur Farabi).
- 84 *Armonia*, p. 41-2, avec les riches commentaires de C. MARTINI-BONADEO, p. 99-104.
- 85 « Quelques remarques sur la science politique de Maïmonide et de Fārābī » (1937), *Maïmonide*, p. 146-147 ; même idée chez Sh. PINÈS, « Sources philosophiques », p. 141-2.
- 86 Pour un résumé de ces traits fondamentaux qui opposent islam et judaïsme d'une part, et christianisme, de l'autre, voir Abraham MELAMED « Politics and the State », *HJPh*, p. 771-7.
- 87 Voir *Religion*, 52-61/101-8 ; Ch. BUTTERWORTH, « Al-Fārābī's Introductory Sections... », p. 35, n. 16.
- 88 Voir *La philosophie de Platon (Falsafat Aflāṭūn...)*, édition et tr. latine par F. Rosenthal et R. Walzer, Londres, Warburg, 1943, p. 13, 20, 21 ; tr. anglaise

par M. Mahdi, *Philosophy of Plato, Philosophy of Plato and Aristotle* (1962), Ithaca et New York, Cornell University Press, 2001<sup>3</sup>, p. 60, 65, 66.

- <sup>89</sup> Voir H. A. DAVIDSON, *Moses Maimonides*, p. 313-22 ; *id.*, « Ibn Al-Qiftī's Statement Regarding Maimonides' Early Study of Science », *Aleph*, 14.1/2014, p. 245-58 sur *Ta'riḥ al-hukamā'*, éd. J. Lippert, Leipzig, Dieterich'sche Verlagsbuchhandlungen, p. 317 (le début de l'entrée sur Maïmonide dirait que celui-ci aurait acquis juste quelques notions de logique, « a smattering of logic » - p. 256), contre l'acceptation de l'authenticité par S. Stroumsa, dans *Maimonides in His World*, p. 126-8. La réponse de S. STROUMSA se trouve juste après le texte de Davidson. Voir « On Maimonides and on Logic », *Aleph*, 14.1/2014, p. 259-63. Voir enfin, Ahmad HASNAWI, « Réflexions sur la terminologie logique de Maïmonide et son contexte farabien. Le *Guide des Perplexes* et le *Traité de logique* », *Maïmonide, philosophe et savant*, p. 69-73 (contre Davidson).

<sup>90</sup> *Logique*, XIV, p. 31/96.

<sup>91</sup> *Logique*, XIV, p. 32/99.

<sup>92</sup> Peut-être une allusion à la *Politique* d'Aristote (*Logique*, XIV, p. 102, note 229 de Brague). Voir Averroes on *Plato's « Republic »*, 1<sup>er</sup> traité, p. 4, où le philosophe explique son choix de commenter Platon par l'absence de la *Politique* dans l'Andalousie almohade.

<sup>93</sup> *Logique*, XIV, p. 33/101-2.

<sup>94</sup> EN, VI, 9, 1142a9-10 ; H. A. WOLFSON, « The Classification of the Sciences in Medieval Jewish Philosophy », dans Isadore Twersky and George H. Williams (éd.), *Studies in the History of Philosophy and Religion*, I, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1973, p. 493. Voir AVICENNE, *Sur la division des sciences intellectuelles* (*Fī aqsām al-'ulūm al-'aqliyya*), dans *Tis' Rasā'il*, Le Caire, Dar al-'arab, 2<sup>nde</sup> éd., s.d., p. 107-8 ; tr. fr. par G. W. Anawati, dans *Mélanges de l'Institut dominicain d'études orientales*, XIII/1977, p. 326-7.

<sup>95</sup> Sans entrer en détail, voir H. A. WOLFSON, « The Classification of the Sciences... », p. 536-45 ; *id.*, « Note on Maimonides Classification of the Sciences », *ibid.*, p. 551-60 ; L. STRAUSS, « Maimonides' Statement on Political Science », *What is Political Philosophy?* (1959), Chicago et Londres, Chicago University Press, 1988<sup>2</sup>, p. 160-2 ; J. L. KRAEMER, « Maimonides and the Philosophic Sciences in His *Treatise on the Art of Logic* », *Perspectives on Maimonides*, p. 90-101.

<sup>96</sup> L'expression « la démarche pour l'(sc. la félicité) atteindre (*al-sa'y fī taḥṣīl-hā*) » (*Logique*, XIV, p. 33, 5 ar.), représente une allusion explicite au titre de l'ouvrage farabien *l'Accession à la félicité* (*Taḥṣīl al-sa'āda*). Mentionnons que, contrairement à nos philosophes, Avicenne assigne la poursuite du bonheur à l'éthique, en distinguant nettement entre les finalités de la philosophie théorique et celles de la philosophie pratique : « le but de la (division) théorique est le vrai, le but de la (division) pratique est le bien ». Voir *Divisions...*, p. 105/325 ; p. 107/326 (c'est l'éthique qui apprend à

- l'homme comment doivent être ses mœurs et actions afin qu'il puisse rendre heureuses sa vie présente, ainsi que sa vie dernière).
- 97 Rappelons en passant la multiplicité des significations de ce calque du grec. Comme seul exemple, voir AVICENNE, *Divisions...*, p. 108/326-7, où le mot *nāmūs* est considéré être l'équivalent de *sunna*, du modèle ferme et stable (*al-miṭāl al-qā'im al-ṭābit*), voire de la révélation (*nuzūl al-wahī*), ou de l'ange de la révélation. Cette riche palette de significations est attestée ailleurs, voir *El*, VII, s.v. « *Nāmūs* », p. 953-5 (M. PLESSNER).
- 98 *Guide*, II, 39, p. 268-70/301-6, résumé ici. *Haḡayān* représente un terme technique chez Maïmonide. Voir S. STROUMSA, *Maimonides in His World...*, p. 138-52, avec des riches exemples. Pour quelques-unes des occurrences, voir *Traité d'éthique* (« *Huit chapitres* »), VIII, tr. fr. par R. Brague, Paris, Desclée de Brouwer, 2001, p. 27/103 (sur l'astrologie) ; *Guide*, I, Introd., p. 9/22 (sur les excès de l'interprétation allégorique) ; II, 25, p. 229/197 (sur les excès des batinites) ; III, 12, p. 318/67 (sur Razi) ; III, 26, p. 370/209 (sur les détails des commandements) ; III, 29, p. 379/237, et 380/239 (les Sabiens, Casdéens et Chaldéens), etc.
- 99 *EN*, I, 1097b12 ; identique au texte arabe. Voir *EN<sub>ar</sub>* : *li-anna al-insāna madanī bi-l-ṭab'* (p. 133).
- 100 *Guide*, II, 40, p. 308/270 : ... *al-šaṭī'a wa-in lam takun ṭabī'iyatan fa-la-hā madḡal fī al-amr al-ṭabī'ī*. Sur cet extrait, voir R. BRAGUE, « La porte de la nature », dans *Maïmonide, philosophe et savant*, p. 193-208. Voir *Traité d'éthique*, IV, p. 11/61.
- 101 Sur l'opposition entre les opinions/ croyances saines, et croyances nécessaires, voir *Guide*, III, 28, surtout la fin, p. 374/216 ; Charles TOUATI, « Croyances vraies et croyances nécessaires (Platon, Averroès, philosophie juive et Spinoza) » dans *Prophètes, talmudistes, philosophes*, Paris, Cerf, 1990, p. 248-9.
- 102 *Guide*, II, 40, p. 270-2/ 306-13, que nous avons résumé très brièvement.
- 103 *Guide*, III, 27, p. 371-2/ 210-12.
- 104 Comme le suggère *Guide*, III, 54, p. 466-9/457-63, explication de la polysémie du mot *ḡokmāh*, et des quatre perfections ; avec comme parallèle, *Accession*, p. 119/13. Sur ces extraits, voir Alexander ALTMANN, « Maimonides' "Four Perfections" », *Essays in Jewish Intellectual History*, New Hanover, Hampshire et Londres, University Press of England, 1981, p. 65-75 ; D.-A. ILIEȘ, *Sur le chemin du palais*, p. 226-9.
- 105 Voir R. LERNER, article « Moses Maimonides », dans Leo Strauss et Joseph Cropsey (éd.), *History of Political Thought*, p. 231. Lerner considère néanmoins que l'affirmation de *Logique* XIV, selon laquelle le gouvernement par les *nomoi* a été remplacé par celui par les commandements divins, ne se réfère qu'à la partie des enseignements pratiques, non pas à l'ensemble des doctrines politiques, surtout en ce qui concerne les matières spéculatives (p. 239).

- <sup>106</sup> R. LERNER, « Moses Maimonides », p. 229-30; Abraham MELAMED, « Politics and the State », p. 768-771. Pour une description plus complète de la pensée politique de Maïmonide, voir R. BRAGUE, *La Loi de Dieu*, p. 237-46.
- <sup>107</sup> Comme l'a déjà remarqué Sh. PINES, « Sources philosophiques », p. 151-2.
- <sup>108</sup> Voir Ph. VALLAT, *Régime* p. XXVII- XXIX.
- <sup>109</sup> Ulrich RUDOLPH, « Reflections on al-Fārābī's *Mabādī' ārā' ahl al-madīna al-fāḍila* », dans Peter Adamson (éd.), *In the Age of al-Fārābī. Arabic Philosophy in the Fourth/Tenth Century*, Londres-Turin, The Warburg Institute-Nino Aragno Editore, 2008, p. 1-14. En outre, le texte et les commentaires de Richard Walzer à sa consistante édition et traduction de la *Cité* invitent à précaution. Voir le substantiel c.r. de Muhsin MAHDI, « Al-Fārābī's Imperfect State », dans *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 110/1990, p. 691-726.
- <sup>110</sup> *Régime*, p. 31/ 1-3, en compte six : la Cause première, les (Causes) secondes, l'Intellect Agent, l'âme, la forme, la matière.
- <sup>111</sup> *Al-mādda al-ūlā wa-l-uṣṭuqūsāt*. La matière première est aussi nommée *al-hayūlā* (ἵλη ; calque grec). *Uṣṭuqus* (στοιχεῖον ; calque grec)/*uṣṭuqūsāt*, dénote les quatre éléments (terre, eau, air feu), qui représentent la toute première différenciation de la matière première. Pour la hiérarchie des formes qui se trouvent dans le monde sublunaire, voir *Régime*, p. 38/32-3 ; la matière des corps célestes n'est matière que par homonymie (*ibid.* 41/39). Sur la signification et l'histoire de la transmission de ces deux termes grecs via le syriaque, voir M. ZONTA, *Saggio...*, article « Elemento », p. 123-4 ; article « Materia », p. 185 ; A.- M. GOICHON, *Lexique...*, entrée 15, p. 5-6 ; entrée 736, p. 413-4. Farabi discute ces deux emprunts du grec en *Lettres*, § 156, p. 159. Dans l'*Accession* on lit, à propos de cette ressemblance, que « la cité contient des similitudes (*naẓā'ir*) de ce que contient la totalité du monde » (p. 143/25).
- <sup>112</sup> *Régime*, p. 84/ 170-2. Description semblable dans *Cité*, V, 15, §6, p. 236-9.
- <sup>113</sup> *Régime*, p. 47/60 sq.
- <sup>114</sup> Voir pour toutes ces ressemblances, *Accession*, p. 142-3/24-5, *Cité*, V, 15 §§ 4-6, p. 231-9 ; *Aphorismes choisis*, § 25, p. 41-2/p. 23-4 et partiellement § 61, p. 70-1/40 ; *Religion*, p. 65/112. Pour plus d'exemples, voir R. BRAGUE, « Deux versions du microcosme. Être le monde en petit ou imiter le monde en grand », dans A. Hasnawi, A. Elamrani-Jamal, M. Aouad (éd.), *Perspectives arabes et médiévales sur la tradition scientifique et philosophique grecque...*, Leuven-Paris, Peeters et Institut du monde arabe, 1997, p.523-33.
- <sup>115</sup> *Régime*, p. 79/156, avec une référence au philosophe-roi ; *Épître de l'intellect*, p. 31/51.
- <sup>116</sup> *Régime*, 54-5/84-5.
- <sup>117</sup> *La Philosophie d'Aristote*, éd. M. Mahdi, Beyrouth, Dar Majallat Shi'r, 1961, p. 68-9 ; trad. anglaise dans *Alfarabi. Philosophy of Plato and Aristotle*, p. 79-80.

- 118 Voir *Accession*, p.187-8/46 : un philosophe théorique doit absolument s'accompagner d'un législateur parfait.
- 119 *Régime*, p. 74-5/ 139-42.
- 120 Sur ce point, voir les développements de Ph. VALLAT, « Principles of the Philosophy of the State », dans Richard C. Taylor et Luis Xavier López-Farjeat (éd.), *The Routledge Companion to Islamic Philosophy*, Routledge, 2016, p. 342-3; *École*, p. 297-346 (ch. IX). Nous résumons très brièvement, et sans entrer en détail, *Régime*, p. 85-6/175-82.
- 121 *Régime*, 85/175-7 utilise l'idée de la réflexion de la réalité intelligible dans le sensible (théorie tirée de la *République* 509e-510a et 516 a-b ; voir n. 561, p. 176). La métaphore de la réflexion (miroir, corps poli, etc.) se rencontre ailleurs chez les *falāsifa*. Sans entrer en détails, voir IBN BĀĠĠĀ, *Discours sur la conjonction de l'intellect avec l'homme (Fī ittiṣāl al-'aql bi-l-insān), La conduite de l'isolé et deux autres épîtres*, introduction, édition critique du texte arabe, traduction et commentaires par Charles Genequand, Paris, Vrin, 2010, §§ 47-8, p. 198 (« gens de la caverne ») ; *Guide*, I, Introd., p. 4/11 (le corps poli et réfléchissant) ; IBN TUFAYL, *Hayy ben Yaqdhān*, éd. et trad. fr. par Léon Gauthier, Beyrouth, Imprimerie catholique, 1936<sup>2</sup>, p. 28-9/24-5.
- 122 Distinction parallèle à celle entre 'āmma ou ġumhūr et ḥāṣṣa dans *Accession*, p. 178/ 41 sq. (voir *Régime*, p. 182, n. 576), qui se rencontre aussi chez Maïmonide.
- 123 *Accession*, p. 184-5/44.
- 124 *Metafísica*, X, [p. 443 de l'éd. du Caire]= p. 1018; *Hayy ben Yaqdhān*, p. 106/144.
- 125 *Accession*, p. 186/45 ; *Lettres*, §§ 108-110 p. 131-2, pour des développements plus amples.
- 126 *Religion*, p. 47/97-8. Voir Nelly LAHOUD, « Al-Fārābī : On Religion and Philosophy », dans *MUSJ*, 57/2004, qui fait une intéressante analogie entre le rapport logique-grammaire et philosophie-religion (p. 293-6), ainsi que Emma GANNAGÉ « Y a-t-il une pensée politique dans le *Kitāb al-ḥurūf* d'al Fārābī ? », *ibid.*, p. 253-6.
- 127 *Lettres*, § 110, p. 132. Notre extrait appartient à la section médiane du *Livre des Lettres*. Pour des résumés de cette section, voir M. MAHDI, « De la philosophie et de la religion », dans *La fondation...*, p. 281-308 et surtout l'excellent article de G. VAJDA, « Langage, philosophie, politique et religion d'après un traité récemment publié d'Abū Naṣr al-Fārābī » (1970) repris dans *Études de théologie...*, p. 247-60 (résumé §§ 115-58).
- 128 Ayant achevé ce passage, nous nous sommes rendu compte qu'Emma GANNAGÉ conçoit ces relations exactement de la même façon. Voir, *ibid.*, p. 247, discussion du même extrait.
- 129 Nous ne pouvons pas discuter ici les remarques de nature platonicienne sur les régimes imparfaits, qui se trouvent dans plusieurs ouvrages de Farabi.

- Sur ce point, voir Patricia CRONE, « Al-Fārābī's Imperfect Constitutions », *MUSJ*, 57/2004, p. 191-228.
- 130 Ce pourquoi, comme l'affirme FARABI dans une phrase célèbre : « Il ressort clairement que la notion (*ma'nā*) de philosophe (*al-faylasūf*), de prince premier (*wa-l-ra'īs al-awwal*), d'instituteur des lois (*wāḍī' al-nawāmīs*) et d'imam (*wa-l-imām*) représente une notion unique » (*Accession*, p. 190/47).
- 131 *La Philosophie d'Aristote*, p. 133/130.
- 132 Il deviendrait alors *ra'īs al-ma'mūra kulli-hā* (*Cité*, V, 15, § 11, p. 246). Sur l'étendue de la communauté vertueuse, et de l'unicité des élites quant à leur idéologie philosophique, voir P. CRONE, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2004, p. 178-9.
- 133 Ph. VALLAT, *École*, p. 345.
- 134 Ce qui ne veut nullement dire, d'une société apolitique. Sur les structures d'organisation de la diaspora juive médiévale, on consultera avec intérêt Sh. D. GOITEIN, *A Mediterranean Society. The Jewish Communities of the World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza* (1971), vol II : *The Community*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-Londres, University of California Press, 1999<sup>2</sup>.
- 135 Pour une étude détaillée de l'ensemble des cosmologies chez les philosophes juifs, voir Gad FREUDENTHAL, « Cosmology : the Heavenly Bodies », *HJPh*, p. 302-61. Nous avons mené une analyse plus complexe de nos deux passages ; voir D.-A. ILIEȘ, *Sur le chemin du palais*, p. 249-65 (ch. XIII).
- 136 Sur ces expressions bizarres (« biens », « lumières », « forces »), voir Y. Tzvi LANGERMANN, « Maimonides' Repudiation of Astrology », *Maimonidean Studies*, 2/1991, p. 148-9.
- 137 Sur ce terme, voir A.-M. GOICHON, *Lexique...*, entrée 541, p. 288-9 (à ne pas confondre avec *mufīd*). Voir e.g., AVICENNE, *Metafisica*, IX, 2, p. [390, éd. du Caire]= p. 896 ; où on trouve *mufīd li-l-ḥayrāt*, qui semble être une erreur du manuscrit, lequel aurait dû avoir *mufīd li-l-ḥayrāt* (note 97, p. 1234).
- 138 Une affirmation analogue, fortement avicennisante se trouve dans le *Guide* I, 58, p. 92/243-4.
- 139 Résumé de *Guide*, II, 11, p. 191-2/95-6, trad. légèrement modifiée.
- 140 Un traitement de la question de la prophétie chez les philosophes juifs se trouve dans l'étude de Barry S. KOGAN « Understanding Prophecy : Four Traditions », *HJPh*, p. 481-523 ; voir également Howard KREISEL, *Prophecy. The History of an Idea in Medieval Jewish Philosophy*, Dordrecht- Boston-New York, Kluwer, 2001, p. 148-315, consacrées à Maïmonide.
- 141 *Al-ḥaqq* peut également désigner l'un des noms de Dieu. Voir Daniel GIMARET, *Les noms divins en islam. Exégèse lexicographique et théologique*, Paris, Cerf, 1988, 138-42. Dans ce cas, « la science du Vrai », pourrait bien désigner la métaphysique, également appelée « science divine (*al-'ilm al-ilāhī*) ».
- 142 *Guide*, II, 37, p. 265/293, trad. modifiée.

- 143 *Guide*, I, 72 p. 127/354; Alexander ALTMANN, « The Delphic Maxim in Medieval Islam and Judaism », *Studies in Religious Philosophy and Mysticism*, Ithaca-New York, Cornell, p. 19-28.
- 144 *Guide*, II, 36, p. 260/281. À comparer avec la source farabienne : *Cité V*, 15, § 10, p. 244.
- 145 On a observé à cet égard que cette affirmation doit être comprise dans un cadre naturaliste : le « refus » de la prophétie est lié à des impédimentas d'ordre naturel. Voir *Guide*, II, 32, p. 254/262, avec les observations de B. KOGAN, *ibid.*, p. 508.
- 146 *Guide*, I, Introd., p. 7-8/18-9.
- 147 *Guide*, I, Introd., p. 2/ 6-8. Pour ces termes logiques, voir *Logique*, XIII, p. 27-8/90 ; p. 29/92 ; 28/91. Pour la possible source, voir FARABI, *Petit commentaire sur « De l'Interprétation »*, dans *Al-manṭiq 'inda al-Fārābī*, vol. I, éd. Rafiq al-'Ajam, Dar al-mashreq, 1985 avec des discussions dans A. HASNAWI, « Réflexions sur la terminologie logique de Maïmonide et son contexte farabien. Le *Guide des Perplexes* et le *Traité de logique* », p. 62-8. Pour le contexte exégétique juif, voir Frank Ephraïm TALMAGE, « Apples of Gold: The Inner Meaning of Sacred Texts in Medieval Judaism », dans *Apples of Gold in Settings of Silver. Studies in Medieval Exegesis and Polemics*, Toronto, Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1999, p. 108-150; pour un aperçu general, Howard KREISEL, « Philosophical Interpretations of the Bible », *HJPh*, p. 88-120.
- 148 *Guide*, I, 14, p. 27/64. Voir aussi *Guide*, I, Introd. p. 2/6 citation de Proverbes VIII, 4, « C'est vous, hommes que j'appelle, et ma voix s'adresse aux fils d'Adam » ; l'interprétation du fameux extrait talmudique : « La Torah a parlé la langue des fils de l'homme (*Dibbrāh Tōrāh ki-lēšōn bnē ādām*) » (TB, *Yebamoth*, 71a ; *Baba Mešī'a*, 31b), commenté dans *Guide*, I, 26, p. 37-38/ 88-90 ; I, 46, p.68/ 162 ; I, 53, p. 81/ 206, etc.
- 149 *Guide*, III, 51, p. 456/436 ; à comparer avec AVERROËS, *Discours décisif*, trad. fr. Marc Geoffroy, § 2, p. 102-5. Voir D.-A. ILIEȘ, *Sur le chemin du palais*, p. 188-92 ; R. BRAGUE, « La physique est-elle intéressante ? », *Au moyen du Moyen Âge*, p. 97-118.
- 150 Voir *Guide*, I, 54 et III, 54 (qui clôt le traité); Lawrence V. BERMAN, « The Political Interpretation of the Maxim: the Purpose of Philosophy is the Imitation of God », *Studia Islamica*, XV/1961, p. 53-61.
- 151 *Guide*, I, 15, p. 28/65.
- 152 Voir Sh. PINES, « The Limitations of Human Knowledge According to Al-Fārābī, Ibn Bāğğa and Maimonides », W.-Z. Harvey et M. Idel (éd.), *The Collected Works of Shlomo Pines V*, Jérusalem, Magnes Press, 1997, p. 404-431; A. I. SABRA, « The Andalusian Revolt against Ptolemaic Astronomy. Averroes and al-Bīṭrūjī », dans Everett Mendelsohn (éd.), *Transformation and Tradition in the Sciences. Essays in Honor of I. Bernard Cohen*, Cambridge University Press, 1984, XIV, p. 133-153; Josef STERN, *The Matter and Form*



- of *Maimonides' « Guide »*, Cambridge (Mass.)-Londres, Harvard University Press, 2013.
- 153 Voir *Lettres*, §§ 147-53, p. 153-58; L. V. BERMAN, « Maimonides, the Disciple of Alfarabi », dans Joseph A. Buijs (éd.), *Maimonides. A Collection of Critical Essays*, University of Notre Dame Press, 1988, 199-200.
- 154 Comme l'a très justement observé L. V. BERMAN, *ibid.*, p. 201-3.
- 155 Voir *Guide*, II, 25, p. 229/ 196 : « ...il n'y a pas non plus de porte du *ta'wīl* fermée devant nous » (*lā abwāb al-ta'wīl aydan masdūda fī wuḡūhi-nā*). Sur la question du *ta'wīl* dans l'œuvre de Maïmonide, voir Mordechai Z. COHEN, *Opening the Gates of Interpretation. Maimonides' Biblical Hermeneutics in Light of His Geonic-Andalusian Heritage and Muslim Milieu*, Leyde-Boston, Brill, 2011, p. 455-481.
- 156 S. STROUMSA, « Sabéens de Ḥarrān et sabéens de Maïmonide », dans *Maïmonide, philosophe et savant*, p. 335-352 ; *id.*, *Maimonides in His World*, p. 84-105.
- 157 « The Meaning of *madanī* in al-Fārābī's "Political" Philosophy », *MUSJ*, 57/ 2004, p. 259-82, qui part de la traduction de πολιτεία par *sīra* dans *EN*, 1181b 12-23=*EN<sub>ar</sub>* p. 151-3 La critique de cette perspective se trouve dans Charles GENEQUAND, « Loi morale, loi politique : Al-Fārābī et Ibn Bāḡḡa », p. 499-503.
- 158 Ch. BUTTERWORTH, « Al-Fārābī's Introductory Sections... », p. 33, 37, 40 (la « métaphysique » dans les ouvrages cosmologiques n'est qu'un set d'images rhétoriques), 38, 41 (l'approche cosmologique est consistant avec les préjugés religieux des lecteurs), p. 40 (la hiérarchie naturelle est employée dans le seul but de fonder une hiérarchie politique) ; Joshua PARENS, *Leo Strauss and the Recovery...*, p. 31-3, 45-9 (contre l'interprétation néo-platonicienne de Farabi ou Maïmonide), p. 76-9 (pas de fondement métaphysique de la politique) ; L. STRAUSS, *The City and Man*, Chicago et Londres, The University of Chicago Press, 1964, p. 20 : « In its original form political philosophy broadly understood is the core of philosophy or rather "the first philosophy" ».
- 159 Voir J. PARENS, *ibid.*, p. 53 : « I don't belabour the obvious point that the « state » [l'allemand *Staat*, une manière de traduire l'arabe *madīna* par les chercheurs germanophones de Farabi, e.g. Dieterici, qui rend *madīna fāḍila* par *Der Musterstaat*] referred to in Alfarabi's writings is often not the Islamic nation but just as often Plato's *tiny city*- which could never be confused with a "state" ».
- 160 « On Christian and Jew. *The Merchant of Venice* », Allan BLOOM avec Harry V. JAFFA, *Shakespeare's Politics* (1961), Chicago et Londres, The University of Chicago Press, 1981<sup>2</sup>, p. 30-31.
- 161 *EN*, X, 1177b31 *sq.* ; *EN<sub>ar</sub>*, p. 561 : quant aux aspirations de l'homme (*himam al-insān*), celui-ci doit viser, dans la mesure du possible, à les rendre

- immortelles ([bal] *yanbagī an yuṣayyira-hā ‘ādīmata mawtin ‘alā qadr mā yumkin*).
- 162 Régime, p. 80/162, 82/166-8 avec les commentaires de Ph. Vallat; avec des parallèles dans Cité V, 16, § 1, p. 260-1 ; § 4, p. 264-67.
- 163 Comme source, voir Ibn Bāḡḡa, *Épître de l'adieu*, dans *La conduite de l'isolé et deux autres épîtres*, introduction, édition critique du texte arabe, traduction et commentaires par Charles Genequand, Paris, Vrin, 2010, p. 117 ; *Guide*, I, 74, p. 434-5/155, ainsi que la discussion de la « mort par un baiser de Dieu » sur TB, *Baba Bathra*, 17a, à la fin du *Guide* III, 51.
- 164 Histoire, p. 687; traduit et discuté par J. L. KRAEMER, *Maimonides. The Life and World...*, p. 209; *id.*, « Maimonides' Intellectual Milieu in Cairo », p. 33.
- 165 Sans entrer en détail, voir AVERROËS, *L'Incohérence de l'incohérence (Tahāfut al-tahāfut)*, « Quatrième discussion », éd. M. Bouyges, s.j., Beyrouth 1930, p. 580-8 [non-vidī]; trad. angl. Simon Van den Bergh, Oxford, 1954, p. 359-363. Voir MAÏMONIDE, *Traité de la résurrection*, éd. Shailat, dans *Iggerot ha-Rambam*, I, p. 319-338 (judéo-arabe); tr. anglaise par Hillel G. Fradkin, dans Ralph LERNER, *Maimonides' Empire of Light*, p. 154-177; S. STROUMSA, *Maimonides in His World...*, p. 165-83; J.-L. KRAEMER, *Maimonides...*, p. 407-25. Sur les libres penseurs, voir S. STROUMSA, *Freethinkers of Medieval Islam. Ibn al-Rawāndī, Abū Bakr al-Rāzī, and Their Impact on Islamic Thought*, Brill, Leyde- Boston-Cologne, 1999.
- 166 Voir *Aphorismes choisis*, § 93, p. 95/60-1 ; Régime, p.80/158 ; *Guide*, II, 36, p. 262/ 286, avec une parallèle chez Averroès, *Averroes on Plato's « Republic »*, 2<sup>ème</sup> traité, p. 78, reprenant Rép. 496d-497a. Pour des parallèles tardo-antiques, voir Dominic J. O'MEARA, « Simplicius on the Place of the Philosopher in the City (*In Epictetum* chap. 32) », *MUSJ*, 57/ 2004, p. 89-98. Maïmonide utilise le syntagme « l'homme parfait et solitaire (*al-kāmil al-mutawahhīd*) », emprunté à Ibn Bāḡḡa. Chez ce dernier, la connotation n'est pas toujours « pessimiste », le terme pouvant être synonyme de « autonome » et « autarcique » ; voir Ch. GENEQUAND, dans *La conduite...*, p. 40-1, qui renvoie aussi à EN, X, 7, 1177a 27-b1- sur « l'homme qui se suffit le plus pleinement à lui-même (αὐταρξέστατος) » (tr. Tricot). =EN<sub>arr</sub> p. 558 (*ḡū kifāyatīn ḡiddan*), οὐ αὐτάρχεια = *kifāya*.
- 167 « What is Political Philosophy ? » dans *What Is Political Philosophy ?*, p. 40.



## MARIA IROD

Geb. 1977 in Bukarest

Doktor der Philologie an der Universität Bukarest  
Dissertation: *Dieter Schlesak zwischen Moderne und Postmoderne*

Dozentin für deutsche Literaturgeschichte an der Fakultät für Fremdsprachen  
und –literaturen der Christlichen Dimitrie-Cantemir-Universität

ÖAD-Stipendiatin an der Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz, 2002-2004  
Forschungsaufenthalt am IKGS München, März-April 2008

Teilnahme an internationalen germanistischen Tagungen und  
Übersetzerworkshops in Österreich, Deutschland und der Schweiz

Literarische Übersetzungen, Essays, Rezensionen und literaturwissenschaftliche  
Aufsätze im Bereich der rumäniendeutschen und der österreichischen  
Gegenwartsliteratur

**Buchpublikationen:**

*Dieter Schlesak zwischen Moderne und Postmoderne*, Frank & Timme Verlag,  
Berlin, 2015

*Josef Winkler – literarische Stilmittel*, Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Berlin 2018

# KIRCHENKRITIK IN ZEITEN DER RHETORIK DES POPULISMUS EINE DISKURSANALYTISCHE ANNÄHERUNG AN HANS KÜNG

## Abstract

The paper focuses on critical writings by the Catholic theologian Hans Küng, following the intertwining of the discourse strands "birth control" and "authority of the magisterium". In doing so the present paper employs a combination of interpretation methods inspired by Critical Discourse Analysis, aiming to show how discursive strategies are used to construct an opposition between the supposedly backward teachings of the Church and the own critical and progressive stance. Based on the microanalysis of the sample texts, the paper argues that Küng's approach is not free of populist rhetorical devices and topoi such as the opposition between the few and the many, the ad hominem argument, the use of collective symbols or the idea of crisis and rebirth.

**Keywords:** Hans Küng, das Zweite Vatikanische Konzil, *Humanae vitae*, Unfehlbarkeit, Empfängnisverhütung, Diskursanalyse, Populismus

Der vorliegende Beitrag nimmt sich vor, die Kommunikationsstrategien eines deutschsprachigen Theologen, der im Fahrwasser des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils die Grenzen des katholischen Diskurses in Fragen der Moraltheologie aufbrechen wollte und dessen reformatorische Versuche letztendlich zu seinem Ausschluss aus der Religionsgemeinschaft geführt haben, mit Mitteln der kritischen Diskursanalyse auf ihre Wirksamkeit hin zu untersuchen.

Der Beitrag ist Teil einer größeren Untersuchung zum Thema katholischer Reformtheologie nach dem Zweiten Vatikanum, die ihr Augenmerk auf Hans Küng, Uta Ranke-Heinemann und Eugen Drewermann richtet. Außer dem grundsätzlichen Konsens in Fragen wie Priesterzölibat, Priesterweihe für Frauen, Auflockerung der katholischen Sexualmoral etc., haben die drei Theologen noch zweierlei gemeinsam, was eine

diskursanalytische Paralleluntersuchung ihrer Werke sinnvoll macht. Ursprünglich als innerkirchliche Kritik formuliert, entwickelten sich ihre dissidenten Schriften nach den durch den Vatikan erhaltenen Sanktionen – den Theologie-Professoren Hans Küng und Uta Ranke-Heinemann wurde die kirchliche Lehrerlaubnis 1979 bzw. 1987 entzogen, der katholische Priester Eugen Drewermann erhielt 1992 Berufs- und Lehrverbot – zu Beststellern christlicher Literatur im deutschsprachigen Raum. Mit diesem Publikumserfolg, der sich auch in einer starken Medienpräsenz der drei Theologen niederschlug, hängt ein zweiter wichtiger Aspekt zusammen. Aus der Orientierung an eine breite Öffentlichkeit ergibt sich eine hybride Textgattung zwischen Sachbuch und Fachliteratur, die die disziplinären Grenzen der Theologie sprengt ohne den wissenschaftlich-theologischen Anspruch aufzugeben.

An dieser Stelle soll die etwas gewagte These formuliert werden, von der ich in der folgenden Untersuchung ausgehe und die sich am Ende entweder bestätigt oder nur mit Einschränkungen als haltbar erweisen wird. In den bei einem breiten, aufgeklärt-humanistischen, jedoch christlich orientierten Publikum durchaus erfolgreichen Texten der drei Reformtheologen lassen sich Argumentationsmuster und rhetorische Mittel des Populismus erkennen. Zugegebenermaßen ist das Phänomen des Populismus schwer zu erfassen und der Versuch einer Definition kann nur interdisziplinär unter Zuhilfenahme politik- sowie sprachwissenschaftlicher Ansätze erfolgen. Im aktuellen Geschehen wird der Populismus im politischen Kontext betrachtet und hauptsächlich mit dem Rechts- bzw. Linksradikalismus in Verbindung gebracht. Daher haftet dem Wort eine negative Konnotation an. Tatsache ist, dass dieser eher vage, aber „schillernde Begriff“<sup>1</sup> in den heutigen Medien fast inflationär gebraucht und oft auch „populistisch“ als Kampfansage gegen den politischen Gegner eingesetzt wird<sup>2</sup>. Die wissenschaftlichen Bemühungen um eine Begriffsbestimmung hingegen führen zu divergierenden Ergebnissen. Während einige Forscher den Populismus eher über Inhalte definieren und ihn als eine Ideologie verstehen, die ein idealisiertes, näher unbestimmbares „Volk“ einer arroganten und eigennützigen Elite gegenüberstellt, betrachten andere den Populismus hauptsächlich als diskursive Praxis, die auf Mobilisierung des Publikums bzw. auf Macht- und Popularitätserwerb abzielt. Egal wie sich der populistische Diskurs im politischen Spektrum positioniert und ob er sich etwa im konservativen und ethnozentrischen Traditionalismus oder im liberalen und globalisierten Weltbild verankert sieht, lässt sich doch ein „ideologisches Minimum“<sup>3</sup> dieses Phänomens identifizieren. Karin

Priester sieht dieses ideologische Minimum auf der Achse von „Volk“ und „Elite“ und definiert es als Anti-Establishment-Orientierung (d.h. „Anti-Elitarismus, Anti-Intellektualismus, Antipolitik, Institutionenfeindlichkeit sowie Moralisierung, Polarisierung und Personalisierung der Politik“<sup>4</sup>). Decker und Lewandowsky (2009) verorten die wissenschaftliche Analyse von Populismus auf drei Bedeutungsebenen: „Die erste Bedeutungsebene fragt danach, wie der Populismus entsteht, welche gesellschaftlichen Ursachen ihm zugrunde liegen. Die zweite Bedeutungsebene bezieht sich auf die ideologischen Inhalte des Populismus und die dritte Bedeutungsebene auf dessen formale und stilistische Merkmale.“<sup>5</sup> Für die vorliegende Untersuchung ist vor allem die dritte Bedeutungsebene interessant. Hier wird also die Ansicht vertreten, dass der Populismus ein eher über sprachliche Mittel und Kommunikationstechniken als über Inhalte definierbares Phänomen ist. Allerdings muss eingeräumt werden, dass Ideologie und Rhetorik oft in engem Zusammenhang stehen<sup>6</sup>. Auch wenn Hans Küng, Uta Ranke-Heinemann und Eugen Drewermann sich um differenzierte Stellungnahmen zu moraltheologischen Fragen bemühen, die typisch populistische Komplexitätsreduktion wenigstens theoretisch vermeiden und ein fortschrittliches Gedankengut vertreten, das von der üblichen rechtspopulistischen Hetze und den Exklusionskampagnen gegen verschiedene Minderheiten meilenweit entfernt ist, lassen sich doch auch bei ihnen formale Merkmale des Populismus erkennen, woraus man schließen kann, dass nicht einmal die besten Absichten vor den Versuchungen der populistischen Rhetorik schützen.

Eine vergleichende Untersuchung der drei Autoren würde jedoch den Rahmen der vorliegenden Arbeit sprengen. Daher werde ich im Folgenden nur auf die Sprache von Hans Küng näher eingehen. Über diesen sehr produktiven Autor ist bereits relativ viel geschrieben worden. Seine Positionen sind entweder positiv rezipiert oder kritisiert worden, allerdings immer aus einer theologischen Perspektive. Es liegt m.E. noch keine Auseinandersetzung mit seiner diskursiven Praxis vor.

Mit der diskursanalytischen Herangehensweise bezwecke ich eine genauere Untersuchung der sprachlichen Verfertigung von Wahrheit im Kontext der Herausforderungen, mit denen das theologische Denken durch das postmoderne Paradigma konfrontiert wird. Angesichts der spätmodernen Auflösung aller bestehenden Grundlagen des Sinn-Verstehens und der festen metaphysischen Kategorien bedeutet die Öffnung des theologischen Denkens gegenüber dem erkenntnistheoretischen Relativismus eine große Herausforderung. In der römisch-katholischen

Theologie der Gegenwart sind die Werke von Hans Küng, genauso wie die von Uta Ranke-Heinemann und Eugen Drewermann, Fallbeispiele für eine Gratwanderung zwischen dem Abbau der hermeneutischen Hegemonie der Kirche und der selbständigen Suche nach Verbindlichem. Angesichts des heutigen Perspektivismus, d.h. der Tatsache, dass das menschliche Verstehen nicht mehr dazu gezwungen wird, einen einzigen, alle anderen ausschließenden metaphysischen Standpunkt einzunehmen, gewinnt das Element der Wahl an Bedeutung. Damit hängt eng die Notwendigkeit zusammen, sich auf die Lebensbedingungen der Menschen einzulassen, die man erreichen will. Rhetorische Überredungsstrategien zur Übernahme bestimmter religiöser Überzeugungen und Werte rücken in den Vordergrund und überschatten die Dogmen, deren Wahrheitsanspruch durch eine transzendente Autorität legitimiert wird. Auf dem postmodernen Weltanschauungsmarkt treten katholische Sachbücher, zumal sie die spirituelle Dimension der Einzelnen in ihrer Vielfalt ansprechen und das traditionelle christliche Symbolsystem mit den impliziten Machtansprüchen in Frage stellen, in Konkurrenz zum mystisch-spiritualistischen Angebot der Esoterik und müssen sich durch eine rhetorisch geschickte Konstruktion des eigenen Profils durchsetzen.

Der Entstehungszusammenhang der theologischen Werke von Hans Küng ist für die hier unternommene Analyse und die dabei angewandte Methodik von großer Tragweite. Erstens wird sein Denken durch den Geist des Zweiten Vatikanums geprägt und das Erscheinen seiner Texte durch die nachkonziliare Situation ermöglicht. Das Vatikanum II ist das erste Konzil, das keine Rechtstexte verabschiedet und die dogmatische Rechtssprache mit einer Pastoralssprache ersetzt. Somit fängt das Vatikanum II die überlieferte Lehre der Kirche aufzubrechen. Da in den Dokumenten des Konzils die Grenzen des katholischen Diskurses nicht mehr klar definiert werden, gedeiht infolgedessen ein reformatorischer Impetus, der die theologische Kreativität fördert. Zweitens ist der größere kulturgeschichtliche Rahmen zu berücksichtigen, in dem die hier zu untersuchenden Texten entstanden sind. Sie werden nach dem sogenannten *Linguistic Turn* geschrieben, der Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts eine Akzentverlagerung von genuinen Sachfragen hin auf Bedeutungsfragen bewirkt und die Sprache zum zentralen Gegenstand der Philosophie gemacht hat. Mit der Annahme, dass Denken unabhängig von Sprache unmöglich sei, und mit der Skepsis, dass Sprache das Denken restlos ausdrücken und die Wirklichkeit angemessen erfassen könne, hat diese sprachbezogene Wende einen Paradigmenwechsel auf dem



Gebiet der Kultur und der Geisteswissenschaften in die Wege geleitet. In diesem Kontext einer bewusst wahrgenommenen Spannung zwischen der abgeschlossenen Offenbarung und dem wandelbaren Medium Sprache ist auch das theologische Denken von Hans Küng angesiedelt.

Die grundlegende Problematik der Sprache wird bereits in seiner kirchenkritischen Schrift *Unfehlbar? Eine Anfrage* aus dem Jahre 1970 reflektiert. In einem Abschnitt, in dem er den ihm oft unterstellten Anspruch auf eine *ex-cathedra*-Argumentation dementiert, weist Küng auf die kontextuelle Prägung der Glaubenssätze hin: „Auch Glaubenssätze sind ja nie unmittelbares Gotteswort, sondern bestenfalls in und durch Menschenwort bezeugtes und vermitteltes Gotteswort: vernehmbar, tradierbar als Menschensätze.“<sup>7</sup> Sie unterliegen folglich denselben Gesetzmäßigkeiten wie alle anderen menschlichen Aussagen. Küng signalisiert en passant das Eingebettet-Sein seiner Argumentation in einem Denkmuster, das seinen Ursprung in der sprachkritischen Wendung um 1900 hat, unterlässt jedoch jegliche eingehende Auseinandersetzung mit sprachphilosophischen Fragen, um vom Thema der Unfehlbarkeit nicht abzuweichen. Für seine Herangehensweise an theologische Streitfragen ist jedoch wichtig festzuhalten, dass er sich der „Problematik, die Sätzen überhaupt anhaftet“<sup>8</sup> durchaus bewusst ist und sie in fünf Punkten zusammenfasst: 1. „Sätze bleiben hinter der Wirklichkeit zurück.“<sup>9</sup>. Damit ist die Kluft zwischen der Intention des Sprechers und dem sprachlichen Ausdruck gemeint. 2. „Sätze sind mißdeutbar.“<sup>10</sup>, d.h. die kulturell tradierten Konnotationen sowie die subjektiv bedingten und affektiv beladenen Assoziationen der Wörter eröffnen einen potentiell unendlichen Raum verschiedener Auslegungsmöglichkeiten und können im Falle eines Dialogs trotz des guten Willens der Gesprächsteilnehmer zu Missverständnissen führen. 3. „Sätze sind nur bedingt übersetzbar.“<sup>11</sup> – Diese Feststellung wird im theologischen Kontext ausdrücklich auf die Bibelübersetzung und, katholisch gesehen, auf die Übersetzung der lateinischen Liturgie in die Volkssprache bezogen. 4. „Sätze sind in Bewegung.“<sup>12</sup> Die Dynamik der Sprache hat mit der Geschichte der Menschheit zu tun, daher sind Äußerungen immer zeitbedingt und kontextgebunden. 5. „Sätze sind ideologiefähig.“<sup>13</sup> Da sie missdeutbar ist, kann die Sprache auch als Instrument der Manipulation im Machtkampf eingesetzt werden.

Küng räumt jedoch ein, dass er mit seinen Anmerkungen zur Vieldeutigkeit des sprachlichen Ausdrucks keineswegs die Unterscheidung zwischen falschen und wahren Sätzen bestreiten bzw. die Unmöglichkeit

der Verständigung behaupten will. Die Aufgabe einer zeitgemäßen, sprachbewussten Theologie sieht er darin, „ernsthaft im Irrtum des Anderen die Wahrheit und in der eigenen Wahrheit den möglichen Irrtum zu sehen. Auf diese Weise geschähe in der Abkehr vom vermeintlichen Irrtum die Begegnung in der gemeinten Wahrheit.“<sup>14</sup>

Küngs theologische Schriften sind also in der Problematik der Sprache tief verankert und stellen sich auf eine eigene Art und Weise die Grundfrage: Wie lässt sich die ewige, verbindliche Wahrheit für den modernen Menschen verständlich machen?

Hauptanliegen des vorliegenden Beitrags ist es demnach, die sprachliche Konstruktion eines alternativen Diskurses zu Streitfragen wie der katholischen Eheauffassung, der Geburtenregelung und der Unfehlbarkeit des Lehramtes in repräsentativen Texten von Hans Küng unter die Lupe zu nehmen. Die Tatsache, dass diese Streitfragen, wie Küng selber betont, zwar keine „zentralen theologischen Fragen der christlichen Verkündigung“<sup>15</sup>, jedoch für die Glaubwürdigkeit der katholischen Kirche in der heutigen säkularisierten Welt äußerst wichtig sind, ist für die vorliegende Untersuchung besonders relevant. Da diese „neuralgischen Punkte“<sup>16</sup>, an denen das katholische Lehramt aus der Sicht der Reformtheologen versagt, in einem Zwischenbereich von Theologie, Ethik und Politik angesiedelt sind, bietet sich die Diskursanalyse als geeignetes Instrument zur Aufdeckung der Argumentationsstrukturen der untersuchten Texte. Das politisch-polemische Moment sowie die jeweiligen sprachlichen Realisierungsmittel stehen dabei im Mittelpunkt. Um die Grenzen des als offiziell erachteten katholischen Diskurses zu den oben genannten Streitfragen nachzuzeichnen und dadurch die Grenzüberschreitungen Küngs sichtbar zu machen, sollen hier kirchlich anerkannte Dokumente bzw. offizielle Verlautbarungen des Vatikans als Kontrastfolie herangezogen werden. Für das Verstehen der Situation vor dem Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzil und der nachwirkenden konservativen Strömungen, die sich auf fest umrissene, klar definierte Lehrsätze stützen, ist ein neuscholastisches Dogmatikhandbuch unentbehrlich. Hier wird auf Ludwig Ott's *Grundriss der katholischen Dogmatik*<sup>17</sup> Bezug genommen. Für die Zwecke der vorliegenden Untersuchung werden hier hauptsächlich die Ausführungen zur christlichen Anthropologie, zum päpstlichen Lehrprimat und zum Sakrament der Ehe in Betracht gezogen.

Um die diskursiven Grenzen der Sagbarkeit nach dem Zweiten Vatikanum genauer zu erkunden, sollte man im Kontext der Reaktionen auf die Enzyklika *Humanae vitae* Hans Küngs Position mit der eines

anderen deutschen Moraltheologen, dem Tübinger Professor Alfons Auer, vergleichen, der in seinem Buch *Autonome Moral und christlicher Glaube* (1971) auch für eine Auflockerung der katholischen Moralthologie im Sinne einer an die Bedürfnisse des Einzelnen angepassten Ethik plädierte, jedoch ohne den offiziellen Diskursrahmen der katholischen Kirche zu verlassen. Doch müssen wir diese wichtige aber viel zu umfangreiche Frage künftiger Diskussion überlassen.

Bevor die eigentliche Textanalyse vorgenommen werden kann, sollen noch kurz der geschichtliche Hintergrund der Textmaterialien dargelegt und die angewandte Methodik erklärt werden. Vonseiten der konservativen Kritiker wird dem Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzil der Mangel an *voluntas definiendi* vorgeworfen, d.h. die Zurückhaltung, mit lehramtlicher Autorität dogmatische Wahrheiten durchzusetzen. Das Erbe des Konzils, das bis in die Gegenwart hinein wirkt und den Höhepunkt im Pontifikat von Papst Franziskus erreicht, sei die „Pastoralität“, d.h. der Vorrang der Glaubenspraxis vor der Glaubenslehre. Der traditionalistische Historiker Roberto de Mattei sieht die heutige Krise der katholischen Kirche im Einfluss der säkularisierten Weltanschauung auf die Theologie, der zu einer Loslösung der religiösen Erfahrung von „jeder objektiven *regula fidei*“<sup>18</sup> führt. Dazu zitiert er den Theologen Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, der diese Entwicklung auf die progressive *Nouvelle theologie* zurückführt und die Situation wie folgt zusammenfasst:

Die Wahrheit ist nicht mehr die Übereinstimmung des Urteils mit der extramentalen (objektiven) Realität und ihren unveränderlichen Gesetzen, sondern die Übereinstimmung des Urteils mit den Notwendigkeiten des Handelns und des menschlichen Lebens, das sich ständig wandelt. Die Philosophie des Seins oder der Ontologie wird ersetzt durch die Philosophie des Handelns, die die Wahrheit nicht mehr in Funktion des Seins, sondern des Handelns definiert.<sup>19</sup>

Als relevante Dokumente des Konzils, in denen die neue Pastoralprache besonders deutlich wird, sich mit der Öffnung gegenüber der modernen Welt verbindet und die Versöhnung zwischen konservativen und fortschrittlichen Meinungen anstrebt, werden im Rahmen der vorliegenden Untersuchung die Kirchenkonstitution *Lumen gentium* und die pastorale Konstitution des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils *Gaudium et spes. Über die Kirche in der Welt von heute* berücksichtigt.

Aber der grundlegende lehramtliche Text, der aus progressiver Sicht das Versagen der innerkatholischen Reformbestrebungen in der nachkonziliaren Zeit dokumentiert, ist die Enzyklika *Humanae vitae*, die von Papst Paul VI. im Jahre 1968 veröffentlicht wurde. Dieser Text, der die naturrechtlich begründete Lehre, dass „jeder eheliche Akt von sich aus auf die Erzeugung menschlichen Lebens hingeordnet bleiben“<sup>20</sup> müsse bestätigt, wird zum Streitpunkt im nachkonziliaren theologischen Diskurs. Ausgehend von diesem Text entfaltet Hans Küng seine Kritik an der päpstlichen Unfehlbarkeit, die schlussendlich zum Entzug seiner Lehrerlaubnis führt, dieselbe heftig umstrittene Enzyklika bietet Uta Ranke-Heinemann Anlass zur satirischen Dekonstruktion der katholischen Sexuallehre und sie wird auch von Eugen Drewermann wiederholt als Beispiel einer lebensfremden Unterdrückung erotischer Liebe zitiert.

Um den Gegenstand des vorliegenden Beitrags genau zu bestimmen bzw. thematisch einzugrenzen, werden im Folgenden Textauszüge diskutiert, die Aussagen über die Grundproblematik der Enzyklika – Geburtenregelung, Empfängnisverhütung, Begriff der Ehe, Fortpflanzung und Sexualität – und die damit verbundene Frage der lehramtlichen Autorität enthalten. Die Untersuchung steht methodisch in der Tradition einer an Michel Foucault orientierten Kritischen Diskursanalyse (KDA), wie sie etwa im Paderborner Projekt „Die Ordnung der Geschlechterverhältnisse“ durch Siegfried Jäger und sein Team (1997)<sup>21</sup> oder in der Studie zur diskursiven Verfertigung österreichischer Identität (Wodak et al, 1998)<sup>22</sup> entwickelt wurde.

Im Verständnis der KDA spielt der Foucaultsche Zusammenhang von Wissen und Macht eine zentrale Rolle. Der Diskurs wird von Foucault als sozial und kulturell bedingter Raum definiert, in dem überlieferte Wissensvorräte weitergegeben bzw. neu kombiniert werden, was zur Transformation oder auch zur Entstehung von Forschungsobjekten, Verständnisweisen und Erkenntniszielen führt. Durch Diskurse wird, so Foucault und die an ihn anknüpfende KDA, erst Wirklichkeit konstruiert und folglich auch Macht ausgeübt. Durch stilistisch-rhetorische Mittel und im Rückgriff auf tradierte Begrifflichkeiten und Kollektivsymbole kann der Bereich des Sag- und Machbaren ausgeweitet oder eingengt sowie die Annahme von Wahrheiten herbeigeführt werden. Im Unterschied zu autorzentrierten Textanalysen, die an Autorintentionen und/oder deren hintergründigen Motivationen interessiert sind, befasst sich die Diskursanalyse eher mit den Gesetzmäßigkeiten der diskursiven Produktion von Wissen. Die ausgewählten Texte von Hans Küng werden

als ein an der Schnittstelle von Theologie, Politik, Philosophie und verschiedenen anderen Wissensbereichen entstandener Diskurs betrachtet, der sich als verbindliches, christlich-existenzielles Ethos präsentiert und die Bedeutungen der im Zusammenhang mit der Enzyklika *Humanae vitae* verwendeten Begriffe prozesshaft zu verändern trachtet. Im Gegensatz zu einer linguistisch orientierten Diskursanalyse, die rein deskriptiv die grammatikalischen und pragmatischen Merkmale des Sprachgebrauchs auf ihre kohärenzstiftende Funktion hin prüft, hat die KDA auch eine dezidiert politische Dimension, d.h. sie setzt sich zum Ziel, die „ideologisch durchwirkten und oft opaken Formen der Machtausübung, der politischen Kontrolle und Manipulation [...] im Sprachgebrauch sichtbar zu machen.“<sup>23</sup>

Mit dieser Methodologie sind auch erhebliche Schwierigkeiten verbunden. Erstens fasst Foucault selbst sein Werk und somit das sehr komplexe theoretisch-methodische Instrumentarium der Diskursanalyse als eine „Werkzeugkiste“ auf, ohne konkrete Anweisungen zur Anwendung der Werkzeuge zu bieten. Die deutsche Rezeption des Foucaultschen Diskursbegriffes hat vor allem mit den Literaturwissenschaftlern Jürgen Link und Siegfried Jäger wichtige erschließungspraktische Methoden entwickelt, die den Umgang mit dem Materialkorpus erleichtern. Die Wiener Diskursanalyse, die von Ruth Wodak und ihrem Team vertreten wird, verpflichtet sich einem Methodenpluralismus und schlägt eine triadische Herangehensweise an Texte vor, die drei „ineinander verwobene Analysedimensionen“<sup>24</sup> – Inhalte, Strategien und Realisierungsmittel / Realisierungsformen – enthält. Für die vorliegende Untersuchung werden Analyseschritte und methodische Zugänge aus den Arbeiten der oben genannten Forscher kombiniert und an die Fragestellung bzw. an die Besonderheiten des Analysematerials angepasst.

Über die Problematik der Anwendung verschiedener Methodikansätze, die z.T. miteinander unvereinbaren Theorietraditionen entstammen, reflektiert Bettina Bock von Wülfigen in ihrer diskursanalytischen Studie zur Darstellung von Reproduktionstechniken im biomedizinischen Diskurs um die Jahrtausendwende.<sup>25</sup> Im Falle der vorliegenden Untersuchung treffen die stark an Foucault angelehnten poststrukturalistischen und antisubjektivistischen Ansätze Siegfried Jägers und Jürgen Links auf Methoden der Wiener Diskursanalyse, die sich von einer extremen, vom „Tod des Subjekts“ ausgehenden postmodernen Tradition, die „den Diskurs zum personifizierten Akteur erhebt, der die SprecherInnen einer Sprachgemeinschaft gewissermaßen spricht, so daß sie für das, was sie

gleichsam als Marionetten des Diskurses äußern, nicht zur Verantwortung gezogen werden können“, ausdrücklich distanzieren<sup>26</sup>. Hinzu kommen noch Elemente der rhetorischen und stilistischen Textanalyse sowie der Metaphernanalyse nach Harald Weinrich, die zwar entgegen Foucaultscher Vorstellungen eine „objektive“ Sprache (*langue*) von einem „subjektiven“ Sprechakt (*parole*) unterscheiden, aber für die Feinanalyse repräsentativer Diskursfragmente wertvolle Instrumente bieten. Genauso wie Bock von Wülfigen in ihrer Studie vorgeht, werden auch für die vorliegende Arbeit methodische Ansätze „aus ihrem Herkunftskontext diskursanalytisch zweckentfremdet und [...] als Werkzeuge der Analyse von diskursiven Techniken neu gedeutet.“<sup>27</sup>

Ein weiteres Problem betrifft die Anwendung diskursanalytischer Verfahren auf religiöse Texte. Obwohl, wie bereits angedeutet, der hier untersuchte Textkorpus zwischen Theologie, Ethik und Politik zu verorten ist, gehören die Ausrichtung auf die Transzendenz und der Anspruch auf allgemeinverbindliche Wahrheiten eindeutig in den Bereich des Religiösen. Die Anwendung einer Methodik, die ihre Wurzeln im postmodernen Konstruktivismus hat, kann also in diesem Fall problematisch sein, zumal sie den realistisch-metaphysischen Voraussetzungen der Religion widerspricht. Jedoch sehe ich darin zwei praktische Vorteile, die mich trotz diesem Widerspruch eine diskursanalytische Auswertung der Texte von Hans Küng bevorzugen lassen. Abgesehen von der oben erwähnten polemisch-politischen Dimension dieser Texte selbst und deren Verzahnung mit anderen Diskursformationen wie der offiziell katholischen, der bioethischen, der philosophischen etc., gibt es auch ein ausgeprägtes selbstreflexives Moment, das die diskursanalytische Herangehensweise zu einem ausdifferenzierten methodischen Vorgehen macht. Wer sich vornimmt, die ideologischen und strategischen Elemente eines Textes sowie seine Eingebundenheit in ein kulturell-diskursives Gefüge aufzudecken, kann keinen unabhängigen Beobachterstatus mehr genießen. D.h. die Diskursanalysierenden bewegen sich nie in einem diskursfreien Raum, sondern befinden sich in einer eigenen Macht-Wissen-Konstellation, die sie mitreflektieren müssen. Daraus ergeben sich epistemologische Schwierigkeiten, aber daraus erwächst m.E. auch der Hauptvorteil einer nachpositivistischen Forschung: die geschärfte Aufmerksamkeit für die Begrenztheit und die kulturell bedingten Konstruktionen im eigenen und im fremden Wissen sowie die Zunahme an methodologischer Komplexität, die verschiedene Ansätze integriert, auf begriffliche Genauigkeit achtet und zugleich ihre Erkenntnisse als kontextuell und unvollständig begreift.

Hier treffen also der konstruktivistische Ansatz der Diskurstheorie und die Tradition der negativen Theologie aufeinander. Während der erstere nur vorläufige allgemeine Wahrheiten anerkennt, die diskursiv verhandelt werden und von einem je eigenen kulturellen Kontext abhängig sind, geht die letztere davon aus, dass die Wirklichkeit Gottes vom Menschen nie voll erfasst werden kann.

Ein zweiter Vorteil, den ich mit einer diskursanalytischen Perspektive auf theologische Texte verbinde, ist die Möglichkeit einer sprachbezogenen Untersuchung, die bei einem festen Ausgangspunkt in der traditionellen Disziplin Philologie interdisziplinäre Ansätze integriert und relevante Ergebnisse für andere Fachbereiche sowie für aktuelle Debatten um religiös motivierte Stellungnahmen zu bioethischen Fragen liefern kann. Mir ist bewusst, dass ich damit oft als Fachfremde in die Theologie bzw. Politikwissenschaft abschweifen muss, jedoch steht die punktuelle Analyse verschiedener sprachlicher Instrumente zur Konstruktion von Wahrheit in verschiedenen Kontexten stets im Vordergrund meiner Arbeit.

Wie oben erwähnt kommen im vorliegenden Beitrag unterschiedliche Analyseinstrumente zum Einsatz, die alle dem nicht einheitlichen Paradigma der Diskursanalyse angehören. An dieser Stelle ist es angebracht, eine kurze Präzisierung der hier angewendeten Begriffe und Verfahren darzulegen. In der Vorgehensweise folge ich im Großen und Ganzen den von Siegfried Jäger vorgeschlagenen und von Bettina Bock von Wülfigen abgeänderten Analyseschritten. Zum ersten Schritt der Makroanalyse gehört die Bestimmung des „nicht-sprachlichen“ bzw. des „sprachlichen“ Kontextes des Textkorpus<sup>28</sup>. Als nicht-sprachlicher Kontext sind sowohl eine kurze Darstellung des geschichtlichen Hintergrunds des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils bzw. des Entstehungszusammenhangs der Enzyklika *Humanae vitae* als auch ein paar relevante biografische Daten über Hans Küng zu betrachten. Hier wird ebenfalls mit Hilfe des oben genannten Lehrbuchs der Dogmatik und der zwei Konzilkonstitutionen *Lumen gentium* und *Gaudium et spes* der offiziell katholische Diskursrahmen in einer Zeit des beschleunigten Wertewandels der 1960er und 1970er Jahre dargestellt. Im Unterschied zu Jäger und Bock von Wülfigen, die ausschließlich journalistische Texte analysieren, oder auch zu Wodak und ihrem Team, die sich mit politischen Reden, Werbeplakaten und Interviews befassen, sind die von mir untersuchten Texte in Buchform erschienen. Daher ist bei der Analyse des sprachlichen Kontextes eine Charakterisierung der Verlage erforderlich, die diese Bücher veröffentlicht haben. Damit wird innerhalb der Diskursebene

(Medien) der Sektor christliches Sachbuch identifiziert, der im konkreten Fall der hier zu analysierenden Texte Elemente des Spezialdiskurses 'katholische Theologie', der christlichen Erbauungsliteratur und der Geschichtsschreibung integriert und als außertextliches Kennzeichen die hohe Auflage und die Position auf Bestseller-Listen aufweist. Bei diesem Schritt können schon Aussagen über die Diskursposition, d.h. den „ideologischen Ort, von dem aus jemand oder auch eine Zeitung oder Zeitschrift [oder ein Verlag, Anm. M.I.] am Diskurs teilnimmt“<sup>29</sup>, gemacht werden, die im weiteren Verlauf der Analyse bestätigt werden müssen. Von dem, was Jäger als „Analyse der Makrostruktur des Textes“ bezeichnet, wird in die Makroanalyse nur die Bestimmung der Textsorte übernommen, die in unserem konkreten Fall Probleme aufwirft, weil sie hybrid ist und von einer traditionellen Kategorisierung abweicht. Von der Wahl der Textsorte und ihrer Besonderheiten kann des weiteren auf eine bestimmte Intentionalität des Autors geschlossen werden.

Die darauf folgende Mikroanalyse bietet einen Überblick auf die Verortung der Diskursstränge Geburtenregelung bzw. Unfehlbarkeit im analysierten Textkorpus, mit Berücksichtigung der Einbettung dieser Diskursstränge in ihrer diskursiven Umgebung sowie ihrer Verschränkung miteinander. Darüber hinaus werden Unterthemen (Abtreibung, künstliche Verhütung vs. Kalendermethode) erfasst und Oberthemen (Sexualität und Fortpflanzung, Zweck der Ehe, Autonomie des Einzelnen, Situationsethik, moraltheologische Normenbegründung) zugeordnet. Der Begriff „Diskursstrang“ verwende ich in enger Anlehnung an Siegfried Jägers Definition:

Diskursstränge sind thematisch einheitliche Diskursverläufe, die aus einer Vielzahl von Elementen, sogenannten Diskursfragmenten, zusammengesetzt sind. Diskursfragmente sind am ehesten mit Foucaults Aussagen in der „Archäologie des Wissens“ zu vergleichen. Sie sind häufig oder fast immer mit anderen thematischen Elementen verwoben, also solchen, die nicht direkt zum Thema gehören, also aus der Perspektive einer bestimmten Fragestellung zwar nicht uninteressant sein mögen, weil solche Hinweise auf Verschränkungen mit anderen Diskurssträngen andeuten können; durch diese Verschränkungen können besondere Effekte erzielt werden.<sup>30</sup>

Die Makro- und die Mikroanalyse lassen sich der Rubrik „Inhalt“ in Wodaks Klassifizierung der Analysedimensionen zuordnen. Im



analysierten Material kommen, wie gesagt, die Hauptdiskursstränge „Geburtenregelung“ und „Autorität des Lehramtes“ immer miteinander oder mit anderen relevanten Themen verschränkt vor. Daher wird in der eigentlichen Textanalyse immer die für den jeweiligen Text relevante Verschränkung in den Vordergrund gerückt und mit den sprachlichen Besonderheiten des Textes in Verbindung gesetzt.

In der Feinanalyse einiger ausgewählter Textauszüge wird exemplarisch gezeigt, mit welchen sprachlichen Mitteln der Text seine Botschaft zu vermitteln versucht. Dabei wird mit Ruth Wodak<sup>31</sup> in Strategien und Realisierungsformen unterschieden. In Anlehnung an Bourdieu versteht die Wiener KDA die Strategien als „eine Art mehr oder weniger automatisierter oder aber bewußter, auf den verschiedenen Ebenen der mentalen Organisation angesiedelter, mehr oder weniger elaborierter Handlungspläne.“<sup>32</sup> In den Dienst der sogenannten „Makrostrategien“, die ihren Funktionen entsprechend konstruktiv, bewahrend bzw. rechtfertigend, transformatorisch oder demontierend sein können<sup>33</sup>, treten verschiedene andere Strategien, von denen Wodak die „Assimilationsstrategien“ (=„Strategien der Betonung oder Präsupposition von Gleichheit“) und die „Dissimilationsstrategien“ (=„Strategien der Betonung oder Präsupposition von Differenz“) als die häufigsten und wichtigsten hervorhebt<sup>34</sup>. Der Begriff „Strategie“ an sich, so wie er auch im Rahmen der Wiener KDA definiert wird, setzt eine gewisse Intentionalität der Diskursakteure voraus und legt nahe, dass eine Betrachtung der Texte unter dem Aspekt populistischer rhetorischer Mittel sinnvoll ist.

Was die Realisierungsformen betrifft, wird sowohl auf semantische als auch auf syntaktische Aspekte geachtet. Allgemein gilt, dass das Verfahren der Formanalyse wie auch die methodischen Zugänge und die Reihenfolge der Analyseschritte an die Besonderheiten des Textmaterials angepasst werden.

Wie oben erwähnt soll zunächst im Rahmen der Makroanalyse auf den historisch-biografischen Hintergrund der zu untersuchenden Texte eingegangen werden.

Das Zweite Vatikanische Konzil, das von Papst Johannes XXIII. am 25. Januar 1959 angekündigt und am 11. Oktober 1962 im Petersdom feierlich eröffnet wurde, entsprang der Notwendigkeit, eine mit der katholischen Lehre vereinbare Antwort auf die moderne Welt zu geben. Das Hauptziel des Konzils beschrieb der Papst mit dem Wort „Aggiornamento“, worunter eine Art „Heutig-Werden“ der katholischen Lehre zu verstehen ist, d.h. eine Übertragung der Dogmen in die Sprache der Moderne. Die Öffnung

der katholischen Kirche gegenüber der modernen Welt ging mit der Bereitschaft zum ökumenischen Dialog einher. Unter den mehr als 2500 Teilnehmern befanden sich auch Beobachter aus nichtkatholischen christlichen Gemeinschaften. Zum Konzil wurden außer den direkt beteiligten hohen Klerikern auch sogenannte *Periti*, d.h. theologische Experten, eingeladen, unter ihnen Hans Küng als Berater des damaligen Bischofs von Rottenburg, Carl Joseph Leiprecht, und Joseph Ratzinger, der vom Kölner Erzbischof zur Mitarbeit an der Konzilsvorbereitung eingeladen wurde. Papst Johannes XXIII. starb im Juni 1963 und das Konzil wurde von seinem Nachfolger Paul VI. fortgesetzt und am 8. Dezember 1965 beendet. In den insgesamt vier Sitzungsperioden jeweils im Herbst wurden 16 Dokumente verabschiedet: vier Konstitutionen, neun Verordnungen und drei Erklärungen.

Die Erneuerungen, die die katholische Kirche mit dem Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzil in die Wege geleitet hat, finden auf mehreren Ebenen des kirchlichen Lebens statt. Die beträchtlichsten Veränderungen betreffen die Riten und die Ökumene. Im Zuge der Aufwertung der Laienschaft innerhalb der Kirche, wurde die Liturgie in der Landessprache gefördert und die Tridentinische Messe, bei der der Priester das Messopfer mit dem Rücken zur Gemeinde feiert und von der Kanzel herab predigt, abgeschafft. Die starke ökumenische Orientierung des Konzils äußerte sich einerseits in der theologischen Dialogbereitschaft mit Orthodoxen und Protestanten – u.a. in der gemeinsamen Erklärung von Papst Paul VI. und dem Ökumenischen Patriarch von Konstantinopel, Athenagoras, die die 1054 sanktionierte gegenseitige Exkommunikation aufhob – und andererseits in der Absage an den jahrhundertalten Antijudaismus und der allgemeinen Öffnung gegenüber nicht-christlichen Religionen.

Im Selbstverständnis der katholischen Kirche vollzieht sich auch eine grundlegende Erneuerung. Sie besteht vor allem in der Sprache, die im Unterschied zur vorkonziliaren Zeit einen freundlicheren Ton hinsichtlich der Laien und der Angehörigen anderer christlicher Gemeinschaften anstimmt. Die Dokumente des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils setzen zwar die grundsätzliche traditionelle Unterscheidung zwischen dem Laien- und dem Priesterstand fort, betonen jedoch ausdrücklich die Gaben und die besondere Bedeutung, die den Gläubigen in der Kirchengemeinschaft zukommen. Der Dogmatiktext hebt kategorisch den gottgewollten Charakter der kirchlichen Hierarchie hervor und tut dies in Abgrenzung zu den „häretischen Lehren“:

Das Konzil von Trient erklärte gegenüber den Reformatoren, die das besondere Priestertum und damit auch die Hierarchie verwarfen und nur das allgemeine Priestertum aller Gläubigen anerkannten, daß es in der katholischen Kirche eine durch göttliche Anordnung eingesetzte Hierarchie gibt. [...] Pius VI. verwarf die gallikanische Lehre der Synode von Pistoia, die Kirchengewalt sei von Gott unmittelbar der Kirche, d.h. der Gesamtheit der Gläubigen, und von der Kirche den Hirten derselben übertragen worden, als häretisch. Nach der Lehre der Kirche hat Christus die geistliche Gewalt den Aposteln unmittelbar übergeben. Pius X. verurteilte die Aufstellung der Modernisten, die kirchliche Hierarchie sei das Ergebnis einer allmählichen geschichtlichen Entwicklung.<sup>35</sup>

Im Vergleich dazu wird in *Lumen gentium* dieselbe Auffassung vom Priestertum vertreten, jedoch auf eine Art und Weise formuliert, die die Gemeinsamkeiten und das Zusammenwirken von Laien und Klerikern betont:

Das gemeinsame Priestertum der Gläubigen aber und das Priestertum des Dienstes, das heißt das hierarchische Priestertum, unterscheiden sich zwar dem Wesen und nicht bloß dem Grade nach. Dennoch sind sie einander zugeordnet: das eine wie das andere nämlich nimmt je auf besondere Weise am Priestertum Christi teil. Der Amtspriester nämlich bildet kraft seiner heiligen Gewalt, die er innehat, das priesterliche Volk heran und leitet es; er vollzieht in der Person Christi das eucharistische Opfer und bringt es im Namen des ganzen Volkes Gott dar; die Gläubigen hingegen wirken kraft ihres königlichen Priestertums an der eucharistischen Darbringung mit und üben ihr Priestertum aus im Empfang der Sakramente, im Gebet, in der Danksagung, im Zeugnis eines heiligen Lebens, durch Selbstverleugung und tätige Liebe.<sup>36</sup>

Hinzu kommt noch ein wichtiger Aspekt, der den durch das Zweite Vatikanische Konzil eingeführte Diskurs von der römisch-neuscholastischen Dogmatik unterscheidet. Sowohl in der Kirchenkonstitution *Lumen gentium* als auch in der Pastoralkonstitution *Gaudium et spes* ist von der pilgernden Kirche als dem „Volk Gottes“ auf dem Weg durch die Zeit die Rede. Im vor dem Konzil verfassten Dogmatikhandbuch von Ludwig Ott wird ein eher statisches Bild von der Kirche entworfen, das ihre Zeitlosigkeit aufgrund des göttlichen Ursprungs hervorhebt: „Die Gründung der Kirche durch Christus besagt, daß er selbst die wesentlichen Grundlagen der Kirche in der Lehre, im Kult und in der Verfassung gelegt hat.“<sup>37</sup> Diese Behauptung wird durch die Worte des Papstes Pius X. bekräftigt: „Pius

X. erklärte im Antimodernisteneid (1910), daß 'die Kirche vom wahren und geschichtlichen Christus selbst in der Zeit seines Erdenlebens unmittelbar und persönlich gegründet wurde.'<sup>38</sup> Hingegen behauptet die Pastoralkonstitution *Gaudium et spes*, die um eine Neubestimmung der Wechselbeziehung von Kirche und Welt bemüht ist, die geschichtliche Dynamik der Institution Kirche und somit ihre Fähigkeit zur Erneuerung. Dadurch wird an den Topos der *ecclesia semper reformanda* und an den Reformbegriff angeknüpft, der schon „nach der klassischen Ekklesiologie“ ein Wesensmerkmal der katholischen Kirche war<sup>39</sup>:

Hervorgegangen aus der Liebe des ewigen Vaters, in der Zeit gestiftet von Christus dem Erlöser, geeint im Heiligen Geist, hat die Kirche das endzeitliche Heil zum Ziel, das erst in der künftigen Weltzeit voll verwirklicht werden kann. Sie ist aber schon hier auf Erden anwesend, gesammelt aus Menschen, Gliedern des irdischen Gemeinwesens, die dazu berufen sind, schon in dieser geschichtlichen Zeit der Menschheit die Familie der Kinder Gottes zu bilden, die bis zur Ankunft des Herrn stetig wachsen soll. [...] So geht denn diese Kirche, zugleich „sichtbare Versammlung und geistliche Gemeinschaft“, den Weg mit der ganzen Menschheit gemeinsam und erfährt das gleiche irdische Geschick mit der Welt und ist gewissermaßen der Sauerteig und die Seele der in Christus zu erneuernden und in die Familie Gottes umzugestaltenden menschlichen Gesellschaft.<sup>40</sup>

Darüber hinaus wird in demselben Dokument zugegeben, dass die Kirche selbst der „Geschichte und Entwicklung der Menschheit“ sowie dem „Fortschritt der Wissenschaften“ viel verdanke.<sup>41</sup>

Zugleich bedeutet das Zweite Vatikanische Konzil auch eine Aufwertung der sogenannten „Kollegialität“ und der Lehr- und Leitungsfunktion der Bischöfe in ihrer Diözese als Gegengewicht zum Primat des Papstes: „Die Bischöfe empfangen als Nachfolger der Apostel vom Herrn, dem alle Gewalt im Himmel und auf Erden gegeben ist, die Sendung, alle Völker zu lehren und das Evangelium jedwedem Geschöpf zu verkündigen.“<sup>42</sup> Trotzdem bleibt die Lehre vom Primat des Papstes unangetastet erhalten: „Der Bischof von Rom ist als Nachfolger Petri das immerwährende, sichtbare Prinzip und Fundament für die Einheit der Vielheit von Bischöfen und Gläubigen.“<sup>43</sup>

Angesichts dieser diskursiven Merkmale, die die traditionelle Rechtsprache mit der Pastoralprache ersetzen und doch einen Kompromiss zwischen dem konservativen Bild einer statischen und

monolithischen Kirche und dem fortschrittlichen Entwicklungsgedanken in der Kirchengeschichte anstreben, nimmt es nicht wunder, dass das Konzil eine umstrittene Rezeption erfahren hat. Der Kirchenhistoriker Hubert Wolf spricht von einem Kontinuitäts- bzw. einem Diskontinuitätsmodell in der Rezeption des Vatikanums II. Während das erstere besagt, dass das Konzil eigentlich nichts Neues gebracht habe und der zentralistischen Kirchenlehre dadurch keinen Abbruch getan worden sei, heben die Anhänger des Diskontinuitätsmodells die Erneuerungen des Konzils hervor, insbesondere bezüglich der Haltung zu den Menschenrechten und den anderen Religionen, und bewerten sie je nach der eigenen Einstellung positiv oder negativ<sup>44</sup>.

Vor diesem Hintergrund einer beginnenden Entstabilisierung des katholischen Diskursrahmens durch die neue Pastoralssprache des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils ist 1968, im Jahr der linksgerichteten Bürgerrechtsbewegungen und Studentenrevolten in Deutschland, Frankreich und anderen westlichen Ländern, ein vatikanisches Dokument erschienen, das für Verwirrung und Unmut bei den katholischen Gläubigen weltweit sorgte und von vielen als Abkehr vom befreienden Geist des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils kritisiert wurde. Die Enzyklika *Humanae vitae. Über die Weitergabe des Lebens* führt die von den Vorgängerpäpsten Leo XIII. und Pius XI. in den Enzykliken *Arcanum divinae sapientiae* (1880) und *Casti connubi* (1930) vertretene aristotelisch-thomistische Naturrechtslehre weiter und lehrt, „daß „jeder eheliche Akt“ von sich aus auf die Erzeugung menschlichen Lebens hingeeordnet bleiben muß“<sup>45</sup>. Die Entscheidung des Papstes für ein Totalverbot der künstlichen Empfängnisverhütung widersprach dem Gutachten der bereits von Johannes XXIII. eingesetzten und von Paul VI. neu einberufenen Expertenkommission. Die Kommission – bestehend aus Theologen, Medizinerinnen, Psychologen und Sozialwissenschaftlern – sprach sich schon 1966 mehrheitlich für eine Verantwortbarkeit der künstlichen Mittel zur Empfängnisverhütung.

Über die Anknüpfung an die Tradition hinaus, die die Sexualität an die Fortpflanzung bindet und die Gatten als „freie und bewußte Mitarbeiter des Schöpfergottes“ definiert, „die mit Gott zusammenzuwirken bei der Weckung und Erziehung neuen menschlichen Lebens“<sup>46</sup>, bringt *Humanae vitae* auch originelle Ideen hervor. Nachdem er die „Inanspruchnahme unfruchtbarer Perioden“<sup>47</sup> als natürliche Methode der Familienplanung für erlaubt erklärt, führt der Papst Paul VI. seine Hauptargumente gegen die künstliche Empfängnisverhütung an. Diese Argumente, die sich direkt

auf den Zeitgeist beziehen, wurden z.T. von Anhängern der Enzyklika als visionär bezeichnet.<sup>48</sup> Die Enzyklika legt nahe, dass eine Billigung der künstlichen Empfängnisverhütung drei schwerwiegende Konsequenzen haben könnte: 1. Erstens würde dadurch der Weg „zur ehelichen Untreue“ und „zur allgemeinen Aufweichung der sittlichen Zucht“<sup>49</sup> erleichtert. 2. Zweitens würden die Männer „die Ehrfurcht vor der Frau verlieren, und, ohne auf ihr körperliches Wohl und seelisches Gleichgewicht Rücksicht zu nehmen, sie zum bloßen Werkzeug ihrer Triebbefriedigung erniedrigen“<sup>50</sup>. 3. Schließlich könnte die künstliche Empfängnisverhütung zum biopolitischen Instrument in der Hand (totalitaristischer) Regierungen werden und somit wäre der „Dienst an der Weitergabe des Lebens menschlicher Willkür überlassen“<sup>51</sup>.

Unter den kritischen Stimmen, die sich mit der Enzyklika *Humanae vitae* auseinandergesetzt haben, ragt der Schweizer Theologe Hans Küng (geb. am 18.03.1928 in Sursee / Kanton Luzern) heraus. Ein Absolvent der Päpstlichen Universität Gregoriana in Rom, wo er Philosophie und Theologie studiert hatte, erwarb Küng den Dokortitel in Paris mit einer Dissertation zum Thema „*Rechtfertigung. Die Lehre Karl Barths und eine katholische Besinnung*“, wurde 1954 als Priester geweiht und machte sich schon vor dem Konzil einen Namen als akademischen Theologen, was ihm 1960 eine Professur für Fundamentaltheologie an der Katholisch-Theologischen Fakultät der Eberhard Karls Universität in Tübingen brachte. Auf seine Initiative wurde 1966 der andere junge „Konzilstheologe“ Joseph Ratzinger an den Lehrstuhl für Katholische Dogmatik in Tübingen berufen. Die ersten Konflikte zwischen Küng und der katholischen Hierarchie begannen schon während des Konzils, als er 1962 das Buch *Strukturen der Kirche* veröffentlichte, in dem er die Kirche als Volk Gottes auf seinem Weg durch die Zeit bezeichnete und die historisch wandelbaren Strukturen der Institution Kirche hervorhob<sup>52</sup>. Küngs rebellische Haltung sowie seine ökumenische Gesinnung und die Annäherung an die lutherische Theologie hatten schon im Jahr seiner Promotion 1957 die Aufmerksamkeit der Heiligen Kongregation des Heiligen Offiziums (der heutigen Glaubenskongregation) auf ihn gelenkt, die eine Akte über ihn anlegte. Der Konflikt wurde mehrere Jahre hindurch geführt und spitzte sich nach der Erscheinung des Buches *Unfehlbar? Eine Anfrage* im Jahre 1970. Küng selber bezieht die Sanktionen, die vom Vatikan gegen ihn verhängt worden sind, auf dieses Buch bzw. allgemein auf seine Kritik am Dogma der Unfehlbarkeit. Jedoch wurde Küng die Lehrerlaubnis (*missio canonica*) erst 1979 entzogen, nachdem

das Verfahren gegen ihn 1975 durch die Glaubenskongregation mit einer einfachen Rüge eingestellt worden war.<sup>53</sup> 1979 stellte ein vom Papst Johannes Paul II. unterschriebenes Dokument der Glaubenskongregation gravierende Abweichungen Küngs vom katholischen Glauben, nicht nur bezüglich der Ekklesiologie, sondern u.a. bezüglich der Christologie und der Trinitätslehre fest. Aufgrund dessen entzog die Deutsche Bischofskonferenz Hans Küng im Dezember 1979 die Lehrerlaubnis. Küng blieb fakultätsunabhängiger Professor für ökumenische Theologie an derselben Universität bis zu seiner Emeritierung. Er ist zudem auch weiterhin ein römisch-katholischer Priester. Seit Anfang der 1990er Jahre engagierte er sich zunehmend für das Projekt Weltethos, das unter dem Motto „Kein Friede ohne Religionsfriede“ und im Rahmen der gleichnamigen Stiftung verschiedene Aktivitäten zu ökumenischen, ethischen und weltpolitischen Themen organisiert. In seinen späten Jahren, vor allem seit dem Tod des mit ihm gut befreundeten Rhetorikprofessors Walter Jens in geistiger Umnachtung, plädiert Hans Küng für die Sterbehilfe und widerspricht erneut einer offiziellen Position des Vatikans.

Hans Küng ist der Autor eines sehr umfangreichen Werkes, in dem Theologisches und Philosophisches sich die Waage halten und das außer kritischen Stellungnahmen zur katholischen Ekklesiologie, grundlegende Fragen wie die Existenz Gottes, das Wesen des Christentums und die Wechselbeziehung von Glaube und Vernunft behandelt sowie Abhandlungen zu den Weltreligionen, zu Politik, Wirtschaft und Ethik oder zur Geschichte der Frauen in der katholischen Kirche umfasst. Küng hat auch drei autobiografische Bände verfasst – *Erkämpfte Freiheit* (2002), *Umstrittene Wahrheit* (2007) und *Erlebte Menschlichkeit* (2013) –, die insgesamt mehr als 2100 Seiten füllen. Seine von der tiefgehenden Auseinandersetzung mit philosophischen Richtungen – von Hegels Dialektik bis zu Thomas Kuhns Paradimentheorie – geprägte Position fasst Küng als „historisch-kritische Theologie, die wie die Bibel so auch die Dogmengeschichte kritisch untersucht und sich an der ursprünglichen Botschaft, Gestalt und Geschichte Jesu mißt.“ zusammen<sup>54</sup> Seine eigene Position definiert Küng überdies in Abgrenzung zu Joseph Ratzingers „historisch-organische[r] Theologie“, die die „Brüche in der Entwicklung“ übersehe und eine maßgeblich von der Patristik geprägte Kirchenauffassung vertrete<sup>55</sup>.

Die Reihe „Hans Küng – sämtliche Werke“, die aktuell vom Herder-Verlag geplant und auf 24 Bände angelegt ist, zeugt auch von der Stellung Küngs in der heutigen intellektuellen Welt. In einem Verlag erschienen, der seine

Tätigkeit als katholisch mit ökumenischer Ausrichtung versteht<sup>56</sup>, sprechen die Bücher dieses Autors, der trotz seiner Konflikte mit dem Vatikan sich immer noch als Katholik empfindet, eine breite, geisteswissenschaftlich gebildete und theologisch interessierte Leserschaft an. Dementsprechend lassen sich Küngs Schriften der hybriden Gattung Sachbuch zuordnen, die Elemente des „Spezialdiskurses“<sup>57</sup>, d.h. wissenschaftlich streng geprüfte und sorgfältig mit Quellenangaben versehene Fakten bzw. komplexe und zum Teil nur von Theologen nachvollziehbare Gedankengänge, mit Elementen des „Interdiskurses“<sup>58</sup>, d.h. stark reduzierten und allgemein verständlich gemachten wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnissen, kombiniert.

Als Beispiele dieser publikumsorientierten diskursiven Praxis, die permanent fachliche Termini und Argumentationsmuster sowie historische Ereignisse mit aktuellen und dem Zeitgeist angepassten Werten und Interessen in Verbindung setzt, seien hier zwei Textauszüge zitiert, die die Verschränkung der Diskursstränge katholische Sexualmoral und kirchliche Autorität illustrieren.

In chronologischer Anordnung stammt der erste Auszug aus dem polemischen Buch *Unfehlbar? Eine Anfrage* (1970) und der zweite aus dem geschichtlichen Grundriss *Die Frau im Christentum* (2001).

Wie bereits erwähnt entsteht *Unfehlbar?* als Reaktion auf die Enzyklika *Humanae vitae*, befasst sich jedoch nicht direkt mit dem Inhalt der Enzyklika, d.h. der katholischen Lehre über die Geburtenregelung, sondern schneidet ein Thema an, das Küng zufolge der „Pillen-Enzyklika“ sowie der ganzen Glaubwürdigkeitskrise der katholischen Kirche zugrunde liege: die Unfehlbarkeit des Lehramtes. Wie er in seinen Memoiren behauptet, hatte Hans Küng bereits ein Jahr vor dem Erlassen der Enzyklika eine Offenbarung, die er der Veröffentlichung des Gutachtens der konservativen Konzilsminderheit verdankt. Es fiel ihm „wie Schuppen vor den Augen: Dem Papst geht es in der Frage der Geburtenregelung nicht um die Pille [...] sondern um das Prestige des kirchlichen Lehramtes.“<sup>59</sup> Weit ausholend argumentiert Küngs Buch, dass die Unfehlbarkeit der Kirche nicht mit dem Festhalten an der „Unfehlbarkeit von bestimmten Sätzen (Doktrinen, Theorien)“<sup>60</sup> gleichzusetzen sei, sondern vielmehr ein „grundlegendes Bleiben der Kirche in der Wahrheit, das auch von einzelnen Irrtümern nicht aufgehoben wird“<sup>61</sup> bedeute.

Über den Entstehungszusammenhang der Enzyklika *Humanae vitae* sagt Hans Küng bereits am Anfang seines polemischen Buches *Unfehlbar? Eine Anfrage* folgendes:



Nach wie vor wird die Kirche mit Enzykliken, Dekreten und Hirtenbriefen beschenkt, die in Entscheidendem vom Evangelium nicht gedeckt sind, von den meisten Menschen heute nicht eigentlich verstanden und von der Theologie nicht begründet werden können. [...] <sup>62</sup>

Nachdem er den Text der Enzyklika einer semantischen Analyse unterzieht, derzufolge das Wort „Gesetz“ und damit verwandte Vokabeln in *Humanae vitae* übermäßig oft vorkommen, zieht Hans Küng die Schlussfolgerung:

Dies alles sind Signale dafür, wie sehr in diesem Dokument das Gesetz die christliche Freiheit, das kirchliche Lehramt das Evangelium Jesu Christi, die päpstliche Tradition die Heilige Schrift überspielen: Zeichen also, wie sehr das Lehramt der katholischen Kirche noch immer unter der moralisierenden Vergesetzlichung, der lebensfernen Ideologisierung und dem triumphalistischen Papalismus leidet. <sup>63</sup>

Nach ausgiebigen Zitaten aus der inzwischen öffentlich gewordenen vatikanischen Dokumente zieht Küng eine Parallele zwischen der Situation in der Kirche und dem aktuellen politischen Geschehen:

Ist es da verwunderlich, daß viele Menschen in und außerhalb der katholischen Kirche Parallelen zur Lage in der Tschechoslowakei gezogen haben? Und ist es da noch erstaunlich, daß unerleuchtete Bischöfe sich in ihrer „Ergebenheit dem Stuhle Petri gegenüber“ ermuntert fühlten, bestimmte Theologen öffentlich zu beschimpfen und gerade eifrigste unter ihren Priestern von ihren Pflichten zu suspendieren und gerade so Krisen in ihren Kirchen heraufzubeschwören? <sup>64</sup>

Der Band *Die Frau im Christentum* stellt einen gut lesbaren geschichtlichen Überblick auf die spannungsreichen Entwicklungen bezüglich der Rolle der Frau im westeuropäischen Christentum dar. Das Buch fasst die Forschungsergebnisse des von der Stiftung Volkswagenwerk finanzierten Projektes „Frau und Christentum“ zusammen. Das Projekt wurde in den 1980er und den frühen 1990er Jahren am damals von Hans Küng geleiteten Institut für Ökumenische Forschung an der Universität Tübingen durchgeführt und der Abschlussbericht sowie zahlreiche Dokumente über die im Rahmen des Projektes organisierten Veranstaltungen befinden sich im Archiv des Instituts. Am groß angelegten Forschungsprojekt beteiligten sich außer Hans Küng die Theologinnen

Anne Jensen, Elisabeth Moltmann-Wendel, Bernadette Brooten und die Historikerin Doris Kaufmann.<sup>65</sup> Hans Küngs Buch versucht, die im Rahmen des Projektes erarbeiteten Erkenntnisse über die Geschichte der Frau im Christentum einem breiten Publikum „im Blick auf die Gegenwart“<sup>66</sup> zugänglich zu machen. Dabei knüpft es an den Leitgedanken der Unfehlbarkeit als der Hauptursache der Glaubwürdigkeitskrise der katholischen Kirche in der modernen Welt an. Im Kontext des Buches wird dieser Diskursstrang mit dem der Frauenfeindlichkeit verknüpft. Der Diskursstrang „Frauenfeindlichkeit im Christentum“ wird aus einigen Diskursfragmenten zusammengesetzt, die wiederum die Verbindung zu Küngs Hauptinteresse, der „Unfehlbarkeit von bestimmten Sätzen“ (s.o.), und auch zum Thema der Enzyklika *Humanae vitae*, der Geburtenregelung, herstellen. Hinzu kommt noch das Unterthema „Marienfrömmigkeit“, das die Brücke sowohl zum Thema der Unfehlbarkeit als auch zu den miteinander verwandten Themen Frauen- und Sexualfeindlichkeit bzw. Geburtenregelung schlägt. Die Diskursfragmente, die im letzten Unterkapitel des *Die Frau in der Kirche des Mittelalters* überschriebenen Kapitels die Hauptargumente transportieren und zur Verschränkung der Diskursstränge „Unfehlbarkeit“ und „Geburtenregelung“ beitragen, könnte man wie folgt zusammenfassen:

- Die weibliche Sexualität ist, laut der allgemeinen und von der Kirche unterstützten Meinung, grundsätzlich böse
- Die christlich gesinnte Frau sollte die Kontrolle über ihren (fruchtbaren) Körper an höhere (männliche) Instanzen übergeben
- Der Primat und die Unfehlbarkeit des Papstes sind katholische Dogmen und somit unhinterfragbar
- Die katholischen Priester müssen zölibatär leben
- Die Heilige Jungfrau Maria hat nicht nur ihre eigene Keuschheit Zeit ihres Lebens bewahrt, sondern sie ist selbst „unbefleckt“ empfangen worden und somit frei von der (sexuell übertragbaren) Erbsünde
- Das katholische Marienbild ist „eine Kompensationsfigur für unverheiratete Kleriker“<sup>67</sup>

Das Unterkapitel wird mit der rhetorischen Frage: „Ein ökumenisches Marienbild?“ überschrieben. Dass das traditionell katholische Marienbild unvereinbar mit der Ökumene sei, ist die implizite Antwort darauf, die man aus dem ganzen Unterkapitel herauslesen kann.

Nur vor einem hütete man sich im Mittelalter: irgendwelche neuen *Mariendogmen* zu verkünden. Dies war den Päpsten des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts vorbehalten: Pius IX. und Pius XII. Insbesondere Pius IX. hat durch seine Politik die Kirche gleich mit zwei Dogmen belastet. Nachdem er bereits in gegenrevolutionärem Konservatismus gegen Aufklärung, Wissenschaft, Demokratie und Religionsfreiheit ohne jedes biblische Fundament Mariens Unbefleckte Empfängnis (Bewahrung vor der Erbsünde) in aller Form zum Dogma erhoben hatte (1854), drängte er 16 Jahre später mit Hilfe des Vatikanum I (1870) der ganzen Kirche auch noch den Primat und die Unfehlbarkeit des Papstes auf. Nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg setzte Pius XII. diese Linie fort. Er hatte den Ehrgeiz – in seinem römischen Triumphalismus unbekümmert um protestantische, orthodoxe und innerkatholische Bedenken –, auch Mariens leibliche Aufnahme in die himmlische Herrlichkeit als Dogma zu verkünden [...]<sup>68</sup>

Was im Mittelalter also noch nicht so deutlich war, ist durch die Pius-Päpste ad oculos demonstriert worden: Typisch für das römisch-katholische gehen hier und nur hier *Papalismus* und *Marianismus* Hand in Hand. Hintergrund bildet zweifellos der Zölibatismus, der – wie wir hörten – tief in der mittelalterlichen Welt verwurzelt ist. [...] Keine Frage: Eine mittelalterlich gebliebene römisch-katholische Hierarchie (mit einem Papst wie Johannes Paul II., der in seinem Wappen das Kreuz zugunsten des marianischen M aus der Mitte weggerückt hat), welche die Ehelosigkeit für den Klerus auch angesichts Tausender pfarrerloser Pfarreien propagiert und die sexuelle Lust im Bereich der Ehe an die Kinderzeugung binden will, schuf mit der Gestalt Marias eine Kompensationsfigur für unverheiratete Kleriker, bei der man auf „geistige Weise“ Intimität, Liebenswürdigkeit, Weiblichkeit und Mütterlichkeit erfahren kann. Welche fatalen psychischen Folgen diese Politik haben kann und hat, ist von Eugen Drewermann mit vielen Beispielen beschrieben und analysiert worden. [...]<sup>69</sup>

Doch die Krise des Papalismus, Marianismus und Zölibatismus, wie sie heute auch für traditionelle Katholiken offenkundig ist, zeichnete sich schon im Spätmittelalter ab und führte anfangs des 16. Jahrhunderts zur Reformation Martin Luthers.<sup>70</sup>

Wenn man die Auszüge aus *Unfehlbar? Eine Anfrage* und aus *Die Frau im Christentum* miteinander vergleicht, fallen schon auf den ersten Blick sowohl inhaltliche als auch stilistische Gemeinsamkeiten auf. In beiden Fällen bilden antithetische Konstruktionen den Grundtenor des Textes. Inhaltlich wird sowohl in den *Unfehlbar*-Auszügen als auch im Unterkapitel „Ein ökumenisches Marienbild?“ das ideologische Moment der päpstlichen Entscheidungen hervorgehoben und einen Zusammenhang zwischen Vergangenheit und Gegenwart hergestellt.

Die Antithesen stellen Gegensätze in einer oft zugespitzten Formulierung gegenüber, die dadurch veranschaulichend und einprägsam wirkt. Im zweiten oben angeführten Zitat werden drei Gegensatzpaare gebildet, die eine Polarisierung von Gut und Böse suggerieren. Auf der guten Seite (des wahren Christentums, so wie es Hans Küng versteht) befinden sich die „christliche Freiheit“, „das Evangelium Jesu Christi“ und „die Heilige Schrift“. Auf der anderen Seite gibt es die antagonistischen Mächte, die diese unterdrückten Werte „überspielen“: „das Gesetz“, „das kirchliche Lehramt“ und „die päpstliche Tradition“. Das Resultat dieser Machtassymetrie, die das Verknöcherte der Überlieferung die Gewissensfreiheit und das Wort Gottes überwiegen lässt, wird durch eine Akkumulation ausgedrückt, die nochmals veranschaulichend wirkt, indem sie statt einfach „Totalitarismus“ oder „Absolutismus“ zu sagen, thematisch zusammengehörige Unterbegriffe aufzählt. Diese Stilfigur wird noch durch die Relation der Adjektive zu den drei Abstrakta verstärkt: Die Situation in der katholischen Kirche lässt sich also einmal durch „Vergesetzlichung“, „Ideologisierung“ und „Papalismus“ beschreiben, wobei der letzte Terminus schon durch die Endung auf eine ideologische Dimension schließen lässt. Das Überhebliche und Menschenfeindliche der in ihrer realitätsfremden Welt erstarrten Institution Kirche wird noch fast tautologisch durch die Attribute „moralisierend“, „lebensfern“ und „triumphalistisch“ hervorgehoben.

Im nächsten Absatz wird der Bogen von dieser etwas abstrakten und zeitlosen Darstellung der absolutistisch regierten Kirche zum konkreten Totalitarismus der Gegenwart gespannt. Das Fazit wird durch zwei rhetorische Fragen zum Ausdruck gebracht, die die Meinung des Verfassers auf eindringliche und einprägsame Weise wiedergeben. Die Formulierung „Lage in der Tschechoslowakei“ fungiert, um mit Siegfried Jäger zu sprechen, als eine „Fähre ins Bewusstsein“<sup>71</sup>, d.h. das Hauptthema der Beziehung zwischen dem Vatikan und den katholischen Gläubigen wird an bereits vorhandenes Hintergrundwissen über den Prager Frühling angekoppelt, um die katholische Hierarchie als repressives Machtsystem darzustellen. Des weiteren werden antithetisch zwei Gruppierungen innerhalb der katholischen Kirche ausgemacht: die Rückständigen und die Fortschrittlichen. Auf der einen Seite die „unerleuchteten Bischöfe“, die in ihrer Unterwürfigkeit gegenüber dem Vatikan die Meinungsfreiheit zu unterdrücken versuchen, auf der anderen Seite „bestimmte Theologen“ und „eifrigste“ Priester, die durch Verleumdungen und Sanktionen an ihrer Pflichterfüllung gehindert werden.

Die Antithese wird auch im späteren Textbeispiel aus der historischen Abhandlung *Die Frau im Christentum* als wichtiges rhetorisches Mittel eingesetzt. Die komplexe Verschränkung der Diskursstränge Sexual- und Frauenfeindlichkeit, absolute Autorität des päpstlichen Lehramtes, Priesterzölibat und Marienfrömmigkeit wird äußerst verknüpft in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung dargelegt. Diese Vereinfachung und kompakt-reduzierende Formulierung von Wissen ist ein typisches Verfahren für Interdiskurse<sup>72</sup>, die komplexe Informationen leicht verständlich machen wollen. Zu diesem Zweck muss er sich an mehrere Spezialdiskurse anknüpfen, in diesem Fall sind es die Diskurse der Theologie, der Geschichtsschreibung und der Politikwissenschaft. Interessanterweise wird hier, auch wenn nur en passant, auch auf den Diskurs der Tiefenpsychologie verwiesen, der für den Theologen Eugen Drewermann eine zentrale Rolle spielt. Bereits am Anfang der zitierten Textstelle wird eine Antithese zwischen dem „gegenrevolutionären Konservatismus“ des Papstes Pius XI. und den Hauptmerkmalen der Moderne – „Aufklärung, Wissenschaft, Demokratie und Religionsfreiheit“ – konstruiert. Pius XI. und Pius XII. werden als die „Pius-Päpste“ in einem Atem genannt, um die Kontinuität ihrer Politik hervorzuheben. Auch wenn hier die Enzyklika *Humanae vitae* und ihre Problematik nicht explizit erwähnt werden, kann das Kompositum „Pius-Päpste“ als impliziter Hinweis darauf gedeutet werden, da der Autor der Enzyklika *Casti connubii*, die im Jahre 1930 sich ausdrücklich gegen die künstliche Empfängnisverhütung aussprach, auch ein Pius-Papst war.

Was die Wortwahl betrifft, gibt es auffallende Parallelen zwischen den *Unfehlbar*-Auszügen und denen aus *Die Frau im Christentum*. Während im ersten oben angeführten Zitat „die Kirche mit Enzykliken, Dekreten und Hirtenbriefen *beschenkt*“ [Herv. M.I.] wird, wobei das Verb „beschenken“ hier ironisch verwendet wird, haben die Verben im späteren Text eine aggressive Konnotation: die Kirche wird mit Dogmen „belastet“ bzw. Dogmen werden ihr „aufgedrängt“. Die Abweichung des päpstlichen Lehramtes vom Maßstab der Heiligen Schrift wird auch hier thematisiert. Der Vatikan verkündet also Dogmen, „die in Entscheidendem vom Evangelium nicht gedeckt sind“. „Triumphalismus“ ist ebenfalls ein Wort, das bereits im *Unfehlbar*-Auszug in adjektivischer Form verwendet wurde. Hier kommt der Begriff als Substantiv wieder vor und zwar auch in Bezug auf den Papst, der „in seinem römischen Triumphalismus“ despotisch agiert und keine Rücksicht auf innerkirchliche oder ökumenische Kritik nimmt. Im ganzen Unterkapitel kommen insgesamt vier neologische Begriffe vor,

die auf -ismus enden und somit auf ideologische Strömungen innerhalb der katholischen Kirche verweisen, deren vermeintlich gottgewollte Natur dekonstruiert werden muss. Papalismus, Marianismus, Zölibatismus und Triumphalismus sind die Stichwörter, die im Text auch grafisch hervorgehoben zur knappen Charakterisierung der gegenwärtigen Situation der katholischen Hierarchie eingesetzt werden und deren historische Wurzeln der Verfasser aufzudecken meint. An dieser Stelle sollte man auch die Anwendung des Begriffs „Mittelalter“ näher betrachten. Der Begriff übernimmt hier im interdiskursiven Kontext eine Führenfunktion. Er wird aus seinem ursprünglichen geschichtswissenschaftlichen Zusammenhang gerissen und spielt auf weit verbreitete Klischees an, die das Mittelalter als angeblich finstere Zeit darstellen. Dadurch wird der Eindruck erweckt, dass die gegenwärtige Lage der katholischen Kirche noch „schlimmer“ als das „schlimme“ Mittelalter sei. Das Unterkapitel schließt mit einer Sentenz, die die vorangegangene Argumentation zusammenfasst, die Hauptthese der Rückständigkeit der Institution Kirche auf den Punkt bringt und die Notwendigkeit einer Reform von innen unterstreicht, indem sie auf die Krisensituation im Spätmittelalter und auf Luthers Reformation verweist. Der Schlusssatz ist also zugleich eine knappe, veranschaulichende Aussage, die eine Zeitdiagnose stellt, und eine Warnung bzw. ein verkappter Behandlungsvorschlag, der ein neues Schisma innerhalb der katholischen Kirche vermeiden soll.

Abschließend lässt sich festhalten, dass beide Texte ihre Überredungsabsicht durch einen überzeugenden Stil konkretisieren, der auf Lesbarkeit und Klarheit setzt und daher mit veranschaulichenden und einprägsamen rhetorischen Mitteln wie der Antithese und der rhetorischen Frage arbeitet. Die Parallelisierung von Kirchengeschichte bzw. Kirchenstruktur und aktuellem politischem Geschehen, die Polarisierung von guten (d.h. fortschrittlichen) und bösen (d.h. konservativen) Kräften, sowie der Einsatz von Kollektivsymbolen mit Führenfunktion wie „das Mittelalter“ oder „der Prager Frühling“ sind exemplarische Argumentationsmuster, die nicht nur in allen zitierten Texten vorkommen, sondern darüber hinaus die Diskursstränge Unfehlbarkeit und katholische Sexualmoral bestimmen, so wie sie in allen Büchern von Hans Küng thematisiert werden. Diese Verfahren können unter der Rubrik „demonstrierende Diskursstrategien“ (Wodak) zusammengefasst werden, deren Effekt eine Abwertung der Gegner durch eine Schwarz-Weiß-Malerei ist. Angesichts einer solchen diskursiven Praxis sowie der Anwendung des *argumentum ad hominem* – hier bezüglich des Papstes Johannes

Paul II. – rechtfertigt sich die anfangs formulierte These der Anwesenheit populistischer Diskursstrategien in den Texten des Kirchenkritikers. Dies will keineswegs dem Reformtheologen Hans Küng eine ideologische Positionierung unter den Populisten unterstellen. Allein „das populistische Grundaxiom des Anti-Elitismus“<sup>73</sup>, das auf Küngs Einstellung nur bedingt zutrifft, würde dagegen sprechen<sup>74</sup>. Die diskursanalytische Untersuchung seiner Werke konnte jedoch zeigen, dass auch anspruchsvolle Texte mit kritisch aufklärerischen Intentionen in ihrem diskursiven Modus der Artikulation mit populistischen Verfahren und Topoi durchspickt sein können.

## ANMERKUNGEN

- <sup>1</sup> Frank Decker / Marcel Lewandowsky, *Populismus. Erscheinungsformen, Entstehungshintergründe und Folgen eines politischen Phänomens* (2009), <http://www.bpb.de/41192/was-ist-rechtspopulismus?p=all> (19.06.2017)
- <sup>2</sup> Vgl. Dazu das Interview des Sprachwissenschaftlers Boris Kositzke mit Bettina Klein, *Der populistische Provokateur gewinnt immer* (2007), [http://www.deutschlandfunk.de/sprachwissenschaftler-der-populistische-provokateur-gewinnt.694.de.html?dram:article\\_id=64657](http://www.deutschlandfunk.de/sprachwissenschaftler-der-populistische-provokateur-gewinnt.694.de.html?dram:article_id=64657) (20.06.2017)
- <sup>3</sup> Karin Priester, *Wesensmerkmale des Populismus* (2012), <https://www.bpb.de/apuz/75848/wesensmerkmale-des-populismus?p=all> (19.06.2017)
- <sup>4</sup> Ebd.
- <sup>5</sup> Frank Decker / Marcel Lewandowsky, a.a.O.
- <sup>6</sup> Vgl. ebd.
- <sup>7</sup> Hans Küng, *Unfehlbar? Eine Anfrage*, Ullstein Buch, Frankfurt am Main – Berlin – Wien, 1980, S. 128.
- <sup>8</sup> Ebd., S. 129.
- <sup>9</sup> Ebd.
- <sup>10</sup> Ebd.
- <sup>11</sup> Ebd., S. 130.
- <sup>12</sup> Ebd.
- <sup>13</sup> Ebd., S. 131.
- <sup>14</sup> Ebd., S. 140.
- <sup>15</sup> Hans Küng, a.a.O., S. 15.
- <sup>16</sup> Ebd.
- <sup>17</sup> Ludwig Ott, *Grundriss der katholischen Dogmatik*, Verlag Herder, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1965.
- <sup>18</sup> Roberto de Mattei, *Die sich verflüssigende Kirche – Das Leiden der Kirche kommt von weit her* (2013), <https://gloria.tv/article/6o39rD6thk1gChRwWqZjtFMZp/language/VhNsBNkAXCbW6LyxcWeq7Yt4F> (12.06.2017)
- <sup>19</sup> Ebd.
- <sup>20</sup> [http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/de/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_enc\\_25071968\\_humanae-vitae.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/de/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae.html) (10.03.2017)
- <sup>21</sup> Vgl. Siegfried Jäger, *Bemerkungen zur Durchführung von Diskursanalysen*, [http://www.diss-duisburg.de/Internetbibliothek/Artikel/Durchfuehrung\\_Diskursanalyse.htm](http://www.diss-duisburg.de/Internetbibliothek/Artikel/Durchfuehrung_Diskursanalyse.htm) (13.11.2015)
- <sup>22</sup> Ruth Wodak, Rudolf de Cillia, Martin Reisigl, Karin Liebhart, Klaus Hofstaetter, Maria Kargl, *Zur diskursiven Konstruktion nationaler Identität*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1998.
- <sup>23</sup> Ebd., S. 43.
- <sup>24</sup> Ruth Wodak et al, a.a.O., S. 71.



- 25 Bettina Bock von Wülfigen, *Genetisierung der Zeugung. Eine Diskurs- und Metaphernanalyse reproduktionsgenetischer Zukünfte*, transcript Verlag, Bielefeld, 2007, S. 42.
- 26 Ruth Wodak et al, a.a.O., S. 42.
- 27 Bettina Bock von Wülfigen, a.a.O., S. 42.
- 28 Vgl. Siegfried Jäger, a.a.O.(13.11.2016)
- 29 Ebd.
- 30 Siegfried Jäger, a.a.O.
- 31 Vgl. Wodak et al, a.a.O., S.73-101.
- 32 Ebd., S. 75.
- 33 Ebd.
- 34 Ebd., S. 76.
- 35 Ludwig Ott, a.a.O., S. 334-5.
- 36 *Dogmatische Konstitution. Lumen gentium. Über die Kirche*, [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_const\\_19641121\\_lumen-gentium\\_ge.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_ge.html) (11.07.2017)
- 37 Ludwig Ott, a.a.O., S. 329.
- 38 Ebd.
- 39 Vgl. Hubert Wolf, *Krypta. Unterdrückte Traditionen der Kirchengeschichte*, C.H. Beck, München 2015, S. 16.
- 40 *Pastorale Konstitution. Gaudium et spes. Über die Kirche in der Welt von heute*, [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_const\\_19651207\\_gaudium-et-spes\\_ge.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_ge.html) (11.07.2017)
- 41 Vgl. ebd.
- 42 Ebd.
- 43 Ebd.
- 44 Vgl. Hubert Wolf, a.a.O., S. 23.
- 45 *Humanae vitae*, [http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/de/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_enc\\_25071968\\_humanae-vitae.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/de/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae.html) (2.03.2017)
- 46 Ebd.
- 47 Ebd.
- 48 Vgl. <http://www.kath-info.de/humanaevitae.html> (12.07.2017)
- 49 *Humanae vitae*, a.a.O.
- 50 Ebd.
- 51 Ebd.
- 52 Hans Küng, *Strukturen der Kirche*, Herder Verlag, Freiburg 1962.
- 53 Vgl. *Declaratio de duobus operibus professoris Ioannis Küng in quibus continentur nonnullae opiniones quae doctrinae Ecclesiae Catholicae opponuntur* [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_19750215\\_libri-kung\\_lt.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19750215_libri-kung_lt.html) (13.07.2017)
- 54 Hans Küng, *Umstrittene Wahrheit*, Piper Verlag, München, 2007, S. 33.
- 55 Ebd.

- 56 Vgl. <https://www.herder-korrespondenz.de/die-zeitschrift>  
57 Der Begriff wurde von Jürgen Link geprägt. Vgl. Siegfried Jäger, a.a.O.  
58 Der Begriff wurde ebenfalls von J.L. geprägt. Vgl ebd.  
59 Hans Küng, *Umstrittene Wahrheit*, a.a.O., S. 83.  
60 Hans Küng, *Unfehlbarkeit*, Herder Verlag, Freiburg im Breisgau 2016, S. 212.  
61 Ebd., S. 214.  
62 Hans Küng, *Unfehlbar? Eine Anfrage*, a.a.O., S. 11.  
63 Ebd. S. 39.  
64 Ebd., S. 40.  
65 Vgl. Hans Küng, *Die Frau im Christentum*, Piper Verlag, München 2001, S.  
8-9.  
66 Ebd., S. 10.  
67 Ebd., S. 73.  
68 Ebd., S. 72.  
69 Ebd., S. 73.  
70 Ebd., S. 76.  
71 Siegfried Jäger, a.a.O.(13.11.2016)  
72 Der Begriff wurde vom Literaturwissenschaftler Jürgen Link in Anlehnung  
an Michel Foucaults Diskurstheorie geprägt. Grundsätzlich bildet der  
Interdiskurs einen Bildraum zwischen den verschiedenen Spezialdiskursen  
(der Medizin, der Technik, des Sports, der Theologie etc.), der den Nicht-  
Spezialisten in einer zunehmend arbeitsteilig und hochspezialisierten Welt  
die Teilhabe an all diesen Diskursen ermöglicht. Mit dem Interdiskurs  
hängt eng der Begriff „Kollektivsymbol“ zusammen. Das Kollektivsymbol  
gehört zum Allgemeinwissen der Durchschnittsmenschen einer bestimmten  
Generation in ihrem jeweiligen Kulturraum und leistet die wichtigste  
vermittelnde Funktion im Interdiskurs. Das Beispiel, das Jürgen Link  
anführt, ist der Ballon bei den Autoren des 19. Jahrhunderts. Die liberal  
und demokratisch gesinnten unter ihnen deuten es positiv sehen darin  
ein Symbol des technischen Fortschritts, während die konservativen den  
Ballon als Zeichen der leichtsinnigen Überheblichkeit des modernen  
Menschen verstehen. Vgl. [http://www.einladung-zur-literaturwissenschaft.  
de/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=380:personen-  
link&catid=45:kapitel-](http://www.einladung-zur-literaturwissenschaft.de/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=380:personen-link&catid=45:kapitel-) (4.03.2017)  
73 Karin Priester, *Rechter und linker Populismus. Annäherung an ein  
Chamäleon*, Campus Verlag, Frankfurt / New York 2012, S. 46.  
74 Die negative Darstellung der katholischen Hierarchie könnte man als  
anti-elitär bezeichnen, zumal diese klerikale Elite dem „Volk Gottes“  
gegenübergestellt wird. Auf der anderen Seite widersprechen Kungs  
wissenschaftlicher Anspruch und die tatsächlich gründliche Recherche,  
die seinen Büchern zugrunde liegt, dem „Anti-Intellektualismus“, einem  
anderen wesentlichen Merkmal des Populismus.

## LITERATURVERZEICHNIS

- AUER, A., *Autonome Moral und christlicher Glaube*, Patmos Verlag, Düsseldorf, 1971
- BOCK VON WÜLFINGEN, B., *Genetisierung der Zeugung. Eine Diskurs- und Metaphernanalyse reproduktionsgenetischer Zukünfte*, transcript Verlag, Bielefeld, 2007
- DECKER, F., LEWANDOWSY, M., *Populismus. Erscheinungsformen, Entstehungshintergründe und Folgen eines politischen Phänomens* (2009), <http://www.bpb.de/41192/was-ist-rechtspopulismus?p=all> (19.06.2017)
- JÄGER, S., *Bemerkungen zur Durchführung von Diskursanalysen*, [http://www.diss-duisburg.de/Internetbibliothek/Artikel/Durchfuehrung\\_Diskursanalyse.htm](http://www.diss-duisburg.de/Internetbibliothek/Artikel/Durchfuehrung_Diskursanalyse.htm) (13.11.2015)
- KÜNG, H., *Strukturen der Kirche*, Herder Verlag, Freiburg, 1962
- KÜNG, H., *Unfehlbar? Eine Anfrage*, Ullstein Buch, Frankfurt am Main – Berlin – Wien, 1980
- KÜNG, H., *Die Frau im Christentum*, Piper Verlag, München, 2001
- KÜNG, H., *Erkämpfte Freiheit*, Piper Verlag, München, 2002
- KÜNG, H., *Umstrittene Wahrheit*, Piper Verlag, München, 2007
- KÜNG, H., *Erlebte Menschlichkeit*, Piper Verlag, München, 2013
- KÜNG, H., *Unfehlbarkeit*, Herder Verlag, Freiburg im Breisgau 2016
- DE MATTEI, R., *Die sich verflüssigende Kirche – Das Leiden der Kirche kommt von weit her* (2013), <https://gloria.tv/article/6o39rD6thk1gChRwWqZjFMZp/language/VhNsBNkAXCbW6LyxcWeq7Yt4F> (12.06.2017)
- OTT, L., *Grundriss der katholischen Dogmatik*, Verlag Herder, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1965.
- PRIESTER, K., *Rechter und linker Populismus. Annäherung an ein Chamäleon*, Campus Verlag, Frankfurt / New York, 2012
- WODAK, R., DE CILLIA, R., REISIGL, M., LIEBHART, K., HOFSTAETTER, K., KARGL, M., *Zur diskursiven Konstruktion nationaler Identität*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main, 1998
- WOLF, H., *Krypta. Unterdrückte Traditionen der Kirchengeschichte*, C.H. Beck, München 2015

### Dokumente des Vatikans:

- Dogmatische Konstitution. Lumen gentium. Über die Kirche*, [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_const\\_19641121\\_lumen-gentium\\_ge.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_ge.html) (11.07.2017)
- Pastorale Konstitution. Gaudium et spes. Über die Kirche in der Welt von heute*, [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_const\\_19651207\\_gaudium-et-spes\\_ge.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_ge.html) (11.07.2017)
- Humanae vitae*, [http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/de/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_enc\\_25071968\\_humanae-vitae.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/de/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae.html) (2.03.2017)

*Declaratio de duobus operibus professoris Ioannis Küng in quibus continentur nonnullae opiniones quae doctrinae Ecclesiae Catholicae opponuntur*  
[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_19750215\\_libri-kung\\_lt.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19750215_libri-kung_lt.html) (13.07.2017)



## CLAUDIU OANCEA

Born in 1983, in Câmpina

Ph.D. in History and Civilization, European University Institute, Florence, Italy

Thesis: *Mass Culture Forged on the Party's Assembly Line: Political Festivals in Socialist Romania, 1948-1989*

### **Scholarships:**

Combined Grant of the European University Institute and the Romanian Government (2009 – 2013)

Grant of the Romanian Government (2009)

EUI – UC Berkeley Exchange Program Supplementary Grant (2011)

Grant of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2008)

Fellowship, Central European University, Budapest (2006 – 2007)

Scholarship, University of Bucharest, Bucharest (2003 – 2005)

Several book chapters, articles, and book reviews published in Romania, Hungary, and Spain.

Participation to international conferences and workshops, invited lectures in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Romania, United Kingdom, United States of America.



# POPULAR MUSIC AND OFFICIAL CULTURE IN 1980s SOCIALIST ROMANIA

## Abstract

This article addresses the entangled relationship between various genres of popular music and official culture in socialist Romania during the last part of the communist regime, the 1980s. It provides an analysis of the cultural and political context of late socialist Romania, focusing on the communist regime's attempts at cultural control and uniformization and on the negotiations with various popular music scenes which emerged throughout the country. Furthermore, the article addresses issues of censorship, cultural transnational networks, and it explores the relation between amateur and professional artists, both in the official context of political festivals and in the often informal one of local music festivals and performances, in an attempt to go beyond the received wisdom of 1980s Romania as a closed society.

**Keywords:** popular music, Romania, socialism, culture, censorship, political festivals, amateur artists, transnational networks.

## Introduction

This article aims at construing popular music genres in socialist Romania, during the 1980s, in an attempt to go beyond the national framework of analysis, while paying attention to the numerous transnational cultural networks, formed either officially, or within the realms of the black market. In terms of popular music, 1980s socialist Romania represented an all-encompassing mixture of genres: a rejuvenated and, most of the times, artificially reconstructed folk culture, that was addressed to both the new urban class and to the so-called "working peasantry", coexisted with a postindustrial popular culture, made up of traditional light music, pop music, as well as various subgenres of rock and jazz music.

Almost every existing genre was made to fit the official culture paradigm: from choirs praising the economic achievements of the single Party and folk singers dedicating songs to the national past, to hard rock

bands supporting the fight for peace and disarmament. Traditional religious and secular festivals were joined by numerous, newly emerged, recurring artistic manifestations, organized at a political level; thus, the last decade of communist Romania was marked by the “National Festival of Socialist Culture and Education *Song of Romania*” which had started out as a unifying cultural competition for professionals and amateurs alike, only to become instrumental to Nicolae Ceaușescu’s personality cult during the 1980s. Alternative youth culture ranged from the increasingly politicized “Cenaclul Flacăra”, led by official poet Adrian Păunescu, to officially sanctioned rock bands, that managed to eschew official propaganda lyrics, while delving into classic Romanian poetry and mythology, thus earning the admiration of the college educated elitist youth. The 1980 also saw the emergence of a low-brow type of popular music, the so-called oriental music, or *proto-manele*, a genre never represented in official culture, which, nevertheless, enjoyed tremendous popular appeal and nurtured an entire black market.

While the 1980s in socialist Romania have been perceived as a period of economic crisis, political dictatorship, and cultural autarchy based on a resurgence of nationalism, a historical inquiry of popular music during this period can nuance one’s understanding of the cultural landscape during late socialism. Furthermore, it can redefine not only the entangled relations between ideology, state, cultural policies, alternative and official culture, but also the way in which cultural centers and peripheries are constructed beyond the national framework of analysis.

I will start with a brief overview of popular music genres and of the relation between amateur and professional artists, as part of the state institutional network. I will, thus, first focus on the 1960s and 1970s, and I will pay attention to the case study of Radio Free Europe journalist Cornel Chiriac and on how it influenced popular music (especially rock music) in Romania, during the 1980s. For the latter period, I will present the cultural context, dominated by the *Song of Romania* festival, as well as the main popular music genres of the 1980s: jazz music, rock music, *muzică populară*, light music, and *proto-manele*. My aim will be to analyze how the official cultural context of the 1980s influenced the existence of these music genres and how the socialist state sought to negotiate the boundaries of cultural activity, with various artists and audiences.



## **Official Culture and Popular Music in Late Socialist Romania: The Beginnings**

In the late 1940s, the ideology of the Romanian Workers' Party made a clear difference between professional artists and amateur ones, as evident from all reports presented at official plenaries, congresses and directorate meetings. In terms of policies, this translated into the financial retribution of the professional artist and the status attributed to the amateur one. For instance, after 1948, actors, musicians, singers, or script writers were forced to become "state artists", which, for them, meant receiving a fixed salary<sup>1</sup>. They had to perform for working people and worker peasant audiences, but they were also paid for activities with amateur artists. Nevertheless, certain artists continued to make money informally out of concerts. While for classical music or early jazz musicians this was harder, as the number of halls and restaurants with an audience for such genres was limited, for folklore performers this became relatively easy, when they performed in the province.

The explanation for this situation is twofold: on the one hand, control in Bucharest restaurants was stricter, as their audience was more heterogeneous and included foreigners as well, embassy employees in the early 1950s, but also tourists, later on. The second explanation is ideological, and had to do with the Party's view of so-called cosmopolitan genres, like jazz, seen as foreign and representative for foreign, Western ideology. While this will oscillate over time, the 1950s are marked by a rigid opposition to any foreign styles, other than the ones from the Soviet Union or friendly socialist countries.<sup>2</sup>

The 1960s brought a new popular music genre onto the scene, that of rock music. Movies and an increased tourist activity played a key role in the development of rock music in socialist Romania.<sup>3</sup> Initially, the genre was the perquisite of young amateur musicians. While state officials kept a close eye on the amateur movement, what they failed to take into account was the separation that still existed between the working class and those working in the educational sector, in terms of cultural and artistic tastes. Thus, activists remained strictly focused on their own propaganda materials, that prescribed ever changing activities, without considering everyday life realities. By 1970 however, music bands, particularly young ones, tended to professionalize, that is, to turn their activity into a permanent one, or to search for opportunities in higher education (such as attending the Conservatory, or the Theatre and Film National

School). This meant that not only would their tastes change, but also their repertoire, while at the same time making them much less malleable to influences from the propaganda apparatus. Throughout the 1960s, such amateur bands became the first professional popular music young bands in Romania, such as *Phoenix*, *Sincron*, *Entuziaștii*, *Sideral*, and *Mondial*.

Initially, they were marginalized by the regime, more tolerated than encouraged. However, by the mid-1960s the state owned *Electrecord* record company began to issue the first 7 inch records of bands such as *Entuziaștii*, *Sincron*, or *Coral*, which played beat music: either adaptations of Western hits, such as *Entuziaștii*<sup>4</sup>, or of traditional folklore, played in a rock 'n' roll manner, such as *Sincron*. The latter band, for instance, used beat rhythms, vocalist – choir duets and electric guitar solos in their adaptation of the traditional *Hăulita de la Gorj*.<sup>5</sup> The late 1960s would bring about not just a more tolerant and liberal attitude from the state, but also the release of original beat songs, sung in Romanian, as would be the case with the record debut of the band *Phoenix*. The reason for this is purely financial: initially, *Electrecord* viewed the release of original Romanian beat songs as unprofitable, and focused on records either by Romanian bands singing in English, or on foreign singers and bands (from Italy, Sweden, France, GDR) who sang primarily in English, but also French and Italian. The first EP record by *Phoenix* contained two adaptations by *The Beatles* and two original songs. When the record's success (and sales) was higher than that most such records, *Electrecord* allowed the band to record a second EP of original songs in Romanian. Such an example shows that finances were, at times, more important than ideology. Throughout the 1970s, more and more amateur bands which started in local houses of culture would make their way toward professionalization, while also taking part in various artistic and cultural festivals and competitions.

The case of amateur bands turning professional and opening up toward Western influences played a significant part in the history of festivals and artistic competitions, especially in urban areas (large centers, as well as small towns) and for the young generation. Western radio stations, particularly US sponsored ones, such as Radio Free Europe, small contraband traffic in the border areas, especially in the western part of Romania, and, equally important, international tourism, that allowed foreign tourist to bring in their own everyday life consumer culture to Romania, all these influenced youth culture, as well as amateur artistic activities.<sup>6</sup> In order to assess how these exchanges were possible, what their influences were, and, more importantly, what negotiations (formal or

informal) took place between various state institutions and ordinary people, one can use a variety of sources. Oral history interviews are one such solution, both in terms of sources and in terms of investigating the issue. Another source is represented by the *Securitate* files. Ordinary people, as well as celebrities, found themselves either kept under surveillance, or approached and forced into becoming informants. Of course, when reading such files, one has to take everything with a grain of salt. Despite its fearsome reputation, the *Securitate* was primarily a bureaucratic institution. It needed to maintain an ever-present image in front of the RCP, that it was the one institution to rely on in order to keep things under control. In doing so, the *Securitate* kept huge amounts of informative reports on various people, in many cases just for the sake of providing the Party leadership with the image of laborious activity. Even the smallest details were recorded, either by zealous *Securitate* officers, or simply offered by informants who thought they showed cooperation. These details, found *passim* in various such informative reports, can be used to reconstruct the youth culture of the 1960s, and beyond, as well as everyday life activities, that would be, otherwise, lost or neglected in present day memories. One such case is that of Cornel Chiriac' *Securitate* file.

### **Official versus Popular: The Case of Cornel Chiriac and Its Influence on the 1980s**

Cornel Chiriac was a radio producer, journalist, and, occasionally, a jazz drummer. He remains famous, however, for his radio broadcast for Radio Free Europe, named *Metronom*, from 1969 until 1975, when he was assassinated in Munich.<sup>7</sup>

In the early 1960s, while he was a high school pupil in his native town of Pitești, Chiriac came under the attention of the *Securitate*, for so-called "subversive actions" [*activitate de agitație cu caracter dușmănos*].<sup>8</sup> According to the *Securitate* agents who kept him under surveillance, Chiriac had manifested a "hostile attitude toward our country, the Romanian People's Republic" and had condemned Romania's attitude and policies toward the promotion of jazz music.<sup>9</sup> He was also presented as a follower of "the surrealist abstractionist movement, which is a reactionary movement, with no materialist basis whatsoever."<sup>10</sup>

Because of this, the *Securitate* infiltrated collaborators among Chiriac's close friends, to find out about his habits, musical tastes, correspondence,

and sources of information.<sup>11</sup> Chiriac openly expressed his disdain for the difficulties of having access to jazz music in Romania, as well as of popularizing jazz music, in letters to his friends, some of which were intercepted by the *Securitate*.

In a letter to a certain Mr. Colan, Chiriac asserted his frustration at not having received any feedback from the *Contemporanul* magazine, after he had sent an article about the history and importance of jazz music:

I was a bit rushed in my last letter, since I was under pressure with my letter to the *Contemporanul*. The sixteen pages, in which I presented my points of view and opinions on jazz, have cost me a night without rest.

I haven't received any answer until today. I don't know what to believe. Anyway, I'll keep on waiting. I have also sent them a note on the *Electrecord* record which has kept me busy for almost a month. I have, also, put forth a proposition about an introductory class on jazz in a magazine column inside the *Contemporanul*, dedicated to the topic.

I even went as far as citing a quote from the "Bases of Marxist-Leninist Esthetics" regarding music. Indeed, I did write in harsh terms about certain persons. Anyway, this is the last time (as it is the first time as well) when I try to write to a Romanian publication.<sup>12</sup>

The *Securitate* report containing the facsimile of the letter asked for operative measures to keep Chiriac under surveillance on a permanent basis. A few weeks later, a report from one of the *Securitate* agents, in charge of Chiriac, contained data about the latter's room and magazine collection. The room had the word "jazz" written on the wall in letters made of fir cones. Chiriac also had a transistor radio which he used – according to source "Rose" – to listen to Radio Free Europe. He had also written an underground fanzine, called "Jazz Cool", which he intended to send to his friends by post.<sup>13</sup>

Eventually, the *Securitate* intercepted Chiriac's fanzine collection, in 1963, and even had the young jazz fan report to its county headquarters in Pitești, to give a full statement of his actions. Chiriac acknowledged that he had been too "fiery and hotheaded" about his remarks about the republic, but he defended jazz music, which he saw as the music of the oppressed, the music of those who fight capitalism around the world:<sup>14</sup>

I started working on the magazine in (August) 1962 and I continued working until July 1963. I was not forced, neither was I advised by anyone

when I took this initiative. I acknowledge the fact that I have broken the rules of our state when I started editing an illegal magazine. Its content is purely musical, politically harmless. But a fact is a fact: I have committed a crime, by writing it and by disseminating it amongst the youth. [...] I saw the magazine as a means to straighten out certain problems of jazz: its deeply popular origins, (jazz is black people's music, born in the fire of the struggle for freedom, against slavery and humiliation inflicted by the American bourgeois society, founded on the domination of the white race. I was also looking to show that there is no connection between the true jazz music and commercial productions of fashionable light music: Rock 'n' Roll, Twist, Cha-Cha-Cha, Mambo, etc.<sup>15</sup>

Chiriac's case is enlightening not only because it deals with a music genre generally marginalized in Romania until the 1960s.<sup>16</sup> It is interesting because it shows the musical tastes and means of access to musical information for a young person who lived in the province. What is also interesting is the authorities' attitude toward jazz. While the *Securitate* agents considered it to be cosmopolitan and reactionary, by 1963 the state label *Electrecord* had already released a few recordings of Romanian jazz musicians, such as Teodor Cosma<sup>17</sup> or Jancsi Kőrössi. This makes the relation between state and jazz (or other music genres) more ambiguous and shows that it could vary according to the agency of the people involved. Furthermore, the reason why jazz or beat music were important for the amateur artistic movement was that it was not considered, for the most part, by the state to be part of professional musical activities, thus being relegated to amateur activities of the young generation.<sup>18</sup> This situation maintained well into the 1970s and was particularly obvious when attempting to secure a record deal with *Electrecord*. In an article in *Flacăra* Magazine in 1971, George Stanca, a pop music reviewer, noticed how hard it was for any pop artist to release a record, as they had to pass through several levels of official acceptance.<sup>19</sup> The most important one was to get official approval from the Union of Composers and Musicologists in Romania, which only included professional musicians, primarily those with a music higher education. Amateur pop bands were excluded, from the start, from such membership and faced a much tougher environment, as they had to gain support from various television and radio officials, as well as from the public. Their repertoire was, usually, the most relevant for audiences, while ordinary amateur bands were mainly artificially supported by the State, through factories and educational institutions. Cornel Chiriac's case study is of importance for exactly these amateur

bands, whose potential the socialist state never fully realized. While other such case studies are necessary to fully grasp the intricacies of state policies and everyday life reactions, it sets, nonetheless, the framework for analyzing the negotiations that took place between state and ordinary people.

## 1980s Political Festivals and Popular Music

Although political festivals played an important role throughout the history of the Romanian communist regime, they became even more important in the early 1970s, with the advent of Ceaușescu's personality cult and the shift toward a mixture of nationalism and socialist ideology. Political festivals took on the task of articulating the discourse of national commemorations through an extended series of cultural and artistic practices. Illustrating the regime's attempt at unified control and pompous celebrations, all local and national political festivals in Romania were joined together in 1976 under the umbrella of the so called "National Festival of Socialist Education and Culture *Song of Romania*".<sup>20</sup> This festival appeared after the Eleventh Congress of the Romanian Communist Party (1974) and the first Congress of Political Education and Socialist Culture (1976), when the regime included more and more nationalistic elements into its communist ideology.

Initiated in 1976, *Song of Romania* lasted until 1989, comprising seven editions, which were held every two years. Each edition lasted from autumn of one year until the summer of the following one.<sup>21</sup>

The festival focused especially on amateur artists (whether workers, pupils, peasants, etc.). It consisted of a network of artistic competitions, between all types of social, professional and age categories, and it included several phases: a lower, mass level, a county and a regional one, as well as a republican level of competition, in which, the propaganda claimed, only the selected best of the other levels would participate. Although the festival focused on amateur artists, it also included professional artists, but their function was often reduced to that of supervising the activity of amateurs. Therefore, many intellectuals and professional artists came to view *Song of Romania* as a means for depriving them of their traditional status, of creators of culture. Although, at an institutional level, this was more and more obvious in the increase of state control over professional artists' unions, the relations between "intellectuals", the regime and *Song*

of *Romania* are more complex.<sup>22</sup> By the mid-1970s, the regime had started making budget cuts in the amount of paper for magazines and books. After 1976, *Song of Romania* brought a further budget cut, by drawing in most of the state funding for artistic activities. This affected professional writers and artists directly, as indicated by reports from the *Securitate* archive.<sup>23</sup> Notwithstanding this, professional artists maintained their role and their work, as both supervisors and competitors, which in turn, preserved their social and artistic status and augmented their incomes. Thus, the official intentions of the socialist regime turned into a series of intricate negotiations, which could mean either competing for state resources in a society marred by increased shortage, resisting to it or, simply, complying with situation, in what has been called for a different ideological and historic case study “passive participation”.<sup>24</sup>

From 1976 until 1989, *Song of Romania* underwent an increase in the number of participants, ranging from 2,000,000 members for its first edition of 1976-1977, to 5,084,000 “performers and creators of various ages and professions” in 1989.<sup>25</sup> To these data, one should also add the number of passive participants, such as spectators, or persons in charge of organizing the performances.

As Anca Giurchescu points out, *Song of Romania* did not bring anything innovative concerning the type of artistic performances, continuing, in fact, a line of artistic festivals, which had been set up, with the proclamation of the communist republic.<sup>26</sup> For instance, *Festivalul filmului la sate* [The Film Festival for Villages] existed before 1976.<sup>27</sup> However, after the emergence of *Song of Romania*, this festival was incorporated in it, along with other festivals already in existence at a local or regional level.<sup>28</sup>

Nonetheless, *Song of Romania* represented the main context within which all cultural activities would take place throughout the 1980s. Thus, the festival also influenced and shaped the evolution of popular music in the last decade of socialist Romania, with consequences leading well into the post-communist period.

In the political, economic, and cultural context of 1980s socialist Romania, certain popular music genres not only survived, but flourished, while others struggled to maintain their existence. The causes for these oscillations were manifold and they went beyond the ideological realm, encompassing factors which, at times, had to do more with the evolutions of music genre publics than with Party plenums. As already seen, festivals were the basis of official culture in the latter part of Romanian late socialism. This aspect also reflected in the life of jazz music. As jazz critic

Virgil Mihaiu points out, jazz festivals played a crucial role for musicians and audiences interested in the genre.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, jazz festivals grew in number throughout the 1980s: from one major festival, held initially in Ploiești and, later on, in Sibiu, an entire framework started to grow, comprising recurring manifestations in Brașov (during winter time) and Costinești, on the Black Sea coast (during the summer). These three festivals managed to retain a recurring feature, while others, held in cities and towns, such as Iași, Satu-Mare, Zalău, etc. had only a sporadic existence. Such festivals started out in the periods of relative liberalization.<sup>30</sup>

The ones which were best organized and became most important did so also with the help of foreign musicians who played in Romania. Either from Western, capitalist countries (Roberta Flack, Chick Corea), or from socialist ones (Vladimir Tarasov, Vladimir Chekasin), these musicians wrote letters to Romanian officials, in which they described the positive experiences they had had while playing to Romanian audiences. As a consequence, they would ask Romanian officials for permission to return to such jazz festivals, thus ensuring their existence. Not only foreign musicians played an important role. Foreign magazines, namely the Polish *Jazz Forum*, provided Romanian jazz musicians and critics with an arena, within which they could present Romanian jazz life to international audiences.<sup>31</sup> This latter aspect was particularly important, since, as Virgil Mihaiu had pointed out in 1982, Romanian jazz music was not accurately reflected in Romanian newspapers and cultural magazines at the time.<sup>32</sup>

Jazz festivals and concerts could, at times, represent realms of a more open-minded approach to cultural issues. This was especially true of the Costinești festival, which was also broadcasted live on *Radio Vacanța* (Radio Holiday), a local radio station, whose range of transmission was limited, nonetheless, to the Costinești holiday resort. Notwithstanding this aspect, when it came to records, jazz music found itself in a rather dire situation throughout the 1980s: less than 15 jazz records were released by *Electrecord* from 1980 until 1989.<sup>33</sup> The musicians lucky enough to have records released during this decade were already established artists and had started to release records since the 1970s. Vocal jazz, jazz rock, contemporary jazz were considered accessible enough by *Electrecord* officials to deserve a release, while more experimental subgenres, such as free jazz, were mainly left aside.

Harry Tavitian's case was symptomatic for this latter aspect. Tavitian's first two records were released abroad, in the UK, on the independent label *Leo Records*, which had started out with the purpose of disseminating



East European and Soviet jazz music to Western audiences.<sup>34</sup> Jazz critic Virgil Mihaiu managed to smuggle a series of tape recordings, which featured Tavitian's concerts, and bring them over to the UK label. This, in its turn, released them as a series of long play records. However, not only Western audiences were intrigued by them. According to Tavitian, the *Securitate* also became interested and, indirectly, this led to the musician's first record released in Romania, with the help of the Goethe Institute.<sup>35</sup> Released in 1988, *East-West Creativ Combinations* was based on Harry Tavitian's concert of the same year, together with Corneliu Stroe and German musicians Reinhart Hammerschmidt and Hans Kumpf. The music features a combination of folk music themes, which form the basis for a series of free jazz improvisations, based on vocals, percussion, and woodwind instruments, as well as piano. Unlike other jazz records released in Romania throughout the 1980s, which enjoyed a relatively high press run, Tavitian's record was pressed in only 200 copies, and most of these were destined for the West German market.<sup>36</sup>

In a way, such cases reflected closely on jazz music's situation in the larger cultural context dominated by a festival such as *Song of Romania*: there was little official interest, but once artists started making themselves noticed abroad, personal agency could play an important role in making the system's wheels turn.

Rock music in 1980s socialist Romania had already had its own history of conflict with the regime, even though most releases by Romanian rock bands had followed the ideological principles set by the Romanian Communist Party. Thus, it is quite ironic, and telling of how Romanian rock music developed during communism, that, by 1981, the leaders of Romania's two most important rock bands had fled the country. In 1977, Nicolae Covaci had made a spectacular escape, taking with him most of the band *Phoenix*, except vocalist Mircea Baniciu.<sup>37</sup> In 1981, Dan Andrei Aldea, the leader of the other significant Romanian rock band, *Sfinx*, asked for political asylum, while on tour in Belgium, and settled in Munich. *Phoenix* had released three records during the 1970s. These had been the subject of official censorship, to various degrees. Thus, the band's first LP, *Cei ce ne-au dat nume* (1972), was supposed to feature several songs, which never passed the scrutiny of censors, for reasons which remain obscure until today.<sup>38</sup> Notwithstanding this, *Cei ce ne-au dat nume* also featured an almost fifteen minutes song, titled *Negru Vodă* (Black Voivode), which told the story of a medieval prince (voivode), who defends his motherland from foreign invaders. The song's

theme chimed well with the Romanian Communist Party's then recent ideological turn toward nationalism. At the same time, it incorporated a contemporary hard rock sound, as well as jazz improvisations, which were perfectly synchronized with the music of *Phoenix's* Western counterparts. Similarly, the LP *Zalmoxe*, *Sfinx's* second album, from 1979, dealt with the theme of the Dacian deity of the same name.<sup>39</sup> One should stress that, by the late 1970s, the history of the Dacians was considered of particular importance for reasons which had to do more with ideology than with scientific reasons.<sup>40</sup>

The histories of Nicolae Covaci and Dan Andrei Aldea are representative for the larger context within which rock musicians and rock music fans were constrained to operate not only in the 1970s, but also in the 1980s. Classically trained musicians and those who performed lighter or more traditional genres of music (such as light/pop music, or *muzică populară*) benefited from official support, when it came to reaching the status of professional artist, a title which enabled them to perform, record, and be officially acknowledged for their cultural activity. This was also because the state directly sponsored the above-mentioned music genres through institutions and music ensembles, and because it also provided aspiring musicians and artists with an educational framework, which only served to underline their cultural activity as an official one. Jazz and rock musicians did not benefit from such leverage. However, throughout the late socialist period, as the state changed its attitude toward Western based popular music genres, musicians could make use of its network of houses of culture, in order to pursue a music career. Nonetheless, in general, rock musicians encountered more difficulties. Thus, to reach the goal of getting a record deal from *Electrecord*, one needed to have success at a local level first (by playing in a house of culture, or a restaurant).<sup>41</sup> This represented a first occasion to obtain better instruments. For the musicians who lived in major cities, such as Bucharest, Cluj, or Timișoara, or near the Western border, there were more such opportunities along with the possibility of getting hold of the latest records, either as original copies, or in bootleg format. This latter aspect was also important for the informal education of aspiring young rock musicians. Likewise, family background played an important role in becoming a rock musician: in most cases, young people from middle class families, had better access to records and instruments. There were also exceptions to the rule, when houses of culture provided the instruments which were necessary. In certain cases, at major student festivals, bands which were already established and owned

better instruments agreed to lend their gear to younger performers.<sup>42</sup> For most bands, the crucial step was moving to one of the main cities. For those living in smaller towns, this happened as they pursued their higher education, a step which usually meant the break-up of previous bands and the formation of new ones, in the new location. Playing in a major house of culture or in a major restaurant could bring bands in the spotlight, as long as these would get the attention and, later on, the support of journalists who worked for a central newspaper or magazine. This was followed by the opportunity to record several songs for the national radio station. Since 1977, this radio station was usually *Radio 3 Tineret* (Radio 3 Youth), which had been established as a response to Radio Free Europe and its broadcasts on popular music, initiated by Cornel Chiriac.<sup>43</sup> Finally, if a song would enjoy popularity on the radio, then there might have been the possibility to record for the state company, *Electrecord*.<sup>44</sup> For certain bands, being part of the Festival *Song of Romania* also played a role in getting the opportunity to have their recordings released by the state label. One striking example is that of the band *Accent*, from Tulcea. A progressive rock band, playing in a highly experimental and inaccessible style, *Accent* won 1<sup>st</sup> Prize at the 1981 Edition of *Song of Romania*.<sup>45</sup>

Being a rock music fan meant that one either had to form or to become part of an already formed network, which combined informal connections and official institutions. Obtaining the latest Western records was socially conditioned: the higher the social status, the easier it was to get hold of physical copies of records, which acquired a symbolic status. Music journalist Florin-Silviu Ursulescu provides an insightful image of what it meant to become part of such networks. His sources included TAROM air pilots and truck drivers, who travelled abroad. In order to make use of their services, however, he needed foreign currency, which was only available from foreign students, who had come to study in Romania, or from low rank employees of foreign embassies.<sup>46</sup> Later on, after he started working for *Radio 3 Tineret*, he had to use his informal contacts again, this time not only to obtain the latest records of successful Western rock bands, such as *Led Zeppelin* or *Pink Floyd*, but also of more obscure artists from Italy or France, who had recorded for *Electrecord* during the 1960s and were accepted by censorship for radio broadcasting.<sup>47</sup>

According to the musicians who lived during late socialist Romania, censorship was omnipresent. It manifested itself at various levels and its agency took on many forms. For instance, as Ursulescu recalls, radio censorship comprised several stages: a sound engineer would verify the

tape on which the music was recorded and approved it from a technical point of view. Foreign lyrics were translated. A second censor would listen to the tape, while reading the lyrics. Only then would the tape be marked as *bun de emisie* (approved for broadcast).<sup>48</sup>

*Electrecord* also had its own censors, who could decide whether the artwork, music, or lyrics for a record were inappropriate for a variety of reasons. Rodion Roșca, the leader of the band *Rodion G.A.*, recalls how lyrics were modified for no reasons, or in order to oust just one word which was considered troublesome. For instance, for the song *Satul de rouă* (The Village Made of Dew), the lyrics *Sufletu-mi la tine vine,/Să-l purifici și să-l ierți* (My soul comes to you/So you may purify and forgive it) had the word *purifici* (purify) replaced with *întâmpini* (welcome). According to Roșca, the word *purifici* was considered mystical and this led to it being censored. One can only wonder then why another word such as *suflet* (soul) was left unmodified.<sup>49</sup> In other cases surprisingly daring lyrics managed to appear on disc. One such case was of the song *Protest*, by the band *Metrock*, from the city of Oradea. *Protest* opened the B side of the band's sole LP, *Castelul de nisip* (The Sand Castle). It featured lyrics such as *Vreau să știu de ce se uită unii după mine/Fiindcă am păr lung și barbă, c-așa-mi stă mai bine* (I want to know why some people look strangely at me/Because I have long hair and a beard, 'cause this is how I look my best).<sup>50</sup> Furthermore the lyrics opened the song and were repeated in the second stanza, after an aggressive, hard rock style, guitar solo. One explanation for this situation is the fact that the song's theme dealt with peace and the fight against war, a topic which had been a favorite of official propaganda during the 1950s and had been brought again upfront during the 1980s. Such a theme also allowed *Metrock* to feature its four members on the LP cover wearing long hair and beards, a rather uncommon feature for the *Electrecord* artwork at the time.<sup>51</sup>

Similarly, the most famous Romanian hard rock band of the 1980s, *Iris* used the theme of peace, to feature a portrait of AC/DC guitar player, Angus Young, on the cover of their second LP, *Iris II*, in 1987.<sup>52</sup> Created by fellow musician and illustrator Alexandru Andrieș, the front cover of *Iris II* depicted Angus Young during a live performance, dressed in his trademark school-boy uniform. One cannot see the guitarist's face, as his head is leaned forward. Both his head and the guitar head are painted to indicate an explosion of energy and fire. Furthermore, the one song on the album which dealt explicitly with the theme of peace, *Lumea vrea pace* (People want peace), combines the musical styles of two of the

most prominent hard rock/heavy metal Western bands of the 1980s: *AC/DC* and *Judas Priest*. The chorus of the song is built following the *AC/DC* pattern: the backing vocalists repeat the word *pace* (peace), supporting the front vocalist. *AC/DC* would use the same type of chorus, to underline messages that, nonetheless, dealt with sexuality, over-the-top masculinity, or debauchery.

Other bands enjoyed less luck. For instance, the band *Celelalte Cuvinte* had the cover for their first album rejected, because it depicted antique ruins and modern buildings. Allegedly, the reason behind this rejection had to do with the year of the LP release, which coincided with the tenth-year commemoration since the 1977 earthquake. One should notice that *Celelalte Cuvinte*'s music style was that of progressive rock, including numerous folk influences. By the second half of the 1980s, the genre was not only unfashionable among Western audiences, but it had lost any features which the official regime might have regarded as threatening.<sup>53</sup> Notwithstanding, censorship was much more permissive when it came to live concerts in smaller venues. Audiences could manifest themselves: scream, shout, sing in unison with the band. Performers could play, while imitating their Western counterparts and role models.<sup>54</sup>

The black market and informal networks played a crucial part in the history of both jazz and rock music during late socialist Romania, but, as the 1980s carried on, they became more important. Distribution networks were created with the purpose of disseminating popular music records among students, high-school pupils, as well as factory workers who resided either in urban or rural areas. While certain networks were facilitated by the very modernization process the socialist state had started (such as airline or maritime transportation, access to Romanian higher education for foreign students), others depended heavily on connections that existed before the communist period. In this latter sense, areas such as Banat (in the western part of Romania, bordering Hungary and Yugoslavia) or the cities of Brăila and Galați (both ports on the Danube, in the eastern part of the country) saw the development of black markets, centered around the distribution and manufacture of recordings, which depended more on their historical transnational character.

By the mid-1980s, Western editions of the then fashionable hard rock/heavy metal bands could cost as much as 800 lei per copy. By comparison, the price for one *Electrecord* record was 26 lei, seldom reaching 28. Most sellers made copies of the record and either sold the copies and kept the original, or vice versa.<sup>55</sup> A special case study is that of the Romanian

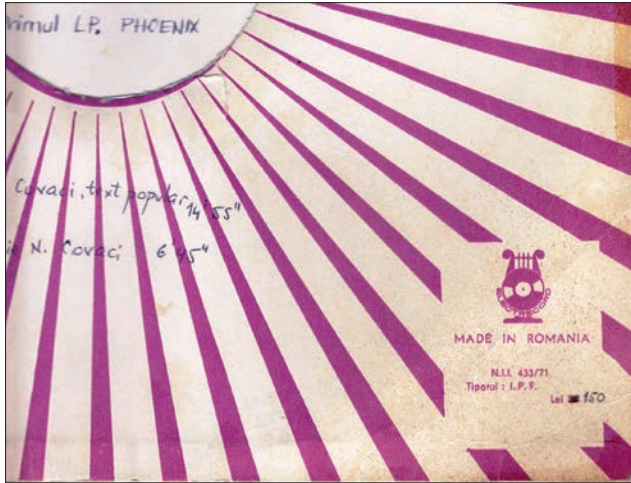
band *Phoenix* and of the *Sfinx* recordings which featured Dan Andrei Aldea.<sup>56</sup> Because most members from *Phoenix* and several from *Sfinx* had either fled or immigrated, the 1970s records of the two bands were not accessible anymore. Furthermore, the band *Phoenix* was eliminated altogether from the Romanian rock music guide published in two editions, 1977 and 1979.<sup>57</sup> The fact that *Electrecord* did not reissue these bands' releases did not prevent fans from purchasing them illegally, most of the times from official vendors in the main music magazines.<sup>58</sup> One worker from the *Electrecord* pressing plant even started printing bootlegs of the three LPs *Phoenix* had released during the previous decade. Allegedly, he gave them away as presents, until one day a *Securitate* colonel asked for a copy of such a bootleg from the *Electrecord* director. Despite the colonel's claim that the copy was supposed to be a present for his daughter, the director denied the whole story, started an internal investigation and, eventually, fired the worker.<sup>59</sup>



Phoenix, *Cei ce ne-au dat nume* (1980s Bootleg Copy)  
(Author's Personal Collection)

The story was presented in one of the main Romanian newspapers in the early 2010s. The worker, who wished to remain anonymous, omitted, however, an important part of the narrative. The bootleg records were not offered as gifts, but got sold for sums of money which varied from 150 to 200 lei per LP.<sup>60</sup> This meant, for instance, that *Phoenix's* double LP, *Cantofabule*, sold for as much as 400 lei. The records came in generic

*Electrecord* sleeves and had no labels. Certain buyers designed their own labels and artwork.<sup>61</sup> Even compared to the prices for Western made records, those paid for unofficial copies of Phoenix LPs seem unusually high, given the bootleg audio quality and the lack of original artwork. The fact is indicative for the high regard the band still enjoyed from its audiences.



Price of a *Phoenix* Bootleg LP (Detail)  
(Author's Personal Collection)

Jazz and rock music during the 1980s survived rather than developed, an aspect which holds especially true when one considers the number of releases by *Electrecord* for each genre. While the number of rock music records was higher than that of jazz records, the two-combined represented an almost insignificant number, when compared to those dedicated to classical music, folk, light music, or political records. Furthermore, it would seem rather odd to include the so-called *muzică populară* in the realm of popular music. The term has been closely associated with that of folklore, usually referring to oral music, which developed independently of state institutions.<sup>62</sup> Leaving aside the (completely erroneous) juxtapositions one might make between the word-by-word English translation of *muzică populară* and popular music *per se*, in this case, by *muzică populară* one understands the hybrid musical form, based on traditional folk music which



emerged in the interwar period. *Muzică populară* combined influences from the contemporary light music, as well as elements of early jazz music. Thus, *muzică populară* existed before the communist regime, but it was changed by the latter. State socialism brought in the large orchestral ensembles, following the Soviet model. Furthermore, instruments such as the saxophone, which was not typical for traditional folk music, were incorporated by *muzică populară* performers and ensembles. Likewise, vocal styles underwent a drastic change: vocal styles more specific to light music replaced the sudden changes between vocal registers, which used to be a feature of traditional folk music.

The repertoire of *muzică populară* included both old and new songs. Some had been written as so-called “cântece românești” (Romanian songs) during the interwar period, but were later re-orchestrated with the use of large ensembles.<sup>63</sup> At the start of the 1980s, *muzică populară* comprised a mixture of traditional folk songs, “Romanian songs”, and new songs whose lyrics dealt with the achievements of state socialism (or so-called “fakelore”).<sup>64</sup> *Muzică populară* performers started their careers in the same way as all other performers, in houses of culture, often taking classes in școli populare de artă (people’s schools of art). Later, they could join ensembles of state institutions and become better known as performers.<sup>65</sup> This was a major step in any *muzică populară* performer’s career. Because they were hired in official ensembles which went on tour and often recorded for *Electrecord*, performers of *muzică populară* could afford a decent living. The most famous and commercially successful ones enjoyed even better conditions, despite the financial losses caused by institutions such as the state record label, or *Agenția Română de Impresariat Artistic* (The Romanian Agency for Artistic Management).

While *muzică populară* and *fakelore* were not synonymous, they shared an entangled relation, which is best noticed in the releases put out by *Electrecord*. Thus, one can identify two main approaches: the first one was that of compilations of the so-called *cântece de viață nouă* (songs of new life). Such LPs were released by the state label, bearing either the actual title of one of the songs, or generic titles such as *Țară nouă, cântec nou* (New Country, New Song). Such a record would comprise several singers, among whom, usually, there were one or two famous ones (such as Maria Ciobanu, Sofia Vicoveanca, or Nicolae Furdui Iancu).<sup>66</sup> The second approach was that of solo albums, by famous *muzică populară* performers, which would include one *fakelore* song. One such example is *Eu vreau pace, eu vreau pace*, by singer Ion Dolănescu, released on



cassette, in 1982. The title song is typical for the state folklore of the era, while the selection of the remaining songs from the album includes *muzică populară* and folklore. In this case, one should also underline the physical format of the album, since cassettes cost 100 lei at the time, a considerable price, which symbolized Dolănescu's commercial success.<sup>67</sup>

Light music performers benefited, more or less, from the same advantages offered by the socialist state, as did *muzică populară* singers. During the 1980s, the majority of light music songwriters still bore the influences of Italian pop music and French chansons, which had permeated through the Iron Curtain during the 1960s. Thematically, lyrics dealt with abstract and vague stories of love, hope, and fulfillment. There was also a modernizing trend, which encompassed genres such as electronic music, new wave, synth-pop or Italo-disco, and this would form the mainstream style by the end of the 1980s.<sup>68</sup> With the advent of *glasnost* and *perestroika* in the USSR in the second half of the 1980s, Western influences manifested more from the east than from the west, as can be noticed on several songs released in the late 1980s.

One such example is *Voi cânta pentru mileniul III*, performed by Angela Similea and written by Marius Țicu.<sup>69</sup> Released on *Electrecord* in 1987, the intro to the song featured a series of sound effects specific for the so-called *cosmic disco* subgenre. *Cosmic disco* had begun in France in the late 1970s and had enjoyed tremendous success in the USSR in the early 1980s. Bands like *Zodiac* sold impressive amounts of album copies and their records, released by the Soviet label *Melodiya*, also circulated in Romania.<sup>70</sup> In terms of lyrical content, censorship manifested itself as vigorously as in rock music. Words and themes were scrutinized. The criteria for censorship varied, however, and depended heavily on agency and personal interaction.

The content of lyrics was not a major problem for the last genre of this overview, that of the so-called *proto-manele*. The term refers to a group of performers, from various cities and provinces of Romania, who played a combination of folk music, *muzică populară*, pop music, using modern, electronic instruments. Musical influences were multiple: from the Yugoslav *novocomponovana narodna muzika* to Greek music, from the traditional *muzică lăutărească* to Middle-Eastern music.<sup>71</sup> *Proto-manele* bands, such as *Azur* from Brăila, or *Generic* from Galați, benefitted tremendously from the multicultural and multiethnic life of their native cities and this aspect was evident in the music they performed in restaurants and at weddings. The lyrics included themes about unshared love, the

brevity of life, and made extensive use of innuendos about social and intimate life. Unlike jazz or rock music, not to mention *muzică populară* or light music, *proto-manele* were tolerated only informally, and only at a local level, by local state officials. *Proto-manele* bands never took part in any edition of *Song of Romania*, *Electrecord* never released any LPs and mass media remained completely silent about the existence of such performers. Notwithstanding, *proto-manele* bands enjoyed more and more commercial success, at first among local audiences. The existence of black markets, informal networks and cassette bootleggers only served to increase their appeal at a national level.<sup>72</sup> The performers of such bands were officially acknowledged by the state, but their music and lyrics were not. From this point of view, *proto-manele* represented a low-brow cultural alternative to the high-brow one, represented by jazz and rock music. While the audiences for the above-mentioned music genres were almost diametrically opposed in terms of music taste, social class, education, they both profited from cultural alternatives which were rather tolerated by the socialist state than encouraged. Furthermore, they profited in different ways. The communist regime had a tighter grip on jazz and rock music, especially when it came to officially released records. Notwithstanding this aspect, the audience and performers often found the alternative they were looking for in the music they were listening. This became particularly true in the context of live concerts. *Proto-manele* audiences were mainly ignored by state officials, which also meant that they could enjoy more freedom within a mainly live performance context, not only when it came to music, but also to lyrics.

## Concluding Remarks

When concluding this overview of popular music in the cultural context of 1980s socialist Romania, one needs to point out several aspects. First, popular music in socialist Romania was much more diverse than met the eye, and alternative music included both high and low-brow genres of music. Not only educated, cultured urban people resented officially approved political music, although, in their case, they developed a strong sense of elitism, which was not entirely specific to the time and space context of 1980s socialist Romania. By the 1980s, jazz listeners had developed a similar sense in liberal democracies and in more permissive socialist states as well. However, the identity of such listeners

and musicians was formed under the influence of both the political and music context.

Second, the communist regime was not a monobloc; it had numerous layers, starting from the top decisions, in whose approval Ceaușescu had increasing authority, going through an intermediate level, including party activists, people with functions in the Council of Socialist Culture and Education, all the way down to local level activists, sound engineers and sound editors, or newspaper editors. In certain cases, such as those of *proto-manele* bands, the public played a crucial role. This is not to downplay the role of the audiences for other music genres.

Regarding rock music, it may not be one of the first things one thinks of when remembering the legacy of Romanian state socialism, which is still embedded either in the dark image of Nicolae Ceaușescu's authoritarian regime, or in the nostalgic colors of socialist achievements. Nevertheless, rock music played an important part within the youth culture of the 1970s and 1980s: from underground student concerts and festivals to performances held on stadiums, from unofficial tapes of concert recordings, to official record sales numbering in the hundreds of thousands. Censorship, bribes, and personal connections, all mattered in the quest for releasing an album, or even an EP, on the state-owned record company, named *Electrecord*. More than this, the state constantly sought to adapt the youth's pop and rock aspirations to its own ideological creed, and the result often consisted of albums with intended tracks missing because of censorship tags, such as "mystical lyrics", delayed albums, because of "esthetically inappropriate" vocals, or albums with songs dedicated to themes that were central to the state propaganda of the time, such as the fight for disarmament.

While the popular music scene was much more nuanced and open to foreign influences than the official sources would acknowledge, the entangled relationship between official and alternative types of music culture would have an impact on the evolution of popular music genres well into the post socialist period.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> This was regulated through numerous normative acts published in the *Buletinul Oficial al M.A.N. al R.P.R.* See, for instance, *Ibidem*, no. 6, 1948, pp. 67-69; *Ibidem*, no. 2, 1950, pp. 34-37; *Ibidem*, no. 9, 1953, pp. 145-146.
- <sup>2</sup> This is particularly evident in the content of articles published in *Îndrumătorul cultural* (The Cultural Guide) over the 1950s.
- <sup>3</sup> See Timothy W. Ryback, *Rock around the Bloc: A History of Rock Music in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990, pp. 121-126.
- <sup>4</sup> See <http://www.discogs.com/Entuzia%C8%99tii-Dynamite-A-Girl-Like-You-Got-A-Funny-Feeling-She-Is-So-Sweet/release/1736432> ; (last retrieved on November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016)
- <sup>5</sup> See <http://www.discogs.com/Sincron-Sincron/release/4975235> ; (last retrieved on November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016)
- <sup>6</sup> Timothy W. Ryback, *op. cit.*, p. 122.
- <sup>7</sup> See Daniela Caraman Fotea, Cristian Nicolau, *Dicționar rock, pop, folk*, [Rock, Pop, Folk Music Dictionary], Bucharest: Humanitas, 1999, p. 89-91.
- <sup>8</sup> The Archive of the National Council for the Study of the *Securitate* Files [further presented by its Romanian acronym ACNSAS], File I 204265, Surveillance File for Chiriac, Cornel, Volume 1, p.5.
- <sup>9</sup> ACNSAS, File I 204265, Volume 1, p. 7.
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, p.4.
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 24.
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 90.
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 31 and pp. 45-46.
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, Volume 1, p. 132.
- <sup>15</sup> ACNSAS, File I 204265, Volume 1, p. 131.
- <sup>16</sup> Very few jazz recordings had been released by *Electrecord* in the late 1950s and early 1960s. They were mostly presented as dance music and edited on 78 rpm records with two songs, one per each side. One exception to this was a 10inch vinyl record including world dance music and a few jazz numbers, one starring the pioneer of jazz in Romania, Jancsi Kőrösy. See <http://www.discogs.com/Orchestra-Electrecord-Dirijor-Teodor-Cosma-lancsi-Kőrösy-Muzic%C4%83-De-Dans-Programul-Nr-2/release/4469445>. Last retrieved on June 23, 2017. Kőrösy himself would make his recorded debut on labels in Czechoslovakia and Hungary, before releasing his first album in in 1965 in Romania, the first of what was to become *Seria Jazz* (The Jazz Series). See <http://www.discogs.com/Jancsi-K%C3%B6r%C3%B6ssy-Jancsi-K%C3%B6r%C3%B6ssy/release/1417776> . Last retrieved on June 23, 2017.
- <sup>17</sup> See <http://www.discogs.com/artist/Teodor+Cosma> . Last retrieved on June 23, 2017.

- 18 For further information, see Nelu Stratone, *Rock sub seceră și ciocan. Prima parte din cronica muzicii rock în România*, Timișoara: Ariergarda, 2016, p. 337-350.
- 19 George Stanca, "Cât de greu se scoate la noi un disc", in *Flacăra*, No. 7 (284)/1971, p. 14.
- 20 The original Romanian title is *Festivalul Național al Educației și Culturii Socialiste Cântarea României*. The name of the festival was inspired by a famous poem, with the same title, written by Alecu Russo, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The original poem emphasized the love of the author toward his country, as well as the beauty of Romanian lands. In choosing this name for the festival, the regime of Nicolae Ceaușescu intended to resort to national ideology as means of gaining legitimacy.  
English translations of the name have varied, but without essential differences. The translation encountered mostly is that of "Song of Romania". Other alternatives are "Singing of Romania" (as the name of the festival is translated in the Subject Files of the Romanian Unit, at the Open Society Archives: <http://www.archivum.ws/db/fa/300-60-1-1.htm> Last entry: February 04, 2017). This is due to the fact that "Cântarea României" is an ambiguous term, allowing both translations. The festival was also known as "Cântare României", which can only be translated as "Song to Romania", acknowledging the existence of the dative case, and not the genitive case, as it happens with "Singing of Romania". Katherine Verdery took into account only the genitive case, using the translation "Song of Romania" (see Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism. Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu's Romania*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991, pp. 114, 212. This latter translation is also the one I have opted for, taking into account Nicolae Ceaușescu's intentions for the festival. On November 1<sup>st</sup> 1976, during the meeting of the Executive Bureau of the National Council of Socialist Unity Front, Ceaușescu considered that the name "Cântarea României" [Song of Romania] is better, arguing that "Trebuie să cînte România, nu să cîntăm pentru România." [It is Romania that must sing, not us for Romania]. See ANIC, Secția organizatorică, file 20/1976, folio 2 v.
- 21 Few researches have been conducted on this topic, despite its importance and spectacular character. This means that the history of the festival "Song of Romania" is still under-researched. Anca Giurchescu was among the first to focus on this festival, and the first to construct a theoretical analysis of the latter. Her 1987 article on "Song of Romania" puts forth a typology of functions of the festival and its main features, focusing especially on the political uses of folklore by the communist regime. However, the article lacks primary sources and represents mainly a 1980s perspective on "Song of Romania", while the festival was still underway. See Anca Giurchescu, «The National Festival "Song of România", Symbols in Political Discourse», in Claes Arvidson, Lars Erik, Blomqvist, *Symbols of Power: The Esthetics of Political Legislation in the*

- Soviet Union and Eastern Europe*. Stockholm, Almqvist & Wiskill International, 1987, pp. 163–171. A more comprehensive, as well as more recent, analysis of the festival is to be found in Vintilă Mihăilescu, «A New Festival for the New Man: The Socialist Market of Folk Experts during the ‘Singing Romania’ National Festival», in Vintilă Mihăilescu, Ilia Iliev, Slobodan Naumovic (eds.), *Studying peoples in the people’s democracies. II: socialist era anthropology in south-east Europe*, Berlin, Lit, London, Global, Piscataway, NJ, Transaction Publishers, 2008, pp. 55-80.
- 22 One important question for this discussion refers to the definition of an “intellectual class” in a socialist regime, more precisely in socialist Romania. Since the socialist regime operated with an ideology based on a static class structure, “intellectuals” were to be defined by what they were not, namely peasants and workers. Thus, their role became ambiguous: on the one hand, they, together with peasants – who were gradually turning into peasant workers – were supposed to lose their specific features on the long run, by the creation of the “new man”. However, in the permanent transition toward communism, they were assigned a crucial role, that of media between the Party’s ideology and the uneducated classes.
- 23 The file of Romanian poetess Nina Cassian (who was kept under surveillance by the *Securitate* for more than 12 years, for her private or public criticisms to the Party’s policies) contains several references to budget cuts in artistic activities that affected her and other professional artists directly or indirectly, as well as mentioning of the *Song of Romania* Festival, seen as a threat to professional artists’ status. Thus, in one private meeting, recorded and transcribed by the *Securitate*, Cassian complains that “while writers are deprived of all their advantages, billions of work hours are spent for *Song of Romania*, and the competitors don’t want to go back to the factories and manifest a desire for becoming professionals”. A.C.N.S.A.S., Nina Cassian (Ștefănescu Renee Annie), Dosar Informativ No. 256690, Vol. 4, file 139. This sort of complaint is expressed on various occasions in the company of fellow writers and artists. See for instance, A.C.N.S.A.S., Nina Cassian (Ștefănescu Renee Annie), Dosar Informativ No. 256690, Vol. 1, file 28 back page, file 246, or file 293, or Vol. 4, file 84.
- 24 For the latter aspect, see Detlev J.K. Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany: Conformity, Opposition, and Racism in Everyday Life*, Yale University Press, 1989. Stephen Kotkin discusses the usefulness of such an approach for the study of the 1930s Soviet Union. See Stephen Kotkin, «1991 and the Russian Revolution: Sources, Conceptual Categories, Analytical Frameworks», *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 70, No. 2 (June, 1998), p. 419.
- 25 HU OSA 300-60-1. Romanian Unit. Subject Files. Box 109. Folder 804. Bucharest Agerpress, September 8, 1989.

- 26 Anca Giurchescu, «The National Festival “Song of Romania”: Manipulation of Symbols in the Political Discourse», in Claes Arvidsson, Lars Erik Blomqvist, *op. cit.*, p. 164.
- 27 This particular festival is mentioned, for instance, in *Scînteia*, January 11, 1975, 4. *Song of Romania* only started in 1976.
- 28 See the mentioning of the Film Festival for Villages, 1976-1977 Edition, in *Scînteia*, December 2, 1976, 4. The Festival is officially organized under the auspices of the *Song of Romania* festival.
- 29 Virgil Mihaiu, *Jazz Connections in Romania*, Bucharest: Institutul Cultural Român, 2007, pp. 89-91 and 105-116.
- 30 When using the term “relative liberalization”, one must consider the context of the 1980s in socialist Romania, marked by Nicolae Ceaușescu’s personality cult, cultural autarchy, and nationalism. Such periods were brief and they allowed film makers, musicians, writers, or visual artists to release works which went beyond the narrow canons of official propaganda, while not going against the main principles set by the Party. In filmography such a period was during the early 1980s and it included movies by Dan Pița or Mircea Danieliuc. See Cristian Tudor Popescu, *Filmul surd în România mută. Politică și propagandă în filmul românesc de ficțiune (1912-1989)*, Bucharest: Polirom, 2011, p. 235. In rock music, *Electrecord* released albums such as the Club A compilation (1981), which featured rock bands and jazz groups live in concert. Until 1989 this was the only live rock album released by *Electrecord*.
- 31 One such article, published in *Jazz Forum* No. 100 (1986) was a review by Sorin Antohi to Virgil Mihaiu’s first book on jazz music, *Cutia de rezonanță*. Mihaiu’s book was one of a handful published in Romania on jazz music in general during late socialism. See also Virgil Mihaiu, *op. cit.*, p. 108.
- 32 See Virgil Mihaiu, *Cutia de rezonanță*, Bucharest, Editura Albatros, 1985, p. 269. Mihaiu’s first book on jazz music included a series of essays dealing with jazz music in general from a 1980s perspective. The last essay of the collection, sent to the publishing house in 1982, reflected on Romanian jazz music at the start of the 1980s. See Virgil Mihaiu, *Cutia de rezonanță*, pp. 267-287.
- 33 Among these were Aura Urziceanu – „Once I Loved” (*Am iubit odată*) (1981, *Electrecord* ST-EDE 01892); *Over the Rainbow* (1984, *Electrecord* ST-EDE 02505/02506); Marius Popp – *Nodul Gordian* (1984, *Electrecord* ST-EDE 02377); *Acordul fin / Fine Tuning* (1989, *Electrecord* ST-EDE 03503); Johnny Răducanu – *Confesiuni II / Confessions II* (1982, *Electrecord* ST-EDE 02079); *Confesiuni 3* (1986, *Electrecord* ST-EDE 02923); *Jazz Made in Romania* (1987, *Electrecord* ST-EDE 03140).
- 34 For an overview of the label, see its official webpage: <http://www.leorecords.com/> (accessed July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017) and its Discogs page: <https://www.discogs.com/>

- com/label/28723-Leo-Records (accessed July 1st, 2017). See also Virgil Mihaiu, *Jazzorelief*, Bucharest, Editura Nemira, 1993, p. 65.
- 35 See *Muzici și faze*, Interview with Harry Tavitian. Available at: <http://www.muzicisifaze.com/interviu.php?id=21> (accessed on July 1st, 2017). See also, Virgil Mihaiu, *Jazz Connections in Romania*, pp. 103-104.
- 36 Harry Tavitian, personal communication with the author, May 2016.
- 37 See Nicolae Covaci, *Phoenix în să eu...*, Bucharest: Nemira Publishing House, 1994, pp. 427-432. Also, Nicolae Covaci, *Giudecata înțeleptilor*, Bucharest: Integral Publishing House, 2014, pp. 9-24.
- 38 See Nelu Stratone, *op. cit.*, p. 179.
- 39 For more on how the *Zalmoxe* LP actually fell in line with the official ideology, see Caius Dobrescu "The Phoenix That Could Not Rise: Politics and Rock Culture in Romania: 1960-1989", in *East Central Europe*, 2-3, no. 38 (2011), pp. 255-290.
- 40 Not only rock music dealt with the history and mythology of ancient Dacia. Contemporary classical musicians also wrote numerous works dedicated to the Dacians. See for instance, Ștefan Niculescu, *Simfonia a II-a, „Opus Dacicum”* (1980), Mansi Barberis, *Itinerar Dacic* (lieder), or Liviu Glodeanu, the opera *Zamolxe* (1969). For further information, see Valentina Sandu-Dediu, *Muzica românească între 1944-2000*, Bucharest: Editura muzicală, 2002, p. 245 and p. 236 respectively.
- 41 This aspect was true for rock musicians since the beginnings of rock music in Romania. See Nelu Stratone, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-51.
- 42 *Ibidem*, pp. 160-166.
- 43 Florin Silviu Ursulescu, *FSU: Florin Silviu Ursulescu în dialog cu Doru Ionescu*, Bucharest: Casa de pariuri literare, 2015, p. 68.
- 44 Even then, however, there was the possibility of being rejected by sound editors and censors, for a variety of reasons. For instance, one band, *Kappa*, from Cluj, allegedly refused to pay a bribe to one of the sound editors from *Electrecord* and never had the chance to record a song during the 1980s. See <http://www.clujulcultural.ro/exclusiv-clujenii-de-la-kappa-primul-album-de-rock-progresiv-dupa-30-de-ani/> 9Last accessed: July 3rd, 2017).
- 45 Back cover of the LP Grupul Pro Musica / Grupul Accent – *Formații Rock 9* (1986, Romania: *Electrecord* ST-EDE 02918).
- 46 Florin-Silviu Ursulescu, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-14.
- 47 *Ibidem*, p. 64.
- 48 *Ibidem*, pp. 66-67.
- 49 Rodion Ladislau Roșca, personal communication, June 2017.
- 50 One review of the album misread the lyrics as *Vreau să știu de ce se uită unii după mine/Fiindcă am păr lung și barbă, c-așa-mi stă mai bine* (I want to know why some people look strangely at me/Because I have long hair and a beard, 'cause this is how I look my best). See Mihai Plămădeală,



- Review *Metrock – Castelul de nisip*. Source: <http://www.muzicisifaze.com/trupa.php?id=248&cat=1> (accessed on July 10th, 2017). However, *Metrock* songwriter, lyricist, guitarist, and vocalist Marius Luca denies this variant. Marius Luca, personal communication, July 2017.
- 51 See *Metrock, Castelul de nisip* (1982, *Electrecord* ST-EDE 02077). Artwork available at <https://www.discogs.com/Metrock-Castelul-De-Nisip/release/1490617> (Last accessed on July 4th, 2017). Also available in Traian Doru Marinescu, *Disc(RO)mania. Enciclopedia albumelor muzicale românești pop/rock/folk/jazz 195-2014*, Bucharest: Act și Politon, 2017, p. 123.
- 52 See *Iris – Iris II* (1987, *Electrecord* ST-EDE 03138). Artwork available at <https://www.discogs.com/Iris-II/release/1379792> (Last accessed on July 4th, 2017). See also, Traian Doru Marinescu, *op. cit.*, p. 110.
- 53 For the censored artwork and official front cover, see *Celelalte Cuvinte – Celelalte Cuvinte* (2017 CD Reissue, Soft Records, SFTR-044-2) Available at <https://www.discogs.com/Celelalte-Cuvinte-Celelalte-Cuvinte/release/10004622> (Accessed on July 4th, 2017). See also Traian Doru Marinescu, *op. cit.*, p. 60.
- 54 See, for instance a live performance from May 1989 by the rock band *Pro Musica*, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ZOeuQ4iWQM> (accessed on July 5th, 2017). See also Radu Lupașcu, “Interview with Florin Ochescu”, in Radu Lupașcu, *Rock Interviuuri*, Bucharest: Blumenthal, 2012, p. 148.
- 55 E.C., personal communication, March 2017. A.M., personal communication, April 2017.
- 56 Sfinx released a third record in 1984, without Dan Andrei Aldea.
- 57 See Daniela Caraman Fotea, Florian Lungu, *Disco Ghid-Rock*, Bucharest: Editura muzicală, pp. 218-220. The dictionary includes the bands Passport, Pesniari, Picket Wilson, Pink Floyd, omitting Phoenix.
- 58 A.M., personal communication, April 2017. The price for Sfinx’s *Zalmoxe* LP was 40 lei during the 1980s, compared to the official 26 lei one.
- 59 See Paul Rogojinaru, “Cum s-au editat discuri cu Phoenix sub nasul cenzurii comuniste”, in *Jurnalul național*, December 4, 2012. Available at: <http://jurnalul.ro/special-jurnalul/interviuri/cum-s-au-editat-discuri-cu-phoenix-sub-nasul-cenzurii-comuniste-630675.html> (Accessed on July 5th, 2017)
- 60 E.C., personal communication, March 2017. I.R., personal communication, December 2016. E.C. bought his bootleg copy of the record *Cei ce ne-au dat nume* for 150 lei and, later, sold it for the same amount. I.R. bought all three albums for 200 lei per LP, 600 lei in total.
- 61 *Ibidem*.
- 62 See Speranța Rădulescu, “Actors and Performance” in Margaret Beissinger, Speranța Rădulescu, Anca Giurchescu, *Manele in Romania. Cultural*

*Expression and Cultural Meaning in Balkan Popular Music*, Lanham, Boulder: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016, pp. 139-140 and p. 157.

63 One of the most famous examples is that of “Sanie cu zurgălăi” (Sleigh with bells), written in 1937 for singer Maria Tănase and later recorded by folk and muzică populară singer Maria Lătărețu, with a different chorus and altered lyrics. For further info, see <https://folclormuzical.wordpress.com/2014/12/26/saniecuzurgalai/> (accessed on July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017).

64 For further information on the topic of *folklorism* and *fakelore* see Anca Giurchescu, “The Power of Dance and Its Social and Political Uses”, in *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, Vol. 33. (2001), p. 117.

65 One such case was of muzică populară singer Ion Dolănescu, who started out in a people’s school of art. During his military service, he became part of the “Ciocarlia” Ensemble, which was his artistic and commercial breakthrough. See [https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ion\\_Dol%C4%83nescu](https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ion_Dol%C4%83nescu) (accessed July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017).

66 See, for instance, Various artists, Țară nouă, cântec nou (1975, *Electrecord* EPE 01172). For further information, see <https://www.discogs.com/Various-%C8%9Aar%C4%83-Nou%C4%83-C%C3%AEntec-Nou/release/4660130> (accessed on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017).

67 See Ion Dolănescu, *Eu vreau pace, eu vreau pace* (1982, *Electrecord* STC 00174).

68 The most prominent songwriter and composer, who spearheaded the influence of electronic music onto Romanian pop music, was Adrian Enescu.

69 See Angela Similea, Marius Țeicu, *Nu-mi lua iubirea* (1987, *Electrecord* ST-EDE 03130). For further information, see <https://www.discogs.com/Angela-Similea-%C8%98i-Marius-%C8%9Aeicu-Nu-mi-Lua-Iubirea/release/3260622> (last accessed on July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017).

70 See, for instance, Zodiac, *Music In The Universe* (1982, USSR, Melodiya, C60 — 18365-6). For further information, see <https://www.discogs.com/Zodiac-Music-In-The-Universe/release/242244> (accessed on July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017).

71 An excellent example for the multitude of music influences is that of Dan Armeanca. Armeanca started out as a factory worker and amateur musician. According to him, he was influenced by so-called „Oriental music” (music played in Middle-Eastern countries, such as Syria or Iraq), rock guitarists, Italian pop music, and traditional muzică lăutărească. See <https://www.vice.com/ro/article/53bd8d/cine-a-inventat-manelele-in-romania> (last accessed on July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017).

72 For more detailed information, see an interview with Nelu Vlad, leader of the and Azur, from Brăila: <https://www.vice.com/ro/article/3dq5nb/interviu-nelu-vlad-trupa-azur> (last accessed July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017).

## Bibliography

### Archives:

- The National Archives of Romania, Fonds Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party (Bucharest, Romania)
- The National Archives of Romania, Fonds Union of Composers (Bucharest, Romania)
- The Archives of the National Council for the Study of *Securitate* Archives (Bucharest, Romania)

### Audio Records:

- Angela Similea & Marius Țicu – *Nu-mi lua iubirea* (1987, Romania: *Electrecord* ST-EDE 03130)
- Celelalte Cuvinte – *Celelalte Cuvinte* (1987, Romania: *Electrecord* ST-EDE 03137)
- Celelalte Cuvinte – *Celelalte Cuvinte* (2017 CD reissue, Romania: *Soft Records* SFTR-044-2)
- Compact / Grup 2005 – *Formații Rock 6* (1981, Romania: *Electrecord* ST-EDE 02145)
- Grupul Pro Musica / Grupul Accent – *Formații Rock 9* (1986, Romania: *Electrecord* ST-EDE 02918)
- Harry Tavitian & Creativ – *Horizons* (1985, United Kingdom: *Leo Records*, LR 124)
- Harry Tavitian, Corneliu Stroe – *Transylvanian Suite* (1986, United Kingdom: *Leo Records* LR 132)
- Harry Tavitian, Corneliu Stroe, Reinhart Hammerschmidt, Hans Kumpf – *East-West Creativ Combinations* (1988, Romania: *Leader Jazz Records* – ST 7001)
- Iris – *Iris I* (1984, Romania: *Electrecord* ST-EDE 02514)
- Iris – *Iris II* (1987, Romania: *Electrecord* ST-EDE 03138)
- Marius Țicu – *Gulliver în Țara piticilor* (1989, Romania: *Electrecord* ST-EDE 03681)
- Metrock – *Castelul de nisip* (1982, Romania: *Electrecord* ST-EDE 02077)
- Phoenix – *Cei ce ne-au dat nume* (1987, Unofficial release)
- Savoy – *Ultimul romantic 2* (1988, Romania: *Electrecord*: ST-EDE 03331)

### References:

- BEISSINGER, M., GIURCHESCU, A., RĂDULESCU, S. (eds.), *Manele in Romania: Cultural Expression and Social Meaning in Balkan Popular Music*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2016.
- BREN, P., NEUBURGER, M. (eds.), *Communism Unwrapped: Consumption in Cold War Eastern Europe*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- CARAMAN FOTEA, D., LUNGU, F., *Disco Ghid-Rock*, Bucharest: Editura muzicală, 1979.
- COVACI, N., *Phoenix însă eu...*, Bucharest: Editura Nemira, 1994.

- COVACI, N., *Giudecata înțelepților*, Bucharest: Integral Publishing House, 2014.
- DOBRESCU, C., "The Phoenix That Could Not Rise: Politics and Rock Culture in Romania, 1960-1989", in *East Central Europe*, Volume 38, Issue 2-3, (2011), pp. 255-290.
- EDENSOR, T., *National Identity, Popular Culture and Everyday Life*, Oxford, New York: Berg, 2002.
- FIELD, D. (ed.), *American Cold War Culture*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005.
- GIURCHESCU, A., "The Power of Dance and Its Social and Political Uses" in *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, Vol. 33, (2001), pp. 109-121.
- GRIGORAȘ C., *Muzică prin gaura cheii. Retrospectivă a domeniului muzical din România*, Editrex, București, 2015.
- HERRMANN, S.M. (ed.), *Ambivalent Americanizations: Popular and Consumer Culture in Central and Eastern Europe*, Heidelberg: Winter, 2008.
- IONESCU, D., *Timpul chitarelor. Cornel Chiriac și Epoca Beat*, Integral, București, 2016.
- KLANICZAY, G., TRENCSENYI, B., "Mapping the Merry Ghetto: Musical Countercultures in East Central Europe, 1960-1989", in *East Central Europe*, Volume 38, Issue 2-3 (2011), pp. 169-179.
- LUTHAR, B., PUNIK, M., *Remembering Utopia: The Culture of Everyday Life in Socialist Yugoslavia*, Washington DC: New Academia Publishing, 2010.
- MAJOR, P., *Across the Blocs: Exploring Comparative Cold War Cultural and Social History*, London: Frank Cass, 2004.
- MAZIERSKA, E. (ed.), *Popular Music in Eastern Europe. Breaking the Cold War Paradigm*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.
- MIHAIU, V., *Cutia de rezonanță*, Bucharest: Editura Albatros, 1985.
- MIHAIU, V., *Jazzorelief*, Bucharest: Editura Nemira, 1993.
- MIHAIU, V., *Jazz Connections in Romania*, Bucharest: Institutul Cultural Român, 2007.
- MIHĂILESCU, V., ILIEV, I., NAUMOVIC, S. (eds.) *Studying Peoples in the People's Democracies (II) Socialist Era Anthropology in South-East Europe*, Halle Studies in the Anthropology of Eurasia, Vol. 8, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, 2008.
- PELLS, R.H., *Not like Us: How Europeans have loved, hated, and transformed American Culture since World War II*, New York, NY: Basic Books, 1997.
- POIGER, U.G., *Jazz, Rock and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a divided Germany*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.
- RAMET, S.P., CRNKOVIĆ, G.P., *Kazaaam! Splat! Ploof!: The American Impact on European Popular Culture since 1945*, Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003.
- RĂDUCANU, J., *Țara lui Johnny*, Bucharest: Editura Vivaldi, 2005.

- RYBACK, T. W., *Rock around the Bloc: A History of Rock Music in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.
- SANDU-DEDIU, V., *Muzica românească între 1944-2000*, Bucharest: Editura muzicală, 2002.
- SBÂRCEA, G., *Jazzul – o poveste cu negri*, Bucharest: Editura muzicală a Uniunii Compozitorilor, 1974.
- STRATONE, N. *Rock sub seceră și ciocan – Prima parte din cronică muzicii rock în România*, Timișoara: Ariergarda, 2016.
- ȘIPA, A., *Jazz, între agonie și extaz. 30 de ani de jazz & blues în România 1972-2002*, Bucharest: Paralela 45, 2002.
- URSULESCU, F.-S., *FSU: Florin Silviu Ursulescu în dialog cu Doru Ionescu*, Bucharest: Casa de pariuri literare, 2015.





## MIRCEA-LUCIAN SCROB

Born in 1985, in Sebeș, Alba County

Ph.D. in Comparative History of Central, Southeastern and Eastern Europe,  
Central European University, Budapest

Thesis: *From Mămăligă to Bread as the “Core” Food of Romanian Villagers:  
A consumer-centered interpretation of a dietary change (1900-1980)*

Visiting fellow, Vrije Universiteit, Brussels, 2013

Participation to conferences in France, United States of America, Italy, Poland,  
Hungary, Portugal

Several scholarly papers in the field of Food Studies, Food History,  
History of Medicine





# DEVELOPMENTS IN FOOD CONSUMPTION IN SOCIALIST ROMANIA DURING THE 1960s AND 1970s: IMPLICATIONS FOR A REEVALUATION OF CONSUMERS' EXPERIENCES UNDER SOCIALISM

## Abstract

The topic of food consumption in Socialist Romania and Eastern Europe commonly conjures up images of widespread deprivation: rationing of supplies, frequent queuing, 'progressive' public health policies that were actually intended to restrict intake and adulteration of food products. Less adequately discussed in the popular press and in the academic literature remains the dietary transition that began in the 1960s and which transformed the rural and urban diets from a traditional, 'core'-fringe' type to the modern type characteristic of industrial societies. My article addresses this gap in the literature by analyzing the main developments in rural diets from the 1960s and 1970s along with the rural consumers' perceptions of these developments from a standard of living perspective. Over and above its contribution to the study of food consumption in 20<sup>th</sup> century Romania, my analysis contributes to a better understanding of consumers' experiences under State Socialism given that food consumption, together with housing and clothing, was a key aspect in the rural residents' conception of 'the good life'.

**Keywords:** Food Consumption under Socialism, Dietary Transition, Rural Development, Everyday Life in Socialist Romania

## Introduction

This article discusses a cluster of developments in food consumption in the Romanian countryside during the 1960s and 1970s. While the relevance of such a research focus may not be readily apparent even to researchers from the burgeoning field of Consumption under Socialism,

I maintain that such an analysis can inform better understandings not just of diets and nutrition in the Romanian countryside, but also of the trajectory of the Romanian Socialist Regime and of competing versions of life under Socialism. Regarding the selection of the research topic, the focus on food consumption is, fortunately, relatively well established in the scholarship on Socialist Romania as researchers have readily recognized the importance of, and explored, the relations and experiences surrounding food mostly in connection with the fall of the Socialist Regime and to previous (c)overt manifestations of discontent. For instance, for the 1980s, academic writers and journalists,<sup>1</sup> museum curators and film makers<sup>2</sup> have all described in detail the extensive deprivation that queuing for food painfully reflected, the 'progressive' program of rational consumption used to justify further requisitions of basic foodstuffs to be traded internationally for the much needed hard currency and the various strategies deployed by ordinary citizens to secure meager supplies of food. Thanks to such research, the image of long lines of people queuing to retrieve, bags in hand, their meager rations of meat, milk, bread or sugar has justifiably become one of the most recognizable images of Socialism in Romania. In addition, developments in food consumption during the first decade of Socialist rule have also been covered, including not just the post-war deprivations and the 1946-1947 famine, but also the imposition of a rationing scheme through which scarce food supplies were re-directed from rural areas to social categories privileged by the new regime (urban residents and particularly workers in heavy industry) or the use of heavy in-kind levies (cote) to break the resistance of villagers opposing collectivization.<sup>3</sup> While acknowledging this valuable research, I find that discussions of developments in food practices from the intervening period remain exceptionally rare, both in the academic literature and in attempts at memorialization despite the witnesses' readiness to reference these developments.<sup>4</sup> My primary intention has been, therefore, to bridge this gap in the literature by exploring a group of developments in food consumption during the 1960s and 1970s which jointly marked a transition from a 'core'-fringe dietary pattern typical of traditional populations to a more modern diet typical of industrial populations. The underlying assumption motivating such a study is that food consumption had been one of the central components of the Romanian consumers' idea of a 'good life', not just negatively in that the absence of food produced acute discontent, but also positively in that the growing availability of highly prized foods promoted consumer satisfaction. Accordingly, the Romanian

consumers' experiences with food are crucial for understanding both why the Socialist Regime collapsed and why it had become stabilized and the actual impact of the observed developments will be evaluated by interpreting them from a standard of living perspective.

Finally, the research focus is on the food consumption of rural residents - a heterogeneous social group defined by their underprivileged position relative to urban residents - which although had accounted for more than half of the country's population throughout the studied period has nonetheless received less attention in the literature on Socialism beyond the experience of collectivization. Moreover, in the field of Consumption under Socialism, the consumption experiences of rural residents feature disproportionately rarely, the focus having been conventionally on privileged social categories that were almost always urban, frequently the residents of capital cities or important industrial towns, and having access to high economic and cultural capital. More importantly than filling this gap in the literature, however, the study of rural residents has theoretical value and relevance outside of the academia since it underlines clearly the shortcomings of the dominant approaches to the study of consumption under Socialism (see the next section) and facilitates the examination of a specific version of life under Socialism that has been too often uncritically dismissed. Specifically, rural residents and residents of small industrial towns that were in their 40s and 50s when the regime fell readily maintain in private discussions that consumption experiences under Socialism had not been uniformly bleak but that, in fact, during the 1960-70s life became more comfortable compared to both pre-1960s and post-1980s standards. Such versions of events have been commonly explained within the dominant narrative by assuming some kind of 'error' in the remembering process (either nostalgia, selective memory or confounding entanglement of time spent under Socialism and youth when life is generally better) and my intention is to examine the merits of such accounts by cross-checking them against contemporary information and data from multiple agents. The results of such an evaluation can then inform a more productive dialogue between supporters of two opposing versions of life under Socialism which so far has been complicated by mutual misunderstandings and preconceived opinions, with repercussions for the polarization of Romanian society along generational lines.

## **Theoretical Perspectives, Methodological Outlook And Approach To Sources**

My analysis builds upon an understanding of consumption in which consumers actively invest consumption practices with meaning and creatively appropriate consumption opportunities to fit their own purposes.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, to retrieve consumers' expectations and experiences under Socialism, it is necessary to apply an anthropological approach in the sense of Clifford Geertz's 'thick description'<sup>6</sup> that can capture the complexities of consumer experiences and properly interpret them within their local contexts of meaning. Such an approach differs sharply from the normative approaches which have dominated research during the first decade after the demise of Socialist Regimes and which mainly consisted in comparing levels of availability of consumer products in Socialist and Capitalist countries.<sup>7</sup> While these approaches have merits in evaluating the relative performance of the two systems of supplying the population with consumer goods, my evaluation is that they have less value in making sense of the consumers' experiences under Socialism. Specifically, with the possible exceptions of East Germany and of a minority of individuals who had travelled abroad, consumption practices in Western Europe have doubtfully been sufficiently visible to function effectively as a standard of reference for Socialist consumers and, as a result, their contribution to the study of consumers' experiences under Socialism is rather limited.

My approach shares the same theoretical perspective with the new wave of studies on consumption under Socialism that has emerged in the past decade but differs in the degree to which it incorporates in practice the local contexts of meaning. This new wave of studies has the undeniable merit of having refocused research on how consumption had been experienced rather than on how it measured up to Western performances or to Marxist ideals.<sup>8</sup> Underlying this theoretical perspective is the understanding that consumption experiences are individually created by the subject and, therefore, that they cannot be fully regulated, prescribed or controlled<sup>9</sup> nor retrieved by applying a normative interpretative scheme. Nevertheless, the studies inspired by this approach have the significant drawback of having included a number of assumptions about the Socialist consumers' expectations and preferences which were modeled on Western normative experiences and, as a result, of having reproduced a softer version of the 'Western'-centric narrative which it intended to replace. This

normative influence of Western experiences is perhaps most evident in the set of products that have been selected for analysis: both the established durable goods (automobiles, refrigerators, city apartments) and the newly added soft goods (fashionable clothing, coffee, tobacco and champagne, alternative music and opera performances, erotic materials and camping equipment) have in common, despite their material diversity, the fact that they had defined or at least had a counterpart in the contemporary Western consumerist society. In line with the theoretical perspective presented above, however, the principal uncertainty concerns whether, and to what extent, the typical selection of products adequately reflects the horizon of expectation of the various groups of consumers from the Socialist Block. The assumption that it does is not altogether justified especially considering the significant differences between the Western and Eastern parts of Europe, not least in the initial and overall level of economic development and in the proportion of households that had access to the infrastructure required by most durable goods. In contrast to these approaches, my approach acknowledges the crucial importance of selecting meaningful indicators for representing consumers' expectations and experiences - measured in terms of their salience for the respective consumers - and responds to this challenge by tapping into the relevant contexts of meaning, by being mindful of fine local and socio-economic differences and by emphasizing the need for self-reflexivity and awareness of one's own biases in approaching consumption.

The application of a 'thick description' approach acquires particular significance in the study of the consumption experiences of rural residents. My argument is that in the case of this social category, the focus on standards of reference and sets of consumer products modelled on 'Western' experiences are singularly irrelevant partly because emblematic consumer products such as durable goods fell outside the horizon of expectations of most consumers, the majority of which did not have access to such basic infrastructure as electrical power as late as 1970s, and partly because such sets fail to include consumption goods and practices which were particular to the region and to a stage of relative economic underdevelopment but which were, nevertheless, salient to a considerable number of consumers. Instead, I argue that the research focus needs to shift to a set of 'unconventional' consumer products/needs that retrospective testimonies and contemporary written information indicate were culturally loaded, locally meaningful and, therefore, more representative for the rural consumers' horizon of expectations. For instance, the focus may

productively shift from the 'poor' quality of Socialist housing according to optimal or designers' standards<sup>10</sup> to the rural consumers' experiences of having a house built from building materials (bricks, tiles) commonly associated with well-off villagers and from the 'kitchen wars' over which Block can provide the most functional, technologically up-to-date kitchen to the first, generalized emergence in the Romanian countryside of a permanent kitchen as a separate space for cooking and eating. Furthermore, the focus in the consumption of clothing and footwear can fruitfully shift from the undeniable shortcomings of the industrial sectors in providing 'adequate' goods defined according to the industries' quality standards to the rural consumers' perceptions of the move from flax to cotton materials or from rural to urban fashions considering their access to the technical know-how in sewing and tailoring that came together with an extensive experience in homemade clothing production. Finally, the focus in food consumption needs to shift from cookbooks, luxury products (caviar, champagne) and department stores to include, besides culturally loaded products such as tobacco and alcohol, changes in meat consumption, the transition from mămăligă to bread, the turn towards market-acquired, convenience foods and the growing stability of the food supply. In this paper, I focus exclusively on such developments in food consumption which are, first, reviewed together to emphasize their interconnections within a shifting dietary configuration and then interpreted from a standard of living perspective.

Before proceeding to the actual analysis, several clarifications concerning methodology and the availability of, and approach to, sources are required. In terms of methodology, my study is first and foremost an exploratory study: its aim is to raise awareness about a previously neglected topic and to propose a reinterpretation of consumer experiences under Socialism by building on this new information and by employing more relevant standards of reference (diachronic reference points). Methodologically, such a study occupies a privileged position since, within the confines of a non-experimental research design, it is comparatively easier to prove that previous analyses have been incomplete and that competing interpretations of a phenomenon are available rather than to prove that a particular interpretation is singularly important.<sup>11</sup> When interpretations of developments had to be provided, I have always considered competing interpretations as well and I have presented arguments for why I believe they are less plausible than the accepted interpretation. In terms of sources, my analysis builds on data

from a variety of sources that have been related to each other through the method of data triangulation and which have been collected and analyzed through the application of a variety of research methods. The method of data triangulation assumes that data derived from various types of sources are not inherently incompatible and, consequently, that by combining data from sources that are susceptible to different kinds of errors, a more accurate description of the studied processes may emerge.<sup>12</sup> The method has been applied most consistently in reconstructing the trends in food consumption: information from large-scale household budgetary surveys using self-report, small-scale in-depth dietary studies conducted by trained personnel and using various periods and intervals of observation and nationwide food balance sheet have been confronted to exclude biases associated with any specific study format. In addition, the information from these studies, which had been almost always produced through interactions with state representatives, has been confronted with information from retrospective interviews that are supposedly free of this shortcoming.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, the method has been applied in interpreting the observed dietary trends as information from contemporary sociological studies has been confronted with information from retrospective interviews and from indicators of demand in a non-market economy (queuing, petitioning and relative prices on the black market). Finally, the required information has been amassed through methods of systematic data collection (unstructured, semi-structured and structured interviews coupled with random sampling, archival data collection) and has been analyzed using exploratory and inferential statistical methods and narrative analysis.

### **Shifting Dietary Patterns: From a 'Core'-'Fringe' to an 'Industrial-Style' Dietary Configuration**

The central claim of this article is that the general dietary configuration of the Romanian rural residents had changed from a 'core'-'fringe' configuration to a typically modern configuration between 1900 and 1980 and that the most dramatic changes had occurred beginning with the 1960s. The 'core'-'fringe' dietary configuration refers to the model developed by Sidney Mintz to formalize what he perceived to be strong regularities in the diets of such populations.<sup>14</sup> Specifically, Sidney Mintz argued that the dietary configurations of traditional populations are organized, with few exceptions, around a recognizable 'core' food,

commonly the processed product of grains or tubers rich in complex carbohydrates (starch). This food forms the element of stability in a diet since it is consumed in largely unmodified form at almost every meal, it represents the principal component of the meal since it is consumed in greater quantities than any other component and, in some cases, than all the other components of a meal taken together and it provides most of the required calories and significant parts of the needed macronutrients.<sup>15</sup> By comparison, the 'fringe' component of dietary configurations, which typically sample a wide variety of food sources, adds welcomed diversity to the meal since it is presented under various forms, it is consumed in relatively smaller quantities and supplies important nutrients that are absent or present only in insufficient amounts in the 'core' food. Within each meal, the 'core' and 'fringe' components form a functionally interdependent pair with the 'core' foods having been historically consumed only exceptionally without anything else to accompany them while the practice of consuming typical 'fringe' dishes with small or no quantities of typical 'core' foods is largely restricted to social groups from modern, industrial societies. Furthermore, the 'fringe' dishes perform the function of facilitating the ingestion of the copious quantities of 'core' food and, therefore, are usually prepared under liquid or semi-liquid form.<sup>16</sup> Finally, the larger part of the ingredients of the 'core' food and the majority of the ingredients for 'fringe' dishes are produced within the economic unit of the household, most of the ingredients are of vegetal origin while the ingredients of animal origin cover mainly milk, eggs, cheese and only small quantities of meat and the served foods are almost always prepared within the household. In contrast, in dietary configurations typical of industrial societies, the 'core' food is considerably less important, both absolutely and relative to the other ingredients of the meal, meat consumption is significantly higher, most of the ingredients are purchased from outside the household while semi-prepared and already prepared purchased foods feature frequently in the menus.<sup>17</sup>

#### ***THE PRE-1960S 'CORE'-'FRINGE' DIETARY CONFIGURATION***

Table 1 summarizes data on food consumption from several dietary studies conducted in the countryside between 1900 and 1995 that is intended to inform the analysis of the dietary change. The data has been organized under the broad categories of Cereal products, Plant-based ingredients and Animal-based ingredients, with the subcategory: Meat, to



facilitate a clearer discussion of dietary configurations along the lines of the two models presented above but throughout the analysis new categories for comparison will be introduced to reveal other important developments in diets. The referenced studies have been selected for analysis primarily because they returned quantitative results which facilitated comparisons across time and, secondly, because they involved a meaningfully large number of participants. Besides the data on food consumption, information has been included regarding the process by which the data had been generated to help clarify, qualify, and caution the reader about, the quality of the data.

According to this data, the majority of rural residents up to the 1960s had subsisted on a 'core'-'fringe' type of diet at least in terms of the configuration of served meals. First and foremost, cereal products (mămăligă, bread, turtă) had been consumed at each meal in absolute quantities consistent with the function of 'core' food. The data from the rigorous studies in which food consumption was measured by specialized personnel are indicative in this sense: in Ineu village, Bihor County, a relatively well-off village, adult males performing mid-intensity work were reported to consume, on average, 770 gr. of cereal products per day;<sup>18</sup> in Măguri, Cluj County, a relatively poor village, 131 adults were reported to consume, on average, 870 gr. of bread,<sup>19</sup> while in Pojejena Română, Barloveni-vechi and Pătaș, Caraș County, 210 adults and children were reported to consume 930 gr. of either bread or mămăligă.<sup>20</sup> The highest credible figure that I have identified in the literature puts the average daily consumption of cereal products at 1.5 kg of mămăligă and it was reported by Enescu and Radenschi for adult males performing mid-intensity work based on observations of 4 families (32 members) from Roman County, Moldova.<sup>21</sup> These levels of consumption, confirmed by studies using self-report and longer periods of observation, are impressive by modern standards and high enough to provide between a minimum daily load of 1550 kcal in the case of Ineu village and a maximum load of 2100 kcal in the case of the villagers from Roman County.

Secondly, consumption of cereal staples was important not just in absolute, but also in relative terms with cereal products outweighing all the other ingredients of a meal put together, when milk is excluded. Specifically, the relative weight of bread, mămăligă or turtă within a meal ranged from 56% in the Ineu study to **70%** in the Măguri study with mămăligă generally accounting for a higher share of a meal than bread or turtă since it incorporated larger quantities of water, had a

lower caloric density, and, consequently, was consumed in higher quantities. Concerning the accompanying dishes, these were prepared mainly from vegetal ingredients while among animal ingredients, meat was relatively less important than eggs and cheese. Furthermore, meat consumption remained generally low in absolute quantities as well: the highest consumption had been reported for Ineu village, which enjoyed good economic conditions, and for the villages covered by the 1906 Dietary Study, which had been surveyed between Christmas and Lent,<sup>22</sup> a period when meat consumption was customarily at its highest. However, even in these cases the quantities consumed are modest by contemporary standards. In addition, the quantities reported for Măguri, Pojejena Română, Barloveni-vechi and Pătaș villages are remarkably low, a situation partly explained by their less privileged economic position and partly by the time of the observation - Spring and Summer - when meat consumption was customarily at its lowest. All these ingredients have been mainly prepared into liquid or semi-liquid dishes with the 1957 Dietary Study reporting an average frequency of consumption for soups of 198 days and for stews of 167 days.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, consistent with the functional interrelationship between 'core' and 'fringe' dishes, when food items were eaten raw as side dishes, they mostly consisted of onions, pickled vegetables, salads or dairy products, foodstuffs that facilitated the ingestion of the large quantities of 'core' foods by stimulating the secretion of saliva or by moistening and lubricating the resulting admixture.<sup>24</sup>

Thirdly, cereal products have been central not just within individual meals but also within the longer-term dietary patterns with variants of cereal products (mămăligă, bread, turtă or all of them with various frequencies) having accompanied virtually every meal throughout the year. In this sense, the 1957 Dietary Study, which reported the frequencies of consumption of various food products for 88 families from 9 villages from Oltenia, Muntenia and Dobrogea, suggests a minimum limit of almost 300 days per year in which cereal products had been consumed.<sup>25</sup> However, several observations by different researchers for various regions and years indicate that cereal products had been consumed at least each day if not at each meal,<sup>26</sup> observations consistent with the maximum limit of consumption frequency allowed by the 1957 Dietary Study. Nonetheless, while cereal products had been served, most likely, at every meal, a different product had been served predominantly in various geographical regions of the Romanian countryside, by different socio-economic classes within each region and at various periods during the agricultural year. In

particular, mămăligă had been consumed preponderantly by the majority of rural residents from the regions of Moldova, Muntenia, Southern Oltenia, Maramureş, more or less as frequently as turtă in Northern Oltenia and as bread in Southeastern Transilvania and only in insignificant quantities in Dobrogea, Banat, Crişana and Central Transilvania, where the consumption of bread predominated.<sup>27</sup> However, within each of these regions, not everyone consumed the dominant cereal product to the same extent: in regions where the consumption of mămăligă predominated, well-off villagers consumed bread relatively more frequently than poorer villagers while in regions where turtă or bread predominated, mămăligă was consumed relatively more frequently by poorer villagers. Finally, in regions where mămăligă predominated, bread was nevertheless generally consumed at festive meals occasioned by major religious holidays or life events (weddings, funerals, family celebrations), was offered as a special treat for children and as a comfort food for the sick and was consumed more frequently during the time window after the harvesting of wheat and the bringing in of the new maize crop (August-September).

The practicalities of acquiring and preparing the 'core' foods are, unfortunately, not sufficiently well established for the Romanian countryside and, therefore, can only tentatively be checked for consistency with Mintz's dietary model. The share of ingredients produced directly by the economic unit of the household rather than acquired from the market is difficult to establish precisely. In terms of the main ingredients for 'core' foods (maize or wheat), data on patterns of land usage which show that, nationally, rural households owning less than 1 Ha of land nonetheless cultivated, on average, 56% of it with cereals reveals a concern with securing at least part of the needed quantities through own production.<sup>28</sup> At the same time, data broken down by geographic location shows that in mountainous villages, the majority of rural households owning less than 1 Ha assigned for cereal production surfaces of land that could not yield sufficient quantities to cover their consumption needs and, correspondingly, that they had to acquire variable quantities from outside the household, a practice confirmed by contemporary observers (for Măguri, Cluj County,<sup>29</sup> Nerej, Vrancea,<sup>30</sup> Arsura, Fălciu<sup>31</sup>) and the respondents to my oral questionnaire (Retevoieşti village, Argeş County). Regarding all food ingredients, data for 1938 from 234 household budgets from villages from various regions of Greater Romania show that, on average and depending on the region, 70 to 90% of food items by monetary value were produced within the household, with the share remaining high

(61 to 83%) for households that owned 'insufficient' amounts of land by contemporary standards of between 0.1 and 3 Ha.<sup>32</sup>

Relatively, the information available for the acquisition of ready-to-eat 'core' foods from outside the household, as opposed to the acquisition of grains or flour, is more straightforward and consistent in showing few acquisitions. In this regard, the availability of industrially-produced bread in the Romanian countryside, derived by subtracting from the total production of bread by state-owned factories the quantities consumed by the urban population, has been estimated for 1959 at around 15 kg per rural resident. The levels of availability of industrially-produced bread per rural resident ranged from insignificant quantities in most regions to 26-36 kg in the regions of Stalin, Ploiești, Pitești and Constanța but in none of the regions did it cover, on average, more than one third of the total 'core' food needs of the rural residents.<sup>33</sup> The presence of industrially-produced bread in the Romanian countryside had been, most likely, equally unimpressive before 1950. According to data derived from two general censuses of the population, there existed a maximum number of 1404 rural bakeries in 1912<sup>34</sup> in the Old Kingdom of Romania and 1356 in 1930<sup>35</sup> in the same territories except Dobrogea. These bakeries were serviced, on average, by 2.7 workers (the owner and 1.7 employees) in 1912 and by 1.8 workers (the owner and 0.8 employees) in 1930 which suggests a low capacity of production capable of catering adequately to the bread requirements of one medium-sized village. Nevertheless, considering that in 1912 the rural population was divided among 2781 rural communes comprising 8525 villages, that the distance between villages was often considerable and that the network of roads was underdeveloped, the proportion of the rural population that had access to industrially produced bread must have been quite low. Concerning the acquisition of mămăligă or turtă from outside the household, I have found no evidence indicating such a practice, a possible limitation for developing it having had to do, from the supply side, with the challenge of commercializing products that were usually consumed while hot. Overall, most quantities of 'core' food have been prepared within the household, a task which required significant expenditure of time and energy given the frequency of 'core' food consumption throughout the year, the high quantities consumed at meals and the rural residents' preference for consuming such foods while fresh/hot.

One possibility to bring all this information together in an evocative manner is to imagine an average rural resident prior to the 1950s, sitting down for lunch, expecting to partake from a copious serving of cereal

products, the same way he/she did in the preceding months or will do in the coming months as well. This sizable portion of cereal products would be served together with a soup and/or a stew, frequently prepared using comparatively smaller amounts of vegetal ingredients, especially, although not necessarily, during fasting periods, or from meat products - more rarely in Summer and with greater frequency during Carnival. These dishes would have been prepared, most often, within the household, which would have required the expenditure of considerable time and energy, while the majority of the ingredients would have also been produced within the economic unit of the household through demanding year-long agricultural activities. Certainly, the actual experiences of individual rural residents would have differed to particular extents from those of the statistically average rural resident: some would have consumed more or less quantities of cereal products (villagers from Roman County vs. villagers from Bihor County) and more or less under the form of mămăligă, bread or turtă (Moldova and Muntenia vs. Banat vs. Northern Oltenia), some would have consumed more or less quantities of meat (well-off vs. less well-off villagers in Roman County) and more or less quantities of ingredients would have been acquired from outside the household (Măguri vs. Ineu). Yet, the qualitative features of the statistically average diet (predominance of cereal products, emphasis on ingredients of vegetal origin, low intake of meat, high reliance on the economic unit of the household to prepare meals) remain generally valid across socio-economic profiles and geographic locations and are radically different from those of the statistically average diet from the end of the 1970s.

### ***THE POST-1960S 'INDUSTRIAL-STYLE' DIETARY CONFIGURATION***

The 1979-1980 Dietary Study 1 is the first available in-depth study to show a significantly different average dietary configuration for a large segment of the rural population.<sup>36</sup> First, according to this and subsequent studies, the consumption of cereal products has dropped to almost half its pre-1960 level. Secondly, the drop in the consumption of cereal products, together with a rise in the consumption of food products of animal origin, has markedly reduced the relative weight of cereal products in overall intake to the point that food consumption from the three categories was considerably more balanced. Furthermore, average meat consumption doubled over the intervening period to become the preponderant food item among the increasingly important category of solid products of

animal origin. The rise in meat consumption remains considerable even after adjusting for changes in the age structure of the rural population and in patterns of sharing the meal between members of the different generations with the villagers surveyed in the 1979-1980 Dietary Study 1 still consuming around 75% more meat than the participants to the 1906 Dietary Study and around 83% more than the participants to the Ineu Dietary Study even under the least favorable restrictions. The rising trend is confirmed by dietary studies reporting intake over a full year, an important methodological feature given a food product whose consumption varied significantly throughout the year, when it is considered that the Household Budgetary Survey of 1968 reported an adjusted consumption level of 128 gr. for a representative sample of the population while the 1938 Dietary Study reported 114 gr. for a sample in which the top rural households were heavily overrepresented.<sup>37</sup> Thirdly, the consumption of industrially-produced bread, and within this category, of bread produced with cereals from the State's Central Reserves, increased at the expense of cereal foods produced, to various extents, within the household. According to my calculations, an estimated quantity of almost 70 kg of industrially produced bread had been available, on average, to rural residents in 1975, of which 54.5 kg was produced using flour from the State's Central Reserves and 13.5 kg through baking services using flour provided by customers.<sup>38</sup> This quantity was sufficient to cover half of the cereal consumption needs of rural residents at this time and the levels of availability increased further and continuously during the next 5 years. The distribution of quantities of bread varied, again, considerably by region with rural residents from counties such as Arad, Timiș, Satu Mare and Iași having had access to insignificant quantities while rural residents from Gorj, Vâlcea, Argeș, Dâmbovița and Prahova having had access to quantities high enough to cover their entire consumption needs. Concomitant with this change towards convenience food, bread increasingly replaced mămăligă and turtă in the diets of rural residents, in the rural areas of Muntenia and Oltenia, for instance, having progressed from an exceptional food item to the position of basic cereal product according to the 1979-1980 Dietary Studies.

Admittedly, alongside these changing features, there remained important points of continuity: cereal products continued to be consumed at least every day, and quite likely at every meal, together with hot liquid and semi-liquid dishes (soups and stews)<sup>39</sup> although the consumption of milk had most likely decreased markedly. Yet, my argument is that by the

end of the 1970s the consumption experiences at the table of most rural residents were recognizably different than before 1960 and that this change in dietary patterns was remarkable in terms of its widespread coverage and short duration. In particular, the trends discussed above have been observed for all age categories including persons aged 60 or above in the case of women (born before 1921) and 65 or older in the case of men (born before 1916) which, according to the 1979-1980 Dietary Studies, have come to consume preponderantly bread, historically higher quantities of meat, and higher quantities of animal products in general. Such findings indicate that the observed dietary trends have not been the mere outcome of the natural shift in generations, but rather that persons who have subsisted on a 'core'-'fringe' diet for a considerable part of their lives had nonetheless switched to a new type of diet by 1980. Furthermore, even though geographical differences in food consumption persisted, villagers from plain (1979-1980 Dietary Study 2), hilly (1979-1980 Dietary Study 1) and mountainous (Nehoiu Dietary Study)<sup>40</sup> villages have been uniformly shown to consume lower quantities of cereal products, higher quantities of bread and higher quantities of meat thus indicating the wide geographical reach of such changes. The data by geographic region does suggest, however, that the magnitude of the dietary changes had been greater in hilly and mountainous regions where features of the 'core'-'fringe' dietary configurations had been formerly more marked, a geographic pattern possibly related to the differential impact of the industrialization program in the Romanian countryside. Finally, concerning the duration of the dietary transition, the first pair of available studies showing markedly different patterns of consumption for a representative number of rural residents have been conducted 22 years apart from one another. Nevertheless, I believe that, at the level of the individual household, the dietary transition had occurred over a much shorter timespan related to the move of some or all members into industrial employment, the opening of a new baking unit in the nearby urban locality or in the local Agricultural Cooperative or to the marked improvement in payments for workers in Agricultural Cooperatives from the early 1970s.

## **Interpreting the Dietary Changes within the Non-Market Version of Socialism**

The dietary developments presented above are challenging to interpret from a standard of living perspective, first, because like most dietary changes, they involved a trade-off between various foodstuffs and, secondly, because they happened within the non-market version of Socialism. The first difficulty arises from the dynamics of dietary developments: the rising consumption of industrially-produced bread necessarily translated into a decreased consumption of homemade bread, *mămăligă*, and *turtă* while the higher consumption of energy-dense meat and animal products went together with a reduction in the consumption of cereal products. Unlike dietary developments which involved only additions of new/more foodstuffs, the interpretation of these particular developments requires a careful assessment of the rural residents' relative preferences for the added food item compared to the directly substituted item. Such assessments are, however, difficult to perform for the non-market, centrally planned economic system and the confidence in their overall results is necessarily lower than in the case of free market economic systems. Specifically, in the context of a free market economic system, the consumers' actions to increase the consumption of food items whose prices are higher than those of the substituted items generally reflect their preferences for the added items. By contrast, within Socialist Romania's non-market economic system in which prices were fixed and supply was centrally-planned, the same actions are equally compatible with a preference for the added items as well as with a case of forced substitution in which consumers opted for a second-best alternative given that the preferred items were simply not available.<sup>41</sup> The possibility of forced substitution needs to be considered given that through collectivization, rural residents lost control over most of the land that formerly supported their diets and, as a result, came to rely to an unprecedented extent on an external food distribution system that, in the particular case of Socialist Romania, adjusted imperfectly, infrequently and with delays to consumers' demands.<sup>42</sup> In the absence of information from prices, my approach for differentiating between the two possibilities has been to combine alternative sources of information and indicators of demand in a non-market economy to retrieve the parameters of the decisional processes that produced the dietary changes. The following section includes assessments informed by this approach of the rural residents' actions to increase their consumption of meat and



animal products at the expense of cereal products, of industrially-produced bread at the expense of homemade products and of bread at the expense of mămăligă and turtă.

The least controversial claim is that rural consumers had perceived positively the rising consumption of meat even at the expense of a decreased consumption of cereal products. Several lines of evidence, from the more general to the more specific, support this claim: the high preference for meat observed across such a wide variety of cultures<sup>43</sup> that some researchers have come to consider it an inherited biological predisposition rooted in evolutionary history,<sup>44</sup> the presence of meat products on festive menus in the Romanian countryside<sup>45</sup> which typically featured comparatively prestigious ingredients and the information provided by specific indicators of demand in non-market economies such as letters of complaint constantly referencing the insufficient distribution of meat,<sup>46</sup> retrospective accounts consistently emphasizing the frequent and long queues for meat and series of prices on the peasant free market uniformly showing the high costs of consuming meat,<sup>47</sup> are all indicative of the special status of meat consumption. Accordingly, the rising consumption of meat, together with that of other animal products and vegetal ingredients for 'fringe' dishes, and the parallel marked decrease in the consumption of cereal products most likely corresponded to consumers' preferences rather than having been an instance of forced substitution. Besides such circumstantial evidence, the rural household's greater maneuvering space in terms of consuming meat or cereal products further suggests that instances of forced substitution, in which rural residents preferred to consume higher quantities of cereal products but, because these were not available, had to settle for consuming meat, must have been comparatively rare. Specifically, the rural households' widespread and enduring practice of producing most of the animal products consumed at meals by converting variable quantities of grains, otherwise available for human consumption, into animal products shows that most households were in a position to readily consume greater quantities of cereal products but instead chose to consume them under the form of animal products. Assuming a conservative conversion ratio of 2 kg of grains to 1 kg of meat as typical for animal husbandry performed by rural households and a price ratio of 4 kg of grains to 1 kg of meat/animal products on the state controlled and free peasant markets, the choice to increase meat consumption mobilized/accounted for much of the observed decrease in the consumption of cereal products. Certainly, such a shift

entailed a considerable decrease in the intake of calories and, as such, it had been made possible by a marked decrease in the physical intensity of work which accompanied the progressive mechanization of industrial and agricultural operations (especially the sowing and harvesting of grains). Overall, however, the increasing conversion of cereal products into animal products corresponded to consumers' preferences while among the developments involving strictly the 'core' foods I consider more relevant and positive from the consumers' perspective the growing stabilization of the food supply following collectivization. Specifically, up to the 1960s, rural residents faced occasional periods of widespread famine in years when both the maize and wheat crops failed (1907, 1946-1947) and periods of recurrent seasonal hunger in which varying numbers of rural households ran out of sufficient supplies of cereal products beginning with Spring and, consequently, had to adjust their intake downwards, add flour from lesser grains (barley) to lengthen their supplies of 'core' food or borrow the needed quantities. With the 1960s, however, the marked increase in the production of bread grains per capita, the development of a physical and institutional infrastructure for transferring cereal supplies from surplus to deficient regions and the development of a wide-reaching commercial network which distributed growing quantities of cereal products (bread, flour, and grains) at relatively stable, low prices assured for the majority of rural residents an adequate supply of cereal products throughout the year. Contemporary perceptions as reflected in the Securitate documents reviewed for the village of Fundulea by Raluca Nicoleta Spiridon<sup>48</sup> and retrospective evaluations from my oral interviews indicate that rural residents had highly appreciated the increased availability of cereal products and other foodstuffs throughout the year.

Similarly well-established may be the interpretation that rural residents had increased their consumption of industrially-produced cereal products because they appreciated their labor- and time-saving qualities compared to homemade products even though they seem to have preferred the latter in terms of taste. In this regard, the preparation of *mămăligă*, bread or *turtă* engaged the time and energy of the housewife in different ways, but each one demanded high engagement in its own way. Specifically, the preparation of *mămăligă* involved boiling water in a suitably sized pot, adding maize flour when the water reached the appropriate temperature, leaving it to boil until the mixture acquired the desired consistency, stirring it vigorously at the end to ensure that there are no chunks of uncooked flour and then turning it over a wooden plate.

Mămăliga would then be cut into slices using a string as it stuck to metal and was eaten by hand with various side dishes preferably while hot or warm. The entire process of cooking mămăligă took between 30 and 45 minutes but it required minimal actual involvement beyond the tasks of preparing the water for heating, pouring the maize flour when the water temperature was appropriate, adding subsequently small quantities of flour to ensure that the mixture had the desired consistency and the final stirring. Nevertheless, because mămăligă had to be prepared once, twice or even three times a day since it was preferred hot or warm, the moderately difficult tasks could become tedious through repetition. By contrast, bread was prepared by allowing dough made by mixing wheat/rye flour with water to rise under the action of leavening catalysts before baking it in the oven. Through kneading, the dough became elastic enough to capture the carbon dioxide released during leavening and baking and through baking, the crumb (interior of the bread) increased in volume by becoming more aerated and elastic and a more or less thin crust formed around the crumb at its point of contact with the hot air. For such changes to take place, however, energetic kneading and adequate time allowance for leavening were required and baking had to be done using a heat source that generated and maintained a high temperature all around the bread. Given that properly kneading the dough was a particularly arduous task and that adequate leavening and baking required considerable time, the preparation of bread involved work of higher intensity and demanded a greater expenditure of time than the one-off preparation of an equivalent quantity of mămăligă. Nevertheless, because the housewives could prepare all at once an 'oven' of bread sufficient to last a number of days as bread was usually consumed while cold, certain rural residents might have preferred the option of concentrating their labor over a shorter time span to the alternative of preparing the equivalent quantity of mămăligă in several sessions before each meal especially during the tightly scheduled harvest season. Finally, turtă was prepared by mixing maize flour, various quantities of wheat flour, water, and salt, to which was added a small quantity of wheat bran or sugar, kneading the mixture to various extents, and baking it in the oven until a glaze crust formed on top. Compared to mămăligă, the preparation of turtă was more demanding since it required preparing the oven and some kneading, although its readier consumption while cold offered greater flexibility to the housewife, while compared to bread it demanded less effort for kneading and less time for leavening. In the case of all three foods, however, the requirement to prepare

them regularly in high quantities may have been perceived particularly demanding by housewives, especially following their move into industrial employment, which might explain the rural residents' willingness to increase considerably their consumption of industrially-produced bread, in some regions to levels sufficiently high to cover entirely their cereal consumption needs. Actually, the convenience of consuming ready-made bread was the single most important reason offered by the rural residents from Argeș County whom I had interviewed for consuming, then and now, industrially-produced bread rather than homemade *mămăligă* even with side dishes with which they would otherwise prefer *mămăligă* (see below) or even if they continued to prefer homemade bread especially after the switch in the baking industry from earthen to steam and, finally, to mechanical ovens.

Given the rural residents' preference for homemade products, the possibility that the increased consumption of industrially-produced cereal products was an instance of forced substitution needs to be discussed more thoroughly. Specifically, rural residents might have increased their consumption of market-acquired bread simply because they did not have access to sufficient quantities of unprocessed ingredients (grains or flour) to prepare homemade foods to the extent they wanted given the central authorities' decision to distribute through the State Commercial Network the majority of cereal products already processed as bread and the consumers' decreased capacity to secure the required supplies through own production following collectivization. Furthermore, even if consumers had access to sufficient quantities of unprocessed cereals to consume homemade products whenever they desired, they may not have had access to adequate quantities to feed their livestock and, therefore, may have accommodated the increased distribution of industrially-produced bread as an imperfect solution to increase their feed supplies and, indirectly, their consumption of animal products. Nevertheless, the case of bread produced through baking services and my estimates regarding the percentage of households that had access to sufficient quantities of cereal products to support a diet centered on homemade products argue against the forced substitution interpretation. Specifically, in the case of bread produced through baking services, consumers provided to bakeries functioning within Agricultural and Consumers Cooperatives the required ingredients for preparing bread plus an in-kind or monetary fee in exchange for receiving ready-made bread. Given this arrangement, the consumption of bread produced through baking services cannot be explained by an

insufficient availability of unprocessed cereals since customers had to hand to Cooperatives the equivalent quantities of wheat nor can it be explained as a strategy to increase feed supplies since customers had not only to provide all ingredients, but also to pay an in-kind fee consisting of either grains or flour. Accordingly, the consumption in 1975 of a total quantity of 152400 tons of bread produced through baking services<sup>49</sup>, equivalent to roughly 13 kg per rural resident, mostly by villagers from plain regions, suggests that at least part of the consumers had appreciated the convenience of consuming ready-made bread over homemade products. Furthermore, my estimates that, in regions where distribution of industrially-produced bread covered almost the entire cereal consumption needs of consumers and where rural residents were found by the 1979-1980 Dietary Study 1 to consume almost exclusively bread, one third to one half of rural households had access to sufficient quantities of maize to consume homemade mămăligă at 6 out of 7 meals shows that consumers appreciated the convenience and/or taste of industrially-produced bread.

The interpretation of the shift from mămăligă to bread presents more challenges not only because in the literature there are diametrically opposed views regarding the consumers' perceptions of dietary changes involving 'core' foods but also because the locally relevant information is ambiguous.<sup>50</sup> Less glamorous at first glance than other lifestyle changes under Socialism, the rising consumption of bread is significant because bread consumption had been invested with rich meanings in those regions in the Romanian countryside where mămăligă was consumed preponderantly. Specifically, written and oral testimonies indicate that bread had been used as a ritual and festive food, as a marker of social status, as a special treat for children and as a comfort food for the sick - consumption practices which both reflected and reaffirmed the communities' judgment that bread was socially more valued than mămăligă. Indicative in this sense, rural residents of appropriate age from Argeş County whom I had interviewed have explicitly recalled that bread was formerly considered a luxury product while 19 out of 90 respondents have stated that they used to refer to bread as 'cozonac' (a special type of cake) to indicate both that its consumption was rare and particularly valued. Yet, the respondents' answers to an oral questionnaire in which they were asked to state their preferences for bread or mămăligă in combination with six typical side dishes (vegetable soup, bean soup, bean stew, omelet/fried eggs, sarmale and steamed sauerkraut, with or without meat) shows that the overwhelming majority continued to prefer

to this day the last three dishes with mămăligă. The respondents have been prompted to consider that both bread and mămăligă were readily available without the need to prepare or purchase them with the purpose of excluding motivations due to convenience or price and of retrieving exclusively their hedonic preferences. The overall evidence suggests, therefore, that on the one hand, rural residents may have always wanted to consume certain dishes with bread but could not do so before the 1960s because of the considerably higher price of wheat compared to maize. However, beginning with the 1960s, the growing distribution of industrially-produced bread through the State Commercial Network at fixed prices that were actually lower than the prices of equivalent quantities of maize sold on the peasant market finally enabled rural residents to increase their consumption of bread. On the other hand, the 1979-1980 Dietary Studies reported consumption levels for bread that were sufficiently high to imply that rural residents consumed it even with dishes with which, according to contemporary and retrospective information, they most likely preferred mămăligă. Considering the evidence presented in the previous section, in the majority of such cases rural households might have preferred the convenience of consuming ready-made bread more than the taste of homemade mămăligă but in a minority of cases, rural households might have been forced to consume bread even though they preferred mămăligă because they did not have access to sufficient quantities of maize.

## Conclusions

This article presented the argument that the dietary configurations of Romanian rural residents have changed radically beginning with the 1960s and that the majority of these developments have been interpreted positively from a standard of living perspective. The implications of such findings need to be stated explicitly not just to understand their potential contribution, but also to avoid any overstretching or misrepresentation. First and foremost, my assessment is that such findings enrich the understanding of food experiences in Socialist Romania by revealing the particular experiences of an under-researched social group outside the customary timeframe of previous research. However, the finding that the food experiences of rural residents during the 1960s and 1970s have been generally positive does not contradict the experiences of widespread shortage from the 1950s and 1980s but, in fact, helps to put them into

perspective by showing how welcomed developments in lifestyle have been unraveled with a vengeance after 1980 and even throughout the 1990s. Furthermore, such findings should not be understood to suggest that the Socialist experiment had, in the grand scheme of Romanian history, some positive effects either specifically under the form of these improvements in food consumption or more generally in terms of economic development. Such a claim assumes that consumers' experiences would have been worse under an alternative economic system (free market economy, for instance), an assumption impossible to evaluate in the absence of a proper control case and less plausible on theoretical grounds given the comparatively less efficient flow of information and system of incentives within the Socialist economic system. Finally, my discussion should not be understood as whitewashing a criminal Regime that has been responsible for much suffering by focusing exclusively on its 'achievements'. Rather, my intention through this research has been to draw attention to major developments in the Romanian countryside during a specific phase of Socialism, first to developments in diets and, through subsequent publications, to developments in housing and clothing as well, to promote a better understanding of the trajectory of the Socialist Regime as well as of the underpinnings of the worldview of a distinct generation. Specifically, my guiding argument has been that the experiences of this generation of consuming a diet radically different from that of their parents or of their childhood, of living in what they perceived to be more high-status houses and of wearing prestigious urban-style clothing has promoted a sense of a 'good life' that, regardless of its exact attribution, had helped stabilize the Socialist Regime. Furthermore, these experiences may have instilled into this generation a sense of positive expectations for the future which had been painfully betrayed during the 1980s and 1990s and only partially and costly met during the 2000s, a shortfall in expectations which may explain an enduring nostalgia for a time when life experiences and prospects were promising. I believe that further research on this generation that would consider in a serious manner their version of events could help in coming to terms with a turbulent past, a task that so far has proven quite divisive.

**Table 1. Data on Food Intake, Method of Collecting Data, Geographic Coverage and Number of Participants for Major Dietary Studies, 1900-1995**

Dietary Study	Year	Method of collecting data	Number of participants	Observation period	Length of observation	Geographic Coverage	Average daily food consumption in grams		
							Cereals	Plant-based	Animal-based (of which meat)
Lupu Dietary Study	1906	End of the year inventory	150 (Adults)		1 year	Arsura, Fălciu			(40)
1906 Dietary Study <sup>51</sup>	1906	7 day recall	116	January-February (Carnival)	7 days	Old Kingdom of Romania			(75)
Măguri Dietary Study <sup>52</sup>	1934	Food weighing – daily	131 (Adults)	Summer (non-fasting)	1 to 2 days	Local	872	273	89.2 (28)
Râmneanțu Dietary Study <sup>53</sup>	1937	Food weighing – daily	210	Spring and Summer	1 to 2 days	Local	930	334.5	124 (39)
Ineu Dietary Study <sup>54</sup>	1938	Food weighing – daily	47 (Adults)	October and December (non-fasting)	6 to 7 days	Local	720	391.2	165 (75)



60 Romanian Villages Dietary Study <sup>55</sup>	1938	End of the year inventory	1440	Agricultural	1 year	National			(114)
Household Budgetary Surveys <sup>56</sup>	1953	Record keeping – daily	3000	Calendaristic year	1 year	National			(41.6)
Household Budgetary Surveys <sup>57</sup>	1958	Record keeping – daily	3000	Calendaristic year	1 year	National			(76.7)
Household Budgetary Surveys <sup>58</sup>	1968	Record keeping – daily	3000	Calendaristic year	1 year	National			(137.9)
1979-1980 Dietary Study 1 <sup>59</sup>	1980	24 hours recall	688 (Adults)	September- October	7 days	Oltenia and Muntenia - Hilly	464.4	481.6	263.5 (144.2)
1979-1980 Dietary Study 2 <sup>60</sup>	1980	24 hours recall	981 (Adults)	September- October	7 days	Oltenia and Muntenia - Plain	560	480.65	273 (122.5)

Public Health Institute Dietary Study <sup>61</sup>	1979-1984	24 hours recall	7367	Winter, Spring and Autumn	7 days	National	505.8	367.9	230.1 (116)
1992-1994 Dietary Study <sup>62</sup>	1992, 1993, 1994	24 hours recall	692 (Adults)	Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter	7 or 10 days	Muntenia - Plain	540	740	315 (88.7)

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Ioana Pârvulescu (Ed.), *Și eu am trăit în Comunism [I too have lived under Communism]* (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2015), Adrian Neculau (Ed.), *Viața cotidiană în comunism [Everyday Life in Communism]* (Iași: Polirom, 2004), Smaranda Vultur, "Daily Life and Constraints in Communist Romania in the Late 1980s: From the Semiotics of Food to the Semiotics of Power," in *Remembering Communism: Private and Public Recollections of Lived Experience in Southeast Europe*, eds. Maria Todorova, Augusta Dimou and Stefan Troebst (Budapest, Central European University Press, 2014), Jill Massino, "From Black Caviar to Blackouts: Gender, Consumption, and Lifestyle in Ceausescu's Romania," in *Communism Unwrapped: Consumption in Cold War Eastern Europe*, eds. Paulina Bren and Mary Neuburger (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 226-249.
- <sup>2</sup> The movie "*Amintiri din epoca de aur [Tales from the Golden Age]*" by film director Cristian Mungiu, the collection "*Amintiri din Epoca de Aur*" initiated by the newspaper *Evenimentul Zilei* and which features stories sent by readers and the exposition on 1980s Socialist Romania at the Romanian Peasant Museum have all touched upon the problem of food consumption during this decade.
- <sup>3</sup> Constantin Iordachi and Dorin Dobrinu (Eds.), *Transforming Peasants, Property and Power: The Collectivization of Agriculture in Romania, 1949-1962* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2009).
- <sup>4</sup> Cristina Petrescu and Dragoș Petrescu, "The Canon of Remembering Romanian Communism: From Autobiographical Recollections to Collective Representations," in *Remembering Communism*, 43-70.
- <sup>5</sup> Yurchak, A, *Everything was Forever, Until It was No More: The Last Soviet Generation*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2006.
- <sup>6</sup> Geertz, C, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretative Theory of Culture" in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, ed. C. Geertz, Basic Books, New York, 1973, 3-30.
- <sup>7</sup> Katherine Verdery, *What was Socialism and What Comes Next?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996) and Greg Castillo, "Domesticating the Cold War: Household Consumption as Propaganda in Marshall Plan Germany", *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 40, 2005, 261-288.
- <sup>8</sup> See the collections of studies edited by Paulina Bren and Mary Neuburger, *Communism Unwrapped: Consumption in Cold War Eastern Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), Nadège Ragaru and Antonela Capelle-Pogăcean, *Vie Quotidienne et Pouvoir sous le Communisme. Consommer à l'Est* (Paris: Karthala, 2010), David Crowley and Susan Reid, *Pleasures in Socialism: Leisure and Luxury in the Eastern Bloc* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2010) and David Crowley and Susan Reid, *Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc* (Oxford: Berg, 2002).

- 9 David Crowley and Susan Reid, *Pleasures in Socialism*, 4-5, 17.
- 10 Susan Reid, "Communist Comfort: Socialist Modernism and the Making of Cozy Homes in the Khrushchev Era", *Gender & History*, vol. 21, 2009, 465-498.
- 11 Thad Dunning, *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences: A Design-Based Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).
- 12 Nigel G. Fielding and Jane L. Fielding, *Linking Data* (Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1997).
- 13 90 face-to-face interviews have been conducted by the author between July and October, 2013 in the following villages from Argeș County: Rociu, Căteasca, Retevoiești, Bogați, Cerbu, Curteanca, Drăganu, Lăzărești, Ungheni, Băiculești, Mârghia, Mănicești, Popești and Izvoru-Recea. The interviews focused primarily on the consumption of bread and mămăligă, past and present, but the respondents have frequently discussed more general developments in food consumption and lifestyles during the 1960s and 1970s as well.
- 14 Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power. The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Penguin Books, 1991), 8-13 and Sidney W. Mintz and Daniela Schlettwein-Gsell, "Food Patterns in Agrarian Societies: The 'Core-Fringe-Legume' Hypothesis. A Dialogue," *Gastronomica: The Journal of Critical Food Studies* 1 (2001): 40-52 and Sidney Mintz and Sharda Nayak, "The Anthropology of Food: Core and Fringe in Diet," *India International Centre Quarterly* 12 (1985): 193-204.
- 15 Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*. 9, 12.
- 16 Ibid., 12.
- 17 Ibid., 13.
- 18 Grigore Benetato, "Alimentația țăranilor din Ardeal și Banat [The Food Consumption of Peasants from Ardeal and Banat]," in *Revista de Igienă Socială [Review of Social Hygiene]* 10, (January-April 1940): 326-327.
- 19 Grigore Benetato, *Problema Alimentației pentru Individ și Colectivitate [The Nutrition Problem for the Individual and the Community]* (Cluj: Tipografia Cartea Românească, 1939), 232-233.
- 20 Petru Râmneanțu, "Starea de nutriție și alimentație din trei comune ale județului Caraș [Nutritional and Food Status in Three Rural Communes from Caraș County]," in *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic [The Journal of Eugenics and Biopolitics]*, No. 8, 1937, 97-123.
- 21 Moise Enescu and A. Radenschi, "Contribuțiuni la studiul alimentației țăranului moldovean, cu observațiuni asupra regimului pelagroșilor [Contributions to the Study of the Diets of the Moldavian Peasant, with Observations on the Diets of Pellagrins]," in *Revista de Igienă Socială [Review of Social Hygiene]* 10 (1937): 457.
- 22 Gheorghe Proca and Gheorghe Kirileanu, *Cercetări asupra hranei țăranului, de Profesori Doctori Gh. Proca și Gh. I. Kirileanu (raport) [Inquiries into the*

- Peasants' Diet, by Professor Doctors Gh. Proca and Gh. I. Kirileanu (Report)]* (Bucharest: Imprimeria Statului, București, 1907), 12-13.
- 23 Ion Ardelean and Alfred Sporn, "Particularitățile alimentației în mediul rural din regiunile București, Argeș, Oltenia, Dobrogea și Ploiești" [The Particularities of Rural Diets in the Regions of Bucuresti, Argeș, Oltenia, Dobrogea and Ploiești] in *Culegere de lucrări metodologice și documentare. Probleme de igienă și sănătate publică în sectorul agricol (din materialele consfățuirii de la Constanța) 1961. [Collection of Metodological and Documentary Papers (From the Materials of the Conference from Constanța) in 1961]* (Bucharest: Ministerul Sănătății și Prevederilor Sociale Institutul de Igienă și Protecția Muncii- R.P.R., 1962), 84-86.
- 24 Mihai Lupescu, *Din bucătăria țaranului român [The Cooking and Cuisine of the Romanian Peasant]* (Bucharest: Paideia, 2000), 161.
- 25 Ion Ardelean and Alfred Sporn, "Particularitățile alimentației în mediul rural," 85.
- 26 Moise Enescu and A Radenschi, "Contribuțiuni la studiul alimentației țaranului moldovean, cu observațiuni asupra regimului pelagrosilor", 457, Mihai Lupescu, *Din bucătăria țaranului român*, 161.
- 27 Dan Georgescu, *L'alimentation de la Population Rurale en Roumanie* (Bucharest : Institutul Central de Statistică, București, 1940), 32-35, Grigore Benetato, "Alimentația tăranelor din Ardeal și Banat," 326-328, and Ioan Claudian, *Alimentația Poporului Român în cadrul Antropogeografiei și Istoriei Economice [The Diet of the Romanian People in Relation to its Antropogeography and Economic History]* (Bucharest: Fundația pentru Literatură și Artă 'Regele Carol II', 1939), 124-126.
- 28 Anton Golopenția (Ed.), *60 Sate Românești cercetate de echipele studențești în vara 1938. Vol II: Situația economică. [60 Romanian Villages Studied by the Student Research Teams in the Summer of 1938. Vol. 2: Economic Situation]* (Bucharest : Institutul de Științe Sociale al României, 1941).
- 29 Benetato, G, *Problema Alimentației pentru Individ și Colectivitate*.
- 30 Arhivele Naționale ale României. Fundațiile Culturale Regale-Centrală. 79/1937, 36
- 31 Nicolae Lupu, *Alimentația Țaranului [The Peasant's Diet]* (Bucharest: Biblioteca Ateneului Popular, 1937), 18.
- 32 Anton Golopenția (Ed.), *60 Sate Românești*, 267, 288-289.
- 33 For a detailed discussion of how the estimates on the availability of industrially-produced bread have been derived, see Scrob, *From Mămăligă to Bread as the "Core" Food of Romanian Villagers: A Consumer-Centered Interpretation of a Dietary Change (1900-1980)*. PhD Thesis, Central European University, 2015, 128-138.
- 34 *Statistica profesiunilor din România: după recensământul general al Populațiunei din 1 Ianuarie 1913 St. N. [Statistics on Professions in Romania: Based on the results of the general census of the population from January*

- 1<sup>st</sup> 1913 (New Style)] (Bucharest: Ministerul Industriei și Comerțului, Direcțiunea generală a statisticeii, 1925), 26-27.
- 35 Sabin Manuilă, *Recensământul General al Populației României din 29 Decembrie 1930. Vol V-VI: Populația pe clase și grupe de profesii și situația în profesie pe sexe* [The General Census of the Romanian Population from December 29<sup>th</sup> 1930. Vol. V-VI: Classification of the population by profession and the distribution of professions by gender] (Bucharest: Editura Institutului Central de Statistică, 1940).
- 36 Iulian Mincu, *Impactul Om-Alimentație: Istoria alimentației la români din cele mai vechi timpuri și până în prezent* [The Human-Nutrition Relationship: A History of Romanian Diets from the Earliest Times up to the Present] (Bucharest: Editura Medicală, 1993), 274-310.
- 37 Out of the entire sample of households considered in the 1938 Dietary Study, the first 10% owned land which put them in the top 1.5% nationally, the first 32% in the top 6.5%, the first 50% in the top 25% while the poorest villagers were strongly under-represented. Data on landowning by the surveyed households comes from Anton Golopenția (Ed.), *60 Sate Românești*, 253-261 while data on landholding at the national level from Roman Cresin, *Recensământul agricol al României din 1941 – rezultate provizorii* [The Agricultural Census of Romania of 1941-Provisional Data] (Bucharest: Imprimeria Institutului Central de Statistică, 1945), Annex no. 7.
- 38 Mircea-Lucian Scrob, *From Mămăligă to Bread as the “Core” Food of Romanian Villagers*. pp. 135 and 208.
- 39 See the data from Iulian Mincu, *Impactul Om-Alimentație* on the frequency of consumption of various foods in the villages of Bălțești and Bratovoiești.
- 40 Sebastian Dumitrache et al., “Cercetarea modului de alimentație și a stării de nutriție a populației din două localități rurale în curs de urbanizare [Research on the Dietary Patterns and Nutritional Status of Residents from Two Rural Communes in the Process of Urbanization],” in *A XII-a sesiune științifică a Institutului de Igienă și Sănătate Publică: Rezumatele Lucrărilor* [The 12th Scientific Session of the Institute of Hygiene and Public Health: Summary of Papers], (Bucharest: Ministerul Sănătății, 1977), 85-86.
- 41 The concept of forced substitution comes from Janos Kornai, *Economics of Shortage* (Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1980).
- 42 Nevertheless, the qualification needs to be made that rural residents retained a comparatively greater freedom than urban residents to shape their own meals through private plot production, continued ownership over land in non-collectivized regions and more readily available possibilities to convert vegetal products into the possibly more desirable animal products.
- 43 H. Leon Abrams, Jr, “The Preference for Animal Protein and Fat: A Cross Cultural Survey,” in *Food and Evolution. Toward a Theory of Human Food Habits*, ed. Marvin Harris and Eric B. Ross (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), 207-224.

- 44 William J. Hamilton III, "Omnivorous Primate Diets and Human Overconsumption of Meat," in *Food and Evolution. Toward a Theory of Human Food Habits*, ed. Marvin Harris and Eric B. Ross (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), 117-133.
- 45 Mihai Lupescu, *Din bucătăria țăranului român*, 164.
- 46 ANR. C.C. al P.C.R. Secția Cancelarie. 193/1972, 102, 191/1972, 42, 61, 92, 179-180.
- 47 C.C. al P.C.R. Secția Economică. 13/1970, 57, 19/1974, 17, 21, 31/1964, 1.
- 48 Raluca Nicoleta Spiridon, "Raporturile familiale private copii-părinți în anii '80. Studiu de caz: comuna Fundulea [Children-Parents Private Family Relations in the 1980s. Case-study: Fundulea Village]," in *Stat și viață privată în regimurile comuniste [State and Private Life under the Communist Regimes]*, ed. Cosmin Budeanca and Florentin Olteanu (Iași: Polirom, 2009), 217-235.
- 49 Calculated as the difference between total bread production and the quantities produced using state-supplied flour in 1975 based on data from ANR. C.C. al P.C.R. Secția Economică. 134/1976, 4.
- 50 This discussion summarizes and streamlines a longer analysis that I have provided in Scrob, *From Mămăligă to Bread as the "Core" Food of Romanian Villagers*.
- 51 Proca, Gh & Kirileanu Gh, *Cercetări asupra hranei țăranului*.
- 52 Benetato, Gr, *Problema Alimentației pentru Individ și Colectivitate*. 184-231.
- 53 Râmneanțu, P, "Starea de nutriție și alimentație din trei comune ale județului Caraș".
- 54 Grigore Benetato, "Alimentația țăranilor din Ardeal și Banat", 326-327.
- 55 Dan Georgescu, *L'alimentation de la Population Rurale en Roumanie*, 36.
- 56 Arhivele Naționale ale României. C.C. al P.C.R. Secția Economică. 220/1959, 55.
- 57 Ibid.
- 58 Arhivele Naționale ale României. C.C. al P.C.R. Secția Economică. 8/1970, 89.
- 59 Iulian Mincu, *Impactul Om-Alimentație*,. 287-297.
- 60 Ibid., 276-286
- 61 Ibid., 310-312.
- 62 Albu, A, *Comportamentul alimentar și starea de nutriție a unor esantioane de populație din localități rurale situate în zona Munteniei [Food Intake and Nutritional Status of Population Samples from Rural Localities from the Region of Muntenia]*, Universitatea de Medicină și Farmacie „Carol Davila”, Institutul de Sănătate Publică, București, 1997.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### A. Archival Sources

**Arhivele Naționale ale României (ANR). Comitetul Central al Partidului Comunist Român (C.C. al P.C.R.) Secția Economică:** Files 220/1959, 31/1964, 8/1970, 13/1970, 19/1974, 134/1976.

**ANR. C.C. al P.C.R. Secția Căminară.** Files 191/1972, 193/1972.

**ANR. Fundațiile Culturale Regale-Centrală.** File 79/1937.

### B. Published Sources

Abrams Jr, HL, "The Preference for Animal Protein and Fat: A Cross Cultural Survey" in *Food and Evolution. Toward a Theory of Human Food Habits*, ed. Marvin Harris and Eric B. Ross, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1987, pp. 207-224.

Albu, A, *Comportamentul alimentar și starea de nutriție a unor esanțioane de populație din localități rurale situate în zona Munteniei [Food Intake and Nutritional Status of Population Samples from Rural Localities from the Region of Muntenia]*, Universitatea de Medicină și Farmacie "Carol Davila", Institutul de Sănătate Publică, București, 1997.

Ardelean, I. & Sporn, A, "Particularitățile alimentației în mediul rural din regiunile București, Argeș, Oltenia, Dobrogea și Ploiești" [The Particularities of Rural Diets in the Regions of București, Argeș, Oltenia, Dobrogea and Ploiești]" în *Culegere de lucrări metodologice și documentare. Probleme de igienă și sănătate publică în sectorul agricol (din materialele consfățuirii de la Constanța) 1961. [Collection of Metodological and Documentary Papers (From the Materials of the Conference from Constanța) in 1961]*, Ministerul Sănătății și Prevederilor Sociale Institutul de Igienă și Protecția Muncii-R.P.R., București, 1962, 84-86.

Benetato, Gr, *Problema Alimentației pentru Individ și Colectivitate [The Nutrition Problem for the Individual and the Community]*, Tipografia Cartea Românească, Cluj, 1939.

Benetato, Gr, "Alimentația țăranilor din Ardeal și Banat [The Food Consumption of Peasants from Ardeal and Banat]," în *Revista de Igienă Socială [Review of Social Hygiene]*, 10, 1940, 323-339.

Bren, P & Neuburger, M, *Communism Unwrapped: Consumption in Cold War Eastern Europe*, Oxford University Press, New York.

Castillo, G, 'Domesticating the Cold War: Household Consumption as Propaganda in Marshall Plan Germany', *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 40, 2005, 261-288.

Claudian, I, *Alimentația Poporului Român în cadrul Antropogeografiei și Istoriei Economice [The Diet of the Romanian People in Relation to its Antropogeography and Economic History]*, Fundația pentru Literatură și Artă 'Regele Carol II', Bucharest, 1939, 124-126.



- Cresin, R, Recensământul agricol al României din 1941 – rezultate provizorii [The Agricultural Census of Romania of 1941-Provisional Data], Imprimeria Institutului Central de Statistică, Bucharest, 1945.
- Crowley, D & Reid, S, *Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc*, Berg, Oxford, 2002.
- Crowley, D & Reid, S, *Pleasures in Socialism: Leisure and Luxury in the Eastern Bloc*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 2010.
- Dumitrache S et al., "Cercetarea modului de alimentație și a stării de nutriție a populației din două localități rurale în curs de urbanizare [Research on the Dietary Patterns and Nutritional Status of Residents from Two Rural Communes in the Process of Urbanization]," in *A XII-a sesiune științifică a Institutului de Igienă și Sănătate Publică: Rezumatele Lucrărilor [The 12th Scientific Session of the Institute of Hygiene and Public Health: Summary of Papers]*, Ministerul Sănătății, Bucharest, 1977, 85-86.
- Dunning, T, *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences: A Design-Based Approach*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2012.
- Enescu, M & Radenschi, A, "Contribuțiuni la studiul alimentației țăranului moldovean, cu observațiuni asupra regimului pelagroșilor [Contributions to the Study of the Diets of the Moldavian Peasant, with Observations on the Diets of Pellagrins]," in *Revista de Igienă Socială [Review of Social Hygiene]*, 10, 1937.
- Fielding, NG & Fielding J, *Linking Data*, Sage Publications, Newbury Park, 1997.
- Geertz, C, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretative Theory of Culture" in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, ed. C. Geertz, Basic Books, New York, 1973, 3-30.
- Golopenția, A (Ed.), *60 Sate Românești cercetate de echipele studențești în vara 1938. Vol II: Situația economică. [60 Romanian Villages Studied by the Student Research Teams in the Summer of 1938. Vol. 2: Economic Situation]*, Institutul de Științe Sociale al României, Bucharest, 1941.
- Hamilton III, WJ, "Omnivorous Primate Diets and Human Overconsumption of Meat" in *Food and Evolution. Toward a Theory of Human Food Habits*, 117-133.
- Iordachi, C & Dobrinu, C (Eds.), *Transforming Peasants, Property and Power: The Collectivization of Agriculture in Romania, 1949-1962*, Central European University Press, Budapest, 2009.
- Kornai, J, *Economics of Shortage*, North-Holland, Amsterdam, 1980.
- Lupescu, M, *Din bucătăria țăranului român [The Cooking and Cuisine of the Romanian Peasant]*, Paideia, Bucharest, 2000.
- Lupu, N, *Alimentația Țăranului [The Peasant's Diet]*, Biblioteca Ateneului Popular, Bucharest, 1937.
- Massino, J, "From Black Caviar to Blackouts: Gender, Consumption, and Lifestyle in Ceausescu's Romania," in *Communism Unwrapped: Consumption in Cold War Eastern Europe*, eds. Paulina Bren and Mary Neuburger, Oxford University Press, New York, 2012.

- Manuilă, S, *Recensământul General al Populației României din 29 Decemvrie 1930. Vol V-VI: Populația pe clase și grupe de profesii și situația în profesie pe sexe* [The General Census of the Romanian Population from December 29<sup>th</sup> 1930. Vol. V-VI: Classification of the population by profession and the distribution of professions by gender, Editura Institutului Central de Statistică, Bucharest, 1940.
- Mincu, I, *Impactul Om-Alimentație: Istoria alimentației la români din cele mai vechi timpuri și până în prezent*, [The Human-Nutrition Relationship: A History of Romanian Diets from the Earliest Times up to the Present], Editura Medicală, București, 1993.
- Mintz, S & Nayak, S, "The Anthropology of Food: Core and Fringe in Diet," in *India International Centre Quarterly*, 12, 1985, 193-204.
- Mintz, S, *Sweetness and Power. The Place of Sugar in Modern History*, Penguin Books, New York, 1991.
- Mintz, S & Schlettwein-Gsell, D, "Food Patterns in Agrarian Societies: The 'Core-Fringe-Legume' Hypothesis. A Dialogue," in *Gastronomica: The Journal of Critical Food Studies*, 1, 2001, 40-52.
- Neculau, A. (Ed.), *Viața cotidiană în comunism* [Everyday Life in Communism], Polirom, Iași, 2004.
- Pârvulescu, I (Ed.), *Și eu am trăit în Comunism* [I too have lived under Communism], Humanitas, Bucharest, 2015.
- Petrescu, C & Petrescu, D, "The Canon of Remembering Romanian Communism: From Autobiographical Recollections to Collective Representations," in *Remembering Communism: Private and Public Recollections of Lived Experience in Southeast Europe*, eds. Maria Todorova, Augusta Dimou and Stefan Troebst, Central European University Press, Budapest, 2014.
- Proca, Gh & Kirileanu Gh, *Cercetări asupra hranei țăranului, de Profesori Doctori Gh. Proca și Gh. I. Kirileanu (raport)* [Inquiries into the Peasants' Diet, by Professor Doctors Gh. Proca and Gh. I. Kirileanu (Report)], Imprimeria Statului, București, 1907.
- Răgaru, N & Capelle-Pogăcean A, *Vie quotidienne et pouvoir sous le communisme. Consommer à l'Est*, Karthala, Paris, 2012.
- Râmneanu, P, "Starea de nutriție și alimentație din trei comune ale județului Caraș [Nutritional and Food Situation in Three Rural Communes from Caraș County]," in *Buletin eugenic și biopolitic* [The Journal of Eugenics and Biopolitics], 8, 1937, 97-123.
- Reid, S, "Communist Comfort: Socialist Modernism and the Making of Cozy Homes in the Khrushchev Era," *Gender & History*, 21, 2009, 465-498.
- Scrob, M, *From Mămăligă to Bread as the "Core" Food of Romanian Villagers: A Consumer-Centered Interpretation of a Dietary Change (1900-1980)*, PhD Thesis, Central European University, 2015.
- Spiridon, RN, "Raporturile familiale private copii-părinți în anii '80. Studiu de caz: comuna Fundulea [Children-Parents Private Family Relations in the

1980s. Case-study: Fundulea Village],” in *Stat și viață privată în regimurile comuniste* [State and Private Life under the Communist Regimes], ed. Cosmin Budeanca and Florentin Olteanu, Polirom, Iași, 2009, 217-235.

*Statistica profesiunilor din România: după recensământul general al Populațiunei din 1 Ianuarie 1913 St. N.* [Statistics on Professions in Romania: Based on the results of the general census of the population from January 1<sup>st</sup> 1913 (New Style)], Ministerul Industriei și Comerțului, Direcțiunea generală a statisticeii, București, 1925.

Vultur, S, “Daily Life and Constraints in Communist Romania in the Late 1980s: From the Semiotics of Food to the Semiotics of Power,” in *Remembering Communism: Private and Public Recollections of Lived Experience in Southeast Europe*, eds. Maria Todorova, Augusta Dimou and Stefan Troebst, Central European University Press, Budapest, 2014.

Verdery, K, *What was Socialism and What Comes Next?*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1996.

Yurchak, A, *Everything was Forever, Until It was No More: The Last Soviet Generation*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2006.





## TUDOR GHERASIM SMIRNA

Born in 1976, in Focșani

Ph.D., Bucharest University of Economic Studies

Thesis: *Central Bank Theories. Analysis of the Suffolk System and the National Bank of Moldavia*

Assistant Professor, Faculty of International Business and Economics,  
Bucharest University of Economic Studies

Research Fellow, The Ludwig von Mises Institute, Auburn. Alabama, U.S.A.,  
2002

Romanian Academy – Iași Branch (2014-2015)

Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, Madrid (2014-2015)

Participation to international conferences in Romania, Spain, China

Articles on business cycles, monetary theory, central banking, balance of  
payments theory, economic history, history of economic thought, pension  
systems, methodology



# ROMANIAN ECHOES OF THE *CURRENCY VERSUS BANKING* DEBATE – FROM UNIFICATION TO THE CREATION OF THE NATIONAL BANK

## **Abstract**

In this paper we take a new look at how the modern Romanian monetary and banking system took shape between the Unification of the Principalities and the founding of the National Bank of Romania in 1880. We are primarily interested in showing that the ideas that influenced its creation were richer than previous historical accounts imply. For this purpose, we first take a look at the Western debates between the Currency School and the Banking School, and in particular at the ideas of French participants. Against this background, we will then evoke the Romanian echoes of this great 19th century controversy.

**Keywords:** Currency School, Banking School, central bank, free banking, gold standard, bimetallicism, fiduciary media, paper money.

Western liberalism was spreading worldwide during the 19th century, and the Romanian Principalities were no exception. The emancipation of commerce and production from privilege and control was a slow and bumpy but inevitable process – led by ideas of personal rights and liberties that were permeating political and commercial elites.

## **The great 19<sup>th</sup> century Currency versus Banking debate**

In the monetary field, the establishment and international alignment of gold, silver or bimetallic standards was a secular Western evolution. In the field of banking, progress was slower to take hold than in other areas of economic life. In contrast to the long trend towards free markets, initial

freedom of banking in England, France, or Prussia was later replaced by monopoly, restricted plurality and a return towards centralization.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the institution of the monopoly central bank that was first established shortly before the beginning of 18th century in England survived and later spread to other countries – continental Europe included – despite the triumph of classical liberal ideas. The great debate between the Currency School and the Banking School can be understood as a struggle of economic thinkers disentangling themselves from error, but not yet ready to apply their findings to money and banking. This debate that spanned a century and the whole Western world can be seen as the long demystification of some of the most difficult subjects in the discipline.

It intensified in England around the turn of the 19th century, and it then moved East and West, to Europe and the United States. What started with the Bullionist controversy<sup>2</sup> over the return to convertibility of Bank of England notes has later, in the 1840's, turned into the currency versus banking debate – that led to the enactment of Peel's Law in 1844, a landmark for the ill-fated triumph of currency principles' incoherent application – and it continued in the following years and decades.<sup>3</sup> In France, our area of interest – given its influence over the Principalities and later Romania –, the debate was substantial after 1840 and especially heated after the crisis of 1857, around the time Romanian Principalities entered their phase of momentous change. One main point of contradiction in these debates was the just or proper level of the interest rate. Since recession was usually accompanied by a surge of the market level of the interest rate, there were, on the one hand, parties clamoring for the intervention of the state to regulate a low level of interest.<sup>4</sup> And there were, on the other hand, advocates of letting the market decide that level.<sup>5</sup> In trying to solve this problem the writers and respondents engaged in discussions related to fundamental economic principles and to the right architecture and mechanisms of the monetary and banking institutions. There were questions pondering on what is a crisis, if there are general causes to crises, and if there is the case to distinguish between commercial and financial crises. Also, the thinkers were asking if there is a lack of capital or a lack of money in crises. Or, what is the effect of international trade and its dynamics on national crises?

On the subject of money and monetary standard there were questions on whether an economy should be based on a metallic or fiduciary money, or if it should have a mixed money supply. Then, what would be the role of metallic money in such a mixed supply? Should there be a unique metallic



standard or a bimetallic standard? Also, should the bimetallic standard be based on a fixed or a free exchange rate between the two metals?

There were also inquiries into the definition of interest: is it the price of money or of credit? Is there only one factor of the interest rate, or are there several components of the interest rate?

When it came to the field of banking, there were questions about the monetary substitutes issued by the banks. Are banknotes economically equal to deposits, or not? Should there be a monopoly of the issue of fiduciary media, or not? And, should we have a central bank or a free banking system? If we should have a central bank, how extensive should the role of such a bank be? Should there be regional banks with roles similar to the national central bank, or should the central bank simply have territorial subsidiaries?

In France<sup>6</sup> the supporters of a theory of crises caused by underexpansion or restriction were Coquelin and Du Puynode. They, together with Courcelle-Seneuil and Garnier defended an extension of the *laissez faire* regime to money and banking, where the stockholders of the bank had limited liability and were free from all state interference. Chevalier and Horn were also in this camp,<sup>7</sup> although they were in favor of maintaining some degree of legislative intervention. Mannequin and most of the above defended free banking with the needs of trade argument employed earlier by the English counterparts of the Banking School: notes cannot be issued in excess, otherwise they would return to the issuing banks through market processes, and thus free banking would not engender crises.

On a somewhat more conservative position was Lavergne, who advocated for a system of regional department banks with more autonomy than in the past. Clement Juglar also held an intermediary position in which the Bank of France played a central role in a network of banks.

Isaac Pereire, Maurice Aubry and Paul Coq held the Napoleonic position<sup>8</sup> that the interest rate should be fixed at a low level – 3% in the case of Pereire –, and on this ground they attacked the Bank of France for raising the interest rate.

The defenders of the status quo – a prevalence of the royal prerogative in money and banking – like Bonnet and Wolowski, wanted to see a continuation of the monopoly of the Bank of France and its control by the state. But it was not purely on political grounds that they defended the monopoly. Bonnet argued that the existence of only one bank of issue is optimal, whereas the existence of a plurality of banks would have both undesirable inflationary effects and not enough flexibility in

war times. They were defending the importance of a flexible interest rate in equilibrating supply and demand of bank credit. Their theory of crises was inflationist: too much credit can lead to imbalances and crises.

Others argued, like English authors before them, that banknote holders would not be able to discriminate among the banknotes and this would lead to a proliferation of low quality paper money and all the subsequent negative consequences. In trying to make sense of the diversity of opinions, we can categorize the authors following two criteria:

By the banking structure criterion,<sup>9</sup> we can distinguish the following categories, from the most centralist to the most *laissez faire* thinkers: proponents of a state owned central bank, monopoly of central bank theorists, duopolists, central bank and regional banks advocates, unlimited liability free bankers, limited liability free bankers.

By the inflation criterion, from the strictest to the most flexible, we can distinguish these categories: monetary certificate advocates, real bills moderates, fixed fiduciary issue moderates, and fiduciary media enthusiasts.

Some thinkers were advocates of the same institutional means for opposite goals. Courcelle-Seneuil and Horn wanted free banking but were not inflationists or low interest rate advocates. And Laveleye, for example, was against the expansion of credit, but he considered that a free banking setting would be less expansionist than a monopoly central bank setting. Also, Henri Cernuschi was against the central bank monopoly but he also famously considered that free banking would imply irresponsible banknote issuance followed by public distrust and abandonment of banknote use.<sup>10</sup> Victor Modeste also criticized fiduciary media and wanted a pure money certificate regime, i.e., where all banknotes are backed by specie all the time.<sup>11</sup> Couillet was for a central bank architecture for reasons similar to Cernuschi's: freedom in banking would lead to inflationary redistribution and bankruptcies that would then attract public distrust. Centralization offered more advantages than disadvantages from his point of view.

## **Are there Romanian echoes of the debate?**

The Romanian period of classical liberalism<sup>12</sup> largely overlapped with the period of French classical liberalism. An interesting question is, then, to what extent was the spectrum of ideas debated in France and the

West imported into the Romanian discussions on the subject of money and banking?

The progress of countries that adopted free markets and capitalist modes of production from the West was sped up by the export of innovations and the capital accumulated by these economies.<sup>13</sup> In monetary and banking matters, as in others, the Romanians felt compelled to speed up the process, and were helped by Western investors who wanted to profit from the rapid modernization of emerging economies.

The history of modern Romanian banking is essentially a history of how the central bank came to existence. It is normal, given the historical context, to see a drive for its adoption by Western imitation and less debate about its nature, scope, functions and utility. But, since the controversy was still alive in Europe at that time, and since a lot of the leading political and economic figures were educated in Western academic centers, it is legitimate to ask if there was a local money and banking debate mirroring the one in the West.

## Historical setting

Around 1860, the monetary landscape in the Principalities consisted of a multitude of gold, silver, and copper coins. There were no paper money substitutes circulating. The banking sector was also in a state of backwardness when compared to France and the West. There were private local money changers turning fast into full-fledged bankers (they were mainly Jews), and foreign banks<sup>14</sup>. The growing international trade that consisted mainly in exportation of cereals and animal produce and the importation of manufactured goods was operated through cash and bills of exchange drawn on important hubs of international commerce.

The monetary situation until the reform of 1867 and even afterward can be described in three words: chronic Gresham effects.<sup>15</sup> The practice of regulated exchange rates – preexistent since the Organic Statutes and before – for different kinds of money led to perpetual imbalances, speculation, uncertainty and violent money movements to and from the territory, according to the evolution of the international market rates. These problems existed since the first days of the new Romanian state and until after the end of the discussed period. Egregious examples include the order of the Minister of finance from Moldavia, Eugen Alcaz, forbidding embezzlement by tax collectors through substitution of bad money for

good<sup>16</sup>; the extremely profitable international arbitrage described by Moruzi;<sup>17</sup> or the inundation of the Romanian market with overvalued silver rubles after the War of Independence.<sup>18</sup>

Nicolae Suțu offered a good description of the state of credit and banking. Succinctly put, there was legal uncertainty with exorbitant interest rates. In a banking law justification, written in 1852<sup>19</sup>, Suțu identified the lack of credit as the chief problem related to banking in the Principalities. It was not so much the state that was complaining at the time for the dearth of credit, as were the private landowners. Suțu wrote that landowners were eager to invest and increase production after new opportunities for export began to open up from 1829. They did not understand how interest works and, also, they took advantage of the legal tolerance that their class enjoyed. As a result, relates Suțu, almost all were on the brink of ruin at the time of his writing.

He looked at the interest level in the West and accused the high interest in the Principalities, but he was also offering an explanation for the very high local levels (which were officially capped at annual rates of 10 or 12 percent, but were available on the market only at levels of 24, 30 or even 36 percent). Suțu observed that creditors had little certainty of seeing their claims repaid. Justice was discretionary, slow and costly. Years after term, and after interminable legal hassle, the creditor would obtain a much lower real interest than stipulated in the contract. It could be 10 percent or even less. Suțu stated clearly what later economists called the risk premium as a component of the interest rate:

L'intérêt légal est de 10% dans le pays. Les emprunts garantis par l'hypothèque se font quelquefois à ce taux, et plus communément au taux de 12% ; mais l'agiotage fait le plus souvent monter l'intérêt à 18 et même à 24 et au delà. Cette hausse désastreuse de l'intérêt est toujours le résultat du défaut de sûreté et de l'incertitude où se trouve le prêteur, de toucher ses fonds ou même ses intérêts au terme convenu. Le revenu de l'argent est alors composé de l'intérêt proprement dit et d'une prime proportionnelle au risque que court le créancier ; mais cette espèce de dédommagement produit un cercle vicieux vu qu'il ne tend d'un autre côté qu'à augmenter les difficultés du débiteur. Ainsi, que d'embarras, que de démarches et de temps perdu pour le prêteur jusqu'à ce qu'il parvienne à se faire rembourser [...]<sup>20</sup>

In the bank law project of 1852 he went on to say that the solution for this critical situation was a credit institute and lower interest rates. The

credit supply can be increased by the expansionary powers of fractional reserves. Through this procedure of multiplication, the bank can offer a low interest rate to borrowers while giving high return on capital to stockholders:

La Banque peut émettre des billets pour une somme équivalente à son numéraire ; le crédit de ces billets est constitué sur la base suivante : en prêtant cent mille ducats p. ex. en numéraire, la Banque conserve, dans ses caisses, des hypothèques d'une valeur supérieure à ses débours. Elle peut dès lors émettre pour cent mille ducats de billets qui représentent les valeurs en caisses et sont garantis par elles ; ces billets qui représentent les valeurs en caisses et sont garantis par elles ; ces billets sont de plus réalisables à tout instant par la Banque. C'est ainsi que d'une part les capitaux du pays ont doublés par la circulation de valeurs inactives et que de l'autre, l'actionnaire voit doubler ses intérêts qui ne sont plus de 8 mais de 16%.<sup>21</sup>

Suțu's position on money and banking is interesting because it defines early on the general perception of the problem – lack of credit –, its rationalization – the naiveté and privilege of the boyars<sup>22</sup> that led to over-indebtedness –, and the solution – a privileged bank that would multiply capital, lower the interest rate, and fecundate the national economy.

## **Initiatives in money and banking**

Before 1860, there were numerous attempts at having a monopoly bank of issuance in the Principalities. They were systematically thwarted by either the Ottoman or the Russian authorities. In 1856, Prince Grigore Alexandru Ghika has succeeded in establishing the ill-fated National Bank of Moldavia.

The state of finances, money, and banking during the unification process is characteristic for the decades that followed. Immediately after the double election of Prince Cuza in 1859, the emerging state had a series of momentous problems. Lack of funds was one of the main worries of the statesmen from the two provincial governing bodies and this turned out to be a chronic plight. Since taxation or borrowing – local or international – did not bring in enough revenues, inflation through a central bank was seen as a promising solution.

There are a few landmarks in the money and banking history of the period. We note here a 1859 proposal for a national bank by C. Steriadi, minister of finance; the 1860 proposal for the unification of money rates and the introduction of a new national money; the 1860 proposal for a national bank by Ion C. Brătianu, as finance minister; the 1861 proposal for a new privileged bank, Banca Română; the 1862 bank project by Ioan Polichroniadi et. Co.; the 48 million lei loan floated in 1864 on the London market; the 1864 founding of the CEC deposit bank; the 1865 charter for the privileged Banca României controlled by Adolphe Hertz and Jacques Löbel, a short-lived and fruitless initiative of the besieged Cuza regime; the 1867 projects for Banca României Limitată and for a Land Bank advanced by Ladislav Zmoyski; the monetary reform of 1867; the 1871 request for a Banca Națională și de Credit Funciar a României by Eugene Bosquet Deschamps; the 1873 national bank project advanced by Jacques Poumay, D.S. Rodocanachi, Menelas Ghermani, S. Ioanidi, Petre Christu and Achille Zerlendi; the 1873 creation of the Creditul Funciar Rural; the 1874 central bank project advanced by minister of finance P. Mavrogheni; the 1877 bank proposal advanced by P. Buescu; the 1877 law for the issuance of 30 million land notes or State scrip notes; and finally the 1880 law for the enactment of the National Bank of Romania, an initiative of the Brătianu Cabinet.

We will analyze below the most interesting contributions related to these developments.

## **The Central Commission Money Project**

Economist and biographer Victor Slăvescu credits Suțu with the authorship of the proposal for a new national money, dated 1860 in Focșani.<sup>23</sup> The signatories of the project were in fact Suțu, I. Cantacuzino, I. Docan, Al. Moruzi, and L. Steege, all members of the Central Commission.

Suțu *et al.* accused the Organic Statutes for legislating a fixed price between gold and silver. Then, they observed that there were in Moldavia three different regulated (or “nominal”) exchange rates: one in Galați (Danube port and main Moldavian foreign trade hub), one for all commerce in the rest of the country, and one at the Treasury in Iași. They were all three different from the exchange rate in Constantinople and the real market exchange rate in Moldavia.<sup>24</sup>

This state of affairs led to severe effects carried on by the “agiotars”, or “zarafi”. Gold and silver was exported to Vienna or Constantinople and the local market was inundated with copper-silver “parale” (or, in French, *billon*).<sup>25</sup>

They, therefore, proposed to give up the fictitious monetary unit of *leu* and adopt a silver standard, and suggested France as a model of metallic standard. But, quoting Michel Chevalier, they stated that Romania should have avoided a bimetallic standard for the problems that the fixed exchange rates between the two metals could bring about, as the cases of France and Belgium proved. They went on to state that it was also impractical, at least at the time being, to replace all circulating foreign monies with the new national metallic standard. Suffice it to just give a silver definition to the new national money, mint it in Paris for the sum of 100 million francs, and leave all existing money to circulate freely in the new country.

Thus, we can see that already in 1860 the new Romanian state had an economically sound project for the monetary unification – that it would enact into law only 7 years later, and with the main disadvantage of keeping bimetallism in place.

Suțu’s last publication is a report of the state of the economy in 1866.<sup>26</sup> There, as in his earlier project for a land mortgage bank we can find proposals anticipating the mortgage notes that were issued by the Treasury in 1877 and were backed with public lands.

## **Place, Moruzi, Strat, Ghica**

Besides Nicolae Suțu, we have other four remarkable authors who contributed substantially to the discussions on money and banking in the era: Victor Place, Alexandru D. Moruzi, Ioan Strat and Ion Ghica. For lack of space, we decided to leave out a detailed discussion of their contributions and will only mention their positions in the conclusions.

## **The Parliament Debates for the Monetary Law of 1867**

This law was Romania’s de facto entrance into the Latin Monetary Union. This integration with the monetary systems of France, Belgium, Italy and Switzerland had its virtues and its drawbacks. The virtues were

related to the adoption of a standardization in money minting, along with the decimal system, and thus the abandonment of discretion in money regulation. The *leu* became the name of a certain quantity of silver or gold, instead of an abstract unit of account subject to arbitrary regulation.

The drawbacks were related to the contradictions embedded in the constitution of the monetary union itself. Its conventions included two layers of fixed pricing that could only lead to several Gresham effects. First, the Union kept bimetallism in place at a fixed conversion rate of 15.5 units of silver to one of gold. Second, there was a silver to silver fixed ratio generated by defining the 5 franc unit as a 0.900 purity silver quantity and the 1 franc unit as a corresponding quantity of only 0,835 silver purity.<sup>27</sup> Third, there was the paper to metal (either gold or silver) definition – and implicit fixed parity – that could not be defended permanently with less than 100% reserve backing – and the same would apply to any other substitute created by the bank, such as deposit entries.

As we have seen, fixed bimetallism was already rejected by Suțu or Moruzi, but Romanian lawmakers chose to adhere to the Latin Union despite its perceived drawbacks. In the debates occasioned by the law, D. Sturdza discussed the problems of fixed bimetallism that created disequilibrium between gold and silver. G. Ghica also objected to the idea of giving a fixed rate for gold and silver, since it would lead to strong fluctuations. However, bimetallism was adopted with the argument that civilized countries had bimetallist regimes as a rule.<sup>28</sup>

The State's lack of gold and silver opened two alternatives to lawmakers: minting symbolic quantities or using brass. V. Boerescu highlighted the benefits that Cantillon redistribution would bring to the Romanian state when minting brass or even nickel monies of little metal value but high nominal price.<sup>29</sup>

## **The Parliament Debates for the Mortgage Notes Law of 1877**

Brătianu nurtured the idea of issuing State paper money for a longer time,<sup>30</sup> and the impending Independence War finally provided the opportunity and the need<sup>31</sup> for such instruments to be floated in Romania. It was after all a precedent set by Western states to issue such instruments in times of emergency, as was the case with the *assignats* and with the Prussian state money during the Napoleonic Wars. The plan was to have 30.000.000 lei worth of state notes issued,<sup>32</sup> with backing in land assets



of the State. These notes would be redeemed in the span of 5 years as the state lands would be sold.

Gr. Vulturescu argued that the dire condition of state finances and the need to keep a strong army pushed the state to adopt the solution of issuing state notes. His justification is interesting because it is a summary of the options available for managing the budget problem. One option consisted in lowering state expenses – not realistic in the given circumstances. Another option was to increase revenue by raising taxation, but here again was a problem because real collection was already halved. Another source of revenue, borrowing from the Romanians or from abroad, was considered equally unrealistic. Therefore, inflation was the last resort. Vulturescu called it “a forced loan.”<sup>33</sup> He underlined the unjust character of the measure – the receivers did not get interest and faced the risk of a later devaluation of the notes – but claimed that it was an extreme, emergency solution.

E. Grădișteanu retraced succinctly the state’s history of debasing metallic money and manipulating paper money into hyperinflations. He criticized the notes as a type of asymmetric tax and underlined the distinction between paper money – the notes that were discussed at the moment – and money paper – the banknotes redeemable in gold.<sup>34</sup> He predicted the sharp devaluation of the former.

Em. Pache Protopopescu evoked the examples of John Law’s inflation and of the *assignats* to vehemently reject the proposal. He too defended the idea of paper notes backed by metal and issued by institutions capable of redeeming them on demand. He quoted Courcelle Seneuil to condemn paper notes as an apanage of uncivilized nations. He suggested that raising taxes would be better since it would induce a spirit of economy in the population.

V. Maniu brought patriotic arguments to support this measure that he and D.I. Ghica called a necessary evil. V. Fleva made the point that Austria, Russia and even France have resorted to suspension of payments as an emergency measure and that this was similar to issuing paper notes. He stated that the credit of the Romanian state was in good standing and had bright perspectives, therefore the value of the notes issued would be stable. In support of the measure, he brought the examples of England during Napoleonic War, and United States during the Civil War. He cited Victor Bonnet to criticize Adam Smith’s obsolete condemnation of financing war with paper money.<sup>35</sup> Fleva appears to be situated on a Banking School position. He supported the well-known needs of trade

argument that there is a certain degree of inflation that can be absorbed by the economy without negative consequences.

P. Buescu advanced the idea of a central bank while strongly criticizing the land notes initiative. He highlighted the advantages of fiduciary media issued by a bank and quoted from Gustave du Puynode and Courcelle-Seneuil to support his proposal. One thing to notice here is that both these authors were critical of the central bank and are advocates of free banking. On the other hand, Buescu criticized paper money. He based his arguments on Bonnet, showing that he is opposed to state-issued money and extracted the history of *assignats* from Joseph Garnier. Buescu underlined the importance of metallic reserves that back banknotes, while he diminished it when he defended his bank project.

N. Ionescu also considered that paper money was a barbarous institution, brought by Mongols. His solution was, too, the creation of a central bank based on assets of the state. George Cantilli was also against the issue of these notes because they would have pushed Romania on the path to further inflation, redistribution and crises. He took a position that reminds of Bastiat:

I believe that a state must not be concerned with immediate effects when proposing measures, but with the effects that will take place later, in a further moment; to see if the results of this project that may be momentarily flattering will not be accompanied by financial catastrophe later.<sup>36</sup>

Cantilli mustered knowledge from Anselme Batbie, Maurice Block, Courcelle-Seneuil, Joseph Garnier and Bonnet<sup>37</sup> to show the problems of paper money and his adamant opposition to a measure that promised to grow worse and become impossible to eradicate later.

One astute observation he extracted from Victor Bonnet was the difference in duration between crises under regimes of fiduciary media backed with fractional reserves and crises under regimes of paper money. The first were much shorter, and he offered the example of the 1857 crisis that was liquidated in one year despite being serious and worldwide.

He decried the lack of public discussion of such a piece of legislation and its intempestive introduction even among the members of Parliament.

Ion Brătianu defended the law with a revelatory intervention. First, he considered that the comparison with Law's system was misplaced. Our lands are not like the wilderness of Louisiana. According to Brătianu, Law was a genius, his idea of a bank was good, but he exaggerated – like all

geniuses do. After defining money, he stated that even the Tartars needed and used it, suggesting thus that paper money was not a barbarous but a universal institution. In amalgamating all preexisting kinds of media of exchange with modern means of payment, he committed a sophism: it was not the concept of money that his critics were attacking, but paper money. However, according to him it was the other way around: gold and silver were already obsolete and modern societies needed paper instruments. And, because Romania was not yet sufficiently developed, a bank needed the legitimacy bestowed by the state through monopoly privilege to circulate its banknotes.

He described how banknotes are issued against bills of exchange and how, during crises, it is impossible to redeem them with gold on demand because the money is gone to the debtors of the bank. Thus, there was a problem that no civilized society could solve yet: the suspension of payments and the forced circulation of unbacked banknotes. This solution was not ideal, but it acted like a bitter yet healthy pill. Implicitly, he equated the land notes with this emergency situation. Despite this observation, a few lines later he objects that if the state is meddling with the metallic deposits of the bank, either in normal times or in emergencies, it is committing a delict against property. The bank, in other words, was allowed to use depositor's money as it wished, but not the state.

The *assignats*, in his opinion, are a constitutional creation. Brătianu stated the Banking School opinion that inflation of the money supply is acceptable to a certain degree, up to the superior limit that society needs and accepts the increased supply.

Since the option of an external credit was too costly or downright impossible under the circumstances, the one-time issuance of the 30.000.000 land notes was a necessary yet temporary measure in anticipation of the central bank enactment.

[E]ver since I returned from abroad I have tried with all my powers to found a bank. Ask if I didn't implore all bankers to give me their support in 1867 and 1868 [...]; but some on the right were too backward and some on the left were too advanced, like Mr. Buescu, who wanted to jump immediately to the ideal credit, free credit...<sup>38</sup>

Brătianu finally considered that there was no author who could not support the need for some form of inflation over the metallic stock:

I challenge you, Gentlemen, to come up with one author who states that a society can move forward satisfying its needs only with metallic money, without the need of paper. What does any economist say? He says that first paper should be issued to suit the needs of exchange, and second that it should be managed so that the exchange can be done *al pari* and that the paper is backed by secure guaranties.<sup>39</sup>

### ***Senate talks***

In the Senate, Dimitrie Sturdza is remarkable for his Currency School position: he argued for strict metallic money stocks and against the manipulation of money and credit – in a “separate opinion” where he defended his own distinct law proposal, conceived as a micro course in monetary and banking economics. His arguments were then restated during the polemics.

He considered the law of the highest importance, because it signified the switch from metallic currency to paper money – “a pure fiction.”<sup>40</sup> He began with a thorough overview of the financial situation and immediate obligations of the Romanian state. Faced with this situation, he asserted, the state has three ways to pay: either new taxes, new debts or by selling its assets. Thus, he did not consider inflation as an option.

It is impossible that a state pays its debts by multiplying the media of exchange. This belief is founded on the idea that a government can create money or currency at its will. This idea is as erroneous and it has the same basis as the idea that someone could create wealth without labor, without effort, only by pure will.<sup>41</sup>

Sturdza proceeded to define money as strictly the metallic stock of gold and silver and show that an economy cannot accept a quantity over its needs.<sup>42</sup> He went on to correctly state Say’s law without identifying it as such: production of goods and services will create a demand for money.

Gold and silver are a commodity that must be exchanged against other commodity, and it can only come where it is needed. If we do not have anything to sell, or if what we have to sell we cannot sell in certain moments, like the one we are in now, where would that billion come from? [...] In no country there is more money than the country needs.<sup>43</sup>

Next, he made an imprecise inference: a growing economy, i.e. an economy that produces and trades more, will need higher quantities of money.<sup>44</sup> These growing needs, he stated, are met in developed economies by financial innovations such as checks, banknotes, warrants and clearinghouses. But these do not diminish the quantity of gold and silver. On the contrary, metal stocks increase in such economies, because they alone are money, the only solid ground for all circulation. He quoted from Wolowski to show that the Western states are on a path of returning from the error of unbacked paper money.

Without describing the 100% reserve principle in these exact words he came the closest among Romanians of the time to doing so:

Banknotes base their credit on a certain existing quantity of precious metal, and they are received by the public with more or less loss the more or less close is the metallic stock to the quantity of issued notes. Where there is knowledge that banknotes can be converted at any time and without contestation in sound money, there they have the same value as the metallic money without doubts from anyone, for everyone senses that this substitute of money is not just a fiction, but can become a reality in a minute. The less the metallic stock or the more uncertain it is, the lower is the value of the banknotes.<sup>45</sup>

Besides not stating the principle precisely, Sturdza stated here too much. This positive description needs more premises than the simple normative observation that banknotes should be backed at all time by 100% reserves. It was often the case that banknotes circulated with full nominal value while only backed by one third in metallic reserves (the golden rule of the real bills doctrine) or less.<sup>46</sup>

While he immediately conceded the usefulness of fiduciary circulation in well-established economies, thus contradicting the statement quoted above, Sturdza suggested that in practice the principle of full reserve was rather the rule. The same discounting principle applies to gold and silver money: "A gold or silver coin has the value of the pure gold or silver comprised in it." Any alteration will be reflected in its market value.

Sturdza also understood correctly the status of token money. These coins that have a nominal value higher than their monetary metal content cannot have but little circulation; they are the metal correspondent to paper banknotes imprinted with a value unrelated to their content.

He then identified the land notes or State scrip that was proposed in the legislation as *fiat* money: because it had no backing whatsoever. He thus made the clearest distinction between this paper money and the fiduciary media that other debaters have called money paper.

Gold is gold and land is land. Gold and land are two different goods. Land can be transformed into gold, or cotton, or iron, but it needs time and people willing to buy. But paper that wants monetary status cannot be realized in a moment, because properties cannot be sold in a moment, and this is why paper money based on land sale cannot be money, because it cannot be converted immediately into gold and silver<sup>47</sup>

Moreover, he called out the impropriety of naming the notes “land notes” since there was only a general and vague backing for them. The state stood to lose through their coming devaluation and Sturdza warned that it was not just a one-time affairs, more notes would be issued in the future. Moreover, to the extent that they would be imposed at nominal value, the gold and silver would disappear from the market. The effect of the state notes is chaotic movement of prices, the loss of the “compass of values” and ultimately the general disturbance of transactions.

In observing the unequal impact of the notes on society, Sturdza also identified the Cantillon effect,<sup>48</sup> the redistribution of wealth from fixed income categories, usually the lower classes, to the variable income categories, usually the higher classes –, but he stated that not even the latter have a secure means of escaping their negative effects.

Moreover, the differential in value between specie and paper would be increased by a “premium that the seller appropriates for even higher devaluation in the future. This premium being subject to variation according to the different constellations of the moment, the price of paper will be subject to a fluctuation and it will be itself a new source of depreciation”<sup>49</sup> If Suțu before him identified the risk premium in the interest rate, Sturdza is the first, to our knowledge, to talk here about the price premium in Romanian economic literature.

The increased prices, he warned, would affect import, export and production and will generate a spiral of increasing impoverishment that the state will find very hard to extricate itself from. While fiduciary media could ultimately resort to the 45-day-maturity instruments it is backed with, the proposed unbacked currency could not find anything to convert to and the state would have a limitless incentive to issue more notes.

He cited or quoted from “men of theory” such as Courcelle Seneuil, Turgot, John Stuart Mill, Talleyrand, Thiers, Paul Coq, Stein, Michaelis, Tellkamp, Adolf Dagner, Rau, Max Diolh, Bergius, Umphenbach, Bamberger, Say, Goschen, Carey, and from other “men of practice”, to support his points. He concluded that the issuance of State notes is the modern equivalent of the old practice of debasement – the solution of dishonest or desperate states, a form of counterfeiting.

Sturdza proposed instead the creation of a mortgage institution that would have issued long term interest bearing debt instruments and the sale of state lands over the span of 8 years to repay these instruments.

V. Boerescu accused Sturdza’s argumentation and proposal of being impractical. He also criticized his adherence to the currency principles: metallic money was a medium of the past from his point of view. It is credit, and not money, that intermediated exchanges in the present.<sup>50</sup> He invoked Wolowski and Bonnet to support his defense of fiduciary media and paper money.

N. Drosu rejected the law project, proposing increases of taxes and decreases of spending. P.P. Carp also attacked paper money and saw the solution in the establishment of a privileged bank of discount and circulation. He considered that 50% of estates should be confiscated for the creation of the central bank.

There were other proposals of little interest here and the amended proposal of the Cabinet was finally voted – after being again discussed in the Deputies Assembly –, despite such articulate opposition.

## **Debates occasioned by the law for the creation of the National Bank**

The typical bank for discount and circulation was considered to be built on the “one third – real bills – two times capital” rule: the banknotes issued by the bank would be backed by a one third reserve of gold and silver and, to the full of their value by short term credit instruments – up to 90 days – representing secure commerce operations. Also, the total issuance of the bank would not exceed two times its initial capital. Since banknotes were backed by the portfolio, the bank only needed its initial capital as a redundant guarantee that was only important initially and could later use it to buy state or other long term titles. This view was held by many Romanians among which Moruzi, Strat, Boerescu or Brătianu.

## The Mavrogheni initiative

In 1873, conservative finance minister Petre Mavrogheni intended, once again, to establish the central bank. From the justification of the law, we find out that the institution was an imported design from the Belgian central bank. It was considered an optimal model that resulted after great experience and deliberation. The state offered the privilege of exclusive right to issue banknotes to a concern of foreign capitalists represented by a banker named Leithner, but retained control over the bank because it was a beneficial, yet perilous instrument:

Is there anyone not seeing that such an exorbitant right as that of issuing banknotes, in other words of introducing a fiduciary circulation besides the metallic circulation, cannot be granted without the intervention of the government to insure that the issuance of banknotes is not made in the exclusive interest of the stockholders, but in the interest of commerce and industry; and, besides, there is so much disruption, so much disorder that can be brought over commercial transactions and generally over the value of all things though exaggerate emission or through irresponsible restriction [...]<sup>51</sup>

The Mavrogheni initiative was fiercely criticized by Brătianu, who is credited with leading the efforts of hampering its enactment.<sup>52</sup> Brătianu's thought on banking matters is cursorily presented in his speech at the Atheneum on the bank project and in his subsequent open letters to Mavrogheni, published in *Românul* in January – February 1873. Brătianu reveals extensively in these pages his wall to wall opposition to foreign investment rather than his conceptions on banking, but we can understand that he favored a strict delimitation between short-term banking (the discount and circulation bank) and long term banking (the land bank). On the other hand, he asserted the futility of the latter for helping the landowners without the expansion of fiduciary media made possible by the first. Brătianu spoke of the foreigners that "at any price, want to grab the Romanian credit organized through institutes, and then to exploit us with our own resources, to expropriate us and conquer us."<sup>53</sup> This privilege, he warned Mavrogheni in his open letters, is reserved for Romanians. Indeed, in 1880 Brătianu led the effort to finally enact the Bank.



## The Buescu initiative

In the interim, there was another attempt to pass a law project, in 1877. This project was conceived under the supervision of Finance Minister P. Buescu and his cabinet, although the inspiration is again stated to be the Belgian central bank. It is remarkable because of its Banking School leanings and even its socialist, Saint-Simonian undertones. The statement of reasons<sup>54</sup> for the law is constructed as again a micro course in monetary and banking matters, developing from basic observations in a step by step manner. The preamble stated that capital exploited land and labor through high interest. The discount and circulation bank was the only effective means that we have for the bad financial state of the country. Crises occur because money happens to leave the country with too much ease. These movements bring distress and ruin, even to the wealthy few that usually control the metallic stock. There is little use of land banks<sup>55</sup> if their titles are discounted on the market and the properties have depressed prices. For this reason an agency should exist to counter these movements with a flexible supply of money.

The bank offers to substitute bills of exchange and other short term commercial paper – that cannot circulate on the market – with its own paper that can circulate because it is a promise to pay metal on demand. Again, we notice in this statement the seminal asymmetry that lays at the foundation of fractional reserve banking: the backing of immediately redeemable instruments with instruments of less liquidity. The demonstration goes from this assumption to logically show that, since the banknotes are backed by the public credit instruments they are exchanged for, the initial capital raised for the funding of the bank is only of symbolic value. For this reason, the proposal only stipulated a need for 10 million lei as initial capital, and, for this reason also, there was no need for private capital – the less so for foreign capital.

But, going back to basics, the report traces the historical evolution of money from the barter economy to its present state. Gold and silver have been chosen for their functions in an evolutionary process. However, metallic money proves to be insufficient for present needs and this is where the banknote enters the scene as a complement to money. While the author<sup>56</sup> does not dismiss metallic money altogether – the banknote can only be redeemed in gold or silver –, he stresses the crucial role of the banknote in economizing on uses of the scarce and expensive metallic stock.

There are limits to what a bank of this kind can do: it must buy good quality credit titles that do not jeopardize its security and trust. It must balance selling and buying of such titles, it must keep a fraction of its portfolio in metallic reserves for usual net withdrawals, and it must have some capital and other reserve funds to use in case of losses. Metallic reserves are usually stipulated by law to not be lower than one third of the banknotes outstanding, but the experience of America and Scotland has shown that much lower fractions are sufficient and the proposal of the Romanian legislator is to leave this question to be settled in the statutes. The bank in fact, if it is well administered, does not need the initial capital or other funds besides its portfolio of secure short-term paper – to back the banknotes. It does not even have to redeem all banknotes on demand. Should it be faced with demands exceeding its metallic stock, it must be allowed to wait for the maturation of its assets and ultimately to cede onto the public its short term credit instruments. While not as good as gold or silver in terms of immediate liquidity, they would eventually mature in the span of 90 days at most.

And, since the bank fulfills such an important public function without the need of private owners, why should it be exploited by a monopoly of private owners? It should belong to the public, although it should be independent from the state – that only provides the administrative personnel – and the proceeds should be returned to the public. The solution here is the mutualist principle: the public gives credit, the public takes credit, and the speculators are kept away. Otherwise “isn’t it evident that this is a usurpation of common law?”<sup>57</sup> Thus, without the speculating private capitalists as stockholders of the bank, the interest rate can be kept permanently low.<sup>58</sup>

Another remarkable fact is that this proposal does not reverse Western experience. If the central banks of the great nations are currently organized on commercial principles, the reason is that they are antiquated. There is a long time since their establishment, and their commercial architecture was at the time adopted only because of the defective application of the supposedly good principles of John Law’s bank from 1720. In the present, the report argued, knowledge about money and credit had advanced sufficiently so as to justify a new organization of the central bank, but there are great private interests that oppose the change.

During the discussion of the new law proposal in 1880 Buescu again suggested the mutualist solution and the elimination of intermediaries.<sup>59</sup>

## **The proposal of 1880 and the final enactment of the bank**

In 1880 the legislators began again discussing the preceding two proposals, of Mavrogheni and Buescu, and came up with a third one – again taking the Bank of Belgium as an example. After introductory considerations related to the opportunity of such an institution, the statement of reasons<sup>60</sup> asked whether it should be based on monopoly or should any bank have the liberty to issue banknotes. Starting from Bonnet's argument about the utility of the Bank of France during and after the Franco-Prussian War and on the tendency of most states to adopt a monopoly, the issue was settled in favor of this arrangement.

Also, following Bonnet's judgement, the bank should have some limitations similar to the Bank of France: to always keep one third in metallic reserves and to not issue banknotes over two times the bank capital (30 million lei this time, not just 10 million as in the case of Buescu's project). The stockholder structure would include a one third ownership by the state and two thirds by private owners. This was considered a good compromise between the disadvantages of a private monopoly – or even free banking – and the situation of a pure state ownership. While the private owners give it capital and efficiency, the state gives it credibility – a credibility that was shattered by recent financial scandals and failures.<sup>61</sup>

There were discussions on different details of the law, some of little economic importance and others remarkable. Alexandru Lahovary intervened repeatedly with critical remarks. First, he objected that the state should not own any part of the bank, thus changing its nature. This is a moot point, since the state was also supposed to control the institution by other means – the privilege itself and the legal tender that it offered banknotes being the most evident. But he had a point in raising the same objection on the ground that the state budget is not in such good shape as to afford its participation in the bank. Then, to the arguments that the bank would multiply capital and lower the interest rate, Lahovary replied astutely that the country needs real, and not fictitious, capital:

[I] complained about the multiplication of fictitious capital, of fiduciary money, that cannot have other result than the decrease of real capital, of gold and silver money.<sup>62</sup>

He went on to develop his argument criticizing the land mortgage notes, showing that they are a type of surreptitious taxation, and the banknotes issued by the bank would have the same effect:

The man buying his daily bread, the housewife buying her pound of meat for the family, they pay this agio in a hidden and indirect way, but they do pay it.<sup>63</sup>

In fact, Lahovary did not oppose the idea of a central bank, but he warned about its possible effects. He stated that, absent the one-third restriction, the bank would become a “paper money factory”<sup>64</sup> and that this would anyway happen later on. He insisted that the bank should be restricted from issuing low denomination banknotes, again, for anti-inflationary reasons.

G. Vernescu, on the other hand, suggested a free banking alternative would have been more just and he doubted the monopoly would have been efficient if the bank did not enjoy public trust. Like Lahovary, he criticized the participation of the state as owner of the bank, because the state has the bad habit of using it for its own needs, especially in emergencies.

When the State cannot satisfy its needs anymore with taxes or other regular means, then it resorts to these discount and circulation banks.<sup>65</sup>

Vernescu made a plea for submitting banking to the general rules of commerce and let the sector free.<sup>66</sup> He echoed the old requirements of Suțu and Strat: as long as the payment of debts is enforced and there is social stability, there is no need for a privilege or any other measure. However, he suggested that the statutes are written and approved by the legislators, just like the law.<sup>67</sup>

G. Chițu warned that a multitude of banks would issue a multitude of banknotes and he concluded that chaos would ensue from such a situation. He defended the one-third requirement against the higher liberty of the bank to issue banknotes. G. Cantilli considered that free banking would be too dangerous to tolerate and quoted from Peregrino Rossi who compared the production of banknotes under such a regime to the production of gunpowder in the middle of a city.

N. Fleva brought again the argument of Buescu about the redundancy of capital and reserve in a plea to not stipulate the one third minimum reserve requirement in the law. Buescu himself restated his socialist ideas and suggested that the capital be all invested in state titles.

Vasile Boerescu, the foreign affairs minister at the time, defended the law from a Banking School position: the bank could never issue banknotes in such number that they would depreciate. Since there was a demand from the public, the issuance would be limited by that demand.<sup>68</sup> Historically, he stated, such depreciation only happened when the bank was forced by the state to overissue its credit. In passages reminding of Places's argumentation, he stated that the central bank, by being a public institution, represented a categorical leap from the private banks. Its credit is backed somehow by the whole society and only it can multiply capital and lower its price. In a statement typical of the Banking School, he sustained the mysterious capacity of the bank to create value indirectly through the simple act of issuing banknotes.

The bank does not create values; its banknotes are only instruments that exchange other commercial or industrial value. They do not hold real value by themselves, they are only the instrument to discount a different, already existing value. Therefore, these banknotes are not new values exceeding the old ones, but they just cause the creation of other industrial and commercial value.<sup>69</sup>

Boerescu defended the limitation at 7% maximum of the interest rate, arguing consistently with his position that the bank profits from issuing credit in high volumes, not from increasing the price. Like him, Câmpineanu supported such a ceiling suggesting that otherwise the bank could become greedy and provoke crises. He can be thus deemed a supporter of the restrictionist theory of crises.

Menelas Ghermani took an opposite position on the interest rate issue, arguing that it is essential for the bank to be able to increase it when it wanted to limit credit expansion or gold and silver drainage. Also, he suggested that the limitation of bank issuance not be related to the metallic reserves available, but to capital – making it in this way more predictable. For the same reasons related to the risk of inflation, he advised that the banknotes not be issued in denominations smaller than 50 francs. Another astute observation of Ghermani was that a bimetallic reserve, given the fixed exchange rate between gold and silver, would in fact lead to a purely

silver composition of the bank reserves. He suggested that the bank should only accept gold, thus anticipating the switch to the gold standard.

In the Senate, Theodor Rosetti complained about the lack of a public discussion on such a momentous institution. In his extensive discussion, he made the case that Romania did not need a discount and circulation bank at the moment, because there were no specific short term industrial or commercial needs for it. His demonstration follows closely Say's thoughts on the matter, although he does not explicitly reference Say.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, the proposal to buy the 1877 state scrip land notes with the new banknotes was contradicting the short term purpose of fiduciary circulation. His conclusion about the bank resembles Titu Maiorescu's protest against "forms without substance."<sup>71</sup>

I believe [...] that first of all such a law should have been the object of the most serious study, either by the Cabinet, or the Parliament [...]. What is good in France or Belgium may not be so on the shores of Dâmbovița, and the sharpest and most perfect institutions that proved to be useful abroad can become bad or even dangerous when transplanted into circumstances where the premises, the foundations [...] are absent.<sup>72</sup>

Since others used to compare the utility of the note-issuing bank to the railroads he concluded that introducing a central bank here would have been like building railroads through the Sahara desert. Moreover, argued Rosetti, since the bank had the state's backing its increased legitimacy could generate ampler crises.<sup>73</sup>

Ion Ghica intervened cursorily in favor of the bank proposal, supporting the idea of banknote circulation with the observation that the land notes are indeed in high demand and do not circulate at a discount.

Brătianu intervened in the Senate in favor of a bimetallic reserve for the bank, arguing that there was not enough gold in the country to support such a movement. The quantity of banknotes would be severely limited in such a case. Boerescu intervened again on this subject, considering that gold reserves would "constrain the bank with an iron ring" and citing Wolowski and other authors to the effect that abandoning bimetalism would create a sudden deflation.<sup>74</sup>

## Conclusion

Our economic historiography suggests that the path forward in money and banking was clear in the illuminated minds of the time and, after notable struggles against reactionary forces, the country was led to the right institutional end. However, a closer look shows a different picture. We have grounds to say that our authors, thinkers and politicians can be classified, just like their more illustrious Western counterparts, into the Currency School and the Banking School. Alternatives to *fiat* money or the central bank were acknowledged and their advocates were not less clear minded or knowledgeable than their opponents.

It is a source of puzzlement that the richness of arguments and the breadth of knowledge displayed in the parliamentary debates are not also found more frequently in the pages of books, reports, brochures or the press. One possible explanation is that it was – in the perception of our elite – not a problem of principle, but a problem of political expediency. From this perspective, we can suspect that the discussions in the Parliament were rather the exception to the rule that the Romanian society is not going to start analyzing the progress of the West, but import it wholesale as quickly as possible, for its own good. Vasile Boerescu's declaration during the parliamentary debates for the bank law is symptomatic:

Indeed, these men say that banking must be free, that there is no need for regulation, no need for the participation of the State, no need of a privilege for the issuance of banknotes. Mr. Vernescu is criticizing this principle that is admitted and practiced with great success in all Europe and he expects us, a people that is just starting to see the light of economic life on the shores of the Danube and the Dâmbovița, to teach old Europe [...] <sup>75</sup>

But we find good knowledge and fine understanding of the issues. Suțu is the first to make – already in 1838 – a reference to J. B. Say to the effect that the quantity of money in a country is irrelevant.<sup>76</sup> Then we see in his writings grounds for understanding the fundamental reasons for the unusually high interest rates, such as the risk premium caused by regime uncertainty. Suțu has a classical liberal worldview generally, but on subjects related to money and banking he is an advocate of interventionism and inflationism. He wants the state or a private monopoly under de supervision of the state to expand credit, especially trough a land mortgage bank operating on the principle of fractional reserve banking. His liberal

stance is also weakened by his late writings where he advocates state interventions for the development of agriculture (quoting from Passy and Coquelin to support his position). The monetary law project from 1860 looks like an exception to his general disposition on banking matters.

Victor Place authored two documents where he gave a systematic treatment to the subject of the privileged bank, trying to demonstrate step by step the evolution of banking to its highest state: that of a monopoly operating on fractional reserves and issuing paper banknotes.<sup>77</sup>

Moruzi, like previous authors, offered the prospect of a privileged bank of issue that would have universal crediting functions, not just a circulation and land mortgage bank as in the case of Suțu. Being against a central bank, he said, was being an enemy of the country.<sup>78</sup> Despite believing in a sort of magical power of circulation credit, he offered pages of lucidity and humor where he criticized the spending behavior of Romanians, who, he said, used their wealth to import luxury consumption goods instead of bringing in productive goods useful for investment. He compared this behavior to that of primitive people that ceded their valuables in exchange for trinkets. And, in a page that contradicted many of the assertions about cheap credit, he stated that ultimately it was the abolition of regulation and monopolies that created prosperity; he showed that the only kind of useful equality is equality in liberty – not in wealth.<sup>79</sup>

Ion Strat is another remarkable author. He was repeatedly accused of lacking originality for writing a treatise titled and conceived after Say's treatise, but he thus offered extensive treatment in Romanian language of the subjects at stake – and with more rigor than the much better appreciated Ion Ghica. Although he finally had little to say about the central bank, his discussion of money and banking followed closely – but not identically – Say's. He is thus rather a skeptic of the central bank, he is against free credit, the control of the interest rate,<sup>80</sup> and surely an adamant enemy of debasement and *fiat* money, despite various inconsistencies.

We can safely assert that Ion Ghica is our first writer that can be squarely put in the ranks of the Banking School. Moreover, Ghica is a free banker, not disturbed by Proudhon's ideas of free credit. Everybody in Scotland has access to credit, he stated, and a lot of people became rich because of it. Romania needed something similar, but, unfortunately the lack of liberty and justice prevented the importation of such institutions.<sup>81</sup> Liberty of banknote issuance, he noticed, has almost accomplished the ideal of some socialists by driving the interest down to almost zero. He

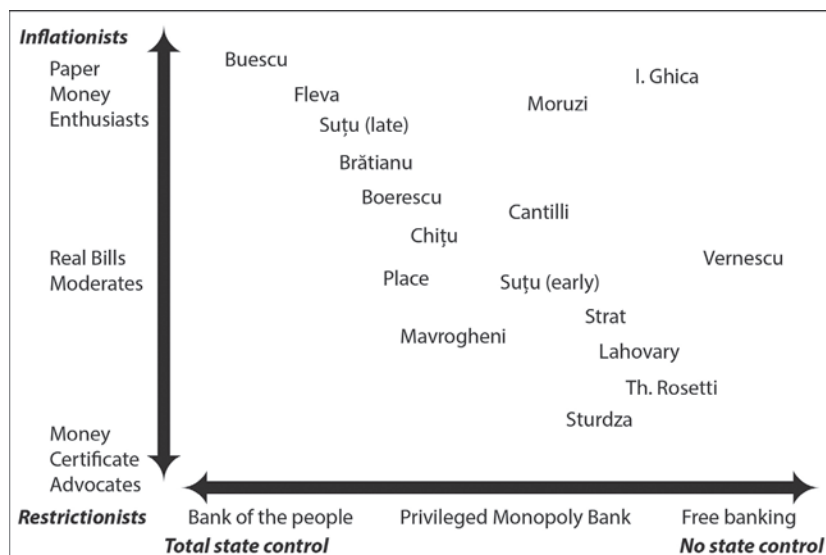


understood, like the most astute members of the Banking School the essential equivalence between banknotes and deposits.<sup>82</sup>

In the Parliament debates we discover that politicians were knowledgeable of economic arguments and some of them very well read. Dimitrie Sturdza is a surprisingly systematic member of the Currency School.<sup>83</sup> His positions place him among the most conservative advocates of the real bills doctrine in banking, and a vehement critic of paper money. He is the closest among Romanian writers to explicitly state the principle of 100% reserve coverage for banknotes. Cantilli can be also placed next to Sturdza, and so can Pache Protopopescu, G. Vernescu or Alexandru Lahovary.

In the Banking School camp we find the more illustrious Brătianu, Boerescu, Flea, accompanied by the more eccentric P. Buescu.

According to our earlier classification we can group the most important authors like this:<sup>84</sup>



Another dimension that could not be reflected in this graphic representation is the openness or animosity towards foreign capital. Conservatives were as a rule open to a bank with foreign initial capital while liberals were as a rule opposed.

Although it may seem at a distant look that the central bank was imported from abroad on a clean slate, we can see upon close analysis that we had serious and chronic monetary problems that called for a solution and that the central bank was eventually imposed as solution. The paternalist conception about the value of money – the insistence of authorities and legislators to fix the official value of different coins circulating, and thus to engender perennial Gresham effects – kept the business environment in constant disarray. These imbalances called for a free market at least in circulation if not in production of money. Instead, in another historical case of the dynamic of interventionism, the reaction to the effects of one bad measure was not the removal of the cause – namely, the manipulation of money – but further interventionism, in this case the introduction of a central bank in an attempt to extract money and credit from the reign of scarcity. This further denial of economic law would not amend the state of affairs, but make it worse.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Smith, V. C., *The rationale of central banking and the free banking alternative*, Indianapolis, LibertyPress, 1990, 10
- <sup>2</sup> Ricardo, D., *The high price of bullion, a proof of the depreciation of banknotes*, 2d ed., London, Printed for J. Murray, 1810
- <sup>3</sup> Rothbard, M. N., *An Austrian perspective on the history of economic thought*, 2 vols., Aldershot, Hants, England ; Brookfield, Vt., USA, E. Elgar Pub., 1995
- <sup>4</sup> Smith, *The rationale of central banking and the free banking alternative*, 40
- <sup>5</sup> Bonnet, V., *L'Enquête sur le crédit et la crise de 1863-64*, Paris, Guillaumin, 1866.
- <sup>6</sup> We include here authors that were active in the French debates although they were not French.
- <sup>7</sup> Chevalier, M., *Cours d'économie politique*, Paris, Capelle, 1842
- <sup>8</sup> See Wolowski, L., *La question des banques*, Paris, Guillaumin et cie., 1864, 69-70
- <sup>9</sup> For a different classification along similar lines, see Huerta de Soto, J., *Moneda, Creditul Bancar și Ciclurile Economice*, Iași, Editura Universității Al. I. Cuza & Institutul Ludwig von Mises România, 2010
- <sup>10</sup> Cernuschi, H., *Contre le billet de banque*, Paris, Lacroix, 1866; *Mécanique de l'échange*, Paris, A. Lacriox, Verboeckhoven et cie, 1865
- <sup>11</sup> Modeste, V., «Le billet des banques d'émission et la fausse monnaie,» *Le Journal des Économistes* 3(1866)
- <sup>12</sup> One good treatment of the subject is offered by Eugen Demetrescu. In his doctoral thesis written under the coordination of V. Madgearu he presents and criticizes from a protectionist point of view the influence of classical liberal thinkers in 19th century Romania. Demetrescu, E. and V. Rizescu, *Influența școalei economice liberale în România în secolul al XIX-lea*, Ed. a 2., rev. ed., Gândire politică românească, București, DominoR, 2005. Another notable source is Turczynski, E., *De la iluminism la liberalismul timpuriu: vocile politice și revendicarile lor în spațiul românesc*, București, Editura Fundatiei Culturale Române, 2000.
- <sup>13</sup> Mises, L. v., "The Plight of Underdeveloped Nations", in *Money, Method and Market Process: Essays by Ludwig von Mises*, Boston, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1990.
- <sup>14</sup> There is an interesting discussion here about the situation of the local money changers and bankers, since many of them were under jurisdiction of foreign powers through the agency of local consulates.
- <sup>15</sup> These effects are a particular manifestation of the more general law of fixed prices. Whenever a maximum is imposed on the price of a good, that good will face an excess of demand and a penury of supply. In the case of two money types being exchanged for one another, a fixed exchange ratio would lead to overvalued money driving out undervalued money.

- 16 Slăvescu, V., *Finanțele României sub Cuza-Vodă*, București, Editura Fundației Culturale Magazin Istoric, 2003, 80
- 17 Moruzi, A. D., *Progrès et liberté*, Galatz, Typographie Frédéric Thiel, 1861, 113
- 18 Băicoianu, C. I., *Istoria politicei noastre monetare și a Băncii Naționale*, vol. II, partea II, București, Cartea Românească, 1932, 70
- 19 Suțu, N., «Projet de loi sur la banque Moldave», in *Vieața și opera economistului Nicolae Suțu, 1798-1871*, ed. Victor Slăvescu, București, Monitorul Oficial, 1852; reprint, 1941.
- 20 Ibid., p. 446.. L Likewise, «Nevoia de credit în Moldova și necesitatea unei bănci de amortisare», in *Vieața și opera economistului Nicolae Suțu, 1798-1871*, ed. Victor Slăvescu, București, Monitorul Oficial, 1855; reprint, 1941, p. 474.
- 21 «Projet de loi sur la banque Moldave», p. 447.
- 22 See also Zane, G., *Economia de schimb in Principatele Române*, București, Editura Casei Școalelor, 1930, 405
- 23 Suțu, N., «Expunere de motive și textul proiectului de lege privitor la înființarea unei monete naționale», in *Vieața și opera economistului Nicolae Suțu, 1798-1871*, ed. Victor Slăvescu, București, Monitorul Oficial, 1860; reprint, 1941.
- 24 We can see that, in fact, Moldavia was operating with three different currencies: the Galati leu, the Moldavian leu and the Treasury leu, all of them without a concrete presence on the market, but, by the different regulated exchange rates, positioned as different currencies. Further confirmation of this state of affairs can be found in Rosetti, R., *Amintiri*, București, Humanitas, 2013.
- 25 Suțu, «Expunere de motive și textul proiectului de lege privitor la înființarea unei monete naționale», p. 504-506.
- 26 «Aperçu sur l'état économique du pays et sur les besoins les plus pressants», in *Vieața și opera economistului Nicolae Suțu, 1798-1871*, ed. Victor Slăvescu, București, Monitorul Oficial, 1866; reprint, 1941.
- 27 Henry Parker Willis talks about popular criticism of a "third value" for the frank. Willis, H. P., *A history of the Latin Monetary Union: a study of international monetary action*, Economic studies of the University of Chicago, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1901, 72.
- 28 Willis suggests that the Union was orchestrated by Napoleon III for political interests, but the acceptance of foreign money and the standardization was already a de facto process that predated the first Union Convention of 1865, as Bamberger shows. Ibid., 55-60.; Bamberger, L. and R. I. G. Lévy, *Le métal-argent à la fin de XIXe siècle*, Paris, Guillaumin et cie, 1894, 13.
- 29 Before being able to mint its own coins, Romania accepted all silver and gold coins from the Latin Union and a selection of others.

- 30 Since 1866. Brătianu, I. C., *Acte și cuvântări*, vol. I/2, București, Cartea Românească, 1935, 330
- 31 Vulturescu declares in Parliament that the state was close to default, and Sturdza demonstrates it. Băicoianu, *Istoria politiceii noastre monetare și a Băncii Naționale*, II, partea II, 368, 417
- 32 The gold and silver stock existent at the time in Romania was estimated at 50.000.000. Ibid., 386.
- 33 Ibid., 310.
- 34 His position is usual for the place and time: banknotes should be redeemable at any time in reserve metal, but reserves should be fractional, otherwise it would not be possible to expand credit and lower the interest rate. Ibid., 313.
- 35 Ibid., I, partea II: 323 - 327.
- 36 Our translation here and below, unless otherwise stated. Ibid., II, partea II: 336.
- 37 Cantilli is outstanding among the others because he refers the authors with publication date, edition and page number, whereas the others quote without details, and some of them, like Pruncu, even quote from authors without giving their name.
- 38 Băicoianu, *Istoria politiceii noastre monetare și a Băncii Naționale*, II, partea II, 360
- 39 Ibid., 384.
- 40 Ibid., 414.
- 41 Ibid., 418. He reiterates this distinction between money and credit later in the discussions. See pp 460-461.
- 42 There is a subtle observation here: this argument proves correct when it is formulated in term of gold and silver, like it is the case here; and wrong or imprecise when formulated in terms of money substitutes.
- 43 Băicoianu, *Istoria politiceii noastre monetare și a Băncii Naționale*, II, partea II, 466
- 44 That is not necessarily so. The same quantity can service a growing economy. In this case, the price system will be the adjusting factor.
- 45 Băicoianu, *Istoria politiceii noastre monetare și a Băncii Naționale*, II, partea II, 420 The next quote is on the same page. He makes a similar statement at page 466.
- 46 Nevertheless, it is remarkable to see it uttered in Romanian discussions just like this.
- 47 The state cannot create money, in other words. Băicoianu, *Istoria politiceii noastre monetare și a Băncii Naționale*, II, partea II, 465
- 48 Clearly describing them but not expressly naming them Cantillon effects.
- 49 Băicoianu, *Istoria politiceii noastre monetare și a Băncii Naționale*, II, partea II, 425

- 50 Bratianu intervened in the same vein. Ibid., I, partea II: 477, 515.
- 51 Ibid., II, partea II: 132-133..
- 52 Murgescu, C., *Mersul ideilor economice la români: epoca modernă*, Ed. a 2-a ed., 2 vols., Colecția Biblioteca Băncii Naționale, București, Editura Enciclopedică, 1994, 174-175
- 53 Brătianu, *Acte și cuvântări*, I/2, 323-361 . We can see that Brătianu held the typical Banking School view that the circulation bank would not create inflation, because its role would only be to replace weaker credit instruments with a general type of accepted titles.
- 54 Băicoianu, *Istoria politiceii noastre monetare și a Băncii Naționale*, II, partea II, 138 ff
- 55 As the ones instituted in 1873 and 1874.
- 56 The report is signed by Buescu.
- 57 Băicoianu, *Istoria politiceii noastre monetare și a Băncii Naționale*, II, partea II, 152
- 58 The raising of the discount rate by the Bank of France from 4% up to 8% after 1848 is attributed to the greed of its private stockholders. Ibid., 152-153.
- 59 Ibid., 201.
- 60 Ibid., 159.
- 61 Sociatea Financiară, Bank of Brăila, National Bank of Moldavia. Ibid., 204.
- 62 Ibid., 179-180.
- 63 Ibid., 182.
- 64 Ibid., 220.
- 65 Ibid., 198.
- 66 However, his position is contradictory because he only objected – while pleading for complete liberty – to the participation of the state in ownership of the bank, and not to the monopoly privilege. Ibid., 199.
- 67 Rather than being inconsistent, he was probably trying to avoid increased control by the Cabinet as opposed to the elected bodies.
- 68 Băicoianu, *Istoria politiceii noastre monetare și a Băncii Naționale*, II, partea II, 241, 261.
- 69 Ibid., 260.
- 70 Say, J. B., *Traité d'économie politique*, Paris, Guillaumin, 1861, 301
- 71 Maiorescu, T., «În contra direcției de astăzi în cultura română [Against Today's Direction in Romanian Culture]», in *Opere [Works]*, 1868
- 72 Băicoianu, *Istoria politiceii noastre monetare și a Băncii Naționale*, II, partea II, 255
- 73 See also Slăvescu, V., *Istoricul Băncii Naționale a României : 1880-1924*, București, Cultura națională, 1925, 21
- 74 Băicoianu, *Istoria politiceii noastre monetare și a Băncii Naționale*, II, partea II, 291-292

- <sup>75</sup> Ibid., 199.
- <sup>76</sup> Suțu, N., „Aperçu sur l'état industriel de la Moldavie”, in *Vieața și opera economistului Nicolae Suțu, 1798-1871*, ed. Victor Slăvescu, București, Monitorul Oficial, 1838; reprint, 1941, p. 203.
- <sup>77</sup> Smirna, T. G., “Victor Place as Early Advocate of Central Banking in Romania,” *Review of Social and Economic Issues* 1, no. 3 (2016).
- <sup>78</sup> Moruzi, *Progrès et liberté*, p. 127
- <sup>79</sup> Ibid., p. 163.
- <sup>80</sup> Strat, I., *Tractat complectu de economia politica*, București, Imprimeria Statului, 1870, p. 303
- <sup>81</sup> Ghica, I., *Convorbiri economice, volumul I*, București, Socec & Comp., 1879, p. 103-107
- <sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 233.
- <sup>83</sup> We think we do not err too much saying that in Sturdza we have our own Henri Cernuschi.
- <sup>84</sup> With the amendment that this two-dimensional classification is necessarily reductionist and shows tendencies rather than unequivocal positions in most cases. The description is further complicated by the inconsistencies of persons discussed.

## References

- BAMBERGER, L., and R. L. G. LÉVY, *Le métal-argent à la fin de XIXe siècle*. Paris, Guillaumin et cie, 1894.
- BĂICOIANU, C. I., *Istoria politicei noastre monetare și a Băncii Naționale*. Vol. II, partea II, București, Cartea Românească, 1932.
- BĂICOIANU, C. I., *Istoria politicei noastre monetare și a Băncii Naționale*. Vol. I, partea II, București, Cartea Românească, 1932.
- BONNET, V., *L'Enquête sur le crédit et la crise de 1863-64*. Paris, Guillaumin, 1866.
- BRĂTIANU, I. C., *Acte și cuvântări*. Vol. I/2, București, Cartea Românească, 1935.
- CERNUSCHI, H., *Contre le billet de banque*, Paris, Lacroix, 1866.
- CERNUSCHI, H., *Mécanique de l'échange*, Paris, A. Lacroix, Verboeckhoven et cie, 1865.
- CHEVALIER, M., *Cours d'économie politique*, Paris, Capelle, 1842.
- DEMETRESCU, E., and V. RIZESCU, *Influența școalei economice liberale în România în secolul al XIX-lea*, Gândire politică românească. Ed. a 2., rev. ed. București, DominoR, 2005.
- GHICA, I., *Convorbiri economice, volumul I*, București, Socec & Comp., 1879.
- HUERTA DE SOTO, J., *Moneda, Creditul Bancar și Ciclurile Economice*, Iași, Editura Universității Al. I. Cuza & Institutul Ludwig von Mises România, 2010.
- MAIORESCU, T., "În contra direcției de astăzi în cultura română [Against Today's Direction in Romanian Culture]", in *Opere [Works]*, 1868.
- MISES, L. v., "The Plight of Underdeveloped Nations", in *Money, Method and Market Process: Essays by Ludwig von Mises*, Boston, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1990.
- MODESTE, V., «Le billet des banques d'émission et la fausse monnaie», *Le Journal des Économistes* 3, 1866, 15.
- MORUZI, A. D., *Progrès et liberté*, Galatz, Typographie Frédéric Thiel, 1861.
- MURGESCU, C., *Mersul ideilor economice la români: epoca modernă*, Colecția Biblioteca Băncii Naționale, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2 vols, București, Editura Enciclopedică, 1994.
- RICARDO, D., *The high price of bullion, a proof of the depreciation of banknotes*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., London, Printed for J. Murray, 1810.
- ROSETTI, R., *Amintiri*, București, Humanitas, 2013.
- ROTHBARD, M. N., *An Austrian perspective on the history of economic thought*, 2 vols, Aldershot, Hants, England; Brookfield, Vt., USA, E. Elgar Pub., 1995.
- SAY, J. B., *Traité d'économie politique*, Paris, Guillaumin, 1861.
- SLĂVESCU, V., *Finanțele României sub Cuza-Vodă*, București, Editura Fundației Culturale Magazin Istoric, 2003.
- SLĂVESCU, V., *Istoricul Băncii Naționale a României: 1880-1924*, București, Cultura națională, 1925.



- SMIRNA, T. G., "Victor Place as Early Advocate of Central Banking in Romania", *Review of Social and Economic Issues* 1, no. 3, 2016.
- SMITH, V. C., *The rationale of central banking and the free banking alternative*, Indianapolis, LibertyPress, 1990.
- STRAT, I., *Tractat complectu de economia politica*, Bucuresti, Imprimeria Statului, 1870.
- SUȚU, N., «Aperçu sur l'état économique du pays et sur les besoins les plus pressants», in *Vieața și opera economistului Nicolae Suțu, 1798-1871*, edited by Victor Slăvescu, București, Monitorul Oficial, 1866. Reprint, 1941.
- SUȚU, N., «Aperçu sur l'état industriel de la Moldavie», in *Vieața și opera economistului Nicolae Suțu, 1798-1871*, edited by Victor Slăvescu, București, Monitorul Oficial, 1838. Reprint, 1941.
- SUȚU, N., «Expunere de motive și textul proiectului de lege privitor la înființarea unei monete naționale», in *Vieața și opera economistului Nicolae Suțu, 1798-1871*, edited by Victor Slăvescu, București, Monitorul Oficial, 1860. Reprint, 1941.
- SUȚU, N., «Nevoia de credit în Moldova și necesitatea unei bănci de amortisare», in *Vieața și opera economistului Nicolae Suțu, 1798-1871*, edited by Victor Slăvescu, București, Monitorul Oficial, 1855. Reprint, 1941.
- SUȚU, N., «Projet de loi sur la banque Moldave», in *Vieața și opera economistului Nicolae Suțu, 1798-1871*, edited by Victor Slăvescu, București, Monitorul Oficial, 1852. Reprint, 1941.
- TURCZYNSKI, E., *De la iluminism la liberalismul timpuriu: vocile politice și revendicarile lor în spațiul românesc*, București, Editura Fundatiei Culturale Române, 2000.
- WILLIS, H. P., *A history of the Latin Monetary Union: a study of international monetary action*, Economic studies of the University of Chicago, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1901.
- WOŁOWSKI, L., *La question des banques*, Paris, Guillaumin et cie., 1864.
- ZANE, G., *Economia de schimb in Principatele Române*, București, Editura Casei Școalelor, 1930.





## ADELA TOPLEAN

Born in 1977, in Hunedoara

Ph.D. in Philology, University of Bucharest

Thesis: *The Threshold and the Void: Death, Dying and the Afterworld in Modern Religious Discourse and Folk Beliefs*

Assistant Professor, Faculty of Letters, Department of Communication Studies,  
University of Bucharest

Member of the International Association for the Study of Death and Society

Fellowship from the Ministry of Education at Sorbonne (Paris V, Faculté de Sciences Sociales "René Descartes" - Centre d'Étude sur l'Actuel et le Quotidien), 2002

Doctoral grant at Lund University from the Swedish Institute (Faculty of Theology - Centre for Theology and Religious Studies: Centrum för Teologi och Religionsvetenskap), 2006 – 2008

Visiting scholar at the University of California, Berkeley, Institute of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies

Has presented papers at numerous international Death,  
Dying & Disposal Conferences

Has written studies for various Swedish, German, British, and American  
publications, concerned with sociological and epistemological aspects of death  
and dying in contemporary Europe

**Books:**

*Pragul și neantul. Încercări de circumscriere a morții*, Polirom, 2006  
*Moartea modernă, între poetică și tanatologie. Repere suedeze, accente  
românești*, Editura Universității din București, 2016

Her research interests range from sociology of religion and sociology of the  
sacred, to sociology of death, epistemological grounds of thanatology, as well  
as social psychology.

# THE IMPACT OF SECULARIZATION AND SPIRITUALIZATION ON DEATH MEANINGS AND PRACTICES, AMONG CONTEMPORARY ROMANIANS

## Abstract

With this study, I intend to focus on the challenges of secularization and spiritualization impacting the traditional ways in which most people approach death in contemporary Romania. As it has become all the more evident after *Colectiv* nightclub tragedy, Romanians' religiosity can no longer be unproblematically linked to institutional religion. If the growing number of non-dogmatic experiences of the sacred and, consequently, the multiplication of personal death ways have long been an acknowledged reality in the Western world, Romania is still uncomfortably stuck in the interstice between two major death patterns (traditional and modern) both being perceived as menacing and unconvincing. This may have led to conflicting versions of "good death" that have created small, unstable comfort zones, and fast, unpredictable swings from meaningful to meaningless versions of dying.

**Key words:** Death Studies, sociology of death, religious studies, secularization, spirituality, personal death ways, post-communism.

## I. Introduction

In this study I will look at the challenge of secularization - on the one hand, and the challenge of spiritualization - on the other hand, impacting the traditional ways of understanding death in contemporary Romania. I argue that contemporary Romanians' religiosity is not substantially linked to institutional religion, and that this growing disconnection will be somehow reflected in contemporary attitudes on death. How does a "dislocation" of faith influence peoples' relationship with the key institutions handling death? Does this lead to new, more subjective and more "comfortable" death ways?

As it has become all the more evident after *Colectiv* nightclub tragedy from October 30 2015, death is a catalyst<sup>1</sup> that produces social solidarity<sup>2</sup> and stirs a need for collective action. However, that does not mean that a (collective) response to (mass) death is conceived exclusively in the logic of the crowd, there must be previous (symbolic and material) contexts as well as further (symbolic and material) consequences that lead not only to a specific and obvious crowd dynamics, but also nurtures meaningful mid/long-term attitude shifts towards death in general. My hypothesis is that, in the recent years, new death ways that are *more* compatible with one's actual social experience have begun to surface, and that the general assumption that institutions are *not* to be trusted with matters of death and dying has actually accelerated a free-styling death trend.

This is not a macroscopic perspective and it is not my intention to start a systematic investigation on how Romanians experience death. Instead, by looking at my respondents' death ideas and beliefs, I will try to identify those that seem responsible for a shift in death mentalities. The way people choose to "optimize" and develop a certain management of hope when they no longer rely (not entirely) on a religious paradigm could delimit new comfort zones from where individuals can better handle crucial experiences.

## **II. A bunch of hardly answerable questions**

### **II. 1. Epistemological obstacles**

People die everywhere and all the time; therefore comprehensive research on death and dying is, in a way, a utopia.<sup>3</sup> In fact, the more complex a society is, the more complex and multi-layered its death system. Consequently, the more difficult it will be to pursue research without challenging methodologies and resorting to *adequate* interdisciplinary approaches. In truth, Death Studies often have "ambiguous" uses. Their scientific preferences and methodological tools depend not only on academic priorities, but also on bureaucratic inertia and conflicting agendas of various industries of death (funeral industries have different priorities from healthcare institutions which, at their turn, may not reflect the priorities of end-of-life institutions<sup>4</sup>). For better or for worse, they all rely on cultural and socio-political climates.<sup>5</sup>

I will start with a proper precaution: there is no generic thanatology,<sup>6</sup> only thanatological knowledge that constantly tries to bridge gaps between certain theories and certain practices in certain organizational/ institutional contexts within certain societies/ communities. In contemporary Romania, we have a lot less than that. One cannot simply “import” thanatological knowledge and expertise. Handling death implies a specific social dynamics, and changing death ways around is impossible without relevant structural change.

When someone says: “I don’t think of myself as a widow”,<sup>7</sup> it is, of course, as Parkes shows, very important to start not with a grief model, but with what that particular woman believes a widow is. When someone from Crevedia Mare (Giurgiu county) approached me and said: “I think cremation is unacceptable”, I could not tell him that cremation was the dominant disposal practice in many Europeans “civilized” countries. Certainly, cremation is not “just” a disposal method, and the lack of crematoria in most Romanian cities has nothing to do with the failure to “invest locally” or with an excessive obedience towards Romanian Orthodox Church.<sup>8</sup> The fact that one feels one’s worldview challenged by a certain death practice goes deeper into the very foundation of one’s “scheme of things”, as Solomon, Greenberg and Pyszczynski<sup>9</sup> put it. *If a death practice is “unacceptable” it is actually threatening.*

In Death Studies, the challenge to remain efficient and relevant is probably more urgent than in other fields, as it is very difficult to find the “right” links between causes and effects. As far as I am concerned, I have come to believe that lacking in reflective capacity turns a thanatologist into a biased administrator of deadly matters. There is a *paralyzing* sense of theoretical disappointment paired with a dramatic quest for meaning that makes you want to “get it right”, but also discourages you from following a single research lead. But gaining perspective *and* scientific evidence is hardly possible.

Should I ask *how many of the major trends in thanatology are compatible with Romanian realities?* We know that the management of death is *dramatically* conditioned by the very profile of the institutions that handle it. But maybe what is beyond institutional, biological and social definitions of death is more meaningful for people in post-communist countries, as they are notorious for their lack of trust in institutions. Is it better to ask, together with David Heinz:<sup>10</sup> *is there some death left beyond the institutions in which we mostly die?* A part of me says: nobody needs to know that; this is of no use in any (professional or existential)

practice. Another part of me says: the kind of death constantly escaping the institutional labels is also the kind of death constantly underestimated by scholars. And this could be of true interest.

With these “impossible” questions in mind and a handful of empirical data, I have started to write a book about the death system in contemporary Romania. This study is partially based on the ongoing book manuscript, however, as shown in the introduction, the study only focuses on a particular dynamics: the one that (hypothetically) underpins the process of moving from traditional/official views on death to more subjective ones, a process that (hypothetically) gained momentum after the deadly fire in *Colectiv* nightclub.

## **II. 2. Bare numbers and a methodological context**

The fieldwork for this study was carried out between October 2016 and June 2017 and mainly consists in semi-structured interviews and online surveys, but also in participative observation at funerals and wakes that I have attended constantly in the last 15 years.

Apart from Geoffrey Gorer's famous study<sup>11</sup> on attitudes and beliefs towards death in the Great Britain in the mid 60s - a sociological survey based on a representative national sample - systematic and comprehensive approaches on death attitudes have been avoided. Who could aim at extensively documenting peoples' experiences in relation to death and dying? Death is part of everything we say and do, as Robert Kastenbaum famously said, thanatology is “the study of life with death left in it.”<sup>12</sup>

We do not know how the average Belgian or Romanian feels about death and this will probably not change any time soon. What we know is how certain (Western) institutions of death function or should function, and what World/European Values Survey and other cross-cultural data tell us about peoples' beliefs in afterlife, spirituality, religious institutions, or God. As far as Romanian thanatology<sup>13</sup> is concerned, most valuable contributions belong to historiography, cultural history and oral history, ethnology and, sporadically, to philosophy and philology.

Based of many years of unsystematic field research and almost nine months of systematic fieldwork, I can now honestly say that, despite of my best efforts, the documentation has remained incomplete.

The bare numbers are easy to find. For instance, according to Eurostat<sup>14</sup> (2013-2014), most Romanians die of circulatory diseases (968.6 per 100,000 inhabitants) followed closely by Serbians (954.1)



and only surpassed by Bulgarians (1085.8), at the opposite end one finds Norwegians (288). The main cause of death of Romanian elderly people is cerebrovascular diseases - over 600 per 100,000 inhabitants, among the biggest rates in the European Union. It is important to keep in mind that all circulatory diseases are associated with diabetes, high cholesterol levels and smoking, as well as with the (lack of) control of the hypertension. This means Romanians are facing institutional failures (a poorly managed health care system) after making multiple "lifestyle errors" (smoking, drinking, sloppy eating and very few routine check-ups).

It is also important to note that, in Romania, although the crude death rates<sup>15</sup> throughout the country are high, they differ by region: 876 deaths per 100 000 inhabitants in the South-East to close to 2 000 per 100 000 inhabitants in the North-West. In fact, in Romania and the neighboring countries, the standardized death rate for circulatory diseases is more than double than the European Union average, in strong contrast with, for instance, France where the standardized death rate for circulatory diseases is less than three-fifths the European Union average.

Romania, Latvia and Lithuanian are also the European countries with the most deaths by transport accidents (around 11 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants in Romania).<sup>16</sup> However, slightly fewer Romanians die of cancer (269) compared with other European countries (Denmark, Croatia having over 300). The lower rate of death caused by tumors is, sadly enough, counteracted by a very high *avoidable mortality* rate (that is dying of causes that could be avoided in the presence of suitable and timely medical care). According to a little quoted report prepared by the Social Situation Observatory – Health Status and Living Conditions Network,<sup>17</sup> *treatable and preventable deaths were considered to be almost half of the total deaths in Romania and Bulgaria of 2005*. Actually Romania has the highest level of treatable mortality in the European Union. Mortality from treatable conditions among Romanian men was in 2005 five times higher than among Swedish men. This is a clear indicator of what I have called "*guilty dying*" that I believe had a huge overall influence upon Romanians perception on death in both communist and post-communist times. *Colectiv* disaster has just magnified a problem that was already there for decades.

The good news is that death by cancer, heart diseases, and transport accidents has decreased significantly between 2004 and 2013 throughout the whole Europe, therefore in Romania as well. The same goes for life expectancy at 65 that, in Romania, has increased steadily from 1980 to

2014 in both women and men (with a gender gap of 5.5 years of life in 2014 in favor of women). Sadly, in 2014, we still had the highest infant mortality rate in Europe (8,4 deaths per 1000 live births) compared, for instance, with Cyprus and Slovenia (1, 4 deaths respectively 1,8 deaths per 1000 live births).

As for the Government expenditure on health, according to Eurostats (2015), we spend 4, 2 % of gross domestic product (GDP), which is a lot less than the Northern countries (8, 6% of GDP in Denmark and 8, 4% of GDP in Norway), but more than Cyprus (2, 6% of GDP) or Latvia (3, 8%). We spend extremely little for public health (0,1%), but 2,1% for hospital services and the lack of pharmaceutical supply is one of the main problems within our health care system.<sup>18</sup>

What we can tell by looking at the above numbers is an implacable yet expectable East-West gap in mortality rates with a very problematic symptom: the very high rate of avoidable and preventable mortality indicating - on the one hand - poor health policies and prevention programs (causing not only fewer diagnoses, but also a failure to deal with diagnosed diseases), and, moreover, poor lifestyles leading to lung cancer, traffic accidents, cirrhosis of the liver<sup>19</sup> and cardio-cerebral diseases. On the good side, Romania has known an increase in (healthy) life expectancy.

The purpose of my own data was to get a qualitative sense of whether Romanians' perceptions of death is influenced, on the one hand, by the awareness of the avoidability of death, and, on the other hand, by a fluctuating relationships with traditional religion and, more generally, with the institutions of death, after *Colectiv* disaster.

I rely on Robert Atkinson's view on the sacred functions of personal mythmaking<sup>20</sup> in life story interviews. As Atkinson underlines, birth, struggles, love and death produce stories that are central to people's well-being.<sup>21</sup> Most people, when approached for an interview, after going beyond the phase of excessive cautiousness, become captivated by their own life or death story, their frame of mind changes, and they cannot refrain themselves from trying to get at the "truth of the human life".<sup>22</sup>

So far I have made the transcriptions of sixteen face-to-face semi-structured interviews. They have all been remarkably powerful. It looks like there is no such thing as a "weak" death story. Although I have conducted a total of thirty-two interviews, a part of them are to be used in a different study on medical knowledge and attitudes on death. However, some of the conclusions formulated by the end of this paper are based on testimonies not yet transcribed for the purpose of this paper.

I have not chosen my interviewees randomly. I aimed to reach a diversity of sorts and, the moment I have realized that a gender imbalance was hardly surmountable (death proved to be a difficult topic for men to discuss), I have actively sought to restore it. I have also taken into consideration the difference in crude death rates between South-East and North-West Romania as well as religious background after looking at the data from the latest census (October 2011) where 86,5% declared themselves to be Orthodox, 4,6% Roman-Catholics, and almost 2% Pentecostals. I have recruited respondents based on my own network and previous field experience, as well as within online groups, via public notice boards at post offices and pharmacy stores (in three villages). I have transcribed the conversations with 8 female respondents and 6 male respondents aged between 43 and 72 living in urban and rural regions across the country: Oradea, Salonta (one Pentecostal male respondent), Vatra Dornei, Saru Dornei, Botoșani, Galați, Crevedia-Mare, Târgu-Mureș (two Roman-Catholics), Cugir, Vinerea, Poiana Vadului, Bucharest. I have asked questions regarding their relationship with religion, God and the Church, afterlife beliefs, fear of death, meanings of death, previous hospital and disease experiences, medical knowledge in general, health and lifestyle, funeral attendance and ritual *know-how*, opinions on *Colectiv* disaster, and, sporadically, the loss of faith/religious authority and (social) tolerance (multiculturalism, terrorism) in an attempt to see how my respondents generally deal with late modern challenges. Each discussion has begun with examining the relationship between death, dying and religious beliefs in traditional Romania. Overall, I have followed three leads: 1. *the relationship with the actual institutions handling death-related matters* (mostly the Church, the State in general, and the medical system), 2. *the relationship with the systems of meanings and “the providers” of mainstream-able meaningful solutions for death*, 3. *the personal know-how, personal standards for one’s own death style*.

At last, I have conducted two online surveys (spread via various Facebook groups): one related to *Colectiv* fire, corruption in general, the medical system, and death policies in contemporary Romania with 845 respondents (sixty-eight percent of the total respondents being female respondents), the other survey on religiosity/spirituality and death meanings, of 327 respondents, eighty-three percent were women, all respondents having experienced a loss in the last five years.

### III. How is post-Colectiv Romania different?

#### Analyzing some answers

In 2015, on October the 30rd, the Romanian metal-core band *Goodbye to Gravity* launched their new album "Mantras of War" in a trendy nightclub in Bucharest. A spark of fire from the pyrotechnics went through the flammable ceiling and 27 people were killed on the spot. More than one hundred were injured. Some of the severely affected were taken to various European hospitals, but most of them remained in Bucharest hospitals with little care facilities for burn treatment. Due to unstable conditions and massive spread of nosocomial infection, the number of deaths was constantly rising. It was later discovered that the nightclub was functioning without the Fire Department permit; on that particular pre-Halloween night, they were using outdoor pyrotechnics indoors, with unintelligible (because Bulgarian) instructions for use. While dozens of rock fans were dying in hospitals, hundreds of thousand of people were protesting on the main boulevards of Romanian cities demanding the resignation of the centre-left prime minister Victor Ponta, already notorious for his legal problems (ranging from academic fraud to tax fraud and money laundering). "Shame on you", "Assassins", "All corrupted leaders must leave" the protesters were shouting, while the ocean of candles was only growing and glowing against the dark frame of the nightclub. Once more, the whole country turned apocalyptic. Yet all this time, the Romanian Orthodox Church remained silent. These are the facts.

After *Colectiv* moment, people complained more than ever about a faulty management of death. It was Romania's most famous writer Mircea Cartarescu who coined the expression "corruption kills" on his Facebook wall. It was a powerful expression that stuck with everyone. Almost two years later, all my respondents think that someone's incompetence or corruption (a doctor, a drunken driver etc.) will kill them sooner or later. Death is more a social issue than a religious problem, although they see themselves as religious persons. A social approach of death offers simultaneously a manageable (social) problem, a concrete enemy, and a conceivable solution.

Thanatologists know very well that the new kind of "good death" model (as opposed to other models identified by social historians in the past) is a *correctly solved or a well-managed death*.<sup>23</sup> It is my impression that this has always been the case in communist and post-communist Romania. Many believe that life continues in the afterlife and display

a “metaphysical fatalism” at the same time. But when asked concrete questions, most people think that death is caused by a “faulty” (political) maneuver. The relationship between the causes and the effects is not at all clear. Death is this social problem you might as well avoid if only the local authorities, the hospital, the shareholders of *Colectiv* nightclub, or yourself would have done their/your part correctly. If someone dies, something that *should have* been fixed and *could have* been fixed has happened. It suddenly seems reasonable to want to put someone in charge, someone that is going to make sure it does not happen again. The knowledge on death is heavily “instrumentalized”. This lead, on the one hand, to an excessive practicalization of a deeply existential matter, and, on the other hand, to a constant refraining from looking for deeper death meanings. Indeed, only one of my interviewees, a Pentecostal man from Salonta said that the meaning of death is the communion with God in the afterlife.

The pain and frustration of having to deal with an avoidable death interferes drastically with a meaningful understanding of the experience of dying. I think this not only affects the way Romanians approach death in general, but also their *expectations* of how to think and feel about it, and how to deal with life-threatening situations in a “guilty dying” paradigm.

To the survey question about who can be hold directly responsible for the death of the 64 young people in the *Colectiv* nightclub, a percentage of 76% think that *we were all responsible*. Also, they believed that it was the generalized corruption in Romania, not the owners of the club, or the fireworks company, or the doctors, or God that could be held guilty. *The general guilt* we all carry is ultimately causing death. “Because, let’s face it, we are all corrupted”, said a female respondent from Cugir, Alba Iulia county. Also, the survey made by INSCOP Research<sup>24</sup> about the death of the babies hospitalized in Arges and Bucharest with hemolytic-uremic syndrome after consuming cheese contaminated with E. Coli bacteria, shows that the largest percent of respondents (19%) think that the Ministry of Health bears the guilt for the deaths, followed by the Public Health Council in Arges, not the hospitals themselves, and not the cheese producer.

I have also asked my informants what are the things that brought them comfort when facing a loss. Some mentioned religion explicitly, two respondents (both from urban areas) mentioned a priest, some mentioned a good doctor or a reliable family member. However, every one of them mentioned the overall importance of *hope*: they hope to overcome sorrow, they hope to get well again, hope as opposed to despair, hope as an

explicit expression of their religious faith (only women from both rural and urban areas have made a direct reference to religious hope). What I have called “a *proper management of hope*” when facing a crisis needed my scholarly attention.

Traditionally, culturally and even intuitively, hope is connected with some kind of “religious-like” expectations. A psychotherapeutic input or medical intervention is often perceived as “salutary”, even magic. This is not to imply that hope is necessarily irrational, but that entails a genuine trust or confidence in something or somebody. The recent emergence of *meaning-oriented grief therapies*<sup>25</sup> is not accidental. We all tend to introduce death in a comprehensive, meaningful – Atkinson will call it “sacred” - story with good characters and bad characters. It gives us a meaning and a purpose, as Pyszczynski, Solomon and Greenberg show in their study about 9/11.<sup>26</sup>

Progressing through our storyline also implies explaining the suffering, but even more, reaching towards a *resolution*.<sup>27</sup> Personal stories on personal death-related experiences *do* contribute to a better - but not necessarily more realistic- management of hope. They tend to explain whatever horrible thing happened to anyone. One creates “theodicies”<sup>28</sup> for personal use and, as Peter Berger explained many years ago, “it is not happiness that theodicy primarily provides, but meaning.”<sup>29</sup>

Two male respondents (although they have previously stated not to have a religious understanding of the world) believed that the *Colectiv* fire was “abnormal”, “I’m telling you, Romania is cursed” and “How could this have happened without magic involvement?” When I have asked other respondents about an “occult intervention” in *Colectiv* tragic course of events, they have strongly rejected the hypothesis of a “malefic contribution” to the disaster: “the corrupt government is the devil, Ponta is the devil, we are all devils because we’ve let this happen” said a younger female from Târgu-Mureș that also said she believes in the power of “collective wisdom” and that no successful transition in life is possible without relying on each other; Orthodox religion made Romanians feel even more disconnected (*dezbinăți*) lately, she thought. “I am a Roman-Catholic, but my faith has nothing to do with what I’m telling you.”

It is important to understand the “value”, the “quality” of one’s personal theodicy; and also, to discuss the growingly popular character of a *reliable theodicy*. After all, consensus is what gives power to beliefs, as Steve Bruce rightly noted.

I now have to ask: *where do we find the standards of value for assessing, justifying, and improving our own death way and our "custom-made" standards of meaning and hope? And how do we reach a consensus?*

#### **IV. Fumbling with bare numbers and fuzzy religiosity, while searching for consensus**

Religion has always been a source of collective identities, a source of hope, comfort and consensual meanings. In theory at least, religions take care of the problem of death. When they promise an otherworldly reward, they also imply that the significance of death is beyond the event of death. But, as Atkinson would say, this is the general kind of human story, the substantial, "take-it-or-leave-it" kind of sacred story. The moment we step foot on the functionalistic ground and we consider *the lived religious experience* and personal religious narratives, things get a little fuzzy, as David Voas<sup>30</sup> would put it.

Religious beliefs are not the same thing with religious participation. We have known this for a long time, as Grace Davie made a distinction between those that "believe without belonging" and those who "belong without believing".<sup>31</sup> How about the growing number of people that are neither religious nor unreligious, but however stick around, remaining "fuzzily" loyal to their own religion, with sporadic involvement with the institution itself? How about those vaguely believing in some superior power,<sup>32</sup> but declaring themselves Catholics or Orthodox because the belonging remains meaningful for their social identity? In Voas's words, "the result is similar to a self-description as working class by the owner of a large business, or claims to Irishness by Americans who have a grandparent from Galway."<sup>33</sup>

To cut a long story short, assessing self-described religious beliefs in next to impossible. If we look at the opinion poles on European Social Survey<sup>34</sup> we can note the high levels of religious and quasi-religious beliefs throughout all European Union. The highly problematic psychosociological issue is whether those who claim a certain belief in, say, reincarnation, are actually *committed* to their view. As Voas shows, most people are not even aware about the difference between "religious" and "spiritual", they just give their opinion on a matter that concerns them in little describable ways.

According to INSCOP Research (2015), a percentage of 83,9% Romanians consider themselves religious, but only 81% according to World Value Surveys (2010- 2014).<sup>35</sup> However, almost 40% attend religious services *only* in important moments of the year (Christmas, Easter, etc.). While an insignificant percentage of 1,1% declare themselves atheists, almost 97% believe in God, around 50% believe in an afterlife, almost 30% believe in curses, 15,6% believe in extraterrestrial life, and about the same percentage (15,3%) believe in magic.

Obviously, Romanians believe in everything. The problem however may be that when one believes in everything one inevitably becomes less consistently engaged in a certain religious or quasi-religious practice. This may sound counter-intuitive to many who have read about the bursts of popular piety<sup>36</sup> in contemporary Romania. I cannot argue with the fact that this is a fruitful topic for both scholars and journalists, but talking spiritual self-expression in contemporary Romania makes more sense than, say, five years ago.<sup>37</sup>

The picture one often gets is of an ever-growing Orthodox fundamentalism. One has written about it until one has deliberately (or unintentionally) overexposed it. But the counter part is just as “promising”! It has become more obvious after the *Colectiv* fire that linking Romanians’ religiosity with institutional religion is no longer recommendable. I think there have been *substantial* changes in understanding and performing religion among contemporary Romanians. After *Colectiv* disaster, the spontaneous shrines were profoundly secular.

Of course, in all post-communist countries, there are specific de-traditionalization and secularization patterns<sup>38</sup> to be considered. We have undoubtedly experienced an emancipation process from traditional religious order, but, as many sociologists of religion show, the abandonment of tradition does not happen suddenly, it is a gradual process<sup>39</sup> with multiple recurrent events and unexpected boosts. Davie thinks this is a typical European pattern, where we have a dominant church considered to be “the normal” church: an “inclusive institution”<sup>40</sup> that takes a lot of spiritual, geographical, sociological, psychological and cultural space within a society. This “static” institution inherently has compatibility problems with a modern speed-oriented urban life. An institution as such may lose control over peoples’ beliefs,<sup>41</sup> but one cannot simply “get over” something that takes such a big space. We therefore should take into consideration the fact that ROC and Patriarch Daniel have lately suffered a decrease in credibility not only because their response



to *Colectiv* tragedy has been massively evaluated as “inadequate”, but also for “normal” reasons, like *the rise of consumerism*. We know from Heelas and Bauman<sup>42</sup> that the “consumer model” implies a unique sense of identity and wellbeing and certainly *self-awareness*. Overconsumption is directly linked to the pursuit for happiness. It is also a confirmed rival of established religion. Consumerism also attests a certain social and financial level, and Romanians have always been interested in enhancing *social status*.

#### IV. 1. Terror management or hope management?

A couple of centuries ago,<sup>43</sup> having a doctor beside the bed of the dying man reflected his good social position. These days, a nutrition guru or a fitness guru, a personal trainer or a famous chef are called to personally assist people in their journey towards healthier lives. Embracing professionally assisted health plans is what every “respectable” contemporary individual does. This, too, is a matter of social status; and it has become so not only in urban Romania, but also in rural parts where people tend to be heavy consumers of wellness television shows. More and more people start to believe that being well-trained and well-fed is a value worth pursuing at any price. This may actually be *the only* long-term commitment Romanians are still willing to go after.

The motivation is strong and it comes from the inside as well as from the outside: an alignment between Western lifestyles and Romanians lifestyles is actively sought, and a need to find personalized, non-institutional ways of avoiding death is imperative. Although there are not substantial changes in health indicators yet, according to Romanian Meat Association,<sup>44</sup> *the consumption of processed meat has decreased by a quarter in the latest years*. In terms of Terror management health model,<sup>45</sup> an increased death anxiety correlates with one’s self-esteem and self-awareness and, of course, with one’s existential worries.

The bottom line is that the average Romanian did not abandon tradition, but did not keep it as it was either. He or she understands it and performs it differently, in ways that are *not substantially incompatible* with cosmopolitan trends.<sup>46</sup> Old superstitions and religious gestures may be channeled to serve modern personal wellness objectives. Even highly popular saints like St. Nektarios and St. Ephraim are specialized in life-threatening diseases and financial problems. Orthodox religion is *more than ever* expected to meet *worldly* needs. Whatever or whoever promises

wellness – from the relics of a saint to doctors and nutritionists - become a viable option, something or someone to follow.

On every level, everybody's efforts are focused on *impending* death from happening. Everything we need to do about our death is already *here, at hand, on this side* of the world. This view is, I think, a strong *pattern of synchronization: absolutely everyone believes in the importance of preventing dying through lifestyle choices.*

All our metaphysical worries have been “reabsorbed” into daily worries that ask for immediate *salutary* life decisions. Whatever works. Some of us have a complete medical check-up every 6 months. Some others go to the gym. Some still go to the church. As I have read in the wonderful collection of interviews made by Bărbulescu and collaborators,<sup>47</sup> villagers over 65 use broccoli soups recipes taken from the internet to cure prostate cancer!

Of course, there seems to be no legitimate basis for imposing one's version on others, *but*, at the same time, it looks like a *chaotic accumulation of preventing-death “tips” may not be that chaotic after all*: when it comes to life and death, one tends to be consensual. We can always discern a couple of “absolute reference points” and a certain tendency of *mainstreaming* the best ones. So what is the prevalent reference point when making a certain death-related decision rather than other? Is this “reference point” essentially multi-determined? Is it a norm imposed by health care professionals, a cultural trend in our community, an institutional constraint, a psychological factor? What makes it dominant in a certain community or society?

Some countries adjust better than others to the growing lack of usability of traditional (religious) life and death ways. As shown, there are similarities, but also stark differences across Europe. Just like every individual, probably each country has to deal at some point with its very own way of *not* understanding death. The ways of putting up with such misunderstandings are different only up to a point. *The mainstreaming process constantly limits the impact and the reliability of individual death ways. How exactly are such death styles supposed to reproduce and on what basis? Are there legitimate (“true”) enough to be passed on to the children? As far as Voas (and his fuzzy religious practices) is concerned, “the chances of passing them successfully to the next generation are slim”.*<sup>48</sup> This remains, however, a very important question.

#### IV. 2. When medicine answers everyone's existential questions

Thanks to social media, public talks, public policies, and health care programs, "good-death ideas" spread a lot easier these days. Every one of them can at least *induce* the need for a certain life or death style. If people like it, they will embrace it. All my interviewees have *at least once* looked online for a cancer cure; even the 72-year-old one asked her nephew to look up the benefits of turmeric.

It is not surprising that at the survey question *which institution is most likely to generate a meaningful context for death?* more than 80% said it is the *medical system*.

Here is an interesting shift: in a country where the medical system is falling apart, more and more people seem to be ready to make *bold, carefully picked health choices*. It does not matter whether we talk pseudo-science or cutting-edge genetic technology, heretic medical movements, magic tricks, or laser surgery, fad diets or advanced biochemical nutrition, as long as people turn to them for the same (quasi)-religious reasons. It is the "*reception*" problem that draws my attention. From the very popular Dr. Oz to the charismatic and controversial local star Olivia Steer, taking an interest in wellness is increasingly linked to shaping attitudes towards death and dying. Official and unofficial medical knowledge proposes a universal language of salvation,<sup>49</sup> a comprehensive and reliable corpus of ever-updatable information, practices and techniques meant to keep death away. It also raises hermeneutic, philosophical, and ethical life and death questions more than ever before. This led to a *social consensus concerning the reliability of the medical techniques and goals*, in times when religions are less frequented for their ability to offer coherent and reliable norms for dealing with death.

All my interviewees said at some point "I've read about it" or "I know all about it, I've read articles, I did research". Whoever has direct or indirect access to the internet googles everything from symptoms, to home remedies, from pharma sites to drug dosage information. We all improve our medical knowledge on a daily basis. Ultimately, what does this mean? That we actively try to *live up* to the solutions we *believe* in. This also means we have full responsibility for how we solve the problem. We fail, we get sick, and hope to be healed. If the healing is not working, we are to blame. Our terrible illness is our terrible fault and our terrible sin. In this context, our death is the punishment for eating and living sluggishly. We could say, ironically, that our life mainly consists in finding ways to

avoid “getting caught”. Some respondents displayed cynicism towards prophylaxis which, in the terms of terror management health model, only suggests a different kind of self-oriented defense. Once you are *found ill*, you are *found guilty*.

#### IV. 3. Sacred means for sacred goals

When compared with other (secular) systems, *medicine obviously has an increased permeability to the sacred*. When the secular takes over the sacred, the secular itself becomes a new sacred order. Now, 30% of my survey respondents said that the experience of dying is something mysterious and spiritual, about 20% said it is biological, very few said that, when death occurs, the soul leaves the body. Phenomenologically, confrontation with death calls up *sacred feelings* of some kind. In Rudolf Otto’s classic terms, death is something “wholly different”.<sup>50</sup> An emotional experience of awe could be felt in regard to many other things that meet existential needs, like, for example, nature, sports, green interiors, architecture in general,<sup>51</sup> etc.

As I have shown in previous studies,<sup>52</sup> looking for a systematic sacred account of death is an insurmountable theoretical task. As the British sociologist N. J. Demerath (arguably) showed, sacred can only be approached “functionally”, that is, as a consequence of “something”, not as a “substance”. The possibility of defining religion substantively and the sacred functionally has been one of my main research interests in the recent years. So far I have only come to unfavorable conclusions: “The dispersed sacred may be recognized when one sees it or experiences it, but, as long as it is not permanently and uniformly “distributed” in previously envisaged cultural forms, sociology cannot offer a full and practical scientific status of an assembly of sacred experiences which are de-substantialized, unpredictable and complex.”<sup>53</sup>

“I was afraid to look at his palms” a respondent explained to me what he felt when preparing the body of his dead father for the funeral. Although he was not a very religious person, he suddenly remembered that someone once told him the dead lose the lines on their palms. The detail hunted him for months after the event. “Do I tell others about it?” he asked himself. In the end, he did not. “I knew my family would have overanalyzed it, yet my fear seemed somehow stupid. And what if the others would have believe me? What if they’d have said: how could you *not* look? I didn’t want to get into that sort of situation.”

An encounter with the sacred lingers in one's mind. It often tends to be *shared, regulated, circumscribed, and made available to others in a normative way*. Other people want to know what one has experienced. *People look for an authoritative reference point or for a reference principle outside themselves.*

After transcribing the interview answers I could clearly see that the very private *experiences of death* derive less from substantive traditional religion or other institutional arrangements. They have more to do with the personal, timid, confusing ways of approaching the sacred. Considering the dispersed sacred as *prevailing* over the coherent (dogmatic) religious experiences opens up the possibility towards a personal encounter with death as *a direct connection to the sacred*. The problem is that we never know "where" the sacred "ends". When nothing is apriorically sacred, *everything* can be sacred.

The trouble is not solely theoretical, but also existential: *people move unexpectedly and little purposefully in and out such sacred comfort zones*. This is, I think, a viable starting point for understanding the paradox of the coexistence of both "freestyling" and "mainstreaming" death.

The important assumption is that we are constantly witnessing *medical and bioethical legitimations of the sacred*. In the terms of this paper, these may be called "*absolute sacred points*" of normativity that justify the freestyling and the mainstreaming in one's constant look for *comfortable devices*:

When I go to work to the vineyard early in the morning, I'm thinking – what I am doing? I'm old, I don't need all this wine, but then I remember that my father - who died in 2000 - did the same thing. (...) He was a drunk, but also a hard worker [laughs] he knew what he was working for (...) I do it because he did it and it's a superstition, if I stop working the vineyard, my father gets upset and I die, I can't it give up, I can't sell it, he left me a burden and he speaks to me through this burden every day. I kind of like it after all.

## V. Discomfort zones

I have identified two main sources of discomfort in relation to death and dying:

1. *The weakening of the communities of meaning*: people do not tell stories to each other the way they used to. This weakens the very

significance of community ties. There must be a value, a narrative one has heard or made up, a “loose” dogma, a spiritual norm that has a dominant influence over one’s view on death. But how would one carry it on (symbolically)? And what if one changes one’s mind? Because (statistically) the process of dying gets longer, one tends to lose one’s reference points. The dying is often too weak to actively seek new good-death-ideas, therefore one tends to rely on expert knowledge that in Romania is hard to find or inefficient. As I have understood from my respondents, families refrain these days from bringing clear-cut explanations on what they are going to do once death occurs. Moreover, fewer dying people are ready to approach family members and tell exactly how they want to be handled. The only practice that has been around for decades, is that of ensuring a grave. Most “reliable” Romanians over 60 own a grave in a nearby cemetery. Of course, a well-managed death *does not* necessarily mean a meaningful death. Death is more than finding a good nursing house, enough money for the burial and efficient painkillers. The question remains unanswered: *“who” is responsible for the control, the production, the processing and the long-term maintenance of meaning, of “good” death meanings?*

Nothing in the survey results and in my interviewees’ answers provides a key. Apart from willing to prevent death through self-administered medical maneuvers, I could not trace any relevant idea about how they understand the *real* experience of dying, when compared to the Westerners that have already understood the importance of *achieving and maintaining* their own death style.

2. *Financial precariousness* is also an important source of discomfort. Perhaps the cruelest consequence of the fact that death has become almost exclusively a social matter, it is that *a well-managed death is a matter of social status*. Low social exposure and loose family ties mean “low-quality” death. Most respondents think we need political will and money in order for us to die a good death. But here we have a very “meaningful” confusion: the fact that medical condition of the dying is often complicated, it is hard to address it, and one hopes until the last minute that something can be done. As Kellehear once asked, *where does the health care end and where does the death care start?* This is, of course, a *question of meaning* not only a matter of logistics. Having the highest rate of avoidable deaths in the European Union, it is unlikely for Romanians to actually be delivered the “right” institutional narratives that could enforce a coherent and reliable production of meanings.

Dying is not recognized as being dying not only because the aging process gets longer, but also because it perversely overlaps with...healthy living.

Ironically, *you have to be wealthy, healthy, and socially connected in order to live to "see" the benefits of a well-managed death.* Two of my respondents were widows and none of them had any kind of expectations from the Romanian health care system. Their children work in Spain and respectively Belgium and these women already know that, when the time will come, nothing is going to go according to the plan. The self-management of the old age becomes one with the self-management of death.

Moreover, *a public recognition of a dying role is difficult to obtain in Romania:* one needs not only social visibility and a right diagnosis, but it also has to be a priority on someone's agenda in order for him or her be recognized and treated for what he or she is. Otherwise, as a 46 year old respondent confessed,

when my mother died it was just chaos and shame. We spent hours on three hospital hallways and nobody took us in because I didn't have any money with me < can't you see she's dying? Get her home! > a nurse said to me. I was supposed to feel guilty for bringing her to the hospital!

When one dies like this, one is neither a hero nor a victim, just a confused and confusing version of one's self, socially inapt, financially unstable, "just ashamed to have to die in such a corrupt country."

## **VI. Comfort zones and a few conclusions**

Comfort may be brought by either good anticipation/preparation or by the total lack of anticipation of death. 22% of my survey respondents said that a sudden death (be it a violent one) is preferable to long dying. This got me thinking that, maybe, Romanians do not respond well to prevention programs, they are fatalist and have an ambivalent attitude toward the (im)possibility to avoid death.

48% of the survey respondents believed that death was a spiritual experience and a very high percentage (80%) thought death was controllable through medical means - which may demarcate a comfort zone once provided exclusively by traditional religion.

In a nutshell, the multiplication of sacred sources and means on the one hand, and an increased personal autonomy on the other hand, led to a multiplication of easily spreadable personal death ways that caused an increased access to conflicting versions of “good death” and have created small, unstable comfort zones, and fast, unpredictable swings from meaningful to meaningless versions of dying.

Bringing one’s death style to the public scene, making it recognizable and “operational” is a complicated act of social and symbolic value that one can hardly complete by one’s self. It seems to me that *the quality of the self-management of death is directly influenced by the quality of life in a very strict, sociological sense, but it is indirectly influenced by “the quality” of one’s beliefs system, in a less strict sense.*

Achieving a death of your own, as Donald Heinz once put it is, after all, *a personal achievement.*

In this sense, I think that the real enemy in finding a reliable *savoir mourir* is not the loss of faith, but *a less dynamic relationship between the disintegration of certain shared death meanings, and the individual’s or community’s inability to rebuild those meanings, or create new meanings from scratch.*

Everyday conversations - on, for instance, medical issues - can reinforce shared beliefs, but even so, one *has* to rise above the debate. A personal death way is not only about one’s personal social accomplishment; what it matters, is “the spirit” in which one takes it up.

## VII. Coda

When one screams “Corruption kills!” one implies that *death in Romania has a more or less explicit political agenda.* One does not need to read Talcott Parsons’s structural functionalism<sup>54</sup> in order to understand that peoples’ relationship with mortality cannot be understood without a larger socio-cultural context. Everything is interconnected: from everyday interpersonal relationships to the official management of death involving institutions, practices and places, objects and symbols. The individual approach of social reality and individual approach of death are interlinked.

If one plans to look at how a society is doing - politically, institutionally, spiritually, economically - the most “unforgiving” way is to look at its death system. *A transitologist and a thanatologist may work together for coming to a better understanding of what makes a postcommunist country*



*socially and politically capable to build and maintain pertinent, agreed-upon, and non-ambivalent connections between peoples' own existential values and institutions.*

According to Horia Patapievic, <sup>55</sup> in a country where there has been a generation-long communist period, the mechanisms of modernization have been discontinuous. When communism rose, de-traditionalization was harshly imposed; and then when communism collapsed, de-traditionalization was strongly disapproved. The equilibrium between the two opposite compressing forces was tricky to find and to maintain, institutionally and psychologically, collectively and individually. After the fall of communism, all previously held values were suddenly practiced differently, reflecting ambivalence, duplicity, at best, confusion. The things people did, said, and believed during communist times have gained a rigidity of sorts. They have become easier to misunderstand and misused by the old and the young alike. These features are primarily evident in the informal traditions <sup>56</sup> the ones that actually shape everyday interactions and our spontaneous take on existential matters, death included.

The weakening of the communities of meaning and the long process of dying forced the individual to make up her own symbolic reference points. The official death institutions were not to be trusted (even if only for their notorious financial scams), and there was no one to turn to for the production, the processing, and the long-term maintenance of "comfortable" death meanings. Also, a financially precarious life meant falling out - at an early stage of dying - of whatever death system there might have been available. Acknowledging a dying role is/was not only a social task, but also a pressing economical burden.

If today we can identify any new, privileged comfort zones for the dying and the bereaved, they are not primarily dependent upon majority's beliefs or upon other institutional traits, rather, they are the result of conscious personal efforts that follow both complicated inner rules and more general, global, agreed-upon trends (living well, eating well, working abroad, specific agendas of certain NGO's); they, as often as possible, by-pass the national constraints and the local institutional arrangements.

But even so, such institutional forces affect both the individual and the nation, although unpredictably and (always) asymmetrically. The best example is the simultaneous (and surely un-purposeful) trust *and* distrust in traditional religious institutions that often leads to a more profound problem: the failure to engage in a deeper understanding of reality, that, I believe, could naturally foster a feeling of the sacred. To cut a complex

story short, when someone dies, it is likely to simultaneously blame God, the State, the medical system and yourself: "that ignorant doctor", "that curse", "if I only had the money...", "we are all guilty", "it's corruption".

Having a fluctuant relationship with every potential death-cause is what all individuals do when confronted with danger. To a certain extent, we all engage in a chaotic superposition of scripts, we all practice a confusion of standards that goes hand in hand with the confusion of various reference systems (from old magic to doctor Oz-approved solutions, from politics to prophylactic medicine and technology). But when all institutions that literally and symbolically manage death fail on you at the same time, there is no one to turn to.

The mass response to the *Colectiv* tragedy revealed this fracture better than ever before: it was the point where political needs have met existential worries, and it was the point where death was massively misunderstood precisely because every single institutions of death failed, and we were left empty-handed. Ultimately, this translates into a paralyzing inability to address the problem of death itself.

The tragic event remained in the collective memory as the event that made a corrupt government to resign. *The government itself* killed our teenagers.

In a country where nearly everyone is suspected of having a hidden "political agenda", death easily becomes "just" a social problem. You have to dread because someone's incompetence, neglect, or corruption will sooner or later kill you. A researcher should try to grasp comprehensively *and* systematically the relationships between death and those institutions and areas of meaning that, in today's Romania, have an influence on the social processes and structures and, by that, interfere - affirmatively, negatively or ambivalently - with the more subjective, individual reference points. Unless we find those points, we are doomed to confusion, ambivalence, and "bad", meaningless dying.

Romanians protest more often and more furiously than ever. They experience the fundamental lack of trust in institutions with the desperation of those who have already understood (by intuition) that this poses a deeper existential danger. Meanwhile, as we go about from task to task, we keep living upon principles that are essentially dissonant with each other, while, in the background, an all-embracing uncertainty only grows and grows.

It takes a thanatologist's eye to see that this lack of trust will ultimately kill us; either literally, when our ceilings will be on fire, or in an obscurely precise Kafkaian way.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Ernest Becker, *The Denial of Death*, Simon & Schuster, New York, 1973.
- <sup>2</sup> Émile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. A new translation by Carol Cosman, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001, but also the founders of terror management theory: Jeff Greenberg, Sheldon Solomon and Thomas Pyszczynski, "A Terror Management Theory of Social Behavior: The Psychological Functions of Self-Esteem and Cultural Worldviews", pp. 93-159, in *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, vol. 24, Issue C, 1991. About the social response to 9/11 and terror responses see Thomas A. Pyszczynski, Sheldon Solomon and Jeff Greenberg, *In the Wake of 9/11: The Psychology of Terror*, American Psychological Association, Washington DC, 2003, but also Tony Walter, „Sociological Perspectives on Death, Dying, and Bereavement", pp. 31-45, in Judith D. Stillion, Thomas Attig (eds.), *Death, Dying and Bereavement. Contemporary Perspectives, Institutions, and Practices*, Springer Publishing Company, New York, 2015. See also Elias Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, tr. by Carol Stewart, The Continuum Publishing Corporation, New York, 1973, esp. p. 17 for how the crowd reacts to "a discharge".
- <sup>3</sup> Wolf Lepenies, *Between Literature and Science: the Rise of Sociology*, tr. by R. J. Hollingdale, Cambridge UP, Cambridge, 1988, pp. 150, 151.
- <sup>4</sup> A recent example of such institutional de-phasing comes from the grief specialist Colin Murray Parkes, in Caroline Pearce, "Bridging the divides in bereavement research: a conversation with Colin Murray Parkes", pp. 181-193, in *Mortality*, vol. 22, nr. 3, 2017, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13576275.2017.1326891>, p. 189. Clive Seale, *Constructing Death. The Sociology of dying and bereavement*, Cambridge UP, Cambridge, 1998. See also the classic work of Barney G. Glaser, Anselm L. Strauss, *Awareness of Dying*, Aldine, Chicago, 1965.
- <sup>5</sup> A valuable recent edited work: Judith D. Stillion, Thomas Attig (eds.), *op. cit.* Very useful approaches: Tony Walter, "Why different countries manage death differently: a comparative analysis of modern urban societies", pp. 123-145, in *The British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 63, Issue 1, 2012 ; DOI: 10.1111/j.1468-4446.2011.01396.x; Candi K. Cann, John Troyer, „Trans-Atlantic death methods: disciplinarity shared and challenged by a common language", pp. 105-117, in *Mortality*, vol. 22, no. 2, 2017; <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13576275.2017.1291601>
- <sup>6</sup> There are many recent thanatological works analyzing the researching trends in death and dying, pointing out the limitation of research and epistemological models. Apart from the already mentioned work of editors Judith D. Stillion and Thomas Attig, I name a few other methodology-focused ones: Joachim Wittkowski, Kenneth J. Doka, Robert A. Neimeyer and Michael Vallergera, "Publication Trends in Thanatology. An Analysis

- of Leading Journals”, pp.453-462, in *Death Studies*, vol. 39, no.8, 2015, DOI:10.1080/07481187.2014.1000054; Tony Walter, “The Sociology of Death”, pp. 317-366, in *Sociology Compass*, vol. 2, nr. 1, 2008, DOI: 10.1111/j.1751-9020.2007.00069.x; Tony Walter, “Communication media and the dead: from the Stone Age to Facebook”, pp. 215-232, in *Mortality*, vol 20, no. 3, 2015, DOI:10.1080/13576275.2014.993598; John R. Jordan, “Introduction Research that Matters: bridging the gap between research and practice în thanatology”, pp. 457-467, in *Death Studies*, vol. 24, No. 6, 2000; <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07481180050121444>; Helen Stanton Chapple, Barbara L. Bouton, Amy Yin Man Chow, Kathleen R. Gilbert, Phyllis Kosminsky, Jane Moore & Peggy P. Whitning, “The body of knowledge in thanatology: An outline”, pp. 118-125, in *Death Studies*, vol. 41, no. 2, 2017; Michael Hviid Jacobsen (ed.), *Deconstructing Death: Changing Cultures of Death, Dying, Bereavement and Care in the Nordic Countries*, University Press of Southern Denmark, Odense, Danmark, 2013.
- 7 Caroline Pearce, *op. cit.*, p. 188.
- 8 See Marius Rotar, *History of modern cremation in Romania*, Cambridge Scholar Publishing, Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK, 2013, and a very insightful paper by Asher Colombo, “Why Europe has never been united (not even in the afterworld): The fall and the rise of cremation in cities (1876-1939), pp. 22-33, in *Death Studies*, vol 41, no. 1, 2017.
- 9 Sheldon Solomon, Jeff Greenberg, Thomas Pyszczynski, *The Worm at the Core. On the Role of Death in Life*, Random House, New York, 2015.
- 10 David Heinz, *The Last Passage*, Oxford UP, Oxford and New York, 1999.
- 11 Geoffrey Gorer, *Death, Grief, and Mourning in Contemporary Britain*, Cresset, London, 1965. See also the already quoted overview of the sociology of death written by Tony Walter for *Sociology Compass*.
- 12 Stillion, Attig (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. xviii.
- 13 Among the recent relevant works one could mention the already cited history of cremation written by Marius Rotar, also Istvan Kiraly V., *Death and History*, Lambert AP, Saarbrücken, 2015; Mihaela Grancea, *Discursuri despre moarte în Transilvania secolelor XVI-XX*, Casa cărții de știință, Cluj-Napoca, 2006; *Reprezentări ale morții în România epocii comuniste.Trei studii de antropologie funerară*, Casa Cărții de Știință, Cluj-Napoca, 2007; Cristina Bogdan, *Moartea și lumea românească premodernă*, ed. Universității din București, București, 2016; Florența Popescu-Simion, *Orașul și lumile de dincolo*, Ed. Fundației România de mâine, București, 2016; Ștefan Dorondel, *Moartea și apa – ritualuri funerare, simbolism acvatic și structura lumii de dincolo în imaginarul țărănesc*, Paideia, București, 2004.
- 14 Causes of Death – Standardized Death Rate by Residence per 100,000 inhabitants, during 2013-2014.
- 15 The crude death rate is the number of deaths occurring among the population of a given geographical area during a given year, per 1,000 mid-year total

population of the given geographical area during the same year. See <https://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=491>

16 Causes of death — standardised death rate, 2014 (per 100 000 inhabitants aged less than 65), according to Eurostats. See [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Causes\\_of\\_death\\_%E2%80%94\\_standardised\\_death\\_rate,\\_2014\\_\(per\\_100\\_000\\_inhabitants\\_aged\\_less\\_than\\_65\)\\_YB17.png](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Causes_of_death_%E2%80%94_standardised_death_rate,_2014_(per_100_000_inhabitants_aged_less_than_65)_YB17.png) (accessed at July 13 2017)

17 *Health Status and Living Conditions in an Enlarged Europe* issued by London School of Economics and Political Studies in December 2005, pp. 44-57.

18 *Ibid.*, p. 39.

19 *Ibid.*, p. 55.

20 Robert Atkinson, *The Gift of Stories. Practical and Spiritual Applications of Autobiography, Life Stories, and Personal Mythmaking*, Bergin and Garvey, Westport Connecticut, London, 1995, pp. 19-49.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 21.

22 *Ibid.*

23 Seale, *op. cit.*, but even more Allan Kellehear, *A Social History of Dying*, Cambridge UP, Cambridge, 2007, esp. pp. 147-169.

24 [http://www.inscop.ro/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/INSCOP-raport-martie-2016\\_-Imbolnavirea-bebelusilor-din-Arges.pdf](http://www.inscop.ro/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/INSCOP-raport-martie-2016_-Imbolnavirea-bebelusilor-din-Arges.pdf), latest access July 13, 2017.

25 Colin Murray Parkes, *Love and loss: The roots and its complications*, Routledge, Hove, 2006; Robert A. Neimeyer, Laurie A. Burke, Michael M. Mackay, Jessica G. van Dyke Stringer, "Grief Therapy and the Reconstruction of Meaning: From Principle to Practice", pp. 73-83, in *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, vol. 40, Issue 2, 2010.

26 Pyszczynski, Solomon, Greenberg, *In the Wake of 9/11...*

27 Atkinson, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

28 Peter L. Berger, *The Social Reality of Religion*, Hammersmith: Penguin Book, Hammersmith, 1973.

29 *Ibid.*, p. 66.

30 David Voas, "The Rise and Fall of Fuzzy Fidelity in Europe", pp. 155-168, in *European Sociological Review*, vol. 25, no. 2, 2009, DOI:10.1093/esr/jcn044; Siobhan McAndrew, David Voas, "Measuring Religiosity Using Surveys", pp. 1-15, in *Survey Question Bank*, Topic Overview 4, February 2011; David Voas and Abby Day, "Recognizing Secular Christians: Toward an Unexcluded Middle in the Study of Religion", pp. 1-20, in *Association of Religion Data Archives. Guiding Papers Series*, unknown issue and year.

31 Grace Davie, "Prospects for Religion in the Modern World", pp. 455-464, in *The Ecumenical*, vol. 52, No. 4, 2000. Grace Davie, *Religion in Modern Europe. A Memory Mutates*. Oxford UP, Oxford, 2000.

32 Voas, "The Rise and Fall..."

33 *Ibid.*, p. 162.

- 34 <http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/>
- 35 Based on data taken from WVS (2010-2014), Daniel David outlines a comparison between Romanians and Americans' in terms of religiosity, belief in God, religious service attendance, and, more importantly, the degree of personal autonomy. However, no further analysis of the results is provided. *Psihologia poporului român. Profilul psihologic al românilor într-o monografie cognitiv-experimentală*, ed. Polirom, Iași, 2015.
- 36 A valuable approach is Mirel Bănică's *Nevoia de miracol. Fenomenul pelerinajelor în România contemporană*. Polirom, Iași, 2014; also Lavinia Stan & Lucian Turcescu, *Religion and Politics in Post-Communist Romania*. Oxford University Press, New York, 2007; Radu Preda, "Ortodoxia și democrația postcomunistă. Căzul românesc", pp. 326-356, in C. Ungureanu (ed.), *Religia în democrație. O dilemă a modernității*, Polirom, Iași, 2011; Irina Stahl and Eric Venbrux, "Ritual Multiplication: on Lived Religion in Bucharest", pp. 139-167, in *Jaarboek voor liturgieonderzoek*, Issue 27, Instituut voor Christelijk Cultureel Erfgoed, Groningen, 2011; Irina Stahl, "Getting in touch with the saints in contemporary Romania", pp. 99-109, in *Balkanskaya kartin mira sub specie pyati chelovecheskih shuvstv. Balkanskie chetniya 12. Tezisy i materialy*. Russian Academy of Sciences, Institute for Slavic Studies, Moscow, 2013. Journalism: L. Leustean, "A Romanian Religious Revolution: The Orthodox Church and the 2014 Presidential Election [blog post]. *Transatlantic Academy*, November 18 2014, retrieved from: <http://www.transatlanticacademy.org/node/742> (accessed on July 15 2017)
- Raluca Pantazi, "Încrederea în Biserica Orthodoxa Română este la cel mai scăzut nivel din ultimii 4 ani – Sondaj CCSB" in *HotNews*, February 14 2013, Retrieved from: <http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-esential-14226636-increderea-biserica-ortodoxa-romana-este-cel-mai-scazut-nivel-din-ultimii-4-ani-sondaj-ccsb-care-sunt-explicatiile.htm>
- 37 I have also explored the topic in a previous study: Adela Toplean, "To resist or to embrace social death?" in Tony Walter & Jana Kralova (eds.), *Social Death. Questioning the Life-Death Boundary*, Routledge, 2016. More about modern spirituality: Paul Heelas. & Linda Woodhead, *The Spiritual Revolution: Why Religion is Giving Way to Spirituality*, Blackwell, Oxford, 2005; Paul Heelas, *Spiritualities of Life. New Age Romanticism and Consumptive Capitalism*, Blackwell, Oxford, 2008; David Tacey, *The Spirituality Revolution: The Emergence of Contemporary Spirituality*, Brunner-Routledge, New York, 2004.
- 38 I use Steve Bruce's perspective on secularization, *Secularization*. Oxford: Oxford UP, Oxford, 2011. I look at the de-traditionalization through the lenses proposed by Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *Cosmopolitan Communications. Cultural Diversity in a Globalized World*, Cambridge UP, Cambridge, New York, 2009; *Sacred and Secular. Religion and*

- Politics Worldwide*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Cambridge UP, Cambridge, New York, 2011; Horia-Roman Patapievicu, *Partea nevăzută decide totul*, Humanitas, București, 2015; Bogdan Voicu, Mălina Voicu (eds.), *Valorile românilor 1993-2006*, ed. Institutul European, Iași, 2007; Lazăr Vlăsceanu, Marian-Gabriel Hâncean, *Modernitatea românească*, Paralela 45, 2014; Daniel David, *op. cit.*; Anca Manolescu, "Democrația pluralistă: o șansă" pentru desecularizarea religiei?", pp. 356-378, in C. Ungureanu (ed.), *op. cit.*
- 39 Callum G. Brown, Michael Snape (eds.), *Secularization in the Christian World*, Ashgate, Farnham, Burlington, 2010, esp. Grace Davie's contribution, "Thinking Broadly and Thinking Deeply: Two Examples of the Study of Religion in the Modern World", pp. 229, 230.
- 40 *Ibid.*, p. 230.
- 41 *Ibid.*
- 42 Zygmunt Bauman, *Consuming Life*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2007; John Brewer & Frank Trentman (eds.), *Consuming Cultures, Global Perspectives. Historical Trajectories, Transnational Exchanges*, Berg Publishers, Oxford, 2006; Elena Druică, Viorel Cornescu, Rodica Ianole, "Consumerism and Hyperconsumerism in the Romanian Society" in *Global Business and Management Research. An International Journal*, Vol. 30, no. 4, 2010, retrieved from: <https://www.questia.com/library/journal/1G1-260061482/consumerism-and-hyperconsumerism-in-the-romanian-society>
- 43 Philippe Ariès, *The Hour of Our Death*, trans. H. Weaver, Oxford UP, Oxford, 1991; Constantin Bărbulescu, *Romania medicilor. Medici, tarani si igiena rurala in Romania de la 1860 la 1910*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 2015.
- 44 See <http://www.digi24.ro/stiri/actualitate/social/romanii-mananca-mai-putina-carne-consumul-de-mezeluri-a-scazut-cu-un-sfert-274747> (accessed on July 15, 2017)
- 45 Jamie L. Goldenberg & Jamie Arndt, "The Implications of death for health: A terror management health model for behavioral health promotion", pp.1032–1053, in *Psychological Review*, 115 (4). doi:10.1037/a0013326
- 46 Vintilă Mihăilescu, "Tradiții și psihologie" in *Dilema Veche*, 6-12 August 2015, retrieved from: <http://dilemaveche.ro/sectiune/situa-iunea/articol/traditii-psihologie>; Radu Preda, *op. cit.*; Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism. Identity and Cultural Politics under Ceausescu's Romania*, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, 1991; *The Political Lives of the Dead Bodies. Reburial and Postsocialist Change*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press., New York, 1999.
- 47 Elena Bărbulescu (coord.) Țărani, boli și vindecători în perioada comunistă. Mărturii orale, vol. I, II, ed. Mega, Cluj-Napoca, 2010, 2011. vol. II, p. 164.
- 48 Voas, "The Rise and Fall...", p. 162.
- 49 Ivan Illich, *Limits to Medicine. Medical Nemesis: The Expropriation of Health*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Marion Boyars Publ., London, 2000; Fredrik Svenaeus, *The Hermeneutics of Medicine and the Phenomenology of Health: Steps*

- Towards a Philosophy of Medical Practice*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, 2000.
- 50 Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., tr. John Harvey, Oxford UP, London, 1958.
- 51 Anna Petersson, Gunnar Sandin, Maria Liljas, "Room of silence: an explorative investigation of design students' redesign of an arena for reflection and existential meaning-making", pp. 130-148, in *Mortality*, vol. 21, No. 2, 2017, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13576275.2015.1046825> ; among the general studies on the sacred that I have used are: Robert N. Bellah, *The Broken Covenant: American Civil Religion in Time of Trial*, Seabury Press, New York, 1975; José Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1994; "The Secular and Secularisms", *Social Research*, Volume 76, Issue 4, 2009; Harvey Cox, *The Secular City: Secularization and Urbanization in Theological Perspective*, Collier Books, New York, 1990; Grace Davie, *Religion in....* and "Prospects for..."; N. Jay Demerath IIIrd & W. C. Roof, "Religion - Recent Strands in Research", pp. 19-35, in *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 2, 1976; N. Jay Demerath IIIrd, „The Varieties of Sacred Experience: Finding The Sacred In A Secular Grove”, pp. 1-11, in *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Volume 39, No. 1, 2000; Roy Rappaport, *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity*, Cambridge UP, Cambridge, 1999; Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*, Harvard UP, Harvard, 2007.
- 52 Adela Toplean, "On Personal Ways of Dying: New Troubles, Old Means", pp. 63-75, in *Svensk Teologisk Kvartalskrift*, 83, 2008; "Crossroads between modern death and the secular sacred", pp. 29-53, in A. Bremborg, G. Gustafsson, G. Hallonsten (eds.), *Religionssociologi i brytningstider*, Lunds Universitet, Lund, 2009; "Der Tod und das Heilige - Zwischen Geheimnis und Theorie (Teil 1)", pp. 31-40, in *Gnostika*, 44, 2010; "How Sacred is Secular Death? And just how Secular Can Sacred Death Be? A Theoretical Proposal", in M. Rotar & A. Teodorescu (eds.) *Dying and Death in 18th-21st Century Europe*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle Upon Tyne, 2011..
- 53 Toplean, "How Sacred is..."
- 54 Talcott Parsons, *Theories of Society: foundations of modern sociological theory*, Free Press, New York, 1961.
- 55 Patapievici, *op. cit.*, pp. 207-218.
- 56 See Archie Brown, *The Rise and Fall of Communism*, HarperCollins e-books, 2009, p. 578, but also Patapievici, *op. cit.*



## SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ARIES, Ph., *The Hour of Our Death*, trans. H. Weaver, Oxford UP, Oxford, 1991.
- ATKINSON, R., *The Gift of Stories. Practical and Spiritual Applications of Autobiography, Life Stories, and Personal Mythmaking*, Bergin and Garvey, Westport Connecticut, London, 1995.
- BAUMAN, Z., *Consuming Life*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2007.
- BĂNICĂ, M., *Nevoia de miracol. Fenomenul pelerinajelor în România contemporană*. Polirom, Iași, 2014.
- BĂRBULESCU, C., *Romania medicilor. Medici, tarani și igiena rurală în România de la 1860 la 1910*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 2015.
- BĂRBULESCU, E. (coord.), *Țărani, boli și vindecători în perioada comunistă. Mărturii orale, vol. I, II*, ed. Mega, Cluj-Napoca, 2010, 2011.
- BECKER, E., *The Denial of Death*, Simon & Schuster, New York, 1973.
- BELLAH, R. N., *The Broken Covenant: American Civil Religion in Time of Trial*, Seabury Press, New York, 1975.
- BERGER, P. L., *The Social Reality of Religion*, Hammersmith: Penguin Book, Hammersmith, 1973.
- BREWER, J., TRENTMAN, F. (eds.), *Consuming Cultures, Global Perspectives. Historical Trajectories, Transnational Exchanges*, Berg Publishers, Oxford, 2006.
- BROWN, A., *The Rise and Fall of Communism*, HarperCollins e-books, 2009.
- BROWN, C. G., SNAPE, M. (eds.), *Secularization in the Christian World*, Ashgate, Farnham, Burlington, 2010.
- BRUCE, S., *Secularization*. Oxford: Oxford UP, Oxford, 2011.
- CANN, C. K., TROYER, J., „Trans-Atlantic death methods: disciplinarity shared and challenged by a common language”, in *Mortality*, vol. 22, no. 2, 2017.
- CANETTI, E. *Crowds and Power*, tr. by Carol Stewart, The Continuum Publishing Corporation, New York, 1973.
- CASANOVA, J., *Public Religions in the Modern World*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1994. CASANOVA, J., „The Secular and Secularisms”, in *Social Research*, Volume 76, Issue 4, 2009.
- COLOMBO, A. „Why Europe has never been united (not even in the afterworld): The fall and the rise of cremation in cities (1876-1939), in *Death Studies*, vol 41, no. 1, 2017.
- COX, H., *The Secular City: Secularization and Urbanization in Theological Perspective*, Collier Books, New York, 1990.
- DAVID, D., *Psihologia poporului român. Profilul psihologic al românilor într-o monografie cognitiv-experimentală*, ed. Polirom, Iași, 2015.
- DAVIE, G., „Prospects for Religion in the Modern World”, in *The Ecumenical*, vol. 52, No. 4, 2000.
- DAVIE, G., *Religion in Modern Europe. A Memory Mutates*. Oxford UP, Oxford, 2000.

- DEMERATH, N.-J., „The Varieties of Sacred Experience: Finding The Sacred In A Secular Grove”, in *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Volume 39, No. 1, 2000.
- DEMERATH, N.-J., ROOF, W. C., „Religion - Recent Strands in Research”, in *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 2, 1976.
- DRUICĂ, E., CORNESCU, V., IANOLE, R., „Consumerism and Hyperconsumerism in the Romanian Society” in *Global Business and Management Research. An International Journal* Vol. 30, no. 4, 2010
- DURKHEIM, É., *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life. A new translation by Carol Cosman*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001.
- GLASER, B., STRAUSS, A., *Awareness of Dying*, Aldine, Chicago, 1965.
- GOLDENBERG, J. L., ARNDT, J., „The Implications of death for health: A terror management health model for behavioral health promotion”, in *Psychological Review*, 115 (4).
- GORER, G., *Death, Grief, and Mourning in Contemporary Britain*, Cresset, London, 1965.
- GREENBERG, J., SOLOMON, S., PYAZCZYNSKI, Th. „A Terror Management Theory of Social Behavior: The Psychological Functions of Self-Esteem and Cultural Worldviews”, in *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, vol. 24, Issue C, 1991.
- HEELAS, P., *Spiritualities of Life. New Age Romanticism and Consumptive Capitalism*, Blackwell, Oxford, 2008.
- HEELAS, P., WOODHEAD, L., *The Spiritual Revolution: Why Religion is Giving Way to Spirituality*, Blackwell, Oxford, 2005.
- HEINZ, D., *The Last Passage*, Oxford UP, Oxford and New York, 1999.
- ILLICH, I., *Limits to Medicine. Medical Nemesis: The Expropriation of Health*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Marion Boyars Publ., London, 2000.
- JACOBSEN, M. H. (ed.), *Deconstructing Death: Changing Cultures of Death, Dying, Bereavement and Care in the Nordic Countries*, University Press of Southern Denmark, Odense, Danmark, 2013.
- JORDAN, J. R., „Introduction Research that Matters: bridging the gap between research and practice in thanatology”, in *Death Studies*, vol. 24, No. 6, 2000.
- KELLEHEAR, A., *A Social History of Dying*, Cambridge UP, Cambridge, 2007.
- LEPENIES, W., *Between Literature and Science: the Rise of Sociology*, tr. by R. J. Hollingdale, Cambridge UP, Cambridge, 1988.
- McANDREW, S., VOAS, D., „Measuring Religiosity Using Surveys”, in *Survey Question Bank*, Topic Overview 4, February 2011.
- MIHĂILESCU, V., „Traditii si psihologie” in *Dilema Veche*, 6-12 August 2015.
- NEIMEYER, R. A. et al. „Grief Therapy and the Reconstruction of Meaning: From Principle to Practice”, in *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, vol. 40, Issue 2, 2010.

- NORRIS, P., INGLEHART, R., *Cosmopolitan Communications. Cultural Diversity in a Globalized World*, Cambridge UP, Cambridge, New York, 2009.
- NORRIS, P., INGLEHART, R., *Sacred and Secular. Religion and Politics Worldwide*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Cambridge UP, Cambridge, New York, 2011.
- OTTO, R., *The Idea of the Holy*, 2nd ed., tr. John Harvey, Oxford UP, London, 1958.
- PARKES, C. M., *Love and loss: The roots and its complications*, Routledge, Hove, 2006.
- PARSONS, T., *Theories of Society: foundations of modern sociological theory*, Free Press, New York, 1961.
- PATAPIEVICI, H.-R., *Partea nevazuta decide totul*, Humanitas, Bucuresti, 2015.
- PEARCE, C., "Bridging the divides in bereavement research: a conversation with Colin Murray Parkes", in *Mortality*, vol. 22, nr. 3, 2017.
- PETERSSON, A., SANDING, G., LILJAS, M., "Room of silence: an explorative investigation of design students' redesign of an arena for reflection and existential meaning-making", in *Mortality*, vol. 21, No. 2, 2017.
- PYAZCZYNSKI, Th., SOLOMON S., GREENBERG, J. *In the Wake of 9/11: The Psychology of Terror*, American Psychological Association, Washington DC, 2003.
- ROTAR, M. *History of modern cremation in Romania*, Cambridge Scholar Publishing, Newcastle Upon Tyne, 2013.
- SEALE, C., *Constructing Death. The Sociology of dying and bereavement*, Cambridge UP, Cambridge, 1998.
- SOLOMOM, S., GREENBERG, J. PYAZCZYNSKI, Th., *The Worm at the Core. On the Role of Death in Life*, Random House, New York, 2015.
- STAHL, I., VENBRUX, E., "Ritual Multiplication: on Lived Religion in Bucharest", in *Jaarboek voor liturgieonderzoek*, Issue 27, Instituut voor Christelijk Cultureel Erfgoed, Groningen, 2011.
- STAHL, I., "Getting in touch with the saints in contemporary Romania", in *Balkanskaya kartin mira sub specie pyati chelovecheskih shuvstv. Balkanskie chetniya 12. Tezisy i materialyi*, Russian Academy of Sciences, Institute for Slavic Studies, Moscow, 2013.
- STAN, L., TURCESCU, L., *Religion and Politics in Post-Communist Romania*. Oxford University Press, New York, 2007.
- STANTON, H. et al. "The body of knowledge in thanatology: An outline", in *Death Studies*, vol. 41, no. 2, 2017.
- STILLION, J.D., ATTIG, Th. (eds.), *Death, Dying and Bereavement. Contemporary Perspectives, Institutions, and Practices*, Springer Publishing Company, New York, 2015.
- SVENAEUS, F., *The Hermeneutics of Medicine and the Phenomenology of Health: Steps Towards a Philosophy of Medical Practice*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, 2000.

- TACEY, D., *The Spirituality Revolution: The Emergence of Contemporary Spirituality*, Brunner-Routledge, New York, 2004.
- TAYLOR, Ch., *A Secular Age*, Harvard UP, Harvard, 2007.
- TOPLEAN, A., "Crossroads between modern death and the secular sacred", in A. Bremborg, G. Gustafsson, G. Hallonsten (eds.), *Religionssociologi i brytningstider*, Lunds Universitet, Lund, 2009.
- TOPLEAN, A., "Der Tod und das Heilige - Zwischen Geheimnis und Theorie (Teil 1)", in *Gnostika*, 44, 2010.
- TOPLEAN, A., "How Sacred is Secular Death? And just how Secular Can Sacred Death Be? A Theoretical Proposal", in M. Rotar & A. Teodorescu (eds.) *Dying and Death in 18th-21st Century Europe*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle Upon Tyne, 2011.
- TOPLEAN, A., "On Personal Ways of Dying: New Troubles, Old Means", in *Svensk Teologisk Kvartalskrift*, no. 83, 2008.
- TOPLEAN, A., "To resist or to embrace social death?" in Tony Walter & Jana Kralova (eds.), *Social Death. Questioning the Life-Death Boundary*, Routledge, 2016.
- UNGUREANU, C., (ed.), *Religia in democratie. O dilemă a modernității*, Polirom, Iași, 2011.
- VERDERY, K., *National Ideology under Socialism. Identity and Cultural Politics under Ceausescu's Romania*, University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, 1991.
- VERDERY, K., *The Political Lives of the Dead Bodies. Reburial and Postsocialist Change*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press., New York, 1999.
- VLĂSCEANU, L., HÂNCEAN, M.-G., *Modernitatea românească*, Paralela 45, 2014.
- VOAS, D., DAY, A., "Recognizing Secular Christians: Toward an Unexcluded Middle in the Study of Religion", pp. 1-20, in *Association of Religion Data Archives. Guiding Papers Series*, unknown issue and year.
- VOAS, D., "The Rise and Fall of Fuzzy Fidelity in Europe", in *European Sociological Review*, vol. 25, no. 2, 2009.
- VOICU, B., VOICU, M. (eds.), *Valorile românilor 1993-2006*, ed. Institutul European, Iași, 2007.
- WALTER, T., "Communication media and the dead: from the Stone Age to Facebook", in *Mortality*, vol 20, no. 3, 2015.
- WALTER, T., "The Sociology of Death", in *Sociology Compass*, vol. 2, nr. 1, 2008.
- WALTER, T., "Why different countries manage death differently: a comparative analysis of modern urban societies", in *The British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 63, Issue 1, 2012 .
- WITTKOWSKI J., DOKA K. J. NEIMEYER, R. A., VALLERGA, M., "Publication Trends in Thanatology. An Analysis of Leading Journals", in *Death Studies*, vol. 39, no.8, 2015.



## RADU TUDORANCEA

Born in 1976, in Romania

Ph.D, Romanian Academy

Thesis: *Romanian-Greek Relations during the Interwar Decades (1919-1939)*

Senior Researcher II (Historian), Contemporary History, Nicolae Iorga Institute of History, Romanian Academy, Bucharest

### **Grants and scholarships:**

**2001-2002** -The project entitled „*Frameworks of Regional Cooperation in Southeast Europe*”, financed by the Stability Pact in Southeast Europe and National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece, (MA in Southeast European Studies)

**2009-2011**, The research project *Historical Databases. The projection and statistical analysis of a database regarding foreign travellers in Romanian territories, during XIXth Century*”, (Collective project, Member of the research team), financed by CNCS-UEFISCDI Research Project, PNII – IDEI, 2009-2011.

**September-December 2011**, The project entitled *The Issue of Fraternal Support during the Korean War. Case-Study: People’s Republic of Romania*, Short-Term Research Stay (Fall 2011) at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington DC, USA.

Conferences in Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, France, United States of America,  
Austria

Several research papers published in peer-reviewed journals

“Nicolae Balcescu” Prize of the Romanian Academy (2016) for the book:  
*Ipostazele „ajutorului frăţesc”. RPR şi războiul din Coreea 1950-1953*  
[*The Hypostases of „Fraternal Support”. People’s Republic of Romania*  
*and the Korean War 1950-1953*], Editura Eikon, Cluj, 2014.

### **Books**

*The Home Front. War propaganda, attitudes, thoughts and political opinions*  
*during First World War Romania*, Eikon Publishing House, Cluj, 2015

*The Hypostases of „Fraternal Support”. People’s Republic of Romania and the*  
*Korean War 1950-1953*, (Foreword by prof. Kenton Clymer), Eikon Publishing  
House, Cluj, 2014

*Romanian-Greek relations during the interwar decades. Political and economic*  
*dimensions*, Omonia Publishing House, Bucharest, 2011

# POPULATION MOVEMENTS, DISPLACEMENT AND REFUGE DURING WORLD WAR I IN ROMANIA (1916-1918)

## Abstract

This study examines the background, causes and consequences of population movements, the significance and implications of displacement and refuge during World War I in Romania, as well as the socio-demographic factors related to the above-mentioned evolutions. The article investigates the dimension of individual and collective trauma associated with the experience of refuge, the connection between violence and aggression, on one hand, and displacement and refuge (associated with pauperization) on the other hand. The paper also undertakes the way Romanian authorities have dealt with the prolonged issue of refugees, mainly the social and humanitarian dimensions of it.

**Keywords:** *World War I, Romania, Population Movements, Refuge, Displacement, Casualties*

During the last decade, scientific interest dedicated to First World War remained constant, both within Europe and overseas. Historians and other researchers of the worldwide scientific community have agreed that First World War unleashed a paroxysm of violence, aggression and trauma, obviously marking a major radicalisation of warfare. Consequently, major topics of the Great War have been already tackled (to various degrees), focusing mainly on the extent of violence during military confrontations, as well as on the various effects on societies during the war itself, but also during the postwar decades. A huge number of studies, books and articles published during the 20th century (as well as during the first decade of the 21st century), have almost exhausted the topic, at least in Western historiography.

When it comes to Romanian historiography dedicated to First World War, it is worth mentioning that it was dominated, throughout the last decades and particularly during the Communist regime, by research

themes and scientific topics related to the political dispute surrounding Romania's participation into the War, or simply focused on the military confrontations *per se*. Despite such a rather linear trend, after 1990 new research themes and fresh perspectives have been assumed by historians and other specialists, such as those exploring everyday life during wartime, the interaction between war, territory and memory, the social and cultural implications of the war and so on.

However, apart from a few tangential contributions, Romanian historiography comprises no scientific works dedicated to population movements and displacement during First World War, conducted in a multidisciplinary manner, given the historical, demographic, social and cultural implications. It seems astonishing that after more than a century after the outbreak of World War I, no academic article or study has yet been accomplished with regard to the experiences of (Romanian) population movements or individual and collective experiences of displacement and refuge. More recently, that is, during the last years, there has been a new wave of historical analysis (assumed within Romanian historiography) exploring the cultural context of wartime violence, not only on the battlefields, but also in relation to the civilian population obviously affected by the war operations. However, in terms of existing approaches, there is no other paper dealing with the issue of population movements, not even for an extended period of time (for instance, the only book, by Dumitru Șandru,<sup>1</sup> is only covering World War II and the first postwar years. In other words, in Romanian historiography there is no scientific equivalent of the Western volume edited by Sandra Barkhof and Angela K. Smith, dedicated to war and displacement occurring in the 20th century,<sup>2</sup> which is a living expression of Western interest for this topic, even though is referring not only to World War I, but also to World War II, in terms of population movements generated by war.<sup>3</sup>

As for Romanian historiography, although there is no work dedicated to the above mentioned topic, we should mention a few significant scientific contributions referring tangentially to the theme. An important one is the work by Grigore Antipa<sup>4</sup> (elaborated in French), which provides significant information and data on the debut of the population movements given the advance of the German forces, as well as specific data on the demographic evolutions triggered by the German occupation. It cannot be omitted, also, the book by Anibal Stoenescu (former Chief of Police in Bucharest, during wartime occupation of the Romanian capital), which offers significant demographic data, obtained mainly due to his position, during



the occupation.<sup>5</sup> Other contributions belong to Constantin Bacalbașa<sup>6</sup> and Virgiliu Drăghiceanu,<sup>7</sup> whose contribution was, in real terms, a sort of diary, kept by the author during German occupation. Various other pieces of information on the displacement and population movements triggered by the war were included in the work of E.C. Decusară,<sup>8</sup> as well as in the work of Alexandru I. Socec.<sup>9</sup> Of course, other useful source of information is represented by memoirs and various press collections.

The present research sets out to assess the background, causes and consequences of population movements, the social and demographic factors, the dimension of individual and collective trauma associated with the experience of refuge, the studying of the connection between displacement and refuge, on one hand, and violence, associated with fear and pauperization, on the other hand. Given their role during the process, this analysis also implies the studying of the way Romanian authorities have dealt with the serious and prolonged issue of the refugees, mainly the humanitarian dimension of the issue. It is worth mentioning that the present study will focus mostly on civilian displacement, and only tangentially on the military displacement.<sup>10</sup>

Any analysis regarding population movements and displacement during World War I in Romania obviously needs to start by investigating the context that generated such processes, starting from Romania's intervention into World War I and continuing with the specific evolutions leading to the several stages of population movements and refuge.

Romania entered the First World War in August 1916,<sup>11</sup> after two years of hesitations and sinous negotiations with the Entente, being convinced that siding with the Entente against Central Powers would best serve its national interest, despite the personal inclinations and beliefs expressed by the old King Carol I (at the beginning of the War)<sup>12</sup> and despite the non-interventionist or pro-German approach - a significant one, backed by the majority leading members of the Conservative Party. Before the intervention itself, Romanian society was more and more dominated by the interventionist current, which flowed accross party lines and political figures, growing in intensity particularly in universities and intelectual circles accross the country.<sup>13</sup>

During the years before Romania's entry into the War, a plethora of street demonstrations, gatherings and various meetings, held particularly in Bucharest (but not only) have displayed a pro-Entente approach ; all of these demonstrations supported Romania's intervention into the war, and blamed the Government for postponing the final decision to enter the

War.<sup>14</sup> In the end, after negotiating a treaty of alliance with the Entente powers, Romania decided to enter the War, relying on the recognition from the part of the Entente powers (as stipulated by the treaty of August 17, 1916) of the legitimate right of Romania over the province of Transylvania, and over Romanian inhabited territories within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Despite initial successes, soon Romania had to face a series of military defeats, eventually leading to the loss of the capital itself. Thus, by December 1916, after a disastrous military campaign of less than four months, Romania had surrendered approximately two thirds of the national territory to the Central Powers, while its Army shrunk to less than 100 000 troops,<sup>15</sup> out of more than 450 000 soldiers. Consequently, after December 1916, Romania comprised an area of less than 40 000 km<sup>2</sup> (the region of Moldavia), considerably reduced when compared to its previous 138 000 km<sup>2</sup>, and thus overpopulated territory.<sup>16</sup>

When assessing the origins of displacement and refuge, one should take into account three main (and interlinked) dimensions; first of all, the displacement was obviously triggered by the defeat of the Romanian Army and the loss of territory to enemy forces (the Central Powers' advance was quite impressive); the second and equally important factor consisted in the already existing fears in Romanian society, concerning the (expected) behavior of the enemy troops; the third, and probably the key-factor, was the Romanian authorities' decision to move the Administration and remaining Army units from Bucharest and surrounding areas to Iași, in Moldova, in order to continue the fight (and resistance) against enemy invasion. Apart from the military defeat itself, which represented a serious blow for the entire nation, nothing seemed to frighten Romanian society more than the ongoing advancement of the Bulgarian forces on Romanian territory, during the fall of 1916 (the image of the dramatic defeat in the battle of Turtucaia - August 24/September 6, was still fresh in Romanian society) particularly after the crossing of the Danube by the joint German-Bulgarian forces. While Germans were rather perceived in Romanian society as being a *civilized*, well-educated and rigorous people, Bulgarians were seen as a backward and un-educated people, willing to take revenge over Romanians after their defeat by the Romanian forces during the Second Balkan War, when the Romanian Army crossed the Danube, advancing on Bulgarian territory. The Bulgarian resentment over Romania (before and during the First World War) originated from a sense of frustration that profoundly affected Bulgarian society, especially after the territorial losses resulted from the Bucharest Peace Treaty of August 1913,

which was perceived as real national trauma in Bulgaria. The outcome of the Balkan Wars, as well as the Bucharest Peace Treaty of 1913, marked the failure of the Bulgarian national aspirations regarding a *Greater Bulgaria* (*Велика България*), which animated the Bulgarian political and intellectual circles, since the signing of the San Stefano Treaty of March 1878. That could explain, to a great extent, the plethora of Bulgarian abuses, as well as the numerous cases of mistreatment (targeting Romanian civilian population and prisoners of war, as well) during the advancement of Bulgarian forces on Romanian territory, since the late summer and early fall of 1916 campaign. In fact, most of the Romanian refugees had no doubts that not only the Bulgarians, but the Germans and Austrians as well, angered by what they perceived as Romania's treachery, when Romanian Government joined the Entente, would exact revenge.<sup>17</sup>

The many cases of abuses and mistreatment by the Bulgarian forces<sup>18</sup> on Romanian ground, as well as Bulgarian mistreatment of Romanian prisoners of war<sup>19</sup> were reflected in several Romanian contemporary testimonies, some of them published immediately after the war, during the interwar decades. For instance, a Romanian contemporary politician and journalist, Constantin Bacalbaşa, underlines the fact that Bulgarian soldiers attacked Romania and its civilian population with a sort of deadly hatred, but he is also wondering whether the Bulgarian people was really that wild.<sup>20</sup> Probably the most severe description of the Bulgarian behavior on Romanian territory, (and, to some extent, a proof of the fact that Romanian fears regarding a potential Bulgarian vengeance were justified) is the work of G. Rădulescu (written under the pseudonym of Archibald) which is depicting a rather terrifying image of the Bulgarians, by referring to a vast number of murders and rapes committed by the Bulgarian soldiers on Romanian territory (particularly in villages, but not only) that shocked the Romanian civilian population and Romanian society.<sup>21</sup> The atrocious image of the Bulgarians in Romanian society is somehow confirmed by other contemporary witnesses such as Vasile Th. Căncicov, a former member of the Romanian Parliament, who is referring to the consequences of the potential advancement of Bulgarian soldiers on Romanian territory and the occupation of Bucharest:

[...] the invasion will come. I am terrified about the consequences of such an invasion. Can anyone stay sane, when thinking about the prospect of their arrival (Bulgarians-n.n.)? What should we do? What should I do? Should I simply take my wife and child and run away, as many others? And where to go? In Moldova [...].<sup>22</sup>

Another Romanian author, Virgiliu Drăghiceanu, is also referring to the barbarous behavior of the Bulgarian troops in various villages nearby Bucharest (for instance, in the village of Pârlita).<sup>23</sup>

Going back to the displacement and refuge itself, it should be underlined that there were several stages and waves, as well as various size and evolution, strictly connected to the outcome of military operations. First of all, there was a narrow group of some of the Romanian political and economic elite, which decided to flee, heading towards external destinations, most of them shortly after the Romania's entry into the War; however, the extent of the phenomenon is quasiunknown, being impossible to document. As the tragedy of the situation was growing, some of the personalities of that time, such as Constantin Gane, have blamed those who *abandoned their country*, finding refuge for them and for their families far away, in „Norwegian fjords or on the banks of Seine”.<sup>24</sup> It was, without any doubt, the starting point of a moral debate on the guilt of those who stayed in the occupied territory, in sharp contrast with those who decided to flee.

Another wave of refugees was the one that followed the retreating Romanian Army units from the Transylvanian battlefields, after the initial and quite promising Romanian successes over the Austro-Hungarian troops. With the advancement of Central Powers' forces, a number of refugees, members of the local civilian population, decided to join the Romanian Army in retreat, fearing Austro-Hungarian retaliation.

According to some sources, while the local Hungarians and the Transylvanian Saxons have gathered to welcome the Central Powers' forces, the Romanians, and particularly the local priests, teachers and heads of local communities that previously backed Romanian authorities, felt suddenly insecure about their life and future, being afraid of a potential vengeance coming from the Austro-Hungarian forces. Thus, due to panic, many of them, around a few thousands (for instance, there were at least 100 priests, together with their families), decided to follow the retreating Romanian Army.<sup>25</sup>

The total number of Romanian individuals that decided to leave and follow the retreating Romanian Army was quite significant, being evaluated to at least 80 000, out of which around 2000 were reserve officers.<sup>26</sup> The following months, some of the Romanians who decided to stay in Transylvania did face various punishment decisions; some have been arrested, while others have been deported, convicted or even sentenced to death.<sup>27</sup> For instance, according to some data, after the retreat of the

Romanian Army, 293 Romanian individuals from Sibiu county have been arrested, while other 205 (from Făgăraș county), 198 (from Brașov county), 146 (Alba county), 134 (Trei Scaune County), 111 (Tîrnava Mare County) and others, totalling 1734 Romanians, have faced the same punitive actions from Hungarian authorities.<sup>28</sup> As for those Romanian individuals who managed to retreat into Romanian controlled territory, most of them took refuge in various big cities, such the capital city of Bucharest, or the Danubian ports of Brăila and Galați.<sup>29</sup>

In the meantime, another wave of Romanian refugees was triggered by the disastrous outcome of the fights in Dobroudja, where Romanian Army units were dramatically defeated during the battle for Turtucaia; the dramatic loss of Turtucaia (August 24-September 6, 1916) and the advance of Bulgarian forces from the South have jeopardized the outcome of the battles in Dobroudja. The fear within Romanian society concerning the evolutions on the battlefields was augmented by the circumstances of the Turtucaia defeat, leading to a serious shock, due to the fact that it emerged somehow unexpectedly for the Romanian collective mind (still relaying on the memory of the easy success achieved by the Army during the Second Balkan War). Moreover, given the Romanian decision to evacuate several towns, such as Constanța (8/21 October 1916), because of the advancement of Bulgarian forces, the already existing panic grew in intensity, increasing the number of refugees among Romanian civilians. According to some researchers, Romanian population in Dobroudja dropped from 147 042 individuals before the confrontations, to around 87990 individuals, which means a decrease of almost 60 000 individuals (for accuracy, 59052).<sup>30</sup> Later on, with the crossing of the Danube by the German, Bulgarian and Ottoman troops (10/23 November 1916), the rapid advancement of Central Powers's troops on Romanian territory triggered another wave of refugees from Oltenia and Muntenia (Valachia), especially in the countryside, where entire rural communities abandoned their homes heading North, to Bucharest or directly to Moldavia.<sup>31</sup>

Finally, the last and most important wave of Romanian refugees was triggered by the decision (assumed on November 11/24) taken by Romanian authorities to move the Government, the Parliament, foreign diplomatic missions, as well as to withdraw all state institutions to Moldavia, because of the outcome of the military campaign of 1916. The moving of central authorities to Iasi, seemed the best solution for continuing the fight and the resistance, given the situation, especially after the loss of the last battle for Bucharest (the Arges-Neajlov defeat of November 29-December 3,

1916). After the massive refuge of the Romanian administration,<sup>32</sup> the Army was followed by an important contingent of civilians, all of them heading towards Moldavia.

When assessing the refuge itself, one should also consider the categories of refugees as well as the ways of refuge. For instance, the members of Parliament and other Romanian politicians have left Bucharest on special trains, starting with November 13/26, 1916. When the prospect of enemy advancement to Bucharest seemed very plausible, authorities also initiated the moving of Central Administration, Archives and Treasure of the National Bank to Moldavia. The members of the Royal House of Romania also left for Iași, Moldavia, on November 13/26, only 3 days before Bucharest was occupied by the enemy forces of the Central Powers. A few days later, November 17/30, even the Romanian Army Headquarter had to be evacuated, heading from Periș (the outskirts of Bucharest) towards Moldavia, in order to coordinate the military operations from a safe place.<sup>33</sup> Other leading members of Romanian political and economic elite traveled by their own cars or by gig<sup>34</sup> (light and fast two wheeled carriage, pulled by one horse), although they had to face the difficulties of the jammed and overcrowded roads, as well as the heavy autumn rains.

In contrast, the refuge of the *ordinary people* occurred in dramatic and even tragic conditions, due to panic<sup>35</sup> and especially because there was no evacuation plan for the civilian population. It should be mentioned that such a strange approach by the Romanian authorities was not at all singular among the belligerents of the Great War; for instance, similar lack of reactions and/or contradictory orders were given by the French authorities, at the beginning of the German invasion.<sup>36</sup> In many resembling situations, French local civilian population, as well as local authorities, have been deprived of appropriate governmental information, instructions and measures and that led to a certain feeling of abandonment.<sup>37</sup>

As for Romania, in fact, for quite a long time, the authorities have strived to limit the scale of a potential civilian refuge, probably fearing that a massive number of refugees would have impeded the army's movement, while their massive presence in Moldavia would have generated famine and a growing risk of epidemics, due to overcrowding.<sup>38</sup> However, despite the above-mentioned reluctance, there were some weak and inconsistent attempts, by the Romanian authorities, to organize the evacuation of civilians; thus, in order to organize the evacuation, Romanian authorities have prepared four centers in Bucharest, where permits were issued for those wishing to leave the city by train. Those interested had to go to a

particular center (assigned according to home address) and buy a train ticket, in order to get on board the next day.<sup>39</sup> Very soon, Gara de Nord in Bucharest, the main train station, became extremely overcrowded, making an already chaotic situation even worse, as there were tens of thousands of people willing to leave the city and not enough trains.<sup>40</sup> According to an eye-witness, Elena Th. Emandi, many people, especially children, died aboard wagons due to overcrowding and lack of air, and the other passengers had to throw their bodies off the windows during the travel by train to Moldavia.<sup>41</sup>

On the other hand, the individuals willing to leave the capital city of Bucharest placed an unbearable burden on the already overstretched Romanian railway network, as significant troops and military equipment were being evacuated or moved to Moldavia. Vasile Bianu, doctor and former Senator of Romania, has described the ordeal of those inhabitants of Bucharest (and other refugees) trying to leave the city by train, during the last days before the arrival of the Central Powers' forces:

[...] the trains were overcrowded, there were people of all ages sitting even on the roof of the wagons, while others were hanging on the stairs of the wagons or even on the locomotive....a lot of terrible things happened due to overcrowding, some of the passengers have died instantly while others have suffered leg and arm fractures, being crippled for the rest of their lives[....]<sup>42</sup>

The dramatic situation and widespread panic of the civilian population were aggravated by the fact that, due to war related priorities, the trains carrying civilians had to wait, sometimes for several days, for the passing of the trains transporting troops to the frontline or back, on their retreat.<sup>43</sup>

When referring to the refugees, it should be mentioned that they were individuals of all ages, origin and background, all of them being driven by panic and despair. Some families travelled together, while others preferred to only send their children (particularly the daughters) and their loved ones as far away as possible, fearing the enemy forces and/or occupation.<sup>44</sup> As expected, there were major contrasts and discrepancies regarding the refuge itself. For instance, among the first who left the southern cities and particularly the capital city of Bucharest were the politicians and members of the Romanian Parliament, of various political parties; during the refuge to Moldavia, most of them used their personal influence in order to gain several benefits and advantages. In this respect, the most known case was

the one of Alexandru Constantinescu (also known as *Porcu*), minister of Agriculture, who used a 17 -wagon train for the transportation of all of his personal belongings and valuables, from empty barrels, chairs and tables to firewood and even pickles.<sup>45</sup>

Obviously, there was a strong connection between the rush and chaos associated with the preparations for departure of the Romanian politicians and authorities, on one hand, and the rising agitation and fear among the urban and rural (Bucharest and the suburbs were already shelter for tens of thousands of refugees) civilian population, on the other hand.

Defeat on the frontline did not spare the civilians, who had to decide whether to remain under enemy occupation or to flee eastward, towards Moldavia, together with the remaining Romanian Army and Administration. Being overwhelmed by the fear of being terrorized by enemy troops, many of them have quickly decided to leave ; their displacement was basically triggered by the potential punitive behavior of the enemy troops. Consequently, the retreat of Romanian Administration and Army was soon followed by the retreat of a consistant part of civilian population, in an unorganized, even chaotic movement,<sup>46</sup> evoked by various contemporary witnesses. Thus, the civilian population, consisting mostly in the so-called *ordinary people* that decided to leave, have used horses-drawn carts and ox-drawn carriages, for their refuge to Moldavia, while many others – in fact, thousands and thousands of them, had to walk the entire distance of a few hundred kilometers to Iași.

The refugees that travelled in horse-driven carriages were able to save some of their assets, especially food reserves and smaller items, such as work tools, utensils and clothing, but the heaviest assets had to be left behind. Even so, they were among the fortunate ones, when compared to other refugees, that had no other choice but to travel on foot. The refugees who traveled on foot or by ox-driven carriages also had to face harsher difficulties; such a long journey was definitely an ordeal, due to extreme weather conditions, corroborated with the precarious state of the roads, already overcrowded. The way in which Alexandru I.V. Sococ is referring to the ordeal of civilian refuge to Moldavia is more than suggestive:

[...]...Until they reached Chitila, they have walked cheerfully, making jokes, laughing...at Ploiești, after a 60 km walk under the freezing rain, the fatigue has overcome them ....throughout the devastated villages of Moldavia they couldn't find food, nor shelters...after Focșani, there were already hundreds of dead bodies...later on, at Huși only arrived 47 children, out of a convoy of 2000 [...].<sup>47</sup>



When it comes to civilian refuge, a particular case is the one of the boy scouts of Romania (although a youth organisation, boy scouts were initiated in a sort of pre-military training, so to some extent, they were more than just ordinary civilians). After Romania's entry into the World War I, Romanian boy scouts were involved in various activities, from assisting the Romanian medical staff in hospitals,<sup>48</sup> to offering support in various institutions, such as police and post offices and not only. However, probably the most important activity assigned to Romania's scouts was the one related to the large number of enemy air raids that the capital city of Bucharest had to face, particularly during the first weeks<sup>49</sup> after Romania's entry into the war. Thus, due to the increasing number of German air raids over Bucharest, the boy scouts - especially the students, were assigned (during night watches) various observation posts within the capital city of Romania, and they were supposed to alert the authorities and civilian population about the imminence of an enemy air threat (plane and Zeppelin air raids). Queen Marie of Romania herself, mentioned that the boy scouts were using the same signals as the Romanian police officers, in order to alarm the civilian population to find an appropriate shelter, as soon as possible.<sup>50</sup> But after the disastrous Romanian military campaign of 1916, the Association of Romania's Scouts decided (November 1916) to ask its members to seek refuge into Moldavia. The main reason for such a hasty decision had to do with the bravery the boy scouts have shown during the battle for Targu Jiu; various rumours made the Romanian authorities believe that enemy would take revenge, consequently, Romanian General Staff ordered young men aged 15-19 to follow the rest of Romanian army<sup>51</sup> in exile, for avoiding retaliation and the Association of Romania's Scouts had to comply. As a consequence, some of the teenagers managed to get on trains,<sup>52</sup> but most of them had to walk all the way (or at least a part of it) to Moldavia. Among the written accounts of the episode, we should mention the one delivered by Sabina Cantacuzino: „[...] *Scouts aged from 12 to 17 were sent on their way on foot due to fear of German concentration camps even though they were still in tender childhood; many of them died on the way because of the effort, or influenza, or fatigue [...]*”.<sup>53</sup> The most detailed written account of the Romanian Scout's refuge to Moldavia is the one offered by Alexandru Daia, a boy-scout himself, one of the refugees. In his main work, Daia described the hasty retreat of the boy scouts, that started on November 13, as well as the challenging (and *healthy endeavour*) experience of travelling the 56 kilometers distance from Bucharest to Ploiești, on foot,

in more than two days, under heavy autumn rain.<sup>54</sup> In Moldavia, the boy-scouts, numbering around 4000 members, were located in several colonies, such as Solești (Vaslui), or Sculeni (Iași), or Bâlca (Bacău), which also served as schools.<sup>55</sup>

When assessing the scale of refuge, it should be mentioned that all existing data seem contradictory in terms of number and structure of displaced population. In the particular case of those who left Bucharest, according to some authors,<sup>56</sup> around 22% of the capital's population took refuge to Moldavia, out of almost 396 000 - a considerable number, but still much less than other evaluations, such as the one made by the US diplomat Charles J. Vopicka, the only remaining foreign diplomat in Bucharest, during the WWI occupation, who argued that only 150 000 individuals remained in Bucharest, after December 1916, as many of the inhabitants left the city due to widespread panic.<sup>57</sup>

Other foreign sources refer to slightly higher figures; thus, a German census, conducted during the occupation, on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 1917, reported 308 987 inhabitants<sup>58</sup> in Bucharest, although the document should probably not be regarded as being accurate, given the conditions in which the census took place. According to the same document, Romanian population across the occupied territory numbered 3 438 000 inhabitants (meaning that around 800 000 individuals were among the refugees or enlisted soldiers. Similar information was offered by Virgiliu N. Drăghiceanu, Secretary of the Romanian National Commission for the Historical Monuments and corresponding member of the Romanian Academy,<sup>59</sup> while Constantin Kirițescu, whose work dedicated to Romania's participation in the First World War, is probably the most accurate, mentioned that not more than 10% of the entire population (excepting the military) of Bucharest left for Moldavia.<sup>60</sup>

Moreover, when it comes to population data referring to Moldavia and/or Iași, there were even more discrepancies. The new (and provisional) capital city of Romania- Iași, attracted many *ordinary* refugees, particularly because it was considered as being much safer than other regions of Moldavia, since the all Romanian authorities (Government, Parliament, Army, Administration) also took refuge in Iași. The evaluations vary between 300 000 refugees (as suggested by Charles J. Vopicka<sup>61</sup>) to 510 000 individuals (580 000, when including the previous 70 000 inhabitants of Iași), as mentioned by Vasile Bianu,<sup>62</sup> while according to other evaluations, the city of Iași sheltered, at the beginning of 1917, some 400 000 to 450 000 individuals, without considering the existing

Romanian troops and the other Entente forces located in the area.<sup>63</sup> The highest number of refugees (living in Iasi) is mentioned by Ethel Greening Pantazzi, the Canadian wife of Vasile Pantazzi (captain of Galatzi port) in her work entitled *Roumania in Light & Shadow* (1909-1919), first published in 1921. The above-mentioned author is mentioning the existence of more than a million inhabitants of Iasi, in December 1916, out of which only around 70 000 individuals were previous inhabitants of the city,<sup>64</sup> although most likely these numbers are exaggerated, if not completely inaccurate.

Other foreign accounts (such as the one prepared in 1920 by the *Geographical Section of the Naval Intelligence Division of Great Britain*), which also include the remaining Romanian army and Russian units and extend the evaluation to the entire region of Moldavia, refer to the existence of much more than a million refugees at the end of 1916.<sup>65</sup> Despite the contradictory data, there was an obvious increase in terms of population (it probably more than tripled) if we consider the fact that, before the war, Iasi only had between 65 000<sup>66</sup> to 75 000 inhabitants. For instance, according to some data, more than 45 000 refugees,<sup>67</sup> originating from Dobroudja alone (most of them still horrified by the brutality of Bulgarian soldiers), were heading to various regions of Moldavia, including Iași. Other cities from Moldavia doubled their population, during the years of Romanian refuge. For instance, the population of Galați had almost doubled at the end of 1916, reaching 130 000 inhabitants,<sup>68</sup> while a small town such as Vaslui, numbering only around 10 000 individuals during peace time, was also significantly overcrowded.<sup>69</sup> Due to the rather contradictory various data, it is difficult to assess the total size of the Romanian displacement, but most likely, by corroborating existing information, there were between 500 000 (at least) to 800 000 refugees in Moldavia, at the end of 1916, meaning that almost  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the entire population of Romania took refuge in Moldavia and other foreign destinations, during the First World War. When comparing to the refuge and displacement that occurred in other countries and regions of the First World War Europe, we should mention, for instance, the first War refugees, meaning the one million Belgian refugees who fled from Antwerp and other Belgian cities to Holland (while other 200 000 Belgian refugees fled to France). On the other hand, by mid July, 1915, the total number of internally displaced French refugees stood at 735 000 individuals,<sup>70</sup> while in the case of Serbia, more than half a million civilians fled during the retreat of the remnants of Serbian forces, fearing the anticipated consequences of Bulgarian and Austro-Hungarian occupation, so that the scale of Serbian displacement affected one-third

of Serbia's population.<sup>71</sup> In the Russian Empire, the scale of civilian displacement reached three million in 1915 and climbed to approximately seven million, by 1917.<sup>72</sup>

The trauma represented by the forced abandonment of Bucharest, the occupation of the capital and the advance of German forces towards Siret, which made a invasion of Moldavia plausible, led to even more concern. For the small group of rich refugees, Moldavia and Iasi were only a temporary place to stay, as many of them were already considering a new refuge to the south of Russia, to the Black Sea port of Odessa or even to Paris.<sup>73</sup> In fact, according to an archival document, issued by the Minister of Interior, Romanian authorities were seriously taking into account the bleak hypothesis of another refuge, in Russia. The above -mentioned document, entitled *Certificate (Certificat)*, a bilingual (Romanian-Russian) unfilled printed page, certified the identity and nationality of its holder, offering unrestricted passage into Russia, due to „military reasons, according to the aggrement with the Russian Government”.<sup>74</sup> In fact, the potential evacuation of the Romanian Administration and army into Russia was a Russian initiative, being considered by the Russian Army Headquarter in order to provide a sort of *unimpeded freedom of action* for the Russian troops in Moldavia. General Henri Berthelot, Head of the French Military Mission in Romania, had opposed the Russian proposal, considering such an approach (especially the part regarding the evacuation on Romanian Army) as a sort of abandonment of Moldavia to Russian influence and control.<sup>75</sup> However, a Romanian official delegation that travelled to Petrograd in January 1917, led by Ion I.C. Brătianu, did engage into discussions with members of the Russian Imperial House (including with Tsar Nicholas II) and other officials (such as general Mihail Beliaev, Head of the Russian Military Mission in Romania), debating, among other things, the issue of a potential evacuation and refuge into Russia.<sup>76</sup> Later on, due to rather dramatic existing circumstances, some members of Romanian political elite have decided to seek exile into Russia, and an article published in Kishinev, on January 2/15, 1917, was mentioning the passage through the Razdelnaia railway station of a *first special train* (coming from Romania), transporting some of the Romanian politicians and their families.<sup>77</sup> In fact, other sources have confirmed that since the end of December 1916, Romanian authorities were seriously taking into consideration a potential evacuation into Russia and another consistent proof backing that theory is the fact that immediately after the New Year's Eve (1916-1917), a special commission was created by the Romanian

authorities, with the primary task of searching and evaluating the best potential destinations of refuge in the South of Russia (for the Royal House of Romania, members of the Government and other Romanian authorities).<sup>78</sup> Comandor Vasile Pantazzi was among the members of the above -mentioned commission, an entity created in great haste mainly because things were going „so bad on the frontline”.<sup>79</sup> According to the existing accounts, the commission had spent almost an entire month on Russian soil, and returned in Moldavia after being convinced that the best solution (meaning potential refuge destinations) would have been Kherson and Odessa, due to their convenient proximity to Moldavia.<sup>80</sup> Moreover, the same testimony is mentioning the fact that in March 1917, Odessa was already sheltering a significant Romanian community of refugees, as well as the entire Romanian Commercial Navy, including the Royal Yacht *Ștefan cel Mare*.<sup>81</sup> Even more interesting seem to be the fact that, by the summer of 1917, an appropriate house in Odessa had been reserved for the entire Romanian Royal family, while by August 1917, many influential Romanian politicians, deputies and senators such as Take Ionescu and Constantin I. Angelescu (former Minister of Public Works in the previous Romanian government and future Romanian diplomatic representative in the USA) were also seen in Odessa.<sup>82</sup>

There are several other eye-witness accounts on the re-start of the evacuation procedures, regarding Romanian state institutions, senators and deputies, hospitals and banks, which were sent to Russia, in order to be salvaged and protected, during the spring and summer of 1917.<sup>83</sup> According to various accounts, in Russia, both Odessa and Kherson have become the new shelter for thousands of Romanian refugees, from ordinary civilians to politicians, officers and soldiers, members of various supply services or medical staff.<sup>84</sup> Many wounded soldiers and other sick refugees, evacuated from Romania, have been treated in Romanian hospitals temporarily located in Odessa, since the summer of 1917, until they were healed and returned to Moldavia, when the situation in Moldavia stabilized.<sup>85</sup> However, even the news of the Romanian victory over the German troops at Marășești (July 24/August, 6 - August 21/September, 3, 1917) reached the Romanian community of refugees existing in Odessa with considerable delay, on the arrival of several trains transporting Romanian wounded soldiers.<sup>86</sup>

Previously, Romanian authorities have also considered an evacuation of the boyscouts, from Moldavia to Russia; significant preparations have been made in this respect. Thus, according to a letter by Gheorghe

Munteanu Murgoci, one of the leaders of the Great Legion of Romanian Scouts (after Crown Prince Carol joined the General Quarter of the Army, at the beginning of the 1916 military campaign), addressed to C.I. Istrati, on April 2, 1917, it seems that the Romanian Government was seriously relying on Russian authorities for a potential evacuation of the Romanian boy scouts into Russia.<sup>87</sup> As mentioned in the document, during the early Spring of 1917, Russian authorities were already fully prepared for receiving and sheltering around 4000 Romanian boy scouts, in various locations, such as: 250 boy scouts in Ekaterinoslav; 600 in Hortița; 200 in Mirovaia; 750 in Samoilovka; 100 in Novomoskovsk; 100 in Rozovfca; 500 in Simferopol; 500 in Bakhcisaray, Crimea; and other 1000 to Rostov, Don).<sup>88</sup> The Romanian boy scouts were supposed to arrive to the above-mentioned destinations by train (around 1000 boy scouts per train), and the costs of the entire operation (transportation and sheltering on Russian territory) were covered, through donations, by various Russian entities, such as the Union of Russian Cities (4200 roubles for the journey between Sculeni and Bălți; 4000 roubles for food (warm food), while the Tsar Nicholas II also donated 20000 roubles.<sup>89</sup> It should be mentioned that the exact number of the Romanian boy scouts that were sent to Russia is unknown, as there is no available official data referring to such a presence. However, despite the lack of official data regarding the *per se* evacuation of Romanian boy scouts in Russia, according to some accounts, 12500 Romanian scouts, together with their leaders, have crossed the Russian frontiers during the first weeks of January 1917, on their way to various destinations on Russian territory.<sup>90</sup>

Regardless of the extent of the boy scouts refuge into Russia, it should be mentioned that after the First World War, the boy scouts refuge was often used by various authors and Romanian political circles in order to underline the rather erroneous approach of the wartime Romanian authorities, concerning the evacuation or relocation of the Romanian boy scouts, from Bucharest (and the rest of the occupied territory) to Moldavia and not only. Thus, one of the harshest critics of such an approach belongs to Alexandru Soccec, who referred to the 500 (Romanian) young men, sent to Russia by Romanian authorities, to return only as 500 death certificates.<sup>91</sup>

Probably one of the least known issues regarding a future evacuation (and another type of refuge) from the overcrowded region of Moldavia was the one occurring in April 1918. We refer to an initiative by Take Ionescu, a leading Romanian pro-Entente politician, who addressed the Romanian

Government and requested a special train for travelling abroad (to Paris), in order to initiate various lobby actions for Romania, in France. Everything happened during a complex and complicated regional context, after the signing of the Armistice with the Central Powers (Focsani, December 1917) and the signing of the preliminary Peace Treaty of Buftea (February 20/March 5, 1918). Although the above- mentioned train, which could be referred to as an *easy way out*, was meant for Take Ionescu and for a small group of diplomats, many other persons (particularly politicians and members of the economic elite) suddenly became interested. There were several versions of the passenger list and all the versions were influenced by various official letters sent by different high- ranking officials and influential individuals, all of them requesting approval for certain names.<sup>92</sup> For instance, in a letter addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, C.C. Arion, on April 14, 1918, Ion Mitilineu<sup>93</sup> requested approval that Colonel Radu Rosetti be included on the passenger list.<sup>94</sup> Even more interesting seem to be another letter addressed, on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 1918, to Prime Minister Marghiloman, concerning a former member of the Ion I.C. Brătianu Government, and future outstanding Romanian diplomat, Nicolae Titulescu,<sup>95</sup> who also required to be included (with his wife, as well) on the passenger list of the Take Ionescu train.<sup>96</sup> It is worth mentioning that one of the last version of the list of passengers included 119 individuals, such as Take Ionescu, Ion Cantacuzino, Prince Șerban Cantacuzino, Nicolae Titulescu, Petre Coandă, Constantin Capșa, Lascăr L. Catargi, Marius Nasta, Frederic Nanu, Alexandru Duiliu Zamfirescu, Radu R. Rosetti, and many others (among the 119 names, there were also various foreign diplomatic representatives, such as Fasciotti –Italy, Strihou-Belgium, Marincovici-Serbia).<sup>97</sup>

Returning to the issue of Moldavian refuge, it is worth mentioning that life in Iași, the wartime capital of Romania, was influenced by several factors, such as overpopulation, lack of resources, a precarious hygiene that led to various epidemics and last, but not least, the extreme weather conditions, particularly during the winter 1916-1917. Probably one of the most accurate and detailed description of the disastrous situation of the first months of refuge in Moldavia and particularly in Iași is the one offered by Constantin Argetoianu, a leading member of the Conservative Party, during the first decades of the 20th century. In his main work, Argetoianu underlines the ordeal faced by the tens of thousands of refugees, during their staying in the new capital, life in wartime Iași as well as the dramatic effects of the widespread typhus.<sup>98</sup> Apart from the details of the wartime

life in the new capital of Romania, as witnessed by C. Argetoianu, much more important is the (harsh) observation made by the author, according to which the refugees were considered by the local population of Iași as a sort of calamity, most likely because their arrival in Moldavia (and in Iași) took the form of an invasion and was perceived as such by the local inhabitants of Iași.<sup>99</sup> When assessing the situation of other First World War refugees, it becomes obvious that such a perception of the local population was not at all singular or surprising. For instance, many official authorities and local population in Russian cities and villages have expressed serious misgivings about the burden they were expected to shoulder (referring to Russian refugees).<sup>100</sup>

Due to overpopulation, especially during the first weeks of the refuge, most of the *ordinary* people were wandering and living on the streets of the main cities of Moldavia, particularly in Iași, where hundreds of refugees were visiting the police stations<sup>101</sup> and city offices, in order to ask for a shelter. The first solutions to tackle the issue of overpopulation, as envisaged by the already overwhelmed Romanian authorities, seemed to be the improvised shelters of the Red Cross, the using of Army tents, the sheltering in disused train wagons, as well as the refugee shelters hosted by several institutions, such as the Anatomy Institute in Iași, high-schools, concert halls and other available spaces; among the most unfortunate individuals, there were the peasants and particularly the workers from various factories (of Bucharest, Ploiești and Craiova).<sup>102</sup>

The acute housing shortage affected even the members of the Romanian economic and political elite, as many of the residential buildings of Iași were needed for the Romanian Administration, Army<sup>103</sup> and other institutions that also took refuge in Moldavia. As a consequence, the rent had gone too high even for refugees with financial means, while the prices for those willing to buy appropriate proprieties in Iași were making the few available houses and villas almost unaffordable. For instance, one of the richest family in Romania, Bragadiru, was able to buy a property in Iași, for the huge and impressing price of 125 000 lei- gold.<sup>104</sup> Not surprisingly, even the Queen Marie of Romania herself had to spend almost two weeks in a train, close to Iași, waiting for appropriate accommodation.<sup>105</sup>

For the refugees, the lack of food and financial resources was another severe problem, as a significant part of them fled their homes and most of their belongings were lost, because they couldn't carry them when they left. The lack of resources was aggravated by the central and local authorities, which were obviously overwhelmed by the scale of the refuge,



as well as by the difficult issues regarding the War confrontations that needed to be solved first. To make things even worse, the extreme weather conditions, during the bitter cold winter of 1916-1917, with temperatures dropping to -25 or even - 30 degrees C,<sup>106</sup> have exacerbated the negative effects of war, overpopulation and famine. The extent of famine across Moldavia, particularly at the end of 1916 and beginning of 1917, was also mentioned in a French document, a letter by General Henri Berthelot, Head of the French Military Mission in Romania, addressed to St-Aulaire, a French diplomatic representative in Romania. In the above - mentioned document, Berthelot underlined the fact that Romania was very close to face extinction due to famine, in case the promised minimum 35 Russian (train) wagons of supplies (which were supposed to be delivered daily), would not have been delivered.<sup>107</sup> The situation was aggravated by the fact that a significant part of Romanian supplies, in fact, 43479 wagons of 10 tons each, have been (previously) *temporarily borrowed* or sold to Russian Government.<sup>108</sup>

Another severe burden was the typhus epidemic, which began to spread in December 1916 and continued to spread, reaching its climax during the spring of 1917. Typhus was almost extinguished during the summer of 1917, after causing almost half a million deaths,<sup>109</sup> although, according to other sources, there have been around 300 000 deaths during the winter 1916-1917, meaning 400-500 deaths daily.<sup>110</sup> Widespread typhus was, in fact, another consequence of overcrowding, which was also reflected in hospitals across Iași, as there were at least 11 000 wounded individuals, while the total capacity of all the hospitals in the new (wartime) capital of Romania consisted in only 5000 beds.<sup>111</sup> All the above- mentioned disastrous circumstances were influencing the chances of survival among the refugees (and not only), as the terrible shortage of food, wood and other main supplies could not be solved, or (at least) diminished by the Government, until the late summer-early autumn of 1917.

Due to dramatic situation across Moldavia, especially during the first months of the refugeedom, urgent relief and support actions were needed; thus, various relief actions were initiated by the Romanian Government, as well as by Romanian Red Cross, the foreign diplomatic missions in Romania and last, but not least, by voluntary organisations, from Romania and from abroad. The main entity, established in January 1917 and located in Iași, on Gheorghe Asachi Street (with several branches in other Romanian cities, across Moldavia), was the Special Committee for the Refugees. Although the *Special Committee for the Refugees* benefited

from Government financial backing, it also relied on various donations from the Romanian Red Cross and other internal and external entities, local population and so on.

Apart from the governmental financial support, equally important proved to be the various fund- raising campaigns, initiated and conducted both in Romania (Moldavia) and abroad (particularly in France). Public fund- raising campaigns were mostly initiated by the Romanian Red Cross Society and by Royal House of Romania, which also offered direct financial aid and various donations to the refugees. For instance, in December (1916) alone, the Royal House of Romania donated to the Municipality of Iasi the sum of 120000 lei to be distributed to refugees, on the occasion of Christmas. In fact, during the two years of refuge in Moldavia, the Royal House of Romania donated to the refugees, orphans and wounded soldiers more than 3 000 000 lei.<sup>112</sup> Queen Marie herself had long been involved in various charity actions, and her visits to hospitals and orphanages in Iasi, during the years of refugeedom have been reflected in various contemporary newspapers and postwar studies and articles, as well as in memoirs.<sup>113</sup>

As mentioned before, fund- raising campaigns were also organized abroad, in various capitals of the allied countries (Entente member states), particularly in France (Paris). For instance, such a fund raising campaign was organized in February-March 1917 by the Romanian Legation in Paris and by a *Special Committee of Romanian Red Cross*, under the patronage of Queen Marie of Romania, in order to help Romanian refugees and soldiers. At the end of the campaign, the Romanian Legation had offered diplomas and awards to main (foreign) donors and contributors.<sup>114</sup> Similar fund -raising campaigns have been organized in other places, including Bessarabia (Kishinev); for instance, at the end of 1917, Fondul Refugiaților (*The Refugee Relief Fund*) managed to raise through donations and other local contributions, the significant sum of 760 rubles in only a few days.<sup>115</sup>

In Romania (more exactly in Moldavia, the only territory that remained under Romanian Administration), the main fund -raising campaigns were initiated and conducted by the Romanian Red Cross Society whose significant efforts were limited by the lack of personnel and lack of appropriate financial resources, in order to match the scale of humanitarian needs. According to reliable sources, apart from fund- raising, or as a result of such campaigns, Romanian Red Cross Society was able to distribute to refugees and wounded people in Moldavia, during the war years, through its own canteens, over 10 million meals,<sup>116</sup> meaning that

100 000 refugees and wounded people have received around 100 meals throughout the entire war period, rather a modest number, considering the scale of suffering the wartime years and refuge have brought into the lives of millions of ordinary people. It should be also mentioned that many volunteers have joined the Romanian Red Cross, including underage volunteers (children); in their case, in order to join the Red Cross, they needed parental consent documents (letters). For most of them, the rationale behind joining the Red Cross had to do with patriotism and national ideals, although it is worth mentioning that all the Red Cross volunteers (as well as the entire Red Cross personnel) were receiving free meals and appropriate shelters, as well as medical assistance, if needed. That is probably why many parents have written parental consent letters (for their underage children of 16 to 18 years old, willing to join the Red Cross<sup>117</sup> during the wartime refuge into Moldavia), thus protecting them from being exposed to famine and wartime suffering.<sup>118</sup> Apart from the fund-raising campaigns, the Romanian Red Cross Society activated (in terms of treating the sick and injured individuals) both in the occupied territory (26 Red Cross hospitals, totaling 6895 beds) and Moldavia (29 Red Cross hospitals, and many other field hospitals).<sup>119</sup>

Another lesser known dimension of the Moldavian refuge is the one related to the growing number of the War orphans. Initially, the War orphans have been assigned to various locations in Moldavia, under the umbrella of „Regina Maria” Society, backed by the Ministry of Education, but later on, they were sheltered by the Societatea Ortodoxă Națională a Femeilor Române – Romanian Women’s National Orthodox Society („Protection of Orphans” Section), an entity created in 1910.<sup>120</sup> The *War Orphans Section* of the above mentioned entity was established on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 1917, being coordinated by Princess Olga M. Sturdza (President).<sup>121</sup> According to an official report, towards the end of 1917 (in autumn), there were 16 152 war orphans sheltered in orphanages and hospitals, across Moldavia (Romanian administration only),<sup>122</sup> a significant number of children that needed care and protection during a dramatic wartime period.

When taking into consideration a comparative approach regarding the way other State authorities have dealt with the issue of the refugees, the casestudy of France is probably the most relevant, due to the scale of population movements and displacement. Such an evaluation underlines the fact that, despite some significant actions, the scale of (Romanian) state involvement in the matter of improving the status of the Romanian refugees

was rather poor, when compared to other Governments involved in the war. The French Government, for instance, had initiated a plethora of actions in order to back the refugees, and one of the most important entity proved to be the *Office de Renseignements pour les familles dispersées*.<sup>123</sup>

An explanation for that could be the dramatic situation faced by Romania at that time, after losing two thirds of the national territory to Central Powers (which could have jeopardised its very existence), due to the disastrous campaign of 1916.

A key-factor for the relief actions conducted during the refuge in Moldavia, was related to Foreign Medical Relief Missions, located in Moldavia. The most important one was Berthelot Mission-French Mission (October 1916-February 1918), which apart from its main military purpose, also had a Medical Section. The French Mission comprised 289 officers, 88 doctors and pharmacists, 37 airplane pilots and observers, 1.150 inferior ranks and soldiers.<sup>124</sup> Among the French doctors and nurses of the French medical section of the Berthelot Mission, Jean Clunet and three other colleagues have paid the ultimate price, while treating the widespread exanthematic typhus, during the wartime refuge in Moldavia.<sup>125</sup> Romania was also assisted by a British Military Mission, including a medical section, (from 1916-until 1919), under the umbrella of British Red Cross. However, among the most effective foreign medical mission was the one of the Scottish Women's Hospitals in Romania, medical units consisting of 76 doctors, nurses, pharmacists, chefs and ambulance drivers, co-ordinated by Dr. Elsie Inglis, which activated on Romanian soil between September 1916 and October 1917.<sup>126</sup>

A US Red Cross Medical Mission also activated in Romania, since 1917, after US entered the War on April 6, 1917. The aim of the US mission, coordinated by colonel Henry Anderson, was to initiate and conduct care and relief actions dedicated to wounded individuals and refugees. The US Red Cross Mission in Romania<sup>127</sup> coordinated two main hospitals in Moldavia, in Iasi (for civilians) and the second one in Roman (for the military). A second US Red Cross Mission after the war, in 1919,<sup>128</sup> and backed the relief efforts conducted by the Romania authorities, by providing humanitarian aid.

When it comes to return and resettlement of the former refugees into their initial homes, it is worth mentioning that there were two major waves, which were strictly related to the outcome of the war. Thus, a first wave consisted in various individuals and members of Romanian Administration which returned to the occupied territory, after the signing

of the Buftea Treaty on May 7, 1918 (the preliminary treaty was signed on March 5/18, 1918).

According to numerous archival sources, after the signing of the Buftea Treaty, and particularly since June-July 1918, Romanian authorities located in Moldavia have sent thousands of such individuals back in the occupied territory (with German approval), by using pre-approved list of Romanian citizens (and their permit numbers) that were traveling back (most of them, together with their own families) to various destinations, but particularly to big cities, such as Bucharest.<sup>129</sup> There were also telegrams referring only to individual cases, all of them being issued by the „Serviciul Evacuărilor Iași” (The Evacuation Service-Iasi), and bearing the names of the individuals arriving in the occupied territory, as well as their permit numbers (Ausweis).<sup>130</sup> Their arrival could be regarded, also, at least to some extent, as a sort of benevolent gesture made by the German Administration, after the signing of the Bucharest Peace treaty (as the Treaty provisions were disastrous for the Romanian side). A second wave, the biggest one, was triggered by the end of War, and occurred particularly after the return of the Romanian Royal family to Bucharest (November 18/December 1, 1918), although most of the (surviving) ordinary refugees have returned to their initial homes during the spring and summer of 1919.

It is worth mentioning that the return of the Romanian refugees amplified the already existing moral debate regarding those who left and those who stayed in the occupied territory, a moral debate that started almost immediately after the refuge to Moldavia. During the years of refuge, Romanian society had to deal with an increasing animosity between those who remained in the occupied territory (accused of being cowards or even collaborators of the Central Powers forces) and those who left, seeking refuge to Moldavia.<sup>131</sup> In fact, for those who remained in the occupied territory, the *per se* fact that they did not leave during the massive refuge of the Romanian administration and civilians, did not mean they were less patriotic than the others. As a matter of fact, in many cases, they were either too old, too young, or they just could not abandon their houses, a fact which has to do with human nature, to a certain extent. In other cases, the potential refugees could not find the appropriate vehicles and could not just walk the significant distance to Iasi (several hundred kilometers), or to other destinations in Moldavia, being thus forced to remain in the occupied territory. When comparing the living conditions, both in the occupied territory and in Moldavia, the situation was more or less the same, with every day life being dominated by the strive for survival; however,

those who left had, at least, the advantage of living as free individuals, in various regions of Moldavia, under Romanian administration.

Among the Romanian intellectuals who decided to remain in the occupied territory, there were some individuals who favored the Central Powers approach (meaning an alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary, against Russia) for achieving the national ideals; they were not less patriotic, but, in many cases, they did have a German background, at least in terms of academic education, and were perceiving the Russian Empire as the main menace for Romania. Of course, there were several cases of *collaborationism* among those who stayed in the occupied territory, but others have been unfairly accused of being collaborators.<sup>132</sup>

## Conclusions

Romania had faced, during the First World War, a massive displacement and refugeedom, triggered by the disastrous outcome of the military operations of the 1916 campaign. As the military situation in Romania began to disintegrate in late October - early November 1916, significant groups of Romanian civilians have decided to move to safer areas, in order to protect themselves and their families.

When evaluating the background of the refuge itself, it should be underlined that, apart from the fact that displacement was obviously triggered by the Romanian military defeat and the loss of territory to enemy forces (the Central Powers' advance was quite impressive), there were also other contributing factors, equally important. We refer to the already existing fears in Romanian society, concerning the (expected) behavior of the enemy troops (Bulgarian and German) towards the civilian population and also to another key-factor, the Romanian authorities' decision to move the Administration and remaining Army units from Bucharest and surrounding areas to Iași, in Moldova, in order to continue the fight (and resistance) against enemy invasion. The military defeat itself (a serious blow for the entire nation), and implicitly the loss of Romanian territory to enemy forces, associated with fear, provided the initial basis for the displacement of civilians.

During the various waves of the refugeedom and particularly during the last one, triggered by the retreating Romanian Administration into Moldavia, the size of civilian displacement and refuge took the Romanian authorities by surprise. While the Administration and Army have been

somehow evacuated to Moldavia, the civilian refuge followed a rather chaotic and unorganized path, due to poor and even reluctant involvement of the Romanian authorities. The refugeedom itself exhibited sharp discrepancies among the refugees, as the politicians, high-ranking officials and influential individuals have evacuated themselves by using special trains and private cars, while the boy scouts, peasants and other *ordinary people* have travelled on horse-driven carriages or even on foot. Even more difficult proved to be the years of exile in Moldavia, considering the increasing overpopulation (most of the *ordinary people* were wandering and living on the streets of the main cities of Moldavia), the lack of food and financial resources (refugees fled their homes and most of their belongings were lost), the extreme weather conditions and last, but not least, the widespread typhus (which generated a huge loss of human lives).

The general lack of resources was aggravated by the central and local authorities, which were obviously overwhelmed by the scale of the refuge, as well as by the difficult issues regarding War confrontations that needed to be solved first.

Due to the tremendous size and intensity of the refugeedom, there was a massive impact of the large number of refugees on social and economic life in the *host communities*, which was perceived by various Romanian and observers. As expected, the large number of refugees significantly affected the demographic structure of the Moldavian cities and village, at least for a few years. Also, in connection to the outcome of the war confrontations, the existing refugees had to face the prospects of a continuous refuge, or even of *another* refuge (into various other external destinations, particularly in Russia).

Despite the significant efforts made by the bureaucratic administration in Moldavia and particularly in Iasi, the scale of (Romanian) State involvement in the matter of sheltering and supporting the refugees was limited by the financial and logistical constraints faced by Romania at that time, after losing almost two thirds of the national territory to Central Powers. However, consistent support was offered by the Red Cross Society, by private and semi-official organizations and entities, as well as by foreign medical missions activating in Romania, especially in terms of fund-raising and treating or sheltering the refugees.

It should be also mentioned that refugeedom, although a traumatic experience, was at the same time a prolonged opportunity to increase a certain sense of *national cohesion and solidarity* among the citizens, in front of the continuous external danger. Helping and supporting each other

during the wartime years was not only a manifestation of humanitarian sentiments and relief efforts, but also another step taken by various individuals and entities in order to back the war effort and the final victory of the country over the Central Powers forces.

The refugeedom generated also a moral debate regarding those who left and those who stayed in the occupied territory, a debate that started almost immediately after the beginning of the refuge to Moldavia. In fact, even throughout the interwar decades, Romanian society witnessed an increasing animosity and resentment between those who left the occupied territory seeking temporary refuge to Moldavia, as opposed to those who decided to stay in the occupied territory, many of them being openly accused of *collaborationism* (especially those holding various official positions in the occupied territory). Regardless of the various individual and collective wartime experiences, the refugeedom left physical and psychological scars on the entire (surviving) population, on the Romanian society itself.



## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Dumitru Șandru, *Population Movements in Romania (1940-1948)*, Editura Enciclopedică, Bucharest, 2003.
- <sup>2</sup> See Sandra Barkhof and Angela K. Smith, *War and Displacement in the XX Century: Global Conflicts*, Routledge Studies in Modern History, New York, 2014.
- <sup>3</sup> Even the word itself (refugee) gained its contemporary meaning at the end of 1914, being introduced as such in a title of a Bulletin (entitled *Bulletin des réfugiés meusiens*). See Francois Roth, *Les réfugiés et évacués de l'espace lorrain durant la première guerre mondiale mondiale*, in Olivier Forcade, Philippe Nivet (eds), *Les réfugiés en Europe du XVIe au XXe Siècle*, Nouveau Monde editions, Paris, 2008, p. 167.
- <sup>4</sup> See Grigore Antipa, *L'Occupation ennemie de la Roumanie et ses conséquences économiques et sociales*, Les Presses Universitaires de France, Paris & Yale University Press, 1929.
- <sup>5</sup> Anibal Stoenescu, *Din vremea ocupației*, București, Atelierele Grafice Soccec, 1927.
- <sup>6</sup> Constantin Bacalbașa, *Capitala sub ocupația dușmanului 1916-1918*, Ed. Ancora, Brăila, 1921.
- <sup>7</sup> Virgil Drăghiceanu, *707 zile sub cultura pumnului german*, Editura Saeculum Vizual, București, 2012.
- <sup>8</sup> E.C. Decusară, *România sub ocupațiune dușmană, Fascicola I. Organizarea și activitatea Poliției Militare*, Tipografia Curții Regale F. Göbl, București, 1920.
- <sup>9</sup> Alexandru I. Soccec, *Zile de restriște din anii 1916-1918*, București, Ed. Institutului de Arte Grafice, 1928, pp. 67-69.
- <sup>10</sup> On the differences between military displacement and civilian displacement, see Angela K. Smith and Sandra Barkhof, *The No-Man's Land of Displacement*, in Sandra Barkhof and Angela K. Smith (eds), *War and Displacement in the Twentieth Century. Global Conflicts*, Routledge, New York, 2014, pp. 4-14.
- <sup>11</sup> Probably the best Romanian scientific work dedicated to Romania's intervention in the First World War is still the one published by Constantin Kirițescu, *Istoria Războiului pentru întregirea României, 1916-1919*, (III volumes), Editura Casa Școalelor, Atelierele „Cartea Românească”, Ediția II-a, București, 1926.
- <sup>12</sup> For instance, the Romanian Crown Council (Consiliu de Coroană) held in Sinaia, on July 21/August 3, 1914, rejected King Carol's plea that the alliance with the Central Powers be put into effect. See Ion Mamina, *Consilii de Coroană*, Editura Enciclopedică, București, 1997, pp. 32-39.
- <sup>13</sup> On the Romanian pre-war debate, as well on the choosing of the *appropriate* side for serving the national interest, see also the work by Lucian Boia,

- Germanofilia. Elita intelectuală românească în anii primului război mondial*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2009, pp. 33-51. Lucian Boia underlines the existence of a significant pro-German orientation among Romanian intellectual circles.
- 14 Quite often, these demonstrations and student meetings ended up with violent marches towards the German and Austrian Legations in Bucharest, where windows were broken; in other cases, the demonstrators showed their support for the Entente Powers in front of the French or Russian Legations in Bucharest. See, for instance, the article entitled „Întrunirea Federației Unioniste la Dacia”, unsigned, published in *Universul* (newspaper), June 21, 1916.
- 15 When it comes to Romanian casualties during the campaign of 1916, data tend to vary, depending on the sources. See, for instance, the work by Ion Cușsa, *Armata Română în campaniile din anii 1916-1917 (Romanian Army during the 1916-1917 military campaigns)*, Bucharest, Editura Militară, București, 1967, pp. 179-180.
- 16 The prospects were even worse, due to the size of the enemy forces engaged on Romanian territory.
- 17 See Michael B. Barrett, *Prelude to Blitzkrieg. The 1916 Austro-German Campaign in Romania*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2013, p. 275.
- 18 See, for instance, the work written under the pseudonym of Archibald (by the Romanian journalist G. Rădulescu), entitled *Porcii. Impresii din timpul ocupației. Crime, assassinate, violuri, pirați, hiene, spioni*, București, Institutul Grafic Steaua, 1923, pp. 54-63.
- 19 Probably the most relevant are the works by G. Banea, *Zile de lazaret. Jurnal de captivitate și spital*, București, Fundația pentru literatură și artă Regele Carol II, 1938, pp. 9-11; Constantin Vlădescu, *Bulgarii. Memoriile unui ofițer român fost prizonier în Bulgaria*, București, Biblioteca ziarului Universul, București, 1926, pp. 26-27; George Topârceanu, *Pirin Planina. Episoduri tragice și comice din captivitate*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2014, pp. 184-185. Topirceanu is referring to the Bulgarian hate (regarding Romanians) was stirred by the Bulgarian press.
- 20 See Constantin Bacalbașa, *Capitala sub ocupația dușmanului 1916-1918*, Editura Ancora, Brăila, 1921, pp. 32-43. C. Bacalbașa is also considering the fact that such an image of the Bulgarian people could have been the result of a sort of „ruthless propaganda”.
- 21 Archibald (pseudonym of the Romanian journalist G. Rădulescu), op.cit, pp. 56-62. The data offered by Rădulescu may seem very detailed and accurate, but the information is probably exaggerated.
- 22 See, *in extenso*, the work (Journal) by Vasile Th. Cancicov, *Jurnal din vremea ocupației. Impresiuni și păreri personale din timpul războiului României. Jurnal zilnic 13 august 1916-13 august 1917*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2015, pp. 80-81.

- 23 See Virgiliu N. Drăghiceanu, *op.cit*, p. 38.
- 24 Constantin Gane, *Prin viroage și coclauri, 1916-1917*, Editura Cultura Națională, București, 1922, p. 80.
- 25 See Glenn E. Torrey, *România și Primul Război Mondial*, Meteor Publishing, București, 2014, pp. 123-124.
- 26 See Ioan Bolovan, *Primul Război Mondial și realitățile demografice din Transilvania. Familie, mortalitate și raporturi de gen*, Școala Ardeleană Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2015, pp. 43-44.
- 27 Glenn Torrey, *op. cit*, p. 124.
- 28 The data, from Teodor V. Păcățian, *Jertfele românilor din Ardeal, Bănat, Crișana, Sătmăr și Maramurăș, adevuse în războiul mondial din anii 1914-1918*, Sibiu, 1923, pp. 25-26. All of them have been arrested and faced internment in various Hungarian prisons and internment camps, during the War.
- 29 According to *Universul* newspaper, at the end of October – early November, 1916, the city of Galați was already sheltering 300 refugees from Transylvania (*Universul*, XXXIV, Nr. 302, Issue of Monday, October 31 /November 13, 1916, p. 4)
- 30 According to Valentin Ciorbea, *Aspecte ale situației Dobrogei la sfârșitul Primului Război Mondial*, in *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie A.D. Xenopol*, XXIV/1, 1987, p. 225.
- 31 Constantin Bacalbașa, *op. cit*, p. 20.
- 32 The dramatic moments of the Romanian administration hasty refuge to Moldavia were best described by Grigore Antipa, in his work entitled *L'Occupation ennemie de la Roumanie et ses conséquences économiques et sociales*, Les Presses Universitaires de France, Paris & Yale University Press, 1929, pp. 12-13. From his directorial office located at the Bucharest Museum of Natural Sciences, Antipa was able to see the desolate images of the retreating Romanian Army and had the opportunity to talk to one of the Romanian officers, who ended his dialogue with Antipa by saying: „[...] What is happening is indescribable. What you see here - me and my horse, are the only things that remained, out of my entire regiment. My regiment is lost. The entire army is lost! The country is lost!”.
- 33 Sabina Cantacuzino, *Din viața familiei Ion C. Brătianu 1914-1919*, Bucuresti, Humanitas, 2012, p. 31.
- 34 See, for instance Arabella Yarka, *De pe o zi pe alta. Carnet intim 1913-1918*, Editura Compania, București, 2010, pp. 129-130. Arabella Yarka was a member of Bucharest high-life, who married Carol (Citta) Davila, nephew of the famous Romanian doctor Carol Davilla. Arabella Yarka is also referring to various acquaintances, who were forced to flee and traveled to Moldavia by car.
- 35 There were many witnesses of the rather generalized panic, fear and confusion that dominated the capital of Romania, during the last days before

- the arrival of the Central Powers' forces and occupation. See, for instance, Raymund Netzhammer, *Episcop în România într-o epocă a conflictelor naționale și religioase*, Volumul I, Editura Academiei Române, București, 2005, pp. 673-674.
- 36 See, for instance, Annette Becker, *Oubliés de la Grance Guerre. Humanitaire et culture de guerre*, Fayard/Pluriel, Paris, 2012, p. 31.
- 37 National Archives of France, Fond *Félix Trépont* (1914-1941), Issue 96 AP/1, Dossier 1 (Début du Journal dactylographié), (1914-1917), August 31, 1914, p. 93. As *Préfet du Nord* at the outbreak of the Great War, Félix Trépont (1863-1949) firmly backed the defence of Lille during the German invasion of France and Belgium. He opposed and criticised governmental policy according to which the city of Lille was officially declared an open town, that would not be defended. While such a decision was considered by Trépont an abandonment, many other French local notables (including the mayor of Lille, Charles Delesalle, later accused of defeatism and collaborationism, during the German occupation) considered it as the best option for the civilian population, for the city itself. Prefect F. Trépont was soon arrested and deported in 1915, returning to France in 1916.
- 38 See Adrian Vițalariu, *Thinking of Loved Ones and Always Away from Home*, in Claudiu Lucian Topor and Alexander Rubel, eds.), *The Unknown War from Eastern Europe. Romania between Allies and Enemies 1916-1918*, Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza Iași & Hartung-Gorre Verlag Konstanz, 2016, pp. 223-224.
- 39 See the details in the work by Mircea Iosă, *Situația internă în urma campaniei militare din anul 1916*, București, Editura Militară, 1979, pp. 246-247.
- 40 Elena Th. Emandi, *Din anii de durere. Pagini trăite*, Tipografia C.D. Lupașcu, Bârlad, 1919, pp. 78-79.
- 41 Ibidem.
- 42 See the details in the work by Vasile Bianu, *Însemnări din războiul României Mari, Tomul I, De la mobilizare până la Pacea din București*, Institutul de Arte Grafice Ardealul, Cluj, 1926, p. 50.
- 43 Ibidem, pp. 57-59.
- 44 Adrian Vițalariu, *op. cit.*, p. 224.
- 45 See Constantin Argetoianu, *Memorii. Pentru cei de maine. Amintiri din vremea celor de ieri*, Ed. Machiavelli, București, 2008, p. 54. Ioan G. Bibicescu, the governor of the National Central Bank of Romania, decided to evacuate to Iași, by train, even his fig trees (figus), together with the other belongings.
- 46 The ordeal of the hasty refuge was also described by Constantin Kirîțescu, in his work *Istoria Războiului pentru Întregirea României, 1916-1919*, Ediția a II-a, Vol. II, Editura Casa Școalelor, Atelierele Cartea Românească, București, 1926, pp. 246-249.

- 47 Alexandru I.V. Socec, *Zile de restriște din anii 1916-1918 și episodul din bătălia de pe Argeș*, București, Institutul de Arte Grafice „Tiparnița”, 1928, p. 68-69. Socec portrayed the ordeal of the refuge to Moldavia by using rather macabre details: [...] *the dogs and crows were feeding themselves with the dead bodies of unburied refuted children [...]*”.
- 48 The boy scouts were also helping with the transportation of the wounded civilians (after the air raids) to various hospitals. See Constantin Th. Sapatino, *Trăiri, trăiri...de-a lungul unui veac*, Editura Romfel, București, 1995, p. 15.
- 49 The most devastating German air raid on Bucharest was the one initiated on 12/25 September 1916, which caused 485 dead and over 1000 wounded among civilians. See the details in the work by Anibal Stoenescu, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-53.
- 50 See Maria, *Povestea vieții mele*, III, Editura Eminescu, București, 1997, p. 73. For further details regarding the German air raids and their effect on Romanian civilian population, see also Maria Regina României. *Jurnal de Război 1916-1917*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2014, pp. 149-150. For the odyssey of the Romanian boy-scouts during First World War, see also Bogdan Popa, *A passage to manhood. The boy-scouts of Romania during the First World War*, in *Revista Istorică*, tom XXVII, 1-2, 2016, pp. 29-48.
- 51 See the episode as described by Ion Gh. Duca, *Amintiri politice*, (Războiul), II, Jon Dumitru Verlag, München, 1981, pp. 66-67.
- 52 According to some accounts, there were a few thousand young boys who traveled by train (they were being sent to Moldavia by the Romanian authorities, in order to avoid their recruitment by the enemy forces. See, for instance, Sterea Costescu, *Din carnetul unui căpitan. Însemnări și amintiri din războiul pentru întregirea neamului. (1 august 1916-1 aprilie 1917)*, Tiparul „Învățătorul Român” , Focșani, 1927, p. 184.
- 53 Sabina Cantacuzino, *Din viața familiei Ion C. Brătianu 1914-1919*, București, Humanitas, 2012, p. 29.
- 54 See Alexandru Daia, *Eroi la 16 ani. Însemnările unui fost cercetaș. Jurnal de război 1916-1918*, Editura Ion Creangă, București, 1981, pp. 95-103. The boy scouts have continued their travel to Moldavia, by train, crossing the entire region of Moldavia, during an exhausting journey of almost a week. Constantin Kirițescu, *op.cit.*, p. 369.
- 56 See Șerban Rădulescu Zoner, Irina Gavrilă, *Date privind populația orașului București în anii Războiului de Întregire 1916-1918*, in *Revista de Istorie*, Tome 40, Nr. 7, July 1987, pp. 694-696.
- 57 See Charles J. Vopicka, *Secretele Balcanilor. Șapte ani din viața unui diplomat în centrul furtunos al Europei*, Institutul European, Iași, 2012, p. 109.
- 58 The results of the German Census of January 6, 1917, conducted in Bucharest, have been published in „Bukarester Tagblatt” (which was a newspaper published by the German Administration), Issue of January 11, 1917 (Kriegsausgabe no. 20).

- 59 Virgiliu N. Drăghiceanu, *op. cit.*, p. 35. Drăghiceanu's figures originate from the same German Census of January 1917, although he is mentioning the existence of 312 942 inhabitants of Bucharest, slightly more than the official number forwarded by the German Administration. Drăghiceanu is also mentioning the existence of 25 099 Austro-Germans (out of which 2700 Germans of the Empire), 5406 Greek individuals, 1126 Bulgarians, 1644 Italians and 2538 inhabitants of various other nationalities.
- 60 Constantin Kirițescu, *op.cit.*, p. 316. However, Kirițescu is in fact using the same data as resulted from the German Census of January 1917.
- 61 Charles J. Vopicka, *op. cit.*, p. 137.
- 62 Vasile Bianu, *op. cit.*, p. 71. Bianu underlines that the population of Iași reached nearly twice the level of population of Bucharest. The same Vasile Bianu is mentioning the existence of 600 000 individuals in Iași, at the end of February 1917. See Vasile Bianu, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
- 63 See the data forwarded by Ion Agrigoroaiei, in his work entitled *Opinie publică și stare de spirit în vremea Războiului de Întregire și a Marii Uniri. Iași, 1916-1918*, Editura Fundației Axis, Iași, 2004, pp. 50-51.
- 64 See Ethel Greening Pantazi, *România în lumini și umbre (1909-1919)*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2015, p. 184.
- 65 According to a *Handbook of Roumania*, prepared by the *Geographical Section of the Naval Intelligence Division*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1920, p. 62.
- 66 *Ibidem*, p. 61.
- 67 Grigore Antipa, *op. cit.*, p. 51.
- 68 See Grigore Trancu Iași, *Țara mea. Memorii 1916-1920*, Editura Ararat, București, 1998, pp. 9-10.
- 69 See Marcel Fontaine, *Jurnal de război. Misiune în România. Noiembrie 1916-Aprilie 1918*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2016, p. 57.
- 70 See Peter Gatrell, *The Making of Modern Refugee*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2013, p. 26.
- 71 See the details of the Serbian refuge in the work by Jonathan Gumz, *The Resurrection and Collapse of Empire in Habsburg Serbia, 1914-1918*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007.
- 72 Peter Gatrell, *The Making of Modern Refugee....*, p. 29.
- 73 Constantin Gane, *op. cit.*, p. 80.
- 74 National Archives of Romania (Arhivele Naționale Centrale ale României –ANIC), Ministry of the Interior Fund (Ministerul de Interne), File 471/(1917)-1918, Biroul Permiselor, f. 14 (unfilled, undated and unsigned *Certificate*). See the document – Fig. 1).
- 75 General Henri Berthelot, *Memorii și corespondență 1916-1919*, Editura Militară, București, 2015, pp. 130-131.

- 76 According to a written account of the Romanian visit in Russia, which was sent, as a letter, by the Crown Prince Carol of Romania (also a member of the Romanian delegation), to his father, King Ferdinand of Romania, on January 10/23 1917. See the full text of the above mentioned letter in the work by Sorin Cristescu, *Carol al II lea. Scrisori către părinți*, Editura Tritonic, București, 2015, pp. 102-106.
- 77 According to „Viata Basarabiei”, Nr. 2, January 2/15, 1917, p. 4. The above mentioned article, studied by Dinu Poștarencu, in his work entitled *Primul Război Mondial- Exodul populației României în Rusia*, published in „Art-emis Review”, January 10, 2012. The newspaper also stated that Romanian politicians have underlined that their arrival was not the beginning of the evacuation of legislative chambers, but a solution to acute overpopulation that affected Iasi, the new capital of Romania.
- 78 See Ethel Greening Pantazzi, *op. cit*, p. 185.
- 79 *Ibidem*, p. 185. Comandor Vasile Pantazzi was the Romanian husband of the author.
- 80 *Ibidem*.
- 81 *Ibidem*, p. 189.
- 82 *Ibidem*, pp. 195-196. For details regarding the evacuation of the Romanian senators and deputies in Russia, see Grigore Procopiu, *Parlamentul în pribegie 1916-1918*, Editura Universitaria, București, 1992, pp. 20-114. See also the information offered by A. A. Mossolov, *Misiunea mea în România*, Editura Silex, București, 1997, pp. 81-88.
- 83 Elena Th. Emandi, *op. cit*, pp. 104-107.
- 84 *Ibidem*, pp. 108-119.
- 85 *Ibidem*, pp. 120-125.
- 86 Ethel Greening Pantazi, *op. cit*, pp. 198-199.
- 87 See Raluca Tomi, *Un geolog pasionat de Balcani și modernizarea societății românești: Gheorghe Munteanu Murgoci (1872-1925)*, în „Studii și Materiale de Istorie Modernă”, Vol. XXVII, 2014, pp. 107-148. For the text of the letter itself, see Raluca Tomi, *loc.cit*, pp. 146-148.
- 88 *Ibidem*, p. 148.
- 89 *Ibidem*, p. 147. The Union of Russian Cities had also prepared a reserve consisting of 200000 roubles.
- 90 See the article by Ph.D. Dinu Poștarencu, entitled *Primul Război Mondial- Exodul populației României în Rusia*, published in „Art-emis Review”, January 10, 2012. Poștarencu is referring to an information published by Viața Basarabiei, Nr. 9, January 11/24, 1917, p. 2. A similar information was published by the „Cuvânt Moldovenesc” (a Romanian language newspaper, published also in Chișinău), Nr. 5 (205), January 15, 1917, p. 4. The latter was mentioning the fact that all the 12 500 Romanian boy scouts have crossed the Russian frontier and walked until they reached the city of Bălți.
- 91 Alexandru I. Socec, *op. cit*, pp. 68-69.

- 92 See Romanian National Archives, Fund Ministerul de Interne, File nr. 471/1918, Vol. II, Letter addressed to the Prime Minister of Romania, Alexandru Marghiloman, by Mitilineu (requestion approval for certain names), (unreadable date), p. 114.
- 93 Ion M. Mitilineu (1868-1946), Romanian lawyer and politician, Minister of Justice during Alexandru Marghiloman Cabinet.
- 94 See Romanian National Archives, Fund Ministerul de Interne, File nr. 471/1918, Vol. II, The letter addressed on April 14<sup>th</sup>, 1918, to Constantin C. Arion, Minister of Exterior, by Mitilineu, (requesting approval for colonel Radu Rosetti, so that the above mentioned high- ranking Romanian officer be included on the passenger list of the Take Ionescu Train), p. 115.
- 95 Nicolae Titulescu (1882-1941) was an outstanding Romanian diplomat, several times Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania. During the interwar decades, he was elected President of the General Assembly of the League of Nations (twice, in 1930 and 1931).
- 96 See Romanian National Archives, Fund Ministerul de Interne, File nr. 471/1918, Vol. II, The letter addressed to Prime Minister Alexandru Marghiloma, on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 1918, concerning Nicolae Titulescu's request to be kept on the passenger list of the Take Ionescu Train, p. 117.
- 97 Romanian National Archives, Fund Ministerul de Interne, File nr. 471/1918, Vol. II, The document entitled *Lista persoanelor care au cerut plecarea cu trenul Take Ionescu*, undated (May 5<sup>th</sup>, 1918?), ff. 118-121. According to Romulus Seișanu, German and Austro-Hungarian authorities have granted permission for passage through the occupied territory of Take Ionescu Special Train much later, in June 1918. See Romulus Seișanu, *Take Ionescu. Viața și opera sa*, Editura Ziarului Universul, București, 1930, p. 309.
- 98 See Constantin Argetoianu, *Pentru cei de mâine. Amintiri din vremea celor de ieri, Vol. III, Vth part, (1916-1917)*, Edited by Stelian Neagoe, București, 1992, pp. 68-79.
- 99 Ibidem, p. 81. Argetoianu is explaining such an attitude of the local inhabitants, by saying that their reaction was triggered by the lack of organisation (nothing was prepared in order to accommodate them) regarding the continous arrival of the refugees.
- 100 Peter Gatrell, *A Whole Empire Walking. Refugees in Russia during the World War I*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1999, p. 62.
- 101 Constantin Kirițescu, *op. cit*, p. 368. Kirițescu is referring to a vast number of refugees (around 300 refugees per day) going to each of the Iasi police stations, in order to ask for a shelter.
- 102 Ibidem, p. 368-369.
- 103 Very often, the same house or room was allocated to several persons at the same time, thus generating quarrels and conflicts between the new temporary tenants. See Elena Th. Emandi, *op. cit*, pp. 88-89.



- 104 Sabina Cantacuzino, *op. cit.*, p. 25. Sabina Cantacuzino is also mentioning that „half of Bucharest high society moved to Iași, such as Catargi family, Florescu, Olanescu, Bragadiru and Capitanovici families.
- 105 Maria, Regina României. Jurnal de război 1916-1917..., pp. 235-246. The Queen lived in a train between November, 14/27 to November 23/December 6, 1916, when she moved to the Cantacuzino-Pășcanu House in Iași.
- 106 See Conte de Saint-Aulaire. *Însemnările unui diplomat de altădată în România, 1916-1920*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2016, p. 104.
- 107 National Archives of France, Pierrefitte sur Seine, First World War, Romanie, F/23, File 154, (Organisation du ravitaillement), Letter by Henri Berthelot, addressed to St. Aulaire, on April 27/9, 1917. In the original text: „[...] si la Russie ne fournit pas à la Roumanie ce qu'elle demande, c'est la suppression pure et simple de ce peuple et de son armée, en tant que facteur de la coalition, par „suppression de nourriture”.
- 108 Ibidem. According to the document, 5826 train wagons of supplies were *borrowed* , while other 37753 wagons (mainly cereals) have been bought by the Russian Government.
- 109 On the effects of exanthematic typhus on Romanian refugees and Army, see Ion Cantacuzino, Epidemia de tifos exanthematic în timpul războiului trecut, în Revista Științelor Medicale, 1941, Issue 10, pp. 659- 679. Another work dedicated to exanthematic typhus was the one written by Cantemir Angelescu, *Tifosul exantematic în România*, Editura Monitorul Oficial, Imprimeria Statului, București, 1945.
- 110 Data published by the „Gazeta Bucureștilor”, Issue nr. 381, January 1918.
- 111 Constantin Kirițescu, *op.cit.*, p. 373.
- 112 See the article entitled „Efectul moral și material al ultimelor donațiuni regale”, signed by a „Cavalry officer from Putna County”, published in „Ilustrațiunea”, Nr. 10, October 1916, pp. 133-134.
- 113 Queen Marie had also mentioned about her visits to various hospitals, during the refuge to Moldavia. See Marie, Reine de Roumanie, *Histoire de ma Vie*, Tome Troisième, Paris, Plon, 1940, pp. 320-325. See also *Maria. Regina României, Jurnal de război 1916-1917*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2014, pp. 283-286.
- 114 See the information on the above mentioned diplomas, in „L'Illustration”, Nr. 3863, Issue of March 17, 1917.
- 115 See the article entitled „Fondul Refugiaților”, published by „Ardealul” newspaper, An I, Nr. 12, Issue of December 17, 1917, p. 2.
- 116 See Nicolae Nicoară, *Crucea Roșie Română, aproape o poveste*, Editura Bucureștii Noi, București, 1996, p. 18.
- 117 Archive of Romanian Red Cross Society, File 1916 (No opis number), The (holograph) letter of consent written on August 20 (1917?), by Ecaterina Constantinescu, widow, concerning her son's decision to become a Red Cross volunteer, p. 17. There also many other similar examples.

- 118 Although the Red Cross volunteers (particularly the under-aged) were exposed to other types of trauma, associated with the huge number of deaths occurring in various Red Cross hospitals and shelters.
- 119 Archive of Romanian Red Cross Society, File 1916-1917, (P 1323), Spitale ale Crucii Roșii în timpul campaniei 1916-1918, Lista spitalelor din București și din Moldova, pp. 3-6.
- 120 For the history of the above mentioned entity, see the work by Anemari Monica Negru, *Din istoria Societății Ortodoxe Naționale Române*, Editura Cetatea de Scaun, Târgoviște, 2016. See also significant data concerning the activity of SONR in the book written by Alin Ciupală, *Bătălia lor. Femeile din România în Primul Război Mondial*, Editura Polirom, Iași, 2017, pp. 159-172.
- 121 See *Expunere făcută M.S. Reginei asupra activității desfășurată de la 5 mai și până la 5 octombrie 1917*, de către Societatea Ortodoxă Națională a Femeilor Române, Secția Ocrotirea Orfanilor, Tipografia Dacia, Iași, 1917, p. 7.
- 122 Ibidem, p. 28. In fact, the real number was probably much higher (at least twice as big, when considering the non-institutionalized War orphans, not to mention the War orphans located across the occupied territory. The main orphanages were „Regina Maria” (Iași), the Piatra Neamț orphanage, the orphanages located near Agapia and Văratec Monasteries, the orphanage located in Solești (near Vaslui).
- 123 Archives Nationales (France), Paris, Pierrefitte-sur-Seine, Première Guerre Mondiale, Fond F/23/2, Section (F/23/2-Dossier 15), The note of October 2, 1915. The above -mentioned French entity initiated various actions in order to identify the location of many of the missing French citizens.
- 124 See Generalul Henri Berthelot, *op. cit*, pp. 137-159.
- 125 Constantin Kirițescu, *op. cit*, pp. 391-392.
- 126 See Costel Coroban, *Potârnicile Gri. Spitalele femeilor scoțiene în România 1916-1917*, Editura Cetatea de Scaun, Târgoviște, 2012, pp. 81-206.
- 127 For details (photos) regarding US Red Cross Mission in Romania during First World War, National Archives of Romania, Colecția Documente Fotografice, P II 1969/1-10; F II/1970.
- 128 See, for consistent information on US medical missions in Romania, Ernest h. Latham, Jr, *Un destin ciudat. J. Breckindridge Bayne. Un doctor american pe frontul românesc 1916-1919*, Editura Vremea, București, 2016, pp. 53-73.
- 129 Romanian National Archives, Fund Ministerul de Interne, File 471/1918, Vol. II, pp. 3-4; 41-42; 43-48; 61-62; 70-73.
- 130 Ibidem, pp. 74-81.
- 131 See Radu Tudorancea, *Originile unei controverse: Alexandru Tzigara Samurçaș în anii ocupației (1916-1918)*”, in „Revista Istorică”, nr. 1-2/2016.

- <sup>132</sup> For instance, that was the case of the famous Romanian scientist and bacteriologist Victor Babes, who was blamed for his decision to remain in the occupied territory. In fact, as the archival documents show, he was ordered to remain in Bucharest; he did not just decide to stay in the occupied territory. See the Archive of the Romanian Red Cross Society, File 1916, (P 1323), (*Personal medical ce a activat la spitalele Crucii Roșii*), The Note nr. 4633 of November 16/1916, addressed to the Romanian Red Cross Society by the General Headquarters of the Romanian Army, The Medical Service, p. 13.

## Bibliography

### I. Primary Sources

#### A. Archives

National Archives of Romania (Arhivele Naționale Centrale ale României – ANIC), Fund Minister of Interior (Ministerul de Interne); Fund Documente Fotografice.

Archive of Romanian Red Cross Society, First World War Files, 1916, 1917, 1918.

National Archives of France, Paris, Pierrefitte-sur-Seine, Première Guerre Mondiale, Romania, 1916-1918.

National Archives of France, (Première Guerre Mondiale) Fond *Félix Trépont* (1914-1941).

#### B. Memoirs

Argetoianu, C, *Pentru cei de mâine. Amintiri din vremea celor de ieri, Vol. III, Vth part, (1916-1917)*, Edited by Stelian Neagoe, București, 1992.

Berthelot, H.M, *Memorii și corespondență 1916-1919*, Editura Militară, București, 2015.

Cantacuzino, S, *Din viața familiei Ion C. Brătianu 1914-1919*, Bucuresti, Humanitas, 2012.

Costescu, S, *Din carnetul unui căpitan. Însemnări și amintiri din războiul pentru întregirea neamului (1 august 1916-1 aprilie 1917)*, Tiparul „Învățătorul Român” , Focșani, 1927.

Daia, A, *Eroi la 16 ani. Însemnările unui fost cercetaș. Jurnal de război 1916-1918*, Editura Ion Creangă, București, 1981.

Duca, I.G, *Amintiri politice, (Războiul)*, II, Jon Dumitru Verlag, München, 1981.

Emandi, E. Th, *Din anii de durere. Pagini trăite*, Tipografia C.D. Lupașcu, Bârlad, 1919.

Fontaine, M, *Jurnal de război. Misiune în România. Noiembrie 1916-Aprilie 1918*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2016.

Greening-Pantazzi, E, *România în lumini și umbre (1909-1919)*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2015.

Maria. Regina României, *Jurnal de război 1916-1917*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2014.

Mossolov, A.A., *Misiunea mea în România*, Editura Silex, București, 1997.

Netzhammer, R, *Episcop în România într-o epocă a conflictelor naționale și religioase*, Volumul I, Editura Academiei Române, București, 2005.

Procopiu, G, *Parlamentul României în pibegie 1916-1918*, Editura Universitaria, București, 1992.

Saint-Aulaire, *Însemnările unui diplomat de altădată în România, 1916-1920*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2016.

Sapatino, T, *Trăiri, trăiri...de-a lungul unui veac*, Editura Romfel, București, 1995.

- Trancu I. G, *Țara mea. Memorii 1916-1920*, Editura Ararat, București, 1998.
- Vlădescu, C, *Bulgarii. Memoriile unui ofițer român fost prizonier în Bulgaria*, Biblioteca ziarului Universul, București, 1926.
- Vopicka, Ch, *Secretele Balcanilor. Șapte ani din viața unui diplomat în centrul furtunos al Europei*, Institutul European, Iași, 2012.
- Yarka, A, *De pe o zi pe alta. Carnet intim 1913-1918*, Editura Compania, București, 2010.

## Press

*Gazeta Bucureștilor*  
*Ilustrațiunea*  
*Universul*

## II. Secondary Sources:

- Agrigoroaiei, I, *Opinie publică și stare de spirit în vremea Războiului de Întregire și a Marii Uniri. Iași, 1916-1918*, Editura Fundației Axis, Iași, 2004.
- Angelescu, C, *Tifosul exantematic în România*, Editura Monitorul Oficial, Imprimeria Statului, București, 1945.
- Antipa, G, *L'Occupation ennemie de la Roumanie et ses consequences économiques et sociales*, Les Presses Universitaires de France, Paris & Yale University Press, Paris, 1929.
- Bacalbașa, C, *Capitala sub ocupația dușmanului 1916-1918*, Ed. Ancora, Brăila, 1921.
- Banea, G, *Zile de lazar. Jurnal de captivitate și spital*, Fundația pentru literatură și artă Regele Carol II, București, 1938.
- Barrett, M.B, *Prelude to Blitzkrieg. The 1916 Austro-German Campaign in Romania*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2013.
- Barkhof, S; Smith, A, *War and Displacement in the XX Century: Global Conflicts* Routledge Studies in Modern History, 2014.
- Becker, A, *Oubliés de la Grance Guerre. Humanitaire et culture de guerre*, Fayard/Pluriel, Paris, 2012.
- Boia, L, *Germanofiliile. Elita intelectuală românească în anii primului război mondial*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2009.
- Bolovan, I, *Primul Război Mondial și realitățile demografice din Transilvania. Familie, mortalitate și raporturi de gen*, Școala Ardeleană Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2015.
- Cancicov, V.T, *Jurnal din vremea ocupației. Impresiuni și păreri personale din timpul războiului României. Jurnal zilnic 13 august 1916-13 august 1917*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2015.
- Ciorbea, V, *Aspecte ale situației Dobrogei la sfârșitul Primului Război Mondial*, în Anuarul Institutului de Istorie și Arheologie A.D. Xenopol, XXIV/1, 1987.

- Ciupală, A, *Bătălia Ior. Femeile din România în Primul Război Mondial*, Editura Polirom, Iași, 2017.
- Coroban, C, *Potârnichile Gri. Spitalele femeilor scoțiene în România 1916-1917*, Editura Cetatea de Scaun, Târgoviște, 2012.
- Cristescu, S, *Carol al II lea. Scrisori către părinți*, Editura Tritonic, București, 2015.
- Cupșa, I, *Armata Română în campaniile din anii 1916-1917 (Romanian Army during the 1916-1917 military campaigns)*, Editura Militară, București, 1967.
- Decusară, E.C., *România sub ocupațiune dușmană, Fascicola I. Organizarea și activitatea Poliției Militare*, Tipografia Curții Regale F. Göbl, București, 1920.
- Gane, C, *Prin viroage și coclauri, 1916-1917*, Editura Cultura Națională, București, 1922.
- Gatrell, P, *A Whole Empire Walking. Refugees in Russia during the World War I*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1999.
- Idem, *The Making of Modern Refugee*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2013.
- Gumz, J., *The Resurrection and Collapse of Empire in Habsburg Serbia, 1914-1918*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2007.
- Iosa, M, *Situația internă în urma campaniei militare din anul 1916*, București, Editura Militară, 1979.
- Kirițescu, C., *Istoria Războiului pentru întregirea României, 1916-1919*, (III volumes), Editura Casa Școalelor, Atelierele „Cartea Românească”, Ediția II-a, București, 1926.
- Latham, E.H, Jr, *Un destin ciudat. J. Breckinridge Bayne. Un doctor american pe frontul românesc 1916-1919*, Editura Vremea, București, 2016.
- Mamina, I, *Consilii de Coroană*, Editura Enciclopedică, București, 1997.
- Negru, A.M., *Din istoria Societății Ortodoxe Naționale Române*, Editura Cetatea de Scaun, Târgoviște, 2016.
- Nicoară, N, *Crucea Roșie Română, aproape o poveste*, Editura Bucureștii Noi, București, 1996.
- Popa B., *A passage to manhood. The boy-scouts of Romania during the First World War*, in „Revista Istorică”, tom XXVII, 1-2, 2016
- Păcățian, T.V, *Jertfele românilor din Ardeal, Bănat, Crișana, Sătmăr și Maramurăș, adevuse în războiul mondial din anii 1914-1918*, Sibiu, 1923.
- Poștarencu, D, *Primul Război Mondial- Exodul populației României în Rusia*, published in „Art-emis Review”, January 10, 2012.
- Rădulescu, G, (Archibald) *Impresii din timpul ocupației. Crime, assassinate, violuri, pirați, hiene, spioni*, Institutul Grafic Steaua, București, 1923.
- Roth, S, *Les réfugiés et évacués de l'espace lorrain durant la première guerre mondiale mondiale*, in Olivier Forcade, Philippe Nivet (eds), *Les réfugiés en Europe du XVIe au XXe Siècle*, Nouveau Monde editions, Paris, 2008.
- Seișanu, R, *Take Ionescu. Viața și opera sa*, Editura ziarului „Universul”, București, 1930.

- Socec, A.I, *Zile de restriște din anii 1916-1918*, București, Ed. Institutului de Arte Grafice, 1928.
- Stoenescu, A., *Din vremea ocupației*, Atelierele Grafice Socec, București, 1927.
- Șandru, D, *Mișcări de populație în România (1940-1948)*, Editura Enciclopedică, București, 2003.
- Tomi, R, *Un geolog pasionat de Balcani și modernizarea societății românești: Gheorghe Munteanu Murgoci (1872-1925)*, în „Studii și Materiale de Istorie Modernă”, Vol. XXVII, 2014.
- Topârceanu, G, *Pirin Planina. Episoduri tragice și comice din captivitate*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2014.
- Tudorancea, R., *Originile unei controverse: Alexandru Tzigara Samurçaș în anii ocupației (1916-1918)*”, in „Revista Istorică” , nr. 1-2/2016.
- Idem, *Frontul de acasă. Propagandă, atitudini și curente de opinie în România Primului Război Mondial*, Ediția a II-a, revăzută și adăugită, Editura Eikon, București, 2016.
- Vițalaru, A, *Thinking of Loved Ones and Always Away from Home*, in Claudiu Lucian Topor and Alexander Rubel, eds.), *The Unknown War from Eastern Europe. Romania between Allies and Enemies 1916-1918*, Editura Universității Alexandru Ioan Cuza Iași & Hartung-Gorre Verlag Konstanz, 2016.
- Zoner, S.R, Gavrilă, I, *Date privind populația orașului București în anii Războiului de Întregire 1916-1918*, in Revista de Istorie, Tome 40, Nr. 7, 1987.