

VOL. VII (XXIV)
2012

ANALELE UNIVERSITĂȚII DE VEST DIN TIMIȘOARA
SERIA: FILOSOFIE ȘI ȘTIINȚE ALE COMUNICĂRII

ANNALS OF THE WEST UNIVERSITY OF TIMIȘOARA
SERIES: PHILOSOPHY AND COMMUNICATION SCIENCES

Editorial board:

Editor:

IASMINA PETROVICI (West University, Timișoara, Romania)

Executive Editor:

SEBASTIAN PETRIȘOR (West University, Timișoara, Romania)

Members:

ADINA BAYA, IOAN BIRIȘ, MARIANA BRANDL-GHERGA, IOAN BUȘ,
GHEORGHE CLITAN, GIORGINA OANA GABOR, LUCIAN IONICĂ, IANCU LUCICA,
LAURA MALIȚA, CLAUDIU MESAROȘ, MARIA MICLE, IONEL NARIȚA,
ȘTEFANA OANA CIORTEA-NEAMȚIU, ALEXANDRU PETRESCU,
TAMARA PETROVA, LUCIAN VASILE SZABO, MARCEL TOLCEA, IOANA VID

Advisory board:

ALEXANDER BAUMGARTEN (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania,
alexbaum7@web.de)
CORIN BRAGA (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, corinbraga@yahoo.com)
FARKAS KATALIN (Central European University, Budapest, Hungary, farkask@ceu.hu)
ALBERTO GONZALES (Bowling Green State University, Ohio, USA, agonzal@bgsu.edu)
CRISTINA IONESCU (Regina University, Canada)
NOBORU NOTOMI (Keio University, Japan)
NILÜFER PEMBECİOĞLU ÖCEL (Istanbul University, Turkey, nilocel@istanbul.edu.tr)
MILENKO PEROVIĆ (Novi Sad University, Serbia, milenko.perovic@gmail.com)
DORIN POPA (A.I. Cuza University, Iasi, Romania, dpopa@uaic.ro)
ILIE RAD (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, nikolausrambu@yahoo.de)
NICOLAE RÂMBU (A.I. Cuza University, Iasi, Romania, nikolausrambu@yahoo.de)
CĂLIN RUS (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, calin.rus@ubbcluj)
TON VEEN (Christian University of Ede, Netherlands, tveen@che.nl)

Analele Universității de Vest din Timișoara. Seria Filosofie și științe ale comunicării (Online)
ISSN 1844 – 1351

Analele Universității de Vest din Timișoara. Seria Filosofie și științe ale comunicării (Print)
ISSN 1842 – 6638

Manuscripts, books and publications proposed for exchange, also submitted papers should be sent to:
e-mail: claudiu.mesaros@pfc.uvt.ro
iasmipetrovici@yahoo.com

UNIVERSITATEA DE VEST DIN TIMIȘOARA
FACULTATEA DE ȘTIINȚE POLITICE, FILOSOFIE ȘI ȘTIINȚE ALE COMUNICĂRII
DEPARTAMENTUL DE FILOSOFIE ȘI ȘTIINȚE ALE COMUNICĂRII
TIMIȘOARA 300223, BD. VASILE PÂRVAN NR. 4, ROMÂNIA

Contents:

SECTION I: PHILOSOPHY

Mihaela Meral AHMED: <i>Five Paradoxes of Postmodernity</i>	5
Alina CIRIC: <i>The Perceptual Activity and the Possibility of Knowledge</i>	11
Silvia Mihaela GRIGOREAN, Marin GRIGOREAN: <i>Quelques reflexions autour du concept de contradiction chez Simone Weil</i>	25
Alexandru PETRESCU: <i>The Phenomenology of Transcendental Intersubjectivity and the Possibility of a Phenomenological Ethics</i>	31
Johanna SCHWEIGHOFFER: <i>The Concept, a Controversial Link Between Object and Language. A Brief Inquiry</i>	47

SECTION II: COMMUNICATION SCIENCES

Corina Cozmina COSTINAȘ: <i>Poor Organizational Communication</i>	57
Mălina Iulia DUȚĂ: <i>The Paradox of Roma Identity: Are 'They' Our Construction?</i>	62

ANALELE UNIVERSITĂȚII DE VEST DIN TIMIȘOARA
SERIA FILOSOFIE ȘI ȘTIINȚE ALE COMUNICĂRII
VOL. VII (XXIV), 2012
ISSN 1844 – 1351 (online)
ISSN 1842 – 6638 (print)

SECTION I:
PHILOSOPHY

FIVE PARADOXES OF POSTMODERNITY

Mihaela Meral AHMED
West University of Timișoara

Abstract

Denying modernism and avant-garde, postmodernism returns to modernity. The relation with modernity is considered from other perspectives in terms of breaking relations with it and giving up the acquisitions of modernity (it would be naive to believe that it is possible to purchase complete renunciation of modernity, modernity offers precious lessons even where it fails). The rupture of modernity inspires a quite superficial attitude, because if we go in this direction we must accept that postmodernity wants to obtain the new once more. We can talk not only about five paradoxes of modernity (Compagnon, 1990/1998) but about five paradoxes of postmodernity: The relationship modernism – postmodernism, the obsession for new, past related perspective, the theory deficit and the relation between relativity and relativism.

Keywords: modernity, postmodern, relativism, paradoxes and relativism

It is difficult to talk about postmodernity because several versions circulate first about its incipit and second about what it could mean. Postmodernity is determined in the U.S. by the art of the last avangarde,

particularly Abstract Expressionism and the return of the ornament in architecture, so we can say it started around 1945. In Europe, especially in France, the emergence of postmodernism is dated around 1960-1970. Views on the meaning of postmodernity are varied, but we consider important in what follows a short review of the most worthy of attention ones.

Postmodernity is the culmination of modernity theoretical efforts, so we can sustain that it is the culmination of modernity. In postmodernity there are modern purposes that postmodernity doesn't consider because modernism inherent paradoxes were found (a good example is the idea of progress or innovation). Denying modernism and avant-garde, postmodernism returns to modernity. The relation with modernity is considered from other perspectives in terms of breaking relations with it and giving up the acquisitions of modernity (it would be naive to believe that it is possible to purchase complete renunciation of modernity, modernity offers precious lessons even where it fails). The rupture of modernity inspires a quite superficial attitude, because if we go in this direction we must accept that postmodernity wants to obtain *the new* once more. If the project is a continuation of modern or total rupture of modernity, we can not say definitely, but postmodernity is certainly in a ambiguous relationship with modernity.

Postmodernity has been considered as a continuation of modernism and avant-garde, placing them in conflict with modernity. This view belongs to both postmodernism defenders and those who regard it with hostility. It is not clear what distinguishes avant-garde from postmodernism.

If we consider it a continuation of modernism, we can see that the changes taking place within postmodernity are much faster, *the speed* being one of its fundamental characteristics. We can merely observe as a possible conclusion that of any part of postmodernity we find ourselves, the rationalism as the main characteristic of modernity is no longer possible. Perhaps postmodernism seems more permissive when we ask the question "What is culture?" The cause may be the transition from a Gutenberg civilization to an image era but after the testimony of failure of the avant-garde, we regard it in any case with suspicion. Maybe we suspiciously refuse the positive theoretical acquisitions of postmodernity transforming the art in a critical philosophy of art or an anti-philosophy (the concept of anti-philosophy belongs to Rorty).

The theory deficit of postmodernity is due to its liability, to the rapid succession of theoretic patterns and technologies. Soon after we purchased the latest model of some gadget we think to replace it with something new(er). New is not an adjective in absolute level, but (paradoxical) supports degrees and comparisons.

Although we are more aware, especially after the experience of the failure of modernism, postmodernity theory is not without pitfalls. So we can talk not only about five paradoxes of modernity (Compagnon, 1990/1998) but about five paradoxes of postmodernity:

1. The relationship modernism – postmodernism

This relationship is a complex one primarily because if we consider postmodernity a result and a natural consequence that embodies the most radical ideas of modernism. We always can fall back into the traps spread through avant-garde, modernism, respectively the cult of future (if we accept the assumption that postmodern continues the ambitious plans of modernism). The coexistence of these cultural ages, modernism and postmodernism, makes the relationship between modernity and postmodernity a more complicated one.

2. The obsession for new

Another trap of modernism is the obsession of new (the postmodern wants something opposed to modernism, isn't it?). Thus Compagnon's question makes sense: "have we recovered from the superstition of new?" There are two kinds of new: the new as a trend or fashion and the historical new. The new as a fashion is characterized by a rapid succession of trends, when the new becomes fashion and the trends evens until conformity the need of a new trend arises, as ephemeral as the one that preceded it. This is the new typical for the consumer society. The other possibility of the new, the historical new is characteristic for last avanguards, postmodernity see such a sort of new as a evidence of a rather naïve thinking. Refusing the ideal of a perpetual renewal of the avant-garde, postmodernity afford (if it is still accused of relativity) to return to the past, not in the same way that art Renaissance art returned to ancient Greece or in the same way that Heidegger returned to the Greeq antiquity, but somehow retro to a valuation of all ages and all traditions. Postmodernity gives us the right and duty to choose (not as Sartre meant). In the last avantguards the new reaches a movement so fast that it becomes instant. New involves the delivery speed, as the speed of propagation of a product of any kind increases, the chances to reach the new again are decreasing.

3. Past related perspective

If we said that modernism does not refer to the present because the avant-garde bring the prophetic mission focused on the future and the impact that avanguards will have on it, the postmodernism in its most radical form will also forget what is currently happening in terms of culture, being focused on revitalizing the past. Antoine Compagnon notes that the main task of the term 'postmodernism' will be to note our inability to aderes the present from within (Compagnon 1990/1998, p 83).

4. The theory deficit

One of the fundamental characteristics of modernity is its affinity for theory (Compagnon 1990/1998, p 82). The theory deficit of postmodernism and of the entire period of postmodern (so far) is caused by the refusal of

universality with which we deal within modernism (which is largely due to rationalist tendencies). The transition from modernity to postmodernity means the transition from the Gutenberg civilization to the civilization of images (Wunenburger 1997/2004, p 9). The image doesn't appear as a representation thus (by abolishing reality as external reality of the represented image) we can speak of an ontology of image.

The end of modernity is largely determined by the epistemological crisis of rationalism, late twentieth century dislocated the predominance of reason leaving open the possibility of seduction (Baudrillard) exercised by the image. If postmodernity is a civilization of the image the singularity of the image must also be respected. The theory, of any kind, always has the tendency to generalize. This trend of universalization is regarded from a postmodern point of view rather as a fall in the cliché, a trend towards uniformity. The paradox is, on the other hand, that the role of image in daily practice is insufficiently theorized.

5. Relativity – relativism

Postmodernity is often accused of relativism. The variety of codes of ethics, of theoretical options, of aesthetics of any kind (even modern) of regional and local cultures often leads us to believe that postmodernity is moving towards a total relativism. These objections are determined on the one hand by the general need (maybe also by the trend) of generalization and on the other hand the modernist rigor that wants to legitimize a theoretical formula or another as the only possible one.

Despite relativism, postmodernism sustain its right to relativity (relativity derived from a Nietzschean perspectivism). Thus, in the postmodern scenario we can say that "nothing is apriori legitimated here" (Ferry, 1990/1999, p 297) and that "all styles, all ages enjoy the right to difference" (Ferry, 1990 / 1999, p 297).

At Seidman postmodernity appears as a remedy to cure the millenarianism of modern era. It wouldn't be possible for postmodernity to have only weaknesses and shortcomings and to create just discontinuities because when rules organizing cultural life stop working is impossible for something new to put us in even greater difficulty (or put us in difficulty for no reason). So it seems that the widely criticized postmodernity is a response to a theoretical necessity. We try to follow this direction (without letting to be understood that this would be the only question that postmodernity can answer).

The revolt against modernist "high culture" is a fundamental characteristic of postmodern period (we say period, but we don't consider it closed, ourselves being right now included in this period). Excessively elitist aesthetics appears refined as a pearl polished to a roundness offending for human imperfection that polished it. This aesthetics takes the form of a phenomenon known only with negative connotations: aestheticism. This phenomenon is caused by an overbidding image.

Regarding the ambiguous relationship between modern and postmodern or between modernism and postmodernism we believe that the most lucid and balanced view belongs to Jameson that underlines that we are (even if we don't want to recognise it in some relation with the postmodern era because we exist in it).

The pop current means something accessible to everyone through popularisation (which is often inherent simplified to vulgarity). After the naturalization of the expression pop art reached pop music, pop science, and even pop culture. This popular culture aims to not only increase the access of more and more people to culture, but also the abolition of the "great culture". Philosophical systems are explained to young ones in comic books, Pavarotti plays a duet with Sepultura and scientific theories on the origins of the universe are explained through illustrations books sold in airports. It seems that there are some limits of the postmodern (the *anything goes* type of relativism). However, we do not believe to be a cultural period, or even an idea that has escaped caricaturisms and cinisms of all kinds. Critics of extreme postmodernity, pleasant and superficial as it may be, should take into account the fact that modernism is at least as ridiculous, but not as aware of its ridiculousness. The affirmation of the important role of consciousness is going through a phase in which attention moves from the consciousness of the subject to the consciousness of the object. In aesthetics this way opened from pop art in order to predict and to use the superficiality of the life form known as *the society of consumption*. We can say about pop artists what Sloterdijk says about the ones that represent religious institutions: that they do not believe but they let others to believe. There must be many stupid people for the few to remain wise (Sloterdijk 1983/2000, p 50), or at least we can guess...

We conclude by noticing that perhaps the ultimate paradox of postmodernism is that "despite the deconstructive efforts and radicalism, metafiction and some fundamental ideas continue to occur even after this extremely critical exercise. Therefore, something continues to be build, even in the worst case scenario." (Grădinaru 2010, p 372)

Bibliography:

- Baudrillard, J. [1970] (2005). *Societatea de consum*. București: Comunicare.ro
- Baudrillard, J. [1983] (1996). *Strategiile fatale*. Iași: Polirom
- Compagnon, A. [1990] (1998). *Cele cinci paradoxuri ale modernității*. Cluj: Echinox
- Ferry, L. [1990] (1997). *Homo aestheticus. Inventarea gustului în epoca democrată*. București: Meridiane
- Grădinaru, C. (2010). *Discursul filosofic postmodern. Cazul Baudrillard*. Iași: Institutul European

- Jameson, F. [1991] (2001). *Postmodernism or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Liotard, J.F. [1979] (2003). *Condiția postmodernă*. Cluj-Napoca: Idea Design&Print
- Liotard, J.F. [1988] (1997). *Postmodernul pe înțelesul copiilor*. Cluj: Apostrof
- Rorty, R. [1991] (2000). *Pragmatism și filosofie post-nietzscheană. Eseuri filosofice II*. București: Univers
- Seidman, S.[1990] (2001) *Dezbateri de esență: ordinea morală și criza socială în Alexander, J. C. și Seidman, S.(coord.)*. *Cultură și societate. Dezbateri contemporane*. Iași: Institutul European
- Sloterdijk, P. [1983] (2000) *Critica rațiunii cinice*. Volumul 1, Iași: Polirom
- Wunenburger, J.J. [1997] (2004). *Filozofia imaginilor*. Iași, Polirom

THE PERCEPTUAL ACTIVITY
AND THE POSSIBILITY OF KNOWLEDGE

Alina CIRIC

Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca

Abstract

Our paper focuses on the implications that the concept of phantasia has in the work of Aristotle and the differences between phantasia and imagination, the term used by the latin commentators of Aristotle to translate phantasia. We will present how the main difference between them reveals itself when we will integrate the use of the two terms. Phantasia, in the original Aristotelian text, corresponds to the perceiving apparatus, and imagination has a more limited meaning-it is the creating faculty and has no implication in perceiving. That its why imagination, in late medieval aristotelism, was converted to *imaginarum*, with a more accentuated esthetic function.

Keywords: phantasia, imagination, perception, late medieval aristotelism

The connection between our senses and exterior reality proves in every philosophical system the possibility of articulating that sort of knowledge that our existence in this world implies, and implicitly, shows the role that each subject takes in this world. In each philosophical system,

sense perception generates many questions connected with the manner in which a causal experience can be created, with the type of content that involves what has been perceived and with the manner in which we can connect our perception with other epistemic attitudes.

Our research is based around the aristotelian idea that takes senses as perceptual powers that become active when they are stimulated by exterior things. We will try to demonstrate and elaborate this by appealing mainly to two of Aristotle's works, *De anima* and *Parva naturalia*.¹

The aristotelian perceptual realism involves the teleological idea that sense powers and mental objects form a whole in which the qualities of external things actualize the corresponding sensitive powers. Associating perception with a change in the bodily organ caused by an exterior object will determinate the manner in which this sort of movement can relate with perception seen as an act of the soul. For Aristotle, the sensitive capacities are seen as passive and active powers. Thus, the physical movement will divide between the ability to move, to act on a body (*dunamin to men poiein ekhon*) and the ability to be acted upon (*to de paskhein*).

For Aristotle, what is perceived (*aistheton*) and perception (*aesthesis*) form a single act, but as we shall see, their being differs. The passive potencies that are acted upon have an equivalent active potency that acts upon them. In Aristotle's system, the theory of natural potencies is associated with form and matter as central ontological constituents. Because perception begins with exterior objects, for each sense there is a corresponding specific object. This will make the object of perception an active part of the perceptual act. As we said before, for Aristotle, the actuality of what has been perceived and the senses that perceived are one and the same. In this way, perception is the actualization of a passive potency.

This sort of movement encounters the problem of how the object that generates movement connects with the power that will be activated through him. In this moment, it is necessary to introduce the notion of the medium or the interval that stays between the active power and the passive one.

The interval, who becomes transparent due to light, will be affected by the object, in such a manner in which the lacking material form will activate the seeing power. This sort of changing in the medium will go on in the transparent liquid that exists in the eyes, making thus possible the actualization of the seeing power.

It is necessary then to clarify some central concepts that we find in Aristotle's work.

Form appears as a critical internal principle which determines the existence of a species. According to it, form appears as a dynamic principle of *entelechia*, of action aimed at achieving perfection. In chapter II of *De anima*, Aristotle characterized senses as potentiality that is updated by something exterior to them. These skills are described by the levels of

¹ Aristotle, *Parva naturalia*, trad. Ștefan Mironescu, Ed. Științifică, 1972

potentiality. For Aristotle, any perceptual analysis must begin with the analysis of objects, which are the cause of sensations.

Because senses are passive potencies and can not be perceived by themselves, they need an exterior object. This sensible object will become an active part in the perceiving act. Thus, the color white visibility is actualized when we are looking at something white, even though visibility is separated from the act of seeing. The perceptual forms are for Aristotle objective constituents of reality, in a way in which what is perceived and his sense are one and the same. This game between potentiality and actuality in Aristotle's philosophy is describing the factors that are generating movement in Aristotle's natural philosophy. For Aristotle it is important to bear in mind that the one who activates the sense power does not relate directly with it, the central factor here is the medium or the interval that make possible the intervention of active power upon the passive power. The object has this capacity to change the medium, which becomes transparent due to light making visible the form without matter and thus able to be perceived. This movement in the medium will go on in the eye liquid, making thus possible the act of seeing. (the color of the thing seen will change the air and this transformation will go on with the organ that is perceiving.)

The medium as a necessary distance manifests itself in the impossibility to access the thing perceived without this mediation: the lack of distance will make that the perceiving power and the sensible object to be undifferentiated and impossible to recognize the identity of things.

In Aristotle's *Parva naturalia*², the heart appears as the organ in which these powers are being stored and as the final place in which sensation occurs. Medium is part from the physiological account of perception. Each sense organ has to be capable to receive the sensible form that will activate the faculty to receive. These changes in the sense organs are determinate by the sensitive soul, which is the formal cause of perception. This is how perception appears as the actualization of a passive power.³

The mediation of the interval is necessary due to the impossibility of seeing the object without any distance between him and the eye. When the passing is being made from potentiality to actuality, the sense organs endure a sort of alteration that proves the power of the object to act, but for Aristotle, the actuality of the perceptual capacity and the perceptibility of the object represents a different kind of change.⁴ The changes that are taking place in sense organs are determinate by the sensitive soul, as the formal cause of perception.

² *Parva Naturalia*, De sensu 2, 419a30, ed.cit., pag 23

³ *Theories of Perception in Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy*, cap. Aristotle's Theory of Perception and Medieval Aristotelism, S. Knuutila, Pekka Kärkkäinen, (Studies in the History of Philosophy of Mind)Dordrecht: Springer 2011 pag 16

⁴ Aristotel, *De anima*, II, 5, traducere și comentarii, Alexander Baumgarten, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2005

Considering the exterior objects being passive or active perceived, Aristotle tries to show that when an object actualize a passive sensorial power in that moment also the perceptibility of the object is actualized. The perceptual act involves receiving the form of the material object, followed by a cognitive state that generates a perceptual awareness. This sort of perceptual awareness makes the sense organ to receive the sensory impression (*aisthema*). The impression received by sense is transported in the blood and then in the heart and the nature of the created phantasm depends on the physical constituents of the subject. After, *phantasmata*, images that remained from past perceptions, are being generated which are to be found in the sensitive faculty of the soul and actualized with the help of imagination. The last step is the intervention of memory that represents this phantasm as passed things.

For Aristotle, the sense organs who receive the sensible form of the object are instruments of the soul, which is the real subject of perception, perceptions being acts of his perceptual power.

As we said before, when a perceptible form actualizes a sensitive passive power, the possibility of her being perceived is actualized in the same time with the passive power. The actuality of perceptive potentiality takes place in the perceiving subject and not in the object which is potentially perceived. This is possible due to the formal identity that exists between the sensible form of the exterior objects and the form without matter that updates the sense power. The problem that we encounter here is how the sensitive content is present to subject.

Because we had already spoken about the mediating of the interval, it is suitable now to introduce, for shaping the perceiving apparatus in Aristotle, the role and function of image. There is in history of philosophy a way in which the concept of image is linked to shaping human consciousness.⁵ In medieval period a connection between producing images and human consciousness is to be found that is leading afterward to the development of an ethical existence that is centered around the image of the individual as *imago dei* .(medieval aristotelian heritage)⁶. The classical theory of image opens up the problem of subjectivity and corporal representation. Sensory perception and memory will generate beliefs and judgments that will define the way in which the individual will rapport to the world.

What for Plato appears as a process of perception and image generating will lead afterwards the subject which perceived towards his own soul (psyche). As the process of perception becomes internalized the mental activity is triggered.

⁵. Sara Heinämaa, Vili Lähteenmäki, Pauliina Remes, *Consciousness: From Perception to Reflection in the History of Philosophy*, Dordrecht: Springer 2000

⁶ Stephen G. Nichols, *Picture, Image and Subjectivity in Medieval Culture*, *MLN*, Vol 108, Nr. 4 French Issue, Sept. 1993, pp.617-637, The Johns Hopkins University Press.

The function of image is to clarify and to show the role of phantasia in Aristotle's work. Through the effect of resemblance, the image connects us with the world through a sort of revealing resemblance, but who ontologically speaking is different from the terms that connects. Showing this type of value that image has, a crucial role will be played by the medium that, by crossing, will become a place of ontological manifestation.

The medium will capture the image of the object, a dematerialized image that is already present in the soul.⁷ Although it has a nature of its own, image participates to the nature of the thing showed, opening the access to the knowledge of that thing and to its predictability.

In trying to establish a certain dignity to image, we have to demonstrate her ontological consistency.⁸ Her proper nature becomes more visible with the fact that image doesn't represent only the material nature of the thing, but also his noetic nature. Its participation to being is suggested by the representative content rendered *in* image. Image appears as a mediator between language and thinking, although she is expressed through language, she manages to impose herself both to our eyes and our intellectual understanding. This ontology of the medium that ancient philosophy offers is a form of outlining the invisible essence of transcendental terms. We can identify the private nature of medium in the cosmological discourse in Timaeus, under the specie of a sensitive and enlightening nature. For Aristotle, the medium corresponds to the pure act, *energeia*, being the place in which *energeia* manifests. The necessity of the mediating space as locus of manifestation of opposites is reflected in Timaeus, when Plato describes triangulation, with the purpose of showing the mediated continuity that this relation involves.

The medium reveals the essence of the thing captured through image by generating a whole in the exterior space, it makes place to manifestation *in absentia* of the transcendental terms. The manner in which the medium can reveal the non-visible sense of the image created by crossing him with the eyes leads to the possibility of creating herself, revealing thus her meaning. The final point of the perceptual process reaches the perception of that special interiority, an interiority of the image that is capable of justifying the process of de-reification of the object. The idea of an image that has an ontological dimension capable of opening up to otherness is to be found also in Heidegger and Levinas work.

In trying to describe the perceptual apparatus in Aristotle, we should first classify the role of the soul (*psuche*) in Aristotle's philosophy and his faculties.

For Aristotle, there are three types of substances (*ousia*): the matter that by herself can't subsist, form that makes what it is, and the compound of them.

⁷ De anima, III, 431 b 29: „is not the rock who is in the soul, but her species”, ed.cit.

⁸ Vasiliu, Anca, Despre diafan, Ed.Polirom, Bucuresti, 2010

Psuche appears as the form of natural bodies which are potentially alive. Bound of substance theory in Aristotle, are also the four way in which we can tell the cause (*aition*) of a thing: the material cause through one thing identifies itself with his nature, the formal cause that specifies what sort of thing is, the efficient cause that specifies who created that thing and the final cause that shows for what this thing has been created.⁹ Because the soul is all of these causes beside the first one, he also determinates the changes taking place in it. For Aristotle, psuche is responsible not only for movement, but also for alteration (*alloiosis*) and growth.¹⁰

But still, for Aristotle, the soul it's not the singular cause of perception because this will lead to neglect the type of damage that occurs: an exclusive internal cause of perception will ignore the nature of the thing being affected and which determines after all the type of alteration and her nature. Only because animated bodies possess a soul, we can speak of perception in them, making thereby the soul a principle of growth, movement and nutrition.¹¹

The manner in which for Aristotle we can start describing perception involves first of all investigating the exterior objects that are specific to each sense. Each sense has an object that is specific to him (*idion*). The other objects are only accidentally perceived, not in virtue of what they are but only because they are accidents of the proper sensible. The supreme form of perception, seeing, has as a corresponding object, what is to be seen. The color of the object affects the medium and afterwards will affect the sense organ. In the physiological account of perception for each faculty of the soul, besides nous, there is a corresponding sense organ. This connection between incorporeal faculties and the body that receives them shows the type of relation that is forming between the soul and the body. Aristotle describes this relation as "hypothetical necessity"¹²: the body as a whole and the body as parts have a specific mode for being an instrument (*organon*). For sense organs, their distinctive capacity is to receive the form without matter of the objects.¹³ This capacity of the objects is more visible by looking at the type of transformation that the sense organ undergoes. The organ will become similar to the object that affected him. This sort of change that takes place between the organ and the exterior object, despite the fact that the organ is receiving the form of the object, is encountered also in the inanimate substances.¹⁴

⁹ Fizica, II, 3, trad. N.I.Barbu, Ed. Stiințifică 1966.

¹⁰ De anima, II, 4, p. 150

¹¹ Cambridge Companion to Aristotle, ed. Jonathan Branes, cha. Psychology, p. 199., Cambridge University Press, 1995

¹² Parva naturalia, ed.cit. p. 59

¹³ De anima, II, 12, ed. cit., p. 161

¹⁴ Fizica, VII, 2 , ed. Cit., p. 123

Any sort of alteration necessitates the function of the medium. The difference that is to be found in the sort of change that affects corporeal organs and the change that affects incorporeal entities is the degree of perceptual awareness.

At the corporeal level, alteration takes place like this: the part that has been heated entering in contact with something hot will heat the part that is closer to her, and this will generate the propagation being brought to its origin.¹⁵ Because we are speaking of alteration, this thing has to take place in a perception. This type of alteration needs to be material in order to generate action: in what concerns memory, alteration begins from psuche and ends in the sense organs.¹⁶ For Aristotle, the lower part of the soul, the one which desires, will develop a need, phantasy will identify an object that can fulfill that need. It is evident now that action originates in desire.¹⁷ Perception and desire are common affects both to body and to soul. Beside nous, all other affects are common. Only the animate body can endure alteration. Even thou, for Aristotle, all soul's alteration take place in the body, this will not lead to an extreme physicalism that makes perceiving something blue to color the pupil of the eye in blue. Only the activities of abstract thought don't need organs, these are not physically determinate, but these for humans involve phantasia.¹⁸

We can see now that there are two types of causes that generate action: the change in the organ will generate phantasmata that will affect the heart, as central place of senses. The heart being affected will generate later movement from the other parts of the body around her. On the other hand, seeing and wanting the visible object will generate movement towards consuming that object. It is necessary that in this point we try to explain how desire takes place in the heart of the subject. We have already made clear that a sort of extreme physicalism, as in Descartes metaphysics, is to be avoided here also. Thus, the material part of action is represented by corporal movements, and the soul modes are becoming matter for forming desire. For Aristotle, action cannot be caused by something else than an emotional state of the subject. It is not enough to exist only exterior causes that can determinate action, but this sort of movement has to have a psychological equivalent.

This hilomorphism that characterizes the body-soul relationship will affect the whole corpus developed in *De anima*, in what regards perception

¹⁵ *De Insomniis*, 2, ed. cit, p. 45

¹⁶ *De anima*, I, 4, ed.cit, p. 88

¹⁷ *Cambridge Companion to Aristotle*, cap Psychology, ed. cit. p. 211

¹⁸ „The fact that Aristotle allows that there can be a capacity witch lack an organ shows that he is not committed on principle t the claim that every event must either be a physical event or state or be determined by a physical event or state. It must be said, though, that his discussion of nous in *De anima* III, 4-5 is quite remarkably obscure.” *Cambridge Companion to Aristotle*, ed. cit., p. 213.

and thinking. In *Metaphysics*¹⁹, Aristotle shows that we can consider form as substance because form is the cause of being, and being is not simply only existence. Even though there is this type of hylomorphism, the animated body will not act as if there is a difference between body and soul, making them two substances that can exist one without the other. Matter becomes alive only when soul is present in it. It becomes clear that we do not have to do with two simple substances but with a hylomorphic whole.²⁰ Even though, soul as form cannot be identical with body, when soul animates the body there is only one being in actuality, an animated body. Form received by the body ensures its identity with the soul from which he receives his essence. Because hylomorphic theory applies also to perception and thinking, explaining perception and thinking in terms of movement revolves around the concept of received form. The universe being split between animated and non-animated beings, only animals will become subjects of changes that we can find in perception. However, there must be a distinctive feature of this change so that it becomes an instance of perception and thinking.

For Aristotle, perception is seen as this double movement between being moved and being affected, entailing a special sort of alteration. The other feature of perception is that the organ who receives becomes similar with the object that affected him. For Aristotle, the subject of perception receives form in a manner corresponding to his proportion (*logos*).²¹ The capacity that the subject has to receive the form of the object is due to the isomorphism that is creating between the two forms. It is important to show here that perception differs from movement taken in a larger way. To avoid handling this isomorphism literally, that the eye will become blue if you perceive something blue, this isomorphism implied by the theory of Aristotle, has to be understood as intentional one.²² According to this, thinking has to be affected also by the object of our thoughts. Perceptual ability found in perception must characterize also thinking, for being able to identify their mental form.²³ We can once more clarify this type of affection that characterizes thinking: the subject is thinking of an object, having the ability to identify his intelligible form, this intelligible object will act upon thinking causing the power of mind to determinate the isomorphism between the intelligible form of the object and the sensible one. To be able to understand this, we have not to forget that the nature of our mind has the capacity to think all objects. Just the fact that the mind thinks all the things, it cannot be

¹⁹ *Metafizica*, VII 17, trad. Stefan Bezdechi, Ed. Iri, București, 1999, p.325

²⁰ Christopher Shield, *Aristotle*, Routledge Philosophers, cap7 Living Beings, ed. Brian Leiter, University of Texas, Austin, 2007, p. 285

²¹ "For convenience sake, we can simply say that the perceiving subject becomes isomorphic with the sensible quality." Aristotle, *Routledge Philosophers*, cap7 Living Beings, pag.295

²² Aristotle, *Routledge Philosophers*, ed.cit., p. 297

²³ *De anima*, 429a12, ed.cit.

mixed with these, so the nature of our mind cannot be more than one potential, given that it does not interfere with the things that is thinking about.

Aristotle concludes that mind is not one of the things that is thinking about, and, even more, that it does not exist before thinking something.²⁴ The central aristotelian idea is that sense objects cause damage from which the subject develops various perceptive powers. For Aristotle, the meaning of a thing is true when it shows what that thing is according to his formal essence and not when he is addressing a subject.

For Aristotle, this type of change that we encounter in perception implies the development of two type of movement: passing from potentiality to actuality implies a change in the sense organ that will affect also the activity of the object. But this movement is different from that who acts upon perceptual activity and the perceptibility of object. Because the object of perception is potentially and actually perceivable, Aristotle stresses the fact that when an object actualizes the passive sensory power he actualizes also the perceptibility of the object. The way in which the receiving capacity can take the perceived form is seen as a cognitive state determinate by the perceived object.

In *De insomniis*²⁵, Aristotle talks about the way in which sense impression are transported through blood to the heart making thus that the nature of our phantasms to depend on the physical constitution of the subject.²⁶ This leads to a possible physical fundament of our sense impressions. Imagination and memory will interfere now: imagination will actualize the phantasms that are to be found in the sensitive faculty after there where caused by sense impressions and memory as the faculty through which there are actualized as passed things. Starting from Aristotle and the fact that we cannot think without phantasmata (as images derived from perceptions), the medieval aristotelian heritage gave the famous thesis of *conversion ad phantasmata*.²⁷ Saint Thomas Aquinas interprets as follows the problem of potentiality and actuality in Aristotle's work: the senses are passive and they posed in their nature the capacity of being changed by external objects. For Toma, this sort of change is divided into natural and spiritual one. The natural change takes place by receiving the form of the thing that caused movement accordingly to his natural existence (receiving heat in the heated thing). Spiritual movement is due to receive the form of the thing that caused that movement accordingly to his spiritual existence. (such as the form of the color is received in the eye without changing his color). The intention of the sensible form to generate a spiritual movement is considered by Toma to characterize an incorporeal being.

²⁴ *De anima*, 429a22, ed. cit., p. 357

²⁵ *De insomniis* 3, p. 33

²⁶ Martha C. Nussbaum, Amélie Oksenberg Rorty, *Essays on Aristotle's De anima*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1997, p. 298

²⁷ Toma d'Aquino, *Summa Theologiae*, trad. Andrei Bereschi, Ed. Polirom, 2009

For Toma, intentions only are not causing any natural changes in the medium. Only this sort of spiritual changes that they generate shows that things that pose enough corporality can be capable of causing a movement that is typical to inanimate substances. Toma considers that intern common sense receives impressions from other senses and converts them afterwards in a distinctive perceptual act.

The majority of medieval commentators have accepted the aristotelian idea that normal perception actualizes uniformly the perceived sensible forms. This perspective involves the formal identity between the sensible form that is to be found in external objects and the form without matter that is actualized by the sensitive power.²⁸ This sort of perceptual realism describes that teleological idea according to which perceiving powers and their extra mental objects are forming a whole in which the qualities of things actualize the corresponding sensitive powers. But it is important to understand that this sort of formal identity does not explain the content of the perceiving act.

To be able to create continuity in the hierarchy of beings, Aristotle implies this common physiological ground between humans and animals. But, there is a special place reserved to human phantasia. In *Metaphysics* book I²⁹, Aristotle says that the other animals are living due to memory and their phantasia, but human needs more than that. He speaks about *aisthetike phantasia*³⁰ For Aristotle, beings that have phantasia are behaving in conformity with the faculty that they posed. The soul has the capacity to move human being, but for non-rational being it cannot be a movement generated by intellect or an ethical choice. Animals are capable of movement because they posed wish or the faculty to desire. But wish cannot exist without phantasia. We have to connect phantasia to perception and reason.

For Aristotle, the order of knowledge starts first with the object of desire that will produce movement. We can see now that there are three causes of movement: desire, phantasia and reason.

At the beginning of chapter 10 in book III³¹, Aristotle says that these can be reduced to two, desire and nous, if we consider phantasia as a form of vision.³² For Aristotle, phantasia can be considered as a form of reason, of noesis, using the intellect. Aristotle draws attention that many are those who are guided by phantasia despite their own knowledge and other animals are lead only by phantasia, lacking that type of logismos reasoning.³³ It is obvious now that movement for animals is generated by the faculty of desire. The object of desire that provokes action is good or the apparent good, the good obtained through action. The result of our actions can be a damaging good, because phantasia and desire can be affected by error. This will create

²⁸ Theories of perception in Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy, ed.cit., p. 16

²⁹ *Metafizica*, 98o825 ff. ed. cit.

³⁰ *De anima*, 433b31, ed.cit.

³¹ *De anima*,433a9f, ed.cit.

³² *De anima*,433a9f, ed.cit.

³³ *De anima*, 433a10-12, ed.cit.

the difference between different types of phantasia according to the type of reason that animals can attain. For beings that can deliberate, the proper phantasia that they posed is *phantasia bouletike*³⁴ and is different from phantasia that non-rational animals have, because the other forms of phantasia involve reflection on the actions that they generate, this not being possible in case of animals that don't have reason.

This sort of special capacity involves a special connection that human mind establishes with time, as a necessary condition to create the reflexive act, because what now can seem as a good thing to do in the future may appear as something bad and in this way reason may resist acting impulsively. The *appétit* of non-rational being manifests only in concordance with desire for apparent good, which is generated by a past perception of a similar good. It is evident now that for both animals and humans phantasia is a sort of movement generated by perception.

In *De insomniis*³⁵, natural perception is described as a sort of alteration (*alloiosis*). The sensible objects produce sensations and this affection remains also in them, similar to the water movements that continue even thou what caused them is ceasing. This affection encounters as mediation the sense organs and also the skin. The sensation takes place when this movement of sense organs makes us aware when we are awake that we see and we hear things. In the work that we've cited, the blood is the one who leads this affection of sense organs. The debut of chapter 3 from the cited volume expresses clearly that movement comes from perception, what we establish before as the base for perception. This affection is explained during night time through the fact that this movements generated by sense organs are reversed by the blood to the starting point of perception even more efficient then during day time because they are being reversed with the heart flux from exterior to interior. This sort of movements cannot be generated only by exterior factors, because these images that blood is carrying them, phantasiai, and who are affecting him, are in a way physical bodies that can be weakened in their affection by time passing by. Each of these phantasiai appears as a shadow of a past sensation.³⁶

The other aspect of phantasia implies her activity regarding soul. The discussion from chapter 5 of book II in *De anima* regarding perception and continued with the role of intellect introduces also the debate about types of phantasia and also the differences between them. It is wrong to think a common space between them in which aspects regarding perception and authentic knowledge will form a strong bound.³⁷ Because we cannot find in Aristotle the same formula as we find in Plato regarding phantasia-a

³⁴ *De anima*, 434a7ed.cit

³⁵ *De insomniis*, *Parva naturalia*, 459b4ff, ed.cit

³⁶ *De insomniis*, 461b21-2, ed.cit

³⁷ *Phantasia in classical thought*, cap. *Phantasia in Aristotle and Theophrastus*, Gerard Watson, Galway University Press, 1988 p,21

combination between aisthesis and doxa. We have seen before that for Aristotle phantasia is not to be identified completely with sensibility or reasoning, even though it has a starting point in aesthesis. Because it appears as a form through which we are aware of ourselves and of the world, phantasia regards a different state of consciousness since it's not identified with thinking or sensibility.

Phantasia is different from perception because perception appears as a capacity, *dynamis*, or as an activity, *energeia* but phantasia is there even though there isn't an immediately perceived thing and it also has a correspondence in reality-phantasiai, images that we encounter in our dreams. But the most important difference is that perceptions are always true and most of the time phantasiai are not. Phantasia can be true or fake according to the perception that is corresponding to her, but it cannot be true or fake in the sense of a judgment. Because it provides materials on which our mind is creating judgments, it can appear as a faculty leading to truth, only in this way it can be connected with judgment. It cannot be confused with intuitive knowledge, this being always true, because phantasia can induce error. Even though doxa is different from intuitive knowledge, belief or doxa can be true or false, our belief cannot be identified with phantasia, because we must try our beliefs in reality in order to count on them. Animals even though they possess phantasia, they cannot try this type of assurance because it involves logos or reason, that they don't have.

Aristotle shows thus that phantasia for him cannot have the mentioned platonic formula. Trying to create special features common only to phantasia, Aristotle shows that this cannot be without an actual perception, and beings without perception cannot have it. The perception of features of the objects special designated to senses (color to seeing) has the most potential to be true, the objects that are accidentally perceived have a bigger degree of error. Due to this type of perception phantasia will be veridical and will not lead to error as long as perception of special objects is there and in the other cases her degree of veridicity will be proportional with the presence or distance of the object or with the presence or lack of the faculty. This is what was meant by sustaining that phantasia originates in an actual perception. To fulfill itself, it needs light, because without light we cannot see and seeing is the highest form of perception. Even though, it originates in perception; it cannot be identified with sensation or perception either. It *resembles* perception, is a movement caused by something perceived, true or false according to the type of perception that took place and is a cause of action in humans and animals. Perceiving something beautiful will generate following that thing as a form of guaranteeing for the goodness and kindness of that thing. This feature will be transmitted to the intellective soul generating desire for that thing. Phantasmata, what was kept from a past perception, will become thus necessary to the soul, without it the process of knowledge cannot take place.³⁸

³⁸ De anima, 421a8-17, ed.cit

Book III continues with the manner in which through phantasmata, noetikon or the intellective faculty is gained access to forms as objects of knowledge. The intellective soul will conserve these form-images of things, noemata, and based on them desiring or avoiding other objects will take place. Phantasia is required to realize the conversion of an actual perception between image-thought. For Aristotle, the objects of thought are to be found between forms that are objects of perception, because phantasmata are those forms without matter that are remaining behind an actual perception. That is why for Aristotle, when we contemplate, we contemplate the phantasm of that thing. But the role of phantasia is restricted only to offer these contents to the intellective soul, it is not enough to built judgments only on what phantasia has to offer because this involves combining thoughts and that goes beyond the power of phantasia.

In our short introduction of the perceiving apparatus in Aristotle's work, we tried to present the main terms in which perception occurs and the most evident relations that are creating between them. Because we investigated Aristotle's thinking, we tried to make it clear that our knowledge begins with the effect that our physical world has on us and that this in Aristotle's work is impossible to avoid. Aristotle offers us a chance to a better understanding of ourselves through perceiving the exterior world. The perceiving apparatus gives us a better knowledge of our selves by focusing on what is real, despite contemplating what is above the physical world. Perception not only shapes the place of the subject in this world but also enlarges the possibility of his on knowledge and of the world in which he acts.

Bibliography:

Main works:

Aristotle, *De anima*, trad. Alex. Baumgarten, Humanitas, Bucuresti 2005

Aristotle, *Parva naturalia*, trad. Ștefan Mironescu, Ed. Științifică, Bucuresti, 1972

Aristotle, *Fizica*, trad. N.I. Barbu, Ed. Științifică, Bucuresti, 1966

Aristotle, *Metafizica*, trad. Stefan Bezdechi, Ed. Iri, Bucuresti, 1999

Cited works:

Knuutila, S. Pekka Kärkkäinen, *Theories of Perception in Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy (Studies in the History of Philosophy of Mind)*, Dordrecht: Springer 2011

Sara Heinämaa, Vili Lähteenmäki, Pauliina Remes, *Consciousness: From Perception to Reflection in the History of Philosophy*, Dordrecht: Springer 2000

Stephen G. Nichols, *Picture, Image and Subjectivity in Medieval Culture*, MLN, Vol 108, Nr. 4 French Issue, Sept. 1993, The Johns Hopkins University Press

- Vasiliu, Anca, *Despre diafan*, Ed. Polirom, Bucuresti, 2010
- Cambridge Companion to Aristotle, ed. Jonathan Barnes, Cambridge University Press, 1995
- Christopher Shield, *Aristotle*, Routledge Philosophers, ed. Brian Leiter, University of Texas, Austin, 2007
- Martha C. Nussbaum, Amélie Oksenberg Rorty, *Essays on Aristotle's De anima*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1997
- Toma d'Aquino, *Summa Theologiae*, trad. Andrei Bereschi, Ed. Polirom, 2009
- Watson, G. *Phantasia in classical thought*, Galway University Press, 1988

QUELQUES RÉFLEXIONS AUTOUR DU CONCEPT DE
CONTRADICTION CHEZ SIMONE WEIL

Silvia Mihaela GRIGOREAN, Marin GRIGOREAN
Université Babeș-Bolyai, Cluj-Napoca

Résumé

Le paradoxe de la pensée de Simone Weil consiste dans le fait qu'elle appartient à une religion – le christianisme, comprenant des *faits et des enseignements de Jésus*, sans être pourtant *intégré complètement* à cette tradition spirituelle. Autrement dit, son oeuvre l'est et ne l'est pas de tradition chrétienne et, en même temps, c'est complètement quelque chose de nouveau. En même temps, le texte weilein permet aussi une autre approche: celui du chercheur libre de toute préjugé religieuse ou disciplinaire, intéressé plutôt à la manière dans laquelle l'expérience intérieure acquiert un Sens en captant l'intuition du sacré. L'intuition de concilier l'opposition radicale entre hellénisme et christianisme accentué par la pensée contemporaine et la philosophie du christianisme, est inspiré pour Simone Weil d'une croyance qui appartienne de l'universel, plus proche d'une Tradition primordiale que d'une religion particulier et qui nous révèle que la Vérité du christianisme n'est pas de l'ordre de la pensée mais de la Vie, afin de réaliser un noyau intérieur flexible, nécessaire à l'évolution spirituelle et à la connaissance authentique.

Mots-clés: philosophie du christianisme, tradition spirituelle, l'intuition du sacré, l'universel, herméneutique transdisciplinaire, information spirituelle

Par une transparence voilée interpellant et contradictoire, les vérités paradoxales comprises dans les atteintes de Simone Weil sont de nos jours plus actuelles que jamais. Dans une résonance humaniste transculturelle, elle nous inspire la compréhension du monde dans lequel nous vivons, pour accéder vers une attitude d'ouverture, tolérance, rigueur et dialogue. Son message transreligieux franchit comme un Mot Vivant tous les niveaux de conscience: un espoir de devenir Vivants, dans le miroir du sacré. Les écrits de Simone Weil rejoint Pascal et Kierkegaard en traitant des sujets d'une spiritualité qui se trouve au-delà de tout religion, mais en recherchons l'expériences de la pratique des vertus humanistes: l'ouverture, la tolérance, le renoncement, la simplicité, le dialogue. Sa conversion inachevée atteste son désir de faire l'unité de l'intérieur avec l'extérieur de la tradition chrétienne, car elle décide de rester avec cet ensemble des niveaux des Réalité que l'Église n'a pas pu ou pas voulu encore intégrer: des pauvres, des humilés, des incroyants, des hérétiques: "Elle est la sur le parvis en attente de Dieu, sans bouger, immobile, avec patience, portant pour toujours avec elle dans son coeur la passion du Christ et toutes les choses bonnes que Dieu aime, mais que l'Église n'a pas encore reconnues"¹ La lecture des écrits de Simone Weil est une expérience transpersonnel parce qu'elle te pris dans la possession impersonnel on t'obligeant avec tandresse de te de-déposséder de tous qui est personnel.

Le paradoxe de la pensée de Simone Weil consiste dans le fait qu'elle appartient à une religion – le christianisme, comprenant des *faits et des enseignements de Jésus*, sans être pourtant *intégré complètement* à cette tradition spirituelle. Autrement dit, son oeuvre l'est et ne l'est pas de tradition chrétienne et, en même temps, c'est complètement quelque chose de nouveau. En même temps, le texte weilein permet aussi une autre approche: celui du chercheur libre de toute préjugé religieuse ou disciplinaire, intéressé plutôt à la manière dans laquelle l'expérience intérieure acquiert un Sens en captant l'intuition du sacré. La vocation d'herméneute de Jésus est convergente à sa mission, dont la logique génère la nouveauté. Le langage transdisciplinaire est, en même temps, transmission et trans-mission de l'information spirituelle, impliquant de même la dimension intersubjective que celle trans-subjective de la Réalité. Une herméneutique transdisciplinaire de la pensée de Simone Weil vise la compréhension et l'interprétation de l'information spirituelle comme foudre traversant simultanément la méditation, l'imaginatif et le silence d'entre eux et leur résonance avec le corps, l'esprit et le cœur du chercheur de sens. Le discours weilein capte dans la compréhension du message universel de Jésus le mouvement de

¹ Georges Hourdin, Introduction au livre *La Pensanteur et la Grace* de Simone Weil, Paris, 1962

traversée de l'information spirituelle *entre* le sens raisonnable, le sens transcendant, trans-descendant et trans-significatif *de la grâce*: „Si il y a une tradition religieuse que je garde comme mon patrimoine, c'est la tradition catholique. La tradition chrétienne, française, hellénique est la mienne; la tradition hébraïque m'est étrangère. (...) Parmi eux, le christianisme a son véritable accent, lui qui donnait aux esclaves la liberté surnaturelle”.²

Emmanuel Gabellieri, philosophe chrétien et exégète de Simone Weil, distingue trois possibilités d'aborder la question religieuse en rapport avec les autres aspects de l'existence:

La dimension religieuse de l'enseignement et de la culture
religion et laïcité

la dimension spirituelle de tout enseignement

(2) La dimension culturelle et sociale de la religion

la religion créatrice de communauté et de vie publique

spiritualité du travail

Fêtes et cérémonies religieuses

(3) La dimension esthétique de la révélation chrétienne

Tous ces trois perspectives sont mis en correspondance avec les niveaux des contradictoires comme *une conscience des limites* de la nature et de l'esprit:

antinomies ontologiques primordiales: essence-existence, temps-éternité, singulier-universel, liberté-nécessité

antinomies ontologiques sociales: individu-société, contemplation-travail, force-justice

antinomies proprement ontothéologiques: nature-grâce, malheur-amour surnaturel, Dieu personnel-impersonnel, Incarnation-universalité

L'intuition de concilier l'opposition radicale entre hellénisme et christianisme accentué par la pensée contemporaine et la philosophie du christianisme, est inspiré pour Simone Weil d'une croyance qui appartienne de l'universel, plus proche d'une Tradition primordiale que d'une religion particulier et qui nous révèle que la Vérité du christianisme n'est pas de l'ordre de la pensée mais de la Vie, afin de réaliser un noyau intérieur flexible, nécessaire à l'évolution spirituelle et à la connaissance authentique. Les trois mystères surnaturels humaines – ouvertures vers le Tiers Caché (vers le Christ) sont trois ouvertures qui donnent directement accès à la porte centrale qui est le Christ: la beauté, l'opération de l'intelligence et l'amour. La notion de personne est fondamentale et essentielle pour le Christianisme. *Per-sona* les sons passaient à travers. *Personnare* signifie retentir, résonner. La personne est un résonateur, un amplificateur. Comment on peut s'approcher le transhumanisme que Simone Weil nous propose par la redécouvert du sentiment de la dignité personnelle liée à la résonance dissonante entre la brisure de son être purifiée par la souffrance, l'humiliation, l'abandon, la dérélition et l'harmonie de l'ordre divin? La seconde serait de se demander si la notion de valeur est équivalente avec la

² Simone Weil, *Oeuvres*, Quatro Gallimard, Paris, 1999.

notion du bien. Comment peut-on devenir et expérimenter *la valeur* qui est l'objet de notre acte de connaissance ? Philosophiquement la notion de *personne* est la suite de *l'hypostase*. La notion de *personne* indique l'ultime principe d'individuation, *la singularité substancielle*, qui fait que chacun n'est pas *un être* par accident mais substancielle. Il faut comprendre la conscience de soi et la conscience morale comme réalité de la personne qui permet de se déterminer en conformité avec une règle de vie intérieure. La religion chrétienne ontologise le *moi* en lui donnant un statut d'être qui le rend irréductible au divin dont il n'est ni une parti ni une émanation, au contraire de ce qu'enseignent les religions orientales. Chaque âme est créée par Dieu, mais elle n'est pas Dieu, elle s'en distingue substancielle. Pour Simone Weil, le rapport *Dieu-crédation* comme niveau de médiation et le passage à la limite est équivalente avec Dieu comme *unité des contraires*: il y a en Dieu unité entre le principe créateur et ordonnateur de limitation et la matière inerte qui est indétermination. Les personnes divines représentent *le principe de limitation (maximum de distance)* et l'union entre le principe créateur et ordonnateur de limitation et la matière inerte qui est indétermination (*maximum d'unité*). Le Christ comme étant la *moyenne proportionnelle – l'harmonie ou il se trouve entre les contraires le maximum de distance et le maximum d'unité*. Le Christ comme la seconde Personne de la Trinité il incarne le *passage à la limite* de l'amour qui passe tout connaissance: cette intersection entre une personne et la matière inerte. Existe une continuité ou une discontinuité entre *personnel-impersonnel-transpersonnel* et quelle est le rapport avec le concept de *pluralité* ? Il faut explorer ce qui est entre *personnel-impersonnel-transpersonnel* et comment la cohérence peut être rétabli malgré l'expérience de la discontinuité entre les trois niveaux de conscience.

Parmi les questions liées au ternaire épistémologique *l'écoute - le don - l'intelligence affectif* en s'arrête sur celles autour des *niveaux de connaissance et des niveaux d'Être*:

Est qu'il y a des niveaux de connaissance et des niveaux d'Être dans la tradition chrétienne en rapport avec le concept de la trinité ?

Est qu'il y a des références dans la tradition chrétienne concernant le niveau intellectuel de l'homme, alors qu'elle parle plutôt du corps, de l'âme et de l'esprit ?

La gnose comme *une écoute* qui révèle en nous le *non-attachement* à nos connaissances, alors que *le savoir* est plutôt un contenu épistémologique de l'information spirituelle qui correspond à des niveaux de Réalité qui configurent les domaines disciplinaires. Si on fait l'expérience intérieure de ce qu'on a découvert au niveau intellectuelle, la conséquence c'est de les intégrer et de découvrir qu'elles nous n'appartiennent pas et cette conscience de dépouillement est la source du *don* liée à *l'humilité*. Reconnaître que les savoirs ne n'appartiennent pas et notre être est un lieu privilégié pour les transmettre en gardant l'unicité de leur compréhension. Reconnaître qu'il y a au fond de l'homme une vérité universelle qui ne

n'appartient pas et l'information spirituelle le révèle dans sa trans-mission en traversant tous les niveaux des Réalité.

Paradoxe du contradictoire: *donner le rien*. Remplir un manque en offrant. Une expérience de vide(er) plein. *Qui / (Quoi) fait possible cette expérience de l'impossible ?* En va pas répondre avec le *Mot Vivant* qu'en tentée à le trouver comme solution qui nous a été donné déjà de la tradition chrétienne: *l'amour*. Plutôt on va re-prendre et re-donner un sens à l'un des logia de Jésus de *L'Évangile de Thomas: Soyez passant !* (L 42).

„Être de passage relève de quelque chose d'encore plus étrange que le passage lui même et ses *résultats*. Il ne s'agit pas du simple fait que *tout* doit changer. Il faudra maintenant *changer* le concept même de l'être, comme celui du changement. Ainsi, l'être ne sera plus *l'effet* d'un passage, fut-il celui de la naissance ou celui de la mort: il se donnera dans le changement même ou, plus encore, en tant que changement. Ce n'est donc pas *le passage à l'être* qui sera mis en jeu: c'est *l'être du passage* lui-même qui l'emportera.”³

Passer du niveau subjectif de la connaissance (en/ pour/de) soi au niveau intersubjectif de la re-connaissance (de/en/à travers) de l'autre grâce à cette vocation de la connaissance trans-subjectif du gnose transgressif, nous permet d'avoir l'expérience de la transformation (*metanoia*), la métamorphose de l'âme et de l'intelligence: le trans-mutation unificatrice dans *une intelligence affectif*. En arrivant à cette niveau de *conscience-donatrice*, Jésus découvre (en) lui-même la force intérieure du don (non seulement par rapport au sacrifice de lui-même a travers l'amour comme nous rappelle la tradition chrétienne), mais faisant l'expérience a l'inverse: *le possible qui devienne impossible*, les instruments (on peut dire *les lois de la vie spirituelle ?*) qui nous *donnent* les clefs de l'accès / l'ouverture (justement l'énergie du don) au Réel qui correspond chez Basarab Nicolescu au concept de *non-résistance* (entre les niveaux de Réalité et entre le Sujet et l'Object – la non-résistance absolu):

„Cette zone de résistance absolue c'est un *monde du au-delà* au rapport avec les niveaux de Réalité et de perception, mais un monde liée de cette là. La zone de résistance absolue est l'espace de coexistence de la *trans-ascendance et trans-descendance*. Comme *trans-ascendance*, cette zone correspond au notion philosophique de *transcendance* (qui viens du mot *transcendere*, du *trans* qui signifie *au-delà* et du mot *ascendere* signifie *monter*. Comme *trans-ascendance*, elle est liée de la notion de *l'imanence*. La zone de résistance absolue est dans le même temps *transcendance imanente et imanence transcendante*”.

"Jésus disait: *je vous donnerai* ce que l'œil n'a pas vu, / ce que l'oreille n'a pas entendu, / ce que le main n'a pas touché, / *ce qui n'est pas monté au cœur de l'homme*" (L 17).

Qu'elle est le *Don* du Jésus *qui n'est pas monté au cœur de l'homme?*

On est apellé à découvrir une nouvelle rationalité tout en découvrons ses limites rationalisables:

³ Virgil Ciomoș, în *Avant Propos*, 2008

„Descendre d'un mouvement ou la pesanteur n'a aucun part... La pesanteur fait descendre, l'aile fait monter: quelle aile à la deuxième puissance peut faire descendre sans pesanteur?

La création est faite du mouvement descendant de la pesanteur, du mouvement ascendant de la grâce et du mouvement descendant de la grâce à la deuxième puissance.

La grâce, c'est la loi du mouvement descendant.

S'abaisser, c'est monter à l'égard de la pesanteur morale. La pesanteur morale nous fait tomber vers le haut.

Un malheur trop grand met un être humain au-dessous de la pitié: dégoût, horreur et mépris.

La pitié descend jusqu'à un certain niveau, et non au-dessous. Comment la charité fait-elle pour descendre au-dessous?

Ceux qui sont tombés si bas ont-ils pitié d'eux-mêmes?"⁴

Le sens de l'initiation *du passage* pour l'art d'herméneute c'est de *faire passer* d'un plan de conscience à un autre jusqu'à atteindre l'Esprit du *Logos éternel du Verbe* et le *Logos du Verbe incarné*:

„Non pas au moment de Sa Manifestation il faisait de l'offrande de sa Vie / mais aussi du début du monde, sa Vie était donnée./ à l'heure de sa grande ardeur, / Il est venu pour la délivrance de l'offrande qui était captif./ Elle était séquestré de ceux qui voulaient que la vie l'appartienne. Il a révélaît la puissance du Don / et il a re-donné la bonté dans les cœurs de ceux qui sont mauvais". (logion 9 , *Évangile de Filip*)

⁴ Simone Weil, *Oeuvres*, Quatro Gallimard, Paris, 1999

THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF TRANSCENDENTAL
INTERSUBJECTIVITY AND THE POSSIBILITY
OF A PHENOMENOLOGICAL ETHICS

Alexandru PETRESCU
West University of Timișoara

Abstract

In the following, we take into consideration firstly the specific of the phenomenological analysis of conscience, and this by referring to the thematizations offered by Descartes, Kant and Fichte, namely by those who influenced Husserl in favoring "the transcendental reason" in the philosophical research. For Husserl, the subjective conscience is intentional conscience, and existence is assumed as an existential phenomenon, as an objectual set with sense in conscience. On these conditions, one of the fundamental preoccupations of pure phenomenology lies in the explanation of sense from the constituent intentionality's perspective that characterizes both the personal transcendental ego and the transcendental intersubjectivity: in fact, the objective sense of the world is intersubjectively developed, only that the transcendental intersubjectivity, as an originary structure for all that exists as a sense, has its focus in the self, in any self, which means that in order to thematize it methodically, it is necessary to start from the transcendental ego. In addition, as the philosopher will state in later works, the world, as an existential phenomenon, is rich in significations that

the subject perpetuates or transforms: there is always, for everyone, a predetermined horizon of sense, and on the other side, our subjective conscience always comes with an excess of sense. In the last part of our paper we take into consideration the observation of two critical positions manifested about the husserlian transcendental idealism, the ones signed by Waldenfels and Lévinas, perspectives meant to propose, from different platforms of phenomenology, an ethics.

Keywords: transcendental ego, transcendental intersubjectivity, phenomenological reduction, Lebenswelt, phenomenological ethics.

For most interpreters, Husserl continues to be identified with a strictly-modern thinker, namely a researcher and a philosopher that supports in different directions the relation "subject - object" in knowledge, situation in which monism, egology, but, sometimes, also the danger of solipsism, represent the big problem for the "drawing out of oblivion of the other or of the being", as declared by, with different stakes, Heidegger and Levinas. We remind here that, the principle imposed by Descartes for modern thinking, in this sense, was *cogito sum*, that refers to the fact that "the reflective self" is a metaphysical privileged subject. This word, *subjectum*, names what, as a basis, gathers everything in itself. The other entities, especially as things, represent "the other - in relation to the subject, namely the object - what is placed oppositely to the subject", which can be known, owned etc. Or, in Husserl's case, things are totally different. What is this about? For Husserl, subjectivity and things that show themselves to it are two elements that form a unity, so they are not in opposition. This happens mainly because, for this philosopher, the subjective conscience, intentional in its nature, is always "conscience of something", having the phenomenon linked to it, so it is not about, as in the "natural attitude" followed by Descartes too, considering objects as existing in opposition to it. All my experiences - as a subject - Husserl points out - are characterized by the fact that "I am a conscience of something", that my experiences are oriented experiences; the philosopher gives the name of intentionality to this "oriented character of conscience". We must point out that, in phenomenology, there are two other concepts attached - *intentum* (or *cogitatum*), that something towards which the conscience is oriented, and *intention* (or *cogito*), the conscience of something: these two gain meaning only in relation with intentionality, that as a whole, comprises them (In this issue, see Anton Hügli and Poul Lübcke, in *Philosophie im 20. Jahrhundert*, band 1, 1982!).

On the same line of differences, we have to mention that, if the cartesian process declares the dependence of existence's knowledge, in the order of certainty, of the knowledge of self, the descriptive phenomenology of Husserl starts from the manifestation of things themselves, manifestation in which a transcendently "developed" meaning is always regarded. It is known that, for the philosopher in discussion, "to develop" refers, most often,

to catching and analysing the meaning of something for the intentional conscience. In addition, when "to develop" means "to give meaning", this is developed and always fulfilled by the assumption of intersubjectivity. For the individual subjectivity is always formed, as meaning, only in relation to others. This is about, as Husserl himself affirms in Cartesian meditations, "an essential structure of the intersubjective universal development, in which the self lives as self that develops an objective world"¹. These preliminary definitions have value especially in the direction of supporting the righteous character of the husserlian digression as far as the possibilities of the relation between "subjective" and "transcendental intersubjectivity" are concerned. Making a distinction between "transcendental subject", "rational subject" and "psychological subject" - all of them regarding the same "self", Husserl affirms that the transcendental self is neither an abstract, ideal, metaphysical, general or transpersonal subject, nor one that <produces> certainties about the world; besides, it is not separated of the quality of being "empirical" of the personal self, it is regarded, with priority, as an attitude towards the occurrence of things, of others, in our conscience. Thus, Husserl separates himself from Kant and Fichte, representatives of the transcendental idealism, philosophers that determined him to privilege the "transcendental reason", starting from the community of the empiric self with the transcendental self; pure phenomenology does not reduce the transcendental self to a functional unity of the synthesis of the representations in conscience, as Kant did, and does not give a metaphysical character to self-learning, as it occurs in the fichtean philosophy.

As it is already known, Kant himself named his doctrine transcendental philosophy, transcendental idealism. Afterwards, Fichte will name his own "science doctrine", which is a philosophy of self, a transcendental idealism too, and Schelling will understand by transcendental idealism his own attempt to merge his previous philosophy of nature with the fichtean doctrine of self. In the XXth century, Husserl will also try to define his phenomenology as transcendental idealism. Of course, the meanings of transcendental idealism suffer important specifications in the process of passing from a doctrine to another. As far as Kant is concerned, he promoted a form of an idealism indissolubly merged with an empiric realism, which forbids considering the phenomenal world as an arbitrary creation of conscience. See, on this topic, his speech on transcendental ideality and the empirical reality of space and time! Thus, Kant will oppose, both to the dogmatic idealism of Berkeley, that supports the thesis of dependence of things to their perception (see Kant's critique from Prolegomena), as well as to the sceptical idealism supported by Descartes: if for Descartes the knowledge of existence is, in order of certainty, dependent of self cognition, for Kant, in opposition, the "external experience" holds the cognitive primacy in relation

¹ Husserl, Edmund, *Meditații carteziene. O introducere în fenomenologie*, traducere de Aurelian Crăiuțu, Humanitas, București, 1994, § 44, pp. 128

to the "internal experience", because any knowledge starts with the impact of experience's objects on ourselves. This does not lead, of course, to the dogmatic assertion of the ontological primacy of the external world. In this context, Kant refuses, both the dogmatic realism, for which cognition implies subordination to the alleged "objective reality of things", and the transcendental realism, for which only the "conditions of possibility of things" are real, or, in other versions, those inspired by the medieval thinking, in the self of world, of things.

For Husserl, the transcendental idealism regards, most of the times, as it is shown in Cartesian meditations, the self-explanation of the transcendental self, in its quality of sense developer for any existence, self-explanation accompanied by the "notice" of the intersubjective sublayer of the transcendental ego - as a nucleus of conscience's life; more precisely, the true issue of this new type of transcendental idealism is the explanation of self from the perspective of developing intentionality that characterizes both the transcendental ego and the transcendental intersubjectivity. The transcendental idealism proposed by Husserl is named "pure phenomenology" which, as it is affirmed in Logical researches (1901), "represents a domain of the neutral research, in which different sciences have their roots", revealing "the origins from which the concepts and principles of formal logic result, on which all knowledge is based"². We must specify that, subsequently, the meanings assigned to phenomenology will enrich. In Logical researches, Husserl states that classical logic regards the issue of a judgment's truth, not of its sense. This is why a transcendental logic is necessary, meant to reveal the basis, the nature of sense, of formal logic itself: "it clarifies, in other words, the basis from the nature of the sense, of the logical reason, of every reason (logical, practical - moral etc.)" (...) Only a logic that takes into consideration judgment as activity and as <subjective life> is a <truth's logic - understood as a science of subjectivity that is knowing and operating, in general>. This kind of logic can only be phenomenology. It is a science and, at the same time, a philosophia prima³. From these definitions, we can conclude that at the level of this work from 1901, phenomenology is understood as "pure logic", "base logic", "sense logic", "theory of cognition" (meaning enriched in Philosophy as an exact science, 1911) and "philosophia prima". In the husserlian works that follow, the focus falls especially on this statement: according to the transcendental idealism, any object of cognition must allow to be brought to the phase of a "given" of experience, but cognition does not end with this. Engaging a "critique of the experience" in which the given presents itself, it can be shown that the given is subordinated to a sense that is formed on the level of conscience. Because of this, the experimental method of sciences must

² cf. A. Marga, *Introducere în filosofia contemporană*, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, București, 1988, p. 111

³ A. Marga, *Cunoaștere și sens. Perspective critice asupra pozitivismului*, Editura Politică, București, 1984, p. 165, 166

imply (as preceding it logically and epistemologically) what no experiment can provide, conscience analysis. But, this means, according to Husserl, the identification of the basis of experience data - regarding the sense this bears - on the level of transcendental subjectivity, identification that is possible to achieve only through the phenomenological method.

As far as the method is concerned, we must firstly state that, against metaphysics, Kant imposed the transcendental method, which, after the strict separation of all knowledge faculties, comprises with priority, the metaphysical deduction of the concepts a priori, through which these are pointed out, afterwards the transcendental deduction, through which they are legitimate. To this aspect of this method is added the so called "indirect method", that comprises the presupposition of an opposing thesis and the revealing of the absurd consequences that derive from it. For example, the absurdity of the transcendental realism confirms the transcendental idealism. The Kantian method is different from the one that will be used by Fichte and Schelling, the two of them acting like in the Platonist dialogues of old age, Sophism and Parmenides: a thesis is settled from which derive some consequences and dependent on the result of the analysis one of the opposing thesis is chosen, the negative way or the intermediate one.

In Husserl's case, the method of access to the original source of the deepest conditioning of knowledge is the phenomenological method. It aims at separating "the immanent given of conscience" of what it receives from the outside, that is considered "transcendent" (by "transcendence" Husserl understands the way an object is presented in general). Through the phenomenological method, Husserl proposes to go over the way from the perceived world, the natural world, to the "last foundation structures", which are "essences" accessible only to a "categorical intuition". Actually, this concerns a series of "putting between parenthesis" (a sort of taking out of consideration), by which the "matter" of this knowledge is left outside consideration, in order to reach to a form. It concerns a rise from the object determined as phenomenon to concept (eidos), then to the perception of the clear intention in an objective content (noema) and, finally, to the perception of the intentional act itself (noesa). The transcendental reduction is meant to turn the man's eye from nature to the transcendental conscience. What is left after any reduction is the transcendental ego, considered to be constituent for any reality, because it gives sense to it. The philosopher adds that the reduction allows us to notice how the transcendence of the object can be transcendence in the immanence of the subject. What does this mean? In Logical researches, Husserl stated that it is absurd to try to separate the intentional object (immanent) from the "real" (transcendental) one: they are fundamentally linked together. My conscience - the philosopher states in Cartesian Meditations - cannot be thought if, in an imaginary way, we remove that thing to which the conscience belongs to. As conscience is intentionality, the reduction can be done, without losing what is reduced; the

reduction is, actually, the transformation of every given into a phenomenon with sense, in the intentional conscience.

Through these considerations, we want to remind that Husserl tended to see sometimes in Descartes, other times in Kant and Fichte, his true predecessors, stating that these great figures of modernity have determined him to favor the "transcendental reason" in approaching cognition. And this, as we already stated, even if he cannot be considered anymore a philosopher that understands the world in a strictly modern way, by recurring to the natural attitude represented in the "subject - object" relation. That is why, the "wish for difference" asserted itself in this case too, for Husserl, phenomenology, as a transcendental philosophy, being meant to analyze the intentional conscience (one that implies the existence only as an existential phenomenon, as an objectual set with sense in the conscience, as "intentional object", *cogitatum*), mainly in order to reveal the ultimate conditions of the development of sense for cognition's objects. Only this way, it can be perceived as a specific manner of the transcendental idealism.

According to Husserl, Descartes was the one that initiated a philosophy that would be, at the same time, both science and basis for sciences - in the system of a universal science. Husserl starts from the Cartesian *cogito, cogito* that will be understood as a transcendental subject. Only that Descartes envisions "a philosophy with two focuses: the *cogito* and God": because of that, Descartes must be outrun through a destruction. While for Descartes God transcends the *cogito*, for Husserl, the ego transcends the alter-ego; instead of resorting to the "divine truth" - in order to ensure a superior basis for truth and objectivity of knowledge (Descartes), Husserl will search a similar basis in a philosophy of intersubjectivity, one that develops gradually, more precisely, by developing the problems that concern the first four meditations.

In the case of the transcendental idealism, Kant was, of course, the first to point out the essential role of conscience's unity in all the cognitive synthesis that thinking realizes in the sensitive cognition. What Kant named "the synthetic unity of the transcendental apperception" represents the ultimate condition of any knowledge, of any synthesis. In these conditions, Kant takes into consideration the transcendental self as a functional unity of the synthesis of representations in conscience. The philosophy of self, by Fichte, has its starting point exactly in this Kantian idea of the "synthetic unity of the transcendental apperception". The whole knowledge, not only its forms, as in Kant's opinion, but its content too, is the product of our spiritual activity. What is, then, the foundation of this activity? It is the act through which the Self forms itself. Before knowledge itself, that implies the subject - object duality, the Self must exist, and it cannot exist without self-developing. Preceding experience and knowledge, this self-development, according to Fichte, has a metaphysical character. On these conditions, regular knowledge is outdated by philosophy, because only the philosopher, by intellectual intuition, has access to the self-learning of the Self. Secondly, the

Self develops the non-self, namely the world, at this level the duality of subject with object appears, knowledge and conscience being established. The two moments we talked about represent the thesis and the antithesis, and their synthesis is expressed as follows: the Self opposes inside the Self a divisible Non-Self. Which means that, by mutual limitation, the Self and the Non-Self are reunited, thus coming back to the original unity and asserting itself as Absolute Self. On these conditions, the metaphysical Hegelian conception over the Self is already announced. We must add that the Fichtean perspective on the absolute self evolves towards mysticism, and according to it the Self is the Divine logos itself, manifested both as Existence, Liberty and Truth. See, for that purpose, his comments on John's Gospel, as well as the statements from the Theological - political treaty from 1807!

According to the considerations of Denis Fiset, whom we follow in this issue, in the course about Fichte held between 1915 and 1918, Husserl, after assigning his predecessor the merit of having tried to solve the difficulties concerning the distinction between the empirical self and the transcendental self, he reproaches to the great predecessor that he had made the transcendental ego a metaphysical, void postulate. Beside these statements, he will add, against the German idealism, that fact that the phenomenological psychology represents, on one side, a privileged access point to the transcendental philosophy, and, on the other side, as an intentional psychology, it is the only one that has the task of elaborating the fundamental intentional concepts, that are necessary for the study of pure subjectivity, namely the transcendental self that is sense constitutive. In *Krisis*, paragraph 57, mainly focused on this issue, it will be named "The poisonous separation of the transcendental philosophy from psychology", pointing out that exactly this separation led the successors of Kant to an obscure metaphysics. In the same manner, in a text meant for the *British Encyclopaedia*, Husserl presents his phenomenology as having a double meaning: firstly, it is a transcendental phenomenology, with a prime philosophy function, in the traditional sense of the term; secondly, it is defined as intentional psychology, its task being to serve as propaedeutics for the first meaning. In the first case, phenomenology is the universal science, the founding science of every possible science; as we already stated, as intentional psychology, it has a methodological value and it interferes, in the eidetic reduction, making possible the access to the transcendental ego. Fichte had chosen a direct approach, through knowledge, to the metaphysical transcendental ego, which, in its founding perspective, appeared as given in an apodictic and adequate evidence or intuition; Husserl, on the contrary, shows that the indirect approach of phenomenological reduction (towards the transcendental ego) is guided not only by the apodicticity's ideal (reached through categorical intuition), but,

firstly, by the world of experience that implies explanations by resorting to the intentional psychology⁴.

As we already stated, this indirect approach remains faithful to the spirit of a philosophy that, far from making the transcendental ego a metaphysical postulate, a double of the empirical self, implies, on the contrary, that this nucleus of the intentional conscience, is operating at a knowledge of self level, empirical, namely at the development of psychic self level. We point out that, the so-called psychological reduction does not offer access to the self transcendental dimension inherent to the ego, access possible only through a categorical institution. Let's remind, in this direction, Husserl's words in the first pages of *Philosophy as an exact science*: "The phenomenology about conscience is contrary to a natural science about conscience. It is to be accepted that phenomenology and psychology are in a tight relation. And this because both of them deal with conscience, although in a different manner and with a different <attitude>. We mean that psychology concerns <the empirical conscience>, the conscience from the experimental attitude, as something that exists in the order of nature. On the contrary, the transcendental phenomenology deals with <pure conscience>, namely the conscience in the phenomenological attitude"⁵. As a reply to the "formal constructivism" of Kant, but also to the antipsychologism expressed by Fichte in *Doctrine of Science*, Husserl will state that philosophy is meant to retrieve the intelligible - connected to the transcendental nucleus of intentional conscience's life, which is possible "starting from a low level and intuitively progressing to the constituent operations of conscience". But, this implies the meanings of intentional psychology. In the end, as D. Fisette affirms, Husserl states that what intentional psychology and transcendental phenomenology treat, for example the ego, is identical on an ontological level, that is in content, and that the essential difference for phenomenology is a purely epistemological one. Here interferes an ontological monism, the same descriptum, but also a dualism in the explanation, a one and only ego having the possibility of being the object of both a psychological and transcendental explanation. On these conditions, the methodological value of the psychological, as the process starts from the empirical self, in order to make an intuitive categorical observation of the transcendental ego, this value resides in its propedeutical function for the transcendental phenomenology.

Under the influence of Fichte, Husserl also formulates the so-called "paradox of subjectivity" (that reminds somehow of Kant's "paradox of the internal sense"): how exactly a constituent part of the world, the human subjectivity, can intentionally represent the whole world as meaning? The source of the paradox lays, as Husserl affirms, exactly in the "fatal

⁴ See Denis Fisette, "Remarques sur l'apport de l'idéalisme dans le développement de la phénoménologie", in *Symposium*, volume 3 (2), Quebec, 1999, pp. 185/207!

⁵ Husserl, Edmund, *Filosofia ca știință riguroasă*, Editura Paideea, București, traducere de Alexandru Boboc, 1994, p. 22

separation" between the psychological study of conscience and the philosophically-transcendental study of subjectivity. But, in order to leave this paradox, Fichte postulated the existence and the liberty of the absolute ego, and this, of course, in a metaphysical discourse, which Husserl rejects. On the contrary, dealing with the same subjective-transcendental conscience, it can go through both a psychological reduction and an eidetic-transcendental one, through which the transcendental ego can be reached, as nucleus of life's conscience, as sense constituent. On these conditions, the difference from Fichte's point of view is especially one of method. In other words, the solution for the paradox goes through the following steps: a) the acknowledgment of the actual ego as a person that lives in a community of persons, a psychological subject, that can be apprehended, both by the intentional psychology and the naturalist psychology; b) the assumption that the subject that lives in the world "bears in it a transcendental ego", understood as an operation subjectivity, meaning that the noema, the intentional content of the actual subjectivity, receives its meaning from the transcendental ego; c) the passage from the actual subjectivity to the transcendental nucleus is made by "transcendental reduction". Referring to Fichte, we must also keep in mind his influence on the understanding of self as action, as liberty, concept that for Husserl will become the idea of formation. By this, Husserl absorbs, from this predecessor, the idea of primacy of the practical reason over the theoretical one. For all these reasons, Husserl considers himself entitled to praise Fichte's transcendentalism, and, in particular, his contribution to the formation's phenomenology, but at the same time, to reproach him his predilection for the "mythical formations".

Of all of these, we understand that Husserl's philosophy, although influenced by some of his predecessors, especially German, appears and evolves as a particular manner of the transcendental idealism, one of the issues that settles its specificity being exactly the one that we will refer to in the following section: the issue of intersubjectivity seen from the structure's perspective and the significations of the transcendental ego. It is clear for Husserl that, in order to be able to speak about the existence of intersubjective relations in social communities, firstly we must take into consideration the conditions of possibility, that have a transcendental nature, of their formation. The enunciation of a transcendental theory of intersubjectivity, from the perspective of "sense formation", and not a detailed examination of the actual sociality, means for Husserl the research of what makes possible the sense determinations of the world, objectivity - the sense of existence that is independent from me and can be distinguished both from me and the other -, the sharing of sense in a community, thus, communication, etc. As it is stated in the manuscripts from 1912 - 1935, published under the title *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjectivität*, the process of development (forming) is not a causal one, in which the subject would make objects possible or he would assign sense to them: through the

phenomenological development nothing is created, nothing is born. On the contrary, the development does not express anything else than the "process of bringing towards display", it must be taken into consideration from the perspective of the noetic - noematic relation, because it concerns a process with two roots (talking about Fichte's influence): the originary self and the originary non-self, since subjectivity and the world - as an existential phenomenon - form a unity, which, at a transcendental life's level, expresses the unity of the transcendental development itself. In another manuscript, Husserl adds: "The life of the actual primordial self is, on one side shared according to the actual isolated self, on the other side <related> [intersubjectively], as far as the intentionality of each actual life bears in itself an intentional mediation (...), one that does not reach only as far as self's actual life lies and gives it unity(...), but also forms the transcendental unity of the intersubjective presence and of the intermonadic temporality - of all monades"⁶.

Somehow close to these affirmations, in Cartesian Meditations, Husserl adds an extremely important observation: "The human being itself refers - and implies this reference - to a practical environment that exists as a universe already endowed permanently with predicates that have a certain significance for humans (...). Any such predicate of the world is a result of a temporal genesis, more precisely after such a synthesis that has its roots in the activity and passivity of the human being"⁷. In other words, the world, as an existential phenomenon, is abundant in significations, which the subject perpetuates or transforms: there is always a predetermined horizon of sense and, on the other side, our conscience always comes with an excess of sense. But, this sends us to the perception of the relation between the transcendental ego and the transcendental intersubjectivity and, by default, to the recognition of the fact that the personal transcendental ego is not responsible for the whole richness of sense of the world; for this, the intervention of subjectivity of the other is always needed. This is because "the transcendental intersubjectivity is the absolute foundation of being [Seinsboden], from which signification and validation of everything that exists objectively originates."⁸. When we speak about the transcendental development we also speak, by default, about the transcendental sense of alien subjects and, as a consequence, about a universal layer of sense, which "rooting from them, makes possible for me the objective world". This means that, in the "self sphere" we find determinations already given to our being and, thus, of every human being. "It concerns an essential structure

⁶ Husserl, E., *Husserliana*, 15: *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjectivität. Texte aus dem Nachlass. Dritter Teil: 1929-1935*, Den Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1973, p. 73, translated by Ioana Rotaru

⁷ Husserl, Edmund, *Meditații carteziene. O introducere în fenomenologie*, traducere de Aurelian Crăiuțu, Humanitas, București, 1994, § 58, pp. 172-173

⁸ Husserl, E., *Husserliana*, 9: *Phänomenologische Psychologie. Vorlesungen Sommersemester 1925*, Den Haag, Martinus Nijhoff, 1962, p.344

of the universal formation, in which the self lives as a self that forms an objective world" 9. The personal ego does not deduce the world from itself, but develops it based on what is already given to it, according to its transcendental-intersubjective conscience. Later on, in *Krisis*, the philosopher will consolidate these considerations, firmly stating that subjectivity is what it is, a constituent functional ego - only in the frame of intersubjectivity. It is, thus, necessary to appeal to the signification of the transcendental intersubjectivity, an intersubjectivity that forms (understands and offers) sense to the world - for all, and in whose content I appear too, but only as a transcendental self among others, while the transcendental function is exercised by "us all". Only that, "methodically speaking, the transcendental intersubjectivity and the transcendental socialization that is specific to it - in whose domain it develops, through a system of self-poles functioning, <<the world for all>>, given to each particular subject as world for all - can only be brought to light by starting from the ego and from the system of its transcendental functions and performances."10

What does this mean? In the first place, it concerns the fact that intersubjectivity can "exist" only as a relation between singular subjects; afterwards, as we already stated, any ego - as a sphere of existence has an intersubjective structure: in the development of self, as psyché and as person, an originary reference to other transcendental egos is always necessary; the subjective intentional conscience, whose nucleus (the transcendental ego) revealed through phenomenological reduction is "a field of the transcendental experience", it takes part itself to a "world for all" intersubjectively developed. At the same time, the transcendental intersubjectivity, as an originary structure for everything that exists as sense, has its focus on self, on every self, which means that in order to separate it into themes, we must proceed from the transcendental ego. This is what Husserl himself does in *Cartesian Meditations*. Assuming systematically the risk of solipsism, at the end of the fourth meditation he will have to state that, since any transcendental reality is self's life itself, phenomenology represents self explanation: the self is not just the "subject" pole opposite to the "object" pole; it is the embedding element: everything is a product of the transcendental subjectivity. Or this means solipsism. The fifth Meditation will show however that, without being a dead-end, the transcendental solipsism is only "a passing point of philosophy". As a matter of fact, in the second "meditation", Husserl stated that "the transcendental reduction bears only the appearance of a solipsist science, while its consistent realization, according to its own sense, will lead us to a phenomenology of the transcendental intersubjectivity and, through this, to a transcendental philosophy in general"11.

⁹ Husserl, *Meditații carteziene*, § 44, ed. cit., p. 128

¹⁰ Husserl, E., *Criza științelor europene și fenomenologia transcendențială*, Humanitas, traducere de Christian Ferencz- Flatz, 2011, p. 328)

¹¹ Husserl, *Meditații carteziene*, § 13, ed.cit., p. 61

Considered a "headstone of the transcendental phenomenology", the fifth "cartesian meditation" concerns the specificity of the alterity's existence and of the signification of intersubjectivity in knowledge and communication, in order to offer an opening towards a "lifeworld", a common one, that can be formed by the transcendental subjectivity only by referring to the other's horizon. On these conditions, the nucleus of this "meditation" rises the problem of forming the sense of "the other", formation that goes, as we already showed, through the test of the objection of solipsism, objection undertaken as argument: I decide to research only what is specific to me, excluding the others, because only by knowing what is specific to me I can understand the self of someone else. Thus, the sense of "self" is transferred from me to the other, and this can be done when (because of the founding intersubjectivity, but also in an environment that implies the existence of the personal self) many of the signs of a transcendence towards the other can be spotted. As a matter of fact, the person represents for Husserl "a nucleus of interiorization of different worlds" and only in relation with the person we can raise the issue of forming "a lifeworld": communities are communities of persons, that have specific cultural objects.

From what we have said so far, we can infer that the phenomenological reduction, with all its consequences, is not responsible for the whole richness of sense of the world, as the presence of the other's subjectivity is always necessary. Therefore, in the last part of the fifth meditation, Husserl states that we need a new concept, die Lebenswelt, the lifeworld, since, only the development of a layer of fundamental sense can be explained by an egologist transcendental attitude: one has to proceed to the observation of the already developed layers in the field of the Lebenswelt, those that maintain my possibility of giving sense to things that appear to me as phenomena in conscience. Let us point out that, alongside with the "Lebenswelt", Husserl's phenomenology will evolve as intersubjective, generative phenomenology. In this phase, the philosopher's research stops being limited to the observation of the transcendental ego's possibilities, Husserl wishing to thematize the possibility issue and the effects of communication on a cultural-historical level.

In a later work, *The phenomenology of the communication community*, Husserl will treat the issue of the communication with the other. Let us point out that the phenomenological approach of the communication issue does not start from the structures of language or from the study of the speakers' pragmatic competence, but from the analysis of conscience's intentional acts (as we already noticed), that establish a sort of "grammar of communication - participation" (I. Pârnu). This is because, for Husserl in his late works, communication means sense sharing. "The content of each act of communication is the intention of determining in the other a certain behaviour; receiving this intention, the other manifests, generally, a double behaviour: one determined by the content of communication, and a metacommunicational behaviour, through which he manifests his attitude

towards the content of communication: acceptance, rejection, conflict. Regardless of the type of reactions to the intention of communication, the two interlocutors not only remain one by the other; through empathy, as an apperception of the other's intentionality, of his spirituality, my own internal experiences are reflected in an alter ego, that can be found beyond my own sphere. The empathy relation comes along with language, thus communication means addressed and received discourse.¹² Thus, the possibility and the reasons of communication are given by the intentional development, through analogy and presentation, of the meaning of "other", but its actual realisation, that of communication, implies, Husserl states, the discourse. Briefly: the acts of discourse mediate, actually, the development of a community of persons: I turn towards another person, the other "self" that becomes a "you". In as far as it is understood as another "self", he is, also, a subject of the action of addressing - listening to a discourse. I see the other as the one who addresses me the word, so, as the one who communicates me a certain wish or a will, according to my behaviour. If I am the one who addresses, then I see the other as the one who listens to me, the one who has access to my communication. I do not make my acts of communications alone, but the realisation of these acts motivates in the other a certain co-realisation, that of receiving the acts of communication, that of having access to my communication's intention.

Reference to the transcendental intersubjectivity's phenomenology

As it is known, the resistance to the philosophy of the husserlian transcendental idealism, the one with objections of substance and based on some serious knowledge of it, has appeared even in the field of the phenomenological philosophy. Now, we refer only to two of the outstanding positions, both of them regarding the possibility of a phenomenological ethics. We are talking about Bernhard Waldenfels's and E. Lévinas's statements.

Bernhard Waldenfels wishes to create an opening of the possibilities of philosophical phenomenology towards the "stranger –as a stranger" research, only that "he finds suspicious and helpless" - in this issue – Husserl's appreciations regarding the transcendental ego and the intentionality. The stranger is no longer just another who is born by "delimitation from self"; he is separated, each time, through a threshold, of what is specific for the subject. For Husserl, according to the mentioned expositor, what is alien is beforehand pre-understood in a certain way; it becomes part of a totality of sense, connected with the transcendental subjectivity, more precisely, with intentionality. On the contrary, Waldenfels states that what is alien challenges us, skipping the approach and transcending the comprehension. The alien claim to which we answer and

¹² cf. Ilie Pârvu, *Filosofia comunicării*, Comunicare.ro, Bucuresti, 2000, p. 171

the event of the answer itself does not form a correlation, like sense and intention, or noema and noesis at Husserl. "The call I must answer breaks the symmetrical and recurrent relation of the communicative ethics, meaning a type of ethics founded in the participation to a common sense or to an implicit contract of reason. The other's call cannot be fulfilled like a wish or an order; it breaks any type of circularity, intentional or regulatory"¹³. So, for this author, transcendental phenomenology's limits are obvious, which means that a responsive phenomenology, that surpasses any phenomenology of intentionality, is necessary.

In the case of this phenomenologist we also deal with a particular lecture of Husserl's texts, so that, the conceptual expressions of the transcendental phenomenology suffer some interpretations that are only partially in accordance with the transcendental idealism's spirit. For example, for Waldenfels, the fact that the transcendental phenomenology gives primacy to the constituent ego means that everything (the world, God, the others) must be legitimate by reference to the self conscience of the self. In the same manner, for this German thinker, as well as for Husserl, the radical relation with others is only possible by reflection, the other is only considered a kind of "prisoner" of a mundane, social and intentionally ordered system. In fact, Waldenfels rejects the Husserlian meaning of the "transcendental development of the other", stating that, in order to have access to the authentic meaning of the "others", we only have to start from radically understanding them from themselves, and not from a whole, like the world, whose sense I myself have built, intentionally. On these conditions, the role of the "transcendental attitude" promoted by Husserl is to "liberate completely the human from its connection to the world". Neglecting the fact that, for Husserl, "the transcendental development of the other" represents an interrogation, but also an observation of the conditions of possibility for the apparition of the other for me, Waldenfels firmly states that the husserlian "transcendental reflection" reduces, in fact, the others, to "simple moments of my life". Retorting, he will state that "claiming the other as a stranger precedes any partnership", that, in relation with the other, the priority belongs, in fact, to him, his requests advancing our actions. Our actions, on these conditions, are only answers to alien requests¹⁴.

We are asking then: why wouldn't be legitimate such a possibility of perceiving things? And if it leads to a phenomenological ethics based on the idea of duty of answering to the other - namely to the one that appears as "alien of self", does it not mean that this is an enrichment in the discourse of Phenomenology? The quasi-dialogical character of the responsive relation, in which the sense may come from the "order" which is characteristic of "alienation - as extra-ordinary", or from what generates my answer, or it may be connected to the asymmetry between claim and answer, not involving,

¹³ Bernard Waldenfels, *Schița unei fenomenologii responsive*, traducere de Ion Tănăsescu, Editura Pelican, București, 2006, p.42

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 23-42

thus, my intentional conscience, this character does not enrich, particularly, although not-husserlian, the idea of intersubjectivity? Let's think about the developments in the field of French phenomenology produced on the level of the so-called "theological revolving" of it: "the erotic animal" and the "saturated phenomenon" taken into consideration by Jean Luc Marion, the phenomenology of the face of the Other, treated by Lévinas, the replacement of the "thematical reduction" by the "erotic reduction" for Marion and Michel Henry, all of these have given new dimensions to the discourse in a phenomenological frame. Afterwards, and regarding the dialogue, we can speak about conditions of possibility a priori: see, for example, the signification of interlocution for Francis Jacques, or what means "community of communication" transcendently understood for Karl Otto Apel.

As far as ethics is concerned, usually the starting point was the universality of the moral law, that linked the ethic to a rational principle, the universality of an action's maximum being, according to Kant, the criteria of the moral value. Or, in other version, the starting point was the notion of "utility", establishing that "it is good what benefits me, what is profitable" and that the best thing is that of getting along with the other and of sharing the benefit, the useful with them. Regarding these two perspectives, E. Lévinas manifests critically, proposing also a new approach, "a phenomenological approach of alterity", in which the "Other" is "Another - in an absolute way", "the relation with the neighbour being based on my relation with the Other - as Absolute, as Infinite, as transcendental God"¹⁵.

Referring to the philosophical thinking of our century, Lévinas critically points toward the Husserlian phenomenology and the Heideggerian discourse from *Sein und Zeit*. For Husserl, as the French philosopher states, conscience remains the a priori of any analysis, what we call "reality" actually being a world crossed by the immanent activity of our ego. The ego is constituent for any reality, because it offers it sense: the sense of the world is decoded as sense that I give to the world; but this sense is lived as objective, I discover it, otherwise it would not be the sense the world has for me. As we already pointed out in our research, in order to avoid solipsism, Husserl introduced the concept of "intersubjectivity", in relation to which he starts the approach for issues of the fellow being, of the Other. The alterity of others is different from the simple transcendence of things, to which my conscience gives sense, through the fact that any "other" is a "self" for itself. My ego - Husserl states in Cartesian meditations - cannot be a priori an ego that experiments the world until it forms a community together with the other corresponding egos. By analogy, Husserl gets to state that "the second person represents another first person". Even so - Lévinas states - at Husserl "the ontological imperialism" is visible, because for it thinking comes from the self, it regards something, then it comes back to self with a "noematic" capture. Alterity is reduced to ipseity, in the name of some sort of

¹⁵ Lévinas, E., *Totalitate și infinit. Eseu despre exterioritate*, traducere de Marius Lazurca, Editura Polirom, Iași, 1999, p. 21

"nostalgia of One", that Lévinas considers to be the "intelligibility's paradigm". In this "phenomenology of alterity" - as metaphysics that sets up the ethics in a certain way - the relation of the self with the Other is one in which not the intention of ipseity has a founding character, but the capacity of the Other to express himself. The expression manifests the presence of being; it does not manifest the manner in which the sign relates to the signified, but it makes present the signifier, the one that gives sign. The signifier must present itself before any sign, through itself, as a face. The face is an originary manifestation of the Other, an epiphany, it is the pure presence of the being, its resistance to the noetic - noematic domination of the conscience. The favoring of language in the self - Other relation seems to replace in Lévinas' phenomenology the observation and the representation. The specificity of alterity's language regards the addressing, an addressing that implies the total transparency "of the face towards face". The face of the Other, that addresses to me questioning my "selfish spontaneity that violates the alterity", this face asks me to answer it, accuses me, brings me in the position of the responsible one. Not having anything of an empirical appearance, "the face" talks to me in its pure nudity. "Through the face my fellow being looks at me, shows interest in me before any reflection, imposing itself before my responsibility, where I am irreplaceable and, somehow, called and chosen"¹⁶. The proximity of the other is my responsibility for him. The Other is not a comprehension object at first and then an interlocutor. The two "relations" can mingle. In other words, the comprehension of another is tied inseparably to his invocation. Understanding a person already means talking to that person and putting another's existence, letting that person be, already means accepting this existence, taking it into consideration.

Of course, we all share the idea that a philosophy is more creative if it maintains several interpretation possibilities. As far as Husserl is concerned, we are definitely already placed in a special place of the possibility to interpret! Exactly what we have aimed in this text.

¹⁶ E.Lévinas, 1989, *Répondre d'Autrui*, Neuchatel, p.10

THE CONCEPT, A CONTROVERSIAL LINK
BETWEEN OBJECT AND LANGUAGE. A BRIEF INQUIRY

Johanna SCHWEIGHOFFER
West University of Timișoara

Abstract

This paper discusses the position of the concept as a fundamental tool to acquire knowledge regarding the material reality. Also, being expressed in words or expressions, the concept appears as a link between reality and language. This link is highly controversial in many human sciences, as the researchers in these fields became aware of a major difficulty that should be implied in any analysis: the concept cannot fully express reality, as well as words cannot express entirely the concepts. Linguist Lazăr Șăineanu, logician Gottlob Frege or pragmaticist Charles Sanders Peirce, to name only a few, had a contribution to the acknowledgement of this incongruity between objects, concepts and words. One of the contemporary direction of thought where this distinction has been already made, even if only implicitly, is conceptual history. As a consequence, its results based on a philosophical and logical approach may be able to redefine the entire historical field.

Keywords: concept, notion, object, the theory of representation, language, conceptual history.

From epistemological perspective the concept represents the fundamental element of scientific knowledge, necessary to integrate the multiplicity of facts in hypotheses and theories. Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari express in their volume *What is philosophy?* (first published in 1991) the opinion that, while science creates functions (which allow us to understand the causality as a law in the natural world) and art creates sensations, concepts are the results of a creative philosophical activity: "So long there is a time and a place for creating concepts, the operation that undertakes this will always be called philosophy, or will be undistinguishable from philosophy even if it is called something else"¹. Noticing the extraordinary spreading and functionality of concepts in all sciences, we can conclude the implicit presence of philosophical approach in all these fields, as a rational analysis and theoretical integration of the observed facts of reality.

From the beginning we must notice that usually the dictionaries, especially the contemporary ones, reflect a quasi-synonymy between *concept*, *term* and *notion*². These definitions are questionable, as the *concept* may not reflect the general and essential features of a class of objects, but the conceptualization of a mental construct that has no correspondent of this kind. Secondly, if *notion* is a fundamental and simple logical form, that is part of the most elementary cognitive sentences, *concepts* cannot always be used in this way, as they tend to be part of more complex and abstract assertions. As for the *term*, it appears to be identified indistinctively with its linguistic correspondent, the *word*, when its meaning in the field of logic integrates the *notion*, the *word* and the *object*, as a more complex cognitive and philosophical category.

More flexible are the definitions of Lazăr Şăineanu, the author of the most read and used dictionary of Romanian language, known for its ten published editions between 1896 and 1995. It can be noticed in his view the absence of the synonymy between *notion* and *concept*³, while the *term*⁴ is

¹ Giles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is philosophy?*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1994, p.9.

² *DEX*, Ed. a II-a, Editura Univers Enciclopedic, Bucureşti, 1996, p. 206, 700 and 1086, for the definitions of *concept*, *notion* and, respectively, *term*.

³ Lazăr Şăineanu, *Dicţionar universal al limbii române*, ediţia a VI-a, Editura Scrisul Românesc S.A., 1929, p. 165 and 433. We must mention that the sixth, seventh and ninth editions are identical in content, while the tenth edition, Editura Mydo Center, 1995 presents major differences from the previous ones, (and only some differences are signaled by the editors). Important for our subject is that *concept*, *notion* and *term* are defined in this tenth edition, unexpectedly, exactly like in *DEX*, second edition, 1996, ignoring completely the original definitions of professor Lazăr Şăineanu.

⁴ Lazăr Şăineanu, *Dicţionar universal al limbii române*, ed, cit., p. 646.

regarded not only as a linguistic element, but also a part of sentences and even syllogism in logic.

These definitions of Romanian linguist Lazăr Șăineanu, that of the *concept* as *an idea conceived by spirit* and that of the *notion* as *knowledge about a thing*, express the correct correlation between the *concept* and *spirit* (as the first is the result, even the creation of reason) and between *notion* and *thing* (viewed as a material object). The assertions imply the more simple character of *notion* comparing with the *concept*, and also its possibility to designate an object, while this is not the case of the *concept*, note made by Gottlob Frege in its innovatory book published in 1892, *Über Sinn und Bedeutung* (or *On Sense and Reference*).

As for the *term*, as a logical form, it is viewed as a unity between three constituents:

- the object⁵, in the ontological sphere (or field);
- the notion⁶, in the cognitive sphere or in the field of knowledge;
- the word, in the linguistic field.

The connection between these three constituents is highly problematic. The objects are elements of the material reality, accessible through our senses. They are, at first, thought as notions and then expressed through language. Still, the object, the notion and the word cannot be overlapped, with the exception of very simple and accessible objects (as *this pencil*, for example). In the majority of cases, there are differences between the object or event, what an individual perceives and thinks about it and what can be communicated about that object or event using the words.

The complexity of the object (or phenomenon) directly influences the diversity of notions (mental representations) which expresses it. One single object can be represented very differently in different minds, with extreme variations in the cognitive plan. If in science there is a declared intention of clarifying the sense of notions or even concepts, the common knowledge has no requirement of this kind, so its representations, reflected in language are always questionable.

At their turn, concepts depend on how we perceive, think and understand an event or phenomenon. The 1848' Revolution in Transilvania,

⁵ Reference to the *object* is explained by Ch. Sanders Peirce, (cf. Gérard Deledalle, in essay *Teoria și practica semnului* (*Theory and practice of sign*), from vol. *Semnificație și comunicare în lumea contemporană*, Editura Politică, București, 1985, edition of Solomon Marcus, p. 33), in these way: "Utilizez termenul «obiect» în sensul în care cuvântul substantivizat *Objectum* a fost folosit la începutul secolului al XIII-lea; și când folosesc cuvântul fără să specific despre ce obiect vorbesc, utilizez unul din sensurile obișnuite ale cuvântului și anume ceea ce se prezintă minții sau spiritului, în sensul cel mai larg." (I use the term «object» in the same sense that the noun *Objectum* was used at the beginning of the thirteenth century; and when I use the word without to explain which object I refer to, I use one of its usual meanings, namely something that presents itself to the mind or spirit in the broadest sense.)

⁶ *Notion* has the general sense of *what is thought* or *a mental representation*, according to the theory of representation of perception of John Locke.

for example, is a unique historical event, but the concepts expressing it can differ in a high degree from a historian to another. The conceptualization of a phenomenon is different from a simple mental representation; therefore it is an essential feature of the concepts, especially the historical ones, to be controversial.

Another complex situation appears when notions are new and have no linguistic correspondent. To be able to express them one must redefine already existing words by stipulating a new meaning, or to invent new words. On this occasion may appear discrepancies between what is described, what is thought and what is spoken, that can lead to difficult communication or parallel discourses.

All these remarks must be completed with the observation that, while logic generally operates with notions and philosophy and human sciences with concepts, natural sciences use both of them. This is why we may ask: How can be the concept defined? What are its specific features, comparing with the notion?

The theory of concept has a long tradition. It begins, explicitly, with the first chapter, *The Categories*, of the aristotelic *Organon*. *Categorein*, in greek "*predicate*, what is asserted about an other", is understood by the ancient philosopher as any notion, regardless it is a predicate or a subject⁷, so *category* and *notion* appear as quasi-identical. Mircea Florian notices that "the word that usually at Aristotel designates the notion is λόγος⁸ [...] Notion is a thought expressed in words and its content is the essence. The essence is one in a plurality of individuals, it is the universal"⁹. Besides the fact that the term λόγος in greek means not only *notion* but also *reason*, *word*, *idea*, *discourse* and *science*, (reason for why it is frequently translated in an inappropriate way!), the synonymy between *notion* and λόγος is more adequate in the case of *concept*. This is because, even if Aristotel never gives a precise definition of the *category*¹⁰ and understands by it the *notion*, still the aristotelic categories aim to study the most general notions of all, "the types of existence" (*universalia*), ten in their number at Aristotel. These *universalia* definitely cannot be simple notions, but they will represent "the fundamental ways of asserting the existence of things"¹¹, notions of maximum generality, in fact *concepts*. This is why the aristotelic *categories* were studied in this sense in the medieval times (generating *the quarrel over*

⁷Aristotel, *Organon*, vol. I, *Categoriile*, Editura Științifică, București, 1957, translated by Mircea Florian, p. 44. This remark is made by the translator. The Romanian philosopher Mircea Florian was professor of logic and philosophy at the University of Bucharest between 1916-1948.

⁸ Aristotel, *op. cit.*, p. 120, note 3: even from the first sentence of *The Categories* notion is designated by the term λόγος.

⁹ Aristotel, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

¹⁰ Aristotel, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

¹¹ Aristotel, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

universals) and they tend to preserve this semantic value in philosophy (as it can be seen in the criticism of Immanuel Kant).

The concept is known as the result of abstract thought also in German Philosophy. For example, Friedrich Nietzsche is concerned with the connection between concept and reality. In this aspect "the concept fails in two respects concerning the truth of what really exists: first, it fixates, whereas fleeting events are what really take place; secondly, it subsumes many unequal cases as equal"¹². He also makes an important remark when says that language is a convention and "its development has no logical determinance"¹³. These ideas emphasize the fragile connection between concept and reality (which is not the case of the notion) and the controversial link between concept and language.

The theory of concept becomes even more complex when it is transferred from ontology to gnoseology and semiotics. This is the case of the pragmatism of Charles Sanders Peirce. His fundamental work, unfinished though, is a paraphrase to a work of John Stuart Mill and has the title *A System of Logic. Considered as Semiotic*. His objective is to identify logic with semiotic, the general theory of signs¹⁴. Charles Sanders Peirce agrees with the theory of representation regarding the origin of concepts: "All our concepts are acquired by abstract thought and combination of knowledge which appear for the first time in judgments regarding the experience"¹⁵. The potential independence of the concept from any object is another feature recognized by Charles Sanders Peirce, when he claims that "a mental state" is a concept because it has a significance, a logical content and *possibly* applies to an object¹⁶. Yet the vision of this philosopher regarding the structure of thinking develops in an original direction that will be an influential trend in the American culture. Pragmatism stipulates that the reference of a concept is given by all its effects, already generated or capable of being generated in any possible circumstances. In the terms of Charles Sanders Peirce, the totality of the effects "with any imaginable rational practical relevance" of a concept represents "the whole concept that we can have

¹² Wolfgang Müller-Lauter, Nietzsche, *His philosophy of contradictions and the contradictions of his philosophy*, University of Illinois Press, 1999, p.14.

¹³ Eugen Fink, *Nietzsches's philosophy*, London, Biddles Ltd., 2003, p. 25.

¹⁴ Klaus Oehler in his study *Compendiu al semioticii lui Peirce*, published in vol. *Semnificație și comunicare în lumea contemporană*, Editura Politică, București, 1985, edition by Solomon Marcus, p. 57.

¹⁵ Charles Sanders Peirce, *Semnificație și acțiune*, București, Humanitas, 1990 foreword by Andrei Marga, translation by Delia Marga, p. 62. "Toate conceptele noastre sunt dobândite prin abstractizări și combinații de cunoștințe ce apar pentru prima dată în judecăți de experiență."

¹⁶ Charles Sanders Peirce, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

about an object".¹⁷ The approach of concept and its role is transferred from the space of pure theory to that of practice, of visible consequences, which implies a new fundamental theme, that of responsibility. It is significant the remark of Charles Sanders Peirce about the non-theoretical function of thinking: "the entire function of thinking is that of producing skills for action"¹⁸.

The fact that thinking always has a purpose and this purpose becomes evident due to the acquired skills for action that are generated from it is a theory with important consequences. Charles Sanders Peirce sustain the idea that even the conviction is "a skill of the intellect", generally unconscious¹⁹. Doubt also is "an actual state of mental discomfort from which we actively seek to free ourselves"²⁰. The result of the argumentation of Charles Sanders Peirce is a serious questioning of the intellectual dream that the desire for knowledge would be unselfish, rational and free from subjectivism. In his vision concepts became means for action and they contain in their meanings a multitude of possible effects, many of them unpredictable. In this way he anticipated "the law of unintended consequence", stated later by Karl R. Popper.

This idea of the importance of a concept's consequences appears also at William James, the first philosopher and psychologist that used the term "pragmatism". William James proposes the Pragmatic Rule and asserted that a concept can be *tested*: "Test every concept by the question: What sensible difference to anybody will its truth make? And you are in the best possible position for understanding what it means and for discussing its importance"²¹. In contradiction with the rationalist philosophers, who considered concepts as revelations of reason, or with the empiricists who viewed them only as abstractions of our perceptions, the pragmatic philosophers focused on how the concepts are applied and the virtually unlimited possibility of using them as instruments for shaping the reality.

This short analysis of the meaning of concept in the history of philosophy must be completed with the fact that the relation between reality and thinking is as problematic as that between thinking and language. The question regarding at what extent thinking reflects correctly the reality triggered important philosophical controversies. Rationalists and empiricists offered two radically different solutions, while pragmatists closed the problem of how a concept is formed by concentrating on its practical consequences.

¹⁷ Charles Sanders Peirce, *op. cit.*, p. 143 The fact that Charles S. Peirce speaks here about the object do not contradict the previous ideas of this study, as he asserts that a concept may be, *possibly*, associated to an object, but not necessarily.

¹⁸ Charles Sanders Peirce, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

¹⁹ Charles Sanders Peirce, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

²⁰ Cornelis de Waal, *The Normative thought of Charles S. Peirce*, edited by Cornelis de Waal and Krzysztof Piotr Skowronski, Fordham University Press, 2012, p. 84.

²¹ William James, *Some Problems of Philosophy, a beginning of an introduction to philosophy*, University of Nebraska Press, 1996, p. 60.

Challenging is also the relation between language and thinking, between the concept and its linguistic expression, the word. The stoic philosophers were the first who were concerned with this subject, developing the famous dispute between *analogy*, ἀναλογία and *anomaly*, ἀνωμαλία. *Analogy* represents a perfect synonymy, the counterpart and the rational link between thinking and word. *Anomaly* is viewed as the variation, the deviation of the language from the thinking that creates it. Chrysip concludes that language is ruled by anomaly: language is not “a faithful image of the intellectual content; as words do not correspond entirely to their notions, they even contradict them very often”²². This stoic solution is confirmed by modern research in logic and linguistic, as all sustain that, while the logical categories are universal, the grammatical categories are very different in different languages. Thus, the grammatical categories of Indo-European languages “are not at all the result of the logical thinking”²³, as “language and reason are two different things, even if they influence each other”²⁴.

This incongruity between thinking and language could be, theoretically, surpassed by a scientific analysis of the structure and forms of thinking, irrespective of language. This is one of the goals of logic from centuries. Yet, if the structure of thinking must be interpreted as a *sign*, with a triadic structure, implying the sign itself, the object and its interpret²⁵, as sustains Charles S. Peirce, and the individual that is the interpret makes from the sign a social phenomenon, then thinking in its practical functioning loses its quality of absolute reference for the language. Lazăr Șăineanu remarks that, in general, human reasoning is not logical, being “a natural or psychological reasoning”, while “the just and correct thinking of the logician is thought”²⁶.

Moreover, language is “before everything else, a psychological phenomenon”²⁷ at such extent that the correctness of thinking may have no connection with the process of assigning meanings or with the clarity of statements. Therefore the linguist notices “in general the transformation of meanings in words comes from psychological or historical causes, often completely opposed to logic”²⁸. Also many words that express concepts are vague, due to “the primitively metaphorical character of words and the continuous tendency of the spirit to intermix the proper sense with the

²² Lazăr Șăineanu, *Raporturile între gramatică și logică*, ed. cit., p. 21. In the words of Lazăr Șăineanu: limba nu este o “îcônă credincioasă a coprinsului intelectual; de ôre ce cuvintele nu corespund pe deplin noțiunilor respective, ba adesea chiar le contraîic.”

²³ Lazăr Șăineanu, *Raporturile între gramatică și logică*, ed. cit., p. 31.

²⁴ Lazăr Șăineanu, *Raporturile între gramatică și logică*, ed. cit., p. 50.

²⁵ Klaus Oehler in his study *Compendiu al semioticii lui Peirce*, in vol. *Semnificație și comunicare în lumea contemporană*, Editura Politică, București, 1985, edition by Solomon Marcus, p. 62.

²⁶ Lazăr Șăineanu, *Raporturile între gramatică și logică*, ed. cit., p. 53.

²⁷ Lazăr Șăineanu, *Raporturile între gramatică și logică*, ed. cit., p. 27.

²⁸ Lazăr Șăineanu, *Raporturile între gramatică și logică*, ed. cit., p. 44.

figurative one”²⁹. According to the same idea the conceptual historian Reinhart Koselleck remarks that in a conceptual analysis “we must be aware of the metaphors present in every concept”³⁰.

All these features of thinking and language generated long controversies, at which the linguistic of Ferdinand de Saussure answered pointing out the instability, in other words *the historicity of semiotic structures*, and of the concepts implicitly. The French linguist was the founder, besides the synchronic research of the structures of signs, “as a necessary addition, of the diachronic research of their historical alterations”³¹. The idea of the unhistorical systems of signs, of the fixed concepts regardless the social changes, is contested by this linguistic and its direction of thought. It is not legitimate to begin with the terms “developing the system by summing them, when one has to start from the consistent totality to analyze the components”³².

The evolution of contemporary logic and linguistic influenced many other scientific fields. For example, the new direction of conceptual history expressed the intention of shading light on the distinction between the social history and the history of concepts. The conceptual history reflects also on their interdependence³³, given the fact that the distinction between social facts, concepts and linguistic expressions was more and more perceived. This kind of analysis lead to the recognition of a fundamental cognitive condition: the fiction of facts that are described by linguistic sources. The argument is that “what really happened, if we look back, is real only in the context of linguistic representation”³⁴. This remark, of maximum importance, may be considered the basis of the conception of the historian Reinhart Koselleck regarding the historical research. The authority that language has in transmitting the facts must be limited when the documentary resources are researched. This can be done only through a methodically “clear distinction between language and facts”³⁵. In this case, it is the role of conceptual history to develop the methods and the conceptual instruments in order to fulfill this purpose.

As a conclusion of this brief inquiry, the concept may be defined as a mental structure, abstract in a high degree, with content partially extract from

²⁹ Lazăr Șăineanu, *Raporturile între gramatică și logică*, ed. cit., p. 52.

³⁰ Reinhart Koselleck, *Conceptele și istoriile lor – Semantica și pragmatic limbajului social-politic*, Grup Editorial Art, București, 2009, p. 213.

³¹ Martin Krampen in his study *Saussure și dezvoltarea semiologiei*, in vol. *Semnificație și comunicare în lumea contemporană*, Editura Politică, București, 1985, edition by Solomon Marcus, p. 80.

³² Gérard Deledalle, in his study *Teoria și practica semnului*, in vol. *Semnificație și comunicare în lumea contemporană*, Editura Politică, București, 1985, edition by Solomon Marcus, p. 40.

³³ Reinhart Koselleck, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

³⁴ Reinhart Koselleck, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

³⁵ Reinhart Koselleck, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

experience but completed with features that have no such correspondent. Therefore the concept appears as an intellectual creation, in the same time logical and psychological, having a distinct relation with the expression or the word that expresses it. Because, in many cases, its significant is not an object that can be identified in reality, the relation between the concept and its significance is also a complex one. The understanding and analysis of the concept imply a diachronic and contextual approach. The practical relevance of the concepts in human sciences and the consequences that these are able to produce justify not only a simple theoretical analysis, but, especially, an applied research, which does not ignore the value that concepts had and will have in the social and political field.

Bibliography:

- Aristotel, *Organon*, vol. I, *Categoriile, Despre interpretare*, Editura Științifică, București, 1957, foreword and translation by Mircea Florian
- Fink, Eugen, *Nietzsches's philosophy*, London, Biddles Ltd., 2003
- William James, *Some Problems of Philosophy, a beginning of an introduction to philosophy*, University of Nebraska Press, 1996
- Klaus, Georg, *Logica modernă*, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, București, 1977
- Koselleck, Reinhart, *Conceptele și istoriile lor – Semantica și pragmatic limbajului social-politic*, Grup Editorial Art, București, 2009
- Müller-Lauter, Wolfgang, *Nietzsche, His philosophy of contradictions and the contradictions of his philosophy*, University of Illinois Press, 1999
- Șăineanu, Lazăr, *Raporturile între gramatică și logică*, Editura Librăriei Socecu & Comp., București, 1891
- Șăineanu, Lazăr, *Dicționar universal al limbii române*, Editura Scrisul Românesc, București, ediția a VI-a, 1929.
- Peirce, Charles Sanders, *Semnificație și acțiune*, Humanitas, București, 1990, foreword by Andrei Marga, translation by Delia Marga
- Giles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is philosophy?*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1994
- de Waal, Cornelis, *The Normative thought of Charles S. Peirce*, edited by Cornelis de Waal and Krzysztof Piotr Skowronski, Fordham University Press, 2012

*** *Semnificație și comunicare în lumea contemporană*, Editura Politică, București, 1985, edition by Solomon Marcus. Studies:

1. Oehler, Klaus, *Compendiu al semioticii lui Peirce*
2. Krampen, Martin, *Saussure și dezvoltarea semiologiei*
3. Deledalle, Gérard, *Teoria și practica semnului*

*** *DEX*, ediția a II-a, Editura Univers Enciclopedic, București, 1996

ANALELE UNIVERSITĂȚII DE VEST DIN TIMIȘOARA
SERIA FILOSOFIE ȘI ȘTIINȚE ALE COMUNICĂRII
VOL. VII (XXIV), 2012
ISSN 1844 – 1351 (online)
ISSN 1842 – 6638 (print)

SECTION II:
COMMUNICATION SCIENCES

POOR ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

CORINA COZMINA COSTINAȘ

Carbon Solutions Global Ltd.

Abstract

At some point any organization is forced to know how to face up a poor communication situation and it is important to know what to do and not to do in the future, it is essential to learn something from every situation. There are many factors that can lead to a poor communication process. Deficient communication can affect the internal and external audiences, the organization image, the social, economical and financial plan of a firm and it can be caused by various obstacles such as: culture, religion, language, social status, misleading etc.

Keywords: poor communication, bad strategy, obstacles, internal public, external audience, organization.

*„As strong is the sword in a battle,
as good is the word in city affairs”
(Solon)*

Since ancient times, communication has occupied a very important place in people's lives, even if initially communication was done in a

rudimentary way, however those who were employed in the communication process managed to convey the desired message. Over the years we have seen that communication has become more and more important in everyday life, having an increasingly high role, both at micro and macro level. In other words, without communication we can't live in today's society, as revealed by the dynamic of things.

If, in the past, people communicated with each others through various sounds, signs and gestures, as time passed by these were stylized, but essentially we are using the same communication structures. Currently, communication is vital, whether if the transmitter is an organization, whether it is an individual entity. In both cases it is necessary, because this way the message is popularized and spread, making it very easy to understand and so accessible.

Even if the terms of communication and organization are very commonly used, it is necessary to review their meaning. Organization is limited to a group of people working together to achieve common goals, while being bound by a set of rules and regulations, without losing sight of the multitude of responsibilities that must be fulfilled. Drawing the portrait of an organization is based on some things that should be seen as some character traits of organization, because it must be a good listener, sensitive to anxiety and target audience interest and values, to be a good communicator, to be able to convince the public, but also to listen it, to understand and to accept his views¹.

The well known mean of communication process is illustrated by explanatory dictionary of the Romanian language, the online version, but based on this definition we can establish that the communication process means the ability to "read" someone, to pass some data, meanings and words²; his importance being established by the effect it has on the receiver.

The entire paper revolves around the idea that communication process is the only chance for an organization to survive, to penetrate the public mind and heart, whether we refer to internal or external communication, and that an insufficient communication does nothing else than to have a negative impact on the organization's social, economic and financial plan.

Now that we have defined theoretically the two concepts and have established the fact that communication process is extremely important, we can proceed to show up how an insufficient communication process can affect the performance, results and image of the organization.

Poor and rudimentary communication of an organization can affect either the internal public or the external one, who can have a strong influence on the organizational behavior which can lead to damaging the organizational image in the social plan. Communication failure of an

¹ Rogojinaru, Adela (2006), coordonator, *Comunicare și cultură aplicații interdisciplinare*, Tritonic, București

² Constantin, Noica (1987), *Viață și societate*, în *Cuvânt împreună despre rostirea omenească*, Eminescu, pp. 188-192

organization can be seen from the chosen communication strategy, and also by analyzing the effects of the implementation of a communication and public relations strategy badly chosen. A communication strategy is badly chosen when the organization faces and has to cope with those obstacles which prevent her to convey her message, which can affect her relationship with mass-media and/ or her relation with the employees (which are her internal public) and causing an image and/ or identity crisis. Also, it can lead to loss of mutual confidence, which means that neither the organization will not know how to manage her audience and how to relate to it, nor the public would not know how to notify the organization about his needs and expectations or to persuade her to come into their prevention.

Poor organizational communication can be caused by several factors, factors that vary by target audience, whether it is referring to the internal or external public. If we focus on internal public, meaning on the employees, among those factors we can remember (we must not lose from our sight the fact that a satisfied employee will always be a satisfied customer, who brings along him many other customers which can be at least as satisfied):

1. transmitting information by calling to a series of inappropriate communication techniques by using a wrong channel for the message which is intended to be sent
 1. the rigidity of the leading department
 2. the team leader accepts with great difficulty the feedback which came from the employees and the target audience
 3. poor understanding of the management phenomenon and communication process conducted in and out of organization
 4. lack of communication between employees of different departments, but also between departments and leading management
 1. cultural differences, different emotional baggage and professional of employees

Communication made by an organization through her external audience, around which revolve a great part of communication process, becomes poor when the organization through her chosen and implemented strategy fails to reach the final customer. Most times the communication process between organization and her external audiences becomes faulty and poor under the influence of various factors, factors that we need to know how to annihilate them so we can reduce the negative consequences and bad effects.

1. the message adopted by an organization should be simple, concise, clear, concrete, in other words it should be easily understood by its intended audience
2. using a common language by both characters involved in the communication process (the public and the organization should assigns the same meaning to the used words)
3. mutual recognition of the identity which should lead to harmonizing and reconciling of their opinions and to avoid their confrontation in terms of

meeting the ultimate goal of reaching the customer; avoiding a conflict latent state

4. an information that the organization wants to convey it to the public should be handled by the right people at the right and appropriate time, no sooner or later, otherwise we will not reach the expected result.

The deficient nature of communication process is imposed by a number of obstacles which are dependent or independent of the organization. Social status, shared customs and traditions, religion, level of education, language and vocabulary used everyday are just some of the obstacles that could create real problems to the communication undertaker by an organization. If we confine ourselves to internal audiences, the most common obstacle refers to communication problems that arise between bosses and subordinates. These problems are often caused by those employees who are shy and reserve when they have to express their own opinions, by poor transmission of the intended message, but also by the fact that managers believe they lose their time if they sit down and listen to their subordinates, starting from the assumption that they have nothing new or good to say.

An efficient communication is the ideal solution which every organization should adopt for avoiding the fight with the effects of poor communication tone. For effective communication it is necessary that the transmitter to know very clearly what he has to say, to plan starting from the point of view of those who work for the firm, not to lose of his sight what it is obvious and get lost in the details and to highlight the message so it can be understood by the final audience. Also, it is very important for the company to show empathy and to know how to accept a feedback, whether is positive or a negative one, and beyond accepting a feedback, it is very important that the organization will take into consideration this feedback and will try to make it happened by practicing what it has been suggested.

Communication within an organization overlaps interpersonal communication, and that's why the direction and content of the communication are planned to organizational effectiveness and creating an appropriate communication environment. Once we have established that poor communication has major negative effects we must present some of them and try to find the best solutions to solve and cure them.

1. For example, when a car company tried to promote her new type of cars in Latin America using a Spanish word which in Latin America had another signification was a big and damaging mistake. This situation was a real crisis for this car company image which also was reflected in her financial plan. The company tried to reach more easily Latin Americans and she thought that using that word everything will be easier, but in fact it was a bad mistake. All these situations happened because those in charged to promote the product did not research very well the origin of that word. So, in this case we can observe that the poor

communication was determinate by the cultural and linguist barriers. Solution: we should research deeply everything about the targeted audience so we can avoid this kind of surprises.

2. The second example should refer to a poor internal communication, because the first one was about a deficient communication with external public. This example is a real situation that happened many times in the company I work for. It is something normal for the leading department to try to minimize the importance of internal communication between departments and to avoid monthly meetings. Also, today they say one thing and the second day they do another one, and they try to escape from their responsibilities as much as they can, for example if they have to pay a manufacturer after buying something from him, they try everything not to pay him and when the manufacturer becomes assertively they shout down every mean of communication. In conclusion, chaos is the appropriate word to describe this firm and constant not knowing what to do.

In conclusion, a good public relation strategy and an internal communication strategy are the key of success for any company, firm or organization so they can avoid being in a poor communication case. Also, it is very important that the strategy is well elaborated and implemented, even if at first it is hard to do it so. As a firm we have to do everything possible, we have to know how to relate to our customers, to our employees, if we want to gain every social and communicational battle.

References:

- Constantin, Noica (1987), *Viață și societate în Cuvânt împreună despre rostirea omenească*, București, Eminescu
- Rogojinaru, Adela (2006), coordonator, *Comunicare și cultură aplicații interdisciplinare*, București, Tritonic
- Marconi, Joe (2007), *Ghid practic de relații publice*, Iași, Polirom
- Gregory, Anne (2005), *Relații publice în practică*, București, All Beck
- Oliver, Sandra (2009), *Strategii de relații publice*, Iași, Polirom

THE PARADOX OF ROMA IDENTIITY:
ARE 'THEY' OUR CONSTRUCTION?

Mălina Iulia DUȚĂ
West University of Timișoara

Abstract

Though they are a community often perceived in a biased manner, the objective reality is that the Roma constitute Europe's largest trans-territorial ethnic group. As such, we must try to understand, without further mystifications, their history, culture and place in an ever more globalized world. We have, sometimes with the help of art, built our own representations of the Roma, but the validity of our constructs is currently being called into question.

Keywords: Roma, Gypsies, Identity, Europe, Representation, Cinematography, Persecution, Ethnicity, Social construct, Culture

In one case from the mid-1990s, the French authorities permitted a Roma child to stay in France for the duration of a film shoot in which he played the main role; he was promptly deported to Romania afterwards. In another, the Roma actress who had played the main role in a film competing at the Venice Film Festival was refused a visa and effectively barred from attending the screening. Roma are hailed and welcomed as images on the screen, as long as they do not attempt show up in flesh and blood.

[...] All over Europe filmmakers keep churning out scripts featuring stories of exuberant Roma. All over Europe unwanted Roma populations are on the move; some are struggling to get themselves to a better life, while others are being deported in the context of illicitly executed law enforcement campaigns. One welcomes the images while barring the actual people. The striking failure to reconcile actual and metaphoric Gypsies persists.

Dina Iordanova¹

Dina Iordanova's observation describes the current state of affairs regarding the Roma community in a painfully accurate manner. Paradoxically, the impressions we retain about the Roma make us, as a society, both embrace and reject them: for instance, we envy their freedom (or at least what we perceive as such) but we also blame them for favouring a nomadic-inclined way of life. This is just one minor example, for in today's Europe – both geographically and from the point of view of the European Union – the public image of the Roma community is undeniably plagued by stereotypes. Marginalisation and discrimination, as much as we avoid admitting it, exist both as a day-to-day reality and at an institutional level. In the Introduction of *Between Past and Future – the Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*² Will Guy stated that the Roma are “the largest, poorest and most marginalised minority in Europe.” They are also, in Ian Hancock's words written in the Foreword of the same book, “the single largest transterritorial ethnic minority in Europe.” The Roma live all over the world, but the greatest numbers are indeed in Europe – we are referring to several million people. In the context of freedom of movement offered within the European Union internal migration, employment, health and education policies concerning this minority no longer constitute issues for individual states, but must be seen in the context of a supra-statal framework. Thus it is of utmost importance that we all become aware of what this community represents in contemporary Europe.

The largest percentage of Roma population is concentrated in Central and Eastern Europe, so it is not surprising that the most famous contemporary director to construct Gypsy figures in some of his films is someone originating in that region: the ex-Yugoslavian Emir Kusturica. His most famous films that feature Gypsy characters are *Time of the Gypsies* (1988) and *Black Cat, White Cat* (1998). Considering *Time of the Gypsies* was awarded the Best Director prize at the Cannes Film Festival (1989) and *Black Cat, White Cat* was awarded The Silver Lion for Best Director at the Venice Film Festival (1998), one can affirm that Kusturica's vision as a director is bound to offer an interesting perspective on the Roma.

One of the issues to begin with when referring to terminology is the fact that scholars have not yet reached a conclusion regarding the use of the

¹ In Iordanova, Dina (2008), ‘Mimicry and Plagiarism – Reconciling Actual and Metaphoric Gypsies’ in *Third Text*, Vol 22, Issue 3, 305-310.

² Guy, Will (ed.) (2001), *Between Past and Future – the Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*, Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press.

words 'Gypsy' and 'Roma'. In his work *We are the Romani People* Professor Ian Hancock, reputed scholar, Roma rights activist and of Roma descent himself, stresses the need to only use the word 'Roma', as he finds 'Gypsy' (and its translation into other languages) profoundly derogatory. While Professor Hancock's work is rich in valuable factual information, one cannot completely dismiss the subjective undertone of the work, thus on the issue of 'Gypsy' versus 'Roma' one needs to review several perspectives. Isabel Fonseca's extensive fieldwork on the East European Romani population materialized into *Bury Me Standing – The Gypsies and their Journey*, a travelogue written nonetheless from an educated perspective, thus relying on an academic base confirmed or infirmed in the real world. Ms Fonseca has no problem in using the term 'Gypsy' even in the title, and clearly she can not be in any way accused of discrimination. A very good argument regarding this debate is stated by Paloma Gay y Blasco in her article 'Picturing 'Gypsies': Interdisciplinary Approaches to Roma Representation' appearing in the *Third Text*: "For some years now, 'Gypsy' has been rejected by many as an exoticising and derogatory term that reflects the world-views and oppressive practices of the dominant population. In its place has arisen 'Roma', which is meant to reflect the rich heritage and cultural dignity and distinctiveness of an oppressed but also resisting people. [...] And yet 'Gypsy' [...] remains a preferred mode of self-ascription by many individuals and communities across Europe [...]. It is impossible and indeed undesirable to impose uniformity in academic writing about people who call themselves, or are called by others, 'Gypsy', 'Roma', 'Gitano', 'Manush' and so on."

The existing scholarship on the history of the Roma population in Europe should be quite straightforward, as we are referring to historic events attested by documents. Still, subjectivity slips in this field as well: for instance, while Professor Hancock implies that the enslavement of about half of the Roma population in the Romanian principalities between the 15th and the 19th century is one of the main sources of Roma discrimination today, Angus Fraser, in his book *The Gypsies*, has an opposed version of the matter, stating that though the Gypsies had a difficult life in Eastern Europe and the Ottoman Empire, "they were left pretty much unmolested by western European standards", thus suggesting that the degree of discrimination the Roma suffered in Eastern Europe was greatly surpassed by what they had to endure in the West.

As for the ongoing situation of the Roma in the European Union, the issue constitutes history in the making, thus academic writings are mostly found in the form of articles and books containing several authors' essays. Such is the case of Will Guy's (editor and co-author) *Between past and future – the Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*. Many of the co-authors' main concern is the fact that Roma traditional nomadic inclinations are becoming politicized.

I - Naming and Condemning: Socio-Historical Context of Roma Discrimination. Terminology

As I have already underlined in the introductory section³, scholars agree to disagree on the use of the terms 'Gypsy' and 'Roma'. I personally favour Paloma Gay y Blasco's opinion⁴: only using one of these terms would not fully reflect reality, as currently both terms are in use both in academic writings and in the conscience of both Roma and non-Roma populations. Furthermore, the translation of 'Gypsy' in Romanian ('țigan') and French ('tzigane') – to give two examples – has a different etymology than 'Gypsy'. While 'Gypsy' comes from the obsolete word 'Egyptian', as in the Middle Ages Europeans believed the Roma came from Egypt - thus being historically in the wrong -, the terms 'țigan' or 'tzigane' come from the Byzantine Greek [atsingani], meaning 'do not touch' or 'hands off' people (Hancock 2007: 1). Indeed, the Roma were known as a population that preferred keeping to itself, characteristic still visible nowadays. Considering all this, I believe it would be a mistake to only use one of these terms, as at the moment they seem to be complementing each other.

Another term to be addressed in this section is the key concept of stereotype. In the context of this study 'stereotype' should be understood in the sense in which most dictionaries explain it: **Stereotype**: *a fixed idea that people have about what someone or something is like, especially an idea that is wrong*⁵; *a belief or idea of what a particular type of person or thing is like. Stereotypes are often unfair or untrue*⁶. As an addition, one must be aware of the notion of 'positive stereotype', defining a fixed idea that is probably non-accordant to reality, but sheds a positive light on the stereotyped item.

The Roma in Europe

While it has been established that the Gypsies are a population that started its journey in India, one has yet to establish what the status of the Roma was before they left, what triggered their migration and when exactly this migration began.

What is certain is that they travelled through Asia Minor into the Byzantine Empire, where they later came into contact with the Ottoman Empire, and thus they began their European journey (Hancock 2007: 14-16).

While roughly half of the Roma population that reached Europe through the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires remained in Eastern Europe and was gradually enslaved in the Romanian territories of Wallachia and

³ I believe it do be redundant to mention the same scholars and their works one more time on the exact same issue of 'Gypsy' versus 'Roma', as I have already given their names and title of works I am referring to in the introductory part of the study.

⁴ Gay y Blasco, Paloma (2008), 'Picturing 'Gypsies': Interdisciplinary Approaches to Roma Representation' in *Third Text*, Volume 22, Issue 3, 297-303.

⁵ Cambridge English Dictionary Online

⁶ Longman English Dictionary Online

Moldavia, the other half made its way to Western Europe. The state of slavery in Wallachia and Moldavia lasted until the mid-19th century and, in Hancock's words, "turned a skilled, self-sufficient people into dependent, dispirited chattel" (Hancock 2007: 16). As noted in the *Introduction*, not all scholars share this view, Angus Fraser asserting that in the East "they were left pretty much unmolested by western European standards" (Fraser 2007: 175). Whether the Roma suffered more in the East or in the West remains an open debate.

In Western Europe, the initial curiosity caused by the new population gradually turned into sheer hostility, which apparently was particularly manifest in the German or German-controlled territories (Angus Fraser even establishes a chronology of Roma suffering in the German territories⁷): as late as in the 18th century, after Western Europe having experienced the Enlightenment, the Gypsies were literally in danger of being legally massacred - "in 1721 Emperor Karl VI called for the extermination of Romanies everywhere throughout his domain." (Hancock 2007: 32). Furthermore, "All those [Romanies] crossing into Bohemia in 1740 were ordered to be killed, and in 1782 some 200 were tortured and executed following false charges of cannibalism". Unbelievably, "in places such as England and Finland it was illegal even to be born a Romani." (Hancock 2007: 32).

Clearly, the somber cherry on an already poisoned cake was the Holocaust, but one is to return to that dark chapter later on.

Stereotypes, Social Constructions

Thus along several centuries of oppression and discrimination a feeling of anti-Gypsyism and the consequent stereotypes took shape in the European collective imaginary. Though by the end of the 18th century the Roma were no longer a homogenous population, but were split into groups influenced by the locals in the territories where they settled or wandered (Fraser 2007: 191-196), the stereotypes circulating today seem to be unitary throughout Europe.

From the point of view of the physical characteristics, the Roma are often described as dark skinned and clad in 'exotic', colourful outfits (Fraser 2007: 122-125). While these characteristics might fit the Roma to a certain extent, the above description represents an 'umbrella image': certain Roma groups are blonde (especially amongst the women), while some Spanish and Portuguese Roma adopt very sober, black outfits.

While stereotypes on the physical appearance of the Roma are inaccurate, they do not directly constitute the basis for discrimination any more than people's taste in fashion, for instance, would. It is the moral traits, or rather faults, attributed to the Gypsies that induce a discriminatory attitude. The Roma are accused, amongst others, of being dirty, of loose morals, inclined to getting involved in criminality, particularly petty theft, and a

⁷ In Fraser, Angus (2007) *The Gypsies*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 149-155.

consequence of their nomadic lifestyle would theoretically be their becoming untrustworthy, as they are not able to form civic allegiances.

While “the truth is rarely pure and never simple” (Oscar Wilde), it is not overly difficult to dismantle stereotypes brushed in such thick strokes. As Ian Hancock explains, the Roma have very strict traditions regulating cleanliness and morality: though sometimes physical cleaning is not always observed, this is a consequence of lack of appropriate spaces and financial means, and not a ‘natural’ state of the Roma. As for morality, suffice to say that ideally girls are to be married virgins, both men and women have to cover their knees in public (thus men always wear long pants and women long skirts) and “topics concerning sex and other bodily functions are stenuously avoided in mixed company.” (Hancock 2007: 103; 91-109).

As for the Roma’s lack of allegiances, Paloma Gay y Blasco presents the other side of this story: “In the autumn of 2006 the ghetto was demolished and its inhabitants were resettled once again, some in other state-built ‘Colonies for Special Population’, others in flats among non-Gitanos. They all knew that this would not be the last time they would be, as they explained, ‘made to pack up and go, start from scratch elsewhere’. ‘The Gadje’⁸, I was told, ‘don’t want us to put down roots’. (Gay y Blasco, 2008: 300)⁹.

United Europe, Divided People

One would presume that currently the situation of the Roma in Europe has improved, especially that the United Nations (finally) awarded the Roma a ‘consultative’ status in 1993¹⁰.

While the 1990s brought about political and economic restlessness in the Balkans and Eastern Europe, thus affecting relationships between minority and majority, the expansion of the European Union in the first years of the third millennium is supposed to have marked the beginning of an era of progress in intercultural and social relations. Alas, the case is not quite such when it comes to the Roma. Clearly, there is no more official discrimination. There are no more laws and regulations against the Roma, quite on the contrary, integration is thoroughly encouraged. Unfortunately, many scholars feel that migration “has now become highly politicized” (Castle-Kaněrová, 2001: 117)¹¹. Since the Roma can be defined as migrants *par excellence*, one is compelled to notice the EU maintains a double standard when it comes to minorities, particularly when those concerned are

⁸ the Roma word designating the non-Roma.

⁹ In Gay y Blasco, Paloma (2008) ‘Picturing ‘Gypsies’: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Roma Representation’ in *Third Text*, Volume 22, Issue 3, 297-303.

¹⁰ For more details of the chronology of Roma activism see Ian Hancock’s *We are the Romani People* and Will Guy’s (ed.) *Between Past and Future - the Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*.

¹¹ In Guy, Will (ed.) (2001) *Between Past and Future – the Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*, Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press.

poor and unqualified: on the one hand the EU theoretically celebrates diversity, but on the other hand those who are different are not welcomed:

The matter becomes more serious when we consider the EU's own double standards – on the one hand, criticizing the poor human rights' record of accession countries but, on the other, willingly agreeing that the Roma question is primarily a social and economic issue.

(Castle – Kaněrová, 2001: 122).

II – The Silent Holocaust versus the Silenced Holocaust

The Holocaust led to the death of between 500 thousand and 1,5 million Roma (Hancock 2007: 47-48) and many aspects and circumstances of the Roma Holocaust are yet to be revealed by historians and other scholars. But I am also particularly interested in underlining that even long after World War II¹² Europe remained slow to acknowledge the suffering of the Roma, fact that I consider symptomatic in the case of Roma discrimination.

In 1905 the *Zigeuner-Buch* was published in Munich; the book stated the Roma were “a plague”. Fifteen years later, a study written by two German intellectuals proclaimed the Roma were “unworthy of life”. Finally, in 1935 it was decided to apply the Nuremberg Law to the Roma (and the Jews and those of African descent) (Hancock 2007: 35-37). The Final Solution was duly applied to the Roma, many of the deported perishing in the Auschwitz concentration camp. We should not deceive ourselves believing Roma deportation and discrimination was (mostly) concentrated in the Germany, as France, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg were among the countries that deported (because of the Nazi pressure) the Roma, while the atrocities committed in Croatia by the local militia is said to have surpassed Nazi brutality (Fraser 2007: 262-267).

While after World War II the other victims were allowed at least the solace of having their unimaginable suffering acknowledged, the Roma were deprived of even this minor compensation, in Europe and elsewhere: “The United Nations too, did not assist Romanies during or following the Holocaust, nor, sadly, were Romanies mentioned anywhere in the documentation of the US War Refugee Board. This is all the more puzzling since the situation was known to the War Crimes Tribunal in Washington as early as 1946” (Hancock 2007: 50-51). Dina Iordanova¹³ also tackles the issue in a most poignant manner by making reference to *Das falsche Wort*

¹² A particularly interesting work on this subject is Guenter Lewy's (2000) *The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press. The book focuses principally on the Roma on German and Austrian territories, but some statements are valid for all European Romanies that perished during the Nazi Holocaust.

¹³ Iordanova, Dina (2008) 'Mimicry and Plagiarism. Reconciling Actual and Metaphoric Gypsies' in *Third Text*, Volume 22, Issue 3, 305 – 310.

(*The False Word*, 1987), a documentary on “the story of this enduring bigotry”:

Its most important achievement is in the dispassionate chronicling of the continuous discrimination and systematic selective unfairness applied to Roma Holocaust survivors after the war, throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s. At a time when other groups were given proper acknowledgement and compensation for the persecution inflicted on them, the suffering of Roma survivors was systematically diminished, their damage claims turned down, and many left to perish in poverty in post-Second World War democratic Germany.

(Iordanova 2008: 309).

Thus a Silent Holocaust became a Silenced Holocaust. Up to merely a decade ago, the scholarship available on this issue was very difficult to come across. During the past years, some highly controversial works on the Holocaust have appeared, one of them being Norman Finkelstein's *The Holocaust Industry: reflections on the exploitation of the Jewish suffering*. Though furiously contested by some, Finkelstein had nonetheless the support of Raul Hilberg, an established authority in the field of Holocaust studies. In his *The Holocaust Industry* Finkelstein¹⁴ claims that the suffering of all Holocaust victims has been ‘hijacked’ for political purposes favouring the state of Israel “The claims of Holocaust uniqueness are intellectually barren and morally discreditable, yet they persist. The question is, Why? In the first place, unique suffering confers unique entitlement.” (Finklestein, 2003: 47). It is obvious that Finklestein's standpoint is politicized and debatable, but leaving delicacy aside, we have to admit that one of the reasons for which the Roma Holocaust remained a silent cry up to date is the fact that the Roma never had a political form of organization such as a state to protect their interests and support their claims. Another reason for this situation is that the Roma culture is primarily an oral one, thus many memories of events that took place in the concentration camps have perished together with the former Holocaust survivors.

Theoretically the Roma Holocaust constitutes a rich investigative field for cinematography. Practically, few film directors are committed enough to the Roma cause to take on such a morally disturbing topic. Not only such films would allude to a dark, yet mostly unmapped past, but they would also march into the minefields of contemporary political sensitivities.

III – Emir Kusturica in the Context of Balkan Roma Cinematography

In an interview, Kusturica affirmed: “I’m like a Gypsy myself. I like changes, I see myself moving all around for the next 10 years.” (Iordanova 2002: 26). Funnily enough, when claiming allegiance to the Roma, Kusturica employs the stereotype of the travelling Gypsy that sees nomadism as a

¹⁴ Finkelstein, Norman (2003) *The Holocaust Industry: reflections on the exploitation of Jewish suffering*, London and New York: New Left Books (now Verso Books).

chosen way of life. Does Kusturica really feel an affinity for the Roma or is it just a publicity stunt devised to draw attention? In any case, Kusturica surely has one thing in common with the Roma - the furious passions his work and public persona¹⁵ give rise to: "The members of the two groups [those praising Kusturica and those criticizing him] are equally aggressive and unbalanced in their reactions to Kusturica and the only thing they share is the intensity of feeling they have for the director." (Iordanova 2002: 3).

Emir Kusturica was born in a Bosnian Muslim family in Sarajevo and later on attended university in Prague. Though highly praised in Sarajevo during the 1980s, the director drifted away from his childhood roots. Religion never mattered much in his life, and he gradually came to see the Bosnians as intolerant. He eventually grew very close to Serbia, and considering the conflicts in the 1990s, his allegiances made him the target of rough criticism, especially after the release of his *Underground* (1995), a highly politicised film (Iordanova, 2002: 5-25). After much debate, it slowly became evident that Kusturica was (is) what one would call a Yugonostalgic: "It remains an open question why, after acknowledging faults on all sides, Kusturica gave his unreserved loyalty to the Serbs. [...] The Serbs were the only ones who, at least officially, stood for Yugoslav unity and this is what he stood for as well." (Iordanova 2002: 20-21). Kusturica currently lives in France, but has yet to reside in one single country. Considering these circumstances, it is easy to trace a link between the Roma being constantly uprooted and scrutinized and Kusturica's interest in them: in both cases, the homeland is solely an imaginary place. Maybe that is why in both *Time of the Gypsies* and *Black Cat, White Cat* the name of the 'homeland' is never directly stated – rather, the time of the action is underlined, and this time is an eternal "Present"¹⁶.

Black Cat, White Cat was shot in 1998, ten years after *Time of the Gypsies*, following a period when Kusturica had been under a lot of criticism because of his film *Underground*.

Black Cat, White Cat is nothing about the Gypsies, who are used as a cinematic metaphor and a substituent in this case – and all about Serbia. As Goran Gocić underlines, the film can be read in two allegorical ways: "it could be a satire of a God-forsaken country where the only serious profession is to be a criminal. Or, more plausibly, it can be read as a celebration of a 'successful' and spiteful resistance under, as the Yugoslav state-controlled press would always point out, 'undeserved' economic sanctions." (Gocić 2001: 59).

Either way, the film seems to be a kind of hilariously written manual on how to survive in *no man's land*. The key verb is *to manage*. While none of the characters has a grand destiny, they are all, in accordance to their own

¹⁵ In the context of this study I define 'persona' as the image a public figure constructs for himself (by means of public statements, attitude, etc.).

¹⁶ As in the beginning of *Black Cat, White Cat*.

skills and wit, trying to make it to the next day. Considering Kusturica's political views and the situation in his home country, it is no wonder that he chose to make such a film, bitterly ironic to those having lived in the context he alludes to, and at the same time celebrating life lived in the *carpe diem* spirit.

Conclusion

Needless to say that real Gypsies are far more complex than their constructed representations, no matter how truthful these could be. This study has dealt with Roma stereotyping and discrimination in the hope to draw attention to a problem that continues to be ignored at several levels, but it would be naïve of us to believe that the situation is as clear cut as that. The Roma too have their share of issues to resolve. As Isabel Fonseca underlines in her book *Bury Me Standing*, the Romani culture is a very exclusionary one. Trying to get answers by never asking questions and a never ending game of "us" versus "them" enflamed by both parties are never valid ways of building bridges between cultures. The Roma seem to be no less unwilling to associate with the *Gadje* than the other way around:

"You will never learn our language", a Gypsy activist – and teacher of Romani – proudly told me on a bus in Bucharest. He didn't mean that I had a wooden ear. "For every word you record in your little notebook, we have another one – a synonym, which we use and which you can never know. Oh, you might learn these; but you won't get how to use them, or what nuances they carry. We don't want you to know."

(Fonseca, 1996: 13).

As for the future, the integration of the Roma is not a far fetched vision, but an expectable, though slow, process. Furthermore, the issue of globalization threatens all cultures, but is particularly dangerous for minorities, as Anikó Imre¹⁷ also acknowledges: "Global popular culture voraciously incorporates ethnic differences in the pursuit of selling and consuming non-stop entertainment. This process has two sides: it can be seen as liberating and democratic, empowering minorities whose voices and images would otherwise be missing or stereotyped. At the same time, it implies the appropriation of such voices and images by corporate multiculturalism and its cultures of simulation, which re-trivialises racial difference on a commercial basis." (Imre 2006: 661).

Currently Eastern Europe is experiencing a vivid interest in the Romani culture. Beginning with 1991 the city of Brno in the Czech Republic has been home to the Museum of Romani Culture. At the end of July 2009 the Romanian city of Timișoara hosted the third annual edition of the International Romani Art Festival. All over the world Gypsy and Gypsy-

¹⁷ In 'Play in the Ghetto. Global Entertainment and the European 'Roma Problem'' in *Third Text*, Volume 20, Issue 6, 659 – 670.

inspired music have been attracting ever growing audiences, thus enabling us all, on some level, to witness change and aspire to a better Europe.

References:

Books

- Cartwright, Garth (2007) *Princes Amongst Men. Journeys with Gypsy Musicians*, London: Serpent's Tail.
- Fonseca, Isabel (1996) *Bury Me Standing. The Gypsies and their Journey*, London: Vintage.
- Fraser, Angus (2007) *The Gypsies*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Gocić, Goran (2001) *Notes from the Underground: the Cinema of Emir Kusturica*, London and New York: Wallflower Press.
- Guy, Will (ed) (2001) *Between Past and Future: the Roma of Central and Eastern Europe*, Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press.
- Hancock, Ian (2007) *We Are the Romani People*, Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press.
- Iordanova, Dina (2002) *Emir Kusturica*, London: British Film Institute Publishing.

Articles

- Gay y Blasco, Paloma (2008) 'Picturing 'Gypsies': Interdisciplinary Approaches to Roma Representation' in *Third Text*, Volume 22, Issue 3, 297 – 303.
- Imre, Anikó (2006) 'Play in the Ghetto. Global Entertainment and the European 'Roma Problem'' in *Third Text*, Volume 20, Issue 6, 659 – 670.
- Iordanova, Dina (2008) 'Mimicry and Plagiarism. Reconciling Actual and Metaphoric Gypsies' in *Third Text*, Volume 22, Issue 3, 305 – 310.

Internet sites

- *Google Books*
Finkelstein, Norman (2003) *The Holocaust Industry: reflections on the exploitation of Jewish suffering*, London and New York: New Left Books (now Verso Books)
(last login 01.09.2012).