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The present issue of *Europea* is dedicated exclusively to American Studies. Now that we are living in an age when America is no longer "Europe's sister", as it was thought to be so far, we consider it necessary to revalue our perception of it and our reference to it. In shaping its image, a united Europe cannot ignore the important pattern provided by America. Thus, the papers in the present volume touch on a variety of subjects from philosophy and literature to economics and law, attempting to deal with the multifaceted image of American reality.

THE USE OF SYMBOLISM: RELIGIOUS SUGGESTIONS IN T.S. ELIOT'S EARLY POETRY

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ABSTRACT. Emphasizing the different interpretations given to the question of the symbol in pre-modern and modern culture, the paper emphasizes the use of patterns of symbols in T.S. Eliot's poetry, one of the most celebrated names of the relation between *symbol* and *allegory,* the author of the paper underscores the specific lines of symbolical thinking in T.S. Eliot's poetry.

By tackling T.S. Eliot's early work from the point of view of the use of symbolism, this study tries to identify the way in which Eliot's use of symbolism illuminates the underlying religious sensibility of his early literary output. I shall start this analysis by a succint survey of the history and use of symbols within and without poetry[1].

The etymology (*symballein*, Gk. = to put together; *symbolon*, Gk. = mark, token, sign) and the usage of the word "symbol" allow two main contexts for its use. A larger context includes philosophy, history, philology, theology[2], liturgy; the narrower context of literary theory uses the term as a particular poetic device.

Modern interpretation seems to agree that due to certain factors, the understanding, the impact of many symbols has disappeared from modern life. The factors that account for this loss, for this oblivion of symbols are, mainly, the gradual increase in the scientific way of looking at the world; the gradual disappearance of the sacred in favour of the secular in school curricula; the distrust of imagery that Protestant Christianity has had in general. All these factors made researchers speak of a "lost" or "forgotten" language of symbolism[3].

In the medieval period symbolic interpretation developed into a science. It started from the need of connecting the Old Testament to the New Testament texts, as well as the need of linking the old religion to the

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[1] The latter is based on *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*.

[2] "Symbol" is one synonym for "creed" (see Wellek and Warren, *Theory of Literature*, p.177)

[3] Thus Bayley's "lost" language and E. Fromm's "forgotten" language.

development of the Catholic church. Patristic exegesis developed the fourfold method of interpretation of Biblical texts. Every text was considered to consist of a literal/historical, an allegorical/typological or figural, a moral/tropological and an eschatological/anagogical level. This became the common hermeneutic method in the 12th century. It first appeared in a letter to Can Grande, was prefixed to the *Paradiso* and was, for a long time, attributed to Dante. In this instance the fourfold method is illustrated with respect to the exodus from Egypt: on the literal level the Hebrews celebrated Passover and left Egypt; on the allegorical level, members of the church are redeemed through Jesus; tropologically, Christians are transformed from sinfulness to grace; on the eschatological level, the soul is freed from material bondage and gains eternal existence. A more fundamental bipartite division contrasts literal and fuller meaning. This fundamental bipartite division was to be found in the basic claim of Jesus to divinity in the Old Testament, which was to be confirmed in the fullness of time.

Allegory in the New Testament is most often typological or figural. In it the events of the Old Testament are interpreted as prefigurations of the events that will happen historically in the New Testament. Paul and the early Church Fathers understood the New Testament to be a fulfilment of the types (that is to say, the characters, institutions, taken symbolically) of the Old Testament.

A considerable number of theologians and poets who make use of this type of method of interpretation find an echo, and often a special place in Eliot's critical or poetic work. Origen, for instance, devised a threefold method of interpretation: the somatic, the psychic and the pneumatic. Augustine, in *De Doctrina Christiana*[4], praises the beauty of obscure biblical language. Explicitly Christian poets, such as Milton, Herbert and Blake are acknowledged users of the allegorical or typological level of meaning[5].

The exegetical interpretation was one of the main factors in the development of the Renaissance nature philosophy, which led to the doctrine of correspondences, as it was propounded by the mystics Jakob Boehme and Emanuel Swedenborg, and whose originating role for the ulterior Symbolist doctrine is known. It was given poetic and programmatic

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[4] Augustine is one of the theologians whom Eliot gives an explicit place in his poetical works (see the Notes to *The Waste Land*)

[5] All these poets will be discussed in Eliot's critical writings. He will discuss Milton in two successive essays, 1936, 1947, in connection with this very topic, and his essays will illustrate the evolution of his critical thought, from an appreciaton of "clear visual images" of the kind Dante wrote, towards an acceptance of abstraction. It is, in fact, based on these two essays, on Eliot's power of intervention in the canon and intervention in the newly created canon, that Delmore Schwarz called Eliot "a literay dictator". Eliot will write a British Council monography on George Herbert (1962).

brilliance by the other great influence on Eliot, Charles Baudelaire ("Correspondances", 1857). The basis of the doctrine of correspondences was that it viewed the external world as a system of symbols, revealing the spiritual world in material form. By the Romantic period this doctrine had evolved towards the idea that nature was the language of God or of Spirit. This had become one of the mainstays of poetry. At this time there is one main shift in the relationship between symbol and the world represented: the symbol and the world represented are seen as merged rather than representation and thing represented. The result of this shift during the Romantic period is that symbols become less fixed and more ambiguous.

The 20th century has witnessed a tendency to reunite what science and Reformation protestantism had sundered. There are epistemological theories that claim that the language of symbols has as much claim to knowledge as the language of fact and reason. The questions that arise refer to the kind of reality that this language represents and to the relationship between these two kinds of language. Depending on the position assumed, there is a scale of answers to these questions, going from positivist to mystic answers. Mystics, of course, claim that the language of symbols is the only true language.

Closer to the center of the two positions, working towards a reconciliation, is I.A.Richards' position (*Science and Poetry*, 1926) who accepts the distinction between scientific and symbolic language, but invests the latter with a status and a value of its own. He speaks of a "referential" language of fact and science, distinct from an "emotive" language, whose value resides in its ability to arouse and organize our emotions. The result of this would be that poetry is endowed with a psychological and therapeutic truth.

The New Critics posit that poetry possesses a higher kind of truth, more complex and profound.

Closer to us, the reconcilers, such as Cassirer, say that all languages, both poetry and science, are various ways in which the human mind constructs pictures of reality, so that all languages give us *pictures* of reality, rather than reality itself. The conclusion of this position is that humanity has not forgotten or lost the language of symbols, but has come to prefer one symbolic language to another.

According to some contemporary movements all languages are symbolic, and, consequently, they are all equally meaningless as objective truth. The deconstructionist theory claims that, signifier and signified being arbitrary, it can only follow that language does not have a determinate meaning.

The more rational approach of our age, such as that of Wimsatt or Kermode, is that symbols, since they come between reality and ourselves, are agents of distortion and error as well as of knowledge.

The more restricted meaning of symbols belongs to our field, poetry. The two main issues about poetic symbols are identification and interpretation.

In the issue of identification the reader relies on the double nature of the symbol, a double nature which it has in common with all the other significant figures of speech. The tenor and the vehicle, if we accept I. A. Richards' terms for metaphor, that is to say the subject and the analogue, correspond to the words themselves and to the idea they direct the reader to. The symbol differs from metaphor through the fact that its meaning is both tenor and vehicle.

Once the double nature of the meaning of an image has been identified, the next difficulty is in establishing whether we are really dealing with a symbol or with an allegory.

The operating system of the allegory goes from the abstract notion, external to the poem, towads the embodiment or personification, that is to say, the inverse process from the symbolic one.

Although both the symbol and the allegory, like most of the essential poetic figures, have a double nature, we should say that, if in the case of allegory the stress is on the idea of the double, in the case of the symbol, the stress is laid on the union between its two parts, tenor and vehicle[6].

The idea of the double is apparent in the etymology of allegory (*allos*, Gk. = other; *agoruein* = "to speak"). A text can be written allegorically, and interpreted allegorically. In the latter case we speak of *allegoresis*. But the two procedures, representation and interpretation, are hard to separate, and their use contributes to their reciprocal development. We can say, though, that an allegorical composition generally signals its ambivalence or its allusiveness, as well as the direction of interpretation for its reader. But, of course, what we call allegorical compositions differ in degree[7].

Goethe was the first who tried to define the difference between symbol and allegory. In English literature, Coleridge apprehended the direction of allegorizing as a deficiency in imagination, as a mechanical process, opposed to the organic mode of operation, as an intrusion of the intellect where emotion should dominate. Consequently, the use of allegory was interpreted as a mark of poetic inferiority[8], and this interpretation held

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[6] using again I.A.Richards' famous distinction

[7] Recent criticism has enlarged the scope of the term allegory to include all kinds of interpretation[7]. The tendency of a literary text is double. On the one hand the text exhibits a certain autonomy; on the other hand, a text tends to reflect another set of facts/actions. Given this second tendency, all literary texts can be said, by these standards, to be allegorical.

[8] In Coleridge's view allegory is merely "a translation of abstract notions into a picture language, which is itself nothing but an abstraction from objects of the senses", while a

its validity as late as the Modernist poets. For Coleridge, symbols were the products of imagination, the true, organic poetic faculty, while the ugly duckling, fancy, was the mechanical attribute that could not soar so high.

Murray Krieger[9] finds the origin of this idea in the Ancient war between the poet and the philosopher from which Western literary theory sprang, and from which it is still being nourished. The war later included a third combatant, the historian, and, with Aristotle, the poles became the historian and the poet. Myth, like poetry (and as poetry) is to be accepted only as a projection of the human imagination, as "the shape that the imagination imposes on the flow of experience to make it confirm to itself". Thus myth creates a "deceptive spatialization of elements that are ineluctably temporal"[10]. The more scientifically oriented philosophy of the West showed its preference for history, in the battle waged between myth and history. The concept that was at stake was time. Man's only chance in this battle to overcome temporality is to adopt the romantic concept of myth as spatialized history. Man does this through poetry , through the romantic doctrine of the symbol, - as opposed to allegory, - which wages a war between time and space. The problem with words, if we accept the arbitrary character of the signifier, is that there is always a distance in time between signified and signifier. This dualistic character accounts for the existence of allegory. The principle of anteriority to be derived therefrom presents the human mind as being essentially passive. It is this that the Romantics rejected, starting with the second half of the 18th century. What they suggested instead was a mind possessed by a unifying power. Poetry was seen as essentially symbolic, and the symbol "always partakes of the reality which it renders intelligible; and while it enunciates the whole, abides itself as a living part in that unity, of which it is the representative"[11].

This theoretical monism initiated by Coleridge was continued by Croce and the New Critics. For all of them the symbol was poetic, while the allegory was dual. The New Critics speak of "functional metaphor" that opposes "ornamental analogy".

It is also this monistic idea that makes the symbol, in general, so close to the essence of religion. The sacramental union in theology, materialized in the multiple (fourfold, for instance) methods of interpretation also brought

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symbol "is characterized by a translucence of the special [the species] in the individual, or of the general [genus] in the special...; above all, by the translucence of the eternal through and in the temporal" (apud Wellek and Warren, *Theory of Literature*, p.178).

[9] in the article "'A Waking Dream': the Symbolic Alternative to Allegory", in *Literary Theory Since Plato*, (ed.) Hazard Adams, New York, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1971

[10] *op. cit.*, p.1246

[11] *The Statesman's Manual, The Collected Works of Coleridge, Lay Sermons*, ed. R.J.White, London, Routledge & Kegen Paul, 1972, p.30.

about poetic habits of interpretation that relied on a loss of distinctiveness of the meanings: "The dissolution of distinctness into identity - in effect the destruction of the logic of number - is the very basis of the divine-human paradox of Christ and leads to the miraculous figure behind such breakthroughs as the Trinity and the Transubstantiation of the Eucharist." It is also the union between signifier and signified that produces the necessary breakthrough in temporality, and equates myth with history: "Further, through the typological figura, the unredeemed sequel of chronological time can be redeemed after all into the divine pattern, that eternal, spatial order which exchanges history for eschatology. With every moment existing doubly - both in the temporal order and in the timeless structure - history remains history even while it is rewritten as a divinely authored myth. Every act or person seems random, arbitrary; yet each is a necessary signifier that partakes of the single Transcendental Signified."[12] Thus the poet transcends the boundaries between himself and the Divine creator, and engenders "a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM"[13].

In the case of religious symbols, in particular, there is a special connection between sign and thing signified, metonymic or metaphoric: the Cross, the Lamb, the Good Shepherd. Wellek and Warren recommend a similar employment for the term symbol in literary theory: "In literary theory, it seems desirable that the word should be used in this sense: as an object which refers to another object but which demands attention also in its own right, as a presentation"[14].

In a view like Coleridge's Krieger considers that the next step would be the natural question to ask if such a view of poetics requires a metaphysics, or even a theology to authenticate it. In this respect Eliot's *Four Quartets* seem to present this idea of a simultaneous quest. For Eliot thematic and technical problems seem to fuse: "The poem's method is its meaning is its medium"[15].

This is the supreme point of the symbolist theory, and it is this that de Man attacks in the name of allegory: "Whereas the symbol postulates the possibility of an identification, allegory designates primarily a distance in relation to its own origin, and, renouncing the nostalgia and the desire to coincide, it establishes its language in the void of its temporal difference" (*The Rhetoric of Temporality*, p. 191). In his opinion a definition of poetry based on a dream of unity is "an act of ontological bad faith" (p. 194).

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[12] Murray Krieger, *op. cit.*, p. 1248

[13] Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, W.W.W. Norton & Company Inc., New York, 1974, vol. II, p. 351

[14] *Theory of Literature*, p. 178

[15] Murray Krieger, *op. cit.*, p. 1249

It is at this point that Krieger steps in with a solution of compromise to "the truly temporal predicament". He underlines de Man's role in warning "against our reification of the literary object through taking the special metaphor of poetic form literally in a way that belies the serial nature of the medium and of our experiencing of it."[16] He also shows de Man's merit in making us aware that we thus create "sacred objects whose spatial presence permits us to think we have found a way to transcend time through the unifying power of imagination; in this way we exaggerate unrealistically the human power to transform ineluctable fact".

But Krieger warns that de Man also has recourse to a metaphor, to spatial metaphors, for that matter, in speaking about "blank space", "void" or "distance" in order to refer to his "truly temporal predicament". He concludes: "Indeed, the myth of temporality may be the more insidious, may woo us the more seductively from our sense that it is but discursive, because of our lifelong obsession with the reality of death"[17].

Murray Krieger's hope and offer is for a compromise which should entertain "the dream of symbolic union", with the proviso that it does not include metaphysical speculation: "we must balance a wariness about projecting our myths onto reality with an acknowledgement that we can entertain the dream of symbolic union, provided it does not come trailing clouds of metaphysical glory"[18]. A possibility exists of accepting both symbol and anti-symbol, "of words that fuse together even while, like words generally, they must fall apart in differentiation"[19].

Eliot dared to level this difference by saying that "the difference between imagination and fancy, in view of the poetry of wit, is a very narrow one". His modernist and religious vein towed him towards symbolism, while his love of classical clarity inclined him towards the more intellectual use of allegory.

In a different context Eliot commented on the same issue from a different perspective:

"The music of a word is, so to speak, at a point of intersection: it arises from its relation first to the words immediately preceding it and following it, and indefinitely to the rest of the context; and from another relation, that of its immediate meaning in that context to all the other meanings which it has had in other contexts, to its greater or less wealth of association. Not all words, obviously, are equally rich and well-connected: it

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[16] *op. cit.*, p.1252
[17] *op. cit.*
[18] *op. cit.*, p. 1253
[19] *op. cit.*, p. 1253

is part of the business of the poet to dispose the richer among the poorer, at the right points, and we cannot afford to load a poem too heavily with the former - for it is only at certain moments that a word can be made to insinuate the whole history of a language and a civilization. This is an "allusiveness" which [...] is in the nature of words. [...] a "musical poem" is a poem which has a musical pattern of sound and a musical pattern of secondary meanings of the words which compose it, and [...] these two patterns are indissoluble and one".

This quotation from Eliot's essay "The Music of Poetry" (*On Poetry and Poets*) touches upon two important aspects of Eliot's symbolism[20] which place him in a direct descendence from the French Symbolist poets. He had come into contact with their poetry through Arthur Symons' book *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (1899). The Symbolist ideal encloses a sense of mystery: our reality is made up of mystery within us and mystery surrounding us. The Symbolists' greatest horror was that a thing should be named: a thing must be suggested only; and this could only be achieved by writing a fluid, musical, incantatory poetry. The Symbolists' musical ideal is Wagner, and their poetic ideal is to bring poetry as close as possible to the condition of music. In other words, in the quotation above, Eliot defines the essence of symbolist poetry.

Eliot's appreciation of Symbolism was not, however, an endorsement of the principles of a trend, but an appreciation of the individual voices: the exquisitely sensitive and discriminating Baudelaire, the self-scrutinizing ironic Laforgue, and the self-reflexive quality of Mallarmé. What Eliot was looking for in their poetry was the simultaneous reference to the palpably human and to the abstract that, together, reached the transhuman.

The theoretical writings of these 19th-century French poets had an influence over all arts. It reached towards explorations of the human psyche, upon explorations of the unconscious. The parallel discoveries of psychoanalysis turned towards the same exploration of the symbolic character of dreams and of the unconscious. The sharp divergence of the two psychoanalytic masterminds turned upon the religious stance. While Freud believed that dreams were wholly private symbolic manifestations, sublimations of sexual urges, Jung discovered the similarity, the archetypal character of certain dreams and came to believe in a collective unconscious, uniting us ultimately with the divine. He also refused to admit that our spiritual life is no more than a derivation of our physical life. It is rather in the symbolic representations that primitive man had, through myths, of the divine

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[20] The use of the possessive adjective is justified by Eliot's allegation that the critical work of a poet is bound to speak of the kind of poetry he himself writes (*On Poetry and Poets*, "The Frontiers of Criticism").

surrounding him, that he saw an elevation, through the linking of the physical and the spiritual, towards a different dimension. Although Jung discovered a multitude of symbolic patterns underlying man's apperception, he noticed the prevalence of one such pattern, man's abandonment of the ego in an aspiration towards unity with the divine, the required death for a new birth, traceable in fertility myths all over the world, and obviously connected with the Christian doctrine of Resurrection. Given Eliot's advocacy of the impersonality of poetry, the general expectation is to find him on Jung's side, rather than on Freud's. But especially in his later work, *The Waste Land* or the Ariel poems, Eliot combines the personal with the archetypal symbolism.

It is true that Eliot's scanty references to psychoanalysis are rather on the side of the ironic, but he lived in the spiritual center of Europe at a time when such ideas were in the air, and if not influences, there are definite similarities, common thinking patterns between the poet and the psychologist. From the very beginning a distinction should be made between the involuntary character of dreams and the unconscious, on the one hand, and the deliberate, creative symbolism of poetry, on the other.

Another converging scientific development was the publication of works of anthropology that demonstrated that man, from the beginning, perceived the world through symbols, symbols organized in myths that transcended spacial and temporal frontiers. These Eliot did acknowledge as a source of his thought (in the "Notes to *The Waste Land*" referring to J. Frazer and Jessica Weston[21]).

Such historical facts of the development of thought and of the discovery of new sources of apperception must be acknowledged in an introduction to Eliot's symbolic patterns, but using them for the purposes of analysis would prove restrictive.

Eliot's concern with finding and accounting for an equilibrium between the emotion of poetry (or poetic drama) and its expression brought him to the idea of the necessity of using an object, an action or a series of actions that should stand for the emotion represented. This was the "objective correlative" that, like a symbol, had its own life, alluding at the same time to a different reality. Eliot used this term in his essay "Hamlet and His Problems", in *The Sacred Wood*:

"The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an objective correlative; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that *particular* emotion; such that when

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[21]"To another work of anthropology I am indebted in general, one which has influenced our generation profoundly", *The Complete Poems and Plays, 1909-1950*, p. 50.

the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked"[22].

The underlying purpose of this formula is to hold in check romantic excess, one of the main purposes of modernism. One cannot, though, help noticing that this relying on an implicit connection between an emotion and a sensory representation of it is one of the main tenets of 19th-century aesthetic thought.

The impetus towards change in the English poetry after 1910 manifested itself in the formation of the Imagist group. As the name suggests, the same impulse towards avoiding the discursive, the rationalizing, drove these poets, who set their goal in writing a poetry that should consist of kernels of images, or just one image, reflecting one prevailing emotion[23]. In a retrospect, the leader of the group, Ezra Pound, also defined his requirements regarding the symbol:

"*Symbols.* - I believe that the proper and perfect symbol is the natural object, that if a man use 'symbols' he must so use them that their symbolic function does not obtrude; so that *a* sense, and the poetic quality of the passage, is not lost to those who do not understand the symbol as such, to whom, for instance, a hawk is a hawk."[24]

Imagism could not survive because the very shortness of the poems forbade them any mobility, but its ideas partially corresponded with Eliot's search at the time.

All these developments, but above all, his own search, gave Eliot, from his first published volume of verse (1917), a voice totally different from anything written in English at that time. Part of this particularity of the Eliotian voice was due the use he made of these "musical words", these "objective correlatives", of the "symbolic patterns" of his poetry.

The poetry of *Prufrock and Other Observations* (1917) is the natural outcome of this combined study of Symbolist and Imagist poetry. The major poems, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" and "Portrait of a Lady" have characters who move about, ponder, feel, speak, keep silent in artificial *décors* surrounded by smoke or fog. The whole "action" of "Prufrock" consists in the protagonist's inhibition in front of a room which he dare not go into, his incapacity for taking a decision keeping him outside in the lonely, foggy

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[22] *Selected Essays of T.S.Eliot*, pp. 124-125. Although the syntagm "objective correlative" did not convince critics in its relationship to *Hamlet*, it has entered the language of aesthetic appreciation.

[23] "An Image is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time" (*Literary Essays of Ezra Pound. Edited with an introduction by T.S.Eliot*, A New Directions Book, (1918), 1968, p.4.

[24] *op. cit.*, p. 9.

afternoon. The attraction of the room he doesn't seem capable of getting into is made up of a space crowded with symbols of sensual pleasure and social cosiness.

The poem does not only have a sequence in time, but also delimited zones, each with its special symbolic patterns: the streets, the room, the imaginary mythological places of Prufrock's imaginings.

In fact we could say that there is a symbolic pattern in "Prufrock" that is determined by space. The crowded room he dares not enter is organized around symbolic movements, snobbish women making rounds, talking of things beyond them, the woman he wants to talk to, but attended by somebody else, all of them participating in a ceremonial taking of tea. The intelligent, sensitive but undetermined character would like to join in, but, besides the physical discomfort of his projection through the eyes of the others, this juxtaposition of important issues in a mundane atmosphere is a further hindrance. The ceremonial, but, at the same time, spiritually faulty atmosphere is rendered by mixing up abstract and concrete categories: "drop a question on your plate" (l.30), "I have measured out my life with coffee spoons" (l.51). It is a mock communion, but even this mock communion does not take place: he does not ask the question. The temptations of the "homme moyen sensuel" are also a reflection of his own sense of inadequacy. All the three space zones, symbolic of his three states, find an exemplification in the images of "hair". The woman's hair, tempting, but also slightly suggestive of an animal nature ("Arms that are braceleted and bare/But, in the lamplight, downed with light brown hair", ll.63-64), his own hair, in his mirrored image of physical inadequacy ("with a bald spot in the middle of my hair", l.40; "how his hair is growing thin", l.41) and the final image of the mermaids, mixing their hair with the sea, the red and brown weeds - symbolic colours of warmth and sensuality. But the effect of the sea imagery is not regenerative: the waking from his musings drowns him.

The lesser value of his expectations appears in one of the few symbols of light in the poem, ambiguous symbol of insufficiency, but also of imminent extinction: "I have seen the moment of my greatness flicker" (l.84). The only other image of light is both artificial and imaginary, and it only serves to bring out the neurasthenia of the closed space ("as if by a magic lantern spread the nerves in patterns", l.105).

Another general symbol favoured by Eliot and the Symbolists, that of music, has only a flitting, suggested, rather than grasped, presence. As always with Eliot, it is accompanied by noises and disharmonic voices ("I have known the voices dying with a dying fall/Beneath the music from a farther room", ll.52-53) and the final ("I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each /.../ Till human voices wake us, and we drown", ll.124, 131). Thus

the symbolism of the mermaids is reversed: it is not the indulgence in the imaginary that shall drown the potential Odysseos, but the return to this world.

The other ceremony involved in the poem appears fugitively as a counterpart to the tea, fun and noise of the room: ("Though I have wept and fasted, wept and prayed", l.81), whose effect is doomed by the introductory concessive conjunction before it is mentioned. Prufrock obviously has spiritual aspirations, or rather, fantasies, imagining himself as either Lazarus, revived to a new life, ("'I am Lazarus, come from the dead'", l.94) or John the Baptist ("my head [grown slightly bald] brought in upon a platter", l.82) - with the juxtaposed ceremony of eating and drinking ("tea", ll.79,88,102), or, simply, as that modern myth of intellectual introspection sliding away from action, Hamlet. But lost between sensuality - not love - and futility - not tragedy,- Prufrock sees himself as a pathetic Polonius ("Am an attendant lord", l.112).

Prufrock is undoubtedly a gifted poet, the Symbolist poet of Laforguian irony, the poet of the street and of the moon ("the evening, spread out against the sky, Like a patient etherized upon a table", ll.2-3, the "restless nights in one-night cheap hotels", l.6), who has assimilated the lesson of the Imagists, in the magisterial fragments of the "yellow fog" (ll.15-22).

When the corrosive intelligence and exquisite sensitivity of Baudelaire presents such a character in such a setting his irony fuses ultimately with sympathy for their shared lot. Eliot's modern sensitivity succeeds in keeping away from any such identification in the coolness of impersonality.

The one certainty that Prufrock has is that of the insignificant passage of time, that he is always capable of reducing to physical decay ("I grow old, I grow old... ," l.120).

The heroine of "Portrait of a Lady" has a first-hand experience of this state. Reality is, indeed, as Prufrock had expected, and worse. The appearance of the second protagonist, the young man visiting, amplifies the symbolism of the poem offering almost contrastive pairs. The stuffiness of the space is increased, the outside is almost longed for, now that the protagonist is in the room Prufrock did not dare enter. The third spacial zone is still there, but this time invested with a primitive, almost frightening quality: the mermaids are replaced by the "dull tom tom" (l.32). The young man feels almost assaulted. The arms of the woman Prufrock only dared look at in a mental projection, are here replaced by the young man's hands, looked at and spoken of covetously by the Lady: ("...'you do not know/What life is, you who hold it in your hands'", l.45-46; "...'across the gulf you reach your hand'", l.60). Nevertheless the young man does not feel only imposed upon, but also inadequately brutal in the refined etiolated atmosphere that surrounds the Lady ("And feel as if I had mounted on my hands and knees", l.87). This inadequacy also produces its own anti-music and anti-ritual:("dance, dance/Like a dancing bear,/Cry like a parrot,

chatter like an ape'", ll. 110-112), whose only resemblance to a ritual is the repetitive pattern. This time the repetition is void, though. Music symbolism is present here plentifully, but the melodious music is only talked about (just like the women in "Prufrock", who kept talking about Michelangelo, the lady lets Chopin's name crop up in the conversation). What is heard, replacing the mermaids, is the savage rhythm of drumming. The mundane mock communion ceremony of Prufrock, lived in the present, is also envisaged as an accepted, perpetual punishment ("I shall sit here, serving tea to friends'", l.68). The exasperation is also reflected in the expanded time zone. Each section starts in another season, with another moment of the day (I: "December afternoon"; II: "April sunset"; III: "October night"), but the pattern is devoid of significance, as cyclicity and rejuvenation - or at least progression - are replaced by stagnancy. The blooming lilacs are an ironic *décor* for the strung-up waning lady, ("Now that lilacs are in bloom/She has a bowl of lilacs in her room/And twists one in her fingers while she talks", l. 41-43). The outside space acts as a distraction that threatens to crack the young man's countenance, through sound and smell: they are the objective counterparts to the imaginary "dull tom tom", to the imaginary mermaids: ("...a street piano/Reiterates some worn-out common song/With smells of hyacinths across the garden/Recalling things that other people have desired", ll.79-81). All in all the depressing atmosphere that Prufrock indulges in is replaced by an equally polished Jamesian atmosphere with an undercurrent of tension subtly suggested by the colours, sounds, smells of objects and unconscious gestures. The almost hysterical underground tension is a direct result of the co-presence of two protagonists whose communication is hindered by conventions. The young man certainly does not have Prufrock's intelligence and sensitivity and his desires are almost totally numb. His questionings are consequently reduced in scope.

The strung-up atmosphere of "Portrait of a Lady" is magisterially transmuted to the scenery in the symbolist sketches called "Preludes"[25].

The scenery of "Rhapsody on a Windy Night" absorbs now all the tensions of the absent protagonists; the unpeopled sordid night-time streets are guarded now by the moon, invested with a wide psychological range of qualities. The poems themselves, which sound highly original in English were in fact Eliot's exercise in Laforgue's Symbolist method, ironic tone and favourite setting ("Clair de lune"). What is really new in Eliot's "Rhapsody on a Windy Night" is the absence of dialogue between a protagonist and the moon; the moon is self-sufficient. The preromantic symbol of the ruminating poet is in a perpetual competition with the artificial light spread by street-lamps. More

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[25]See Charles Altieri's essay "'Preludes' as Prelude; In Defence of Eliot as Symboliste", in *T.S.Eliot. A Voice Descanting*. Centenary Essays. ed. Shyamal Bagchee, Macmillan, 1990.

markedly than in the previous poems, the obsession with segmented, linear time is rendered by the beginnings of each section.

A way out of this depression is possible only through retrospection. The rich symbolism of youth and potential happiness is achieved only in the first stanza of "La Figlia Che Piange", the presentation of a girl in a garden scenery, surrounded by flowers and sunlight woven in her hair in Pre-Raphaelite beauty. The picture quality of this stanza, unique in Eliot's poetry, is enhanced through the use of one of his most recurrent symbols: the stair. If Prufrock is terrorised by his own image going down a flight of stairs, if the young man in "Portrait of a Lady" experiences his inadequacy by imagining himself going upstairs on all fours, this poems opens with "Stand on the highest pavement of the stair", i.e., as high as any earthly image of sensual beauty will ever stand for Eliot.

Different as they are, Eliot's stages of achievement started from a symbolic imagination, initially fostered by the Symbolist literature, enhanced by his extensive readings in different literatures with a corresponding enlargement of scope in his poetry. His later concentration upon Christianity, understood as *the* faith, permitted him a regrouping of his pattern of thought, without narrowing it down. An analysis of his early symbolism allows a glimpse into this future direction, to be magisterially exploited in the multi-levelled symbolism of the *Four Quartets*, where "a word is made to insinuate the whole history of a language and civilization", which includes, for us, insinuating Eliot's whole literary output.

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AMERICAN MINORITY WOMEN WRITERS IN A ROMANIAN (EDUCATIONAL/CULTURAL) ENVIRONMENT

MIHAELA MUDURE

Motto: *"It is a matter of honesty of who you are and what you are and honesty about realizing internalized oppression as well as anything else"*

(Lorna Dee Cervantes)

ABSTRACT. Feminist studies provide a wide range of possible approaches, among which the experience of American minority women writers is likely to point to the mainstays of feminism in general, as to specific local circumstances in Romania. The paper brings into question the dilemmas of reconstructing the canon of literature.

The problem of approaching American minority women writers in a Romanian (educational/cultural) environment (hence their inclusion in the Romanian approach to American Studies as a distinct group) can be tackled from two perspectives: a pedagogical one and a conceptual one.

Pragmatically, the pedagogical, the methodological approach to "minority women writers" is, actually, answering the very concrete (but not unnecessary) questions about whom and how American writers should taught in a non-American environment, namely, outside the United States.

The first question is what writers should be included. Obviously, the most important ethnic groups (the African–Americans, the Native–Americans, the Latinos and the Asian–Americans) must be represented. Such excellent anthologies as Dexter Fisher's *Third Woman. Minority Women Writers of the United States* or Paul Lauter's reconstruction of the syllabi for American literature courses in his excellent *Reconstructing American Literature* are valuable resources. I can't, I do not intend to compete. My perspective is, definitely, that of an outsider to American culture. However, something must be added. Jewish,

Italian, Greek or Romanian immigrants (not represented in the resource books mentioned above) are also active culturally. These groups' approaches to crossing cultures (and the Atlantic), building new identities in the New World, and striving to preserve something of the older selves are also worth studying.

Konrad Bercovici, Peter Neagoe, or Andrei Codrescu are, for instance, to be remembered if we refer to the Romanian–Americans. In his short stories Bercovici recreated a "picturesque" Romania with "exotic" Southeast nuances – outlaws, Gipsies and wild parties – a text meant to sell well. Bercovici is a good sample of a minority writer presenting his identity "packed" according to the stereotyping requirements of the majority. His texts tell a lot about Romania in the distorting mirror of the collective American imaginary, a kind of mediated, filtered image. Peter Neagoe's stratagem to "survive" culturally is different. He either tries to put some distance between himself and his own traumas of integration (by presenting, exclusively, the pains of the Jewish greenhorns) or he presents his Transylvanian birth place idealized through the mechanisms of selective memory. As a creator,[1] Andrei Codrescu first impresses the American readership by his surrealist poetic experiences and only after the events from December 1989 does he "make use" of his Romanian heritage "translating" the hot events occurring at the end of that historic year for the American readership ignorant of Romania. Occasionally he refers to Romania in his addresses broadcast at NPR . Transylvania is the landscape of the medieval evocation of a feminine Dracula in *Blood Countess*. But Codrescu is too eager to get Americanized to use his Romanian heritage in any other way except as a scenic background or when some "picturesque" historic occasion arises. These writers' cultural and spiritual evolution encapsulates the main dilemmas of any minority group: the tension between the desire to integrate into the mainstream and the empowerment through isolation from the mainstream of the host culture.

Obviously, the educational "turning to account" of American minority writers (men or women) should rely on a personalized approach. In order to ensure the best Romanian response to such a literary component of American Studies the coordinates of such an approach are, in my opinion: a) the strong link between comprehension and learning; b) understanding and interpreting the text as a collective effort (of the students and the professor, if the text is used in an educational environment); c) empathic identification with minority groups; d) disclosing the scapegoating mechanism through which minorities have had to carry a negative collective projection upon themselves.

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[1] Andrei Codrescu is also the translator of Lucian Blaga into English.

Undoubtedly, such a literary component of American Studies in a Romanian educational environment must be both informative and formative. It should offer new information to the students and it should avoid the parochialism of traditional teaching.

Distinguishing women among minority writers is a pedagogical and analytical stratagem unusual for the ordinary Romanian reader (and, to a certain extent, even for the specialized reader, the critic). But there are some arguments in its favor. Firstly, this distinction can put into prominence much more overtly the three symbolic positions women can occupy in androcracy:[2] virgin, mother and prostitute. For minority women, these symbolic positions have special connotations because power relations within their own ethnic group reiterate, from a gendered point of view, the ethnic hierarchies in society at large. Consequently, the minority female subaltern becomes the subaltern of the subaltern, according to Spivak's well known terminology. In a Romanian educational environment, distinguishing American minority women writers' literature will lead to: a) countering stereotypes and redefining images; b) developing critical thinking; c) helping readers (students) who have problems with their own image by disclosing the mirror mechanism; d) enabling the readers (students) to perceive sex roles and sexuality not as a – historically *given* but as ideological creations (in this case, within the minority context) and as constructions of linguistic difference.

But I have too much respect for you, my reader, for your knowledge and, if you teach, for your pedagogical skill. On the other hand, who am I to give you recipes? The center is moving. Why should I put myself in the center? Why should I "fall prey" to the old academic assumption that I have to analyze, cut everything into pieces? Why shouldn't I try to build a whole, a sphere whose center is everywhere? Why not build a dialogue across fences, because fences still exist. Only walls have fallen down.

Romania?! Where is that? Is it in Asia? It looks like a forgotten place, nobody knows anything about. Maybe some natural or social disasters do happen there from time to time and then Romania covers the news.

Orientalized, let us unite together!

Yes, the great Said does not mention Eastern Europe. He only used sources from Western Europe (England, France, Germany or Italy) or Russia. Forgetting the Far East and omitting the peculiarities of all the countries and peoples in between Austria and Russia he proves to be opaque to the

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[2] We prefer the term "androcracy" (instead of "patriarchy") in order to denote male power.

peculiarities of a whole cultural and political area traumatized between empires, double peripheries (of Europe, on the one hand, and of Istanbul or Moscow as centers of power, on the other hand). But Eastern European princes, like the Romanian Dimitrie Cantemir or the Hungarian Mikes Kelemen, political hostages or political exiles in Istanbul for years, were responsible for the first Orientalized images of the Turkish Empire. Situated on a margin of both the Orient and Europe, both of them create the image of an ailing Orient prone to decadence. The implied superiority of the European world discreetly hides the political agendas of these margins as well.

Let us not repeat forgotten mistakes! Let us look at each other!

Reading American minority women writers does not simply mean a cultural transfer into a Caucasian environment. Whiteness has its own gaps and interstices. From a global perspective, the Romanian reader (student) may not necessarily be that alien to the position of ethnic groups deprived of power.[3] But the pedagogical scenario is different from what you read about in the books written in the United States on this topic. The most common situation in the USA used to be: a white person teaching minority students. The more recent situation is: a minority professor teaching both white (Anglo) and minority students. In a Romanian cultural (educational) environment the readership/class is predominanatly Caucasian, race differences are limited. However, displaced authors are familiar in a society that suffers from having been displaced by the imposition of Communism and which has not found itself yet.

Why minority? Why women?

From the point of view of literary criticism, literary theory and cultural awareness, an extremely important gain for the Romanian reader is to stop regarding American literature as a compact whole. The great, white American canon (Hemingway, Henry James, Faulkner, Mark Twain, etc.) currently accepted in Romania gives the reader (the student) an incomplete view of American literature. It also deprives the reader (the student) of a considerable share of what is the *American experience*. American literature, American culture is not a uniform continuum. Minority women's texts are often interstitial spaces texts where social, ethnic, and gender hierarchies intertwine in peculiar ways. Pearl Buck, for instance, has long been a sort of substitute multicultural token. Undoubtedly, her sympathy and empathy for the Asians and for the Asian-Americans is sincere. A well balanced combination of sentimentality,

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[3] At the same time, the reader is asked (warned) to avoid essentializing both whiteness and the Romanian beneficiary of any effort to introduce American minority women writers into the Romanian (educational) environment.

exoticism and multicultural humanism has been the Oriental spice of American literature for several years. Pearl Buck has been some kind of comfortable Caucasian aesthetic placebo obliterating the real Asian-Americans speaking up for themselves.

Any minority writer is caught between cultures, trying to forge a new identity in an environment not always welcoming. Vernon E. Lattin discusses this problem with regard to the Mexicans–Americans in his article "Ethnicity and Identity in the Contemporary Chicano Novel". Elizabeth J. Ordońez analyzes "The Concept of Cultural Identity in Chicana Poetry". But from a Romanian perspective (inclusive of what we would call comparative multiculturalisms), Chicano writers display commonalities with the Romanian ones. Firstly, they share the so-called Romance-island complex that was often exacerbated in the decades of Communist-nationalism under the Ceaușescu regime. Secondly, they both take pride in their Latin heritage which is considered an glorious ethnic emblem. The difference is that, thanks to the historical span, the Romanians have "solved" their "problems" with the Roman conquerors. The invaders are worshipped because they brought civilization to Dacia. But the Mexican-Americans have an ambiguous attitude towards the Spanish conquistadors who are worshipped as ancestors and abhorred as invaders. They raped a culture but they were also brave and valiant.

The African–Americans look for their ethnic roots in Africa. Forcibly displaced from one continent to the another in the chains of slavery, the African–Americans display interesting commonalties with the Romanian Romas. After having experienced slavery for one or several centuries, both groups were manumitted under the pressure of Liberal groups from the two countries (and not without the positive influence of Masonic ideologies). But while the economic boom of America allowed an easier integration of the manumitted slaves into the market economy as free individuals selling their labor force (often in the North), the predominantly agrarian economies of the Romanian Principalities could not absorb this new labor force. Giving them land was never an issue in the Romanian political discourse. Hence their socialization, particularly on the fringes of society. The Romanian society remembered them during the Antonescu regime, when they were deported to Transnistria, and under Ceaușescu, when an aggressive policy tried to make the vagrant Romas settle down by all means. The consequence can be seen even today. The richness of African-American culture (both oral and written) accounts for the existence of an African-American intelligentsia and for the more successful American society in teaching former slaves to behave and function socially as free individuals. The predominantly oral culture of the

Romanian Romas and the sparse Romanian Roma intelligentsia are the result of neglect and existence of overt or hidden prejudice. The position of the African-American writers in American culture may be an opportunity for stimulating comparisons and an honest analysis of the extent to which we are willing to adopt a democratic and multicultural model for everyone, even for the Romas.

The language minority writers use in their work is a matter of great interest for the Romanian reader (student, scholar). The African-American writers are a special case, in this respect, as well. When brought from Africa, their native languages were completely erased. They had to adopt English but now they are making significant efforts to raise their dialect to the prestige of a language. This linguistic/cultural strategy tells a lot about their evolution, their ethnic awareness and their growing prestige in society.

But what about the other American ethnic groups? The choice of English shows that the fight between the melting pot and cultural pluralism is neither simple nor easy. Contradictory movements are not excluded. The minority writer often praises his/her ethnicity but writes exclusively or mostly in English. One explanation: the market for books in English is much more attractive than the market for the books written in any other language (even Spanish). The interview Pat Mora gave to Norma Alarcon is significant in this respect. Pat Mora does not write in Spanish. "It is not really the language in which I think", she says. "I think that when I choose my words in Spanish I don't just glide in them. However, for personal reasons, mainly a grandmother and an aunt who were great inspiration in my life and with whom I always spoke Spanish, the Spanish language has a special sweetness and warmth for me. I do like to use Spanish when it seems to fit the occasion" (125). For the Native-Americans this issue is even more delicate as their languages, if they survived, are oral languages and they need linguists' work to get the attire of writing. Consequently, proud as they are of their ethnic heritage, the most popular Native-American writers write in English. Paradoxically, due to historical circumstances, English is also the Native-Americans' *lingua franca* for their own cultural and political agenda.

All these debates, convulsions and self-interrogations sound familiar to the Romanian reader (student or scholar). They (should) make him/her sympathetic and understanding to minority issues. Romania got its independence from the Turkish Empire in 1877 and the omanians'struggles to preserve their identity, their ethnicity and their language have been a common topic and topos in Romanian culture. Latin, Slavonic, Greek or French were temptations for the Romanian intellectual along centuries. The choice of the alphabet (Latin or Cyrillic) was a political issue symbolizing both political and

cultural allegiances. The creation of an educational system in Romanian was a stratagem for the preservation of national identity and for the creation of an intelligentsia that will lead the nationalist movements of the 19th and 20th century. The educational issues, as presented in American minority literatures, as well as the traumatic issue of the writers' language choice, language policies present interesting and relevant commonalities in Romanian history.

On the other hand, ethnic minorities from Romania are extremely sensitive to language and educational issues. For them, writing in their own languages, publishing in their own languages, studying in their own languages is, both at the individual and at the collective level, an existential issue. American minority writers can make Romanian readers (both belonging to the ethnic majority and to the ethnic minorities) be more tolerant, more understanding, and more sympathetic with such issues as well. At the same time, literature, aesthetic artifact of enormous emotional potential, may also signal, in concrete and extremely persuasive ways, the connection between ethnicity and citizenship. American minority literatures exalt ethnicity as particular ways of expressing one's American-ness (regarded as citizenship belonging).

O.K., you convinced me. "Minorities". But why women? Do we go back to our Communist past, to the "glorious" eighties when women were promoted for the sake of "being promoted and meeting criteria." We know too well that some token feminine presences here and there do not solve anything. I am allergic to that, you know.

But haven't you noticed? The only female American writer included in our curriculum is Emily Dickinson! Kate Chopin and Edith Wharton are on its threshold. And that is all. On the other hand, a significant proportion of our students are women. Isn't the study of foreign languages, of other cultures a way to transgress boundaries and surpass initial linguistic, gnoseological limits? Gender blindness betrays androcratic apprehensions. Because of the long male domination in history and culture, practically, gender blindness becomes the cultural obliteration of women (maybe with some token exceptions).

These inclusions, distinctions are firstly justified by way in which men and women enter the language and culture. According to the Lacanian perspective on language, the child's entrance into language coincides with the domination of the body (the compulsory maintenance of one's body clean) in order to function as a human in society. The separation from the benevolent and indulgent maternal is the entrance into the law imposed from the outside (called the Law of the Father, because of the dominant position held by men in society). This alienating process is experienced both by boys and girls but the educational culmination of this experience and its coordinates are different for

boys and girls because of gender hierarchies and divisions in society. Boys will be taught that their site in society and culture is domineering and girls (inevitably closer to the subdued and despised maternal) will be taught that their site in society and culture is to be dominated. The limitation of the girls' (women's) access to education and high culture, which was a widespread social practice for many centuries and still is in some countries and areas, has framed and favored this process which, in the long run, has resulted in the androcratic character of culture. As for women writers, one should add the inadequacies of language (used and appropriated by androcracy) unable to express female experiences through a female perspective and not through a male one[4].

Analyzing women writers' work, one faces a problem often stressed in feminine scholarship. As Gloria Anzaldua gloriously noticed: "Culture is made by those in power – men. Males make the rules and the laws; women transmit them" (18). Traditionally, you are not expected to discuss and theorize. You are only expected to internalize. Cherrie Moraga – as eloquent as any gifted poet – expresses this idea in an interview taken by Bernadette Monda. "It's like walking into a room knowing what's going on, but you're not supposed to know what's going on" (127).

The study of American minority female writing also reveals peculiarities of approach and moral message. Survival, by all means, is one of the primary concerns of minority women writers. Approaches may differ. Writers and the characters who are their spokes-women may take refuge in God sent letters and find consolation in the purple color. Or they may plunge into times immemorial, for instance, in the times before the arrival of Columbus. Paula Gunn Allen remarks in her excellent *Sacred Hoop*: "Strange things begin to happen when the focus in American Indian literary studies is shifted from a male to a female axis. One of the major results of the shift is that the materials become centered on continuance rather than extinction" (262).

Yes, I get your message. Men and women do exchange feelings. But they are not the same, they are equal and different in their complementari-ness and the sooner you realize this, the better for everyone.

Do not forget the traps. All systems may be evil, even the feminist ones. But unfortunately, we cannot exist outside a system because of the limitations of our

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[4] At this point the reader is invited to do a linguistic exercise and analyze the linguistic possibilities to express heterosexual experiences, or such typically female experiences as menstruation, or pregnancy, or birth. This area of the vocabulary expresses a male perspective. Linguistically, woman is supposed to be a deviant sickly person, a passive recipient of love gestures or of the male seed to be protected and raised. On the contrary, research and biological realities (experienced by any woman) clearly show that the passive/active divide does not necessarily and always coincide with the gender divide.

orderly mind. Do not exclude. Do not protect one culture in order to hurt the other. The historical fact that some have oppressed for centuries is not a justification. According to the action-reaction law that stubbornly applies to our universe, nothing is without response. And violence turns into violence. Nothing is really important except the fact that you really exist in this world. The rest is words and approaches. Before the class repeat with Maya Angelou: "If you want to know how important you are to the world, stick your finger in a pond and pull it out. Will the hole remain?"

An unusual (uncomfortable?!) challenge for the Romanian readers of American minority women writers are the lesbian writers. They are twice minorized and their closet may be deeper[5]. They are not looking for the other but for the same.

Well ... if they feel more comfortable like that, or if the other can offer nothing?

Literature must embrace everything that is life and this is a kind of behavior that has always existed. Reading about the experiences of these women or about the way they are treated in society does not mean that the reader necessarily must adopt such behavior. The capacity to listen to all kinds of discourses may be an ultimate result of reading American minority women writers.

It is my conviction that the main problem in their reception is conceptual and belongs to epistemological strategy. Gloria Anzaldua has put it in eloquent terms. "What we are suffering from is an absolute despot quality that says we are able to be only one or the other. It claims that human nature is limited and cannot evolve in something better. But I, like other queer people, am two in one body, both male and female. I am the embodiment of the *hieros gamos* the coming together of qualities within" (19). The reader is free to disagree but creating realities where "The more competent we are, the less we dominate" (Sommer, 154) may not necessarily be a utopian goal.

Can we ever escape power relations? The ordinary, most widespread approach is that knowing something is dominating something, at a spiritual, non-concrete level, of course. A reference point will always exist.

Behind cultures and texts, here is the dragon of concrete realities.

Another possibility is adopting a different model for knowledge: knowing by accommodating and enveloping the objet instead of knowing the object by "penetrating" it with the hard tool of reason. As any reading is also a gnoseological experience, such an epistemological approach translates into different expectations from the reader. This grid changes the coordinates of

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[5] Eve Kosofsky-Sedgwick has analyzed the traumatic process of the homosexuals publicly revealing their real identity (coming out) in her book *The Epistemology of the Closet.*

human identification with the fictional characters. This identification accepts difference more easily and it implies more tolerance, more relaxation from the usual hierarchies, more detachment from the assumed normalities.

We think that, from a Romanian perspective, the best approach to American minority women writers is to stress human common-ness even in apparently amazing or contradictory forms of behavioral manifestations. Survival and endurance are part of this female common-ness and fundamental dimensions of women's history transgressing from historic realities into women's texts. Lorna Dee Cervantes' perspective may be helpful and fruitful both as pedagogy and as cultural reception stratagem in the Romanian (educational, cultural) environment as well. Inciting positive reactions, Lorna Dee Cervantes introduces cultural relativism and literature as an important component of the universality of culture. "I guess what I wanted to do was concentrate and find that the intangible sense of culture really is – what it is that binds us together besides linguistic bonds" (106).

Reading (teaching) American minority literatures is a rewarding experience that no open spirit can refuse in the name of a frozen canon. Reading American minority women writers is not only an issue of political correctness. Aesthetic pleasures are not impossible as well. And if our aesthetic expectations are challenged, we have to remember that the aesthetic also has a historical component and Olympian serenity, ivory towers may conceal overt or hidden political agendas, stereotypes. The human does not exist and cannot exist beyond the social. Instead of proclaiming the aesthetic in jeopardy, couldn't it be that some stereotypes are in jeopardy? Reading American minority literatures (distinguishing male and female writers as equal components of humanity, without one gender appropriating the generic to dominate the other) can be a source of pleasure, in many respects. Susan Gardner was empowered and empowered teaching Native–American literature. "One of the most satisfying achievements, in the racially polarized South, is to create a classroom where neither group, for once, is the historical enemy of the other. It has been a delight to appeal to white students' idealism (rather than fostering imperial nostalgia)" (236). Reading (teaching) American minority literatures can spur the same comforting feeling in the Romanian (educational or cultural) environment characterized by multiculturalism[6] and scarred by painful

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[6] Romanian multiculturalism is not the outcome of a colonizing settlers' culture but of various migratory waves of population along history. As compared to American multiculturalism, the span of time in which these movements occurred is much longer and there is no general and consolidated agreement about who the newcomers and who the Natives are. Along time some of these groups have recreated the territory as their own homeland matrix refusing the same legitimating matrix to other groups (in spite of historical, archeological evidence), the homeland appropriation being considered a prerequisite of political power legitimization according to ethnic lines.

memories of recent Communist dictatorship. *Who collaborated and who did not? Who is politically "tainted" and who is not?* To try and learn, and take enjoyment not only from contradiction but also from a state of things is a lot in such a milieu. In a world area where being the Other has often been a cause of wars, this awareness can help build a new consciousness. One needs to be optimistic.

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THOREAU'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE BEGINNINGS OF A THERAPEUTIC CULTURE

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ABSTRACT. The paper is a fragment from an ampler work dedicated to Thoreau's contribution to the beginnings of a therapeutic culture. The question of an alterative normality and the pragmatic ways of establishing it are viewed in connection with Thoreau's impact on literary and cultural media.

Thoreau's leaving Concord for a rather long period of time, and going to live by himself in the surroundings of the small urban settlement was obviously intended to mean more than a simple and quite whimsical gesture of a town community's member. Though similar exploits of the same period were not a novelty, in Thoreau's case we notice prior attempts to envisage an alternative to the individual's style of life, in the sense of acknowledging in a more or less open way the shortcomings of urban civilization, and moreover to set for a critical examination of man's decreasing chances to experience his "natural" bent to exist in a strong correspondance with nature[1] In "A Natural History of Massachussetts" (1842), one finds the already present signs of not only a candid devotion to nature, but more importantly, of the readiness of the author to perceive the multifarious faces of nature's integrated and integrating forms of existence. Besides direct warnings about the "society's disease", there is an overt inclination manifested for wholesomeness, the enchanted modality to read books on natural history as an "elixir", meant of course, to cure modern man[2]. The appeal to nature should not therefore be understood as merely poetical, but rather a rhetorical form of rendering the nature's still untouched wild beauty, which may account for Thoreau's initial perception as a kind of enamoured

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[1] Golemba, Henry, *Thoreau's Wid Rhetoric,* New York University Press, 1990, pp. 43, 86-87, 132.

[2] Thoreau, D. H., "Natural History of Massachussetts" in *The Portable Thoreau*, edited, and with an introduction by Carl Bode, New York, The Viking Press, pg. 33.

botanist rather than of a writer. The disquieting presence of a looming "disappointment" in modern man's life claim in Thoreau's vision for a redeeming action, namely to restore "the tone of the system"[3]. Even at an earlier stage, in his first published writings, Thoreau seemed to have well prepared himself to look deeper into what he called "natural history" (of man, included), acknowledging a change in the observer as well, namely that "the man of science" should have "a finer *organization*"[4]. Furthermore, a sort of programatic design to approach nature's secrets, appears to fully resource to the commandments of changing man's vision on life, generally.

"We do not learn by inference and deduction and the application of mathematics to philosophy, *but by direct intercourse and sympathy. It is with science as with ethics -we cannot know truth by contrivance and method*; the Baconian is as false as any other, and with all the helps of machinery and the arts, the most scientific will still be the healthiest and friendliest man, and possess a more perfect Indian wisdom"[5]. [my italics]

What we should remark firstly on is Thoreau's suggestion of learning a new cultural behaviour through individualistic experience. For Thoreau, the individual emerges as the main actor of this practice, enjoying a kind of limitless freedom in separating or adjoiting various segments within a unitary complex vision, deserving the requirements of being and remaining "natural". By this we mean the writer's endeavour to provide for a "simplified" vision of life that would keep far from positivistic rationalisation. Striving to revive the tenets of classical culture in an age of transition, Thoreau persisted in writing about a new "simple" life, emerging from the still hidden potentialities of the individual, by a "discret intercourse and sympathy". Opposing the utilitarian, positivistic type of discourse to a "spiritualist", "culturalist" one, Thoreau invokes the endangered integrality of mankind's culture, from the restoring, recentrating experience of avoiding the course of social uniformization. It is illustrative from this angle to mention that Thoreau employs also the image of "contrivance" characterizing his age, as well as of "machinery", following obviously Carlyle's "Signs of the Times" (1829). Siding up with critics of modernity, Thoreau does not however turn into a mere nostalgic of the past; he deplores the randomness of changes performed under the guise of a perfectly planned design that should keep Americans on a compelling track of "modern times". Furthermore, Thoreau's position should be interpreted as a *therapeutic*

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[3] *Idem*, pg. 56.
[4] *Ibidem*.
[5] Thoreau, D. H., "The Maine Woods" in *The Portable Thoreau*, op. cit., pp. 102-103.

type of individualistic action, and not as passive complaint over the loss of what Carlyle termed the "loss of the belief in the invisible". Thoreau points to the existence of an immanent and at the same time original content of man's dimension that would be severely damaged by subduing the individual to the "cult" of machinery. The question of wisdom ("Indian wisdom") is considered not only as a comprehensive cultural form salvaging the individual from getting astray, but as an enhancement of the tradition of common sense. In other words, wisdom as it is employed by our author, though a vague notion, tends to assert the pre-eminence of a cultural behavior change in time, moulding continuously by altering the nature of constraints and symbolic gratifications. Thoreau designed the overall cultural behavior as an inwardly looking exploration of man's geniality. Further on, the idea that nature could unlock man's dilemas by a kind of ritualistic purification makes the author's demonstration less plausible. Thoreau was not concerned in acknowledging the priority of human interests over human feelings. But what we should hold in view for this step only, is that for Thoreau, Americans should act in the old spirit of American culture, namely within a salvaging cultural behaviour.

It is not the aim of this paper to go further in collecting eloquent evidence showing that Thoreau was planning an ampler view on the condition of modern man's life, rather than satisfying his curiosity or his inclination to test the capability of living beyond the "frontier" traced between the civilized and uncivilized world. What we got interested in is underlining the mounting pressure to act in this direction, to resort to practical attitudes so that the author himself, (Thoreau), would come out from abode of civilization and breathe the air of a necessary change. In search of the "slumbering subterranean fire in nature which never goes out and which no cold can chill" ("A Winter Walk"), Thoreau arrives to locate the before mentioned "fire" into man's breast, a rather Romantic spent metaphor, still useful to our intention of following the author intuitive description of man's hidden, resourceful depth. *Dwelling* amidst nature acquires not only the suasive spell of a transitory mood. It enhances an increasingly urgent impulse to encompas the narrow horizons of the civilized, actual world (Concord and early 19th century New England) in a broader move to find out integrality of life[6]. In "The Maine Woods" (1848), Thoreau gave a lot of information about the actual life and dwelling conditions of isolated farmers,

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[6] Michaels, Walter Benn, "*Walden's* False Bottoms" in *Walden and Resistance to Civil Government. Henry David Thoreau*, second edition, Rossi William (editor), A Norton Critical Edition, University of Oregon, New York, London, 1992, pp. 410-11. See also Sattel Meyer Robert and his "Remaking of Walden" in the same edition, on the question of Thoreau's approach to Goethean's *Naturphilosophie,* pp.441.

trappers and settlers that would much suit an early anthropologist's taste. It is quite true that the untrodden paths and the uninhabited forests are shown in a literary rhetoric reminiscent of the day's fashion, as for instance in the descriptions of night campings in "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack River" (1849). But the recurrent thought that "the works of man are everywhere swallowed up in the immensity of nature", accompanies the reader, trying to make him intuit the all-embracing frame of "natural" life. The sense of correspondence between Nature and man's world may be easily remarked in such meditative statements with which the exact renderings of the excursion on the rivers are interspaced.

"Art is not tame, and Nature is not wild, in the ordinary sense. A perfect work of man's art would also be wild or natural in a good sense. Man tames Nature only that he may at last make he more free even than he found her, though he may never yet have succeded"[7].

Or, in the following fragment which brings to the surface the author's irony, as an inherent means of creating distance:

"I love to see the hand of man feeding heartily coarse and succulent pleasures, as cattle on the husks and stalks of vegetables. Though there are many crooked and crabbed specimens of humanity among them, run all thorn and rind, and crowded out of shape by adverse circumstances, like the third chestnut in the burs, so that you wonder to see some heads wear a whole hat, yet fear not that the race will fail on waver in them, like the crabs which grow in hedges, they furnish the stocks of sweet and thrifty fruits still. Thus is nature recruited from age to age, while the fair and palatable varieties die out, and have their period. *This is that mankind. How cheap must be the material of which so many men are made!*"[8]. [my italics]

With the posthumuously published "Walking" (1862) and "Life without Principles" (1863), Thoreau's attitude became visibly more radical. Though not having any longer the appetite for minute descriptions and surprising, sweeping generalizations starting from the steady observation of nature, as in *Walden*, Thoreau returns to his favourite interpretation of Nature as being the incarnation "of absolute freedom and wilderness", an originary locus which should be the ultimate destination of any individual's experience. Man is still regarded as being part of the all-embracing, harmonious Nature, "rather than a member of society". Which implies the fact that the antithesis nature-society

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[7] Thoreau, D. H., "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers" in *The Portable Thoreau, op. cit.*, pp. 149-150.

[8] *Ibid.*

which Thoreau magnified in a sort of emblematic issue would firstly mean his refusal to admit of technological progress, equated by our author with spiritual decadence. In this regard, it has been already shown that setting nature versus society was for Thoreau a first step to acquire the necessary knowledge of man's immanence in modernity. And furthermore, that any utopian escape was ill-fated in an age dominated by reason and a utilitarian employment of time. It ensues from this that for Thoreau the danger of utopian thinking and futile projections resided in the belief that only society with its clamorously hailed achievements would be man's place. Thoreau's disbelief in such claimings was not only direct, as manifested in the above mentioned antithetical view, but it was also pragmatic. Debunking the unhealthy modern life, Thoreau strove to regain man's plenary, vital potentialities which came under the policing of utilitarian divisions being consequently estranged. Being aware of the impossibility of "fleeing away" from the challenge of modernity, Thoreau attempted to *reconstruct the overall* understanding of man's place, leaving aside the individual's insertion in society. Obviously the use of ethical on vitalist vocabulary as the terms "good" or "healthy" a.s.o. would not resolve by themselves the predicament of our author who could not find any transcendent belief to rely on. The absence of transcendent liniaments in Thoreau's general interpretation of Nature, along with the absence of eros, narrows considerably the opportunities of finding a social, "pragmatic" solution to his experiences. Therefore, his exploits were destined to remain for a long while walled in "spiritual", highly individualistic (egotistic) experience which eventually would emerge as a failed attempt to salvage man from the tentacles of modernity (seen in its anti-spiritual reality, industrialization, urbanization). Such an overview on Thoreau's work is perhaps still in use, due to the writer's confessed indebtedness to Emerson's literary prestige. Nevertheless, in the course of time, it has been proved that Thoreau's view on the modern desting of man in America differs substantially from Emerson's, and moreover, in many respects Thoreau gave up the "transcendental" knowledge,forging his own vision[9]. Constantly reread and reinterpreted, Thoreau's works (*Walden* mostly but also *Civil Disobedience*) slowly brought to light other facets of Thoreauvian thinking, somehow wronged to lay in oblivion due to their sometimes too radical or too common wording. It appeared thus, that in the much commented antithesis nature versus society, Thoreau was not looking for the annihilation of society as such, nor was he in favour of a sheer, primitive return to the appalling

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[9] Buell, Lawrence, *Literary Transcendentalism. Style and Vision in American Renaissance*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 1973, pp. 284, 300.

conditions of living in misery. He was constantly concerned with the style of life characterizing his contemporaries. Whether Thoreauvian judgements or statements may have seemed to sound nostalgic or simply outmoded for the harbingers of technological advancement regardless of its costs, it is highly debatable. At least, Thoreau acknowledged the new dimensions of his age, business, the issue of jobs, a.s.o. And consequently, he did not fail to respond (in his own way) to the age's most demanding requirement, that of being *rational*.

It is but true that for Thoreau "rational" was in most cases substituted by "wise", which makes all the difference. It is questionable if Thoreau did not actually perceive the social, secularized reference to "reason" In an age of standardization and wide-spreading uniformization, he clearly feared thar "rational" mistique covered as a cover alienation of man from his own life-giving sources. Therefore, his pathetic tone tries in vain to call the attention of his fellowmen on the question of an imminent peril, that of losing the personalizing quality of *being and remaining* an individual. It is only after more than a century that his prophetic statements have acquired a well deserved echo, in spite of their exhortative manner.

"The title *wise* is for the most part, falsely applied. How can one be a wise man, if he does not know any better how to live than other men? – if he is only more cunning and intellectually subtle? Does Wisdom work in a treadmill? Or does she teach how to succeed *by her exemple*? Is the any such thing as wisdom not applied to life? Is she merely the miller who grinds the finest logic? [...]. The ways is which most men get their living, that is, live, are merely makershifts, and a shirking of the real business of life – chiefly because they do not know, but partly because they do not mean, any better"[10].

Quite persuasively, Thoreau brings into limelight the modern man's predicament, namely to respond on the one hand accurately to the challenges of the age – as for instance, that of coping with the changing effects of applying technology in natural and social media - , employing in this respect reason as a means of controlling and administrering the rise of living standards, the so-called advancement of sciences, progress in democratization. On the other hand, Thoreau noticed critically the discrepancies between the rationale of such an approach and reality. In this regard, our author stood against the instrumentalization of man, the considerable uniformization of the individual's role in society, mainly due to the rise of positivistic and utilitarian attitudes. Under the circumstances, Thoreau's appeal to *wisdom* clearly recalls a "spiritualist" or a "culturalist" tendenciy in dealing with the increasingly diverse

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[10] Thoreau, D. H., "Life Without Principle" in *The Portable Thoreau*, *op. cit.*, pg. 638.

reality of the 19ᵗʰ century America. The major drawback of such a viewpoint does not consist in reviving the assets of classical culture, namely resorting to the authority of Platonic philosophy, Latin authors or Buddhist texts, but rather in conceiving the concept of nature as a sort of *monist* interpretation of the world, leaving the individual with the fairly simple task of "understanding" the wholeness of the issue. The emphasis laid by such a culturalist or spiritualist approach can be explained on the basis of a strong reaction felt not only in Thoreau's case, against the levelling brought by utilitarian degraded images of man and society. So, wisdom responds in Thoreau's views more completely to the individual's needs, keeping in check abstract generalizations. The persistent remarks on the need of the individual's real interest, account, for Thoreau's singular examination of his age.

Thoreau's decision to live alone in the woods has been enveloped in a veil of Romantic apocalyptic-prophetic rhetoric suiting both the expectancies of those inclined to acknowledge their nostalgia for the past, as the confident project of utilitarians. The ambivalence of the Thoreauvian message as a whole, in *Walden* as in his major essays, consists in the form of extended "confessions", bringing to the reader a "marginal" viewpoint, avoiding to assume trenchant positions, and likely to weaken the reader's resistence by setting at work the modern attributes of the "author", figure[11]. Thoreau definitely takes advantages of the liberal position authors enjoyed in America (along with the country's worshiping the press). The fundamental determinations of liberalism in America at the period when Thoreau was writing, are essential to distinguish among the attitudes of several members of the "Transcendentalist Club" as well as in emphasizing the final contribution of them in the anti-slavery movement[12]. At the same time, one should notice that within the traditionally accepted form of the essay, there is an increasingly marked tendency to approach "liberally" (namely from the individual's viewpoint and interests) several topics considered so to say, of lesser interest. Thoreau succeeds in approaching a variety of topics,

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[11] Remarks on Thoreau's author "figure" vary considerable, from the presentation of the writer as an *elitist author* (David S. Reynolds, *Beneath the American Rennaissance. The Subversive Imagination in the Age of Emerson and Melville*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachussetts, London, England, 1988, pp. 97-98), to a writer who promoted a "culture of the self" (Leo Stoller, *After Walden. Thoreau's Changing Vision on Economic Man*, Stanford University Press, Stanford California, 1957, pp.4-6, and Buell Lawrence, *New England Literary Culture. From revolution Through Renaissance*, cambridge University press, New York, 1986, pp. 167-168.

[12] Schneider, Herbert W., *A History of American Philosophy*, Columbia University Press, New York & London, 1963, pp. 251-253.

yet not leaving the the impression of an intention more crucial than that of speaking about his own experiences. So, anything that would emerge otherwise as emphatic statements about the condition of the individual, remains under provisional reserve, that is within the *experience of one's accounting for his subjective views.* In other words, Thoreau cashes in on the liberal tradition of the American society, by presenting his bold remarks on the way American live and nothing would have shattered an already well established tradition, except for the impulse to abandon society, in quest for one's plenorry achievement. Thoreau's intentional contrastive play between the acknowledged subjectivity of his thoughts and the presentation of his experiences in the light of a *possible* model of life, engenders a suasive perspective for the reader, enabling him to follow the author's considerations with an augmenting interest, without having the impression of being led astray.

So, again, Thoreau's leaving the peaceful but stifling life of Concord appears in the double play of a gesture of revolt as well as an experience of a member living in a liberal community. Both tendencies coexist (in interpretation as well) stemming in the ambivalent discourse of *Walden*, especially. Pursuing the finding of the present day, individual's virtues in a society which attempts to impress its subjects with a levelled mentality, Thoreau points to a *locus* to be found outside society. Whether one clearly perceives that the key for the necessary change is in recentering man's confidence in his spiritual autonomy, it does not come out so transparently that the locus in not placed outside the world, but in its *proximal vicinity.* Therefore Thoreau's withdrawal from the world shold not be seen as a "separation" from the world; the world (society) may be permanently reached, and one should notice the spacing distance kept as a frontier between the private and the public, wilderness and civilization. So, we suggest a moderate view on Thoreau's radical intention to abandon the world rather than going on considering it as kind of Robinson-like attitude, from which one it differs essentially. The temporary separation from the world enhances the singularity of Thoreau's options rather than his isolation impulses. The singularity of the momentous decision should be taken as an instance of experiential mode in which Thoreau sets his worldview and conception of life. At the some time, in the spirit of the liberal American tradition, besides the priviledge of a spiritual comfort and detachment from everyday's concerns, there is a deep preoccupation to find a moral and pragmatic sense of life which sets the individual and the society in a equal position. So abandoning the world (American society as it existed at Concord), is but a temporary separation and not at all a sort of haughty isolation in the sense of cutting out any links with the world. Thorea prudently

and ironically warns the reader at the beginning of the consistent "Economy" at the beginning of this *Walden*: "At present I am sojourner in civilized life again." The "story" of the separation unfurls itself between two important temporal moments as the Thoreauvian confession betrays its epic structure which is worthwhile underlining in the light of the rhetorical arrangement of the author's discourse. The two moments are a "present" moment, actually accounting for its consistency and meaning. The "present" moment does not open to a future one, as future seems to be circumscribed by relativism rather than an overbearing, too confident belief.

"I learned this, at least by my experiments that if one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a succes unexpected in common hours. He will put some things behind, wiil pass an invisible boundary; new, universal and more liberal laws will be expanded, and interpreted in his favor in a more liberal sense, and he will live with the licence of a higher order of beings. In proportion as he simplifies his life, the laws of the universe will appear less complex, and solitude will not be solitude, no poverty poverty, no weakness weakness. If you have built castles in the air, your work need not to be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them"[13].

If *Walden* meant for most of its commentators and readers a redeeming experience centred on the nostalgia for originacy, it is not less evident that the main part of Thoreau's creation brings to the fore a *perspective* of the end. An end which for Thoreau coincides with a fresh beginning, and here we may find an osmotic borderline between the "past" and "present" moments, mediating the epic mode of the author's confession. As in the end of "Conclusion" in Walden, the end emerges as a reiteration of auroral moments, as "the sun is but a morning-star". Thoreau urges his readers to a continual and moments awakening, a state of meditation and awareness to keep vigil as the passing of the time changes its rhythms in "beginnings" and "ends". One should mark the author's modern outlook, and especially his capacity to store human time in a cycle of beginnings and endings, suggesting thus the idea of a feasible, replenishment inherent to human life (within a liberal society, we should add) rather than the contemplation of an apocalyptic end. Storing away human time in a circular lay-out of Thoreauvian experiences is obvious; the passing of the seasons, the mirror-like correspondence between water and sky, the parallel experience of erecting a log cabin and getting to simplify one's life. Storing human time as the most precious asset emerges as the writer overtly repudiates

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[13] Thoreau, D. H., *Walden* in *The Portable Thoreau*, *op. cit.*, pp. 562-563.

any simptom of waste, showing that modernity has brought valorizations as the most important phenomena testing and proving for the individual's authenticity and autonomy. As we shall point out further on, in storing time. Thoreau underscored the human dimension of lived time as a fundamental consideration to keep man from being utterly instrumentalized and alienated. Storing and employment of human time in a bureaucratized society becomes the main question of not only a symbolical change between man and society, but also as regards the import of "nature" in Thoreau's grounding his life philosophy. As the question of time is presented as being eventually dealt with as either in storing away or in wasting it, in other words, either capitalizing or depreciating it, the decisive assuming of a *style* of life (simplifying, reducing life's complexity) emerges as an optional pragmatic and therapeutic perspective. The setting for such an optional perspective is viewed in an effectual connection with the individual's ego, which has to be valued accordingly as the presence of the author's figure within the whole design of the confession.

"In most books, the *I*, or first person, is omitted, in this it will be retained: that in respect to egotism, is the main difference. We commonly do not remember that it is, after all, always the first person that is speaking. I should not talk so much about myself if there were anybody else whom I knew as well. Unfortunately, I am confined to this theme by the narrowness of my experience. Moreover, I, on my side, require of every writer, first or last, a simple and sincere account of his own life, and not merely what he has heard of other men's lives; some such account as he would send to his kindred from a distant land; for if he has lived sincerrely, it must have beeen in a distant land to me"[14].

Seen as a confession, *Walden* reflects simultaneously the reflector and the reflected perspective. The role of of experience is the cornerstone of the work, as the author confesses about his knowing best himself rather than other persons, in the sense of his being more apt "to explore" himself, rather than other egos. Confession in *Walden* is enveloped as one follows the author's premises in an attempt to achieve authenticity of life, by means of a "simple and sincere" accounting of one's life. Without persisting in suggesting that behind the claimed sincerity and simplicity, Thoreau operates a severe stylistic reduction, to mention only this level of work, we should underscore the anticipated effect of novelty envisaged by our author. Sincerity and simplicity bring along an atmosphere of familiarization, suggesting common or shared understanding in interpreting events or accounted fragments of life. Thoreau does not treat sincerity and simplicity as a kind of "down-to-earth" manner of

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[14] *Idem*, pg. 259.

recounting personal experiences; since they are brought in focus, their representation is surrounded by an air of gravity, very similar to remind every reader the question of assessing the issue of personal, human employment of time. To invoke sincerity and simplicity means also to reject an old fashioned literary-laden style, a sterile literary rhetoric which exhausted itself. Pleading for sincerity and simplicity, Thoreau wishes to instil a degree of innocence in the perception of his *Walden*, without wich his confession would only exhibit the author's experiences, missing the task of presenting it as an *exemplary* (memorable) experiment. One has not to overlook the question of the reader's involvement, which under these favourable auspices would be likely to suspend his disbelief. We must as well hear a contrapuntal voice in the rhethoric of sincerity and simplicity, that is the writer's voice (or to acknowledge to the writer's presence). Though being a confession, *Walden* as *Two Weeks* are not personal diaries; using the accesibility of the confession or of the essay as a literary form, Thoreau organized and as we know reorganized his vast material of notes, remarks and observations, expanding the borders of his quest. The question of fictionality stands close to determining how should the reader deal with the prophetic tone used in the writer's vitaperations against the technological advancement of the age and its "obnoxious" effects. Relying on a selective (and yet rather ecclectic) choice of "authoritative" sources, mainly found in classical literature and culture, Thoreau planned to render a sort of "cultural" salvation of mankind, referring to Americans, mostly. Fictionality in *Walden* but also in Thoreau's posthumiously published essays counts for a means of constructing the perception of reality, especially when it comes to the therapeutic content of act of confession. Our author perceived acutely the spiritual crisis of the age of transition, being influenced by the voices of his age who announced the imminent change, in other words the rapid wearing out of the transcendent interpretations of the world and human being[15]. Finaly simplicity and sincerity point to the writer's avoidance of literary artificiality, though there are many instances, generally speaking, (especially in the essays prior to *Walden*m, and "sincere" accounting of events, as these are almost all related to the writer's subjective experiences.

After having withdrawn from the world, after passing a restoring period in his hut at Walden, the hero from *Walden* returns to civilized world being "a sojourner"; a role which our author does not illuminate to much upon, but which obviously weighs considerably on the deeper inferences of the author's voice. If we dwell on the image of the sojourner, we can perceive that behind the

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[15] Williams, Raymond, *Culture and Society 1780-1950*, Penguin Books, 1961, pp. 59-64.

hint of man's fleeting life viewed as a short spanning temporality, the idea of temporality emerges connected with that of living in a certain place, for a certain period of time; a way of admitting of modern man's migrating impulses, according to the developments in politics, technology, last, but not least in mentalities on an age of transition as the 19th century may be held in view. In this respect, one could wonder why did not the hero of Walden remain for a much longer period in the woods of Walden, living for ever cut out from the world. Such a question is worth taking to only if we perceive Thoreau's gesture within the various changes in the life of American communities, generally. The appearance of different groups organized either on the basis of religious ties or on materialistic grounds provided for a continuous influx of immigrants populating the vast areas of the so called Frontier expanding borderline. The mediated effect did not delay to emerge in a growing awareners of multi-ethnic, and eventually multi-cultural layers of the American society. Thoreau was one of the few prominent American writers to recognize the presence of Indian cultural vestiges and to speak and act, as we know in favour of abolition; he also remarked in various instances (in *Walden* as well) on the European cultural elements thriving in New England. But what seems to outpass in importance his rather occasional remarks is that he would refer to this issue but from the side of the individual. So, for him the test of the spiritual autonomy and the foundation of the social and implicitly ethical behavior are to be found in the individual's struggle to shape his own pragmatic solutions. In contrast to religious or social (political) commandments of phalansteries, religious sects a.s.o., Thoreau examines only the individual's options, deliberately overlooking the impact of the community's complex influence. From the Thoreauvian angle, it was rather clear (at least in the period when the writer was completing his *Walden*), that only the individual could hold the much awaited for solution: whether to go on observing the strict, levelling social hierarchies or to start experimenting, beginning with himself the sense of a radical change. But, it was self-evident that Thoreau was indifferent if not reluctant to consider the political implications of this preaching "simple life", superiority of nature over the state. Being engrossed in freeing individual from the burdening oversized seemingly unimportant tasks of modern life, Thoreau found approving consideration firstly international personalities as different as Lev Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi, Marcel Proust, William Morris. Which shows with no doubt that Thoreau pleaded for "simple life" as a style in correlation with each individual's options. *Walden*, as Thoreau's major work is meant to make its readers confide in themselves.

When referring to *Walden* as to a highly original writing bearing the marks of an expanding confession, reaching a "philosophy of life" accessible to

an expectedly large majority of readers, we viewed it as the testimony of a lived experience within specific cultural circumstances, as for instance, the characteristic attributes of "the age of transition" in America. The crucial point unfolding the author's experience at Walden is in our view the reconstruction of normality, as a main concern of modern authors, in other words to provide an alternative and genuine perspective on what had been held in hig esteem to be "normality" by utilitarianist and positivist thinkers. The configuration of normality confirms that for Thoreau the modality of experiencing life should be optimal (if not continuously perfectible) and consequently that interests on the ever increasing spiritual autonomy of the individual. The radicality of our author's options springs from the inner need to rationalize the phenomenality of life, but it is also in this point that it differs from the view point of most of the interpreters of modern American society in the middle of the 19th century. Normality and its cultural practices of normalization reflect the enlarging, conflicting variations of individualistic issues in a liberal, urban industrial society. With *Walden* one has a first instance of realising the diverging roads between interpretation of normality and the impact of normalization processes as induced by industrialization, urbanization, democratization. "Fleeing" from the world of Concord, Thoreau debunked the hidden violence of social normalization, which as he strove to demonstrate stood definitely against man's chances to remain a human being. And it is again, the question of redescribing eventually man and mankind that in every attempt to redefine normality in a new age ("the mechanical age" according to Carlyle, "the age of business" according to Thoreau) would come as a primary task. Thoreau's experiment at Walden is thoroughly concerned with interpreting the pressure of a violent normalization in the sense of uniformization brought along by the technological advancement, and with resisting such the assault of human alienation and instrumentalization, by resorting to a humanized millieu which appears to be nature in its primordial solitude. The aim of revealing the interlocking correspondances between man and nature seems to lie in presenting the anteriority of the solidarity between man and nature, and moreover that such a profound relationship is to be observed in common life especially. It is rather evident that Thoreau was not all interested in examining the question of accomodation, and to account in this way about a patern of changes that would highlight on the dimensions of modernity itself. The obsinacy of refusing to cope with the consequences of technological progress minutely reflected in the works of authors considering Thoreau a minor Romantic writer, overbrimming with nostalgia. Actually, Thoreau got known due to this apparently marginal if not exotic protest against progress, civilization,

a.s.o., and only when the reverse of blind optimism reaped the failings of "progress", his vision was remembered, though rather shyly. Lather on, as we know, as studies on mentalities and on American culture and society reached a mature stage, and especially when ecological interests were fashionable, *Walden* began to be reread.

What are the "strong" points on which Thoreau could pretend to reconstruct man's alternative normality? How did he evaluate the safe distance between his position as a vehement critic of society generally and American cultural values underlying transition in American society? What were his main theoretical assets to uphold man's role in preserving and expanding the level of civilization which allowed for such a radical thinking? And to end this first set of questions, we wonder if fleeing from a certain stereotype, uniformization of the individual's life, Thoreau did not reach eventually to the same critical point by replacing the constraints of utilitarianism with those of a culturalist or spiritualist ones[16].

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[16] "Culturalist" or "spiritualist" interpretation of culture legitimize a sense of power, which has been dealt with in present-day deconstructivist views. We follow the idea of outlining culture as a kind of "tissue" or "context" as explained in Clifford Geertz's *The Interpretation of Cultures, Selected Essays*, Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, New York, 1971, pp.15-23.

RORTY'S POSTMODERNIST BOURGEOIS LIBERALISM: AN IDEALIST LIBERALISM

MIHAELA CĂBULEA

ABSTRACT. This paper is a thorough analysis of Richard Rorty's vision of the ideal citizen and the ideal society, based on three basic concepts: ethnocentrism, liberalism, and irony. The author of the article examines Rorty's understanding of these three concepts and the way he interrelates them, offering not only a depiction of his liberal utopia, but also a critical view upon it.

I. INTRODUCTION

Richard Rorty is one of the most important and provocative philosophers of the late twentieth century. One can find great difficulty in contextualizing him, because Rorty converses with a variety of thinkers who themselves belong to different movements and traditions. He was described as a Deweyan pragmatist, a postmodern deconstructionist, a liberal ethnocentrist, a romantic aesthete, but certainly we can not reduce the complexity of his thinking only to one of these descriptions. A thorough analysis is necessary before we circumscribe his work.

In his approach, Rorty starts from criticizing the traditional philosophy, which has always tried to find final solutions to questions concerning truth, rationality and knowledge. For him this goal is nothing but a desire to close off inquiry, to privilege a set of descriptions and to "dehumanize" the human being by considering her just a machine. By contrast, he tries to avoid these dehumanizing attempts characteristic to philosophical tradition. Rorty does this by reminding us of the contingency of our language, of our liberal community and of our selves. Thus, he reaffirms our freedom and promises a new sense of community that will be the fruit of the free interplay of various language-games rather than of discovering a true human nature. The American philosopher develops a particular vision of the ideal liberal democratic culture and he calls it the "postmodernist bourgeois liberalism" or "aestheticized culture". Characteristic of this ideal culture is the idea that anything goes as far as change takes place by persuasion rather than force. The ideal of this culture is to provide as much

freedom and diversity as possible, to enlarge our sense of solidarity.

Rorty's prescription for achieving such an ideal liberal culture starts from the normal discourse of the American current liberal democratic society. By normal discourse he means the discourse conducted within "an agreed-upon set of conventions about what counts as a relevant contribution, what counts as having a good argument for the answer or a good criticism of it"[1]. The normal discourse is distinguished from the abnormal discourse defined as "the sort of discourse which sounds strange to the ears of a given audience"[2].

While the traditional philosophy tried to escape the normal discourse and to ground our practices in transcendental, atemporal truths, Rorty thinks that this is impossible and that we must accept as true whatever is the outcome of normal discourse within our community in our time. For the new vocabulary of liberal society tries to find new useful ways of redescribing old institutions and practices. It drops the obsolete notions of objective truth and rational justification and has as an end an aestheticized culture for which creation of new vocabularies represents the most important means for moral and intellectual progress. Such a vocabulary of an aestheticized culture is better suited to express the liberal ideals of freedom and pluralism. The heroes of this culture are the poets and the utopians - those who do not talk like us and who are continuously changing the language. This aestheticized culture does not try in any way to normalize the abnormal discourse.

Another important aspect in Rorty's thinking is that he abandons the Enlightenment hope of connecting private ethics of self-creation with public ethics of mutual accommodation. For Rorty, there is no bridge between these two ethics. Private morality deals with the individual's concern for developing his own personality, with his self-creation. On the contrary, public morality represents the attempts to treat the others right, to enlarge human solidarity, and can be expressed in statutes and maxims. What is needed in this field of public morality is not more theory but more hard work in order to be sure that these principles apply equally to all.

Regarding private morality, Rorty thinks that Freud played a very important part in changing our self-image and our understanding of morality. Freud suggests that inside us live different, mostly unconscious persons, with different language-games, who determine us to do things the way we do. This Freudian image of the self leads to the picture of conscience as just another story, among many others, about how things are. So everyone is free to

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[1] Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, Princeton University Press, 1980, pg. 320.

[2] Richard Rorty, "A reply to Six Critics", *Analyse & Kritik*, 6, 1984, pg. 86.

interpret himself/herself as he/she wants. Hereupon, the character-ideal for shaping our moral character changes. The ascetic ideal (of self-purification), the one of getting in touch with our true selves, our true nature, is replaced by Rorty with the self-enlargement ideal. The self-enlargement can be achieved by developing new and richer ways of formulating our desires and hopes, and thus by making those desires and hopes (and thereby ourselves) richer and more complete. The ethics of self-enlargement helps us get rid of the idea that we have a true self, that there is a common human essence, and thereby become more ironic, playful and inventive in choosing our self-descriptions. Rorty considers that the ethics of self-enrichment is best suited to the liberal democratic ideals, to an open society that is the confrontation field of divergent points of view and is meant to encourage a more tolerant "live-and-let-live" attitude. Those who pursue self-enlargement and who have as their cultural hero the "strong poet" are the ideal citizens of this ideal state.

II. POSTOMDERNIST BOURGEOIS LIBERALISM: AN IRONIC LIBERALISM

Before passing to further considerations, I would like to explain the title of this article. The phrase "postmodernist bourgeois liberalism" belongs to Rorty. He calls his liberalism 'bourgeois' "to emphasize that most of the people I am talking about would have no quarrel with the Marxist claim that a lot of those institutions and practices are possible and justifiable only in certain historical, and especially economic, conditions."[3] And here Rorty makes a distinction between bourgeois liberalism, defined as the attempt to fulfill the hopes of the North Atlantic bourgeoisie, and philosophical liberalism, which is a collection of Kantian principles justifying those hopes. By this distinction he wants to emphasize the difference between subscribing to liberalism simply because it is the best pragmatic option, given the historical circumstances, and subscribing to it because it can be philosophically justified. The term "postmodernist" is used with the meaning given to it by Lyotard, namely that of "distrust in metanarratives". As the author himself says, postmodernist bourgeois liberalism sounds oxymoronic, so the intended effect is an ironic one. It sounds so partly because people who consider that they got rid of metaphysics and metanarratives, also think of themselves as having stepped out off bourgeoisie. But also because it is difficult to disentangle the bourgeois

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[3] Richard Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism, And Truth,* Cambridge University Press, 1991, pg. 198.

liberal institutions from the vocabulary inherited from the Enlightenment. This vocabulary, centered around the distinction between morality and prudence, is not profitable anymore and it should be replaced with one more suitable for the needs of the postmodernist bourgeois liberals. So the second part of the title is just a translation of Rorty's intention when he depicted his own utopian version of liberalism. It was just the effect that Rorty was pursuing.

2.2. The contingency of a liberal community

Rorty's ideal is the one common to the line of thought - Nietzsche, Freud and Davidson - namely, that we reach a state in which we are no longer able to divinize anything. Such a state would be one in which we treat everything - our language, our conscience, our community - as the outcome of time and chance. The process of de-divinization would reach its peak with our inability to give sense to the idea that finite human beings could derive the meaning of their lives from something else except other finite human beings with a contingent existence. The main virtue of the citizens of a contemporary liberal democratic society is to recognize their contingency, and thus, to cure themselves from the metaphysical need of getting in touch with the divine.

The American philosopher thinks that a vocabulary which is centered around terms like metaphor and self-creation would better serve the ideals of the liberal community, than the Enlightenment vocabulary centered around notions like truth, rationality, and moral duty. Even though this latter vocabulary was essential for the beginnings of the liberal democracy, little by little it became an impediment in the way of its development. Thus it needs to be replaced with a new one. Anyway, this does not mean that Rorty intends to use the Wittgensteinian-Davidsonian view about language or the Nietzschean-Freudian description of conscience, as the philosophical foundations at the basis of a liberal community. For the notion of foundation only makes sense within the rationalist vocabulary of the Enlightenment. The vocabulary proposed by Rorty should allow for the redescription of the goals, institutions, and practices of a liberal democracy and for a better fulfilling of its ideal. As Rorty says in *Contingency, Irony, And Solidarity*[a], the process of redescription seems more like refurnishing a house, than like surrounding it with barricades, in order to protect it.

The assertion of the contingency of a liberal community presupposes the acceptance of the claim that there is no ahistorical standpoint outside the

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[a] *R. Rorty, Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*, Cambridge University Press, 1989.

historically determined and temporary vocabulary currently in use, from which to judge this vocabulary. The important border to be passed is not that between temporality and atemporal truth, but the one traced by Nietzsche - the one that separates the old from the new. We have to realize that progress, both for community and individual, is rather a problem of using new words. The terms used by the founders of a new form of cultural life would greatly consist of borrowings from the culture they hope to replace. Only when the new culture has grown old and become the target of the avant-garde attacks, the terminology of that culture is shaped.

An ideal liberal culture would give up the notion of philosophical foundations. The idea that such a society must have foundations belongs to the scientism of the Enlightenment, which was, in its turn, a residue of the religious need to have human projects supported by a nonhuman authority.

For such an ideal liberal culture the justification of the liberal society would be a matter of historical comparison with other attempts of social organization - those from the past and those envisaged by utopians. To consider that such a justification is enough, means to accept Wittgenstein's claim that all vocabularies - even those which contain the words that are most important for our self-description - are human creations, instruments for creating other artifacts as poems, scientifical theories, future generations, and so on. It amounts to giving up the idea that liberalism can be justified and its enemies refuted. Speaking in such terms is not profitable, as Rorty would say. We have to accept that our community is one among many possible others, that there is no way to step out of our community and reach a neutral standpoint from which to judge all possible communities. We have to recognize that our society is what it is, has the morality it has, speaks the language it speaks, not because it approximates the will of God or the human nature, but because there were some poets in the past that happened to speak the way they did. Our society, our way of life is the contingent result of the language spoken by our ancestors, and of institutions and practices that were made possible by that vocabulary.

To summarize, the utopian liberal society that Rorty proposes is one without philosophical foundations, a historical product, one whose citizens have the feeling of the contingency of their language, of their consciousness, and thus of their community. Such citizens would be liberal ironists. According to Rorty, an ironist has to satisfy three conditions. First, he must have radical and permanent doubts about the 'final vocabulary'[5] he currently uses, because

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[5] A 'final vocabulary' is a set of words that human beings use "to justify their actions, their beliefs, and their lives. (...) They are the words in which we tell, sometimes prospectively and sometimes retrospectively, the story of our lives. (...)

he should be aware of the contingency of such a vocabulary. "It is 'final' in the sense that if doubt is cast on the worth of these words, their user has no circular argumentative recourse. Those words are as far as we can go with language; beyond them there is only helpless passivity or a resort to force"[6]. A consequence of this doubt is the ironist's worry of having "been initiated into the wrong tribe"[7]. Second, as one could notice from the very definition of the final vocabulary given in note five, the ironist is aware that he cannot satisfactorily solve his doubts about his own final vocabulary by means of argument. Any argument he provides would be stated in the terms of that vocabulary. So, all his attempts at external justification are circular. The third condition to be an ironist is the awareness that one's vocabulary is not at all closer to truth than anyone else's vocabulary. However, a liberal who satisfies these three conditions and who is characterized by a profoundly skeptical attitude towards his cultural traditions, an awareness of the contingency of his community and a tacit rejection of metaphysical beliefs is not a liberal ironist yet. For, as Rorty says, an iroist should try to overcome his skeptical attitude and be creative. Embracing an ironic stance allows a liberal to redescribe values, practices, institutions, persons and himself in a variety of different ways. The moral philosophy of such a community is an answer to the question "Who are we, how did we become what we are, and what can we become?" rather than an answer to the question "What rules should I obey in my actions?" Thus, morality becomes a set of practices, the practices of our community, determined by time and chance.

2.3. The private-public split: a way of solving the tension between liberalism and ethnocentrism

Rorty's separation between the public and the private realm is considered by most of his critics one of the most problematic aspect of his thinking. But most of the time they take into consideration only the contradictions and tensions from Rorty's texts, thus limiting his view to a few aspects.

In the followings I will try to present the reason why Rorty makes this "old move" (as his critics call it) and its outcomes.

What should be mentioned from the very beginning is that Rorty operates with this split precisely because of the previous failure of metaphysics

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[6] R. Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*, pg. 73.
[7] R. Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*, pg. 75.

to unite these two realms of human life, by providing a final vocabulary, undivided in a private part and a public one, and of the ironist theory which hoped to do this synthesis through narrative. The failure of these two different attempts to unite the public and the private belongs to theory. In theory, the split is total, for there is no language, no vocabulary to unite these areas. The only task we can assume is, for Rorty, that of inventing as many vocabularies of both types, and use them for different purposes. However, this split is not total, because the American philosopher emphasizes that in his ironist culture, in spite of the fact that the two areas cannot combine in a theory, they can do it in life. The ironists have to content themselves with the thought that the private project of self-creation has nothing in common with the attempts to save the others from suffering and humiliation.

Therefore, Rorty proposes us two types of ethics - namely, a public ethics and a private ethics, between which there is no bridge. The former represents the attempts to treat the others right, to diminish the suffering and humiliation of the others, the attempts of mutual accommodation, while the latter deals with the individual's attempts to develop his own personality. So, our public selves and our private selves speak two different languages. The public self operates at the level of the universal speaks an argumentative language and deals with problems of social justice and cultural legitimization. On the other side, the private self operates at the level of the singular, speaks an idiosyncratic language and deals with problems of poetical self-redescription and self-creation. So, in a liberal utopia no one can be simultaneously liberal and ironic, but one may be liberal in the public domain and ironic in the private one.

By postulating this private-public split, Rorty seems to want a certain form of personal isolation. But, however, as Dewey pointed out, nothing acts in complete isolation. The action of everything conjugates with the action of other things. It is just in this sense that, even though private desires and public interests do not admit theoretical synthesis, in daily life they overlap and influence each other.

In this context, the task of the liberal ironist is not only that of pursuing his private projects of self-creation, but also to notice the differences, to pay attention to the "daily detail" of the others' suffering in order to enlarge the capacity of a liberal society to be a tolerant, full of compassion society. Rorty's recommendation is to minimize the difference between certain groups (for example, the difference between the Christians and Muslims from a certain village in Bosnia, or the difference between the blacks and whites from a certain city in Alabama) not by emphasizing a common essence, but by pointing out to lots of similitudes between these groups. He insists that solidarity is precisely

the outcome of our capacity to minimize the differences (capacity which is distinct form the metaphysician's wish to reduce all differences to a common denominator - a fundamental human nature), to expand "us" as far as possible, to include rather that exclude. In the encounter between "us" and the stranger, we find out that the stranger is not, after all, so strange as to deprive him of the benefits offered by the liberal society, of the possibility to be "one of us". It is necessary to mention that for Rorty "to be one of us" does not mean that the stranger has to get rid of all the differences in order to be accepted, but that these differences do not matter as much as the resemblance between he and "us" - namely, the fact that he is a human being capable, like us, to experience suffering and humiliation, a potential victim of cruelty.

During the process of acculturation we recognize the similarities of the other with us, recognition that finally allows us to understand his odd behaviour and to wave him in our cultural web, fact which is possible due to the work of the "connoisseurs of diversity" (sociologists, anthropologists, literary critics, novelists, and poets). This does not mean that we have to deal with a cultural imperialism in Rorty, as it might seem *prima facie*, for the inclusion of the marginalized have to be read as "urging us to *create* a more expansive sense of solidarity than we presently have."[8] The idea of moral progress that leads to a "more expansive sense of solidarity", suggests us that Rorty is aware of the fact that the inclusion of the marginalized will also change our self-image and our culture. What we can object to the American philosopher is that he sees this dialogue between "us" and "they" only from his side, that he does not ask how does the stranger perceive us and to what cultural web does he attach us. He emphasizes the extension of our sense of solidarity and not our need of self-reform. He is preoccupied with listening to the others' sufferings, including, and doing justice to the marginalized.

Paradoxically enough, the traditional liberal concern for the suffering of others leads Rorty to assume an ethnocentric stance. It is well known that ethnocentrism often determines intolerance and cruelty, especially when it is used to justify political beliefs and practices. So nowadays, after Auschwitz or Kosovo, advocating for ethnocentrism is quite an imprudence from a moral point of view. The question is: for what form of ethnocentrism does Rorty advocate? He thinks it is necessary to accept that no one can, and doesn't even want, to be extremely permissive or open to foreign beliefs or practices. Because no one is able to transcend the limits of one's identity, or one's moral and intellectual inheritances. So, the best way for the liberal is to acknowledge his

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[8] R. Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*, pg. 196.

ethnocentrism, without worrying that he turns his back to pluralism, tolerance, self-criticism and openness. He should be frankly ethnocentric, and acknowledge that there are limits to what people can take seriously. This attitude is not an impediment in the way of sympathetic understanding, but one of its main possibility conditions.

To sum up in Rennie Stuart's words, what I have been saying so far, in Rorty's liberal utopia, citizens have to recognize each other minimally, as potential victims of cruelty, and do not be concerned of the way they differ from one another in their private lives. And here Rorty brings in the private-public distinction in order to allow individuals and groups to retain and cultivate their cultural differences, as long as they do not interfere in each other's way. Thus he solves the tension between liberalism and ethnocentrism by dividing the ideal liberal society into a 'Kuwaiti bazaar' surrounded by plenty of 'exclusive private clubs'. "All you need is the ability to control your feelings when people who strike you as irredeemably different show up at City Hall, or at the greengrocers, or at the bazaar. When this happens, you smile a lot, make the best deals you can, and, after a hard day's haggling, retreat to your club. There you will be comforted by the companionship of your moral equals"[9].

In this point, the individual freedom, which Rorty prizes so much, seems to be the reason that lies behind this separation. However, when we are ready to believe that the balance inclines on the side of individual freedom, Rorty reminds us that we have to step back from our private projects and listen to the suffering and humiliation of others, in order to minimize marginalization and cruelty. He proposes us a type of society in which private and public purposes are no longer in conflict, because they can act simultaneous, as two instruments for different purposes.

As far as the private ethics is concerned, the American philosopher considers that Freud played a very important role in changing our self-image and our understanding of morality, through the decentralization of the self. The Platonic tradition thought that there are two parts of the self - namely, a superior part (spiritual) and an inferior one (animal) - and that our task was to shape our moral character by self-purification (by removing the inferior part), thus getting in touch with our true selves, with our true nature.

Freud offers us a completely different image - that of the self as divided in conscience and unconscious. In Rorty's interpretation, the unconscious is an alternative set of believes and desires, inconsistent with the set that is familiar to us and which we identify with conscience, but coherent enough to be considered a person. Therefore, human body houses two or even more persons,

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[9] Richard Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth, Philosophical Papers* vol. I, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, pg. 209.

each having her own language-game, her own set of beliefs and desires, among which there are causal relationships, but not conversational ones. If we accept this Freudian image of self, then we would consider consciousness as one of the many possible stories about how things are. Then our task becomes the one summarized in Freud's expression "where id was, there shall ego be", that of knowing ourselves. This self-knowledge does not mean knowing our essence, or a common human nature that is the source of our moral responsibility, but knowing our idiosyncrasies, the irrational components that divides our selves in inconsistent sets of believes and desires. In Rorty's vision this is possible by turning the unconscious into a conversational partner. The ascetic ideal of self-purification is replaced by the ideal of self-enlargement. The latter can be achieved by developing new ways of formulating our beliefs and desires, thus making those beliefs and desires (and thus ourselves) richer and fuller. The ethics of self-enlargement helps us get rid of the idea that we have a true self, that there is a common human nature, and consequently, become more ironic, playful and inventive in choosing our self-descriptions.

Rorty considers that the ethics of self-enrichment is best suited for the ideals of a democratic liberal culture, for a society that is the field of confrontation among divergent points of view, because it encourages a more tolerant attitude of the type "live and let live". In its turn, democratic liberal society maximizes freedom and minimizes suffering, by the redescription of the liberal practices and institutions, so that they better fit to our present needs.

But it is enough to look around us and realize that the mere attention to the daily detail of the other's suffering does not arise our compassion and neither does enlarge our sense of solidarity, as Rorty hopes. Kosovo is the best proof that the public ethics he proposes us is not strong enough and that we need a more robust ethics than that of diminishing the suffering when we happen to notice it at our fellows. Maybe the revival of the religious dimension which is attempted by some writers in the present, will play an important part in rendering us more sensitive, in enlarging our sense of solidarity.

This revival might be useful on the individual level, too. For the self-image that Rorty proposes us - that of schizoid, crumbled personality - is hard to bear, and the transformation of the unconscious in a conversational partner is not always a useful "managerial" solution (that helps us solve the more and more frequent problems of 'disorders of the self').

I would like to end this chapter by quoting a passage from Rorty, in order to show that the personal fight of the individual to maintain his inner coherence is not always an easy one and that in this private effort of self-creation, an openness to the other is absolutely necessary: "(...) the ironist - the person who has doubts about his own final vocabulary, his own moral identity, and perhaps his own sanity - desperately needs to *talk* to other people, needs

this with the same urgency as people need to make love. He needs to do so because only conversation enables him to handle these doubts, to keep himself together, to keep his web of beliefs and desires coherent enough to enable him to act. He has these doubts and these needs because, for one reason or another, socialization did not entirely take"[10].

2.4. The strong poet and the political utopian - the heroes of an ideal liberal community

The Enlightenment liberal political thinking has centered its rhetoric on the image of the scientist as a kind of priest, as someone who has a privileged position because has got in touch with the fundamental truth. But this image of the scientist as a priest is not profitable nowadays. First of all because the sciences are not the most interesting and promising realm of culture, and second, because the historians of science have proved that the image of scientist has little in common with the scientific achievement. It is true that the sciences have been very prolific since the end of the 18th century, and that we owe them the fulfilling of the liberal goals, but in spite of all this, they withdrew from the front stage.

Rorty recommends us to turn away from science to other areas of culture, more profitable, like art and utopian politics. We have to replace the Enlightenment description of a liberal society as the hope that such a society can be "rationalized", with the hope that the culture as a whole can be "poeticized". This amounts to saying that we should substitute the hope that the idiosyncratic fantasies will have equal chances to be fulfilled for the hope that one day we will be able to replace "passion" or "fantasy" with "reason". In his opinion an ideal liberal culture would be one whose cultural hero is the "strong poet" and the utopian, rather than the scientist, or the priest. It is one in which the poetry would finally gain the ancient fight with philosophy, which means that the metaphors of self-creation would prevail over the metaphors of revealing. In this case the only power we would have is that of recognizing our contingency, and not of finding an ultimate truth "out there".

For Harold Bloom, a strong poet is one whose task is not to find something common to all people from all times (that's the philosophers's task) but to describe those blind impresses, those contingent idiosyncrasies that make from each of us a distinct and unique individual, an "I", rather than a pale copy or rejoinder of somebody else. By redescribing himself the strong poet creates

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[10] R. Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*, pg. 186.

himself. In this process of self-creation, he uses new terms that have never been used before. With a little luck, the language he creates might impress the next generation and this will inevitable adopt it and develop adequate nonlingvistic behavioural patterns.

Unlike Habermas, who can attribute no social utility to a strong poet, Rorty considers that the latter is a good private thinker, a "knight of autonomy". He thinks that we should not trivialize the efforts of such a "knight of autonomy" to invent himself, even though, at first sight, they seem to lack any kind of public relevance. For they are admirable efforts to think "inhuman thoughts", thoughts that have never been thought before, attempts to break away from the vocabulary of the forerunners (in which the latter expressed their self-image).

Anyway, this does not mean, as Habermas thought, that we break our social connections with our fellow citizens. We can engage in a project of self-making without ceasing to be good liberals. This is the case of Foucault, who is a "knight of autonomy" but also a good liberal, because he had never envisaged a politics meant to help human beings gain more autonomy, or forced them to accept his own self-description.

In the public realm, Rorty proposes us as a hero, the political utopian, the person who creates new and promising alternatives to our current institutions and practices. He envisages new future possibilities and proposes us new experiments. The example of a promising political utopian given by Rorty, is Roberto Mangabeira Unger, a Brazilian philosopher. Unger offers us projects of risky experiments. He speaks a new language, different from the language-games we are used to. But as he rightly points out, these familiar language-games are but "frozen politics"[11], that help us legitimate exactly those forms of social life which we truly hope to overcome. Rorty thinks that the experiments Unger proposes us won't sell in rich North Atlantic democracies, precisely because they are formulated in a novel jargon, different from any vocabulary used by these democracies. Unger's public is in the Third World. If there is a hope for change, it lies in the Third World, where Unger's ideas might some day give birth to a national romance. ("Such a national romance consists of psalms of *national* futures rather than of the future of the 'mankind'."[12]) These ideas could make possible an unexpected national future for one of the Third World countries, saving it from playing the role ascribed to it by some more powerful nations.

The strong poet and the political utopian are those who provide us with new vocabularies for purposes of self-creation, and respectively, for purposes of

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[11] R. Rorty, *Essays on Heidegger and Others,* Cambridge University Press, 1991, pg. 189.
[12] R. Rorty, *Essays on Heidegger and Others*, Cambridge University Press, 1991, pg. 184.

social change. Vocabulary shifts are for Rorty the motor of intellectual and moral progress. Such a vocabulary shift is achieved through the literalization of a new metaphor, through the adoption by an entire community of some poet's metaphor coming from nowhere, from outside the logical space. The strong poet creates the 'abnormal discourse', he speaks different than the rest of us, and thus he guarantees the vocabulary shift so necessary in order to alter our practices and create new and unimaginable ones. We can recognize here Rorty's Romantic impulse to exalt the strong poet that dictates his utopian vision of an 'aestheticized culture', a culture which has no other purpose than "to make life easier for poets and revolutionaries."[13] And, as Nancy Fraser noticed, this Romantic impulse is very strong in Rorty, even though he does not feel completely comfortable with it. He doesn't feel so because this impulse has quite an "individualist, elitist and aestheticist character (...) its deification of the strong poet, its fetishization of creation *ex nihilo*"[14]. We can notice in this impulse a 'Sorelian temptation' to divide humanity into 'leaders' and 'masses', to consider the history of human race as a long row of vocabulary shifts provided by the poet-leader. It is not easy at all for Rorty to make peace between his romantic impulse and his pragmatic impulse which has as objectives solving problems, satisfying needs, assuring well-being. He tries hard to show that his aestheticized culture is "liberal and democratic rather than Sorelian and potentially fascistic"[15].

III. CONCLUSIONS

In this final part I will brieflypresent three criticisms of liberalism to which Rorty tries to reply. The first one is the charge made by social researchers that the individualism promoted by liberalism undermines social commitment and generates self-defeating strategies for self-fulfillment. The second is the charge made by moralists that liberalism gives birth to undesirable or reprehensible social types - what Alasdair calls 'The Rich Aesthete, the Manager and the Therapist'. The third criticism sustains that liberalism is incoherent because it leads to relativism.

By treating all life goals as contingent, as optional roles, Rorty undermines the ability to take social responsibilities and projects seriously, which leads to cynism and selfishness. It is hard to see how a society

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[13] R. Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*, Cambridge University Press, 1989, pg. 117.
[14] Nancy Fraser, "The Sorelian Temptation", in *Reading Rorty*, edited by Alan Malachowski, Blackwell, Oxford UK & Cambridge USA, 1991, pg. 306.
[15] Ibid., pg. 306.

recommending the pursuit of individual freedom and the recognition of historical contingency will enlarge our sense of solidarity and social responsibility. Rorty's answer to this criticism is that it is exaggerated, that "liberalism offers at least as many opportunities as it does obstacles for the renewal of a sense of community."[16] He is confident that human beings will naturally tend to do good deeds if they are enlightened and provided with enough freedom. But this confidence is based precisely on that sort of assumption about a common human nature that Rorty wants to overcome.

However, there are places and moments when Rorty seems to say that the aestheticized culture should not be the ideal of everybody, but only of poets and intellectuals. In this case he proposes us an elitist view - a cultural elite that keeps the conversation going in order to make the vocabulary shifts. On neither alternatives Rorty seems very convincing, because as I said in the previous section, our attention to the details of suffering is not enough to strengthen our commitment and enlarge our sense of solidarity.

Rorty's reply to the moral charge is that "even if the typical character types of liberal democracies *are* bland, calculating, petty, and unheroic, the prevalence of such people may be a reasonable price to pay for the political freedom."[17] This would work if political freedom belonged to all citizens of such an ideal liberal culture, but as far as I can see, it belongs only to a small group. In this case the question is "Is the price worth paying?"

Finally, Rorty's answer to the charge of relativism is that such a criticism makes sense only within an Enlightenment rationalist vocabulary, which even though was useful at the beginnings of liberal democracy, does not fit in our postmodern world anymore. This amounts to saying that all problems, practices and institutions are language-relative, they are what they are because we have chosen to play a certain language-game. And since there are no neutral criteria for choosing a vocabulary, we are free to spin off new vocabularies whenever they help us better fulfil our goals. Rorty offers us an 'apologetics' for the liberal society, where 'apologetics' means precisely the redescription of the old institutions and practices in more useful ways.

From this point of view, the third criticism of liberalism seems meaningless. Since there is no "human nature or essence", independent of the institutions and practices developed by our latest vocabularies, it means that we cannot ground our society in a view of human nature. And since justification is relative to a particular vocabulary, the charge of relativism - the claim that

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[16] R. Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism and Truth*.
[17] R. Rorty, *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth*, pg. 190.

liberalism is incoherent because it cannot justify its prize of freedom - seems itself incoherent in the terms of Rorty's vocabulary. The best thing we can do, says Rorty is to drop the old distinctions between absolute and relative, and between rational and irrational and acknowledge that there is no ground for our convictions except the convictions themselves.

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UNREASONABLE SEARCH AND SEIZURE

IARINA PRELIPCEANU

ABSTRACT. The article dwells on the restrictive conditions for disposing the preventive measures, as long as the innocence assumption functions. The writing relies on the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitutions and especially on the U.S. Supreme Court interpretative decisions. The meaning of this amendment is still developing within the Supreme Court's decisions.

1. General Considerations

The United States of America has a poor record, comparatively speaking, when it comes to the ratification of human rights treaties, be they universal or regional in character. They say, in a metaphoric way, that Americans might be deprived of their constitutional rights by human rights treaties. We will understand by examining the U.S. Supreme Court judicial activity, why the American's belief in the U.S. Constitution prevails.

There is growing evidence that many Supreme Court decisions are in harmony with public opinion. The Court is said to represent the Constitution and consequently, share the enormous prestige of that American symbol; when the Court declares laws constitutional, the prestige of the Constitution and the Court wins widespread acceptance for policies of the elected branches among those who had opposed those policies. The modern justification for judicial review is that the Supreme Court protects minority rights; on the other hand, the most controversial decisions are those protecting rights not mentioned in the Constitution (i.e.: the rights to contract or to privacy, especially abortion and contraception). The procedural rights of criminal defendants are also strongly protected, but these decisions reached different solutions during the Court's history. The Burger Court[1], for example, created substantial exceptions

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[1] Stephen L. Wasby, *The Supreme Court in the Federal Judicial System*, Fourth Edition, Nelson-Hall Publishers, Chicago,1993, p.13 and the following pp.; John B. Gates,

to the warrant requirement for searches and seizure, by permitting illegally obtained evidence to be admitted into Court if police officers believed in good faith that they had a valid warrant. The Burger Court also allowed the judicial use of a defendant's statements made when some legal warnings were incomplete. The Rehnquist Court found no illegal search or seizure in mandatory drug testing, even in the absence of probable cause that individuals were using drugs. The rights to remain silent and to have counsel were also weakened.

2. *The Fourth Amendment*

The Fourth Amendment safeguards U.S. citizens from unreasonable search and seizure by government officials. It was included in the Bill of Rights as a direct result of the British use of writs of assistance in the American colonies. These general warrants allowed for arbitrary searches and seizures of person and property and they proliferated in the years preceding the American Revolution; at that time, they were issued to seize contraband smuggled into the colonies in violation of acts of Parliament. These acts imposed tariffs and duties on imports.

According to the Fourth Amendment, "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects against unreasonable search and seizure, shall not be violated and no Warrants shall issue but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation and particularly describing the place to be searched and the persons or things to be seized".

The framers of the Bill of Rights insisted on specific language to ensure that "probable cause" existed and the name, place and things identified. The warrant must issue from a neutral magistrate, a disinterested third party between the citizen and the law enforcement officer (nowadays, the police officer).

The demand for the Bill of Rights amendments came largely from the state constitutional ratifying conventions[2]. The delegates to the Maryland convention, for example, said that the adoption of the Fourth Amendment was necessary because a free people "must be provided a constitutional check effective" to safeguard the citizens against the issuance of general warrants. Many state delegates agreed to the views of Sir William Blackstone expressed in the "*Commentaries*" that general warrants were illegal. The idea was to balance

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Charles A. Johnson, *The American Courts, A Critical Assessment*, Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1991, p. 17.
[2] Peter G. Renstrom, *Constitutional Law and Young Adults*, second edition, California-Colorado-Oxford-England,1996, p. 193.

the personal privacy and the legitimate government interest in effective law enforcement on the other and the principial means of limiting such governmental power was the warrant process.

A warrant is an order issued by a court authorizing the arrest of someone or the search of a specific location and thereby allowing an official government intrusion into personal privacy.

The internal Romanian law considers this legal intrusion not as a governmental one, but as a judicial one; in Romania, it belongs to a judicial authority.

The American warrant process has several components:

1. a request for a warrant must establish *probable cause* that the person to be arrested is linked to a criminal act or that the location to be searched is likely to contain particular seizable items;

2. a warrant can be obtained only *from the appropriate authority*, which is a neutral and detached decisionmaker;

3. the warrant must *describe in relative detail* the person to be arrested or the items to be sought in a search;
Each of these components is examined below.

4. the search warrant *has to be executed within a reasonable period of time*.

3. The Warrant and the Probable Cause Requirements

Looking closely at the Fourth Amendment, it can be noticed that the Amendment is silent as to how the "Reasonableness Clause "and the "Warrant Clause" interact. Hence, there are two competing approaches in order to determine which clause should be considered the most important[3]. The first assumes that the warrant clause is the predominant one; according to this view, the U.S. Supreme Court emphasized that the warrantless searches and seizure could be *reasonable* only if the state could produce a very good justification (usually based on *exigent* circumstances) as to why obtaining the warrant was not possible.

According to the second opinion, "the central inquiry under the Fourth Amendment [is] the reasonableness in all circumstances of the particular governmental invasion of a citizen's personal security. "On this view, the utility of the Warrant Clause is to describe the elements of a valid warrant.

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[3] Wayne R. La Fave, Jerold H. Israel, Criminal Procedure, Second Edition, West Publishing Co., St. Paul, Minn., 1992, p. 138; Charles H. Whitebread, Cristopher Slobogin, Criminal Procedure, An Analysis of Cases and Concepts, Third Edition, Westbury New-York, The Foundation Press,Inc., 1993, p. 129.

There is considerable historical support for this second version of the Fourth Amendament; the Supreme Court has long expressed a preference for the use of arrest warrants and search warrants.

In order to obtain a judicial impartiality, only the warrant can make "informed and deliberate determinations" on the issue of probable cause.

4. *Probable Cause*

The first element necessary to secure an arrest or search warrant is a level of evidence required to convince a neutral third party (a judge or magistrate) to issue a warrant. The level of evidence needed is not as substantial as the evidence to prove guilt; it has only to separe a bona fide criminal suspect from the public in general. This is called making a "prima facie" case, which claims that it may be sufficient without further support or evaluation.

Probable cause relates to reasonable inferences, not to technical judgments based on rigid requirements.

A separate issue that is to be determined is: what level of certainty must the police have before they conduct a search[a]; the only level mentioned in the amendament discussed is the probable cause. Some Supreme Court decisions have recognized that some searches are "*reasonable*" even the probable cause was indefinite.

In order to determine whether a level of suspicion lower that probable cause is permissive, we have to evaluate several factors: the intrusiveness of the search, the nature of the harm being investigated, the difficulty of detecting the harm if probable cause is required and the extent to which a probable cause requirement would disrupt smooth government functioning. For instance, according to the Supreme Court, the alcohol and drug testing of railway workers is less intrusive and violative of expectations of privacy than many other types of searches; the harm caused by drug and alcohol is substantial and such impairment would be difficult to detect if individualized suspicion were required.

The considerations establishing probable cause were clearly described by the U.S. Supreme Court in Draper v. United States (1959).

J. Draper was arrested in Chicago by a federal agent who had not seen him commit any criminal offence. The agent had been told by a "reliable" informant that he would be arriving in Chicago by train. He arrested J. Draper at the railroad station where the officer recognized Draper from the physical description provided by the informant. A search conducted to his arrest for

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[a] Charles H. Whitebread, Cristopher Slobogin, quoted op., p. 130.

holding heroin. Draper was convicted on narcotics charges, with the heroin used a evidence at his trial.

With only Justice W. Douglas dissenting, the Supreme Court upheld the search. The critical question for the Court was whether the apprehending officer had probable cause to make the arrest. The Court emphasized that the evidence standard is quite different from that needed to prove guilt. The Court said "we deal with probabilities" that are "not technical...[but] are the factual and practical considerations of everyday life on which reasonable and prudent man, not legal technicians, act". The arresting officer had found the informant to be reliable in the past and the officer "would have been derelict in his duties" had he not pursued the information. The Court suggested that a standard of probable cause exist where sufficient reasonably trustworthy information is known to authorities for "warrant a man of reasonable caution in the belief that an offence has been or is being committed". So, without a warrant, the arrest of Draper was valid and the search of his person incident to the arrest produced admissible evidence.

Allowable arrest and search incident to arrest, without a warrant, depend upon whether the arresting officer had cause to act. An officer is entitled to consider such information as being available, in determining whether he has probable cause within the parameters of the Fourth Amendment.

The case we examined provides the perspective that a warrantless arrest and search are legally permitted if probable cause exist (and the officer is the only one entitled to consider it), although an arrest or search is a governmental intrusion upon personal privacy and although a warrant can authorize the intrusion.

The case establishes also that probable cause is not drawn from technical or rigid legal requirements. Although the neutral third party (the magistrate) is excluded, the level of evidence is rather low; probable cause does not require support conclusive of guilt; it is based upon probabilities.

5. Informants and Probable Cause

Intriguing probable cause issues can arise through the use of informants, as shown in Draper case[5]. These information can be used to support an attempt to establish probable cause in the warrant process and also to further an investigation. Because the information obtained from an informant is tipically represented by another person through an affidavit, it is hearsay information. Hearsay may be used only if: the informant is reliable, the

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[5] Peter G. Renstrom, quoted op., p. 195 and the following p.

information is credible and some corroborative evidence exist to support the substance of the data. When the informant is unnamed or anonymus, additional supportive evidence may be required.

In Massachusetts v. Upton (1984), the U.S. Supreme Court held that the totality of circumstances standard is appropriate in determining probable cause for a warrant based on information provided by an informant.

This case is representative for the Burger Court's reformulation of the judicial policy relative to the use of informant information in the warrant process.

George Upton was convicted of several offences in a trial in which evidence obtained through a search based on informant information was admitted. The Massachusetts Supreme Court reversed Upton's conviction and ruled that the affidavit supporting the warrant that authorized the search was defective. The affidavit did not establish probable cause based on the two-prong test established in Aguilar v. Texas (1964). Massachusetts appealed the reversal and the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the initial conviction.

The U.S. Supreme Court emphasized that the probable cause requirement could be maintained through a "totality of circumstances" approach. The two-prong test required first that the affidavits submitted in support of warrants, establish the means by which the means by which the informant came to know the information, the so called basis of knowledge prong. The other requirement was that the affidavit, establish either the general veracity of the informant, or the specific reliability in a particular case. In Upton case, the Court chose to move away from both requirements; the Burger-Court rejected the two-prong test as "*hypertechnical* and divorced from" the factual and practical considerations of everyday life on which reasonable and prudent man, not legal technicians act". The Court replaced the two-prong test, with a totality of circumstances approach more in keeping with the practical, common-sense decisions, demanded of judicial officers granting warrants. This kind of analysis permits flexibility and the "excessively technical dissection" of informant tips must be abandoned. The previous technique (the two-prong test) allowed undue attention to isolated or independent issues. The new one, which is a "more deferential standard of review", permits the magistrate to put together pieces of evidence, in a general way, in order to support his or her decision.

By "Upton", the U.S. Supreme Court abandoned the stricter standard regarding this kind of information, existing since the mid 1960's.

The United States v. Harris (1971) allowed the modifying of the previous decision. The Court ruled that the reputation of the person to be searched could be used to support the warrant request. In addition, the "Harris" decision held that the previous receipt of reliable information was not required

to demonstrate an informant's reliability. This ruling reinterpreted "Aguilar" by assigning weight to a suspect's reputation and by deferring to the experience and knowledge of police officers in assessing the credibility of information from informants.

Illinois v. Gates (1983) continued the modification of "Aguilar" standards. The Court totally rejected the two-prong test, and the totality of circumstances approach of "Gates" and "Upton" is said to be more flexible and "will be better archive the accommodation of public and private interests that the Fourth Amendment requires".

One of the key issues is how much information is needed to establish reasonable suspicion. In Alabama v. White (1990), the Court ruled that an anonymus tip, if sufficiently supported by independent evidence, could provide reasonable suspicion. Reasonable suspicion "is dependend upon both the content of information possessed by the police and its degree of reliability". In "White", police were able to corroborate significant aspects of the informer's tip, which in turn, imparted a degree of reliability to the other allegation. The tip contained a "range of details" related not only to" easily obtained facts and conditions existing at the time of the tip" but also to "future of third parties ordinarily not easily predicted". This information of future conduct "demonstrated inside information" and a "special familiarity" with the suspect's activities. Such familiarity made it reasonable for police to belive that a person "with acces to such information is likely to also have access to reliable information about individual's illegal activities".

6. Neutral Magistrate

The second element of the warrant process involves the neutral judicial officer. He has authority to issue warrant based on probable cause. The need for placing the probable cause determination in the hands of such an official, with no interest in the outcome of the case, is evident from Coolidge v. New Hampshire (1971). During an investigation of Edward Coolidge's home, some evidence was obtained without a search warrant. After his arrest, following warrantless seizure of guns and other evidence, a warrant to search his automobile was obtained by the state. Both warrants (the arrest and search one) had been issued by the state attorney general acting as a justice of the peace, a practice permitted under state law. Prior to issuing the warrants, the attorney general had supervised the police investigation of the case and he served as chief prosecutor at Coolidge's trial.

The U.S. Supreme Court concluded that the warrants issued were irreparably flawed. The Fourth Amendment offers protection by requiring that

inferences from evidence "are drawn by neutral and detached magistrates instead of being judged by the officer engaged in the often competitive enterprise of ferrenting out crime". The Court emphasized that the executive branch officials must be categorically disqualified from making warrant judgements because "prosecutors and police simply cannot be asked to maintain the requisite neutrality with regard to their own investigation".

Here we notice first that the Romanian internal law places the prosecutors within the judicial authority, not within the executive branch. Second, the Romanian prosecutors are endowded by law to issue these kinds of warrants. This is a question of impartiality and there are a lot of arguments in favour of a legislative modification so that these powers should be given to an independent magistrate.

The Court said that since the attorney general could not be regarded as the "neutral and detached magistrate required by the Constitution, the search stands on no firmer ground than if there had been no warrant at all".

The Romanian law permits the warrantless search and seizure in some particular situations: when the person to be searched agrees in written form to such an activity (there are voices who do not admit this warrant exception and there are, strong arguments too) and when there is a flagrant offence.

The U.S. Supreme Court held that a judge may compromise neutrality by participating *in the execution* of the warrant. In Lo - Ji Sales v. New York (1979), after a judge issued an open warrant, he accompanied the police in the execution of the warrant and listed on the warrant additional seized items that he determined to be obscene. The Court unanimously condamned the practice, arguing that it was difficult to discern "when he was acting as a neutral and detached judicial officer and when he was one with the police and prosecutors in the executive seizure".

7.   *Warrant Particularity*

Finally, the Fourth Amendment requires the warrant to be specific. It reflects the intense feelings held by the authors of *the Bill of Rights* about invasion of privacy committed under the authority of "*general warrant*" common in eighteen- century Britain.

The references to the person who is to be searched, made in the warrants, are to allow a reasonably reliable identification of the person.

The particularity issue was essential in Ybarra v. Illinois (1979). Ybarra was a customer at a tavern that underwent a warrant-authorized search. The warrant specified the tavern and the bartender as subjects of the search. In executing their duties, the officers performed a "cursory weapon search" on all

tavern patrons under provision of Illinois Law. The officer who frisked Ybarra "felt a cigarette pack with objects in it" but did not remove the packet from Ybarra's pocket. The officer, eventually returned to Ybarra, removed the packet and found heroin. Ybarra was subsequently convicted of possession of a controlled substance.

The U.S. Supreme Court reversed the conviction. Illinois attempted to justify the search on two basis. First, the state contended that the follow-up search was sufficient as an outgrowth of a reasonable frisk. The Court rejected this argument saying that "the state is unable to articulate any specific fact that would have justified the police officer at the scene in even suspecting that Ybarra was armed and dangerous".

Illinois second argument was to justify the search as included in the warrant issued for the search of the bar and bartender. The Court rejected the argument emphasizing that "a person's mere propinquity to others independently suspected of criminal activity does not give the right to probable cause to search that person".

It is necessary to focus on an individual to effect a search. "A search or seizure of a person must be supported by probable cause particularized with respect to that person".

The "armed and dangerous suspicion" is the only exception from the warrant particularity; in the absence of any warrant reference to people, on officer must have a reasonable suspicion that a person encountered in a search is armed and dangerous. Such suspicion would permit a weapons frisk. In the "Ybarra", no reasonable inference of danger was said to exist.

8. Stop-and-Frisk

The stop-and-frisk is a limited detention of a suspicious person accompanied by a cursory weapons search. It occurs without warrant and is undertaken when probable cause to arrest does not exist. The action is based on an officer's reasonable suspicion that a crime is occurring or is about to occur.

The definitive ruling on stop-and-frisk is Terry v. Ohio (1968). The major importance of this case is that it distinguishes stop from arrests and frisks from full searches.

Under "Terry", even situations lacking probable cause may be appropriate for the preventive action of a temporary stop and a cursory weapons search. If the frisk yields a weapon, custodial arrest with a full search may follow.

In "Terry", a police officer observed two men, later joined by a third, acting "suspiciously". Specifically, the officer felt the men were "*casing*" a

particular store. Upon receiving an unsatisfactory response to his request for identification, he frisked the men. John Terry was found to have a gun in his possession and was subsequently convicted for carrying a concelead weapon.

The U.S. Supreme Court held that the officer had no "probable cause" to search Terry fully. So, the Court distinguished between a firsk and a full search, as it follows:

In the Court's view, the officer was entitled to conduct a cursory search for weapons; such a search is "protective" and although it constitutes an intrusion upon the sanctity of the person", the intrusion is briefer and more limited than the full search interference. The frisk is justified by the need to discover weapons that may be used.

Thus, when an officer "observes unusual conduct which leads him reasonably to conclude in light of his experience that criminal activity may be afoot", where he identifies himself as a police officer and where "nothing in the initial stages of the encounter serves to dispel his reasonable fear for his own or others' safety", he is entitled to conduct a cursory search.

"Terry" is very important because provides law enforcement authorities with the capability, but first of all with the duty, of executing preventive actions.

A full search is allowed only if the cursory search yields a weapon, which would lead to a custodial arrest.

The "sufficient reasonable suspicion" was defined by the U.S. Supreme Court in Sibron v. New York (1968). The Court disallowed a stop-and-frisk because the officer could not demonstrate sufficient reasonable suspicion; there was no clear reason to infer that Sibron was armed at the time of the stop or that he presented a danger to the searching officer. From the Court point of view, the search of Sibron was distinct from the frisk of Terry because it was a search for evidence. According to the U.S. Constitution, a warrant is necessary when the search is for evidence and not for weapons. The absence of focused suspicions in "Sibron" was similar to that in "Ybarra".

In 1972, The Burger Court[6] permitted a frisk based upon an informal tip as opposed to an officer's own observations. Five years later, the Court held that an officer could order a lawfully detained driver out of his or her automobile. But once that the driver is out, the "Terry" standard must be respected. Considerations for an officer's safety justifies asking a driver to leave the car and if cause exists to proceed with a frisk, a pat-down is permissible.

In 1983, "Terry" standard was extended again in " Michigan Long", in which the Court allowed a protective search of the passenger compartment of a

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[6] Stephen W. Wasby, *quoted op.*, p. 21.

stopped car. The Court ruled that "Terry" need not to be read as restricting the preventive search to the person of the detained suspect. This kind of search is permitted as long as the police poses an objectively reasonable belief that the suspect is potentially dangerous.

9. Exception to the Warrant Requirement

The main problem associated with searches and seizures stems from police failure to obtain a warrant before taking action[7].

On numerous occasions, the warrant process simply cannot be completed before an arrest or search, but failure to poses a warrant does not necessarily prelude a legally sufficient arrest or search. The circumstances under which the action is taken determine whether the search or arrest is reasonable according to the Fourth Amendment.

Warrant exceptions relate – in various ways – to emergency or exigent situations. An exigent situation make normal warrant process impractical, if not impossible.

The search of automobiles is included in an exigent situation (because of a vehicle's mobility).

If an arrest or search takes place inside a person's residence, it is "presumptively unreasonable" without a warrant. When the underlying offence is minor, it would be virtually impossible to demonstrate an exigency for a warrantless home arrest (Welsh Wisconsin, 1984).

In Payton v. New York (1980), the U.S. Supreme Court held that a warrantless search of a person's home was prohibited unless both probable cause and exigent circumstances existed.

What constitutes exigent circumstances? The physical entry of the home is the chief evil against which the wording of the Fourth Amendament is directed. The nature of the offence is an important factor in evaluating exigent circumstances. The exception is thus limited to investigations of serious crimes. In "Welsh", the only potential emergency claimed, was the need to ascertain the blood alcohol level.

The intoxicated as a noncriminal, civil forfeiture offence was viewed as reflective of the state's limited interest in taking the offender into custody. Given the state's minimal interest, the warrantless home arrest could not be upheld simply because evidence of the petitioner's blood-alcohol level might have dissipated while the police obtained a warrant.

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[7] Peter G. Renstrom, *quoted op.*, p. 203-208.

The matter of how much authority officials poses to enter private homes to make a warrantless arrest has always been troublesome. In "Payton", the Court held that it was to exist both probable cause and emergency. In "Welsh", the Court attempted to clarify the nature of an emergency: if the state classifies an offence as minor, the warrant is necessary.

The question in New York v. Harris (1990)[8] was whether or not the existence of probable cause and administration of the "Miranda" warnings might overcome the taint of an unlawful arrest. Police had probable cause to believe that Harris had commited murder. They enter his house without a warrant and advised him of his rights. Harris than confessed the crime. He was arrested and taken to the police station where he was again read his rights. He then signed a written confession. The U.S. Supreme Court permitted the use of those statements made outside the home, despite the defective arrest.

In order to determine if a seizure is legal or illegal, it has to be defined when an arrest actually begins and The Fourth Amendment is applied. California v. Hodari D. (1991), gave the Court this opportunity. According to the U.S. Supreme Court, the arrest occurs when a person is restrained by application of physical force or when a person submits to the "assertion of authority" by an officer. This is the moment when the individual reaches the Fourth Amendment protection, the way that the **U.S. Constitution stipulates it and the Supreme Court interprets it.**

10.   *The reasonable expectation of privacy*

Not all the police officers activities which may appear like a search are under the incidence of the Fourth Amendment[9]. For such activities, the Police is not obliged to have a search warrant.

The first exception referes to the fact that practically the intrusion does not occur in a "constitutionally protected area". The second exception refers to a subjective element, namely to the citizen's "reasonable expectation of privacy". This expectation of privacy becomes "reasonable" only when the society validates it accordingly. The above mentioned, are to be found in Katz case, which has a great importance for it marks a movement toward a redefinition of the Fourth Amendment scope. It's main idea consist in the followings: "... the Fourth Amendment protects people, not places. What a person knowingly

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[8] G. Alan Tarr, Mary Cornelia Aldis Porter, *State Supreme Courts in State and Nations*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1988, p. 157.

[9] Wayne R. La Fave, Jerold H. Israel, quoted op., p. 124; Charles H. Whitebread, Christopher Slobogin, quoted op., p. 128-137.

exposes to the public, even in his own home and office, is not a subject of the Fourth Amendment protection. But what he seeks to preserve as private, even in an area accessible to the public, *may be* constitutionally protected". In Katz case, the FBI agents overheared defendant's end of telephone conversation by attaching an electronic listening and recording device to the public phone booth, from where he was calling. The Court did not considered the public telephone booth as a constitutionally protected area, within which a person has the right of privacy.

"The plain view doctrine" authorizes seizures of illegal or evidentiary items without warrant, under certain circumstances, such as: when surveilling officers in one motel room are able to hear with the naked ear conversations occurring in the adjoining room; when an officer uses a telescopic lens of a type generally in use or the pictures taken with standard equipment are then enlarged in the development process. These statements are not valid when sophisticated equipment is used, such as a magnetometer or X-ray machine, a radiographic scanner to see inside an object, an electronic eavesdropping or wiretaping equipment to overhear conversations. There is a thin border between these kinds of electronic devices, that is why the nature of the equipment or the manner of its use may dictate a contrary conclusion.

United States v. Dionisio (1973) demonstrates that the obtaining of personal characteristics is not considered as being a search. The following situations are associated to this category: voice samples, fingerprints and handwriting samples. The Supreme Court emphasizes that "the physical characteristics of a person's voice, its tone and manner, as opposed to the content of a specific conversation, are constantly exposed to the public".

On the other hand, the warrant is needed in case of taking a blond sample or using a breathalyser, because these activities are considered as being a search. As far as a sample of hair is concerned, the Court hardly can decide whose category it belongs to.

Due to the perpetual changes within society, it is possible that the protection of the Fourth Amendament should be extended and nevertheless, the U.S. Supreme Court decisions will reflect it.

BEYOND WORDS: LOOKING INTO LINCOLN'S POLITICAL RHETORIC

SORANA STANCIU

Motto:
"How much of Lincoln is generally thought to be true? How much made up? This is an urgent question for any reader"[1]

Explanatory foreword

In spite of its motto, this paper is not a quest for revealing the truth. Since history does not consist in telling facts, but in interpreting them in order to sanctify some figures and demonize others (a vision depicted by Gian Battista Vico). I picked one of the most sanctified figures of the American history: Abraham Lincoln. In trying to explain – first to myself – why this process occurred in his case I came across a few things written on him, which might be divided into three sections:

a) the praising account: *Lincoln on Democracy* or the American Hero;
b) the counterbalancing account: *Crisis of the House Divided* or Lincoln versus Douglas, same levels, different approaches and *The Poetics of Union in Whitman and Lincoln* or different approaches from different levels;
c) the blaming account: Free Speeches in an Open Society or Lincoln viewed from a twentieth century perspective.

If all the works mentioned above are nothing but versions of truth, then it will be useless to assert the search for the ultimate truth in this paper. It does not even contain original ideas, but a mere conviction (developed after a subjective understanding of these texts) that what Lincoln's image travel through history and become a symbol was the statesman's original vision upon life in an organized society. And that kind of vision enabled a Black American to reveal – a hundred years after the Emancipation proclamation – his dream of brotherhood between the Whites and the Blacks of the United States.

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[1] Gore Vidal, *Lincoln*, Modern Library Edition, New York, 1993, p. 713.

Along the stream of thinking

Lincoln has always been regarded as a political figure, not a philosopher and he is remembered by his memorable phrases: "malice towards none", "a house divided", "a new birth of freedom", to name but a few. However, researchers have managed to link his theories with the ones belonging to some of the world's most famous thinkers. For instance, Leo Strauss made the distinction between natural right and political right (Natural Right and History) proving that the modern political philosophy has laid the foundation of modern atheistic totalitarianism (in an attempt to bridge the gap between theory and practice and in the same time replace faith with reason). Lincoln himself appealed to reason, but what he did in the first place was to set a standard of right and wrong, which had its basis in faith. So Lincoln managed "to keep the faith" in a natural right standard while making history.

And his view upon the state - as an organized system – met with the Aristotelian definition of the polis: "a partnership in a *politeid*"[2] (an organized system of laws which were governed by the same principle). Aristotle believed that " the laws [had…] to suit the *politeiai* and not the *politeiai* to suit the laws"[3] and Lincoln expressed the same idea using metaphors. He resumes the principle **liberty to all** into the **apple of gold** image while the Constitution and the Union were visualized as **the picture of silver embracing the apple**. And Lincoln was of the opinion that "The picture was made *for* the apple – not the apple for the picture."[4] However, some historians argued any resemblance between Aristotle and Lincoln by saying that the Greek philosopher always thought slavery was right (while Lincoln did not). But it is also known that Aristotle had in mind the idea of an improvement through slavery, thinking that one day the slave could have been set free, being fit for living among the citizens as a citizen. And that was exactly what Lincoln meant by "internal improvement"[5] as he always thought (even if he could not always say it loud) that Black people could become citizens of the United States one day. The reason why Lincoln supported the idea of self-improvement was because he strongly believed in self-government. He pictures the achievement of self-governing as a three-stages evolution: first, people had to trust the laws and the rules of the society. When they obeyed those rules that meant that they were

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[2] Harry V. Jaffa, *Crisis of the House Divided* (An Interpretation of the Issues in the Lincoln-Douglas Debates), The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1982, p. 331.

[3] *Idem*.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 332.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 344.

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free and ready to govern themselves. Aristotle believed that virtue could be gained in the same way: from incontinence (accepting something that has been imposed) to continence (obeying something that has been accepted) up to reaching virtue (enjoying something that has been obeyed). If we applied Aristotle's terms to Lincoln's doctrine, we would team it up with the definition of virtue. In the same way, as a term of comparison, Douglas's doctrine would go further down the line resembling the idea of incontinence; not only that his idea proved to be inconsistent with the American Constitution, but Douglas himself was inconsistent with his own principles at times.

But in the same time one cannot take the virtue of the positive human law – in Lincoln's case – for the natural laws – in John Locke's case. They both believed in a state of nature, though they did not have the same reference for it. For Lincoln the state of nature was a kind of settlement for a political foundation, while for Locke the same concept was related to a pre-political form of organization on the brink of revolution. So we could resume that Lincoln saw the state of nature in a positive way as the *achievement* of justice, and that Locke saw it in a **negative** way, as a *relief* from oppression. The difference in opinion between the two set forth the apparently opposing views upon human rights. In Locke's case they were the expression of "an indefeasible desire or passion"[6] while for Lincoln they expressed "an objective state or condition in which justice [was] done"[7]. However, Lincoln did not exclude the possibility of revolution to be caused by passion, but he thought that passion had been good for the American Revolution only, but that it was not suitable for his time. What he actually did was to ask for a rational shaping of the human actions. "Passion has halped us; but can do so no more... Reason... must finish all the materials for our future support..."[8] Reaching this point, we might ask if Lincoln was not the one to be blamed for initiating a shift in American political thinking (from the **ancient faith**, though he professed it, to the **totalitarian** domination of reason). This and the awareness in Lincoln's mind about the connections stated above may be debatable. However, we know for sure that Lincoln did not reject the idea of a revolution (and a war ultimately) if it defended a good cause: "the right of revolution is never a legal right... At most, it is but a moral right when exercised for a morally justifiable cause. When exercised without such a cause revolution is no right, but simply a wicked exercise of physical power"[9]. So

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[6] Ibid., p. 328.
[7] *Idem*.
[8] *Idem*.
[9] *Lincoln on Democracy*, edited and introduced by M. M. Cuomo and H. Holzer, Harper Collins Publishers, New-York, 1990, p. 187.

everything had to make sense in a moral way in order to be accepted by Lincoln's way of thinking. That is why, for instance the **house divided** image appeared illogical to Lincoln (sharing a point of view displayed by Thomas Paine in Common Sense) and he rejected it by making very clear the distinction between good and evil. Thus Lincoln managed to demolish all the images and theories advanced by the adversaries of the Union and his direct adversaries by showing the American people and the world the way towards freedom (but a freedom within human limitations). Lincoln understood that the society he lived in imposed obstacles which could not have been overcome in his times. It is generally stated that Lincoln managed to solve the biggest crisis in the American society. Not only did he solve it, but he actually created it, although this might seem unbelievable. First of all, Lincoln did not acquire but little knowledge through an institutionalized educational system, so most of the time he had to discover alone the hidden meanings of the world around him. The struggle to understand things and people is very well presented in this confession: "I used to get irritated when anybody talked to me in a way I could not understand. I was not satisfied until I had repeated it over and over until I had put it in a language plain enough as I thought, for anybody I knew to comprehend. This was a kind of passion to me... I am never easy now when I am handling a thought, till I have bounded it South and bounded it East, and bounded it West"[10]. Thus, for Lincoln an image like **a house divided against itself** stated a contradiction. For Lincoln's mind things, which did not make sense, could not possibly stand. As one of his understanding criterion was to simplify, he reduced opposed ideas to self-evident distinction (between good and evil) which automatically imposed a restriction on choice. But Lincoln was careful enough to choose his supporting examples from among symbols that could not be contested. For instance, he chose the image of the Almighty "God cannot be for and against the same thing in the same time"[11]. The Founding Fathers constituted another precious reference as they "became archetypes of the hidden – meaning intending will of the singular person"[12]. Somehow, in Lincoln's case the effort of understanding the world always met his inner need for self-assertion, till the self and the outer world could not be separated anymore. Lincoln managed to sustain his inner crisis through an obliterate rhetoric ("Both may be and one must be wrong"[13]) which contributed to the augmentation of the conflict.

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[10] *The American Renaissance Reconsidered*, edited by W.B. Michaels and D.E. Pease, The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1985, p. 205.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 187.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 205.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 187.

Main issues and themes

a. Founding Fathers

Lincoln based all his ideas on the Declaration of Independence regarding the opinions of the Founding Fathers as a starting point in building his theories and speeches 9thus the fathers' indications became a guide for Lincoln's thinking). For Lincoln the declaration was not only the outcome of a tension between equality and consent 9he applied the principle when defending the Black peoples' rights) but it also furnished a political obligation for the future rulers to respect its principles. "For Lincoln there was nothing more substantially important that whether Americans lived their lives believing that all men are created equal or they did not. For Lincoln the material prosperity of America was chiefly valuable as the external sign of inner spiritual health – the qualitative superiority of American life – was inextricably and inexorably linked to the tenets of the Declaration of Independence."[14] Lincoln understood why the Declaration did not make appeal to the laws of Britain, but to laws common to all humans: "rights [...] conceived as properties of man in virtue of his nature and hence unalterable by any mortal power"[15]. If they wanted to be free, they had to escape the unjust authority first. That was the example to be followed, thought Lincoln, (when dealing with the Black people, even if they were not mentioned in the Declaration) because the Declaration was also a promise that some day, in the future, people would have gained their rights. "They meant to set up a standard *maxim* for a free society, which should be familiar to all, and revered by all; constantly looked to, constantly labored for, and even though never perfectly attained, constantly approximated, and therefore constantly spreading and deepening its influence, and augmenting the happiness and value of life to all people of all colors everywhere"[16]. In fact, Lincoln was convinced that the political institutions – in order to survive – had to subscribe to the same **political religion**; Lincoln imagined that kind of new faith as a mixture of Biblical elements and American history.

That is how he envisaged the idea of salvation through following a divine model: "The Savior, I suppose, did not expect that any human creature could be as perfect as the Father in Heaven; but he said, 'As your Father in Heaven is perfect, be ye also perfect.' He set that up as a *standard*, and he who did most towards reaching that standard, attained the highest degree of moral

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[14] Harry V. Jaffa, *op. cit.*, p. 304.
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 318.
[16] *Ibid.*, p. 316.

perfection. So I say in relation to the principle that all men are created equal, let it be nearly reached as we can. If we cannot give freedom to every creature, let us do nothing that will impose slavery upon any other creature"[17].

But Lincoln did not just approve to the things stated in the Declaration, but he even took further some of its indications. If presumably Jefferson's advice was: if you do not want to be a slave, avoid to be a master, then Lincoln's assumptions would have been: if you want freedom for yourself, then you have to wish freedom for others.

b. Upon Slavery

The debate upon slavery between Lincoln and Douglas (Lincoln's opponent for the senatorship of Illinois in 1858) was focused around two main themes: free government and popular sovereignty. Lincoln kept on asserting that free government was incompatible with the idea of slavery, while Douglas (the **author** of the Kansas-Nebraska Act[18]) stressed upon the idea that each state had the right to determine its own institutions. Douglas believed in "a virtually *unrestrained* right of local majorities to determine the rights of minorities and to determine these minority rights to the interests of the majority"[19]. But Douglas **forgot** to relate to a principle mentioned in Jefferson's first inaugural: "though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail, that will, to be rightful, must be *reasonable*"[20]. In this respect Lincoln was of the mid that although it was not "for a free government to legislate true opinion with regard to the fundamental principles of civil liberties, [it was] certainly the task of statesmanship to create conviction in the minds and hearts of the citizens with respect to these principles. And that man [was] no friend of free government who [flattered] the people into believing that whatever they [wished] to have [was] right and that he [would] abide by their demands, whatever they [were]"[21]. But Douglas did not really care about the condition of the slave. He pictured slavery as a way (profitable in some parts of the States) to make economy work, so there was no higher (we should say human) principle to approve his conviction, but the interest of the most powerful ones who were entitled to rule over the weak ones. Douglas's economical policy had its basis into the deeply rooted idea that

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[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 316-17.
[18] Through this Act (1854) the question of slavery in free territories was to be established by the settlers themselves.
[19] Harry V. Jaffa, *op. cit.*, p. 304.
[20] *Idem.*
[21] *Ibid.*, p. 305.

"there is no right of action, but self-interest"[22], a principle which enabled him to assert that "slavery is right where an overwhelming majority desires it and wrong where they reject it"[23]. So while Douglas believed that slavery was wrong where it was not needed, Lincoln believed that "slavery [was] wrong everywhere"[24]. Lincoln applied "the deontological distinction between right or wrong with the rhetorical authority of logic"[25] when giving the following reply to Douglas: "He says he don't care whether [slavery] is voted up or voted down/ He may say he don't care whether an indifferent thing is voted up or down, but he must logically have a choice between a right thing and a wrong thing"[26]. But Douglas has never seen anything wrong with slavery or, in other words, he was convinced that the White people had the right to oppress the Black people, because they were superior. "The civilized world have always held, that when any race of men have shown themselves so degraded, by ignorance, superstition, cruelty and barbarism [see Greeks versus Barbarians in Antiquity] as to be utterly incapable of governing themselves, they must, in the nature of things, be governed by others"[27]. But Lincoln set a higher standard. He went beyond laws and described the free government, as a structure based on a reasonable will, having its limitations in ruling and **being ruled** (which should have never been the case anyway). Lincoln portrayed the political ruler as a guide who always acted according to an already set moral principle. "God did not place good and evil before man, telling him to make his choice. On the contrary, he did tell him there was a tree, of the fruit of which, he should not eat, upon pain of certain death"[28]. Lincoln thought it was his duty to guide **blind** men, to tell them where the wrong side was, so they could go to the right one. For Lincoln slavery was definitely the wrong way to go. Meanwhile Douglas fought had to prove that slavery was right and when he did ask for equality, what he really meant was " 'equality for equals only, 'and he believed that Lincoln's interpretation, by giving to unequal, was subversive of all order and justice. If Negroes might not justly be enslaved where their inferior natures or the interests of society required, they might not justly be denied any other equal right"[29]. Douglas had as a goal an economical policy, while Lincoln started a real

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[22] *Ibid.*, p. 30.
[23] *Ibid.*, p. 275.
[24] *Ibid.*, p. 276.
[25] *American Renaissance…*, *op. cit.*, p. 206.
[26] *Idem*.
[27] Harry V. Jaffa, *op. cit.*, p. 32.
[28] *Ibid.*, p. 306.
[29] *Ibid.*, p. 33.

"doctrinal moral crusade"[30] attacking popular sovereignty first: "I can not but hate. I hate it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself. I hate it because it deprives our republican example of its influence in the world – enables the enemies of free institutions, with plausibility, to taunt us as hypocrites – causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity, and especially because it forces so many really good men amongst ourselves into an open war with the very fundamental principles of civil liberty – criticizing the Declaration of Independence, and insisting there is no right principle of action but *self-interest*"[31]. Lincoln trapped Douglas by his own words, demolishing his opponent's demonstration. "If any one *man*, [Douglas said] choose to enslave another, no third man shall be allowed to object"[32]. Lincoln proved that Douglas was wrong in defending slavery, because that way he included (by specifically referring to **any man**) the Whites and the logical conclusion was that slavery could come over the **superior** race as well.

"If A. can prove, however conclusively, that he may, of right, enslave B. – why may not B. snatch the same argument, and prove equally, that he may enslave A. ?

Your say A. is white, and B. is black. It is *color*; then; the lighter having the right to enslave the darker? Take care. By this rule, you are to be slave to the first man you meet, with a fairer skin than your own.

You do not mean *color* exactly? – You mean the whites are intelectually the superiors of the blacks, and, therefore have the right to enslave them? Take care again. By this rule, you are to be slave to the first man you meet, with an intellect superior to your own.

But, say you, it is a question of interest; and, if you can make your *interest*, you have the right to enslave another. Very well. And if he can make it his interest, he has the right to enslave you"[33]. It seems that this fine argument against the so called intellectual superiority of the White people was inspired by one of Henry Clay's letters: "I know there are those who draw an argument in favor of slavery from the alleged intellectual inferiority of the black race. Whether this arguments is founded in fact or not, I will not now stop to inquire, but merely say that if it proves anything at all, it proves too much. It proves that among the white races of the world any one might properly be enslaved by any other which had made greater advances in civilization. And, if this rule applies to nations there is no reason why it should not apply to individuals; and it

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[30] *Ibid.*, p. 37.
[31] *Ibid.*, p. 36.
[32] *Ibid.*, p. 283.
[33] *Ibid.*, p. 336.

might easily be proved that the wisest man in the world could rightfully reduce all other men and women to bondage"[34].

Since the spreading of slavery was what Lincoln feared most (and historical facts proved its imminence; it is enough to mention the Lecompton Constitution[35] or the Dred Scott Decision[36]) he found a logical way of relying on a moral principle when issuing a law. But Lincoln was not only an honest man, but also a shrewd politician. He knew that he could not ask (and he indeed accepted that he did not want to) for equality between White and Black people. So he applied the principle of "distributive justice [or] proportional equality"[37]. He agreed on the fact that the Black deserved little, so all that he wanted for the Blacks was that they were given the basic rights: life, freedom and pursuit of happiness. He never asked that the Blacks be given the right to vote or to mix with the Whites: "I have no purpose to introduce political and social equality between the white and black races. There is a physical difference between the two, which in my judgement will probably forever forbid their living together upon the footing of perfect equality, and inasmuch as it becomes as necessity that there must be a difference, I, as well as Judge Douglas, am in favor of the race to which I belong, having the superior position. I have never said anything to the contrary, but I hold that notwithstanding all this, there is no reason in the world why the Negro is not entitled to all the natural rights enumerated in the Declaration of Independence, the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. I hold that he is as much entitled to these as the white man. I agree with Judge Douglas he is not my equal in many respects – certainly not in color, perhaps in moral and intellectual endowment. But in the right to eat the bread, without leave of anybody else, which his own hand earns, he is my equal of Judge Douglas, and the equal of every living man"[38].

But we have to have in mind that his goal was to make sure that slavery would disappear and in the same time he knew that equality for all was

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[34] *Ibid.*, p. 337.

[35] a fraudulent Constitution adopted in Kansas in 1858; this Constitution did not allow the emancipation of slaves.

[36] The decision of the Supreme Court (1857) which stated that the Congress had no power to prohibit slavery in the territories; since a slave was no citizen, he remained a slave despite his previous residence in a free territory and in the same time he had no standing point.

[37] Harry V. Jaffa, *op. cit.*, p. 307.

[38] *Ibid.*, pp. 382-83.

unattainable, so he had "to accept that lesser form of justice which tempers the demand for equality with the demand for consent"[39].

c. Upon Democracy

"As I would not be a *slave*, so I would not be a *master*: This expresses my idea of *democracy*. Whatever differs from this, to the extent of the difference, is not democracy[40]. With this statement we go back to the idea of free government: one cannot rule and one cannot abide when pleasure only is taken into account; if this happens, then we cannot talk of free government anymore, but about despotism. In order to preserve the state whose government was based on moral principles Lincoln had to keep the balance between equality (among all people in the country) and consent (of the majority), trying to approach them without abandoning either. Once the Blacks set free, he dealt with the problem of their integration into the society in a democratic (criticized later by some historians) way: "What next ? Free them, and make them politically and socially equals? My own feelings will not admit of this; and if mine would, we well know that those of the great mass of white people will not. Whether this feelings accords with justice and sound judgement, is not the sole question, if indeed, it is any part of it. A universal feeling, whether well or ill founded, can not be safely disregarded[41]. Since Lincoln was aware of the fact that "unanimity [was] impossible... [and] the rule of the minority as a permanent arrangement [was] wholly inadmissible"[42] he relied on a "majority less than a whole"[43] which he knew it would govern in a democratic way; "by a regulative principle external to itself which by its measures produces freedom in the form of resistance to the will structured to conserve its own nature"[44].

d. Upon Crisis

Lincoln's merits do not consist only in the liberation of the Black slaves, but in his power to keep the Union together when faced with the major crisis that the American nation has ever experienced (it is not the question here whether we talk about a real crisis of the image of a crisis projected over the American nation). "For Lincoln the crisis of Union repeated the enigma of his

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[39] *Idem.*
[40] *Ibid.*, p. 306.
[41] *Ibid.*, p. 376.
[42] *American Renaissance..., op. cit.*, p. 190.
[43] *Ibid.*, p. 206.
[44] *Idem.*

own socialization. His legendary honesty specifies him as a man of his word [and] the legitimization of his personhood (the crisis of union) involves the justification of a mode of discourse, not merely a particular case of practice"[45]. And that mode of discourse aimed always at influencing the public opinion, as he believed that public opinion had to be changed first in order to change the government afterwards. For instance, in order to influence public opinion Lincoln appealed to the Constitution, appearing to those listening to him as the true defender of the integrity of a nation. "In view of the Constitution and the laws the Union is unbroken; and, to the extent of my ability, I shall take care, as the Constitution itself expressly enjoys me, that the laws of the Union be faithfully executed in all the States"[46]. As public opinion is always formed around some kind of sentiment, Lincoln related to peoples; sensitivity, regardless of their political colors or beliefs. In one of his speeches addressing to the people from the South, Lincoln brought up a few elements 9the banning of slave trade from Africa, the presence of free Negroes and the contempt the Southerners felt towards the slave dealer) meant to prove to the southerners that deep inside *they knew* that slavery was wrong. "In all these cases it is your sense of justice, and human sympathy, continually telling you, that the poor Negro has some natural right to himself – that those who deny it, and make mere merchandise of him, deserve kicking, contempt and death"[47]. Lincoln approached secession and war in a similar way. Secession was viewed as a transgressive exercise (destroying the social bond between North and South) on behalf of a perversion of the affirmation of personhood (slavery), so the war to restore Union was (in Lincoln's view) perfectly justified and the people who died gave their lives up for a noble meaning. He referred to war as "that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion"[48]. Since "life is given up for meaning [...] and the interest of all persons [...] is exchanged for a rational sociability based in a hierarchy of ends of which the highest term is external to the person, and not within his power of choice"[49], nobody should have fighting against citizens of his own country.

But most importantly, Lincoln survived the crisis (even if it was not for too long) and he managed to project his views upon the future, asking not only for reconstruction, but also for reconciliation.

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[45] *Ibid.*, pp. 185-86.
[46] *Ibid.*, p. 206.
[47] Harry V. Jaffa, *op. cit.*, p. 312.
[48] *American Renaissance...*, *op. cit.*, p. 191.
[49] *Idem.*

"Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would *make* war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would *accept* war rather than let it perish. And the war came.

One eight of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the Southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union, even by war; while the government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it. Neither party expected for the war, the magnitude, or the duration, which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the *cause* of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other. [...] The prayers of both could not be answered; that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. [...]

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have born the battle, and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations"[50].

The Statesman

I left this section at the end, on purpose, because although Lincoln was the greatest writer among all the American presidents, his writing "hardly ever illuminated Lincoln the man"[51]. His only biographical sketch composed before being nominated for the presidential elections – shows a humble attitude, not resembling the vigorous display of ideas Lincoln operated in his famous speeches. "I was born [...] in Kentucky. My parents were both born in Virginia, of undistinguished families – second families, perhaps I should say. [...] My father [...] removed from Kentucky to [...] to Indiana in my eight year. We reached our new home about the times the State came in the Union. It was a wild region. [...] There I grew up. There were some schools, so called; but no qualification was ever required of a teacher, beyond '*readin*, *writin*, and *cipherin*' to the Rule of Three. [...] Of course when I came of age I did not know much. Still somehow, I could read, write and cipher to the Rule of Three; [note the

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[50] *Lincoln on Democracy, op. cit.*, pp. 341-42.
[51] *Ibid.*, p. xiv.

slightly ironical tone and the building up of the image of a self-made man] but that was all. I have not been to school since. The little advance I now have upon this store of education, I have picked up from time to time under the pressure of necessity. I was raised to farm work, which I continued till I was twenty two. At twenty one I came to Illinois. [...] Then I got to New-Salem [where I worked] as a sort of clerk in a store. Then came the Black-Hawk war; and I was elected a captain of volunteers. [...] I [...] ran for the Legislature for the same year (1832) and was beaten – the only time I have been beaten by the people. The next and three succeeding biennial elections, I was elected to the Legislature. [...] During this [...] period I have studied law, and [practiced] it. [...] Always a whig in politics, [...] I was losing interest in politics, when the repeal of the Missouri Compromise aroused me again"[52].

In all, Lincoln was more concerned about the Nation's state of being, than about displaying his personal qualities (though he had political ambitions). He thought his duty was to guide the people of America, to show them the way (a nineteenth century Moses) and most historians believe that he succeeded in proving his people and the world that he was a wise statesman who achieved the greatest measure of justice that the world in which he was acting admitted. He was also a perfect example of the **self-made man** (true obsession of the American dream) who (as his laconic autobiography shows) rose from log cabin to White House through self-improvement and ambition. He conquered a nation in torment by the power of his words, which maybe came from his **original** way of getting education. Thus he "received the implications of acculturation without interposing of mediating social forms, and related its structure directly as the structure of the world [he] intended"[53]. "He was a *novus homo*, a man impersonated by his language, the structure of whose *song of self-invention* (a recapitulation of the significant past of America, as he understood it) came in the event to be repeated as America's present, the Civil War"[54]. As he once confessed, he could not escape history, so his language (so much praised for its clarity in meaning and simplicity in form) was limited to the **institutionalized** space and time that he represented.

The revisionist historian pointed out to all his **mistakes**, accusing him of being a dictator or a mere agitator who made too much fuss about the slavery issue to drop all his claims after the war. Some historians have seen him as a

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[52] *Ibid.*, p. xiv-xivi.
[53] *American Renaissance...*, *op. cit.*, p. 185.
[54] *Ibid.*, p. 184.

"professional politician looking for votes"[55]. Nevertheless, he managed to restore rationality and morality to the American political and social environment. And that is how he has always been remembered since his tragic end.

"Inevitably, the real Lincoln has also become a victim of the irreversible passage of time. His life has entered the firm embrace of legend. The real man in large part has been subsumed by the prolonged leavening of folklore, history, and counter-history. No longer a figure of bright memory but one of the flickering past, he is partially, perhaps permanently veiled by distance and myth"[56]. A myth carried on and enriched by Walt Whitman's farewell elegy:

"Passing the visions, passing the night,
Passing unloosing the hold of my comrades' hands,
Passing the song of the hermit bird and the tallying song of my soul,
Victorious song, death's outlet song, yet varying ever-altering song"[57].

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[55] Harry V. Jaffa, *op. cit.*, p. 365.
[56] Lincoln on Democracy, *op. cit.*, p. xxx.
[57] *The Harper American Literature*, second edition, vol. 2, Harper College Collins Publishers, New York, 1993, p. 316.

ON THE MATRIX OR REMARKS ON SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF POST-INDUSTRIAL AMERICA

SATA RÉKA-ÁGATA

ABSTRACT. Starting from the cultural message of a successful American movie, the author of the paper attempts to bring into discussion several traits of postmodern America, focussing on such questions as the place of the individual in society, authenticity of human life, social alienation.

I allow myself to use the term "matrix" as the title of my essay as well as the main ground on which to formulate some questions and to try to analyze some aspects concerning the postindustrial American society, as this term seems to contain the essential features of this society both as a system and as everyday reality. The idea of denoting this modern American-type society as "the Matrix" is, however, not my original one, I first met it in a film bearing the same title. The hero of the movie, Thomas Anderson, a quite irresolute clerk of a huge business corporation, is offered the opportunity to chose between a blue pill – a deeper insight and control over his actual reality called "the Matrix" – and a red pill – a total detachment from the Matrix and incadration into the "virtual reality". He takes the red pill, gets a new name (Neo), a harsh training and rid of all his former illusions so that finally to realize he is "the One" to maintain and widespread this virtual reality. Yet it is not obvious whether he accepts this role or not, as the film ends with a picture of him still wearing the dress (the "uniform") of the virtual reality, giving a telephone-call telling something of the kind "See you!" (who?) and mingling with the people living in the Matrix.

I consider this movie very suggestive and instructive because it raises very topical questions and problems not only for the modern American but for any (kind of) society as a system, questions like: what **is** a system and how does it function?; does any actual system exist as an absolute one without any other parallel (anti)system threatening to swallow and in the same time to integrate it?; who creates it and who can say what the actually existing system is like? Can anyone step out from a system without entering another one? And even if they

can – as our hero of the movie did –, do they not find other structure, tricks, tasks, and members meant to serve the same cause of every system: to take control on not merely the former old system but also on its own constituents and establishers, the people? This means fight over dominance, this requires sacrifice(s) – usually the death of a person, the hero. The leader of the virtual reality, Morpheus does not die, and neither does Neo so the element of sacrifice somehow appears ironic and unuseful(ly unnoticed). It does so either because Neo is not the chosen one or because this virtual reality closed into a space-ship is of one of the many realities which can be swallowed up or even turn into another matrix, or because the solution(s) for a "better" world (with less illusions) are faded out and bring about no peace. But does the hero's attitude – walking away – lead him toward a new solution? It definitely does lead to a *new* solution and eventually to a new matrix, too (perhaps individualism?).

What is..."matrix" (the three dots are deliberately used here, implying that both the determinate and indeterminate articles, as well as the zero article hold, in the same time, before the word "matrix") ?

"The matrix is everywhere, you can feel it, smell it, it's in your mind to keep you away from the truth" – these are the not exactly quoted instructions Morpheus gives his new apprentice. "What truth?" "That you are the slave of your mind." This answer can well be interpreted as the main theme of the movie, also be debated upon by (cognitive) linguists and psychologists, but beyond all more or less scientific analyses, theoretical inquiry, or humanistic approaches, we are given the brief formulation of man's situation or status: that of not being able to surpass his/her own mind, limits within the given, known or still unknown natural laws. The mind allows man to survive, nay, to live in certain circumstances and in the same time it helps man to create illusions about the absoluteness (unlimitedness) of this mind.

What is... matrix? This is a question that many have asked throughout the history of mankind, and that many have felt most ardent in their own times. As Herbert Marcuse puts it the history of mankind remains the history of domination and the logic of mankind remains the logic of domination. My aim in this essay is to point out and analyze some aspects of a system in general and their manifestation in the twentieth century American society. It is not going to be a thorough criticism, only a more or less personal inquiry for which reason I rely mostly on the/some critical writings of **Herbert Marcuse** (*The Unidimensional Man,* and *Philosophical Writings*), of **Christopher Lasch** (*The Culture of Narcissism*), and of **Thorstein Veblen** (*The Theory of the Leisure Class*). Another question arises before starting any "contemplation", whether any attempt to analyze, to say nothing of whether to criticize this society is

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"premature" in the sense that we lack enough distance aphorical (in time) necessary for an objective overlook of this system that seems to be working so conveniently. On the other hand, however, the above mentioned questions appear extremely urgent to be asked (and answered) lest the need to do so would seem unnecessary at all.

The Oxford Student's Dictionary presents the term "matrix" as "1. a shaped mould into which hot metal or other material is poured to make something; 2. a substance in which a jewel, a mineral etc is found in the ground; 3. (*maths*) an organized arrangement of numbers etc; 4. (*computers*) an arrangement of information in the form of a table(3)."(Second edition, Christina Ruse, 1990, p. 393) Each meaning of the term highlights a specific aspect of the system upon which the modern American society has been built, this is why the term is felt to denote it metaphorically simplifying and substituting for the society which, in our case, is provided with definitions like: "capitalist society", "the society of abundance", "the society of consumption", "the unidimensional society" (Herbert Marcuse), or "the narcissistic society" (Christopher Lasch), or "the leisure class" (yes, a single class constituting the society, excluding the other inferior "classes"!), "the society of conspicuous consumption" (Thorstein Veblen). However, metaphorical denotation of the society as "the matrix" does not resolve the problem of thoroughly analysing a society as such, though raises further questions both about the target object to be analysed and and about the possibility of doing so. "Metaphorical thought, in itself is neither good nor bad; it is simply commonplace and inescapable. Abstractions and enormously complex situations [starting from an individual level to a more general one] are routinely understood via metaphor." (Lakoff, 1991, p.2) Or are they (not)?

The first, the third, and the fourth meanings of the "matrix" according to the Oxford Student's Dictionary imply the problem of organization, of administration understood as the precise knowledge and application of certain – physical and mathematical – rules. In this respect the philosopher Herbert Marcuse gives an elaborate and very rigorous criticism of the "capitalist" American society, a system primarily based on scientifically calculated economical cost-benefit principles. In his criticism, he presents the cultural evolution of mankind toward its actual level of social development, from a philosophical, psychological perspective. Implying much of Freud's ideas and terms, Marcuse derives this development from the split of the initial unity (Truth) into Logos (the logical, mental cognition) and Eros (the erotic, existential cognition) as consequently antagonistic elements: the element of Rationality and that of Liberty. This split thus gave birth of the discrepancy between the formal logic and the dialectical thinking, or the unidimensional thinking and

the bidimensional thinking. The difference between the two lies in the fact that on the one hand the dialectical thinking – which characterized the system of all societies up to the second half of the nineteenth century – bears an essential initial contradiction in itself. It never states only what "there **is**" but what "there **should/must be**", thus it contains a positive and a negative statement at the same time, focusing not on the positive but on the negative content of it. The formal logic on the other hand dissolves this contradiction within one statement by reducing it solely to its positive aspect, denying the negative one. The positive thinking gives way to simple, indifferent (in the sense of "impartial"), measurable, and controllable affirmations, to objectivity which constituted the basis for scientific thinking. This proved to be very useful and effective in building up a solid system for the "capitalist society, since the general quality of objective thinking is the main condition of any – logical and social – laws and order, the tribute paid for universal control. The danger of the society constructed on such unidimensional rules is the deformation of the more or less autonomous man who slowly loses his autonomy together with his conscience. How then?

In searching for answers Marcuse gives his best in describing the actual American society as a model for the society of abundance, presenting both its merits and its contradictions. He claims that each system bears an initial contradiction in itself –and the American capitalist society is no exception to that either – eve in spite of its being unidimensional or closed in itself. The American society is one of class, possessing a highly concentrated political and economical power, providing a highly developed, automated, and coordinated productivity, distribution, and communication, a total access to private propriety of the means of production which is yet actively supported and controlled by the government. It's a society in which the material and the cultural needs of the masses are justly and well controlled, and satisfied – manipulated – by the system. It's a society divided into a higher saturated, abundant class, and a lower, inferior class living in a constantly deepening poverty and misery. In its essence it's a closed society, since all these contradictory dimensions of existence – both in the particular and in the public sphere – are subordinated to its laws. In appearance it is an open society toward outside through an economically, politically, and military expansion. Both its closed (to the interior) and its open (to the exterior) character is unnatural and destroying, since such a system absorbs everything, including its own self. Its democracy strengthens dominance even better than absolutism, its liberty requires more economical, social administration and military protection, and its productivity turns into destruction. It is not its materialism that deludes but the

lack of liberty, and of authenticity, caused by the convergence between the realm of necessities (regularized and satisfied by the high technology) and the realm of liberty (the chance to the negative, critical thinking). The absorbent power of this uni-dimensional society manifests itself in all the traditionally distinct domains of life, assimilating them into an illusionary-harmonious totalitarianism in which the most contradictory truths coexist in "peace", actually in indifference. The slyest success and contradiction of this society is just its indifference, its capability to assimilate the utmost contradictions, including that of its own, thus it creates a more and more obviously false, blind trap-reality without, yet to fall itself into it – or not? The only ones to walk into this trap are its supporters, the people, as the system "absorbs" their conscience (in the religious, metaphysical, and psychological sense of the word) by directing their minds and conscience toward a total submission to the needs proclaimed by the system itself. This also weakens the individuals' inclination toward a rational protest. The loss of conscience over the liberties of satisfaction is compensated with a new **"happy conscience"** offered by the system itself, and legitimated by the society, which banishes the feeling and sense of guilt, and facilitates the acceptance of its obliquity. The questions arise: how then, and especially why should we liberate ourselves from this society so contradictory, yet so convenient, and apparently so unaware of its own desperate fight for maintenance? What other possibility or choice has left except for another system very much resembling the former one? In one word is there a lesson we could learn from this actual situation, and society, lesson, which would make us want to change? Is there any possibility then that this "lesson" is not controlled, and produced by the system itself?

Marcuse's suggestion is both a resolution, and an invocation to realize that the society has reached down to the deepest layers of the individual's existence. Therefore both the basis and the changes of the society are to be found there, in the individual's unconscious dimension, instead of the cultural, social theories. The individual's inner dimension is yet not an idealistic, utopian, or transcendental one that surpasses the material necessities, but an even more elemental, instinctual force beyond the so-called "material basis". From this elemental, instinctual (undefined) status (Eros) should emerge a new type of man whose vital, biological impulses push him toward his individual – indefinite – liberty. Marcuse proposes an evolutionary development toward true liberty, and brings as argument the example of the outsiders, the exploited, the persecuted, the unemployed, and amorphous masses living outside democracy, and outside the liberties of abundance. The opposition of these people is just as much pressing as it is *real* because they stand outside this system, its laws, rules,

and principles which they do neither share nor obey to. They are able to bring about a "revolution" that is both a "quantitative" and a "qualitative" change, not just a "reform" which is merely a "quantitative" change. The difference between a "qualitative" and a "quantitative" change is that while the first activates on the basis of economical progress and a proper distribution of goods in the actual society, the second one includes a total change of the system itself besides the quantitative one.

Yet Marcuse doesn't seem to realize the "danger" of unidimensionality of this evolutionary development over (?), or next to (?) the "logical", system-based civilization around some of us, still far from the rest of us. This "danger" does not consist in the context of the new proposal as much as in the possibility of its (Eros) turning into another matrix He overlooks also at least two major problems that arise from (and within) this resolution, namely: **1.** those who are able to realize this possibility of changing, are either unaware, ignorant, even indifferent to this "force" of the outsiders just as much as these are themselves, or are unable to communicate (also because of linguistic, and cognitive differences) with the members of this inferior class; **2.** even if these people made this revolution, they would need a leader to organize the new order/system, and thus their revolution could very well be manipulated or bring about a new combination, a system-based one.

Simone Weil, a very challenging and contradictorily appreciated thinker of the twentieth century comes across the same problems and questions as Herbert Marcuse did, while contemplating upon the social inequalities and injustices. Sharing the way of life of factory workers – she worked in a soap-work for two years – she realizes how close these people are to true liberty, yet how far from it just because this truth is not revealed to them. She slowly abandons the idea that either political or "instinctual" (in the sense of "evolutionary" – see Marcuse) or even religious (referring strictly to the institutional side of religion) resolutions are able to bring about more than just resolutions, namely the recovering of free will. She realizes also that man's disaster ("*malheur*") is not an additional feature to his existence but a reality of which he is unable to liberate himself, only the Being, superior to man, can do that. This Being is neither the "Ubermensch" of Nietzsche, nor the "Sein" of Heidegger (in its intentions highly approaching It though) or the Superman of the technological society, or any other utopian creation of man. We are incapable to notice the persistent presence of this Being, since we are so accustomed to man-produced ideas, ideals and utopias, and we are also incapable to create transcendence for ourselves meant to redeem us. All we can do is to accept the reality of the "*malheur*" (awkwardly translated as "suffering")

meant to guide us to our free will. This term ("suffering") bears much contradiction especially since we are explained it (more or less scientifically) as a complex feeling, something that is totally strange to human nature. Weil approached the general suffering of individuals not on theoretical, or metaphysical, or philosophical, or psychological, or evolutionary, or even religious grounds, but through her personal (physical) experience. This experience is something that she or anyone of us cannot really talk about, express in any way *without* facing the temptation of our imagination. In Weil's vision imagination is the over-working, over-use of our minds, thus surpassing the limits of it and falling into deep illusions. This is inescapable, this is in fact our – more or less acknowledged –"suffering", and man's "free will" manifests itself in the individual acceptance or refusal of this truth, which, thus presented by Weil appears to me so challengingly real.

Similar to Herbert Marcuse's theoretical analysis of the modern American society is that of the social critic **Christopher Lasch** presented in his book entitled *The Culture of Narcissism* – American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations. In it he criticizes an even more developed abundant – turned into narcissistic – society in all its aspects, domains, manifestations, and slogans it makes benefit of. This book is very comprehensive both in its methods and in its content of analysis, providing a rather saturated, disgusted criticism of the agonizing American society than a sound satire of it as compared to Jonathan Swift's critiques or Thorstein Veblen's theoretical writing. However Lasch deplores quite ironically the "satire" –as he calls it – of Veblen – or of the society of the late twentieth century? – as "the leisure class of Thorstein Veblen miscarried; in America, where leisure found its only justification in the capacity to renew mind and body for work, the upper class refused to become a leisure class at all. Fearful of being displaced by the rising robber barons, it mastered the art of mass politics, asserted its control over the emerging industrial corporations, and embraced the ideal of the strenuous life." (Lasch, 1991, p.112) Lasch is right to a certain extend namely that Veblen does not make a clear distinction between the term of "old bourgeoisie" class and the "leisure" class, in fact he confuses these terms. "Old bourgeoisie" is a "social" class that can be described in historical terms, having its stage of creation, of evolution, of consolidation, of dominance and prosperity, and its stage of "denoument"; whereas the term "leisure" appears first in Veblen's work as a notion referring to a more general characteristics of man's behavior, namely that of expressing one's ("economical") superiority over the other(s). This phenomenon or feature has always been a stimulating force for men which the theories of evolution explain(ed) as the will to dominance of the fittest, which

however Veblen does not accept. At the same time he distinguishes their characteristics and manifestations in society as constituting the line of demarcation of two different periods of history – as we shall immediately see when dealing with Veblen's ideas. On the other hand Lasch is wrong in defining Veblen's theory a "satire" *against* the "leisure class" as long as he (Lasch) looks upon that book, expecting resolutions from it. Thus the biggest discontent of Lasch seems to be the degradation of Veblen's "leisure class" into a "society of narcissism" the agony of which brings no comfort either. In the Introductory of his book Lasch describes this "narcissistic society" with such rigor and vividness that I considered it very suggestive and instructive to quote much of it here as it follows. This society "is dying – the culture of competitive individualism, which in its decadence has carried the logic of individualism to the extreme of a war of all against all, the pursuit of happiness to the dead end of a narcissistic preoccupation with the self. Strategies of narcissistic survival now present themselves as emancipation from the repressive conditions of the past, thus giving rise to a "cultural revolution" that reproduces the worst features of the collapsing civilization it claims to criticize. (...) Many radicals still direct their indignation against the authoritarian family, repressive sexual morality, literary censorship, the work ethic, and other foundations of bourgeois order that have been weakened or destroyed by advanced capitalism itself. (...) Economic man himself has given way to the psychological man of our times – the final product of bourgeois individualism. The new narcist is haunted not by guilt but by anxiety. (...) Liberated from the superstitions of the past, he doubts even the reality of his own existence. Superficially relaxed and tolerant, he finds little use for dogmas of racial and ethnic purity but at the same time forfeits the security of group loyalties and regards everyone as a rival for the favors conferred by a paternalistic state. His sexual attitudes are permissive rather than puritanical, even though his emancipation from ancient taboos brings him no sexual peace. Fiercely competitive in his demand for approval and acclaim, he distrusts competition because he associates it unconsciously with an unbridled urge to destroy. Hence he repudiates the competitive ideologies that flourished at an earlier stage of capitalist development and distrusts even their limited expression in sports and games. (...) He praises respect for rules and regulations in the secret belief that they do not apply to himself. ...Does not accumulate goods and provisions against the future, in the manner of the acquisitive individualist of nineteenth-century political economy, but demands immediate gratification and lives in a state of restless, perpetually unsatisfied desire. (...) Having trivialized the past by equating it with outmoded styles of consumption, discarded fashions and attitudes, people today resent anyone who draws on the

past in serious discussions of contemporary conditions or attempts to use the past as a standard b which to judge the present [since] this kind of reasoning rules out entirely any insights gained, and any values arrived at by personal experience, since such experiences are always located in the past, and therefore in the precincts of nostalgia. (...) Our culture's indifference to the past – which easily shades over into active hostility and rejection – furnishes the most telling proof of that culture's bankruptcy. (...) Instead of drawing on our own experience, we allow experts to define our needs for us and then wonder why those needs never seem to be satisfied." (Lasch, 1991, Preface: xv – xviii).

Lasch starts his analysis of the "narcissistic society" from the perspective of a particular sense of the "past" as compared to the "present", therefore the book lacks an epistemological, evolutionary, theoretical, and philosophical dimension. This is partly due to the challenge of the postmodern interpretation of history, which questions the possibility of historiography, itself as an objective relating of true events. In this context Lasch's attempt is also that of a possible rehabilitation of the past, and of history.

Thorstein Veblen's theory of the "leisure class" is considered the first economical theory of the American society at the beginning of the twentieth century. It is remarkable also as an extremely interesting evolutionary and cultural history of mankind and of human behavior. Veblen's affirmation according to which the institution of a "leisure class" (with the former remark to Veblen's use of the term "leisure") is found in its best development at the higher stages of the barbarian culture – such as the actually developing American one – is an "offence" or "criticism" directed "against" those who accept the conventionally pejorative meaning of the term "barbarism", who therefore accept their position in the actual society without any effort to inquire about it. The critic employs the term "barbarism" possibly under the influence of the evolutionary principles according to which the life of a man, just like the life of other species, is a struggle for existence, a process of selective adaptation. The evolution of social structure in the case of the human species has been a process of natural selection of institutions which are the result of the relation between human subjects and a partly non-human, partly material environment. Any community can be regarded as an industrial or economic mechanism the structure of which is made up of its economic institutions. These are habitual methods of carrying on the life process of the community in contact with the material environment in which it lives. The community thus makes use of the forces of the environment for the (immediate) purposes of its life according to methods learned in the past and embodied in the institutions. The pressure exerted by the environment upon the group, and the demand for readjustment

of the group's scheme of life impinges upon the members, in the form of pecuniary exigencies. All these forces as well as the institutions established under their impact bring about the differences between the classes, which in this way appear as naturally, hereditarily and habitually stabile, un-interchangeable. Veblen, in his turn gives a totally different and a more reasonable explanation concerning the origin of the class differences. He claims that "man has a sense of the merit of serviceability or efficiency and of the demerit of futility, waste, or incapacity. This aptitude or propensity may be called the instinct of workmanship. Wherever the circumstances or traditions of life lead to an [sic] habitual comparison of one person with another in point of efficiency, the instinct of workmanship works out in an emulative or invidious comparison of persons." (Adler, p.7.) Unlike other economic theorists who claim that the basis of ownership as the beginning of the class divisions is the struggle for subsistence, Veblen argues that the motive, which lies at the root of ownership, is *emulation and invidious comparison*. These constitute the basis of esteem on which the class differences occur(red).

"Ownership began and grew into a human institution on grounds unrelated to the subsistence minimum. The dominant incentive was from the outset the invidious distinction attaching to wealth, and save temporarily, and by exception, no other motive has usurped the primacy at any later stage of development." (Adler, p.11.)

Thus it appears that wealth has never been an aim in itself but a mere instrument serving the personal esteem, this is why any theory built upon wealth or "leisure" etc miscarried in practice. The effects of ownership as propensity for dominance and coercion, as well as the utility of the owned goods as evidence of the prowess of their owners have always been primary to the functional quality of them. Veblen's recognition coincides with that of Herbert Marcuse in the sense that the history of mankind has always been the history of domination and the logic of mankind has always been the logic of domination.

The term "leisure" is used to connote not indolence or quiescence but a non-productive consumption of time and goods. The background of this class can be traced down in three main stages of human evolution, namely in the predatory, the quasi-peaceable, and the peaceable periods. Each of these gave/gives priority to one of the two different forms of manifestation of esteem, namely the "conspicuous leisure" or the conspicuous consumption", according to the actual society's stage of economical development. The utility of both alike for the purposes of reputability lies in the element of *waste*, which in the case of "conspicuous leisure" manifests itself as a waste of time and effort, and in the case of the "conspicuous consumption" as a waste of goods. In the present the

modern society accepts and canonizes the utility of the second one, which in Lasch's opinion is more derogatory than the first one. The canon of honorific waste immediately or remotely penetrates all the classes of the society, which means not only the actual "bourgeoisie" class as the modern development of the old one, and influences its sense of duty, of beauty, of utility, of devotional or ritualistic fitness, and the scientific sense of truth, dominating the minds and habits of each class including the inferior one.

The essential difference between the wealthy and the common run of mankind lies in the degree of exposure to the economic forces that urge a change. The "leisure class" is in great measure sheltered from the stress of those economic exigencies, which prevail in any modern, highly organized industrial community. It is one of the least responsible of the classes of the society for a further growth of institutions and a readjustment to an altered industrial situation. The abjectly poor, and all those persons whose energies are entirely absorbed by the struggle for daily existence cannot afford the effort of thinking in perspective of their future, so they become blind executors, machines of the system. Their relation to the economic process is an "industrial" –productive – one serving the non-invidious economic interest, whereas the relation of the "leisure class" to this process is a pecuniary –acquisitive – one serving the invidious economic interest. These later interests and conventions of the "business" life or of the "conspicuous consumption" are of the gravest consequence for the industrial process and for the life of the whole community because its immediate end is a greater facility of peaceable and orderly exploitation. Somehow it resembles the attempt and growing necessity to expand the knowledge of reading and writing (knowledge itself) to the lower, not yet independent classes towards the end of the Middle Ages. It meant a huge step to give something totally new to somebody without giving also the experience, the necessary tool to receive it. The same way, spreading (only) the illusion of "leisure" and of "conspicuous consumption" on everybody means giving power to individuals who have never experienced to be individual and take responsibility of themselves as such. The attempts to ameliorate the situation of the inferior classes ("qualitative change" – Marcuse), whose recognition as an actively constituent part of the society it constantly refuses –, the various organizations and social activities are of an altogether dubious economic value. These methods are simply the permutations of conspicuous waste derived from the standards and canons of the pecuniary culture. They act surreptitiously to divert effort of a non-invidious kind from effective service, without disturbing the agent's sense of good intention, or obtruding upon his consciousness the substantial futility of his work. Both the "outsiders" and the

beneficial actions intended to facilitate their situation are absorbed – controlled – by the system.

In this respect it is remarkable that for instance the above mentioned book of Christopher Lasch has been appointed a "national bestseller", and not refused to be published in spite of its extremely sharp tone of disgust. I quote from the back of the book: "Christopher Lasch has gone to the heart of our culture. The insights into personality and its social context are stunning. This is a courageous book." (Michael Rogin, University of California, Berkeley); or "formidable intellectual grasp and the kind of moral conviction rarely found in contemporary, value-neutral history and sociology...Lasch is on something quite real." (Times) To our biggest surprise this system can afford to be dis- and uncovered since it can make us believe that everything even its (historical, evolutionary, philosophical etc) criticism has been "planted" inside its helpless body. Yet it is foolish of us, people to hope to defeat or outwit it because for that we have no other instruments but those provided by our "mother-enemy" who needs to be constantly feeded. And we can just wonder whether the belief, nay faith of Morpheus was not so useful after all, and whether the hero's mingling into the Matrix was a wise act or not. Or we can close our thought into our minds. After all it's only a matter of combination.

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THE GREAT DEPRESSION

IANCĂU CRISTINA

ABSTRACT. The Great Depression constitutes a major topic to analyze from different angles (political and economic ones) American pragmatic statal policies in the field of dealing with the reality of economic crises. The paper attempts to bring an interpretation on the policies of the New Deal.

The Great Depression was a period, which shocked America and left thousands of people desperate. The Great Crash of October 1929 affected virtually every family living in the United States. The decade of prosperity that the crash ended had been dazzling, but this prosperity of the twenties contained within it not just the seeds but the well-rooted weeds of disaster.

When the World War I was over, the nation turned its attention to making money and it succeeded beyond its wildest dreams. Within a few years after the war the United States was producing more than the other six powers of the world together. The welfare of the people was like nowhere else in the world. The exuberance of the people manifested itself in spectacular bursts of invention, great productivity, a growing interest for scientific management and a rising fever due to capital investment on the stock exchange market. The crazes of the day may have vanished but its symbols of energy are still rampant in many cities of America – in New York the Empire State Building, Chrysler Buildings, Rockefeller Center and many others.

The prosperity of the twenties was owed in its greatest part to the faith in freedom, to technology, to the fact that America emerged of the war as a creditor nation and to the fact that it had something no other country had: an enormous market that could absorb a huge mass production, which thanks to easy access to low cost fuel and raw materials was cheap enough for millions. Mechanization, electrification and the spread of assembly line techniques led to

a manufacturing output increase of 64% between 1919 and 1929 and wages and real earnings rose but the profits rose far higher[1].

Until 1925 most of the country's growth had rested on massive industrial expansion and after that the growth was spurred on by hundreds of thousands of large and small investments. The great business boom was based on only very few great industries – automobiles, construction and a few others related to these. The problem with such heavy concentrations of wealth and such massive dependence upon very few industries is similar to the problem of very few people having too much wealth. The economy is reliant upon those industries to expand and grow and invest in order to prosper. If those industries were to slow down or stop, so would the entire economy. While the economy did prosper greatly in the twenties, the fact that this prosperity wasn't balanced between different industries, when the ones that all the wealth concentrated upon them slowed down, the whole economy did[2].

President Coolidge said that the Americans were building a "New Era". He said that "the man who builds a factory builds a temple, and the man who works there worships there". The new generation believed that they were building a new civilization: invention and not political reform was bringing the utopia of humane capitalism. The reality was though very sad: while few Americans were getting very rich, the average American was working 10 to 12 hours a day with no real job or health security and on less money than perhaps he could have[3].

Beneath the decade's glittering surface lurked hidden fissures which were early signs of the collapse to come. The mal distribution of wealth in the 1920's existed on many levels. Money was distributed disparately between the rich and the middle class, between industry and agriculture and between the United States and Europe. This imbalance of wealth created an unstable economy.

The large and growing disparity of wealth between the well-to-do and the middle income citizens made the United States economy unstable. For an economy to function properly, total demand must equal total supply. In an economy with such disparate distribution of income it is not assured that demand will always equal supply. Essentially, what happened in the 1920's was that there was an oversupply of goods. It was not that the surplus products of industrialized society were not wanted, but rather that those whose needs were not satiated could not afford more, whereas the wealthy were satiated by

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[1] Evans, Harold, *The American Century* – Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 1998, p. 200.
[2] *** - *Reader' Digest, "Great Events of the 20ᵗ Century - How They Changed Our Lives"* – The Reader's Digest Association Inc. 1977.
[3] Evans H., *op. cit.*, p. 210.

spending only a small portion of their income. As Galbraith puts it the rich can buy only so much bread. In the twenties America was making luxuries look like necessities. When in 1929 the rich started to cut back on their investment and luxury spending it could not be replaced by consumer demand[4].

Laissez faire was the order of the day in business. This policy was based on the idea that if the government kept from interfering with the economy, business profits would be shared with workers as wages. This way the workers could invest in stock and take part of the general wealth. This policy states that the idea that the economy can balance itself without the need of state interference. In the economic literature this is considered the "classical" trend. After the 1929 crash, economists came up with a new ideology which considered that the state can and should influence the economy through different ways in order to keep it balanced and stable[5].

In the 1920' the wages did not go up proportionately to industrial production and profits (11% compared to 62%). The refusal of business to share its profits with the workers helped bring about a business fall. The economy was also unevenly developed. Some elements of it had no share in the national prosperity. Several industries like coal and textiles never regained their pre-war levels. In these sectors unemployment was high and the wages were alarmingly low.

The "Big Money" as John Dos Passos said replaced justice and freedom as the reason for America's being a country. The people were disillusioned with politicians because they tolerated crooks in government and gangsters in the business, because they worshiped movie stars and sports champions and gave in several of their millions to the antidemocratic Ku Klux Klan. The general feeling was a general disenchantment with democracy. But for the average American the instinct of democracy remained intact because for all the national pressures, for the political conformity, for all the corruption and the ineffectiveness of the state, this instinct was nurtured by the possibility of individual success. In the United States individuals and classes were not set, whereas in Europe the permanent classes and castes held fast to privilege and aggravated the social tension. American democracy was quietly enhanced as a way of life that would survive hard times.

It was fashionable for the better off to flee to Europe where they could strongly censure the waste land at home. Still new art forms were developing in the United States: movies, jazz music, musical plays. America was enhancing

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[4] Gusmorino, Paul A., *Main Causes of the Great Depression* – Gusmorino World Magazine, 1996, p. 5.

[5] Bernstein, Michael A., *The Great Depression - Delayed Recovery and Economic Change in America 1929 - 1939* – Cambridge University Press 1987.

musical appreciation in the world through the phonograph and the radio, it was launching museums and intellectual clubs, new journalism and was registering a significant rise in church membership[6].

Intellectual despair was more significant in the United States because faith in the capacity of the common man was the very heart of civilization. Skepticism about their native American runs through much of the creative writing of the period: F. Scott Fitzgerald, T.S. Eliot, Ring Lardner, Ezra Pound and others of the so called "lost generation".

A major instability of the American economy had to do with large scale international wealth distribution problems. While America was prospering in the 1920's, European nations were struggling to rebuild themselves after the damage of war. In the twenties the United States was trying to be the world's banker, food producer and manufacturer, but to buy as little as possible from the world in return. This attempt to have a constantly favorable trade balance could not succeed for long. The United States maintained high trade barriers to protect American business, but if the United States would not buy from their European counterparts, then there was no way for them to buy from the Americans, or even to pay interest on U.S. loans[7].

The effects of the Great Depression in the United States were felt quickly around the world. Since World War I European economy had depended heavily on U.S. dollars in the form of loans, goods exported to America and tourism. After the crash, when the United States withdrew its money Europe was staggered.

The moment in which the stock market boom of the nineteen – twenties began is hard to define, but there were sound reasons why the prices of common stocks should rise during these years. Corporate earnings were good and growing and the prospect seemed bright. In the early twenties the stock prices were low and yields favorable.

The prices of securities and stocks began to rise in the last months of 1924, and this increase was continued and extended through 1925. During 1926 the prices suffered a setback. Business seemed to be a little off in the early part of the year but it recovered quickly in the second part and at the end of the year the prices were about where they had been at the beginning.

In 1927 the increase began in the earnest. Day after day and month after month the price of stocks went up. The gains by later standards were not very high but they had an aspect of great reliability. Until the beginning of 1928

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[6] Evans H., *op. cit.*, p. 217.

[7] Broadus, Mitchell, *The Depression Decade From New Era Through the New Deal* – Amonk, New York 1975.

even the most reluctant minds could believe that the prices of common stock were catching up with the increase in corporation earnings and that the prospect for further increases and the peace and tranquility of the times were firmly in the hands of the administration in Washington, which would take no more than necessary of any earnings in the form of taxes.

Early in 1928 the nature of the boom changed. The market began to rise, not by slow, steady steps but by great vaulting leaps, coming down occasionally the same way, only to recover and go higher again. The mass speculation escaped into make – believe. Thousands started to invest with frenzy and enthusiasm, coming from dreams of overnight getting rich. Never had there been a better time to get rich and people knew it[8].

In a population of 120 million Americans 1.5 million were investors and around 600,000 speculators – those who borrowed to gamble. In 1920, brokers lent about $1 billion to speculators buying on the margin in the expectation that the market would rise. By October 1929, margin buyers were borrowing more than $8.5 billion, about half that year's entire public debt of the United States[9].

In order to understand how stock markets work, we should consider an example. there is a new company that needs $1,000 to begin operations, so it sells one thousand shares of stock for one dollar each. You pay one dollar and become the proud owner of one share of stock worth one dollar. You must remember that a share of stock is worth either what you paid for it, or what someone else is willing to pay you for it. Let us say that someone comes up to you and offers you five dollars for your share of stock and you accept. The worth of a share of stock is whatever that stock can be sold at, so the value of all the shares of stock in the company is now five dollars. Although only five dollars has changed hands, $4,000 of additional wealth has been created. If you then begin to regret having sold such fine stock, you might take an extra five dollars of your own money and buy a share of that stock for ten dollars. The market value of all thousand shares of stock is now ten dollars and all stock holders are becoming rich quite rapidly.

As long as everyone is confident and does not wish to lose out in the general enrichment, this sort of thing is well and good. But all of this wealth is merely "paper wealth" and has been created by transfer of very small sums of real money. We can suppose that the person who now holds the ten dollars that

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[8] Galbraith, John Kenneth, *The Great Crash 1929* – Houghton Mifflin Co. Boston 1988, pp. 89-107.
[9] Evans H., *op. cit.*, p. 228.

you paid for your share of stock decides that it would be unwise to buy any further stock. And further suppose that one of your fellow stock holders decides to try to sell his share at ten dollars. He would find that there were no buyers for ten dollars, or five dollars or even one dollar. Your stock and that of your fellow stock holders would have become worthless and $10,000 of wealth would have vanished.

This sort of thing happens all the time. The people who want to buy stock at a higher price that the owner paid for is called a *bull* and those who had decided to hold on to the money and not buy anything are called *bears*. What happened in 1929 is that some stock market investors who had been bulls for the previous five or six years began to worry about the good times coming to an end and turned into bears. Once the prices of stock started falling, everybody grabbed what money they could and held onto it. This meant that stock prices continued to fall because of the high supply and low demand. Firms that needed money in order to keep running found it impossible to borrow any and went bankrupt. Their workers had no income so they could not buy anything. The businesses that depended on selling them no longer had a market, and so they went bankrupt also, and more people lost their jobs. This soon became a vicious circle.

Hoover entered the White House in 1929. He seemed ideally suited to guide the nation through any crisis. But the crash that shook the country only seven months after his inauguration shattered America's confidence both in business and in Hoover. Suddenly thousands of holding companies and investment trusts were bankrupt. So were the people who relied on them.

The stock market is a mirror which is the image of the underlying or fundamental economic situation. Cause and effect run from the economy to the stock market and never the reverse. In 1929 the economy was headed for trouble. Eventually that trouble was violently reflected in Wall Street. According to Galbraith five weaknesses seem to have had an especially powerful effect on the disaster to come: the bad distribution of income, the bad corporate structure, the bad banking structure, the weak state of the foreign balance and the poor state of economic intelligence.

On October 24, 1929 (Black Thursday) the complete collapse of the stock market began; about 13 million shares of stock were sold and about $3 billion was lost. The next day President Hoover publicly reaffirmed the soundness of the economy and the market held steady on Friday and Saturday. It was the last hurrah of the old fashioned laissez–faire capitalism. On Monday, stocks fell from the opening bell and now many of the truly solid investments were among them. An estimated $10 to $14 billion was lost. Tuesday, October 29, known eversince as Black Tuesday, extended the damage. The values of most shares fell sharply, leaving financial ruin and panic in its way. Black

Tuesday was in the words of John Kenneth Galbraith "the most devastating day in the history of the New York stock market and it may have been the most devastating day in the history of markets". Some 650,000 shares of U.S. Steel (considered one of the most solid investments) were sold in the first three minutes. Before the day was over more than 16.4 million shares had changed hands, a record that would stand until 1968. Some $32 billion had been lost in one day[10].

The singular feature of the great crash of 1929 was that the worst continued to worsen. What looked one day like the end proved on the next day to have been only the beginning. Nothing could have been more ingeniously designed to maximize the suffering and to insure that as few people as possible escaped the common misfortune.

The long depression that began in 1929 took away all the fabulous gains of the twenties. During this depression millions of investors lost their life savings, business houses closed their doors, factories shut down, banks failed and millions of unemployed walked the streets in a hopeless search for work. In American life there had been nothing except the long forgotten depression of the 1870's to compare to this.

The crash had a further immeasurable psychological impact, not simply on active investors, but on the mass of the population who had followed the Dow Jones roller coaster, almost as closely as they followed baseball stars. They were scared. Millions of families were in debt for the first time, because by buying on installment plans, personal debt had more than doubled. The incipient recession in 1929 had already made consumers think twice about taking on more debt, because suddenly incomes began to look less assured. Car makers and house builders had already felt the breeze. The crash amplified it. In 1930, even before earnings declined, and while government spending and investment were still rising, consumer spending suffered a spectacular 10 percent fall.

Statistics cannot tell the story of extraordinary hardships the masses of people endured. For nearly every unemployed person there were dependents who needed to be fed and housed. Such massive poverty and hunger had never been known in the United States before. Former millionaires stood on street corners trying to sell apples at 5 cents apiece. Hundreds of pitiful shantytowns – called Hoovervilles in honor of the unfortunate Republican president who presided over the disaster – sprang up all over the country to shelter the homeless. People slept under "Hoover blankets" – old newspapers – outdoors. People waited in bread lines in every city hoping for something to eat.In 1931 alone more than 20,000 Americans committed suicide.

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[10] *Idem*, p. 229.

For anyone with a few dimes depression America was a shopper's paradise. A new home could be bought for less than $3,000. A man's suit cost about $10, a shirt less than 50 cents. For a dime one could go to the movies, buy a nickel bag of popcorn and even win prizes given away by the theatre. That was for those who had dimes. Not many lucky enough to be working had much change to spend after paying rent and buying food. To turn to the government, at least during the Hoover years, was useless. There was no federally financed safety net of welfare programs efficient enough to keep the working class to fall into poverty.

The old virtues – thrift, tenacity and willingness to work seemed no longer to make any difference. Many workers were unsure weather or not they would be able to feed their families – thousands were threatened with actual starvation. Hundreds of thousands of jobless men and boys roamed the country side stowing away on freight trains.

Those veterans of the First World War who were forced out of work became bitter indeed. Because of their military service they felt that the country owed them special consideration. When they were reduced to selling apples on street corners at five cents each they looked to the government for help and got none. In 1932, the lowest point in the Depression, two Broadway tunesmiths, the composer Jay Gorney and the lyricist E.Y. Harburg, collaborated on a song that caught the nation's attention for the way it considered the unemployed in general and the unemployed veterans in particular[11]:

Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?...1932
By Jay Gorney and E.Y. Harburg

They used to tell me I was building a dream,
And so I followed the mob,
When there was earth to plough or guns to bear
I was always there right on the job.
They used to tell me I was building a dream
With peace and glory ahead.
Why should I be standing in line
Just waiting for bread?

Once I built a railroad, now it's done.
Brother can you spare a dime
Once I built a tower, to the sun.
Brick and rivet and lime,
Once I built a tower, now it's done,
Brother can you spare a dime?
Once in khaki suits, Gee we looked swell
Full of that Yankee Doodle de dum
Half a million boots went sloggin' through Hell,
I was the kid with the drum.
Say, don't you remember, they called me All?
I was Al all the time.
Say, don't you remember I'm your pal?
Brother, can you spare a dime?

Of all the victims of the Great Depression the most pitiable perhaps were the farmers. Not the intellectual agrarians but the dirt farmers. It was not only that their ordeal lasted the longest during the Depression, it was that they like other farmers everywhere were at the mercy of the weather. The poor who lived in the cities could be desperate too, but they were supported by volunteers, that tried to feed and clothe, and at times even house, the needy. The farmers lacked such support systems, they had to suffer alone. Often the small farmers had no recourse but to leave and look for a better place to live and work.

Chiefly because of overcropping and drought, the farms in the Southwest deteriorated into what came to be called the "Dust Bowl". The small farmers and their families simply could not survive there. The only way to get any return from the soil proved to be agro – business: vast farms run by a few men with much machinery[12].

Hoover refused to take the advice of conservatives, who urged him to do nothing. Hoover believed that the government should help the people, at least up to a point. He acted with bold vigor and created the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to bail out failing banks, state governments and railroads. He used

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[11] ******* – *American Perspectives - United States in the Modern Age* – United States Information Agency - Division for the Study of the United States, Washington D.C. 1990, p. 92.

[12] *Idem*, p. 86.

the federal Reserve Board to encourage business, borrowing and industrial growth. Hoover stepped out public works to provide jobs, cut taxes to encourage consumer purchasing and tried to maintain farm prices by buying up crop surpluses for sale abroad.

Hoover had created the country's first significant federal work projects. His public works programs were conceived as sparks to restart private businesses, rather than as engines in themselves, even these were frustrated by a great gap between intent and deed – remarkable for a man who had always been a symbol of efficiency in both government and private sector. The spending was delayed because the projects were not ready and the states had no money.

The acts passed by Congress and signed by Hoover were the worst kind of intervention: they actually exacerbated the problem. Raising tariffs was one of the worst things that could be done. Both free market advocates and Keynesians agree that lowering prices would cure a depression, it's just that Keynesians believe that government intervention is necessary. A tariff does exactly the wrong thing by rising prices. Other acts passed during Hoover administration had similar effects of either rising prices or keeping them artificially high, when they should have been dropping. Thus it is not that Hoover was a do-nothing president, is that he intervened in exactly the wrong way. He became the symbol of all that had gone wrong, because his policies failed[13].

The most fundamental need to end the depression was the need to put money in people's pockets. Looking back it seems obvious, but it took genius and courage to elaborate the case at the time. Britain's John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946), the seminal economic thinker of the twentieth century, did not publish his book "The General Theory of Employment Interest and Money" until 1936, but he propagated his ideas long before that.

Keynes had a rather simple view of economics. The economy consisted of people passing wealth from one another. If they have too much wealth, or pass it back and forth too quickly, the economy "heats up". Money and credit become worth less and so the prices of commodities rise. If there is too little money and credit or if it moves too slowly from hand to hand, the value of money and credit increases and the price of commodities fall. The first situation is called inflation and the second recession or depression, depending on how severe the drop in prices is. Keynes's view was that it was the responsibility of the government to keep the right amount of money and credit in circulation in order to keep the economy stable.

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[13] Evans H., *op. cit.*, p. 225.

The problem was that government could not control this matter directly. If people chose to keep their money and not buy anything, government could not force them. Keynes understood this problem and felt that and felt that the government had to use deficit spending, putting more money in the economy than it took out, during recessions or depressions. The government could do this by reducing taxes, but this would not be effective in a situation in which people were simply hoarding all the money they could. So, said Keynes, the government should print more money, this way going into debt. The money should be used, if possible for public works and economic infrastructure, and get money into the hands of the consumers, so that they would begin to buy again.

One of the most notable attempts to explain this disaster was made by John Kenneth Galbraith in his book "The Great Crash 1929", published in 1955. He pointed to five significant factors: (1) An extremely unequal distribution of incomes limited the consumer goods market. Most people were not making enough money to buy the goods they manufactured. (2) There was an enormous amount of fraud a corruption in big business and in marketing of stocks and bonds. The prosperity of Wall Street consisted largely of paper that was not backed up by real wealth. (3) The banking structure, made up of too many banks, acted foolishly in making loans. When bad times came, the loans could not be called in and many people lost their savings as a result. (4) Foreign nations had borrowed money from the United States and could not repay their loans. This, coupled with high American trade barriers, damaged their economies because they could not send their exports to the United States at a profit. (5) The amount of information on the operation of the whole economy was much less adequate tan it is today. People, even experts, were not as able to spot trends in industrial output, investment, consumer buying, and other factors that are now studied closely[14].

Galbraith's conclusion on the role of the stock market is that had the economy had been sound, the effect of the crash would have been small. But of course the economy was not sound. It was as he remarks exceedingly fragile. The crash gave a double spin to deflation. First it worked through the financial pyramids, the hundreds of holding companies and investment trusts that had been formed one atop another simply to hold and sell stock. Second, the crash had a huge effect not only on investors but also on the mass of population[15].

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[14] Galbraith, *op. cit.*, pp. 88 – 108.
[15] *Ibidem.*

In 1933 the new president Frank Delano Roosvelt brought an air of cheerful confidence that quickly rallied people to his banner. His inaugural speech was based on answers to problems that rose from the depths of the Great Depression. The remedies that Hoover had proposed were republican remedies, tested over the decades, but in the current crisis they did not work. However help was on its way.

The times called for new, dramatic measures and the new president promised to propose them and to see that they were carried out. "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself" he assured his eagerly listening audience in what became the most memorable sentence of his first inaugural address. He dismissed the old way in which business alone had been dependent on the nation's business, because it had failed. He promised jobs for the millions of unemployed, promising that the government would be duty bound to offer the work that business could no longer provide[16].

Before long the complex of reforms, known as the New Deal merely introduced into the United States types of reform familiar to Englishmen, Germans and Scandinavians for more than a generation. The New Deal represented the culmination of a long range trend toward the abandonment of laissez faire. Fear, cynicism and despair yielded to hope trust and courage. The day after he took the oath, Roosvelt called the Congress into an emergency session.

What was truly novel about The New Deal was the speed with which it accomplished what elsewhere had taken whole generations. Many of the reforms were hastily drawn and weakly administered, some actually contradicted the others.

There is a myth that the New Deal was based on Keynesian economics and that the New Deal failed to end mass unemployment, and therefore Keynesian remedies did not work. The New Deal did indeed fail to produce full employment, but the reason for the failure is that the one thing Roosvelt did not really try was full-blown deficit financing. Roosvelt was a very orthodox "sound money" man. It has to be acknowledged that it would have taken a very bold leader to commit to the level of deficit spending called for to restore full employment.

During the entire New Deal period, despite its speed in decision and execution, public criticism and discussion were never interrupted or suspended, in fact the New Deal brought to the individual citizen a sharp revival of interest in government.

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[16] *** *American Perspectives,* p.100.

When Roosvelt took the presidential oath, the banking and credit system of the nation was in a state of paralysis. With astonishing rapidity the banks were reopened and a policy of moderate currency inflation was adopted in order to start an upward movement in commodity prices and to afford some relief to the debtors. New governmental agencies brought generous credit facilities to industry and agriculture.

In agriculture far reaching reforms were instituted. A goal of the New Deal was to bring independence to farm tenants. By 1939 farm income was more than double what it had been seven years before.

As progress toward recovery continued the federal government spent thousands of millions of dollars for relief of the unemployed, for public works and for the conservation of national resources. These expenditures created new demands for products of American industry.

Great progress was made in labor organization. The American Federation of Labor, with its principle of craft unionism, was slow to organize the unorganized, and some of the dissatisfied mass unions broke away and formed the Congress of Industrial Organizations. Organization brought a growing sense of common political interests, and lobor's power increased not only in industry, but also in politics.

New Deal efforts were carried on, generally against vehement criticism through more programs in the 1930's during Roosvelt's two presidential terms. It did no more than soften the worst impact of the Great Depression, before the war destroyed everything before it. Roosvelt, however did not betray his trust. He did not become a dictator and he took less executive power than the Congress was willing to cede him. He steered straight into the turbulent currents of democratic debate. The doors of the White House were open to opinion from his part. Roosvelt listened and he took the nation with him as he revolutionized the role of the federal government, the structures of the American society and the attitudes towards poverty and sickness.

The new United States forged during the Great Depression would not prove immune to demagoguery,corruption, complacency, class and racial hatred and other eternal problems that afflict every major society. It would prove however that democratic solutions were not merely possible in a great crisis, but that they were inescapable in a society like the American one[17].

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[17] Evans H., *op. cit.*, p. 246.

The Great Depression was a period which staggered the United States and not only. The most important thing for the future generations was to learn from the mistakes of the past and to try to avoid them. Such an important phenomenon as the Great Depression must be fully understood by the specialists and not only, beginning with the causes and the effects and most importantly with the means to avoid it or to recover the balance. In America it seems a severe penalty was paid for the twenties lack of intellectual curiosity, the narrowness of party differences, the erosion of progressivism and the general pressure for conformity of opinion. But still America found better ways to come out of the crisis than other countries. In Germany (but not in France and Britain) economic recovery came at the cost of civil liberties. That state became a gigantic prison in which the Nazis locked up workers and bosses and made them cooperate with one another.

The Great Depression was a great lesson for those who were willing to learn, a lesson for states, for economies, specialists and last but not least for the common people. This was a lesson about extremes, about dealing with crisis, about times of action and times of stand – back, about richness and poverty, but most of all it was a lesson about people and how they react in different situations. It was certainly not the last crisis that the world was to encounter along its way and perhaps not even the greatest one, but it was one that made people open their eyes.

THE TENTH AMONG MUSES: NOTES ON ANNE BRADSTREETS' PURITANISM AND FEMININE WRITING

SÁNDOR KATALIN

ABSTRACT. Looking into Anne Bradstreet's poetry from a feminist point of view may bring to light new dimensions of the Colonial poetess, as well as underlining the cultural shift in perceiving the aura of poetry at the dawning of American literature.

The attempt to define Anne Bradstreet's poetry by such a name as the "Puritan Muse" could easily be charged to be a mere labelling. Nevertheless this definition tends to dismantle itself rather than to enclose its "material" in a category.

The "Puritan Muse" questions itself as a definition by a sort of apparent discrepancy it disguises. The components of this locution may be attributed in this way to different cultural and/or mythological discourses. The word "Puritan" – when conceived stereotypically- may allude the reader to a historical fact, that of withholding arts and literature under Cromwell's Protectorate and under the ideological pressures of the age. The opposite of the 'gesture' which locks the gates of English theatres and tries to make art speak on behalf of religion, might be that of invoking the Muses, these mythopoetical signs of the initial impulses of (artistic) creation. Though the 'spell' of the 'inspired' author and that of the 'inspired' creating were displaced by the intertextual dynamics of literature (in which texts may violate the limits of authorship), the myth of the nine Muses had kept on being recycled for long, mainly in creating 'physiognomies' of women who had the capacity of releasing certain spiritual 'resources'.

Despite any cultural and or historical stereotypes, the "Puritan Muse" was about to subvert these prejudices regarding Puritanism which was (and is) thought of as either indifferent or oppressive towards secular(ized) poetry. (It is known that after the strictest ideological and theological purification had been moderated or exhausted, even the Puritan sermons admitted beside their practical and advocating rhetoric some 'modest' and 'humble' means of aesthetic delight.

"The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America" became the title of Anne Bradsreet's poems as a "modest" and "humble" memento that feminine Puritan writing, even with secular aspects, did exist.

Peter Conn suggests a sort of contextualization of the Bradstreet – phenomenon (though he seems not to go too far with inquiring into this): "Anne Bradstreet must be considered in the context of Puritan attitudes toward women (...)" (Conn, 1989, 51). Such a contextualization might indeed predetermine some productive ways of revising her poetry. For in this context – both in its socio-cultural religious and ideological aspects – one would have to consider the preestablishment of certain subordinated female roles and 'identities' by an authoritative and strongly patriarchal system and discourse. There was a sort of distribution of roles according to which intellectual activities were meant for men while household affairs for women. God was sometimes invoked as the supreme authority to undertake or justify women's enlisting in this kind of category. Thus women were not even regarded as victims of a suppressive male-centred ideology but as subjects to a divine predestination.

Nevertheless, taking for granted the flawlessness and absolutism of such an ideological construct would only enclose the interpretation of its various discourses into mere clichés. For this presupposed flawlessness or absolutism of the Puritan ideology did not remain unquestioned, not even in its own age. Several 'Anne Hutchinsons' and 'Mrs. Hopkinses' were 'trialed' for having deviated from their predetermined model of Puritan femininity (if they had accepted it at all). Deviation from the authoritative and theologically supported models was considered a sort of intruding 'otherness' in a homogenous patriarchal discourse, which undermined or questioned the apparently perfect and rightful functioning of such an ideology. Thus certain Anne Hutchinsons had to be 'eliminated' by execution, while certain Mrs. Hopkinses had to be excommunicated as "book-crazed" women (Conn,1989, 53). One can read in John Winthrop's journal (the fragment about Edward Hopkins's, the governor's wife) that the final outcome of women's involvement in too much intellectual work (such as reading and writing) would be insanity, since they "had been given weaker minds" by their Creator and therefore should not abandon "the place God had set" them (Winthrop quoted by Conn, 1989, 52).

Lingering a bit longer on this aspect of the Puritan definition of femininity is meant to prepare the question whether, in this very context, the 'spring-up' of the Tenth Muse in America was deviant or not, and if it was, how it manifested itself in her poetry.

In the title of Bradstreet's book, "The tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America", the adverb "lately" alludes the reader to a (Puritan) time, when the

mere gesture of grabbing a pen instead of a needle (see Bradstreet's "Prologue" 5. stanza) was likely to be defined by a patriarchal symbolic order to be deviant and even rebellious. With Anne Bradstreet this might stimulate questions about how her writing interprets its own constitutive gesture, how it defines itself as referred to male/masculine writing. As far as the Puritan and religious aspects of this poetry are concerned, the problems may be broadened with that of the dissolution of Christian mythology by the Greek one.

The title of Bradstreet's book could be a stimulus for these interrogations. It is necessary to stress that contrary to possible anticipations, the title is not actually the poetess's own self-definition. The book had been first published in England in 1650 'encouraged' rather arbitrarily by Bradstreet's brother-in-law, John Woodbridge. It is said that the poetess "must have been surprised and pleased by the appearance of her poems in print, but she must also have been chagrined by the presumptuous title-which, no doubt, her brother-in-law blamed upon the printer" (ed. Lemay, 1988, 211). This stimulates the presupposition that the title is already an interpretation, a reader's concentrated understanding. Bradstreet's reaction to such a publication is, in a way, mediated by the following verses from "The Author to Her Book":

> "Thou ill-formed offspring of my feeble brain,
> Who after birth didst by my side remain
> Till snatched from thence by friends, less wise than true,
> Who thee abroad exposed to public view,
> Made thee in rags, halting to th' press trudge,
> Where errors were not lessened (all my judge)".
>
> (ed. Lemay, 1988, 213).

Before reading in these verses some rhetoric of protest against an arbitrary entitling (and labelling), one is likely to be 'sent' back to "The Prologue" of the volume which will only multiply the marks of interrogation: how could such a "presumptuous" and 'unjustified' title be published ? And still: can this title be exclusively referred to as being arbitrary and irrespective of the book itself ?

"The Prologue", for instance, seems to anticipate the title in many respects. It displays a rhetoric of reverse self-assertion and 'perverted' ars poetica. Thus it promises the negative of an aesthetic program, stating what this poetry will *not* be able to be, to attain or to create – simply because of the 'incapacity' and inherent imperfection attributed a priori to women and feminine writing as compared to the masculine one:

"From schoolboy's tongue no rhet'ric we expect,
Nor yet a sweet consort from broken strings,
Nor perfect beauty where's a main defect:
My foolish, broken, blemished Muse so sings,
And this to mend, alas no art is able,
'Cause nature made it so irreparable."

(ed. Lemay, 1988, 212)

After reading the entire prologue, this seems to be written in a discourse of dissimulation. Thus the 'humble', submissive overtones *apparently* assert the inferiority of feminine writing and accept the superiority of the masculine one. (See also in" The Author to Her Book" the verses associating the origin and superiority of 'true' writing with fatherhood, and " the ill-formed offspring" with "feeble brain" and motherhood [verses 22- 24]). Still this discursive humbleness and submission seems to be simulated, feigned and it is subverted by verses like:

"I am obnoxious to each carping tongue
Who says my hand a needle better fits,
A poet's pen all scorn I should thus wrong,
For such despite they cast on female wits:
If what I do prove well, it won't advance,
They'll say it's stol'n, or else it was by chance."

(ed. Lemay, 1988, 212)

These lines, referring to the male definitions and 'definers' merely by the pronoun "they", seem to explode the emblem of female hands created only for holding needles. The last two verses might be read as a sort of caricature about overdriven masculine bias. This discourse of dissimulation makes almost impossible to read the seventh and eighth stanzas of the "Prologue" irrespective of their irony, which instead of yielding to the dominance of a male-centred discourse, seems to mock at its self-confident clichés and categories:

"Men have precedency and still excel,
It is but vain unjustly to wage war,
Men can do best, and women know it well. (…)
And oh ye high flown quills that soar the skies,
And ever with your prey still catch your praise,
If e'er you deign these lowly lines your eyes,
Give thyme or parsley wreath, I ask no bays,
This mean and unrefined ore of mine
Will make your glist'ring gold but more to shine".

(ed. Lemay, 1988, 213)

It is not negligible that some verses evoke the antique Greeks and their mythopoetical understanding of arts and femininity. This 'pagan' mythology might also have strong patriarchal aspects, overestimating sometimes the male pole of its metaphysical oppositions (male-female, reason-passion, activity-passivity, etc.). However, the rhetoric of the "Prologue" selects among myths for its own 'benefit'. Thus the myth of the nine Muses intrudes in the Christian myth of the sinful, imperfect and doomed woman, and – in its turn – is 'Christianised' by such attributes as "foolish, blemished, broken (Muse)". Still this myth releases in a way the fluctuation of Greek mythological signs or symbols:

> "But sure the antique Greeks were far more mild,
> Else of our sex, why feigned they those nine
> And poesy made Calliope's own child".

> (ed. Lemay, 1988, 212)

Beside remembering the printer (!) who might have found here the 'material' that "presumptuous" title, one may as well interpret these verses as invoking an 'outer' (Greek) mythology to justify a slightly deviant female rhetoric, dismantling in this way certain ideological constructs of Puritanism. Thus the Puritan rhetoric often relying on Christian mythology, is 'left ajar' also for flux of Greek mythological elements, which go beyond the "Prologue". One might say that not only Bradstreet's Puritan femininity is a challenge for reinterpretation, but also her Puritan way of writing, which cannot be restrained to the mere literary mediation of some Puritan ideology or theology. As far as the attitude towards mythology is concerned, the reader can compare the poetess's writings with those of Edward Taylor, which seem to be more monolithic or homogenous considering the prevailing Christian and Jewish mythology "translating" mostly the message of the Old and New Testament. (Some isolated reminiscences of Greek mythology can still be found in his poetry.)

Opposite to Taylor, Anne Bradstreet's poetry quite often reiterates different constituents of the Greek myhtopoetical 'stock', while allowing Christian mythology still prevail (or apparently prevail).

In the (textual) process of this mythological flux or remembrance certain Greek myths or symbols are reinterpreted and 'Christianised' as potential mediators of the Christian biblical 'message'. But at the same time Christian mythology itself is rewritten or dissolved by Greek mythopoetics. In this way the frequent textual recurrence of Phoebus's myth has both a Christianised and a secularised version. The Christianised variant follows a sort of metamorphosis of the Apollonian myth (that of the god of light and omniscience), which – in this context – mediates some essential attributes of a Christian divinity, its transcendental irradiation showing the Way, the Truth and the Life.

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Still this Christianisation of Greek myths is not an one-way process: re-evoking Phoebus in the "Contemplations" initiates the constitution of a textual world, in which Nature – in its primordial innocence and capacity of self-regeneration seems to reflect certain aspects of an Arcadian gaiety in the metaphysical perception of the 'landscape'. Nature conveys by its purity the glory and omnipotence of its own Creator, allowing the qualities of Eden interpenetrate with those of Arcadia:

> "Some time now past in the Autumnal Tide,
> When Phoebus wanted but one hour to bed,
> The trees all richly clad, yet void of pride,
> Where gilded o're by his rich golden head.
> (...)
> If so much excellence abide below,
> How excellent is he that dwells on high?
> Whose power and beauty by his works we know.
> (...)
> All mortals here the feeling knowledge hath.
> Thy presence makes it day, thy absence night,
> Quaternal seasons caused by thy might:
> Hail Creature, full of sweetness, beauty and delight."

<div align="right">(ed. Lemay, 1988, 214-215).</div>

Due to the Christianisation of the Phoebus-myth, the importance of the god of the sun (Greek and pagan) does not transcend that of the Christian deity. Nevertheless this intrusion of an Arcadian-like 'landscape' is likely to re-create and 'soften' the dogma of this earthly world conceived to be a Wasteland, a deformed reverse of Eden, a temporary station towards the 'other', true world. The dogmatic segregation, based on the metaphysical opposition of nature and culture/civilisation, paralleling that of innocence versus guilt and human vanity is not entirely suspended, but it is somehow bridged and questioned by the gaiety of a discourse, which displays both Arcadian and Christian characteristics (the God remains Christian, while Phoebus 'only' a "Creature"):

> "So he that saileth in this world of pleasure,
> Feeding on sweets, that never bit of th' sour,
> (...)
> But sad affliction comes and makes him see
> Here's neither honour, wealth, nor safety,
> Only above is found all with security."

<div align="right">(ed. Lemay, 1988, 220-221).</div>

Thus the fusion of Greek and Christian mythology may result in a specific discourse that constructs a pantheistic concept of Nature, pervaded by the divine presence, but having both spiritual and sensuous dimensions.

Certain Apollonian aspects are also maintained in the 'secular' version of Phoebus's myth. In some poems ("Another: Phoebus make haste", "A Letter to Her Husband, Absent upon Public Employment" or "To My Dear and Loving Husband") the absence of the sun grows to be the metaphor of the absent husband. In the rhetoric of this kind of personal narrative the presence (that of the husband) is conveyed by its own absence:

> "My Sun is gone so far in's zodiac,
> Whom whilst I joyed, nor storms, nor frost I felt"
> (...)
> "O Phoebus, hadst thou but thus long from thine
> Restrained the beams of thy beloved shine."

<div align="right">(ed. Lemay,1988, 223-225).</div>

This Apollonian myth written 'around' a husband may also be read as completing the myth of the "Tenth Muse" with that of the protector of arts and Muses (Apollo), succeeding in constituting a personal mythology, with the illusion of the reunited androgyn:

"If ever two were one, then surely we."(ed. Lemay, 1988, 223).

Anne Bradstreet was neither trialed, nor executed like Anne Hutchinson, so this paper does not tend to be a pleading for her. It is rather an attempt to turn away from interpreting her poetry by the 'stock-phrases' of a limited perception of Puritanism. Though she did not define herself irrespective of the patriarchal Puritan culture (and thus she acknowledged her relative dependence upon it), her Puritan femininity cannot not be enclosed in the ideological 'gender 'categories of her age. Nor can her Puritan poetry be restrained to the mere mediation of some Puritan ideology. It is rather a poetry of a permanent oscillation between the acceptance of Puritan authority, principles and dogmas and their immediate displacement and/or joyful disregard.

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SHORT CUTS - A FEW CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT THE STYLE OF ROBERT ALTMAN

IOANA URICARU

ABSTRACT. The career of the great American film-maker Robert Altman sits at the core of a brief analysis of the changes occurring in style and message of postmodern American film, generally. At the same time, the author of the paper evaluates the original traits of considerable artistic output viewed nowadays as a "classic" one.

The prodidious activity of the great American filmaker Robert Altman is viewed from the perspective of the "grammar" of the modernist American film. Focussing on *Short Cuts*, the author analyzes other films, bringing into limelight the similaities and diffrences among them. The main characteristic may be seen as being rooted in the "mechanics of the image".

Robert Altman (born on the 20th of February 1925 in Kansas City) is one of the most original, provocative and lasting American directors and screenwriters of the last three decades. He was never a piece of the Hollywood system, but managed to stay (or return) in the attention of film industry without surrendering a single inch of his independence. His career is very uneven: it started with the encouraging succes of his first scenario (co-written with Richard Fleischer and sold to RKO) and the right timing of his first movie – the documentary *The James Dean Story* which Altman directed, produced and edited in the year of its character death (1957). He then turned to television, and was fired by Alfred Hitchcock after he had worked for only two episodes of the series *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*. He nevertheless continued to direct episodes of successful TV series (such as *Bonanza, Combat, The Kraft Suspense Theatre*) and waited until 1969 to direct another feature - *That Cold Day in the Park* – which was equally rejected by audiences and critics; a year later though, Altman made *M.A.S.H.*, a satire of the life in the army during the Korean war that won the Palm d'Or at the Cannes Festival, received six Academy Award nominations and was a box-office success. Altman's career went on alternating extraordinary pieces of work - such as *Nashville* or *The Player* – with at least unfortunate

experiments – *Quintet* closed after less than a week of showing, and the insuccess of *Popeye* forced him to sell his own production company ("Lion's Gate").

The wide diversity of the themes and subjects of Altman's films led to a great diversity of his means of expression. His work was created during 30 years of continuous change in the cinematic language; he was credited as a director, producer, screenwriter and/or editor for feature films as well as for television productions and documentaries; he approached various genres – comedy, psichological film, western, detective movie, political satire, musical, science-fiction, biography – and gave each of them a personal and iconoclastic look, re-evaluating their patterns. As a result, it is extremely difficult – if not impossible – to outline the features of the Altmanian style that would be present throughout all his movies; but we can identify a few recurrent elements that are obviously representative for the filmmaker Robert Altman. And his 1993 film *Short Cuts* is undoubtedly one of his most representative works, resuming his concern about tipically American issues, his taste for a certain type of visual mechanics, his scrupulousness when it comes to the soundtrack and his genuine approach to narrativity and characters.

The screenplay of *Short Cuts* is written by Robert Altman and Frank Barhydt and it's based on Raymond Carver's "Short Cuts: Selected Stories" (Vintage Books, 1993). This is how Charles Deemer described the content of this book (in the Fall 1997 issue of the "Creative Writing" magazine):
<<Nine stories and one poem create the fabric for Short Cuts, the film:

(1) "Neighbors," in which Bill and Arlene Miller discover that housekeeping can lead to revealing their fantasy selves.

(2) "They're Not Your Husband," in which Earl, an unemployed salesman, overhears male customers talking about his waitress-wife, Doreen, and discovers that it matters to him what they say.

(3) "Vitamins," in which the male narrator's affair is confronted in a bar by an angry Vietnam vet.

(4) "Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?," in which Ralph Wyman forces his wife Marian to reveal the truth about a past indiscretion.

(5) "So Much Water So Close To Home," in which Claire, the narrator, is upset when her husband, Stuart, discovers a dead woman on a fishing trip and delays reporting it.

(6) "A Small, Good Thing," in which Ann and Howard Weiss lose their son after he is hit by a car on his birthday and later confront the baker who made the boy's unclaimed birthday cake.

(7) "Jerry and Molly and Sam," in which Al, a factory worker, gets rid of the family dog but is unable to woo it back again.

(8) "Collectors," a strange tale about a vacuum cleaner saleman's demonstration to a man who may or may not be the man of the house.

(9) "Tell the Women We're Going," about two good buddies, Bill Jamison and Jerry Roberts, who ditch their wives to pick up two teenagers but end up killing one of them.

(10) "Lemonade," a poem about cause, effect, and loss.>>

These compelling stories about ordinary American people and the not-so-ordinary twists of their destinies were turned into a brilliant ensemble piece about ten couples that cross each other lives guided by Altman's tender irony, realistic roughness and bittersweet cruelty. Of course, he modified some of Carver's separate stories in order to obtain a complex, coherent and functional narrative body to base his movie on. First, he moved it all from the blue-collar Portland enviroment to the more extravagant location of the Los Angeles suburbs, that are familiar to him. He subsequently changed the professions of some of the characters (i.e. Earl the salesman becomes a limousine driver, Al the factory worker is turned into a policeman, Howard is a TV anchor and Bill an aspiring make-up artist etc.), modified some of their actions and invented new relations, characters and events in order to achieve harmony and express his own outlook. The result is that *Short Cuts*, the movie, is more obvious and more ironic than Carver's minimalist, subtle fiction; it is also simmetrically balanced between the ten couples that eventually formed the "chorus" (in two cases, Altman also chose to focus not on the marital matters but on the father-son and respectively mother-daughter realtionships).

The Chorus Drama

This type of structure is Altman's favourite; he capitalized it in several films (*Nashville*, *A Wedding*, *Beyond Therapy*, *Short Cuts*, *Kansas City* are some of them), developing and bringing his technique to maturity. Basically, it consists in a special approach of two main elements – the narrativity and the main characters.

The story of the chorus drama results from the interweaving of several stories. Each of them has an autonomous core and one or more segments (which I would call "loops", because they emerge from the core and then are reintegrated in it) that are common to one or more of the other stories. As for the characters, each of them participates in one story - to which he or she is principal – and in one or more stories to which he/she is secondary. On the whole, the highlighting of every character tends to be on the same level of intensity, and the accent is put on the harmonization of the "chorus".

In *Short Cuts*, this features are pushed to the extreme – as a matter of fact, they are pushed towards an "extreme" equilibrium. The stories are equal in quantity of essence and the characters are equal in intensity – so we can't establish a leading thread or a main character. Furthermore, it is hard to establish whether a certain character is "positive" or "negative", a protagonist or an antagonist – most of them change their quality through the story. For example, the humiliated husband - who, at first, seems to be a victim - becomes an assassin, while the appearantly rude and vindictive bakerman proves himself to be a compassionate human being (it is also interesting that the innocent ones, such as the young girl and the little boy, end up dead). This is consistent with Altman's attitude towards his characters: he prefers to remain ambiguous (when not cynical) about their "goodness" or "badness"; and he definitely doesn't like heroes and protagonists. (In *The Player* he expressed this attitude through his lack of respect towards the institution of stardom and towards its rules, casting Bruce Willis and Julia Roberts in ironic, quasi-episodic parts, while dozens of other Hollywood stars were content with 10 to 15 seconds appearances). Even the jury of the Venice Film Festival couldn't decide whether any of the characters of *Short Cuts* was more prominent than the others – and subsequently awarded the Volpi Cup to the ensemble cast (as well as the Golden Lion for the best film of the Festival). This kind of choice is completely atypical of the mainstream American films that are entirely built on the protagonist-antagonist structure while the secondary conflicts and characters are designed to serve the main ones.

But this doesn't mean that any of the characters is neglected or less powerful – each couple has its moment of glory and intensity, that usually comes out of a confrontation between the partner characters. Some of them don't reveal their dramatic substance at once – it remains understated until the proper moment comes to highlight it. Altman has kept the autonomous core of each story intact – so every couple has its intimate scene that brings to light all the hidden (or the unknown) truths of the relation; so is the brilliant coming-home scene between Claire and Stuart. At the beginning, they are a happy couple that gets reunited after a short separation; they make love and then Stuart confesses what happened on his fishing trip: he and his buddies found the body of a dead girl in the river, but kept on trout-fishing for two days. When Claire hears this story, she immediately puts a distance between she and her husband, and seems to re-evaluate all their relationship. Basically, all the scene shows the evolving between two of Claire's lines: "You make me so happy" (in the beginning) and "You make me sick" (in the end). The destinies of both characters are affected by an event that, at first, didn't seem to be so

significantly important to them, and the twist of fate comes from where nobody had expected it. In this spirit, Altman draw two parenthesis of his own choice and manner, two covers that open and respectively close the movie and include all the characters. The opening one shows the city of Los Angeles by night, menaced by the impending invasion of the medfly. The matter is subject to a television editorial, while the helicopters spread all over the city a mysterious substance that should kill the flies. All the characters are more or less concerned with this announced catastrophy, that is menacing them from the background all along the film, but they are eventually stroke by a completely different misfortune: the concluding earthquake that nobody expected or even dreamed of. As the characters of each story are shown in a separate scene, and these scenes are connected through an external element (the helicopters in the beginning, the earthquake in the end), that brings a sense of artificiality, I would call this a "formal" or "demonstrative" linkeage.

Besides the simmetrical covers that bring the characters together, Altman also used other techniques for interweaving the stories. The most efficient – and obvious – is that of directly linking the characters through the state of fact. The jazz singer is living next to Howard and Ann. The little boy of Howard and Ann Finnegan is hit by the car that Doreen, the waitress, was driving. Doreen's daughter is the wife of Bill, the aspiring make-up artist, and Bill's best friend cleans the Finnegan's pool. The Finnegan boy is taken to the hospital and treated by doctor Ralph; Ralph's wife, Marian, makes the acquaintance of Claire and invites her and husband Stuart to come over for dinner. Marian's sister is married to Al, the policeman; Al has a mistress whose ex-husband is a helicopter pilot and spreads the anti-medfly stuff all over Los Angeles... The idea is not that Doreen hit a little boy with the car and this will completely change the Finnegan's destiny – the idea is that it was Doreen, a character of another story who provoked this accident. If we break these connections, Marian would have invited some other couple for dinner, but this "getting together" would still cause a major crisis between Marian and her jealous husband. On the contrary, if Altman would have chosen to identify the dead girl in the river as, let's say, the suicidal daughter of the jazz singer, that would have created one more link of this kind - but this didn't happened and the absence of this link doesn't change anything on the whole. It's just a number of choices that the screenwriter based his text's structure on, choices that were later confirmed by the characters' evolution. Altman could have not used these connections and he would have made ten separate sketches formally put together between two covers. I would call this technique a "first degree" linkeage.

There is a "second degree" type of linkeage, too - the one that comes out of the action. Once the statu quo was established, the characters evolve, the stories develop and invade each other's territory - and this is how the "loops" are formed. In fact, Altman imaginated a few episodes that bring together characters from different stories; the sequence of events that occur in a "loop" belongs to both stories involved, and the interactions inside those loops greatly contribute to the defining of characters and will influence their later actions. The fact that Jerry is at the Finnegans' place, cleaning their pool, is a "first degree" linkeage. Then he sees the daughter of the jazz singer in the neighbouring yard and spies on her through the fence; his cell-phone rings and his buddy, Bill, begins telling him an imaginary dirty story about doing the body make-up of an actress. Jerry listens to this while watching the young girl getting undressed, entering the pool, completely naked, and finally floating face down like a corpse in a desperate attempt to attract her mother's attention. And so, this loop brings together three characters from three different stories and their interaction strongly affects Jerry and gives important information to the viewer about the psichological structure of all the three characters.

Last but not least, an "associational" type of linkeage can be detected, which is more diffuse and works at the symbolic level, appealing to the imagination and psychological mechanisms of the viewer. It consists in using elements in a story that would find their echo in another story, in a way that has nothing to do with logic, story teling or characters' relationship. For example, the image of the girl floating in the pool, faking suicide, is similar to that of the dead girl found in the river by the fishermen. Seeing dr. Ralph in the hospital brings to mind that, in the very beginning of the movie, Earl – the limousine driver – finds a stetoscope that a doctor has forgotten in the back of the car. Both Al, the policeman, and Jerry, the pool-cleaner, have a bunch of noisy kids and try to cope with fatherhood. Bill makes his wife up to look like a violent murder victim, and Claire makes herself up to look like a clown. Marian is a painter and in another story the characters admire the paintings on the walls of their neighbours. And the most ironic of these associations is made between the the story in which Bill and his wife look after the house of a departed couple and the story of Stormy Waethers, the helicopter pilot, that visits his ex-wife's house while she's gone and turns all the objects inside inti little pieces. This is what could happen if you don't have neighbours to watch your home when you're away!

The Mechanics of Image

If we consider the camera in the process of movie-making, the elements of the shooting could be divided in two categories: the content of image (everything that happens in front of the camera: art direction, acting, lighting, direct sound) and the mechanics of image (everything that implies the camera: lens, focus, camera movements, framing). In *Short Cuts,* Altman preferred functional mechanics: camera movements that don't draw the attention of the viewer, framing and lenses that serve a clear description of action and highlight the performances of the actors. The camera is not obviously present in narration – it is rather an observer of the facts that discreetly notices significant details. And yet, Altman does repeatedly use a mechanic element which is meant to lead the viewer's look – and that is the zoom effect.

The advantages of the use of the zoom lens are widely appreciated in different fields of the electronic image. All electronic cameras (from amateur VHS or Hi 8 handycams to professional BETA cameras) are provided with zoom lenses only. Television shows, news reports, TV documentaries, sports broadcasting, live transmissions – they are all shot with such cameras, and it's difficult to find one that doesn't use the zoom effect at all. Therefore, the viewers are accustomed to this element of the visual grammar, they recognize it - even if they are not aware of the technical details explained above - and they associate it with the objectivity, dynamics and real-life atmosphere of such television broadcasting. When Altman used the zoom in "M.A.S.H", making abrupt framing changes (from general, extremely wide shot to medium shot, for example) in two seconds time, the result was quite shocking for the eye of the spectator (frankly, not quite so shocking for the spectator of the early 70's, when a temporary zoom trend had a few famous adepts –including Mike Nichols). But in the same time it created the illusion of reality, the impression that the scenes were shot by a news reporter that wandered among the M.A.S.H. tents, looking for his subject. And it perfectly served the idea that stands behind that movie – that is, showing a shocking and bizarre face of the war, with all those normal people trying not to lose their senses in that cruel and absurd world; and showing it in a truthful way.

In *Short Cuts*, Altman used a zoom effect that may not necessarily have been obtained with a zoom lens; technically, it could have been done with a wll-synchronized tracking shot, but this is not so important – the important thing is that it *looks* like a zoom. More precisely, it looks like a shot from a TV show: you can feel the camera coldly restraining the dimensions of the frame, concentrating on the character's close-up (or on some element of the background). It's a kind of movement that we have seen many times on TV, and

it has a very clear significance for us: watch out, I found something interesting that you might want to check out. This kind of intrusion into the intimacy of the character proved itself to be very effective, suggesting psychological features and processes that are coherent with the story. For instance, the character of Jerry: he is a big, placid and sometimes childish man, married with children and working for a pool-cleaning company. His wife took a home job so she can earn some money while taking care of the children: she works for an erotic hotline and talks awfully dirty on the phone, even while changing the dipers of her baby. Jerry assists to this situation and doesn't do anything to change it, while on the other hand he is assaulted by his friend, Bill, who tells him countless stories about sexual fantasies. In the end, the quiet Jerry would burst out with violence and kill a young girl that he has just met – and even if there's no apparent reason for this killing, the viewer doesn't question Jerry's motivation, because the repeated zoom-like movements towards Jerry's close-up have already warned us that there's something terrible, something menacing going on inside his head.

"Zoom lens – one which has the capacity of producing several focal lengths. A zoom lens is an elaborate combination of elements set up so that there is an infinite number of focal lengths between the shortest and longest lengths of the lens. This is accomplished by several moving elements inside the lens. Because the lens elements move, not all the aberrations can be successfully controlled in all the positions." (ap. The Language of Photography, by Mary Harwood)

The "normal" (or standard) lens for a 35 mm camera has a focal length of 45 to 55 mm and approximately corresponds to the normal view of the human eye. A long length lens (telephoto) has a focal length over 60 mm and creates the illusion of bringing the subject closer to the camera (and to the viewer), while a short length (also called wide angle) lens has a focal length between 18 and 35 mm and take in a larger area than the human eye normally does. When changing focal lengths with a zoom lens, one subsequently creates the so-called zoom effect – the objects in front of the camera seem to move closer or further to the viewer.

This kind of lens is seldom – almost never - used in cinematography. Even when a zoom lens is present in the cinematographer's case, this usually happens because its owner prefers to carry a smaller number of lenses, and uses the same variable focus lens for a close-up (75 mm) as well as for a two-character medium shot (35 or 50 mm), for example. In that case, the cinematographer doesn't have to put away the 75 mm lens and replace it with a 35 mm one between shots; he only has to twist the zoom lens in order to change the focal

length, and so he makes an economy of time and energy (which may be extremely valuable in certain circumstances). When the scene needs to be shot with various focal lengths in a short time (for example when using children or animals, or a particular kind of natural light, that may be lost at any moment), or when the position of the camera makes any adjustment difficult, the use of a zoom lens may be very comfortable and even necessary. But whenever it's possible, the cinematographer prefers to change lenses, as the one-focal length lenses are more accurate and, as pointed out above, do not produce uncontrolable aberrations. As for varying the distance between the viewer and the object during the shot, this is made by phisically moving the camera back and forth (tracking shot).

The Sound of Dialogue

One of the most characteristic feature of Altman's filmmaking is his carefully engineered soundtrack – and especially the overlapping dialogues, that are considered his "trademark" (Jason Ankeny). He was so obsessed with getting the maximum naturalness out of his dialogues, that he developed a special technique (at his "Lion's Gate" company) that allowed him to record live sound on the set. He first used this system when shooting *Nashville* and always used it (and its improved versions) afterwards. Basically, the advantage of live-recording sound is that it assures an authenticity of the dialogue that cannot be acquired through post-dubbing; the disadvantage is that you're risking to get on tape all the undesirable sounds and noises that occur during the shooting. Altman was one of the pioneers who decided to work on the improvement of sound-picking techniques rather than choose the more secure and comfortable option of post dubbing – and he did that because the naturalness of speaking of his characters is priceless to him. In real life, people often interrupt each other's speaking, they don't always finish their phrases and sometimes they just express themselves through interjections and exclamations – and this is what Altman wants from his actors. The volume and the direction of speaking are also important – words said in a low tone and not addressed right to the microphone but to the partner or to the floor may not be technically correct, but they contribute to the impression of reality. The way the actors speak – especially in a dialogue or in a group conversation – may be as important as the things they are saying; sometimes even more important. In *Short Cuts*, in a scene at the bakery, Claire the clown and Ann Finnegan are both speaking in the same time, each of them with a different person; their lines are overlapped and their voices have the same volume (normally, the sound engineer would have chosen a main conversation and placed it in a more favorable position on

the soundtrack, letting the other conversation to be heard underneath, like a buzzing), so all we can hear is fragments of sentences and scattered words; but yet we may perceive their tone and accent and so they are able to contribute to the portretization of the characters. And, more important, this scene has a magical real-life effect, almost like a candid camera show.

Conclusion

Robert Altman was always deeply concerned in the typically American issues, but always prefered to treat his fellow countrymen as individuals amidst a social and historical context rather than as component parts of a nation. He rejects the whole idea of combat between "hero" and "villain", never loses compassion for his characters and carefully reveals their human complexity. Altman keeps his distance from any ideology, is allergic to demagogy and cultivates irony as a precious antidote to manipulation. He is one of the few American directors that managed to acquire indisputable respect and appreciation in film industry without making any compromise - Woody Allen is another, and Quentin Tarantino could become one. Looking for greatness in the least obvious places and disclosuring the intensity of everyday life, he reveals a fresh perspective: size doesn't necessarily matters, and identification could be as appealing as evasion is.

Films directed by **Robert Altman**:

The James Dean Story (1957, doc.)
The Delinquents (1957)
Countdown (1968)
Nightmare in Chicago (1968, TV)
That Cold Day in the Park (1969)
Brewster McCloud (1970)
MASH (1970)
McCabe and Mrs Miller (1971)
Images (1972)
The Long Goodbye (1973)
California Split (1974)
Thieves Like Us (1974)
Nashville (1975)
Buffalo Bill and the Indians, or Sitting Bull's History Lesson (1976)
3 Women (1977)
A Wedding (1978)

Quintet (1979)
H.E.A.L.T.H. (1979)
A Perfect Couple (1979)
Popeye (1980)
Come Back to Five and Dime Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean (1982)
Streamers (1983)
Secret Honor (1984)
Laundromat (1985, TV)
Beyond Therapy (1986)
Fool for Love (1986)
Aria (1987)
Basements (1987, TV doc.)
The Dumb Waiter (1987, TV)
Room (1987, TV)
O.C. and Stiggs (1987)
The Caine Mutiny Court Martial (1988, TV)
Tanner '88 (1988)
Vincent and Theo (1990, TV)
The Player (1992)
Short Cuts (1993)
Pret-A-Porter (1994)
Remembrances of Kansas City Swing (1996, doc.)
Kansas City (1996)
The Gingerbread Man (1998)
Cookie's Fortune (1999)

IMMIGRATION IN INDUSTRIAL AND POSTINDUSTRIAL AMERICA

MIHAI-VICTOR STOICA

ABSTRACT. The paper looks into the question of immigration in industrial and postindustrial America, attempting to constitute an overview upon the issues of the status of American urban communities and cultural stereotypes.

United States is a country of immigration due to historical circumstances and due to myths regarding its affluent society. The aim of this essay is to examine certain patterns of immigration to industrial and post-industrial United States and the cultural interaction between the migrants and other categories of American society.

I will also try to examine the status of the immigrants in the American urban communities and to look at the cultural stereotypes developed around the ethnicity of these migrants.

Migration is an old social phenomenon in the history of mankind. Mass migrations were the result of natural catastrophes or forced displacements of populations usually over relatively short distances. Only in the modern age, mass migration became rather a voluntary than a forced migration. Also the Industrial Revolution improved, developed, increased and sped up the transportation contributing to an unprecedented mass migration over long distances. The largest mass migration from Europe to United States was the so-called Great Atlantic Migration caused by the failure of potatoe crops in Ireland and Germany. According to Britannica (1999) between 1820 and 1910 about 37 millions Europeans entered the United States.

Another important wave of European migrants came during and post World War Two. As a direct result of world system evolution the migration followed the pattern of a long or short distance migration from undeveloped or developing countries migrants moving into the industrialized countries of the West, including United States. Following the same pattern, a migration from South to North can also be observed. According to the same source (Britannica, 1999) since the 1960s more than 10 millions of immigrants were legally

admitted as permanent immigrants while another 8 millions of illegal immigrants can be estimated for the same period.

The study of migration was a difficult task for American social scientists because migration is a complex area of study requiring multidisciplinary analyses. The investigation of migration could be performed using complementary approaches employing anthropology, sociology, demography, human geography, political economy, international relations and even semiotics.

The study of migration had produced certain interesting developments advancing social sciences like understanding the modernity, the issue of industrialization, rural-urban social mobility, the becoming of urban working class, social and familiar networks, the study of workforce market, interethnic relations etc. The fathers of social sciences, Durkheim, Marx, Weber, Toennies and Simmel investigated these issues. Even contemporary researches on post-modernity, post-industrialization, class fragmentation, inter-relation of political and cultural systems cannot be conducted by neglecting the migration. In the last decades the study of migration was strictly specialized and circumscribed to interethnic relations, minority and racial studies. In this process of "specialization" certain aspects regarding the interconnection between different social sciences studying the migration were lost, neglected or integrated. Bottomley (1992) asserted that a comprehensive study of migration have to interrogate the cultural composition of post-industrial societies with heterogeneous populations, the interaction between these populations and various source countries and cultures, and the fluctuation of social power relation.

The American sociology was developed in US under the influence of American Association of Social Sciences founded in 1850 by social reformists which according to Birnbaum (1971) "...were terrified by the suburbs where immigrants dwell and were determined to explore the dimension of trash before its cleaning".

Very influent in this context was the work of two sociologists belonging to Chicago School, Park and Burgess, whose "Introduction to Science of Sociology" (1921) introduced concepts like *status* and *role* of latter importance in Parsons systemic theory. Though Park and Burgess primarily examined the competition among groups and individual actors, Park worked out "a cyclical theory of interracial relations" somewhat mechanical. According to Park, the interaction between groups can be resumed to the following phases: competition, conflict, cooperation and adjustment (cf. Newman, 1973). This theory consist the basis for assimilation policies justifying the melting pot of American culture. Thomas and Znaniecki's study (*Polish Peasant in Europe and Europe*, 1918) and the famous Wirth's book, the ghetto (1928) had

demonstrated that assimilation policies, the exclusion and oppression conducted to the transformation of the immigrant in industrial worker by loosing certain ethnical attributes.

First American sociologists that explored the migration were rather interested in individuals and small groups than in the societal structure. They also saw immigration as a temporary phenomenon or as an evidence of cultural pluralism without implying an intrinsic inequality. This kind of culturalism was generalized supporting the study of migration and settlement by measuring the attitudes and values and neglecting the economic and political system constrains that preceded, prescript and predefined the immigrant statute. Park & Burgess (1921, p. 735) defined assimilation as a process of interpenetration and fusion where persons or groups achieve other persons' or groups' memories, feelings and attitudes; and through the sharing of experience and history they are incorporated with these in a common cultural life. Park and Burgess regard these memories, feelings and attitudes rather as freely shared than being defined by opposition, hierarchy and exclusion. They are not used as distinctive marks or symbolic power. However, assimilation policies inexorably include attempts of destroying and devaluing the memories and attitudes of the immigrants. Gutman (1976) remarked that the transformation of the immigrant in the industrial worker was a process that sometimes faced firm cultural opposition. He cited an official guidebook specially written for Jewish immigrants in 1890 that advised them "... to forget their customs, past and ideals, not to rest, to move fast, to become enterprisers".

In 1945 Warner and Srole published a comprehensive comparative study *The Social Systems of the American Ethnics Groups* that was an important milestone for the study of migration in USA. They emphasized on the importance of economic security, "the only security that a stranger could possess in a new social world" (p. 7) where the capital and goods grant the status and power.

Warner and Srole also remarked that the motive of migration is another important factor slowing down or accelerating status mobility. Other factors could be identified in the family structure, the distance from the source country, the size of the ethnical group, the similarities between the host and the guest country populations. Warner and Srole study is somehow antagonistic with the ideas of the most influent sociologist of contemporary American sociologist, Talcott Parsons, who in his complex and comprehensive systemic theory (*The Social System*, 1951), deliberately ignored ethnical divisions reducing them to class and gender divisions, to the institutionalisation of role expectations and to the integration of the stable social interaction systems, on short, to the problem of maintaining social order. Only in his further writings, Parson proved a deep

understanding of the ethnical divisions of the American social system, surpassing his social engineering inclinations.

Writing in the l960s C. Wright Mills criticized two major tendencies within the American sociology, the parsonian theory (called Grand Theory) and the *abstract empirism,* which employs statistical methodology but usually fails to provide a sustainable theory. The links among the Grand Theory, methodology and data are hardly performed during these years. Mills noticed that one of the reasons behind these divergences consists in the generalized exclusion of Marxist thought that could redirected the focus on struggle for social power and for the role played by material and spiritual interests on society. From the migration studies point of view these two tendencies encouraged the marginalization of migration studies. The parsonian systemic theory led to an inevitable incorporation and assimilation of ethnical divisions within American society while the separation between theoretical and empirical studies on migration led to the birth of the subdivision of sociology in *ethnical studies* (e.g.) where description and the interest for details could fail to provide questions and answers about the nature of society or about political and social relations where ethnicity is a major feature.

Certain important studies raised this type of questions in the beginning of 1960s (Gordon - Assimilation in American Life - 1964, Glazer & Moynihan – Beyond the Melting Pot, 1963). Glazer & Moynihan considered that ethnical groups did not melt in the expected way but they re-formed by transforming the sources of their identities. Gordon took in account the social classes promoting the idea of equal civil rights regardless of race, religion or ethnical background. Sennet and Cobb developed in 1972 (The Hidden Injuries of Class) a harsh critic to integration of immigrants in the lower industrial classes. They started with the assumption that material wealth is feeding the political rest finding the grounds for the historical isolation of an American working class that traced its origin from immigration. They also argued that this industrial working class having its origin in immigration had the social network oriented toward the source country and due to hostility found in the process of replacing native workers also re-oriented it towards family life and ethnical community. Through an extensive study about the consequences of class structure on American society, authors described the integrity of migrants in a world severely different from that within the ethnical enclaves.

Authors also noticed that the relatively meritocratic character of American society also contributed to a political and residential ethnical identification in spite of a class identification. The ethnical segregation led to the development of so called *ethnical urban villages.*

Steinberg (1981) reiterated many of previous mentioned themes. He emphasized that cultural differences marked the beginning and not the end of social analysis. The investigation of their historical and social sources became in this context of serious importance. According to Steinberg the literature of ethnical pluralism gave only a slightly significance to the problem of inequality even when pluralist model assumed a basic equality. When ethnicity coexists with class's disadvantages, these are powerful stimuli for immigrant ethnical groups to be assimilated in the mainstream culture in order to improve their upward social mobility. The ethnical subcultures' destruction is not only a consequence of external pressures but also a part of the existential *quest* of immigrants in order to obtain the *success* and sometimes *the survival.* According to Steinberg, the last ethnical myth consists in the "belief that cultural symbols of the past can ensure more than a comfortable illusion protecting them from the discontents of the present".

Another important shady on international migration was completed by Piore (1978). He developed a multifaceted approach on migrant workers and post-industrial societies. This vision allows a broader perspective on international politics and global economy with the interrelation between the source and destination country of migrants and also permits focusing on immigrants' life and background. Piore examined the "poverty culture" and enlarged the study of migration using economic theories on workforce migration. He stressed on the necessity of an alternative approach of analysing workforce migration towards considering the socio-economic behaviour. He identified a status dualism within the migrants as *homo oeconomicus* in their immigration countries and themselves in their source countries. The money they earn could be used for improving their status at home and not only in the immigration society. This aspect is of an extremely importance for source society because through the performance of migrants in achieving upward social mobility, the American society (e.g.) is re-evaluated and re-considered becoming the preferred destination for other migrants. Piore also pleaded for the necessity of detailed anthropological studies on immigrants' groups in order to obtain a better understanding of integration and communitarian relations and to impede the immigration of those individuals placed outside a structured social context that are forced to develop such a context.

Consequently Piore accomplished a more profound analysis where he is trying to find solutions for reversing the sense of migration by the development of genuine *entrepreneurial social networks* of migration that can lead to return of *old migrants* in their home countries and their replacement by new migrants. This process has to contribute to the improvement of source societies

development that will finally discontinue their status as emigration countries becoming post-industrial societies and consequently immigration countries.

Waters (1990) considered that ethnical identification is a complex process that could be accomplished by self-identification, by the declared ethnical identity of parents, by physical appearance, by spoken language, by particularity of surnames. She demonstrated that in contemporary American society are many peoples that assumes more than a single ethnical identity. Usually, an easy ethnical identification could be realized only for the first generation of immigrants coming from an isolated ethnical enclave. According to Britannica (1999) the current usage of the team *ethnic* confines to the descendants of the newest immigrants but also takes a larger connotation by its applying to "all groups unified by their cultural heritage and by their experience in the New World".

Next I will use the largest connotation of the term in order to identify main ethnical groups of industrial and post-industrial America and to trace their origin in the immigration waves.

Yankees formed in the 19th century an ethnical group distinguished by common religion and customs inherited from the original Puritan migrants. Originally settled in New England, Yankees spread in New York, North of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa and Kansas. Yankees mainly consist of English and Scotch-Irish Protestants. They were united in strong communities with solid religious values and a trust in the value of education offered them the opportunity to achieve important positions in business, in literature and law as well in public institutions. For a long time they identified themselves with the Republican party.

Another ethnical group were the Southern whites and their successors that by contrast with the Yankees continued to be a rural population as migration brought them to Tennessee, Kentucky, Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas. This Southern population was urbanized only later when the industrialization of the South became inevitable in the 20th century; they also preserved affiliation with the Democratic Party until the l960s.

Contrary to generalized misconceptions the colonial population also contained other elements that long preserved their identities as ethnical groups. The *Pennsylvanian Germans* unified by their common religion and language succeeded in preserving their own way of life after three centuries. The Great 19th century German migrations contained a variety of elements that dispersed both in the urban and rural areas of the West. However, in the industrial and post-industrial society the ethnic ties of this population become rather sentimental than effective. That can also be extended to Scotch, Irish, Welsh,

and Dutch populations, whose colonial centres received some strengthening after 1800 but who gradually adapted and assimilated by to the ways of the larger groups among whom they lived. As Waters noticed (1990) the individuals belonging to these ethnicities are usually extremely mixed but they like to identify themselves according to certain desirable or prescribed roles they play in the society.

A strong reiteration of assumed ethnicity was found among some Irish descendants. Roman Catholicism acted as a powerful force for the cohesion of those Irish groups that where small groups before 1840 but where reinforced thereafter by mass migration. Irish ethnics were socially heterogeneous displaying a diversity of social statuses and a degree of conformity to mainstream American culture. Waters (1990) remarked that the Irish attachment to their home culture could range from the identification with IRA to rejection of Irish flag displaying on St. Patrick's Day.

Some coherence and a degree of unity was preserved among the successors of the Norwegian, Danish, Swedish, Finnish, and Icelandic immigrants of the 19th century due to distinctive language and religion as well as their relative grouping in the settlement process. They succeeded to transmit the sense of identity over the second generation but common features with the mainstream culture made them the subject of a comfortable assimilation.

The religion and the particularity of their relatively inaccessible culture allowed the American Jews to preserve a clear-cut ethnical identification even when this identification incited negative stereotypes and preconceptions. Also the Jewish community was reinforced by an important afflux of population from the nazi Germany and latter on from the Eastern European countries and Soviet Union. Also the USA attitude of supporting the Israel preserved the group's loyalty to American values.

The re-configuration of power in Eastern and Central Europe determined a significant migration from these parts of the world. Waters (1990) remarked that in 70s and 80s ethnic becomes synonymous with the Americans of Polish, Italian, Lithuanian, Bohemian, Slovakian, Romanian, Russian etc. origin that have their ethnicity reiterated by the new migration waves. They were sometimes considered as second stock ethnics. They are usually settled in the Northern and Midwestern cities and share Catholic or Greek-Orthodox religion and middle class positions. Most of them were industrial workers, especially half skilled and unskilled working class but also some clerical or professional workers were among them. The neighbourhoods where they live have their roots in the "Little Italys" and "Polish Hills" established by the industrial immigrants. Even if they are not a proper community they share a

relatively common cultural heritage and also have common interests, needs, and problems they have to surpass in the present day United States. This type of white ethnics are concentrated in the inner cities and are affected by high crime rates, deteriorating municipal services, inferior schools, and urban unrest. They fear losing their jobs and neighbourhoods to other ethnic groups. They are immigrants or inheritors of immigrants that believe in a so-called American dream promoting the individualism. They saw their road to success paved by their own individual efforts. This type of immigrants attributes the poverty to the individual failure and not to the injuries of the social milieu. They can be compared to the interwar Italian type of immigrant community described by the study of Gary Mornino on the Italian community in Tampa (We Work Hard and Took Care of Our Own - 1982). Their attitude makes them very unsympathetic to those asking the reformation of American society, especially in the 60s. They conflicted with the black ethnics and during the Vietnam War they were regarded as a conservator group that sent their children to fight in the war and considered the peace movement as anti-American.

As the ethnics have become more vociferous the public has become conscious of the problems and concerns of the urban ethnic minorities and stopped dismissing them as merely "racist" or "uneducated." Ethnic groups have begun to be included in the planning and administration of social-welfare programs of government or foundations, and an ethnic identity is no longer an attribute of un-Americanism. Nowadays it has become legitimate to be an "ethnic."

Blacks are the largest ethnical group in America. The afflux of black population was quite marginal in the industrial and post-industrial age. The civil rights movements were the result of black's emancipation. They could not be anymore only second-class citizens in a pluralistic society where the white newcomers had sometimes more rights and opportunities than the black ethnics. Their discontent with mainstream American culture produced the separatism that replaced the integration as major objective leading to a new sub-culture and sometimes even a counter-culture within American society. Nowadays, the penetration of an imported Muslim religion in the black ethnical group, especially among the black nationalists and radicals, is an important social phenomenon that may lead to an unprecedented religious segregation among Americans.

Spaniards appears to be the largest ethnic group in America. According to Britannica (1999) 7% of United States population has Spanish surnames. But actually this population cannot form a coherent ethnical group. Some of them are the descendants of Spanish population from areas that where some time ago

part of the Mexico (Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, and California) others are legal or illegal immigrants from Mexico and other Latin-American countries. They are also Puerto Ricans (Puerto Rico island is an American State) that come to mainland in order to improve their social mobility. Cubans were migrating in a large number in 1959 when Castro took the power and they regularly reinforced the Hispanic ethnical group by latter migrations. Following the example of black activism and growing self-confidence has induced Mexican-Americans and Puerto Ricans to improve the group influence through political means and social organization. There is a lack in their national organization but their local grouping had a positive impact on achieving better social policies and even bilingual educational programs. The class division is also vertical within this ethnic group, but in spite of substantial cultural differences their sub culture appears to be compatible with the American mainstream culture.

Asian-Americans were the group considered by numerous social scientists as extremely non integrationist within American society. The attitudes and preconceptions regarding the Asian-American group were always extremely negative, as Chicago School had demonstrated. Chinese arrived on the West coast in the industrial age despite constant barriers against their migration. The 1924 Immigration Act definitively disqualified them as legal migrants, but their entrance continued through well-developed social networks. During the Second World War the loyalty of American citizens of Japanese origin were largely questioned, but since the end of the war the attitude toward this community was improved especially in the post-industrial era when Japan became an important partner for US trade.

I will end this approach on migration and ethnical distribution in industrial and post-industrial America with some considerations regarding the barrier imposed against immigration by the United States. The United States first employed an anti-migration policy in 1924 with the Immigration Act. But in 1862 there was promulgated a law that confined the transportation of Chinese immigrants on US ships. Also on the last decades of 19th century several laws passed in the Congress limiting the immigration of workforce only to those attaining contracts before their arrival in the United States. The mass migration came to an end in 1924 with the previous mentioned *Immigration Act* that fixed the famous quota system for American legal immigration. The quota was of 150,000 immigrants and remained fixed until 1968.

Only the system of national origin of immigrants was changed during this period. At the beginning the quota system was fixed upon the ethnical structure of United States in 1920s. This quota system highly favoured Great Britain, Ireland, and Germany that received more than 70 percent of the quota

but only rarely completed this quota because of the favourable circumstances in home countries. In 1965 quota was liberalized and in 1968 the quota system was reformed, a 170,000 annual immigrant visas were established for nation outside Western Hemisphere and 120,000 for those from Western Hemisphere. Other source of immigrants came from the refugees and asylum seekers that received treatment under the right of asylum. Increasing numbers have entered from repressive regimes in Eastern Europe, the Caribbean, Central and South America and Asia. Illegal immigration is the main concern of US immigration policies. The majority of illegal immigrants come through the insufficient secured Mexican border, but there is an important category of overstayers that legally entered the United States but become illegal immigrants by overstaying beyond the expiration of their visas or by changing their employment status. The *Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986* allowed most illegal aliens who have resided in the US regularly since January l, 1982, to apply for legal status. Also, the law prohibits employers from hiring illegal aliens and mandates penalties for violations. This law was intended to regularize the existent illegal migration and to prevent the future unauthorized migration. This law also changed the quota system by according only 55,000 immigrant visas through a state run immigration program (diversity visa - DV) that has to correct the preferential system of previous accorded immigrant visas that favoured the most recent immigrants and particularly and diminished opportunities for the Europeans formerly favoured. There is also supported the immigration through the family reunification and special immigrant visas are easily accorded to a post-industrial highly specialized workforce. The patterns of migration in the post-industrial societies postulate that the mobility of highly qualified workers is increasing in the globalised world system and not only in the US. According to Waldinger (1997) "... more than 160,000 foreign engineers and scientists, for example, immigrated to the United States as permanent residents between 1966 and 1984, and annual rates of immigration among engineers and scientists appear to have grown in recent years. Also American universities housed an ever-growing foreign student population. Between 1954-1955 and 1993-1994, for example, the foreign-student population grew from 34,232 to 449,749. For many, indeed most foreign-students, a stay in American higher education is often a prelude to permanent residence in the United States. Once on campus, foreign students make connections to U.S. citizens and employers that in turn provide the means and the incentives to settle in the U.S. for the long term." These figures proved that immigrant professionals have become an important presence in certain areas of US economy. Waldinger (1997) remarked that a survey of 305 major companies established that foreign citizens

and naturalized US citizens count 20% of their scientific and engineering employment. These policies of attracting already qualified migrants faced the accusation of "brain-draining". The United States likewise other post-industrial states are employing elites from developing or undeveloped countries spending only few moneys on their education. They also appropriate these countries of valuable specialists necessary for their development. The critics of American system use the analysis of these immigration policies in order to underline the American cultural imperialism.

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AMERICA AT THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW CENTURY-CHALLENGES, FIGURES AND POLICIES

LUMINIŢA MATEI

Introduction

In this century, the economies of advanced industrial countries are currently undergoing substantial technological transformations. These rapid changes are unprecedented in economic history and are the consequence of the technological innovation that can be realized in the production of the IT equipment.

A direct consequence of this fact will be in the near future an increased demand for workers with adequate skills to operate in the new environment. How these elements can affect education and labor market in the medium term? How is America standing from this point of view?

In the last years, United States registrated the longest economic expansion in the history. The figures are quite impressive – in 1999, America had 18 million new jobs, wages were rising more than twice than the rate of inflation and they had the lowest unemployment since 1957. The budget, for the first time in three decades was balanced. In this respect, from $290 billion in 1992 in 1999, it was a surplus of $70 billion. America begins the new century with over 20 million new jobs; the fastest economic growth in more than 30 years; the lowest unemployment rates in 30 years; the lowest poverty rates in 20 years; the lowest African American and Hispanic unemployment rates on record.

Will America still be a superpower? Will America face the challenges of the globalization process?

I will try to present some facts regarding the current situation of America, starting with the trade situation and continuing with some area I consider important or having a real impact in the future.

1. Trade

A country can be defined as an economic superpower taking in consideration the volume of trade and its impact on the international market. America proved this century that has the biggest economy with an enormous impact on the international market. But nobody could predict at the beginning of the 90's that America will register such an economic boom.

The US trade deficit in goods and services was around $15.5bn in November 1998. Even with one month still to be counted for 1998, the deficit has already hit a record high of $153.9bn, edging out the old record of $153.4bn set in 1987.

US exports fell by 1.9 per cent in November, to $78.7bn, with sales of aircraft, computer equipment and farm products declining sharply. Imports rose 0.4 per cent to an all-time high of $94.1bn, with the biggest increases registered in imports of vehicles, furniture and telecommunications equipment.

The US trade deficits for 1998 and 1999 are caused by the fall in demand in Asia. While trade deficits with Japan and China actually improved slightly in November, the trend for the first 11 months of 1998 showed those deficits running well ahead of the previous year's pace. For China, the deficit totaled $52.9bn for the year up to and including November, up 15.5 per cent from a year earlier. For Japan, the trade deficit hit $58.2bn for the same year, an increase of 14 per cent.

Steel imports from Japan fell by $47.3m to $306m in November. However, for the first 11 months of 1998, Japanese steel imports more than doubled, totaling $2.9bn.

The Clinton administration has threatened that if December trade figures do not show a substantial decline in Japanese steel imports, it will take action against Tokyo, possibly in the form of stiff duties on Japanese steel under the anti-dumping laws.

2. Informational society

On the 2nd of June 2000, in Berlin, President Clinton announced $128 million in federal grants to help the teachers to be "as comfortable with a computer as they are with a chalk board".

In the same week, in Washington, some of the US top high-tech executives told Congress today that improving research and education are the keys for driving new technology in the decades to come.

It is very interesting to observe that Europe is also taking very strong initiatives in this field. These days, in Brussels very often you hear about: E-commerce, e learning, e-Europe.

Some European politicians affirmed that all these initiatives are in accordance with the US policies in the area and in fact are a stronger reaction from the European Commission to the advance taken by United States in this area.

Internet penetration in Europe, a very important indicator for development of the Information society shows that Europe is now the fastest growing market for Internet development. But European Internet penetration represents just one third of the US penetration rate. European Internet users spend much less times online, less than a quarter of the rate of US users. Telephone charges are a barrier to Internet use in Europe, where telephone pricing is based on time usage, whereas, in the US, local calls are generally charged at a flat monthly rate.

Improvements in technology have been a major factor in U.S. growth over the past half-century, ranking in importance with increases in physical and human capital. Over the past 15 years, however, new workplace technology appears to possess a strong "high-skill", which has led to an increase in earnings for the best educated and most highly skilled workers relative to other workers. It is a major cause of the earnings and income gap between upper and lower income workers and their families.

We are in the midst of a technological revolution in information and communications that will reshape the world of work in fundamental ways. Already, the potential of these technologies to shrink distance, create new market niches, reduce the significance of "going to work", and replace face-to-face contact is visible. The possibilities of working at home, shopping at home, and establishing virtual companies whose employees are scattered worldwide, with products and services accessible only on-line, are all being explored.

3. Competitiveness in the 21st Century and the labor market

The most significant force driving change in the American workforce during the next 20 years is demographic. Rather, the more significant trend is that in the next 25 years, the U.S. population of working age will grow much more slowly than in the past 25 to 30 years.

With the retirement of the work force in the 21st century, for the first time in the American history the replacement workforce apparently, taking in consideration the analyses will not have significantly higher levels of education

and skills than their predecessors. The statistics shows that legal immigrants accounted for half of all workforce growth in the 1990s. More than one-third of immigrants has no high school diploma, twice the level of native-born Americans.

The expert affirm that a strategy to increase the human capital of today's workforce is critical to more rapid growth in earnings' levels, improved business competitiveness, and faster U.S. economic growth. But it cannot counterbalance entirely the result of individual decisions-to leave school early, to be a single parent, to divorce, and to work few hours.

New immigrants will be a major component of U.S. labor force growth during the next 20 years. Large numbers of new immigrants will allow the U.S. to grow faster than it would if they were not in the labor force. But existing immigration law leads to the entry of many immigrants with very low levels of education. Without good English language skills, and with very little education, immigrants comprise an increasing share of all minimum wage workers.

During the period of rapid labor force growth spanning the last two decades, the character of the labor force also changed in important ways. White males have become a less dominant share of the labor force, as minorities and women have increased their representation. For minorities, growth has come as a result of more rapid growth of the working age population combined with increases in participation. For Hispanics, and to lesser extent Asians, immigration has also been a significant source of growth.

For women, the driving force for change has been the dramatic increase in labor force participation. Current forecasts for 2020 suggest that women may will be a majority by that time. Increased labor force involvement by married women, who have increased their year-round hours of work as well as their earnings, has led to substantial increases in the economic well-being of married-couple families.

Changes in the industrial structure of employment, with nearly all net job creation occurring in the service sector, has helped to accommodate the increased labor force involvement of women. Many of the service industries in which employment has grown are relatively intensive users of part-time workers.

Increasingly, U.S. firms and workers compete in an integrated global marketplace. This is obvious in the goods-producing parts of the U.S. economy, such as the auto industry, where even the definition of an "American-made car" is increasingly unclear. Sub-assemblies and parts for many American-badged cars like Pontiac are increasingly imported, while Mercedes, BMW, and Honda produce nearly all components of some models in the United States. Traditionally, trade has less affected the services sector, but that is changing as barriers to trade in financial services, telecommunications, insurance, and

information services are eliminated through trade agreements and new technologies.

4. International Educational Policy

President Clinton issued on April 19, 2000 an executive memorandum setting a comprehensive national policy for educating U.S. citizens internationally. Developed collaboratively by the Department of State and Department of Education, the President's directive renews and strengthens the federal government's commitment to support international education in the broadest sense, and calls on U.S. educational institutions, state and local governments, non-governmental organizations and the business community to make a similar commitment.

Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright said, "U.S. international leadership, competitiveness, and national security are increasingly dependent on international and cross-cultural awareness on the part of U.S. Citizens Our foreign policy goals are enhanced immeasurably by international education - both American scholarship abroad and international leaders who have studied in the U.S. and consequently better understand our culture and system of government. I have a deep commitment to international education from my time as a professor. I have seen these programs work. "The Secretary of Education, in partnership with state governments, academic institutions and the business community, will strengthen programs to build international expertise in U.S. institutions. The goal is to make international education an integral component of U.S. undergraduate education and - through graduate and professional training and research - to enhance the nation's capacity to produce the international and foreign language expertise needed for U.S. global leadership and security. The Departments of State and Education will work with schools and colleges to encourage more students from other countries to study in the United States, and to promote increased study abroad by U.S. students. Nearly 500,000 foreign exchange students are currently studying at American colleges and universities and some 114,000 American students are studying abroad.

The directive calls on the State Department to ensure that international educational exchange programs, including the Fulbright program, receive the support they need to fulfill their mission of promoting mutual understanding. In cooperation with other agencies, schools and colleges and the private sector, both departments also will promote the wise use of technology internationally.

America reacts in this way to the European programmes in the field of education and training which now includes a series of Eastern countries.

European programmes, such Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci have this main objective of promoting cross-border cooperation and exchange of students, professors, trainers or young workers. Human resource became today the most important tool for development and no country can afford to ignore this trend and reality.

5. Foreign policy

This century was called "the American century" especially because of the dominant position on the markets. The questions is now if will still remain after 2000. Europe, and probably China - assuming transition to an acceptable form of democracy can obtain a comparable status. India, by then with much the world's largest population, will be a significant factor in the world. However, national governments, including the "superpowers", will have less capacity to determine events in an environment altered by the globalization.

A discussion of trends proposed by William C. Haropp may suggest some directions of the future:

- The United States is not only the largest economy at present but it is the most dynamic and most productive, the clear leader in defense technology as well as information/communication technology (which is the dominant sector in the age of globalization)

- Population places the United States in the future around 300 million, the European Union (current members only) at 291 million, China at 1,322 million and India at 1,707 million.

- A united Europe has proved a gradual process (the Treaty of Rome was signed in 1957), and the expansion towards East is more difficult than accepted

- Much of the new international agenda will not respond to military or economic power, but only to communication, persuasion, and shared commitment among nations. Now, however, when the United States, as the lone superpower, exerts its influence for a cause it believes to be in the common interest, it may be criticized for arrogance and resisted for behaving like a hegemon.

- Smaller powers or entities can threaten the global power with terrorism or by developing weapons of mass destruction, or can frustrate it by refusing to cooperate (Saddam Hussein's Iraq, Indian and Pakistani

nuclear capability, the Arab/Israeli peace process, wars in Central Africa, narcotics production and trade, global warming);

- Professor Francis Fukuyama, wrote nine years ago that the great ideological debates which had marked mankind were at an end as the entire world was moving toward liberal democracy. At the close of the twentieth century, there are major holdouts - the Islamic countries generally, China, some other parts of Asia, and most of Africa - but the weight of history does seem clearly on the side of democracy and the open market economy.

- Globalization and the headway of technology will vastly change the world in the first half of the twenty-first century: the routine operation of large corporations across borders and continents, the increasingly interdependent global financial system, personal (and portable) telecommunication capability, the expansion of the Internet and of transnational communication links among individuals and groups with common interests, the growth of multinational non-governmental organizations pursuing defined political, social, or economic objectives, more rapid and cheaper transportation, the increasing international mobility of labor as well as capital, perhaps also the dissemination of English as the world language. This evolution will make it more and more difficult to sustain authoritarian regimes insulated from the relatively open world system; globalization will also challenge and almost certainly diminish the authority of governments.

- However, genetic engineering in particular, and the cloning of human beings, could have vast and unpredictable consequences for international relations, as it will for human society altogether.

Having these trends in mind we normally put a question. Does have America the capacity to deal with the problems ?

Many of the specialists affirm that America will not be alone in the international environment of foreign affaires. Recent elected Russian President, Mr. Putin showed that Rusia can have an important position in different negotiation and the last period when America was alone on the world of superpower is forgotten. We also need to take in consideration China, with its enormous capacity, economic and military to intervene especially in Asia.

The relationship between United States and China is fast becoming very important in conditions generated by the US plans to remain a major Asia-Pacific actor.The United States has a clear interest in seeing the emerge of a

China that is prepared to act with restraint, both beyond its borders and toward its own citizens.

America will remain a superpower but will have to face the challenge of the future, a future which is quite impredictable, a future where globalization can be a terrible arm against non-democratic regimes and in some parts of the world a factor of economic destabilization.

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