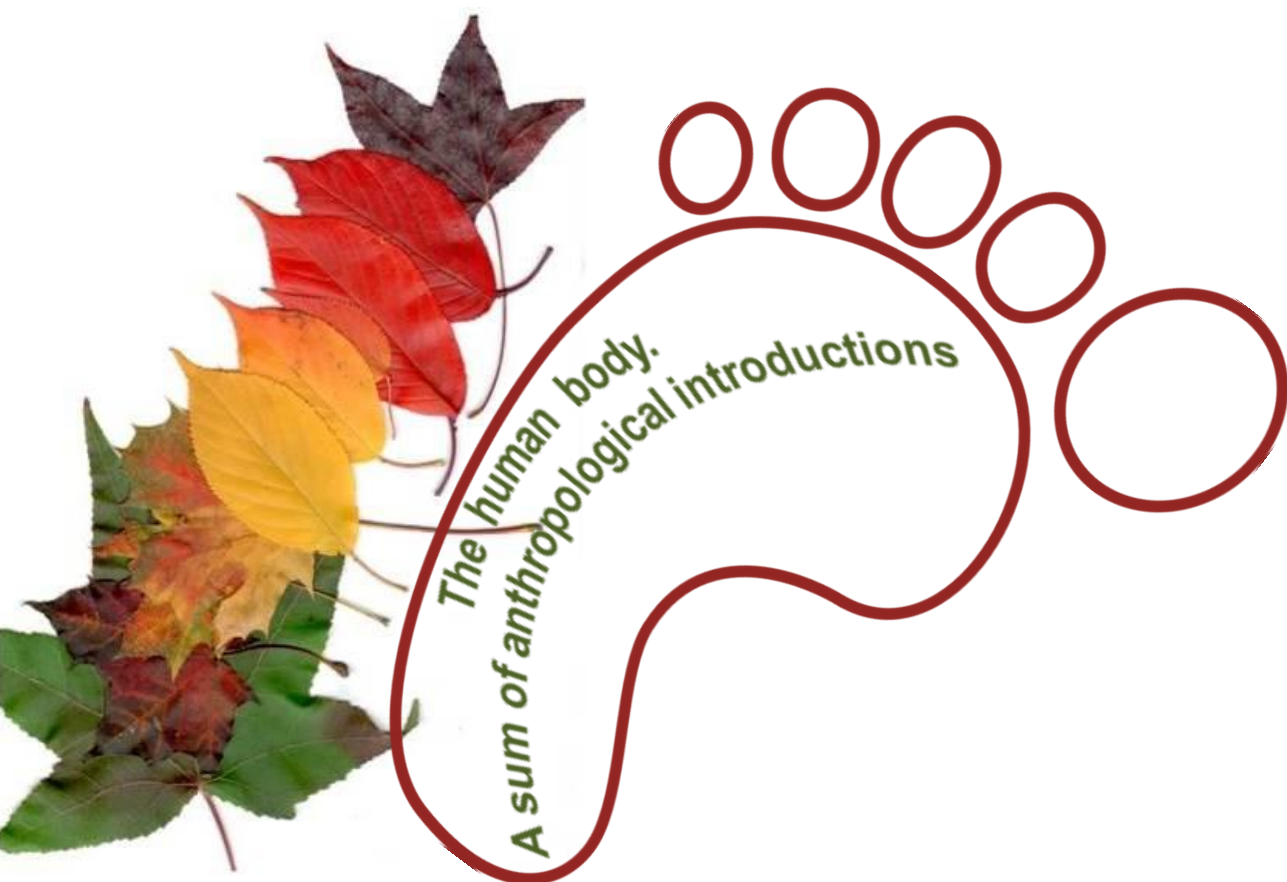




UNIVERSITATEA
DE MEDICINĂ ȘI FARMACIE
VICTOR BABEȘ | TIMIȘOARA

GABRIELA-MARIANA LUCA



Editura Victor Babeș
Timișoara, 2020

Editura „Victor Babeș”

Piața Eftimie Murgu 2, cam. 316, 300041 Timișoara

Tel./ Fax 0256 495 210

e-mail: evb@umft.ro

www.umft.ro/editura

Director general: Prof. univ. emerit dr. Dan V. Poenaru

Colecția: HIPPOCRATE

Coordonator colecție: Prof. univ. dr. Andrei Motoc

Referent științific: Prof. univ. dr. Maria Puiu

Traduceri și referent pentru limba engleză: Carmen Tărniceru

© 2020 Toate drepturile asupra acestei ediții sunt rezervate.

Reproducerea parțială sau integrală a textului, pe orice suport, fără acordul scris al autorilor este interzisă și se va sancționa conform legilor în vigoare.

ISBN 978-606-786-206-5

Gabriela Luca uses her double training as a linguist and anthropologist to realize, again, a wonderful and deep academic plea for communication, in a subtle dialogue between science and religion, much useful to the future servant in obtaining and maintaining the health of our fellow men. This elegant editorial issue is a new challenge both for medical students and for the general knowledge of each and any of us.

I am glad to be among the first to benefit from this wonderful work, which I strongly recommend!

Maria Puiu

MD, PHD, Discipline of Genetics

Victor Babes University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Timisoara

Gabriela-Mariana Luca's *Introduction to Cultural Anthropology of the Human Body* is a significant contribution to the field and a profound research and considered a gateway to the people approaching the field as future study or general interest. Based on observable, sharable examples and on many years of research and teaching, the book, without mystifying or over-generalizing, demonstrates its author's deep understanding individual and societal traits, currents, ambiguities and diversity.

Slobodan Dan Paich

Director and Principal Researcher, Artship Foundation, San Francisco

Visiting Professor, Anthropology-Cultural Studies, UMFTVB

Table of contents

Part I

An Introduction to Cultural Anthropology	5
Historical Conditions which Led to the Emergence of Anthropology	6
Conceptual values	8
Anthropology, Sociology, Religion.....	13
The Methodologic Field of Cultural Anthropology	16
Currents in Anthropology and Schools	18
Codes and Signs	23
Oral and Written.....	25
Figures and Images.....	29
Nature of Symbol	32
Culture and Survival: Myths and Rites	36
Race. Concept and Determination.....	40
Ancestors – The Mirror World.....	45
Acculturation.....	63

Part II

The human body.....	65
Sociocultural morphemes	66
The human body, a sum of anthropological introductions	70
Body marks	76
Fetishism	84
The body in motion	89
Elements of mythological anatomy	91
Sememe, sign and signification in an anthropological discourse	102
The tooth, very briefly, from totem to implant.....	109
I and the other; between us, the face	113
Signs on the face, meanings and time	124
Bibliography.....	132

Part I

An Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

Historical Conditions which Led to the Emergence of Anthropology

Anthropology considered too many times synonymous to ethnology¹ emerged, some may say, approximately one century and a half ago, as a result of the contact to non-European communities, during the period right before the Industrial Revolution. Occidental Europe was about to become more and more controlled by capitalism and to undergo, more intense than ever, the effervescence of substantial changes. The Congress of Berlin in 1885² practically marks the emergence of exotic ethnology. Its purpose was going to be to study the populations found

¹ Although according to contemporary British researchers, this synonymy is almost perfect, there are some differences in the semantic field and even methodological differences between anthropology and ethnology. Anthropology, the study of man – of humanity, in its effort to draft general results on the diversity of people and their environment, is divided into two main branches, cultural anthropology and physical anthropology. The latter studies the body of man, following the line of evolution and the types of development of the individual from the perspective of biological variations from within the species. Cultural anthropology studies man from cultural perspective, the representative feature of the human species, the only one able to see the world symbolically, the life of societies, its transformation based on such symbols, identified and explained by archeologists, linguists and ethnologists.

²Known as Congo-conference, the meeting took place starting in November 1884, and continued up to 1885; the ministries of exterior of 14 strong European countries and the United States, called by the Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, decided altogether to politically divide the black continent. The departure point for dividing Africa seems to be the year 1882, when Egypt was occupied by the Great Britain. France, dissatisfied as it had financed the Suez Channel, focuses its political ambitions to the West (it wanted at the time a West-African empire). Tunis became French colony, Belgium interrupts the French momentum, interferes and proclaims the free state of Congo. The Ivory Coast goes to France, the UK allies with Portugal and recognizes its rights to the Congo river estuaries. Otto von Bismarck conquers Togoland and other two territories, now known as Cameroon. The situation was more and more complicated, other European powers would get involved as well. The Conference from Berlin offered the “possibility” of strong European countries to announce that a territory in Africa was under “effective occupation”.

outside the old continent, the study of the customs, traditions, lifestyle, in order for the Europeans to gather the richness of such people, the abolition of their culture and to convert them to the European values. Once more, in history, we get to be acknowledged that difference is exotic per se, and that the discovery of *the other* nurtures the logics of *otherness*, a basic concept of cultural anthropology, a part of the self, the mirror the outsider represents:

“The other, either presented as a Persian, Egyptian, Scythian, Arabic, Berber, African, Indian, or imagined before having been met, is presented in two essential operating values: distance related to the level of geographical and cartographic knowledge on the one hand, and to the practice of curiousness and sight, on the other hand, of miraculous, in two fundamental valences: the monstrous on the one hand, kindness and paradisiac beauty, on the other hand. This double analytical approach of otherness will strengthen the emblematic symbols for the Other to be perceived and conceived; to know that it is always exotic as it comes from a place unknown by definition and that, once discovered, it becomes the carrier of the traditional functions of such place, the model.” (Affergan, 1987: 27)

Its emergence certificate however had been actually filled in from the oldest times. The human being as *a problem* of the human being seems to have been an issue since the Upper Paleolithic. Some thousands years later, the four great races³ of humanity will be represented on the tomb of the Pharaohs in Biban-el-Moluk, and we actually owe Aristotle (who has placed for the first time the human being amongst the other animals in *Historia Animalium*) the rise of the term anthropology.

³ According to the beliefs of the time: the white race was represented by Libyans and painted in white, the black race in its specific color, the Asians painted in yellow, the Egyptians in red. Around 1400 B.C., the Egyptians start the first expeditions to the upper stream of Nile. We owe them the first descriptions of the populations in Sudan and of the pygmies in Central Africa.

Conceptual values

The term *ethnology* was used for the first time in 1787 by the Swiss Chavanne⁴ and used during the period by other scholars of the times. Back then, its meaning was a synonymous to the science dealing with classifying the human races, science which subsequently became a branch of physical anthropology. Extensively, it shall be used after 1810 - 1830 in France, and will define the subject that deals with the study of people, groups, ethnic pluralities in general, but also the culture and customs of the people considered *primitive*.

Ethnology studies the laws of a group of individuals composed on a distinct cultural basis. It is the science studying the evolution of humans depending on the historical traditions of the group, the transformations of its language, the customs, religion, physical features (presently, abandoned idea due as well to the contemporary multi-ethnic societies but also to the restricted particularities of the race concept) and psychic features. Much later, the term will be replaced by anthropology.

Cultural and social anthropology emerges as a standalone science between 1965 and 1970, although it has had quite deep roots in history⁵. Many philosophers, after the war, idealistically embracing the Marxist-Leninist thinking, with a firm faith in the freedom struggle of people,

⁴ « Essai sur l'éducation intellectuelle avec le profit d'une science nouvelle » François Gresle, Michel Panoff, Michel Perrin, Pierre Tripier, *Dictionnaire des sciences humaines*, édit. Nathan, 1990, p 112.

⁵ We discern, historically speaking, the following steps of knowledge which led to the sedimentation of anthropology as science: 1. The ancient period, almost exclusively represented by the Greek thinkers: Herodotus, Ctesias of Cnide, Pausanias. 2. The medieval period represented by the great travelers and thinkers: Marco Polo, Du Plan de Carpin, Ibn Batuta, Jourdain de Séverac etc. 3. The end of the 15th century and the whole 16th century: the stories on travels to and from America. 4. The 17th century and Bacon's contribution to organizing the research. 5. The Illuminist age brilliantly represented by: Lafitau, Buffon, Linné. 6. Modern anthropology: by Boas, Taylor, Lévi-Strauss and their continuators.

become ethnologists of the French state in colonies. “According to them, the ideologic function of ethnic separations scholarly supported by the dominant classes of industrial societies might be that it hides the convergent interests of the exploited parts of the population and even to hide certain forms of claims, making them look like the manifestation of archaic burden” (Formoso, 2002:20). The direct contact with the evil generated by the Imperialists, the careful study of such societies will make them rise both against the colonization policy and against the initial concept of ethnology which defined them as primitive societies, and which used to actually pursue to ease colonization. The revolt led as well to the change of the professional title. They became *anthropologists*⁶. Starting with the Norwegian researcher, F. Barthes⁷, we have been witnesses of an approach focused on the interethnic relations which mix up social psychology, represented by Goffman, to systemic ecology. Barth says that interethnic frontiers can be quite permeable, without it prejudicing the integrity of the groups in contact and, more than that, that ethnic groups do not have an isolate existence. The generous field of anthropology will become the scene of more and more harsh theoretical fights, the religious and the political being the main topics *settlement* of which, if crossed the emotional fervor and the symbolism characterizing them, they all hoped to lead to the good understanding of societies, synthesis of which may be: “*integrated in the symbolic, our politic is integrated as well in the field of relativeness*”. Robert Lowie⁸, Evans-Pritchard⁹, Edmund Leach¹⁰, Georges Balandier¹¹, Alfred Adler¹², David

⁶ Gr. Anthropos = man, gr. logos =science

⁷ *Ethnic groups and boundaries. The social organization of culture difference*, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1969

⁸ *Psychology and Anthropology of Races*, (1923), *Primitive Religion*, (1924), *The Origin of the State*, (1927), *History of Ethnological Theory*, (1937), *Social Organization*, (1948)

⁹ 1937 *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande*. Oxford University Press. 1976, 1940, *The Nuer: A Description of the Modes of Livelihood and Political Institutions of a Nilotic People*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940b "The Nuer of the Southern Sudan" in *African Political Systems*. M. Fortes and E.E. Evans-Pritchard, eds., London: Oxford University Press, 1965 *Theories of Primitive Religion*. Oxford University Press

Kertzner¹³ are just a part of the artisans of a firm methodology, testimony of the fact that the political anthropology of faraway lands is followed these days by a political anthropology of the space in close proximity, integrated in its history.

Anthropology studies the man and the group it is part of as well as the behavior patterns and variations emerged inside the group. Its purpose is to explain and understand the social reality of the group.

The term is often related to that of *ethnography*; however, we need to underline that the latter regards the material culture of people and allows the observation of the way of life and the collection of historical data.

The concept of *culture*¹⁴ emerges in anthropology towards the end of the 19th century. The first full definition belongs to the English anthropologist Sir Edward Burnett Tylor who wrote in 1871: *culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. Culture is human nature per se.* The term has only been updated and reinvested new meanings. “During this travel around

¹⁰ *Political systems of highland Burma: A study of Kachin social structure* (1954). Harvard University, *Culture and Communication: The Logic by Which Symbols are Connected* (1976). Cambridge University Press, *Social Anthropology* (1982). Oxford University Press.

¹¹ *Anthropologie politique*, 1967, Le pouvoir sur scènes, 1980.

¹² *Meaning of Life (Der Sinn des Lebens)*, translated in Romanian by Leonard Gavrilu

¹³ *Ritual. Politics and Power*, New Haven, Yale University Press

¹⁴ One of the most important theoreticians of the concept, Norbert Elias writes in the *Process of Civilizing*: “The French and English concept of *civilization* can regard political or economic, religious or technical, moral or social facts. The German concept of *Kultur* regards in essence spiritual, artistic, religious facts, having a tendency to netly delimit the facts of such type, on the one hand, from the political, economic and social facts, on the other hand. The French and English concept of *civilization* can regard fulfilments, but equally regards attitude, that *behaviour* of people, irrespective if they fulfilled something or not. In return, the German concept *Kultur* has attenuated the reporting to behaviour to the values of a man without having fulfilled anything, by its simple being and by his conduct, and the specific German meaning of the concept *Kultur* is expressed in the purest meaning by its derivate, the adjective *kulturell*, which does not show the existential values of man, but the value and character of certain human products”. (2002:50)

Europe, the new word, civilization, has been accompanied by an old word – culture – (Cicero had already said it: Cultura animi philosophia est), which has been rejuvenated in order to get almost the same meaning to civilization. For some time, culture will only be the dubbing of civilization” (Braudel, 1994: 35). With time, the notation proliferated and, there were, at the end of the 20th century more than one hundred definitions of culture (Kroeber and Kluckhohn). Present day anthropologists have been striving to get a much firmer delimitation between the human behavior pattern and the abstract values generating it on the one hand, and the perception of the world as generated by the sum of the beliefs underneath this behavior on the other hand. In other words, culture is not only observing a type of behavior, but rather observing the beliefs and values people use to explain and motivate experience, which was reflected precisely by their behavior. A current sense of culture may define it as a set of rules respected by the members of a group, which lead to a certain type of behavior and which establish the order taken by each and every member in such defined group, rules considered appropriate and acceptable for everyone. The compared study of various cultures allowed anthropologists to set certain basic features, present in all societies. Culture is the common denominator by which a group member makes its point and gets to be understood by all the other members. Anthropologist Leslie A. White¹⁵ insists upon the fact that any human behavior has its origin in the way to use symbols. Art, religion and money, White exemplifies, imply the use of symbols. Images, objects, gestures are carrying symbols. Language, as substitute of objects, is the most important symbol carrier of any culture. By word, man manages to transmit its ideational inheritance to a new generation. We may say that the cultural fact is to be learned, transmitted, hereditary. We learn a culture when brought up from within. The process a culture is transmitted by from one generation to the next is called *enculturation*. Our biological needs (hunger, thirst, sleep, sex etc.) are similar to those of other animals, the ways they are satisfied by the human being are cultural products. Not any behavior learnt is culture. An animal can be trained, by repeated exercises, to make certain things. They will not be however naturally transmitted to future generations. Adaptation to the environment is for a human being a cultural act: resistance to the environmental conditions

¹⁵ L. White, 1900-1975, one of the most important theoreticians of North American anthropology, commented that the notion of culture supports on three essential components: technical-economic, social, ideological.

assumes, besides biological “adjustments”, a whole series of facts: tools, cloths, habitations etc. A culture cannot survive unless it really settles the basic issues of the group. They need to procure and distribute goods and services considered indispensable to life, to keep up social order, to be transmitted to future generations. Synthetizing, we can say that the main function of culture is to unite and motivate all the members of the group to survive, engaged in all the processes and actions needed for survival.

Cultural anthropology, emerged in the United States along Franz Boas, is a specific step within a much broader subject. It is connected to cultural relativism, part of the technique, objects, behavior features, a synthesis of social activity. Anthropology, the science of civilizations, is, as M.J. Herskovitz¹⁶ said in his paper, *Man and his Works*, the science of man and of his works.

¹⁶ American anthropologist convinced by the influence of the African culture on the American culture, *Man and his works: the science of cultural anthropology*, 1964

Anthropology, Sociology, Religion

Anthropology is the science of man as sociology is the science of society.

Society is represented by a group of people with a clearly defined place and sharing the same cultural traditions. The way such people depend on one another reflects in the economical system and their family relations. The group identity, which keeps society together, is known as social structure.

Anthropology and sociology have the same purpose, they both study the assembly of material and spiritual culture of the man, except that ethnology is also the science of exotic, nonindustrial societies, fewer and fewer, and amongst these, some have no form of writing. Sociology, born approximately in the same period, has been from the very beginning stimulated by the industrial development and by the huge transformations of the society, generated by it.

The major *difference* between the two subjects is given by the *research perspectives and methods*. The first deals with a limited group, the second, with a global perspective, starts from particular actions and tries to set laws which lead to generalization, applicable to all individuals.

The tools operated by the two subjects can be similar, but sociology starts in research from already existent hypotheses based on the institutionalized preconstructions and looks to check them, by accepting or refusing them, by investigations on field. Anthropology, as well, uses the field as basis of research, but the questionnaire is built differently from that sociological as the central element is the man and, therefore, gets different answers. IN other words, sociology studies various societies before studying the individual, interested especially by the formation and disintegration of groups, interactions amongst biologically isolated

individuals and social groups. Anthropology studies first of all *the man as being* at animal and social level and follows the understanding of social reality, using inductive field methods¹⁷. The most important aspect, from this point of view, is related to the field developed by the term *belief* and, implicitly, *religion*.

“Men and women started worshipping gods right after they visibly became humans. By creating art works, they have also created religions, and not only because they wanted to be sure of their triumph. The beliefs of the beginnings showed amaze and mystery, which have never stopped being an essential component of man’s experience, in this beautiful but frightening world. Just like art, religion as well is an attempt to find meaning and value of existence, despite the sufferings our body is subject to.” (Armstrong, 2009:19)

Spirit in the Christian world, *mana* in the South Sea isles, *numina* of the Latins, *jinn* in the Arabian world, and I only give you the names of the most known to us, are the expression of humans’ desire to get in touch with a superior reality. Personalized, the elements of the universe: the stars, moon and sun, the waters, air, wind, stones, trees have all participated to the expression of the unseen which showed itself to the mortals in exemplary stories core of which will be eternal truth. The historian Otto Rahn (*The Sacred*, 1917) says that the man started creating myths due to unfulfilled surprise, such amaze being the source of all questions and answers the man has had, already found or still looking for. The world of the myths represents the prototype of human existence. How far away are we these days and how difficult is it for us to accept that, for example, people thought in Ancient Iran that each person or object in this world (*getik*) has a correspondent in the archetypal world of sacred reality (*menok*)? God, irrespective of the name it bears in a cultural formula (group united by language and customs, that is a social structure, a society) is the panacea, parent and teacher. Independently from all the anthropologic canonic literature, a seeker like Gregg Braden, famous New

¹⁷ The chaining of the ideas related to the most different aspects of human life: biological, economical, ecological, historical, medical, political, legal, religious etc.

Age author, comes to complete the importance to know the code. We didn't know how to read up to now, his conclusion seems to have been. The truths of holy books, for example, have always been at hand. Demonstration proposes a different reading of a sacred text: a "chemical" reading of the Tora, result of which confirms the axioma: *the man keeps the image of the divine archetype*. Braden, educated at the State University in Missouri, who then became a researcher of the history of human being evolution, says that elements in our body DNA, which is hydrogen, nitrogen and oxygen have as reduced atom mass the numbers 1, 5, 6. The numerical code corresponding the Hebraic letter is the same. One corresponds to Y, give to H, six to V. Altogether, they sum up to the figure, corresponding to letter G, which is earth, carbon. Therefore, "*each cell of each form of life contains the name of God*":

Thymine (T): hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, carbon; Yod, Hey, Vav, Gimel; Y, H, V, G

Cytosine (C): hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, carbon; Yod, Hey, Vav, Gimel; Y, H, V, G

Adenine (A): hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, carbon; Yod, Hey, Vav, Gimel; Y, H, V, G

Guanine (G): hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, carbon; Yod, Hey, Vav, Gimel; Y, H, V, G

YHVH is the name of God, and YHVG, is that of man. Therefore, everything appears in quite logical sequence, Braden draws the conclusion, a constructive dialogue between science and religion can clarify many of the past amazes, amplified so much by the waves of history. Einstein himself, received in 1921 by the Archbishop of Canterbury, answered his question related to the consequences of the relativity theory on theology: "*None. Relativity is purely scientific; it has nothing to do with religion.*"¹⁸

¹⁸ Apud Armstrong, *A History of God*, p. 454

The Methodologic Field of Cultural Anthropology

Cultural anthropology is an *experimental science*, its main research method is *direct observation, the ethnologic field*, parent of which is Bronislaw Malinowski (1884-1942)¹⁹. The Polish Anthropologist is the one who argued that people all over the world share certain biological and psychological needs and that the fundamental function of culture is to fully provide such basic needs. Each and every human being, Malinowski says, needs to feel safe in his or her relation to the physical universe. Therefore, when science or technology were unable to explain certain natural phenomena, an eclipse for example, people turned towards religion and magic to rebalance, to cast away their fears and to feel protected. The nature of an institution, he says, is determined by its functions. Therefore, there are three compulsory levels which are found in all societies:

1. *culture needs to support basic biological needs: food and procreation,*
2. *culture needs to provide the basic instruments of social order: law and education,*
3. *culture needs to provide the integrative process of needs: religion and art.*

¹⁹ B.M. is considered the inventor of the anthropologic field, the favorite method being participative observation. It consists of living with the Indigenous and participating to all their activities. Their illustrious predecessors: James Frazer, Marcel Mauss, Lucien Levy-Bruhl were the researchers in library, and processed materials received from the whole world, gathered by others. They used the comparative method. In 1914, the Polish young man M. embarks for the New-Guinea starting in an unprecedented ethnologic adventure.

If an anthropologist can analyze the ways one culture covers all these needs for its members, Malinovski says, it will certainly set the origin of all cultural features as well. Its land in the Trobriand isles (1915-1918), from this point of view, is considered fundamental and the *sine qua non* reference for any anthropological research.

Cultural anthropology is a *dynamic science*, and it evolved along with society. It is not moralizing and does not question if the discussed event is good or bad per se at the level of the group, it only accounts on it to the remaining society. It studies people behavior, in a certain period of time and in a certain geographical space.

By accepting, by all means, G. Lenclud's opinion according to which "*Anthropology is neither defined by its method nor by its objects*", *participative observation*, theorized by Malinovski, if enjoying a *further look* that that of Lévi-Strauss, plenary offers the object of research: "*any society different from ours is an object, any group in our society, different from that we are part of, is an object, any object of this very group, we do not adhere to, is an object.*" Hence, a precise intellectual step which, in order to make a *qualitative field*, asks multiple competences from the anthropologist: linguistic, historical, demographical, sociological, psychological, geographical etc. Result of the research is expected to be, just like Marcel Mauss used to write "*a total social fact*". As such, an archiving and interpreting model is made by G. Condominas in *Nous avons mangé la forêt de la pierre-génie Gôo. Chronique de Sar Luk, village mnong gar* (1954): chronicles, inedited stories, privileged informers, dialogues as well as unassailable scientific support: photos, archive documents, sketches, lexical analysis, bibliographical support.²⁰

²⁰ For one year, a full Agrarian cycle, Condominas is living with the villagers, Proto-Indochinese population in Sar Luk, in the center of Vietnam, making an emblematic field for any school of anthropology.

Currents in Anthropology and Schools

Years in a row, from the very 15th century, the works of the travelers, missionaries, militaries who provided ethnographic descriptions, by the means of the concerned age, of course, realistic and pertinent, served later researchers to articulate the theoretical field. And always, irrespective of subsequent currents, theoreticians like Mauss și Durkheim will always be quoted amongst the famous parents of ethnology. The perfect portrait of the ethnologist to be found in Robert Lowie's book²¹.

“Just the way a naturalist is impossible to limits him or herself to the study of beautiful butterflies, it's the same with the ethnographer who must not ignore anything related to tradition. He or she shall write about a youth game on stilts as faithful as if writing about the cosmogonic thoughts of a Tahitian priest – both being study objects for him, just the way the children's game can reveal as much on the fundamental cultural phenomena like the metaphysical speculations of the adults.

Therefore, the ethnographer is different from the librarian who will only collect curious customs with great dedication. Starting from gross actions, a scientist owes to classify and interpret.

How did cultures end up being what they are today?

How is it that people so far away have so similar ideas and practices?

Why is it that a certain group of people cannot adapt to a certain climate?

Why is always there that guy who keeps on perpetuating an obsolete custom?

²¹ Lowie, Robert “Histoire de l'ethnologie classique des origines a la seconde guerre mondiale” Paris, Ed. Payot, 1991, 264p.

These are his issues: and, in the extent he is interested in such things, the ethnographer who describes them becomes a theoretician in ethnology."

Scientific anthropology emerges therefore with the European colonialism. It was influenced by diverse philosophical tendencies and supported by Darwin's revolutionary ideas (1809-1882). If we are to connect the real moment of the emergence of ethnology to the emergence of evolutionism, we shall quote first of all two extremely famous names.

Charles Lyell (1797- 1875), Scottish geologist, careful researcher of the alluvium, very interested in the origins of the human species, looked for the answer related to the age of the human race in relation to the known history and traditions. The issue Lyell raised regarded the changes which had been taking place in nature without any triggering event. Why couldn't we assume that Earth is gradually changing, extremely slowly, and that the results of such changes can lead to conclusions to be taken into account? His work influenced a lot the scholars of the times but especially *Charles Darwin* (1809-1882). During a study travel (1831-1836), on the *Beagle* ship, always carrying the book of his compatriot, Lyell, and by comparing the fauna and flora in Galapagos and Australia, he drafts the theory of transformism (*transformation of the living organisms under the influence of environment*) which would later lead to the *On the Origin of Species* (1858). This thesis made Samuel Wilberforce, a British cleric quite fierce. The victory he had gained on June 30, 1860 from the stand in Oxford University Museum Library was melted later on in the retorts of science. Wilberforce said that on the date the world was approximately 6000 years old. According to his calculus, after an extremely literal lecture of the Bible, God had created us on October 23, 4004 BC and the man had to be looked after by the philosophers and Church, had its definitive place in nature and no connection to the apes. We actually were the divinity's favorite kids, masters above everything already created and it was nothing *different* from our history of the best of any other, come from *virgin lands*. As a systematic approach, anthropology starts like a look of ours, the

occidentals, over them “*the savage, the primitive, non-Europeans*”. The fundamental problem will raise between I, we and the other, the others, them. *Anthropology is actually with a target: see is substituted by watch (the medieval meaning of the term being survey)* (Affergan, 1987). Therefore, one of the first conclusions may be that strangers have always done strange things:

“The first spontaneous reaction to an individual is to imagine him as an inferior, as he is different from us: he’s not even a human being or, if he is, is an inferior barbarian; if he does not speak our language, it means he speaks none, just like Colon used to think (Don Bartolome Colon, Admiral). This is how the Slavs in Europe name their German neighbor nemec, the mute; maya from Yucatan name the Toltec invaders as nunob, the mute... the Aztecs tell their neighbors nonualca, the mute; they share the despise of all people for their neighbors, considering that the people farther away culturally or geographically speaking are not even good enough to be sacrificed and consumed.” (Leach, 1980, p.73, apud Vintilă Mihăilescu²²)

The nations who had undertaken the industrial revolution and had imposed their dominance all over in the world belonged to Northern Europe. The South had permanently been devalued as compared to the North. Heroes had to be tall, well-built, with bodies similar to those of the gods, firm eyes with bluish or steel tones, not Spanish, Italians, Jews or other races with their slightly olive skin and prominent nose. The hero of masterpieces (especially Verne’s) in the period right after the industrialization was a genie in engineering, physics or mathematics, connoisseur of biology and archeology.

Darwin’s evolutionism is applied in social sciences and known as Darwinism. The Americans will take it over in 1975 as sociobiology. Irrespective of the steps of Darwinism and its applications, it does not explain definitively the complex evolution of the man, task which turned into a study object for anthropology. The anthropologic principles have

²² Mihăilescu, Vintilă, Anthropologie. Cinci introduceri , Polirom, 2007

crystallized in: evolutionism²³, cultural diffusionism²⁴, functionalism²⁵. Each of them actually shows that living in a society means expecting

²³ The Evolutionism is the 19th century is mainly made of Charles Darwin's biological evolutionism. According to Darwin, the natural selection meets six laws, the first five being drafted as early as 1858, and the sixth being formulated in 1871: 1. The species vary, the young people are not identical to their parents, nor identical amongst them, the species are subject of the evolution, which means that each of them changes along time, are not identical, fixed, closed; 2. Getting new varieties of plants or domestic animals stays at the latitude of the genitor; 3. Natural selection is made depending on the climate; 4. In nature, ecology has a determining role; 5. Fighting for survival within the same species leads to selection, the strong defeats the weak, within the same species, individuals who got to maturity in various places, are not identical; 6. Sexual selection determines the victory of vigorous males. Social Evolutionism is based on the writings of Herbert Spencer (he encouraged liberalism and the thesis of unlimited freedom of individuals) and Karl Marx (the author, with Friederich Engels, of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. The first phrase of the paper can be considered the perfect synthesis of his beliefs: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles"). The evolutionism represented by Lewis Morgan, Edward Tylor, James Frazer, considered the birth document of modern anthropology by the fixation of the anthropological themes, which became classical: myth, magic, religion, relatives. The evolutionism of the 20th century, known as American cultural ecology or cultural materialism: critic of unilinear evolution: Gordon Childe (introduces in 1930 the concept of *Urban Revolution*, which he debates in his book in 1936, *Man Makes Himself*), Leslie White (defender of the Neo-Evolutionism, for him culture is a general urban phenomenon, the plural "cultures" not being indicated in the study of anthropology), Julian Steward (his name is related to the concept of ecological culture, *Theory of Culture Change: The Methodology of Multilinear Evolution*, his book in 1955 shows that the way culture changes is influenced by the surrounding environment), Marshall Sahlins (*Stone Age Economics* (1972), comes with the paradoxical idea that primitive economics have been up to now the only society of actual abundancy), Elman Service (studied cultural evolution in Latin America and in the Caribbean, finds four stages of social evolution which correspond to four levels of political organizing), Marvin Harris (his final work, *Theories of Culture in Postmodern Times*, speaks about the bad influence of the politics consequences in postmodernist theories).

²⁴ Or historical particularism. The bases of the theory of diffusionism were laid in Germany, country known for its major interest paid to ethnographic museums, with many researchers engaged in identifying specific cultural tracks: rites, myths, tools and traditional architecture. One of the first representatives of the German diffusionism was Friedrich Ratzel (1844-1904), German anthropologist, geographer and ethnographer who had a significant contribution for the diffusionist and migration theories in the 19th century. Ratzel's ideas were processed abusively by the Nationalist-Socialist government in Germany, Hitler arguing, by erroneously interpreting Ratzel's theories, his expansion politics. Far from being a racist, Ratzel had explained the influence of the geographic environment on the human habitat. A different very important representative, as well German as origin, emigrates to America, and becomes the father of modern American

something. “It’s amongst ourselves, in a society and we expect amongst ourselves a result; this is the essential form of community” (Marcel Mauss, 1934). Anthropology is based on others’ memory: *learning, conservation, restitution* are, in the same time, biological and cultural processes, and *metamemory* is translated by the capacity of people who became aware of the faculty to memorize, processed and used in the aspiration of emancipation. *Our knowledge depends on a reminiscence*, Plato says. In other words, we truly understand only what our memories evoke, each of us being a “*super-impressed*” micro-universe with messages sent by the five senses, capable of subsequent “*projections*”: director, actor and spectator in one’s own film. Representing something invisible means making it visible. Ancient art, revolving around invisible realities, which we call gods, showed that the Divine is beyond the visible.

anthropology: Franz Boas, is the one insisting upon the difference between the biological inheritance and cultural inheritance, and enters the concept of cultural relativism. His most important work is: *Race, Language and Culture* in 1940.

²⁵ Functionalism imposes Anthropology as science. Emile Durkheim defines the social fact. Bronislaw Malinowski develops the method of participative observation: *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922), *Sex and repression in savage society* (1927), *Corsal Gardens and their Magic* (1935), *A Scientific Theory of Culture*, (1944), *A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term* (1967). The Structural-functionalism of Alfred Radcliff-Brown presents Anthropology as compared sociology and as science of society (representative in order to understand the role of social structure in the perpetuation of social order are *Structure and Function in Primitive Society from 1952* and *A Natural Science of Society from 1957*). The functionalist methodology consists of a synchronic approach, the transcultural comparative method, the analysis of the function of religion and of affiliation relationships, of the ethnographic present, of rituals, of myths related to keeping social order.

Codes and Signs

„*You only see what you know.*” Goethe

From its very beginnings, man has fulfilled a rhythm, has received and sent messages tuned to such rhythm, swing of which, Rilke says, is breathing. By inspiration, man gets informed and by expiration he creates. Expiration is self-giving. “*Man breathes an average of 25 920 times a day, and this is the number of the years from a complex platonic year (the number of years needed for the sun to end a full tour of the zodiac). The average or ideal length of human life – seventy-two years – has the same number of days*” (Black:35). Therefore, any gesture is the result of such process in two strokes. Knowledge gathered by senses is transmitted by gesture. “*Projective empathy*” as named, animates in our eyes the show of universe and infiltrates an almost organic vitality which explains the animism of primitive thinking” (Benoist, 1995:18). The word *sign* comes from the Latin *signum*, verb root *secare*, which means *to cut*. Leaving a sign means *signing in*, cutting by using the hand-*the instrument of all instruments*, the bark of a tree. In Indo-European languages, etymologically, *to say*, comes from a common root which means *to point finger*. The word and the action interwove in a sign, and the first speaker related to the surrounding things after having identified the self as his or her own person. The symbols of letters hide multiple additional layers, each with very deep meanings. The symbols, named letters, have always had at least double significances: the already formed sentences which communicate concrete situations and the sublayers leading to subtle relations, per se. Etymology, this *archeology of language*^{26, 27}, is the only one able to decipher the symbolic mechanism of words.

²⁶ “If we are to cross the genealogical tree in an Indo-European language of a word family going back on the stream of time, guided by the identity amongst phenomena, we get to a root, onomatopoe or simple sound, meaning of which is very general and sent, with infinite nuances, to all the derived branches. Let’s have for example the onomatopoe *clic-clac* and the root *fla*. *Clic-clac* translates a clink (*le claquement*) of two surfaces. Hence

From France to Spain, from Atlas to Black Africa or to China, prehistorical caves testify for the *signs* left by the relocation of image into reality. The accuracy of the style, the beauty of the colors, the care for details, made Picasso exclaim, when he visited for the first time the cave Lascaux (discovered in 1940, in France, down by river Vézère, in Périgord): “I feel I’ve learnt nothing so far!”

The first tools crafted by the man still keep special significances. The *Double Edged-Sickle* has existed in the whole Mediterranean world (from Etruscan cemeteries in Vetulonia and up to Tarsus where it shall identify to the Tarku God, in Lidia, Caria and Crete). Its Carian name, *lábrus*, has the same root with the word *labyrinth*, the sanctuary related to the cult of the Minotaur (Crete deity looking like a bull and the master of lightning). The Greek name of the stone axe is *kéraunia*, which means precisely the *stone of lightning*. From a work tool, by assimilation, it will become the symbol of state power (*fascia de lictor* of the Romans and Etruscans). The first tools, musical instruments and ancient weapons are recorded by the mythology as mark-symbols of the heroes who used them: *the wheel* – representation of the cult of the sun and its rays – led to the symbol of the *cross*, *Achilles’ spear*, Tanaquilla’s *spinning wheel*, Orpheus’ *lyre*, Marsyas’²⁸ *flute*, Agamemnon’s²⁹ *scepter*, Memnon’s sword, Pyrrhos’ shield, *Cybelles’ tympan and cymbals*³⁰ etc.. (Donini, 1968)

the *cliquet* (the clink), *le cliquetis* (the clatter), *le declic* (the click), *la clanche* (the bar of the doorknob), the verb *declancher* (to open a door), *le cliché* (cliché, the noise made by typographic letters) when falling on marble). The Latin word *clavis*, key, led to *clore*, to close, to *inclure* (to include, to involve), to *conclure* (to conclude) ...” (Benoist: 37)

²⁷ Here you have, for example, much closer to our times and us, the Romanians, the way we have in Romanian the word *mulțumesc* (and its older versions, *mulțămesc*, *mulțam*). During harsh feudal times, characterized by wars, terrible blood sheds and betrayals, when the lord’s life was always in threat, the greeting: “*Long life for many years, Your Majesty!*” was invested by strong magic valences. The greeting changed into a salute, *Mulți ani dumitale, boierule!*, welded to *mulțam*, and subsequently had the specific suffix – *escu*.

²⁹ The scepter, the shield, the sword were worked by Hephaistos

³⁰ Instruments dedicated to Cibella (a type of drum with leather very stretched out). Hence the name of tympanum (for the god, but also for the anatomic structure). According to Varon, the tympanum represents the globe the ancients did not imagine as a perfect circle, and cymbals are the two hemispheres of the sky which include earth. The sound of cymbals is named in Latin *tinnitus* (and as medical term it regards the noises within the ear).

Oral and Written

In-fans means not having a voice to utter words. In order to be declared “admitted” in this world, *the person with no voice* needs to issue a rhythmic sound, a cry in balance, at the boundary between animal and human. It is the sound searched by poets in their attempt to harmonize their voices to the universe, changing it afterwards in a speech and qualified as *ineffable*. This resonance is named *muthos* by the Greek. For *muthos* the geometrical perfection of the word to be uttered, of the logos, is not a reality. The common root in Indo-European languages, *mu*, which has also formed the Greek word *muein* (*to be closed, to be calm, to shut up*) and the Latin word *mutus* (*to shut up*), applied to the origins of the animal which can only “say” *mu*, belongs both to the *infans-infant* who does not speak, but cries, moans, yells, and to the man from the end of his road, at the point of his death becoming a child again by *silence* (as his closed lips, uniting the skies and earths, do not allow the word to come out). If we consider the upper lip as being the sky, and the lower lip as being the earth, we shall accept, possibly, the role of creating principle the uttered word has. In speaking, the worlds mix up, the upper meet the lower, in the worthiest secrecy of human being. Words get materiality, they can be gentle, sharp, cruel, puzzled, creating. The same root leads to the word *myth*.

“Or, the idea of silence is related to the things which, by their nature, can only be expressed by symbols. Myth and mystery therefore come from the same esoteric ideology character of which comes from their primordiality and need. As such, the tendencies revealed by myths are models present on the background of each and every performance, like an ancestral memory forgotten by those subjected to repeat it.” (Benoist, 1995: 120)

Societies use the myth in order to explain existence, and the stories are woven by various threads: the cosmogonic myths tell about the origin of the world, orders the birth of the universe, the gods being the main heroes. Heroical stories come afterwards to explain the way things settled in the crafted world, the fundamental role devolves upon the ancestors now, half gods, half humans, who will fight incredible fights on stranger and stranger lands. At the end of the story, we find how a certain land was occupied by a certain group of people.

Concerns become natural afterwards for the survival of the structures fulfilled as such and other stories flow by setting the rules of the place, putting disobedience under atrocious threats: eschatological myths (flood, earthquakes, end of the world). A good reading of the myth, understanding the code (the common Latin root: *codex*, norms, rules) explain the organizing of each and every society. Step by step, the hierarchy, deployed by the story, birth is next, bringing up and good operation of the social organism: we may say, by replacing the terms, a *socio-physiology* of the human body integrated in the social body and the results of such *metabolism*, the word being the supreme food.

The Jew *dabar* (*word*) amounts the creating powers of the uttered word. the speech of performance therefore becomes *performing* in the sense Jean Louis Austin (1989,24)³¹ gave it: “*I only utter, my word is the one generating effect*”. The specificity of oral literature stays in its essential performance, in uttering the words. In other words, we speak about a complex action by which a message with poetic value is simultaneously transmitted and perceived, here and now. A wise old man in Mali used to say: “*Oral tradition is the generator and maker of a type of special man... Where writing does not exist, the man is word. In Africa, every time an old man dies, a whole library burns down*” (Hampate Bâ, Kaydara). Therefore, orality is the memory of humanity itself out of which all the other writings get inspired. The Greek literature rose from the transcriptions of texts composed based on the oral laws of memorizing. In Phaedrus, Plato (1953, I.II.243) brings altogether face to

³¹ Je ne fais pas que dire, ma parole produit un effet, j’accomplis, du fait de la situation de parole, la chose même que je dis accomplis.

face, in a famous confrontation, Thamas (Ammon, the god of the word) and Thot (the god of writing and death, the patron of the scribes, the inventor of the calculus and writing): *the technique of writing will bring oblivion in the mind of those who learned it, as they will stop using their memory: and will trust the writing, the outside, by strange characters, and not the inside, the deepness in themselves, they will commemorate.*

For the main actor in an oral literary work, everything starts from within, by an *interior* sequence of text in his own imaginary: a *proto-image*, a real continuum no expression shall divide, with a rapidity of the tale that grows higher and higher, in a suite of mysteries only accessible to the writers of epopees. Paul Zumthor (1972: 232) is convinced that the *poet sees his or her characters, gods, events as words come out.* We assist, he says, *the birth of a proto-son.* The oral literary text becomes therefore fluctuant like the waters of a river, with various waves, gets created along with the performance and only exists if uttered. This is precisely why rehearsal is a lot more than useful in executing the oral text: it prepares the chaining by priming the progression. It gives time to insert the newly arrived information into the content, the extraordinary into the real, the unseen and unheard into the known, memorizing and natural referral of the meaning along the whole structure.

*“My child, what a word has escaped the barrier
of thy teeth? How should I, then, forget
godlike Odysseus, who is
beyond all mortals in wisdom, and beyond all has
paid sacrifice to the immortal gods”³²*

In order for a fecund relation to exist between ethnology and writing, irrespective of its nature, the careful study of the linguistic phenomenon of each and every culture is a must and of all the textual productions it created. Anthropologic literature confirms this relation from its very beginnings. There is no artist before the work. Creation defines the artist, gives birth to him, promotes him, Hegel would say. The image transposed to the text becomes the polyvalent instrument of

³² Homer, *Odiseea*, Univers, 1979, (95), p.33

mythical thinking. Only used as such, image gets its precise meaning in relation to the place occupied and its function in the waving of a poetic system (Burgos, 1988: 184). In deciphering the writing of the imaginary, Jean Rudhardt³³ shows that while the myth is established in the instrument which uses the common linguistic structures it is subject to during its development, *within the thread of the story*, continuous disintegration occurs, the images get grouped in “*elementary structural layouts*” and “*general organizing layouts*”, and therefore contribute to the “*rise of a meaning*”:

„One day, at noon, Sihai died. All of a sudden, two trees grew out of his mouth which sprouted and flourished; but wind shook them, and the flowers fell to earth. Diseases came from this flower. A tree grew from Sihai’s throat and gold came out of it. Another tree grew from his heart and it gave birth to the people.” (Frazer, *The Golden Bough*)

³³ Rudhardt, Jean, *Image et structure dans le langage mythique*, Genève, p.94

Figures and Images

The parent of the term we use today, *figure* is the Latin word *figura*; the latter belonging to a family of words which evoke a plastic representation, made according to a model: *fingere* (to trim), *figulus* (the potter), *fictor* (the sculptor), *effigies* (the image, the statue). *Figura* is the inheritor of all the meanings of its Greek homologue, *schema*. Indeed, the Plato-Aristotle lexicon distinguishes two categories of terms which cover the notion of *form*; on the one hand, the nouns *morphe* and *eidos* which show the idea coming to *in-form* matter; on the other hand, *schema* is the sensual status, the materialization of such idea. And even more, the schema also applies to any exterior appearance or makeover of an internal entity: *costume, mime, make-up etc.* In parallel, the *schema* is related to rhetoric where it evokes the expression of the exterior idea of the author: Aristotle speaks, for example, de of figures of the syllogism, *schemata silogisma*. The schema transmits therefore most of the connotations for the term *figura*, which plunges for the first time in a rethoric meaning for Cicero and for the unknown author *Ad Herenicum* (1st century BC). Here, *figura* names the three levels of style (*gravis, mediocris, attenuata*) (*De oratore, III, 199*), while the expression *forma orationis* applies more specifically, as related to Cicero, to the figures of style.

Quintilian (1st century) will consecrate the *figura* as a figure of speech. According to him, it was included in one of the five parts of rhetoric (*invention, memory, action, disposition, allocution*), as it is related to the words order of the arguments chosen beforehand by the author: *allocution*. Even within it, words are inserted in a subpart qualified by the ancients as *ornatus* or the art to adorn a text. If we were to consider the various functions attributed to the figures by orators, we would obviously be struck by the special concern given to speech adornment. Surely, some figures can be imposed by the imperious need to cure the language cheerfulness, the concrete case of the *catachresis*, which imposes, lacking a proper term, the diversion of a word from its

initial meaning. *For example, in case we need to invoke the leg of the table, we may, due to reserve or delicacy to need the use of a euphemism (Quintilian).*

However, most often, *figura* appears like an ornament added to the word and the ancients appointed metaphorically *figures* as *colors, lights, flowers, rocks* of the speech. Cicero appreciates it especially with *Venustas*, that is absolute seduction of figurative language. Or, if we're to admit that there is a makeup of language, we also accept the hiatus from the actual phrase (figurative) of the writer as well as the virtual expression of the same thought, which may produce what the classics named the simple, primitive and fundamental status of language (*Dumarsais, sec. VIII*). This distinct notion of figurative language becomes capital for the definition of figures.

In its beginnings (12th century), the term *image*, derived of the Latin word *imago*, appointed as a *figura*, the reproduction of a model, very close to the original, loyal to it. By removing any distance, *imago* suggested the greatest mimetic proximity: *portrait, copy*. Despite all this, during the 18th century, the term became, by analogy, synonymous to figure (*comparison, metaphor*), ending up by evoking any form of figure or semantic anomaly. Actually, the term is characterized by an extreme imprecision and by multiplying secondary names, covered by one of generic words: *symbol, correspondence, theme, myth* etc. *Image* gets loaded by the energy of the object it represents. *I-mago* is magic in the sense of the representation of invisible. Representation acts on sight, informs it on its reality, falls asleep or awakens the awareness of the watcher. *Image* has a funerary genealogy. *Imago* was the wax mold of the deceased person's face. *Simulacrum* was the image similarly reproduced, first of all a phantom and second of all, a face. *Eidolon* was the soul of the dead which left the body just like an invisible shadow. *Sema*, which gave us the sign, was the tombstone as representation or double of it. *Image* is always associated to the double.

From here on, we can try, just the way Wilfried Smekens³⁴ did, defining the image as a signified found on the position of signifier. In

³⁴ Histoire des poétiques, PUF, "Fondamental", 1997

other words, we can rephrase: *a sense generating sense*. We need to take into account that image is not compulsorily an immediate correspondence between own senses and figurative senses, between the *compared and comparing*.

All this, in the Romantism, have undergone serious complications. Images can coexist in a text, images which cannot be decoded as they seem not to be the carriers of obvious symbolism. They do not prove to be reducible to their own sense. These images, we have no *translation* of which, should be, in order to be understood, compared to other images which shall allow maybe the establishment of a common scheme, of significant repetitions. This work of analysis of the images belongs to the subjects which were built around it, especially in the 19th century: *thematic critic, thematology, psychoanalysis, ethnolinguistics, compared ethnology*.

Nature of Symbol

“Deciphering a message means perceiving a symbolic form”. Gombrich

At its origin, the *symbol* was an object cut in two, fragments of ceramic, wood or metal. Two persons kept, each, one part: two guests, the creditor and the debtor, two pelerines, two humans who shall not see each other for some time etc. Getting the two parts closer, they will admit later the good reception by their host, the debts they have, the friendship connecting them. For ancient Greeks, symbols were signs of recognition, by their parents, of the children exposed to possible risks. By analogy, the term transferred to the tokens which gave the soldiers the right to their pay, to indemnities and other entitlements in money. *Symbol* has the double role to separate but also to put together. It evokes a community which has been divided, but with a chance to reunification. Any symbol implies a part of broken sign. This is why the meaning of the symbol is discovered in what brokenness is; each and every part obtained as such also get new meanings. The history of symbols show us that any object can be invested by symbolic values, irrespective of its kind: *stones, metals, trees, flowers, fruit, animals, water sources, rivers and oceans, mountains and valleys, planets, fire, lightning etc.* or its representation: *geometric shapes, numbers, rhythms, idea, sound etc.* The symbol is affirmed as an apparently discernible term indiscernible of which is a different term. The example below, the caduceus, is carrier of multiple significances, stratified in time.

Hermes' caduceus, scepter or walking stick was a rod with two snakes entwined. During the Greco-Roman world, it symbolized peace and commerce – from the Latin *caduceum*, represented by a winged rod, with two snakes entwined around it. For the Greeks, it had initially been a heraldic rod, winged now and then, which was added two wool ribbons.

Karl Otfried Müller's³⁵ opinion, that the ribbons evolved towards the snakes, was also shared by several generations of conservatory mythographers, although Jane Ellen Harrison³⁶ discovered that Hermes' initial shape was that of a snake, and that snakes were an essential component of the caduceus, although she did not know anything about its connections to the Near East. The caduceus is sometimes used as a symbol of medicine (by confusion, most often), especially in North America, the traditional symbol being the rod of Asclepius, with one single snake and no wings. The thyrsus (Dionysus' rod) was a representation of the caduceus, made of an empty stem, similar to that of the fennel, where Prometheus brought fire to light up the mankind. The thyrsus where the sacred fire is hidden within is Sushumna Nadi from the occult Hindi physiology. There is a pinecone on the top of the stem which symbolizes the pineal gland. The story of creation in the bible which offers the image of the snake and of the tree is, according to Jonathan Black, "*the story of the vertebral spine and nervous system of animals as kept in the collective subconscious of the human.*" The lantern of Osiris, Black continues, is the representation of a late vegetal protuberance. The excrescence is the pineal gland, present these days as well to some species of reptiles, like the Tuatara in the New Zealand (subsequently, the protohumans with lanterns on their foreheads were imagined and idealized as unicorns).

According to Freud, symbol expresses indirectly, figuratively, more or less difficult to decipher, desire or conflicts. Symbol is the relation which unifies the manifest content of a type of behavior, of a thought, of a word, of their latent meanings. From the moment we admit it, in a type of behavior, for example, at least two significances out of which one is substituted to another masking it and expressing it altogether, their relations can be qualified, indubitably, as symbolical.

³⁵ Important German archeologist and mythologist who is owed a new, compared approach of the Greek mythology.

³⁶ British linguist and feminist, very interested in Greek mythology, the author of important specialty studies: *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, first edition 1903, "Epilogomena to the Study of Greek Religion", 1921.

This relation is characterized by a certain constancy amongst the manifested and latent elements of the symbol. For some psychoanalysts, the symbolic has always been the unconscious. Therefore, if we accepted the quoted thesis, in the extent the child backs up and disguises his desire less than the adult, his dream is less symbolic and more transparent. Therefore, dream would not always be symbolic, and the interpretation methods would vary depending on the case, rather leading to simple associations than symbols.

For C.G. Jung, symbol is neither allegory nor simple sign, but rather own image to appoint as best as possible the suspected *obscure* nature of the Spirit. Let's remind you that, in the vocabulary of the analyst, *the spirit embeds the conscious and unconscious, focuses religious and ethical, creative and esthetic productions of man, colors all the intellectual, imaginative, emotive activities of the individual and oppose as principle of the biological nature by constantly keeping awake this tension of opposites which is at the core of our psychic life*. And even more, Jung says that the symbol inserts nothing, explains nothing. He sends beyond towards a different sense of the beyond, undetectable, an obscure presence which no word of the language we speak may express it satisfactorily. *Jung considers that symbols are a product of nature*. Its manifestations are not without meaning, and what they really hide is not necessarily an issue of dissimulated censorship which will reappear as a shape borrowed from a symbolic image. It would manifest when a symptom of a conflictual situation instead expressing the normal tendency of the soul to fulfill virtuality. In going from the known to the unknown, from the expressed to the ineffable, the value of a symbol will truly be affirmed. If the hidden term is disclosed one day, the symbol dies.

Symbolical is the conception which, by exceeding any possible interpretation, considers the cross as the expression of a certain fact still unknown and non-understandable, mystic and transcendental, although first of all psychological, *absolutely impossible to show more precisely than by the cross*. As long as a symbol is alive, it is the best expression possible of a fact; it is only alive by the overflow of significances it carries. The social context remains open depending on the significances

of the symbol. The permanent game between symbol and significance is represented by the symbolic practice. *Social practice is a symbolic practice*³⁷.

³⁷ Synthetizing, anthropologist Vintilă Mihăilescu (op.cit.) ordines: symbol – is a sensitive unit, there are no social relations, only symbolized, constitute a habitus, sets a connection amongst the members of society, is integrative - allows the ordination of the world we live in, it is a legislative instrument – the rules of society need to be met, we fear mistakes, it is constructive – it is a historical construction, with anonymous practice, it is real - the human society is real so that symbolical. In the end, everything is symbolical practice.

Culture and Survival: Myths and Rites

Each and every society organizes a mythical corpus which discloses its hierarchy and which keeps it in a functional balance, supplying rules and information on the universe and humans. The myth is a way of living history, it seems hidden for us but always ready to support our existence. Any myth builds around a secret.

“Maybe it’s because I’m an anthropologist and I know that most “literatures” are without writing, most of societies without labor economy and without Oedipus – myth is that which emerged as this “crossroads”, metalinguistic as Claude Lévi-Strauss has seen it, metahistorical as all the anthropologists from Eliade to Corbin saw it, myth which consists of altogether by the historical, social and philosophical imperatives, just like psychological motivations” (Durand, 1998:199)

- a. The myth corresponds to a founding story unless considered true, the myth explains the birth of each and every single thing.
- b. It emerges as an exemplary story.
- c. Being a symbolic story, even when it does not refer to gods and heroes, it remains a symbolic story, it offers models.
- d. It is a repetitive story; it always resumes the constitutive symbolic elements with the same intensity.

Here you have, for example, two of the Romanian cosmogonic models:

“At the beginning of the beginning nothing was on this world but darkness and a boundless sea. In the middle of this sea, a swirl of foam rose, and it was God. We find the way It was born in a different belief, as well from Bucovina: In the middle of the sea swirl there was this butterfly and worm, senseless floating. Suddenly, the butterfly left its wings and blossomed into a young and handsome lad, and He was God, and the worm became a different creature, He, Devil or Satan.” (Pamfile, 2008:14)

“At the beginning, as we see these days on Earth, there was only water. No light, God forbidden. Suddenly, God was born, Sabaot, just like that, out of nowhere, on a leave of de water lily (possibly Nuphar Luteum), and then as well the sun was born above the water, in the sky. The sky was seen then. If it had been before, or not, no one knows, because it was dark. As the sun was born, the light spread on the face of earth. Seeing this light, the Devil came out from the bottom of a puddle, its old estate, and went ashore (?) up to the time it bumped into a child on a leave of water lily and it started talking to him:

- *What are you? Boy!*
- *I am God Sabaot.*
- *And what is that? – showing to the Sun.*
- *That is my help, the Sun” (Pamfile, 2008:14)*

The theme of secret, although omnipresent in the researches of the ethnologist, in the Romanian specialty studies has never been approached as a theme per se. There is a hidden part in each and every human being which shows each of us as much as we show or pretend to be or to do. We rise in the miracle of the stories with fairies and dragons, we believe in the existence of the devil and of God, we make our ideals of honor and convert to the sublime our own innocence. *This utopy of the origins*, never contradicted but only rephrased – we say – *is the ireal referee we face our real*. We create *text(s)* by inventing new and new notions we afterwards twist. And, if we are to name it transparency, the lie sits there, naturally, against it. Plans sliding occur every time by a constant semantic vector: the secret. The society we live in keeps bringing this notion in front of us: professional secret, state secret, medical secret, the secret of them all or only of one of us. Denying this dimension of our existence means increasing totalitarian projects. (Luca, 2004)

In opening his book *“European Thought in the 18th Century”*, Paul Hazard made the following affirmation: *“The 17th century had ended by lack of respect, the 18th century started by irony”*. Paraphrasing, we may say that the 21st century started by an irony of faith which hasn’t ended yet. If, according to the same author, the year 1713 underlined the emergence of the “time for universal critic”, the year 2000 seems to be that of universal

hardship. In all the fields of activity, the human of the new millennium waives archetypal patterns and rules, not necessarily using whole suites of negations, critic or compromises, but, rather making demiurgical promises without however being identified to divinity. The events occur as such in collages sometimes confusing, other times bizarre. But no one bothers with old meanings unless invested by economic targets. The dictionary of contemporary Romanian defines the word *rite* as follows:

1. Religious practice, church ceremony, ritual. Fig. order, pattern.
2. Confession, religion. Let's keep in mind the figurative sense defined in the dictionary as, seen from this angle, it turns into a study object for cultural anthropology. The words *rite* and *order* have the same Vedic Indo-European root *rta*, *arta*, related to cosmic order. The Latin word *ritus* names what is ordered and very close to the meaning of the word *ceremony*, which comes from Sanskrit: *kar* – to make, *môn* – sacred thing, done thing.

Rites urge first of all to the idea of stability. Despite all this, they emerge, deploy and, at a certain point, fade or change. Nothing of what we do can get away from ritualization: the morning coffee, the first fallen milk tooth, the first date with the one you love, the morning or evening washing, choosing the writing materials for the new school year, the receipt of the bachelor degree etc.

“That religious rites have their origin in magical rites (Frazer) or vice versa, that violence may be the founder (Girard), and the sacrifice the initial model of the rite (Freud), that there may be, between the death of the totemic animal and Eucharist, a filiation (Smith), here you have as many uncheckable hypotheses, affirmed during the 19th and 20th centuries. Despite René Girard’s statements, violence sublimed and overcome in a sacrifice is not the paradigm of any and every rite, and the three steps of the passing rituals identified by Van Gennep have nothing of an ideal type which can be generalized to all rites. But negotiation with an alterity – a god, an occult force or a social power – from which people try to get advantages in change of a gift seems to emerge as a constant feature of the rite.” (Rivière, 2000: 93)

The interpretation of contemporary rites needs to take into account as well the issues generated by the current field. Each and every anthropologist has a professional life within the field he or she builds. Our meetings compose dialogues on the spaces we visited, the groups we identified with for a while in our research, by using the same unbeatable work instrument, with slightly revolving resonance: field, *my field*. In essence, the field, practice with academic tradition, is transmitted like any other tradition, although influenced by the personalized marks of various schools of anthropology, keeps the coordinates related to the interest for everyday life, for its integrating, holistic orientation, for the establishment of an *intimate* relation to the object of the research. The permanent ritualization of contemporary societies: a football match, a political scene, a beer or wine festival, the city anniversary, street advertising campaigns, birthday parties when turning eighteen, weddings and funerals managed on the internet, the emergence of new professions with quick need of social implementation etc. makes us stay in front of a continuously moving field and permanent readapting. Things are currently pretty complicated “*due to globalization, space X expands but it becomes somehow a-topical, a place saturated by the presence of other spaces: merchandise from the United States or China, Nike clothing made in Turkey, politics from Iran or France, religion transmitted by an international TV channel and, last but not least, money transmitted in a few seconds by Union Bank from one’s child in Australia.*” (Mihăilescu, 2007:110)

Race. Concept and Determination

“After the flood was over, I don’t know for a fact where two people came from, Adam and Eve. After having banished them, they had lots of children and their children were the ancestors of the Jew, Moldavian and Gypsy. God gave each their own law. One in one country, the other in a different country and the Moldavians, he let them stay here.

And then God called each to give them something. First, the boyars went and praised God. “What do you want?” “Wealth, Lord”. God gave them wealth. Then, there were the Jews because they were the first to put their clothes on. “And you, what do you want?” “Good, Lord.” “Good you shall have.” Our peasants got there in the end – their peasant shoes were difficult to put. “What do you want, God asked?” “Wealth”. “The boyars took it!” “Then the good.” “The Jew has it!” “Then just work, Lord!” “Work is yours!” And therefore work is sacred, as it is from God.

The Gypsy goes as well: “What do you want?” “Wealth.” “The boyars took it!” “Good!” “The Jew has it.” “Work. Moldavians have work.” “What joke of a gift is this?” “A joke you shall be”, God said.”

Elena Niculiță-Voronca, Traditions and Beliefs of the Romanian People, p.42

The term *race* comes from the Latin word *ratio*, order of the things, classification and subsequently receives, from the medium Latin, the meaning of *descendance* (Affergan, 1987)³⁸. Therefore, before having exclusively been related to the biological aspects, the term has been pretty confusing and relates to the classification of human diversity. The whole written history is based either on the monotheist thesis of all races, or

³⁸ Affergan, Francis, *Exotisme et alterite*, PUF, Paris, 1987

denying it by the polytheist thesis of the autonomous origin of races.³⁹ Anthropologists have tried, from early times, to explain the polytypical nature of the human species, by classifying *Homo Sapiens* in subspecies or races, depending on the geographic coordinate, on the physical features (phenotype) as well as: the color of the skin, texture of the hair thread and the degree of the development of the tertiary hair coating (the formation of the hair coating crosses several stages: the primary emerges to the fetus, on most of its body and, usually disappears at birth; the secondary appears on the head and partially eyebrows, in the last period of uterine life and is kept after birth as well; the tertiary coating: beard, moustache, auxiliary hair and public hair of both sexes, the body hair and limbs at

³⁹ Summarizing, the ideational effervescence created around races can be represented as such: Noah's descendants changed their appearance due to the environmental conditions they lived in (Hippocrates, Blumenbach, Prichard develops the migrationist theory, which is degeneration). In 1520, Paracelsus lodges the alternative thesis of polygeny, in 1684 Francois Bernier divides the humankind in 4 large categories: Europeans, Africans, Chinese, Japanese and Lapponians. Half a century later, Linné starting from Galenius's humors distinguishes: Sanguine (Europeans), choleric (Americans), melancholic (Asians), phlegmatic (Africans). Immanuel Kant takes over the thesis on structural inequality, the chromatic features being an irrefutable argument. Samuel George Morton, the founder of the American School of Anthropology, supports the existence of a divine intervention after Adam and Eve. More important than the idea of race becomes the concept of purity, that is inequality amongst people, translated by the danger of mixture (Frantz Josef Gall, William Edwards, Armand de Quatrefages). Arthur de Gobineau writes *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines*, 1853-1855, translated at the beginning of the 20th century by Ludwig Schemann, who will edit afterwards the influential *Politisch antropologische Revue*, extremely appreciated in Germany. An obtuse ethnocentrism is born, and Mendel becomes the artisan of such theories. The creator of Eugenicist utopias, Francis Galton, defines it in 1904: *the study of the factors socially controllable ... to raise the races better equipped*. And, in order to better understand the effect of such theories, lists the example of some measures related to the improvement of the race: Germany, 1934-1945, incomplete data, practiced between 150 000-200 000 of sterilizations on medical – biological criteria and the citizens declared mentally ill were euthanized. 1907, USA, the lawmaking for sterilizing persons carrying hereditary taint. Up to 1948, more than 50000 persons suffered from this intervention, out of which 60% women. 20000 patients and delinquent sterilized in Scandinavian countries between 1935 -1949, out of which 75% were women. In 1948, medical sterilization gets to be provided for by law in Japan as well; out of 300000, 97% were women. (see Vintilă Mihăilescu, *Antropologie. Cinci introduceri*; Gheorghe Brătescu, *Către sănătatea perfectă. O istorie a utopismului medical*)

men, emerges after puberty) the dimensions of the body, particularities of the facial skeleton, the shape of the nose, of the lips, of the eyes. All races are interconnected by anthropological contact types, determined by the community of the whole humankind and of the process of crossbreeding amongst races. There is a very large morphological similarity amongst the natives in South Asia, Australia and Oceania (*Australoids*) and the black natives in Africa (*Negroids*). Both have black hair (curly of the first, strongly developed tertiary hair coating and curly of the Africans, their tertiary hair coating is less developed) and brown eyes, intensely pigmented brown skin, the maxillary come outside, thick lips. The great *Europid* race has light skin color, well-developed chin, abundant tertiary hair coating and soft hair. *Mongoloids* have prominent cheekbone, flat face, coarse and straight hair, and often present a little fold on the upper eyelid and a crease in the internal corner of the eyes, the so called *epicantus*, which covers totally or partially the lacrimal caruncle. People's spreading on new territories led to the creation, from the large races, most probably during the Mesolithic, of most of the small, secondary races. Such a result was also seen after the population of Australia and, much later, Oceania by the people come from South Asia. The oceanic secondary race includes anthropologic groups partially created in Asia (*andamana or negritose; ceylon-sondic or veddoic; curilic or ainic*), partially emerged in Australia and Oceania (*Australian and Melanezian*). Ancient Australoid elements also enter the structures of the populations in Indochina, Indonesia, even South China, from the isles of Hainan and Taiwan. There were predominant in Africa (except for the Mediterranean seaside) types which belonged to the Western branch Negroid-Australoid (*Sudan-black, central-African or Pigmid*, in the South – *Boshimenid group*, in Oriental Africa – the *East-African or Ethiopian group*, transition type towards the *Europids*). In the basin of the Mediterranean Sea and in South-West Asia, up to India, the dark hair Europids have spread, *the brunettes* of the *Indo-Mediterranean* race (groups: *Mediterranean, Balkan-Caucasian* – with developed third hair coating, dull forehead, prominent nose, *Indo-Pamir*). The contact amongst Europid types and Negroid-Australoid types (4th-3rd century BC, the

Veddoids meeting the brunette Europids) led to the creation of the South-Indian or *Dravidian* group). Most probably, the physical anthropology specialists say, after the withdrawal of glaciers, people have come to the North and, probably, by depigmentation, the secondary, North-European race was founded, that is the *blonds*. The data related to the anthropologic competence of the current population confirms that North-East Europe was populated from the South as well but also from the East, more precisely from Siberia, and from here, from the oldest times, they tried to reach to the West, Mongoloid elements. Therefore, a *North-Baltic* group emerged, characterized by a very strong depigmentation of the hair and iris, with some, weak, mongoloid features. The *Atlantico-Baltic* misses (from Scandinavia to Island) the mongoloid features. The native population in America (*Indians and Eskimo*), by their deeply mongoloid features, is an important argument of the thesis for the population of the continent, by populations came from North-East Asia. These are just a few introductory elements on the debut of the great travel of the human being on its planet. The age of great geographic discoveries led as well to important changes in the structure of the population in many regions of the world. The Spanish and Portuguese, followed later by the Dutch and English populated a good part of the American continent, the natives being almost totally exterminated (the ancient inhabitants in the Antilles, Argentina, Uruguay), or mixed (Mexico, Central America, many republics in South America). Here as well, black people were brought as slaves (out of their marriages to Europids, *the mulatto*, and from those with the Indians, the *sambo* emerged). The English colonists decimated the Australian and Polynesian populations (approximately three fourths of the natives were killed), the *Maori* in New Zealand, they exterminated the Tasmanians (decade 1870-1880), and the crossing of the Dutch to Hotenots led to the emergence of the *color* people. The black type is kept still in pure shape in Haiti.

Not only crossbreeding is owed the great diversity of the anthropological types, despite the fact that, more than ever in the whole history of the human being, it is possible today. The environmental factors, the level of economic development of various societies, the

change of the type of activities, the development of technology and many other factors are involved in the change of the anthropological structure of the humankind. The spreading of the humankind meant as well the beginning of a long and complicated process: the creation of language families. The language is a living organism: it is born, lives and dies. The language of a people emerges with it and measures its existence to that of the people which created it. The discovery of the origins of each and every language, of the similarities between various languages, the survival of one or of the other are study objects for linguistics and compared ethnolinguistics⁴⁰. Very interesting is that when two languages mix, there is not a new language that emerges. One of them will always win, and the winner will only suffer some influences from the other⁴¹.

⁴⁰ *Sociolinguistics* – studies the reports between the linguistic variables and the measurable social variables. *Interactional Sociolinguistics* – studies the rhetoric strategies of inhabitants with diverse social origins. *Variationist Sociolinguistics* – studies the grammar variations of oral productions. *Communication ethnography* – studies interpersonal linguistic conducts, including non-verbal communication: gesture, look, mimic. *Conversational Analysis*, the conditions of the interpretation are born during speaking. *Speech Analysis* follows the logic of the action in natural conversations. *Pragmatics* are more interested in using the language, not in its structure.

⁴¹ To see what is to happen to the Romanian language during the future twenty years, for example, under the overwhelming influence of English language and of the borrowings of terms from other languages. I quote the phrase uttered by a young man, college graduate: “*am demigiuri la job și m-am tirat că nu vreau să mă lincui cu el*”. The “translation” in Romanian may be: *am necazuri la lucru și am plecat pentru că nu vreau sa am vreo legătură cu el*.

Ancestors – The Mirror World

Australians belong to an original anthropologic type and assumes that their ancestors lived sometimes in South-East Asia and in Indonesia. The ancestors of the Tasmanians came from the New Caledonia, on sea, by a favorable current along the Australian coast or, as some researchers say, left from Australia to Tasmania. The languages of Australians and Tasmanians do not show any similarities to any other language on the planet. Their long-term isolation made some particularities get conserved and subsequent comparative researches possible. The population spread quite slowly on the Australian continent, there were as many languages and dialects as many tribes, more than 500 most probably. And they, most of the part belong to the agglutinant type and noticed by clarity and richness of their grammar. The *Aranda*, for example, has more than 10.000 words, and the conjugation of the verbs is amazing: approximately 95 tenses which can get various suffixes, owed to render the most subtle nuances of the action. The sound language is doubled by that of gestures, the oldest step of human communication. By gesture, the old Australians used to transmit information to distance, to communicate with other tribes of different languages, or during some periods when the rules prohibited speaking (the widows during mourning and youngsters during their initiation period). Up to the coming of the white people, they did not know metals, agriculture, animal breeding, pottery; they were stone age level. In return, Australian women were very skillful in processing fiber matter, twirled threads and ropes made of vegetal threads, wool or hair they then weaved in nets. Their clothes were scarce, most of the times, just some belt around the waist or over the hips and, depending on the region, as a cape, some opossum leather, thrown over their shoulder. The body was adorned by simple jewels: braids or head girdles, necklaces or bracelets, a little stick passed through the nose diaphragm. During the rituals, they used to dye their hair and cover it with a multicolor puff,

stuck by blood or vegetable fat. The sacrifices such population made are famous. Especially important proved to be, in order to understand the organizing types of the oldest societies, the research of the old Australian economical-social structures, one of the most representative models for primitive order, maintained up to almost our days. It seems that Australians had neither tribe chiefs nor tribal councils; the tribe was only represented by the language community and in case of dialectal differences within the same tribe, they had standalone names, territories and customs. Anthropologists believe that the division of Australian tribes in phratries represent a vestige of the ancient dual exogamy, specific in the distant past of all primitive populations, an embryo of gentile order. One phratry consisted of several gens, children belonged to the organizing formation, phratry or gen, their mother was part of. In Northern regions, at some tribes, maternal filiation lost ground to paternal filiation. The invasion of Europeans imposed, by the resettlement from the inhabited lands, patrilocal settlement (*the woman pursued her husband*; before, the husband used to settle in his wife's gen). At Australians, marriage per groups (*matrimonial sections*, potential groups of wives and husbands, theoretically at least, made conjugal relations settle amongst whole groups of men and women, which was truly applied with the occasion of a ritual) blended with marriage per pair. Except for additional wives, *pirrauru*, each man had one single wife, very rarely two. The main cell in the development of the household was the gen. Economic stratification was found in the subdivision of the groups according to sex and age: the group of adult hunters, the group of women, that of the gatherer-teenagers. In order to become hunters, the boys would train from the earliest of age. The initiation ritual assumes the isolation of the boys and the obedience of severe food interdictions and enduring tormenting procedures for the "coming of age": having teeth knocked out, scarifications, circumcision. The initiation lasted for some years, the youngsters used to listen to the teachings of the old people, endured the corrections applied on their own body before becoming men with full rights. The predominant form of Australian religious beliefs was *totemism*: the belief in supernatural kinship of men to some animals or

plants. The gen totem was considered a type of relative, an ancestor of it. The myths of Australians invoke creatures which are half human, half animals or plants. These mythologic ancestors had embodied their descendants, the human creatures, and kept to them secret connections by sacred objects. *Ciuringa* (in Aranda) is the name of such little boards marked and kept in sacred hideouts. Once a year, under the Chief, the *inticiuma* took place here, the ritual devoted to the totem. Besides gentile totemism, there has also existed a totemism based on sexes and, here and there, individual totemism as well.

“Totemism is not the religion of animals, people or images, but the religion of anonymous and impersonal force, found in each of these creatures, without being taken as one of them. None possesses it fully and they all contribute to it. This force is totally independent from the particular subjects it embodies, which it precedes and survives. Individuals die; generations pass, and others take their place; this force remains however always present, alive and unchanged. It animates present day generations, as it used to animate past generations and as it will animate future generations.” (Durkheim, 1968: 268)

Here as well magic was an important support of the people in faraway times and especially in defending from “injuries”, any evil thrown unto a person or group by the enemies. The remains of the native population in contemporary Australia represent less than 1% of the populations on the continent (approx. 9 million inhabitants).

The origin of the people in **Oceania** keeps being one of the most difficult anthropologic debates, with a plus for the Asian theory of populating **Polynesia**. The languages of Polynesians are related to the languages of the populations in Indonesia and with a good part of the languages spoken in Indochina. The migrating wave which lead to the population of the isles in the Pacific Ocean lead to the creation of maritime populations which improved unbeatable sailing techniques in the history of man. The researchers agree that the origin of the old Polynesians was Archipelago Tahiti. The linguistic factor divides the native populations of Oceania in two large groups: speakers of the Papuan languages (New Guinea and some isles in the Melanesia) and the speakers

of the Malaysian-Polynesian language family. The clothes of the Papuans and Malaysians is the belt over the hips, women used to wear a miniskirt made of leaves. In order to protect themselves from the rain, both women and men used to wear a hood made of tightly sewed leaves. The adornments of men (who used to take a special care of their hair, to comb it in with large clips, chipped in bamboo stems or little sticks skillfully linked together) were far more numerous than womens'. In Hawaii, important people wore capes made of leather and feather, and those in New Zealand wore capes woven from flax or sewed from dog leather and birds. Shells, animal teeth and flowers (garlands made of snapdragon) are the main materials for making adornments. The tattoo is the most important body mark, it is made depending on sex and rank, the chiefs being often fully tattooed. Although the pair-family was not the main economic cell, it prevails, marriage implying to buy a wife. The exchange of products was the determining element of social development.

“But let us notice that the two terms: oloa and tonga; or in better words, let’s keep in mind the second. Tonga names one of the permanent paraphernalia, especially the marriage mats, the girls will inherit from such marriage, the adornments, talismans which get into the fresh family by the agency of the woman, with the obligation to return them; as destination, they are some sort of real estate properties. Oloa designate briefly those objects, most of them instruments, specific to the husband. They are essential movables. [...] if we are to extend the observational field, the notion tonga will immediately have a different magnitude. In Maori, in Tahiti, in Tanzanian, and Mangarevan, it connotes all that is property per se, all that makes you rich, strong and influential, all that can be changed, the objects of compensation. These are exclusively the thesaurus, talismans, crests, mats and sacred idols, sometimes even traditions, cults and magic rituals. We find there the notion of talisman-property, which is generalized in all this Malaysian-Polynesian world and even in the whole Pacific region” (Mauss, 1993: 49).

Incredibly analyzed by Malinowski, *kula*, the exchange system in the Tobriand isles, is the testimony of these inhabitants’ originality and opening. White bracelets and red necklaces were exchanged, passed from

hand to hand, from one isle to the other, describing a huge circle. Very important is the emergence of *men societies*, corporations of men divided in ranks, where access was conditioned by the payment of consistent levies and the fulfillment of very complicated rituals, strengthening the position of the man in society, detrimental to matriarchate. *Mana* is the impersonal force, attributed to the phenomena of nature, spirits, especially of the ancestors, those of the gens and chiefs (chiefs, aristocrats). The cult of skulls, quite spread in Melanesia, the worship of the dead, were tightly connected to secret societies or to men, members of which masked, showing the ancestors and trying to terribly scare the living. Amongst the commoners, day to day life found its balance and observed the norms due to the mana, magic and threatening spirits. The myths of the Polynesians glorify the gods – *cultural heroes: Tane, Tu, Rongo and Tangaroa*, representations of nature, served by minor gods, demons and spirits, mirroring the direct connection between the social and divine hierarchy. The world on the other side was similar to it, after death, the faith of the soul sharing the same situation with its earthy holder. The Polynesian Pantheon seems to have a common source, the priest school in the Raiatea isles (Tahiti Archipelago). At the very beginning, the Sky and Earth were tightly connected, so sharp, that there was no place for the living creatures, according to a New Zealand myth. Tane emerged from the unification of the two and set out to separate them. Therefore, he propped his legs out to the sky and pushed so hard that he lifted it up above the earth and turned his mother face down, (the surface of earth is actually Tane's back). Steam and rain are the bitter tears of the two separated parents. The myth shows the natives' conviction that by their branches, seen as roots, the trees (Tane's sons) support the sky. Notions like *space, void, root, beginning of growing* were top secret. The concepts were tightly connected to the notion of *taboo* (word with Polynesian origin entered Europe by the agency of the English sailor Cook; *taboo/tapu* represents an interdiction failure to observe it will not be unpunished by supernatural forces). Social caste order creates a true institution of the taboo in the archipelago.

“For the Maori, tapu may mean dirty and saint altogether; in both cases, it comprises prohibition and therefore marks the distance. [...] The instinctive tendency is to avoid it; and however, we are inclined to study it. The human being needs to get away, to run from power, and however, needs to lean over. As it can no longer bear a why, or a therefore. Soederblom is obviously right when, by noticing the essence of religion in such a connection, he qualifies it as mystery. It is what people felt before even invoking any divinity. As, in religion, God is a late invention.” (Van der Leeuw, 1995: 35).

The medical knowledge of such populations are to be considered in any hermeneutic research related to therapeutic traditions: massage, herbal pastes, curing fractures, skull trepanation, wounds dressing and healing. A part of their knowledge was written down on little wooden boards, in a hieroglyph system, probably using shark teeth to write. Unfortunately, only 20 such little boards have been found; the missionaries who got to Easter Island during the decade 1860-1870 destroyed almost entirely the monuments of such writing, vestiges of disappeared civilization⁴².

Research in such fascinating region of the world has a special role in anthropologic literature. ORSTOM (*Office de la Recherche Scientifique et Technique Outre-Mer*), which afterwards became the IRD was established in 1943 and had an important role in the development of French research in the area of the New Caledonia, French Polynesia and in Vanuatu. CREDO came next (Center for Research and Documentation on Oceania) from Marseille as well as various labs in the CNRS and EHESS. The research on such region still prevails in American universities (who presently hold the podium of the school of contemporary anthropology) as well as New Zealand and Australian universities. With one exception (*Journal de la Société des Océaniste*, Paris), all the oceanic ethnology magazines are Anglo-Saxon: *Mankind*, *Oceania* (Sydney), *Journal of the Polynesian Society* (Wellington, New

⁴² «If an European gets to settle on an isle in the South Sea, death comes after him, and it shall destroy whole tribes « Koţebu, apud Tolstov, Etnografia continentelor, p.152

Zealand), *Anthropological Forum* (Perth, Australia), *Canberra Anthropology* and *Journal of Pacific History* (Canberra), *Contemporary Pacific* (Hawaii).

America has recently been populated. The first people who got here coming from Asia, most probably starting with the end of the glacial age, when the two continents were connected by an isthmus in front of the, nowadays, Bering strait, and later, by sea. From an anthropologic point of view, the American Indians and the Eskimo are quite similar to the population in North and East Asia and are part of the mongoloid race. Common anthropologic features are brownish skin (the *redskin* being just a literary term, due to their custom to color their skin in red), prominent chick bones, black and straight hair. The Indians speak several families of languages which can be divided in several main groups: *Algonquian-Wakashan* and *Nadene* (the word *dene/dine/tine* means *people*) in its turn, including various subgroups.

The Eskimo call themselves *Inuits*, that is *people*. Skilled hunters and fishermen, they have proven great creativity in organizing their households on such a harsh land. As wood was quite absent in Arctic lands, so generously used by other cultures, it was impossible to be a work material for themselves too. Their traditional cabins, the igloos, are built from compressed snow blocks, lined with sealskin. The custom to eat a large part of food in raw state in order to conserve their health (first of all in order to protect themselves from scurvy) is found in the attribute that characterizes them, the name *Eskimo* comes for the Algonquin word *eschimantic* and means *eater of raw meat*. The specific clothing was represented by a jacket made of one piece with a hood, which is put over someone's head, trousers, boots and gloves. During winter, they used to wear directly on their skin, the trousers and shirt made of reindeer skin, sewed with fur on the inside. During the first half of the 19th century, there were men's houses, named *cajime*, where the council of the old men gathered or canto contests, or comic pantomime shows used to take place. According to their belief, the world is governed by spirits, incarnations of the forces of nature and masters of the animal world and of the sea; the cult of shamans being very respected.

The North-West seaside of America was inhabited by the *Tlingit* Indians, also known as *kolosh* or *koliuji*, from the word *koliujka*, the name of the tubular adornment their women used to have in their lower lip. Skilful hunters and fishermen, they developed a very high-tech exchange system both with the tribes on the coast and with the tribes inside the continent. The gens had names of totem animals and unified in phratries. In their turn, they had totemic names. Tlingit and Haida had two phratries: Raven and Wolf. Their kinship was calculated according to maternal filiation, upon birth, the child had the name of the maternal gen, and in his or her teenage, they got the second name, according to their father's gen. Upon the conclusion of marriage, the husband had to work one or two years for his wife's gen, and then would go together to his gen. Remains of the matriarchate are confirmed as well by the *avunculat* (very tight connection between the maternal uncle and nephews). The development of the exchange and the gathering of goods by the chiefs increased slavery, specific feature of the tribes in the North-West. At the beginning, the slave prisoners were collective property of a *barabora* (communal), afterwards the slaves became property of the chiefs. The target of the *potlatch*, upon the feast offered by one of the phratries in honor of the other's members, was an occasion to offer valuable gifts to the guests. Richer the feast, more notable the gifts, the veneration awarded to the chief increased exponentially, as well as his influence on the commoners of the gen.

The North-West American Potlach is “*religious, mythologic and shamanistic, as the chiefs engaged in a potlach represent and incarnate the ancestors and the gods. They have their names, dance their dances and hold their spirits. [...] The obligation to offer is the essence of potlach. A chief has to give potlach for himself, for his son, for his son in law or daughter, for his dead. He will not keep authority on the village, not even on his own family and cannot keep his rank amongst chiefs – the national and international rank – unless he proves he is favored by the spirits and fortune, that he is the master of all spirits and possessed by them, and cannot prove such richness unless spending and dividing it and*

humiliating the others, by putting them in the shadow of his name.” (Mauss, 1993: 106).

In the south-east of the continent, Algonquin and Iroquois are models of hospitality. No hungry people existed in an Iroquois settlement as long as food existed even in only one single house. The management of the *ovacira* (the smallest unit of the tribe, consisting of a group of blood relatives which came from the same ancestor woman) belonged to women. The chief was chosen amongst the mother-women, her duty was to look after all the members of the group, to see if each of them fulfilled their duties, to choose a military chief and a head for peace times.

The typical representatives of Indians in the prairie are the Dakota tribes, Ceiens and Keddo, and in the South-West, the most famous are *pueblo* (*village*, in Spanish; hundreds of people could enter their huge habitations, the inhabitants of a whole village). *Navachs* presently make the largest group of Indian tribes. Indians thought that all living creatures have a soul. All their beliefs related to the origin and organizing of the world were strictly connected to them, the myths talked about such fantastic creatures. The term *totem* is taken from the language of the Ojibve tribe, their gens and phratries were considered related to the animal name of which they held. *Totem* or *ototam* means *its kinship*. “*The animal the clan’s food depends on is as well the relative of the group; its meat cannot be eaten by the members of the clan, just the same way the marriage cannot occur between the men and women which belong to the same group.*” (Donini, 1968:61)

Besides the wise Raven which brought fire to the people, we shall also find the courageous Coyote or the spirits of the *Grain of Corn*, *al Pods*, *of the Gourd* imagined as very beautiful women dressed in the leaves of such plant. The magic force, *orenda* or *manita*, protects the hunters. Sometimes the *manita* can even be the supreme spirit. The Iroquois Divinity *Agreskuia* is the incarnation of sun and the *master of the war*. When the saint is invoked, one of the old people used to tell about the old times, the living history of the kinship was told while lining up ropes of white and violet braids, made of polished shells and sewed or tied up, according to a certain drawing, in long rows. Mnemonic sign, the

line-up, named *algonkin* or *wampum*, were carried as a belt or over one's shoulder.

Maya, the first very developed population of the American continent is as well the one who conceived an advanced writing system, using three types of signs: *ideographic* (represented full words), *phonetic* (to give letters and syllables), *key-signs* (explained the meaning, but did not read). Good astronomers and good mathematicians, the Maya have drafted a system of numbers based on the dodecanal system, origin of which is counting on fingers. During the first centuries of our era, in the Yucatan Peninsula, at the north-east from Lake Chichen Itza, small state-towns appeared. *Halaci-vinik* (state chief, ad litteram, *the great man*) enjoyed unlimited power. During the 6th century, the state-town Chichen Itza will become a very important economic and cultural facility.

“The Quechua Maya came from the East.

*When they reached new lands, carrying their gods, they were afraid that light would never come back. The left joy aside, in Tulan, and had the long and tormenting travel had taken their breath away. They waited at the edge of Izmachi Forest, peacefully, stuck together, without any of them sit or have a rest. But time passed and dark failed to end. The herald daystar finally emerged on the sky. The Quechua embraced and danced and then, the holy book says, **the sun raised like a human being**. Ever since, the Quechua have been in a hurry, at the end of each and every day, to receive the daystar and to see the sun soaring. When the sun is about to show, they say:*

- *It is there we come from.*” (Galeano, 1988:42)⁴³

Maya used to cultivate corn, tomatoes, pumpkins, grain and cotton, using a land for no more than 3 years, and then left the soil degrade for a while up to 10 years. This may also be the explanation for their resettlement. The Maya is also attributed the cultivation of the cocoa tree. The cocoa powder was used to prepare a drink and they used to keep it pressed in boards.

⁴³ Galeano apud Garcés, Joan, El Estado y los problemas tácticos en el gobierno de Allende, México, Siglo XXI, 1974

The Toltecs, excellent farmers, are the oldest inhabitants in the Mexico Valley. Their cultural center is the town of Teotihuacan. The edifices they built have the shape of a pyramid trunk, with outside faces plated with stone slabs. The *Sun Pyramid* in Teotihuacan has a height of 60 m. The habitations discovered here, with more than 50 rooms, seem to have sheltered family communes. The Toltec culture influenced a lot a population in South Mexico, *Sapotecs*, creators, in their turn, of an original culture.

The Aztecs, initially named, *Tenochca*, came to the valley of Mexico in the 12th century, from the West, where they lived, according to the legends, on an island. The tribe settled on the coasts of Tescoco Lake. In memory of the *Astlan* Island, their legendary homeland, they started to be named *asteka*, name set after the Spanish invasion.

“The seal of the utopia marks the New Spain, from the very beginnings: the metamorphoses of utopic exaltation related to the messianic expectation, being determining for the steps of its development. There are two essential dimensions – according to most of the researchers –, relevant and defining for such European utopias, more precisely, Spanish, which insinuate step by step, devouring the huge body of a different utopia, that pre-Columbian being irrepressibly hung over by cruelty, Pharisaism and sometimes even by good-faith: the missionary spirit of the orders and receptivity of the Mexican polytheism. On the one hand, millenary Franciscans in spiritual breakdown with official ecclesiastic power, coming to revive in Mexico the evangelic church in order to prepare – they said – the comeback of Messiah; on the other hand, the Mexican Indians, who believed no less in the coming of Quetzalcoatl. The success of the missionaries, the triumph of the Iberic utopia, had been therefore guaranteed, by the emergence of Cortes in the year – Ce Acatl – Quetzalcoatl was expected, emergence which confirms the prophecies of the Aztec priests; and, secondly, by the profitable coincidence, subtly exploited and the maximum efficiency in the missionary’s, of two messianisms: the Franciscan and the Aztec.”
(Zărnescu, preface at Sahagun, 1989: 31)

Quetzalcoatl was cherished and recognized as a god. His face was really ugly, his head was elongated and wore beard. His high temple had steps so narrow that hardly was there room for even one single sole. His subjects originated from the wisdom of the god-king (possessor of houses made of gemstones, silver or red or white pearl, wood, peruses and rich pearls, had all the riches of the world, his harvests were beyond imagination: cotton of various colors and lots of corn), they were very skillful craftsmen who were good at processing the green stone, *chalchiuitl*, to melt metals and to make adornments. A herald who lived into the Tzatzitepetl Mountains used to call the inhabitants from one hundred miles away from Anahuac to listen to the desires of the god. Its vassals used to live their lives at the fullest, and the god had his own penitence periods, when he stung his feet and his blood stained the agave thorns. But all such richness was to end. Three men which claimed to be fortune-tellers, who did not have clean thoughts, made lots of scams in the town of Tullan. One of them turned into a wise old man and looked to see the ill king. He claimed to have the cure to save the king: “*Anyone drinking of it (potion), gets drunk; if you want to drink it you will get drunk and recover, you will feel touched and wander thinking about the painful troubles of death*” (Sahagun, 1989: 78). The king loved the potion and asked for more. He felt right away that he was getting younger, becoming a child again, and then growing up, he started to cry and to understand the mystery of leaving. The magic potion was white agave wine, *teometl*. In praise of the god Tezcatlipoca a young man with outstanding qualities was sacrificed. They said the one chosen for sacrifice would be extremely similar to the god, the young man being therefore spoiled for one year. During celebrations, he used to walk on the streets playing the flute, dressed in expensive clothes and adornments, he had golden bells at his feet with a pleasant sound and which announced him wherever he was going. He was accompanied by seven pageboys. Twenty days before the celebration, his body paint was washed, he was married to four lasses, highly educated and with goddess names, in order to revel during the time left and, five days before the sacrifice, he received all the honors of a god. Ultimately, as he separated from his

wives and the world, he went to the temple, took the stairs by himself, and broke on each a flute he used to play when happy. At the end, the satraps were waiting who slammed him down on the stone table and stabbed him, with one strong stroke, using a knife made of obsidian. The satrap would then insert his hand through the cut and ripped out the young man's heart and he would give it to the sun. This would be the way all those destined to be sacrificed were killed. The prisoners had their body painted in white and were wearing belts made of paper. Their lower lip had a pierce made of feather, their cheek was dyed in black, the remaining face in purple. Some were burnt at the end of a complicated ritual, others stabbed and skinned depending on the celebration and celebrated god. All the hearts ripped out and given to gods were afterwards thrown in a wood box. Their bodies were burnt and then taken back to the temple, ripped apart, a hip kept for Motecuhzoma, the remaining part was divided amongst the important characters and relatives. The meat was boiled and offered in small bowls, with soup and corn. The feast took place in the house of the one who had captured the enemy. The hair pulled out from the skull of the sacrificed person was kept as a relic. On the tenth of each and every month, a woman was sacrificed honoring the goddess Xilonen. Montezuma's empire would end on the anniversary of Saint Hippolytus, in 1521, when the Mexicans are defeated. In 1524, twelve Franciscans arrived in the New Spain, who were sent to convert the Indians.

The Indians in the tropical forests used to grub up the fields and grow manioc, corn, sweet potatoes, pulses, tobacco and cotton. They used to seed on a certain date chosen depending on the position of the stars. The inhabitants in the Amazon and Orinoco Basin used to live in gentile communities, in common households, but each and every married pair had their own home. The transition from de la mother-right gens to father-right gens is marked by the *cuvade* custom: *when the woman was going through labor pains, the man would lie in bed and pretended to be confined. For some days, he would benefit from lots of attention and a very special care.* Complicated drawings made with vegetable juice used to adorn their bodies. Most of the adornments were made of colored feather, nuts, seeds and teeth. The Indians in pampas would wear clothes

made of leather, worked perfectly. Very ingenious, the craft for making shoes, the Patagonians would rip off the skin from the horses and guanacos legs, and pulled it raw as it was on their own feet, up to the knees. The skin would dry and took shape of the human leg, and then, without taking it off, would cut it around their toes and sew it. During winter, they would wear some leather boots over such soft footwear. The tracks they used to leave made the Spaniards call them *patagones* (*large feet*).

The process the current population was born in Mexico, Central America and South was pretty different as compared to North America. The economical and administrative power passed to the hands of the colonizers but, not only the indigenous populations were kept here, but important crossbreeding occurred here, between the natives and the new entrants, and there resulted the following groups: Creoles, Mestizos, Mulattoes, Sambo.

The inhabitants of *Africa* can be grouped in three main race types: *Europids*, in the North, blond skin and dark eyes, *Ethiopians* (Abyssinia and Somalia), dark skin, slightly red, curly hair, narrow and long face, narrow and prominent nose. Anthropologically speaking, they represent a link, a bridge from Europids to Negroids. Most of the inhabitants are part of the *black* race (south of Sahara, Central Sudan, upper stream of the Nile, Congo Basin, Tropical Africa, South Africa). Remains of the Bushman and Hottentots populations live in the southern extremity. Their anthropologic type combines features which remind of Mongoloids (flat face, yellowish skin, rare presence of the epicanthus), negroid elements (curly hair and broad nose). The Malagasy from Madagascar highly belong to the Mongoloid race. The linguistic map of the black continent is much more complicated.

The inhabitants in the North were known to the ancient writers. The battle of Cartagena (146 B.C.) led to the loss of the independence for the Libyan empires as well. The Latin sources on Libyans and Numidians become more and more rare, the population got the name of Mauri, and after the emergence of the Arabs, of Berber. The Maghreb is conquered by the Arabs in the 8th century. In such times, the Berbers were divided in

two large groups: Zenaga and Sanhaja. The Zenaga were nomad breeders of camels and used to populate the fields and oases. The second group had a sedentary life, gardening being their basic occupation. Their way of life was quite similar to that of the nomad Arabs come from the Arabian Peninsula. The resettlement of the Arab tribes (*Sulaym* and *Hilal*) occurred relatively late, somewhere around the 11th century. The exceptional tax and religious policy of the Muslim leaders led to the spread of the Arab language and of the Islam and to the consolidation of strong states: Marinid, Zaianid, Hafsid (borders of which somehow correspond to today Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria). Besides the Islam, the north inhabitants have also kept many other agricultural traditions. Therefore, the cult of the saint places, of the sacred water springs and trees, the adoration of the *marabouts* (saints of the place), the rites of rain invocation etc. The central part of Sahara is lived by the *Tuaregs*, presently led by a council of the heads which is also attended by women, very appreciated. The inheritance is passed maternally, marriage is patrilocal but, if a widow, the mother is entitled to go back to the gens she used to belong to. The woman is holder of the traditional writing–*Tifinagh*, knowledge which is passed from mother to daughter. Although Islamic, the Tuaregs have a different interesting particularity: women can have their face uncovered, while the men, when turning 25 years old, wrap their head in a dark color scarf which also covers their mouth, the lower part of their nose and their forehead. The scarf is never taken out, not even during the night.

“People are rather similar to their weather than their ancestors”
Al Jahiz writes in the Bayan. (Anghelescu, 2009:80)

From a distance, the Egyptian culture is one of the most famous and fascinating in the world, as it became a full power subject, Egyptology; the studies on it covering tens of thousands of pages. We shall add just a few words on the rural world of the ancient Egypt. Amongst the Fellahins, the custom of the marriage amongst cousins. The paternal uncle’s son is the future husband of the girl. A different important feature preserved would be the *levirat* (the brother of the deceased husband marries the widow in order to keep the land in their

family). The birth of a boy leads to a special esteem in the community and, in order to protect the infant from whammy, during the first days not even the father is let know the child's gender, and the village hears a rumor about the birth of a girl. Due to the same reason, during early childhood, the boys are dressed in gowns. The funerary processions are accompanied by mourners, like in the old times, with their hands dyed in blue.

The history of Sudan is tightly connected to that of Egypt and Ethiopia. Christianity gets here during the 6th century and it becomes the official religion, in Medieval Nubia. During the 13th century, it is conquered by Arabs, and in the 16th century, the Islam replaces Christianity. In the Muslim sultanates in south, the Arab was the privilege of the Muslim educated people. The *Nilote* populations live as well in the south. They were famous in the 19th century for the craft of melting iron in stone ovens. They used to work spears with long and broad pointer, made of steel.

A common feature of the African populations described is, like in the Pacific, the secret societies. Such societies were holder of a sort of formal secret, all the members of the community got to know the structure of such groups. One of the oldest is the secret society of the men in Liberia. Around the age of 12-14, the boys need to cross the initiation period. the preparation of the young man following to become a man lasts for some months. Teenagers, separated from their family (their mothers are let know that their sons were swallowed by the Poro spirit), are taught in a clearing chosen in great secrecy, under permanent surveillance, to braid baskets and mats, to sculpt, to build, to fish, to know the herbs. One of the leaders, who wore a mask with human and animal features, embodies Poro. Now and then, the members of the secret society enter the village, masked from head to toe, embodying the spirits of the ancestors and striking terror amongst the inhabitants. The news themselves that the spirits are in the village frightens the villagers and make them hide as soon as possible in the house, in a desperate attempt to avoid them. The little girls have as well their own society, where they are taught to cure, body secrets and, of course, to cook with the old women of the village. Secret societies manifested in specific ways, depending on the rules

imposed later by various governances. In some villages on the coast of Guinea, for example, societies were used by authorities as police squadrons to fight against political enemies. In other areas, some societies concluded collaboration contracts amongst them in order to supply some works. Many people in Tropical Africa knew how to process iron before the arrival of the Europeans, the Hottentots being great craftsmen as well. The bushmen are famous for their skill to find and make water tanks (the women used to collect the rainwater in ostrich whole eggs, with a hole at one end). As related to the Bantu, the relatives of the groom used to pay a compensation (*lobola*) to the bride's family when the marriage was concluded, and Herero tribes, the matriarchal gens possessed the land, and the patriarchal gens – the cattle. Outstanding is the Ethiopians applied art. The gold and silver objects, watermarked, adorned with plant motifs, their handwritten books, church painting make the glory of the monasteries here.

The human being, as we assume these days *to know*, is the result of a long evolutionary process. The world, in all the splendor of its diversity, was happy and suffered for a man and due to a man. Precisely for this Levi-Strauss recommends the replacement of the term of race to that of culture:... *humanity stops at the frontiers of the tribe, of the linguistic group, sometimes even of the village; and in such an extent, that a large number of so called primitive populations are appointed by a name which means people (or, in more discreet words, the good, the excellent, the perfect) which implies that the other Tribes, groups or villages do not share such human – or even natural – virtues, but are, best case scenario, made of the fake, mean, monkeys or lice eggs.* (1973)⁴⁴

Hence, the imperious need to know each other, to accept we are neither better, nor worse than others, but only, each of us, a cell of a much bigger organism. And I believe it's appropriate to reiterate in such context, we as a nation, we are a part of the same generous structures and, next to us, it's him-the other.

⁴⁴ LEVI STRAUSS, C., *La pensée sauvage*, Paris

The image of the medicine man in prehistoric times is not very clearly outlined in the history of the Romanian medicine. The magic figures from Cucuteni and Hăbășești are considered evidence of curing witchcraft. We assumed that the medicine man interfered on spirits both in order to be given the cure and in order to assure great hunting. The curer's services were accessible to all the members of a community. The medicine man was supported by them, he was not a direct part to the economic process. His emergence is signaled in the middle step of the barbarism, during the period the production means were completed, the bronze age, after the first great division of labor. The much too fragmentary data in the far away past change when it is about the Dacians and the Scythians, and then the Celts who crossed our lands. The Celts are those who elaborated the conception on life named Wyrđ according to which all the aspects of the world are seen in a flow, a constant movement between the psychologic and mystic polarities of fire and ice, which creates a vision on the universe with gods of an underground world, represented by a system of huge fibers, a huge three dimensional spider net. Every time one single fiber vibrates, the whole net gets into resonance and makes all the components linked amongst each other vibrate. The physical and biological phenomena, the immaterial and material phenomena which make the individual turn into objects of the anthropological study.

“The known is finite, the unknown infinite; intellectually we stand on an islet in the midst of an illimitable ocean of inexplicability. Our business in every generation is to reclaim a little more land, to add something to the extent and the solidity of our possessions.” Thomas H. Huxley (apud Boorstein, 1996: 416)

Acculturation

Acculturation, a basic concept of cultural contacts, as Bastidé use to write, is the “*overlap of civilisations*”. The concept, of an American origin, was developed during the first half of the 20th century, as a reaction to the diffusionist current and aimed to direct research towards overlapping phenomena as they occurred. It is a complex process, it responds to external causes, such as borrowing, and the result must materialise itself both in internal and external factors. Herskovits supplements his definition, insisting that discontinuous contacts must be taken into account and analysed, since culture is a dynamic phenomenon. It is also appropriate to mention that acculturation is not only the transfer of elements, but a continuous process of interactions. Borrowing and assimilation are phases of acculturation. This is where selection intervenes, which makes the subsequent expression articulate itself gradually from one region to another, from one community to another. When two groups are in contact, the new elements are never absorbed in the lump, but selection becomes even more limited when there are imposed traits. The principle of reinterpretation designates the process through which *older significations are attributed to the new elements or, the other way around, the new modifies the significance of the old forms* (Herskovits, 1967). The cargo cult holds an important place within the literary field (*the Melanesians interpreted the arrival of the colonisers’ ships based on their myths of the creation of the world*). An important element of acculturation is connected to the internal stratifications of societies. Dynamic anthropology has proven that acculturation processes take place among subcultures of the same culture, because, as Bastidé shows, relationships are established between individuals, not between cultures. Cultural phenomena belong to social structures and cannot be analysed apart from them. “*The idea we wish to underline is that, while all peoples are exposed to certain elements of foreign cultures, what they*

will accept or reject in a certain situation is determined by their pre-existent culture and the circumstances in which the contact takes place” (Hersovits, 1967: 231).

Part II

The human body

Sociocultural morphemes

“...human sciences, as they are taught at the university, exile us from ourselves, a labyrinthine situation depicted on the psychic scene – that of the animal psyche – where no other curtain lift is possible. They confer an absolute value to the ego and to the sexual function that invade this scene, ignoring the dimension of the Word to which the Eros leads, beyond sex, as well as the dimension of the true I – that I become of each being – located beyond the ego - I”

Annick de Souzenelle, *The Inner Oedipus. The Presence of the Logos in the Greek Myth*, p.10

“All your shadows are found in this box!”⁴⁵

Anthropological literature is extremely generous in what regards the description and analysis of the human body. Hundreds of pages theorise, hierarchize, debate, praise or deny the depth of one theory or another and, in the end, yield in the face of the Western scientific method of operation, granting it an unappealable legitimacy. Biology and medicine, which have now reached an unprecedented level in history, possess a knowledge promoted as absolute. They can explain precisely *how* our body works, however, without always being able to say *why* it does so. This is where ethnology steps in, in its effort to get close to the

⁴⁵ Sir James George Frazer: 1995, *Scripta, Folklore in the Old Testament*, p. 153: “...the tribes that identify their souls with their shadows or images are often deadly afraid of a camera, because they believe that the person who took their photograph has also slain their soul or shadow. Here is one example from thousands of others. In a village in Bas-Yukon, Alaska, an explorer has installed his camera to photograph several Eskimos in the vicinity of their dwellings. (...the village chief) closely examined for several minutes the images stirring on the matt glass and then suddenly lifted his head and yelled to his people: *All your shadows are found in this box.*”

so-called *exotic societies*. To these societies, the body is still expressed through myths, rituals and beliefs, through constructs that ingeniously intertwine with a meaning that is simultaneously physical, systemic, symbolic and initiatory. Under these circumstances, basic phrases such as “*primitive mentality*” or “*savage way of thinking*” become somewhat ambiguous, and the return to archetypes becomes an ethical condition of any scientific undertaking whose main focus is on the body, this illusion of absolute property. Received from parents, the body is constructed bearing the imprints of the society in which it appeared, representing the most intimate form of relationship with alterity, which consists in the person itself. The body is the one constantly reminding of our ties with ourselves, with our ancestors, with the gods, with the other gender, with our fellowmen and with a past whose beginnings we still cannot even begin to suspect, the living proof that we can never live truly alone, that our destiny is of a social nature.

Nevertheless, can the existence of archetypes be proven⁴⁶? It is a difficult homework for cultural history. Chimeric in nature, the solution glides between the physical and the metaphysical and escapes any encasing within a formula. Since early Antiquity and until the Immediate Present, defined and redefined, the motives, called archetypes, glide on the two large constants, time and space, being on everyone’s lips and understood only by some, creating and recreating myths, dallying with the large conquests of science, explaining the Hyperborean journeys through the arguments of quantum physics, leaving to us, mortals, echoes in rhymes of genius: “*It was when it could not be seen, / Now that we see it, it is gone.*”⁴⁷

⁴⁶ C.G.Jung, 1994, Editura Jurnalul Literar, În lumea arhetipurilor (In the World of Archetypes): “the concept of archetype, the inevitable correlate of the idea of unconscious collective, indicates the presence within the psyche of certain universally disseminated forms. Mythological research calls them motives; in the psychology of primitives they correspond to the concept of *représentations collectives* created by Lévy-Bruhl, and in the field of comparative study of religions, Hubert and Mauss have defined them as categories of imagination. In the past, Adolf Bastian defined them as primary or elementary ideas”. pp21-22

⁴⁷ Mihai Eminescu, La steaua (To the star), “Convorbiri literare” (“Literary conversations”), 1890

Such a discourse is most often built on the symbol, both a language of the subconscious (the spectacle of the inner world governed by the right hemisphere, difficult to decipher because we were born with the conviction that we must protect ourselves not only against what is real, against the entire universe, but also against ourselves) and of nature (the spectacle of the outer world that describes reality within reality, governed by the left hemisphere). The anthropological discourse should aim to reconcile and make the Cartesian and the symbolic languages communicate, to not only inquire about the significations of the magical way thinking, but to bring them in dialogue with the scientific and technical ways of thinking. The human body, itself at a crossroads during the crises that characterise contemporary societies, offers itself as a group binder for current interdisciplinary research, erasing increasingly more borders between the *laboratories*, inciting debates, revealing itself and ourselves to us in an increasingly bold manner. Its multiple facets are more and more accepted by contemporaries, legends and myths are no longer regarded simply as goodnight fairy tales, a patient formerly referred to as “16, that is, the room number, 60, *not visible pancreas*” now regains a soul, a name and a face: “*a grey-haired gentleman, with a big sense of humour in room 16*”, and Gunther von Hagens⁴⁸ art reminds us that *we have forgotten the smell of roses* and that we should try once more to look beyond the body-matter. In other words, it is necessary to conduct a critical reading of the Western culture and, in parallel, a new reading of the traditional cultures.

The human body, maltreated, scorned, considered an instrument of sin for centuries, coded, trained, adored, blessed and cursed at the same time, has remained until this day the only asset placed with fierceness under the seal of absolute ownership in the face of which the poor man is

⁴⁸ German anatomist and controversial artist, author of a body preservation technique called plastination or “withering”, developed in 1977 in order to stop aging. 200 pieces, representing full body corpses of people and animals or just parts of them were exhibited, for example, in the 2009 exhibition in London entitled *Body Worlds and The Mirror of Time*. The technique entailed the removal of the skin from the body, the uncovering of the muscles, nerves, tendons and the liquids and fats are replaced with silicone and resins.

eternally perplexed. A second rate painter such as Da Volterra will have covered the bodies painted by Michelangelo in the Sistine Chapel because a prudish Pope deemed them impure, a redhead will have been burnt at the stake for the sin of having hair red as fire, Madame Clofullia⁴⁹ (born in 1831, time of death is uncertain) will have been famous in her time for the beard she styled as Napoleon III and, later on, for the privilege of becoming immortal as a comic book character, and John Merrick, the famous Elephant Man brought on celluloid film by director David Lynch, will become one of the best known symbols of the protest against humans judging man solely based on their appearance. Summoning it through the metaphor of a tender and delicate plant, known as the *despair of the painter*, Lat. *saxifraga umbrosa*, a model for the rendering of the absolute outer fidelity by artists, the search for truth has been long and willingly slowed down throughout human cultural history, since the “*betrayal by the intellectuals began with the first artist who depicted a winged angel: for it is by our hands that we attain Heaven*”⁵⁰.

⁴⁹ At the age of 8, Josephine Boideschene already had a 5 cm long beard, a famous case of hirsutism (excessive growth of thick hair in areas where, in females, it is usually minimal or absent); such cases, “the bearded lady”, which became fair attractions, are cited from ancient times. Hippocrates talks of a bearded priestess. In the Middle Ages, bearded women were considered witches, while a Spanish nun from the 14th century with the same *defect* will later on be sanctified: Saint Paula is celebrated every January 20th. And, as it seems, several other religious female figures will be cited throughout history.

⁵⁰ Pauwels, Louis; Bergier, Jacques, *The Morning of the Magicians*: 2005

The human body, a sum of anthropological introductions

Discovering one's body, the first and only item found under the seal of man's absolute ownership and placing it in the middle of all rituals and beliefs also entails the proof for the spirit's forms of expression. In fact, with its manifestation begins the construction of all social structures, the physical body being only a conductor through which past generations have transmitted their teachings and experiences to their successors. In order for these teachings to be marked down in time and space, the body has to undergo several endurance tests. The testing of limits has also entailed the exercise of very diverse practices, from gentleness (drawing on the body, wearing necklaces and bracelets, for example) to extreme violence (torture). Most of the times, man has willingly endured pain, choosing its own body as a confrontation ground for all his fears. That is why in all cultures, regardless of the meridian, each stage of life, from childhood to old age, the social organisation forms for various historical stages have determined the rites of passage, called in anthropology *initiation rites*, and have marked them through ritual ceremonies called *sacred*. Marcel Mauss used to say that in society, we all expect something. In order to respond to all social expectations (group, clan, tribe, community), man has offered his body, a living chronicle of his own passing through Earth and, at the same time, paradoxically, as an offering brought not to divinity, but to the group in which he has come into existence, on behalf of divinity. Thus offering himself to those he lives with, constantly hoping to be accepted, he will have fulfilled his meaning as part of a much larger organism. The practice of social acceptance, always shadowed by the emotion of a possible misfit, of denial, has often meant the acceptance of pain inscribed on the body. This taste for violence exerted upon the body has constantly been and, unfortunately, still is present in our days as well. We repeat, without fear

of erring, that in spite of all the progress made by sciences, man remains man's biggest unknown. The complexity of his feelings, from the enthusiastic glory felt with every fibre of his body, to uncertainty, has grown with history, has changed the instruments of manifestations, but has never relinquished the experimentation of fear.

The body was and remains the link that unites the members of a group and sometimes groups amongst them, body practices showing that the body is the most faithful instrument of communication throughout history. The body can carry a message from one generation to another (in addition to the genetic structure, the messages of the spirit transposed in the material culture of the group), from one place to another, building connections between different groups of people and thus entailing exchanges (a mixture of genes, an exchange of objects and information), invested with the ultimate function of being a vehicle between worlds, between here and there, the only one capable to draw, in concrete terms, the spiral of the never-ending journey through the large universe.

The spirit uses the body as raw material, mouldable, as a material that can be marked. Those who know the code will also know how to read the message imprinted. The approximately 3 kg, respectively 2 sq. m, of skin, with its over 2 000 currently known diseases, make it the most tried organ in the spiritual and social manifestation, the interface between the inner and the outer world. At this level, the body of the ego becomes a social body, *it integrates*.

In his constant attempt to discover what surrounds him, through the body, which is in fact a micro-universe, man has discovered religion. The connection between heaven and earth, through man as the conductor, is made by travelling a road that unites the plantar vault with the cranial vault. *The soul sits on the edge of the skin, the skin carries the imprint of religion*, writes Gérard Guillet in *L'âme à fleur de peau* (2002). From ancient times, serving various beliefs and dogmas, the skin has been the mirror of the soul's expression and, since each little part of the body was invested with symbols, it has become a page of the *book-body*. Reading this book and deciphering the text undoubtedly leads to the understanding of the mysteries of the world: *Know thyself and thy shall know the*

universe and the gods, the formula written on the frontispiece of Apollo's temple in Delphi, is still homework for entire generations of philosophers and researchers from the most diverse fields of knowledge. Each body segment is to be "read between the lines" as well, to be understood and rendered in the text that could explain the founding myths. For the Dogons from Mali, the ear is a double sexual symbol: the pavilion of the ear functions as a male organ, while the auditory duct functions as a vagina, the word and the semen being counterparts of the fecundating water dispersed by the Supreme Divinity. The word of the man, say the Dogons, is as indispensable as the seminal fluid during the process of inseminating a woman. The male word descends through the ear, just like the semen descends in the vagina, spirals around the matrix and it is only as such that the fecundation is possible. Therefore, words must be good and gentle, uttered in a calm and enveloping tone.

The book of all books is, in fact, the human body. In order not to forget, in order to pass on the information and identity seal, during this long exercise of collective memory, the body has been marked. *Natural or acquired marks of the body could sometimes raise suspicions and the fear that the soul is withering. Religions have entered humans' social life; have influenced their way of dressing, of controlling appearances, hygiene and adornment* (Guillet, 2002). Moreover, each sign that appears on the body of a new-born is considered a divine message. It can either be a sign for the chosen one or the expression of a punishment.

"The small pigmented growth on man's skin, which he has from birth, is linked through its very name to the hazel – the magical tree of the Indo-Europeans. The arrangement of birth marks on the human body is considered a mystic seal that can be used to foretell the future of a person and their character traits. Birth marks are the sign of great fortune, which is why you should not cut the hair growing on them, in order not to lose your luck (Artur Gorovei, *Credinți (Beliefs)*, 5). *In the old almanacs, calendars and so-called 'grammars of love and fate', fashionable in the 8th and 19th centuries, we can find out the following predictions and typological symptoms of persons who bear one or several birth marks on*

their body. In women: a birth mark on the right eyebrow indicates an early marriage..." (Evseev, 1997: 23)

"Children born with a cap or en caul are predisposed to becoming ghouls. They are born by a woman who, while being pregnant, drank unclean water, slavered by the Devil, or who went out at night bare-headed". (Evseev, 1997: 444)

In Ethiopia and Egypt, skin colour is a criterion of purity. Women endeavour to keep as pale a complexion as possible in order to impress their gods. It also has a social dimension: seduction, first of the gods and then of fellow men. Claude Rivière (*Les rites profanes*, 1995) underlines that man's body is the basis of ritualization; that the practice of seduction entails, as part of the same two-phase game of opposites, the appeal to pudicity, while at the same time developing a cobweb of artifices. The denial of nudity, originating from deeply maintaining the intimate connection with divinity, has led to a constant modification of appearances. Therefore, exploiting the anatomy of the body has long been deemed intolerable, the unearthing of the structures located under the skin a genuine threat and, therefore, the organism accepted by society had to carry marks. Entire strategies were set into motion, regardless of the meridian: infants were tightly swaddled in order to have straight legs, the head was rounded or elongated according to the aesthetic criteria of the group, the lips, nose, ears were pierced and adorned with earrings, bracelets and various necklaces, the foot was miniaturised etc.

The witch doctors of the Animists in Africa and of the natives in Australia, inspired by the elements surrounding them, such as beautifully coloured and smelling plants, various rocks and types of soil, have transposed the warranty of the best *conversation* with divinity into body painting. The invisible has become visible on the skin. Each colour bears a message and renders possible the understanding of the communication code between the seen and the unseen. The skin remains our closest encasement because, regardless of where we come from, we all recognise that *"the skin is closer than the shirt"*. And in the Western society, under the weight of accessories, the body becomes increasingly larger. The adornment combines with the skin, then with the entire body, creating a

whole. The body given by the Lord wants to be increasingly presentable, increasingly fit. The traditional notions of beauty change, they metamorphose according to what is fashionable. Moralists ask the clergy for support; Christianity, through the radical body-soul dichotomy, underlines that excessive attention granted to the former is detrimental to the eternal salvation of the latter.

During the dark period of the Middle Ages, people used to wash while dressed in order to avoid sin and the evil spirits that might have inhabited the waters. Jacques Le Goff (1991:176-198) reminds us that the disgust of the medieval people with the body (*ergastulum* – slave prison), in general, becomes genuine horror in what regards the female body, *the Devil's place of choice*. Menstruation is taboo, lepers are the children of women who have sinned during their sensitive period of the month, leprosy being considered rather “*an illness of the soul*”, *the delicate, well-cared for and beautiful body is solely food for the worms, while the corpse of the saints proves its sanctity through its pleasant and sweet smell*. One of the paradoxes of the Christian Middle Ages is precisely the bodily representation of the soul. When analysing *Saint Patrick's Purgatory*, Le Goff says that it is: “...*a system that affects the entire body and all spiritual faculties. It involves four of the five senses: sight, hearing, touch. Taste seems to be the only one excluded (why?), but not entirely, since one of the tortures, for example, is to be immersed in a cauldron full of boiling metal up to one's eyebrows or up to one's lips, neck, chest, navel or knees, or to be hung by a leg or hand. In other cases, their tongue is pricked or tortured. I shall not insist any longer on this aspect of the Purgatory (or Hell) system, but we must remember that the gestures from the afterworld are usually included in a larger set that targets the human body*” (Le Goff: 186). The body, “*a feeble flesh*”, loses any dignity. The irony is that, even if the body is constantly more tremendously guarded from view, it is nevertheless exhibited through adornments and apparel. It will not be long before the laces and plunging necklines wore by ladies during the Renaissance start competing with the tight trousers and defiant slits wore by men. Maternity is paid homage through the fashion line, the cut of the dress, very ample in the womb

area, imitating the figure of the pregnant woman. The basic physical pattern, inside-outside, respectively admitted-rejected, develops myths in which desire plays the central role. Pleasure and rejection are the frontiers of the body and, regardless of society, in order to reach them or to protect themselves, metamorphoses alternate with the speed of thought, as if the phantasms or the games of the imaginary should have been applied at once. The groups of people become more and more firmly delimited. The women painted by Ter Borch have their forehead shaved and arched in order to comply with the canon of beauty valid at that time, while the Papuas, for example, continued to consider themselves as appealing and courageous if they decorated their nostrils with the horn of the boar they killed while hunting. The body increases, changes, *turns over*, in a constant search and adaptation.

Body marks

Permanent body marks, such as tattoos, mutilations and scarifications, garb the body in symbols. More than ever, for our society, they are the living proof of cultural blending.

The Romanian term *tatuaj* comes from the English word *tattoo*, which in turn is borrowed from the Samoan Polynesian term, *tatau*. The traditional tattoo was once made using a sort of comb made of a stick, fitted with a bone blade or a lacy turtle flake. The artisan would hit the wooden piece with a small hammer, until the dye penetrated the skin. The operation would be even more painful when applied to sensitive parts of the body: lips, eyelids, even the penis in the Māori population. The symbolic tattooing expresses the symbolic multiplication of body covers throughout existence, with the purpose of protecting the individual from their original vulnerability. Therefore, it underlined their passing from childhood to adolescence, respectively to adulthood or their belonging to a group. Not everybody would get a tattoo. Women or high-rank people were not obliged to do it. These practices were suppressed under the pressure of the missionaries at the beginning of the 20th century. They have made a forceful comeback though and are used in Western societies, especially with the purpose of reclaiming one's identity. This procedure is used in order to hide a person behind a different type of mask meant to highlight an entire archetypal arsenal.

The body paintings in Africa are, in many ways, additions to the sacrifices made. The believers and the Baluba kings from Congo, for example, cover their body in kaolin in order to show their faith and purity. White painting is used in initiation rites, when a boy becomes a man in Kenya and amongst the Bambara Indians from Polynesia. Matters are much more complex in South America. The body will be covered throughout existence with various drawings according to age, status and gender. There are three colours that are mainly used here: red, black and

white, obtained from vegetal and mineral substances. Red is obtained from the seeds of the *Bixa Orellana* plant, mixed with palm oil and water; black is obtained from the pulp of the *Geni americana* fruit, mixed with vegetal coal; and white is obtained from a white clay, quite difficult to find. We are so used to citing so-called exotic people, that, in awe, we hereby mention the testimonies of Herodotus, according to whom the members of the Thracian nobility wore body marks that designated their status. Even Charles XIV John seems to have had tattooed on his royal behind the “*Death to the kings!*” dictum. Famous political people in the 20th century (Churchill, Roosevelt, Truman and Kennedy) have also worn tattoos.

Amongst the Cavudeo people in Brasil, writes Claude Lévi-Strauss (*Tristes tropiques*) “*one had to be painted in order to be considered human; he who maintained his natural condition was no different from an animal*”.

From Herodotus we find out that the Egyptian tattoo was a religious practice: *priests would tattoo on their foreheads, shoulders or thighs* the seal of the god they served. In time, the commoners also adopted the technique, some of them bearing tattoos even now, for medical or magical reasons. The tattoo invested with therapeutic functions has existed in Egypt for over 5 000 years and continues to be highly appreciated by the population, regardless of age and gender. Most often, women tattoo the lower part of their face, between their lower lip and their chin and, using dotted templates, the back of their hands and their wrists and fingers. It is believed that points filled a person with energy and gave them physical strength. The boys only required two such dots: one on the chin and one close to their right nostril (the latter is to protect them from any toothaches). The adults tattoo their temples, most often with drawings depicting a bird and, not at all negligible, the ornamental function is doubled by the antineuralgic one. A woman who has lost several pregnancies or whose children passed away at an early age will be careful to tattoo a point on the forehead of her last-born and another one on the outer side of their left ankle. In other pathologic situations, it is believed that tattooing a fish on the painful segment may

remove the illness. The most prevalent method used a needle dipped in a dark blue dye mixed with black pigment.

Mesopotamians and Assyrians also tattooed themselves for religious purposes, and Babylonians, and later on Greeks and Romans, for judicial reasons. In the Pacific Islands, as seen above, the tattoo was not purely decorative and protective, but it actually acted as attire (the chiefs showed incredible courage by submitting each bit of their body to this procedure, and their heads, due to the overflow of mana that ennobled them, could be preserved through mummification and left as inheritance for future generations). The arrival of Europeans gravely complicated matters: tattooed heads, which were sacred for the Māori, became merchandise for the white people. Therefore, the fights among tribes intensified and the heads of those who lost, once simply objects of humiliation, became “replacement products” on this market and sold as authentic chief heads.

Most often, the tattoo was an identity mark. The symbol imprinted on the epidermis shows the clear belonging to a group: a tribe, a religious or professional community, a secret society, captivity, army etc.

In Polynesia, the young woman who bore no tattoos had no chance of finding a husband, and the *Tiv* women in Nigeria are known for the beauty of their feet adorned with scarifications and pearls. The women in Tchad are amused by men who bear no tribe marks, no incisions behind the ear, simply because their skin was left as spread and smooth as a drum, which makes them unsuitable for marriage. In order to prove their manhood, they request a very deep scar, which leaves clear marks in the skull, which persist even after their death. Ever since the 18th century, Father Laurent de Lucques noticed that the little girls in Congo who cried during scarifications were considered *good for nothing*. Therefore, the requirement for a successful marriage was to check the quality of the drawing on one's abdomen. The need to set himself apart from his “brother animal” and to respond to the expectations of his fellowmen made man, throughout time and cultures, imagine most unexpected identity marks. “*Under the rule of the mother goddess, the woman was the dominant gender*”, wrote Robert Graves. The subincision (the

splitting of the boys' penis with a piece of flint used as a scalpel), practiced by the *Aranda* tribe in Australia, is one of the cruellest initiation customs cited by anthropologists. Here, the word used to express a *split penis* comes from the term used for vagina, and the title of *vulva holder* is an honour for all boys subjected to this procedure. The repeated rituals and the implicit reopening of the wound demonstrate that men can also bleed, can have menstruation, which enables them to take part in the never-ending mystery of life (Miles, 2001:81). Théophile Gautier, while explaining this unconsumed taste of the intelligent being for adornments, would later on say that "*no dog ever thought of wearing earrings*". By refusing nudity, man differentiates himself from nature. Body changes depend on each homogenous society, are imposed as conduct rules and tests in order to verify one's loyalty to the group and its beliefs. The veils of civilization, whether woven from mixtures of plants and minerals revealed by the sages of time, from incisions made with a blade honed from a shell or from the fine scalpels of plastic surgery offices or from the brands belonging to present day companies in the cosmetic industry, have proven that man, in his attempt to know himself better, has wrapped himself, disguising himself not only for the others, but for himself as well. Group recognition is in fact the measure of his integrity, of his complete being, of his whole being, as if he only existed for himself after existing for the others. Paul Ferdinand Schilder describes this dimension: "*if a woman wears a feather on her hat, her body will extend to the extremity of this feather and she will automatically adopt gestures and attitudes matching this new dimension*". In order to express itself, the body has used all these intermediaries; any new element added has also implicitly generated a change in behaviour. Psychoanalyst Jaques Lacan says that around the age of six months, the child undergoes *the mirror phase*, in which they discover themselves as a complete image. This autoscopic experience consolidates the idea that man may regard himself the same way he looks at surrounding objects. Thus, any mark on the body arches a necessary and protective distance. Man takes on safety and firmness. The epidermis metamorphoses into the parchment and all the marks deposited or incrustrated on it only orient the human being towards a well-defined

purpose, give it *a meaning*, save it from hesitation and, more importantly, from oblivion. Through adornment, a new nimbus-like contour is added to the body. In certain situations, the symbolic growth of the body may be as relevant as possible.

Mutilations are another type of irreversible marks on the body. We are once more speaking of a universal practice, regardless of whether we refer to circumcision, excision, cranial deformations or the removal of teeth. From the *flat heads* in North America, to the elongated ones in Kenya and Tchad, to the deformed feet in South America or Asia (the minuscule feet of the Chinese aristocrat woman, 5 centimetres wide and 12 centimetres long, for example), we are offered just as many definitions of the aesthetic. There is even a dictum that says that “*it lies in the eyes of the beholder*”, because that which for some of us comes close to perfection, for others, in happy cases, may only be trivial. In Europe, their antiquity is certified by Herodotus and Strabo and refers to circumcision and ear piercing, practiced especially along the Danube.

From this point of view, throughout time, the part that is the highest and the closest to heavens, the cranium, has collected profound symbolic meanings. The *cranium* is the bone box that houses the brain, the centre of thought and the key to the secret loges, the tongue. Just like the celestial vault houses the secret of the mysteries of the universe, the cranial vault houses and protects the mystery and secrets of man, symbolism present in numerous sacred writings⁵¹. It is held in high regard in all cultures and it symbolises perennity, mourning and fear of death.

⁵¹ The cranium of the giant Ymir from Icelandic mythology becomes, after his death, the celestial vault. In Rig Veda, it is made of the cranium of the primordial being. Cosmic energy penetrates the human being through the cranial vault. The Taoists say that man has square feet to rest on the ground and a round head that resembles the image of the sky. The acupuncture points on the head are named after stars and the first cervical vertebrae bears the Greek name of Atlas, like the giant who bore the celestial sphere on his shoulders, and T'ien Tchou, in Chinese, which has the same meaning: *Sky Carrier*. J.A. Lavier, in his book, *L'Uranologie chinoise*, shows that the Ancient Chinese have established very close relationships between the geometry of the cranium and that of the local celestial sphere. Thus, the line that runs by the basis of the nose and that of the auditory duct is the reflection of the horizon of the place in man. When man stands up, in a normal position, this plan is parallel to that of the horizon. The line that starts from the same point and reaches the cranial minihorizon will encounter the perfection of the vault

We encounter cranial deformations on all continents⁵²: the Mamboutous tribes in Congo, the Vazimba Malagasy, certain populations in Fiji, New Caledonia, Asia and, until not so very long ago, in Greece, France etc. Artificially deformed heads, with the use of bandages or boards, have always sparked the curiosity of travellers and researchers. The first to cite this phenomenon, calling it macrocephaly, was Herodotus and the cases were located close to the Black Sea (*Pontus Euxinus*): several villages in Caucasus and the Danube region⁵³. The French example is specific to the Toulouse region and is called “*déformations toulousaines*”. Physiologist Charles Richet (1919: 20-44), also known for his sympathy for comparative racial theories, makes quite a critical description of the involuntary interventions, in the name of beauty, on little French girls. “*In the country*”, he writes, around the town of Toulouse, “*until not very long ago, cranial mutilation of new-borns used to be practiced. Tradition required the heads of the infants to be very tightly wrapped in cotton bandages, in order to obtain a lollipop-shaped head. You marvel and wonder whether this was true or not*”, continues Richet. “*Oh, well, it is very true and even truer that the young villagers were not at all brutalized by this awkward custom. Indeed, it requires a lot of effort for man to be able to interfere in the constitution of the organism, which is a rather complex work. In spite of the torture it was subjected to, the brain continued to grow and the children were not more idiotic than their fathers.*”

There are different practices and templates, according to culture, era and purpose. The pre-Inca craniums discovered in Paracas (Peru)

in the point called Pai Hwei, Polaris or the Sky Portal. The height of Polaris at horizon depends on the latitude of the place in which we are. Lavier establishes the typological variation of individuals according to the latitude of the place in which they were born and the cranial curb: the lower the latitude, the more elongated the cranium, which makes Laplanders brachycephalic and Arabs dolichocephalic.

⁵² Ozbek, M., *A-propos des déformations crâniennes artificielles observées au Proche-Orient, Paléorient*, 1974, issue 2-2, vol.2, pp. 469-476.

⁵³ The Sarmatians, located on the Dacian territory, limited themselves to the surrounding plains and hills. One of their specific embellishment methods was the artificial fronto-occipital or circular cranial deformation, through bandaging since childhood.

differ from the Olmec ones found in Venta (Mexico), just as there are important differences between the Egyptian, Asian and Nordic ones. Most societies would deform the heads of infants in their first year of life, before the fontanel would close, when bones were still soft. There are several reasons for wanting such an intervention:

- Caste membership. For the Incas, for example, craniums were deformed in order to underline the difference between the elites (a high forehead for them) and the commoners (a plain forehead).
- Metaphysical reasons. Some people believed that the soul leaves the body through the head, and therefore the cranial vault required moulding in order to facilitate the liberation of the soul.
- Aesthetic reasons. The Mangbetu women are more beautiful and more intelligent due to the elongation of their heads, which leads to various ways of styling their hair.
- The belief that they could resemble totem animals. The Olmecs tried to resemble panthers.

The same medic, Richet, draws our attention to another type of mutilation used until the beginning of the 20th century, even in Eurasia, and which is certainly still used in numerous places around the world: ritual castration. This is a very delicate intervention even for a specialised surgeon and all the more so for the artisan of a primitive community. In certain countries, such as Ethiopia, infant mortality is one of the effects of currently practicing this ritual. The genitals are shaved from the body and, in order to stop the bleeding, the infant is buried in hot sand. Only more robust bodies can endure such torture and they are to be sold for exorbitant prices. Eunuchs had this fate and they were highly desired by Turk pashas to guard their harems. The consequences of such an intervention are very severe for the survivor. The body loses its elegance, it becomes plump, even fat, it grows prominent breasts and buttocks, the voice becomes thinner and, should they receive a musical education, specialists believe they could aspire to a very high register tenor voice. The services in the Sistine Chapel attended by such persons were

considered to be the most beautiful ones. Unfortunately, their fate, measured according to the tough criteria of physical beauty is more than cruel, since they are considered “refuse”. If we return to the face and its problems in winning the battle with the ideal of beauty as a mark of identity, we must admit that piercing is currently in fashion, as well as colouring, be it permanent or not, through tattoos and make-up. It seems that the principle of communicating vessels also observes the rules of history, the present being solely a pretext to make plans for the future, while remembering the past. As argument, I have selected, completely at random, a part of an advertisement of a plastic surgery clinic which also makes a millenary promise: *“sensual lips are the secret of seduction. No matter the colour of lipstick used, the shape of the lip is noticed at first sight. We are the only ones who can offer you...”*

Fetishism

Not only the body, but objects have also become important, and cult objects invested once more with multiple significations have become even more important, *adored*. A new concept has to be discerned: *fetishism*.

The word *feitiço* (with its initial meaning of *artificial* and later on, by extension, of *charming, enchanting*) was the name given by the Portuguese to cult objects belonging to the affricate populations they colonised. The term originates from the Latin *factitious*, which means destiny, and appears in the Italian *fattura* (*sorcery*). Philosophers and ethnologists take it over in the 18th century and link it to religion and cult objects. The same root will lead, in Spanish, to the term *afeitar*, with the meaning we find in the French words *farder*, to put on make-up, and *parer*, to adorn oneself. Subsequent cultural mouldings adopt and strengthen it. The new work or embellishment instruments open a road as spectacular as it is dangerous: the exerting of *individual violence*. The simple relationship of dependence will gradually be replaced by the concept of subordination and social dependence. This type of social hostility is transplanted to religious beliefs as well.

The leader of “the creator” clan, according to the totemic belief, loses his original characteristics and becomes the master. “*The Devas, which in the Vedas are benevolent deities, become Dev (daeva) in the Iranian Avesta, evil spirits; on the contrary, the divine name of Ahura, the principle of light and good in the old Iranian cults, is attributed in India to the calamity generating beings that possess occult powers: the Asuras. The peoples of India and Iran originally formed a single tribal conglomeration. [...] In other words, maintaining the distinctive signs of its animal, vegetal or natural origin, he becomes to show aspects and exigencies increasingly similar to those of a tribe chief, is humanized and, with the passing of time, becomes an idol*”. (Donini, 1968: 92)

Fetishism is attributed to the cult of stones, plants, animals and human faces of the first deities. The term renders precisely the process of religious alienation analysed above by Donini and is the true example of the occurrence of social alienation in the relationships between the members of a community.

On an individual level, each piece of the human body thus becomes capable to awaken it and exalt it, carrying it from one extreme to the other, from pious adoration to perversity. Oftentimes incapable to fully envelop the body, sensuality will only focus on segments. A visible ankle, the roundness of the breast and the arch of a look are all examples of representations disguised with prudish efforts in the Western culture. The history of clothing is a solid argument: the baring of the leg, for example, step by step, moving up from the ankle to the thigh, was not at all an easy process, appreciated by some and condemned by others. The segment that could be looked upon and transformed by imagination into an object of desire was enrolled in a long battle for the liberation of the bodily expression, in the attempt to introduce such a delicate subject to the social discourse: sex. After puberty, the Lala girls in Nigeria are scarified on their thighs and buttocks during an agrarian rite meant to fecundate the earth. The trajectory of love is thus drafted. Moreover, amongst the population in Dahomey or Danxomé, a former African kingdom, today incorporated in the present day state of Benin, the practice of scarifying the inner side of the girls' thighs bears a name that could be translated as "*embrace me*". Depending on the historical time and culture, the parts of the body that are adored can be hidden from the others, kept secret or ostentatiously shown to everyone, in accordance with the rules of pudicity or those of seduction. The pathological coordinate of fetishism can even include the passion for deformed anatomical structures: dwarfs, amputees, obese people etc. The taste for sexual anomalies is found in cultures all over the world. Strabismus, seductive for the Maya populations, was obtained by suspending at eyelevel, from early on, a small disc and a strand of hair. The prosperity and recognition that a Bahima husband enjoys in Uganda is measured by the body size of his wife, young girls being severely fattened up.

Mutilation, hybrid beings and monsters have stirred the imaginary and have offered raw bleeding wounds and injuries to the view. Michel Foucault (*Les mots et les choses*) said that *monsters are the incessant noise of nature*. Umberto Eco will later on add a good exercise of memory stabilization: “*The relationship of familiarity with monsters, instituted since the early times, has determined the Christian world to also appeal to them when defining Divinity*” (2007:126). Ever since Antiquity, the craft of remembering entailed the association of certain words with different places of a town or the rooms of a palace, where hard to forget statues were located. For the followers of occult sciences, monsters had become seductive. (op.cit.)

“It can be easily seen that numerous gods, demigods and mythological heroes (Dionysus, Vulcan, Oedipus etc.) are lame. This crippledness is characteristic especially to deities linked to the pyric element (Hephaestus, Varuna, Tyr, Saint Elijah etc.). It is believed to be a sacrifice representing the price paid for their initiation in the mysteries of fire and the trade of blacksmithing. [...] The lame, similar to the blind or the single-handed, participate in the sacredness of the uneven, because *numero Deus impari gaudet*. But the limp may also signal a spiritual flaw, a punishment for those who come too close to the glory and power of the supreme divinity.” (Evseev, 2007: 590)

Torn in pieces by being cut, painted, moulded and coloured, the body was constructed as a monstrous ideal form. The anatomy of the body had already developed two clear lines of expression: one profoundly cultural and another bestial which have overlapped numerous times, borrowing one another’s work instruments. In discovering the other, man has tripped over his own image, desiring to shape the other in his image and likeness. Missionaries, explorers and even ethnologists were not satisfied with just classifying the customs of those deemed “primitive” as “wild” or “barbaric”, but, with superiority, decided to cease them. Scarifications, deemed barbaric at that time, were covered by Western-styled clothes. Today, in the Netherlands for example, medics practice them in sophisticated offices, in exchange for not at all negligible rates. A British law forbade the Polynesians to tattoo themselves, the punishment

being extremely harsh and enforced in kind. Here is its description, according to the archives of that time: for his first tattoo, *a man had to work a road segment of 60 feet, and 120 feet for his second tattoo, or to crush stone on a length of 24 feet and a width of 12 feet, or to carry out any other labour for the king. The women had to make a greatcoat for the king and one for the governor.*

Nowadays, there is a tattoo centre at the corner of the street I live on and a famous international science TV channel airs a show dedicated to the artists in this field and to their creations. “*The tattoo represents me*” was the response given by the majority of the teenagers I have interviewed in this regard. The reason why they identify with a butterfly, a zodiac sign, a Chinese symbol or a few verses imprinted on their skin is the object of a separate study. The characterisation of the types of contemporary tattoos, the ages and gender of the beneficiaries, the place and means used to apply the drawing on the skin and the risks undertaken, the opinion of the others and the reaction of the parents and professors deserve the full attention of a researcher.

In his study of symbolic wounds, starting from the initiatory mutilations, both in schizophrenic children and primitive peoples, psychoanalyst Bruno Bettelheim⁵⁴ shows that groups can be differentiated into those with an *autoplastic* tendency and those with an *alloplastic* tendency. Thus, primitive cultures, incapable of acting upon the world, “inefficient in their battle with the environment”, have retreated upon themselves, manipulating their body and finding the solution in *autoplastic* mutilation. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that the intervention on the body leads to consequences in the outer physical world as well. The skin collects and protects all the elements composing the structure of an individual. By decorating it, the bridge between man and the environment is resorbed to a certain extent, by granting him homogeneousness, integrating him with the environment and allowing

⁵⁴ Bruno Bettelheim worked with numerous autistic children, his most important books, *The Empty Fortress* (1967) and *A Good Enough Parent* (1987), describing the manner in which archetypal narrative patterns may relate to psychic or psychoanalytical invariants, thus also authorising a reinterpretation of their content.

itself to be moulded by him. In the bodily cartography, the most sensitive areas and, at the same time, the most exposed to contact, to receiving information, are the orifices (nose, mouth, ears, sex – social ground breakers, if we were to accept the translation of a Bambara expression). At this level, pain, libido and the materialisation of the concept of physical beauty are all arguments in favour of bodily alterations. The body is assessed not only through one's own eyes, but especially through the eyes of the others. And in the Western society, under the weight of accessories, the body becomes increasingly larger. The adornment combines with the skin and then with the entire body, becoming a whole. The body given by the Lord wants to become more presentable, more fit.

Mutilations give the body an out of the ordinary nature, invest it with magical powers. Thus, all the mythological metamorphoses seem real: cynocephals and many-headed hydras, sphinxes and mermaids, centaurs and unicorns. An entire filiation claims its right to successive decipherments. We are still learning how to read myths. Man, a fragile being, has understood that the beast is a model which only he, man, can assimilate. That is how the Indians understood (in the most comprehensive meaning of the term) the battle against death. Pain is not only a consequence of this manner of looking at things, but rather a *sine qua non* condition for becoming aware of corporality. The body broken by suffering asks for support. Illness is the other side of the coin. Only by crossing these limits the body may become a sign, writing, a social code.

The body in motion

On the other hand, conquering the space entails movement. By *techniques of the body*, Marcel Mauss (1934) understands the manner in which man has traditionally *learned how to use his own body*. This means that before learning techniques in order to use various tools, *the first and most natural of tools* that demand to be known, in ordinary attitudes and motions, is the human body. Each society has specific customs in terms of body attitude. The position of the hands, the springiness and rhythmicity of the step, the balance of the hips, the position of the back and of the abdomen are all elements making a difference when walking. We can say about people that they have a more or less elegant walk, or an unusual, strong or slow walk, or that they walk like a goddess or like a beast. In society, these techniques are polished through education. Mauss mentions the specific walk of the Māori women in New Zealand. Mothers teach their little girls, from an early age, the strong balance of the hips, „*onioi*”, which is highly appreciated there, but is not a natural way of walking. The various types of motions accompanying wake, hygiene (the washing of hands, the brushing of teeth, baths, types of soap and bath oils, spitting or not spitting), dietary rituals (table seating, the place taken, the manner in which food is served etc.) and sexual positions are all models used in analysing a group. The so-called *missionary* position is characteristic of Westerners, while, for example, the natives in the Pacific only make love with their legs hanging, supported by the knees or arms of the men.

In order to better study the techniques of the body, Mauss offers two types of classifications: one could be called horizontal or synchronous, because it differentiates among certain physical techniques considered simultaneously, and the other diachronic or vertical (physical techniques analysed in different moments in time or during different stages of the human life.) The first takes place based on four criteria: gender difference, age difference, performance difference and the manner in which these

techniques are transmitted. The second classification follows the developmental stages of an individual, from birth to adulthood.

For example, here is how the body of a well-bred young lady was educated in the 18th century: “*she will approach the armchair shown to her (upon entering a room), she will place her heels three to four fingers opposite from it. She will bend her knees while taking her seat, stooping her shoulders and pushing her chest forward*”⁵⁵.

Each detail is important in this entire history of the constrained gesture, which took thousands of years to travel its path amongst fierce violences, through an education that was oftentimes unnatural, until reaching the contemporary training and its paradoxes: in parallel with the mediatisation of the perfect body, numerous adolescents pay less and less attention to their posture, to the position of their body and head. The contemporary recovery of elegant gestures is heavily linked to self-education, since bookshops are filled with books *that teach you how to succeed in life*: how to present yourself during an interview, how to measure your words, how to be elegant during a business dinner or how to use body language as efficiently as possible.

Body language is very carefully researched in the contemporary world. Birdwhistell⁵⁶ is the one who interpreted gestures with the aid of linguistics. He proposed a *kinesic* analysis of the body, using *kinemes* in the analytic discourse, following the model of the *phonemes*. The initiative of the American anthropologist has proven extremely difficult to enforce. Decrypting the filmic model on which he relied in the analysis of each type of human motion required a remarkable effort: transcribing 6 seconds of film meant using several hundred pages. Other questions related to the conquering of the social space, increasingly harder to please, will also search for an answer.

⁵⁵ Gérard Badou, *Le corps défendu: Quand la médecine dépasse les bornes, La science et le vivant*, Paris, 1994

⁵⁶ “It is not merely a figure of speech when I say that speaking of nonverbal communication is like speaking of non-cardiac physiology, when I say that physiology, not anatomy, is the essential model. A liver is only a liver solely on the anatomist’s dissection table. It is a part of a corpse, insufficient for a vital function.” *La nouvelle communication*. Paris: Seuil, 1981)

Elements of mythological anatomy

“The Evil one sits on man’s left hand and left foot; those are his. Try hitting somebody with your left hand and you’ll see you’ll kill them instantly. Just like the Evil one has his angel on the left hand, God sends his angel on the right hand. Each man has an angel and a demon. The angel guards him, shows him the right path, urges him to do good, but the demon urges him to sin and do evil. The angel writes down man’s good deeds and the demon writes down his evil ones. However, many good Christians say that man has an angel, but doesn’t have a demon, because man is christened, has a cross and the devil cannot get close to man.”

Elena Niculiță-Voronca, *Datinile și credințele poporului român (Romanian customs and beliefs)*, p.380

How can the body be thought of in the present day culture? An object, merchandise, a consumer, an entity easily manipulated, proven or dissected, a case or a temple? All of the above are possible answers. Their reading progresses solely to the extent to which the code for each structure is known. In this case, the term used numerous times, almost obsessively, was initiation. The symbolic language is in fact the first step to initiation⁵⁷.

All the mythologies of the world say that *the human body is linked to the cosmic body*. Attributed to Agrippa, but apparently borrowed from earlier authors, the concept of correlations between numbers and the segments that form the human body describes the following drawing: a square divided into 16 equal triangles, each bearing a different number. The sum of these numbers is 825. Whether the figure thus obtained is divided in

⁵⁷ Celestial magic - Filosofia ocultă sau magia (The Occult Philosophy or Magic), book II, Henry Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim

two by a median or by a diagonal, on one side we will obtain an even number, and on the other side an odd one: “*all numbers are in the Universe and all in Man*”. He then proceeds to demonstrate how the human body can be naturally inscribed in a square or in a circle. The man inscribed in a double square, standing up, with his arms spread, forms a Latin cross, the root of sex being located in the centre of the square. The drawing is completed by three elements: a snake, a shepherd’s crook and, most probably, a woven strap. The character’s umbilicus is marked with a cross. He then traced the diagonals of the inner square, thus obtaining St. Andrew’s cross. This symbol could be read as follows: *the old man will give birth to the new man*. Depicted within two circumscribed circles, Agrippa’s man bears on his body the marks of the two luminaries: the Sun, between his umbilicus and his sternum, and the Moon at the extremity of his sex organ. The five planets are placed on the outer circle: Mercury, Jupiter, Mars, Saturn and Venus; man is inscribed in a pentagram.

In the alchemists’ representations, man’s head overlaps with the Sun; on his chest he bears the alchemic egg that contains the foetus above flames illustrated through blossomed plants. Below, the oven is illustrated by intestines bearing the hieroglyphs of the plants. The alchemic man holds two constellations in his hands: in his left *the Triangle*, in his right *the Lyra*. The word *harmony* is engraved above the Lyra, and the word *symmetry* above the triangle. The body thus depicted can only be looked upon because the veil of the Temple or of the celestial vault is lifted. The image described is on the cover of J.J. Becher’s work, “Physique souterraine”. The upper part of the veil bears the writing: “*Circulus Aeterni Motus*” (the circle of eternal motion). Each astrological sign corresponds to a body segment: *Aries* corresponds to the head, especially the forehead and the cranium; *Taurus* to the jaw and neck; *Gemini* to the shoulders; *Cancer* to the stomach and the uterus; *Leo* to the heart; *Virgo* to the intestines; *Libra* to the hips and the pelvis; *Scorpio* to the coccyx; *Capricorn* to the knees, *Aquarius* to the calves; *Pisces* to the soles.

In other words, the particularities of the human body become, due to the nature of the symbols, linked to a divine aspect. Pieces of myth

become folktale⁵⁸, and the folktales read by adults (parents, grandparents) to their children are only a long initiatory exercise, a truth transmitted from one generation to the other, in a continuous gesture of love (the child is held on one's knees or close, a warm voice, a lot of love and excitement).

If Jack is the boy with the magic beans, a chain reading of the symbols contained by this wonderful initiatory fairy tale can remind us of the resemblance between the bean and the shapes of the foetus in the womb, the shape of the sole or of the ear, of identifying the vine growing until it reaches the sky with *Axis Mundi*, the giant living in heavens with the representatives of the giants of long gone worlds, the summoning of an alchemic demonstration through the goose that laid golden eggs and so on and so forth. A fury of interpretation and imagination may lead to a succession of answers to the other questions as well: *Christ* means the anointed one, *cristae* would designate the mitochondrial folds, and the *chrysalis* is the nymph of Lepidoptera, just like the crystal represents a homogenous body, a three-dimensional network structure. We should firstly notice the common root of the words: *cris(t)*. We insist on adding that the chrysalis is a nymph, but nymphs can also be spirits of nature imagined by our ancestors as young and beautiful maidens. *Oros*, a mountain in Greek, the space of the Oreads, is perhaps the term most invested with meanings in what regards the divinization of man. Most often, the great revelations took place on the high tops of mountains. In the legend of the Argonauts in *Nonnos*, the sailors see a cup floating over the Mountain of the World with the Tree of Light. The Argonauts found the fleece and were called towards the stars, like demigods. Hercules places his immortality between *the Lyra* and *the Crown*, *Castor and Polux* waited for the charioteer that would lead them to unimaginable heights, the *Argo* ship was carried like a talisman towards the radiant *Milky Way*, where, together with the *Cross*, the *Altar* and the *Triangle*, they demonstrated the luminous nature of an eternal God. *The triangle*

⁵⁸ The relationship between the fairy tale and the myth has been established by the Grimm brothers, Wesselski and Propp: the fairy tale has its origin in the myth, the two species existing amidst archaic peoples, most of the times overlapping.

symbolised the Holy Trinity; the cross the divine sacrifice of love; the altar the Last Supper, where, on the night of the First Holy Thursday, stood the cup of Rebirth. (Otto Rahn, 2010)

What game of history threw us into nothingness, making us look, through Sisyphean attempts, for the glasses found on the tip of our noses, so that we failed to recognise in the miraculous human body the miraculous cup of the Grail? The audacity thus uttered became the long no return road of knowledge. Gone long ago to search for himself, man is still searching. Entire myths were built on the snake principle, with the promise of never-ending youth, periodically renewing the skins shed and repudiated, condemned to a false oblivion. Apollo, who reaches the land of the Hyperboreans (his chosen people, pious happy beings with pure customs, who only ate fruit, who had never killed for food) in a ship pulled by swans, can later on be likened to Saint George who kills the dragon (aquatic symbol, not a being) and unleashes the waters so that nature could be reborn, green and intoxicatingly beautiful. The same chromatic range includes the *Christogram*, also green, which symbolises the spirit of the universe, by summoning the same support, I.H.S., *Iesus Hominum Salvator* (Jesus, the Saviour of Men) as *IeShuaH* (in Hebrew, God the Saviour). Fulcanelli has shown that the facades of Gothic cathedrals, glorifying temples of the divine spirit, were built starting from the shape of the letter H and that *Eta - H*, in the Greek alphabet, the seventh letter, symbolised the dwelling of the spirit, of the celestial body spreading light: *Helios*; the Sun perfectly symbolises the spiritus mundi, J or I suggests fire, *Jes* meaning fire in Hebrew. The S from saviour embodies the first subject matter of philosophers – *sophia*, its cup.

Why would a small boy like Jack want to climb, to detach himself from the earth that surrounds his home, the place watched over by his good mom? Adam is the Man Below, just like Elohim is the man above, answers Annick de Souzenelle. To become human means to start building a spine. “*And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on earth, and the top of it reached to heaven*” (Genesis, 28, 12-13), Jacob’s dream. “*The ladder or scale is a word built on the S-C-L root that we find in all invitations to escalation: scale, school, skeleton. In Hebrew, the word ladder, Selam, is*

guided by the tree of tradition, leaning on it.” It is highly important that man’s life is constructed between heaven and earth. Should man release one of the poles, he will find himself outside of the current of life. The spine is the bright guide of he who knows how to see. It is the tool of he who knows how to work. It is the path of he who knows how to climb. In India, the spine is called brahmadanda, meaning “*Brahma’s staff*”. In Christian mysticism, the Son of God descends and the Son of Man ascends. In Hinduism, this happens on the spiritual level, through the opening of the 7 chakras, from the basis of the spine (fundamental chakra) up to the top of the head (coronal chakra). When entering the cranium, the cerebrospinal trunk releases the six roots of the cerebellum, an organ also called the tree of life. The drawing that takes shape following an arrow-like section of the cerebellum resembles an oak leaf.

The Creator separates light from darkness, day from night, and later man from woman, but, more importantly, he separates the heavens in the principal waters, *Maim*. The *Ma* root is the mother root of all words signifying manifestation, such as *matter*, *maternal*, *matrix*, *main* (hand). *Ma* is in each of its elements the symbol of *Mi*. *Syn-bolein* means to unify, just like *dia-bolein* means to criss-cross, to separate. The man above is *Mi*’s world, concludes Annick de Souzaenelle. This could be the beginning of what, through linguistic speculation, we hide behind the threads (mitos), spinning new discourses of what, how and where man truly is.

In the Western culture, the names of various body segments bear the name of mythological characters. We do not know our body sufficiently, we do not know the nature of all the evils that subdue it. A statement such as “*disease is a manifestation of the metasymbolic thinking*” may generate heated discussions amongst scientists all over the world and most virulent negations, although numerous disorders are already explained through mythological symbols (the Oedipus complex, for example; but Marcel Mauss tells us that this reason can only be claimed for the Western cultures). The French language designates the body by using a plural noun, *corps*, and the adverb *entiers* comes from the juxtaposition of two words *en* and *tiers*, thus joining together the three

bodies (physical, emotional, mental). The mental body searches for explanations, justifies itself, is in permanent balance, searching for stability. The emotional body proves its existence by creating mirages whose material expression is the story, it narrates to itself and to us about itself. The physical body is where the motion thus marked shows us the results obtained by the first two. Each of us is inhabited, just like a well-defined land, by one or several founding myths. Searching for a meaning thus expressed leads us to establishing a mythological contact, following which we feel the joy of enlightenment, of enthusiasm (Greek, *en-theos*). This is, in fact, the function of the myths: to convey the message of divinity to the community. By repeating the myth, by retelling it, man summons symbols. The human body is a sum of symbols. Man's path, his pace or his conquering of space and time, the overlap of the two constants, starts with the soles. To step means to take the sole of the ground, to lift it and to then place it back on the body of the mother goddess. It is the first act that lifts the man and grants him the privilege of seeing her, but also of observing. The Latin word *ped* led to *pedos* (podium, pedestal). Thus situated, the human being took on a new dimension. The plantar vault becomes the symbol of the encounter between heaven and earth, represented in the zodiac, as shown above, through the sign of Pisces.

The two upside-down hemispheres will combine, towards the end of the journey, in the face, in the roundness of the lips that will liberate the word.

In all myths, a hero's leg wound refers to a symbolic liberation from the maternal line (step, plantar vault, the Earth goddess) and his launching into the reconquering of a heaven where he will once more find his lost kingdom, his own power. Western mythology, which stems from the Greek one, has created, among others, Oedipus, Jason and Hephaestus. Jason, the leader of the Argonaut expedition and the son of the king of Iolcos was raised on Mount Pelion and watched over and educated by the Centaur Chiron. When he reaches adulthood, he returns home to take up the throne foully stolen from his father by Pelias. While crossing the Anavros river, carrying an old woman on his back, who

happens to be no other than the goddess Hera testing his generosity, he loses his left sandal. Jason also means healer. It has been known for millennia, as well as in traditional Asian therapy, that on the sole of the feet we find the pressure points for each organ (reflexology⁵⁹).

Hephaestus is rejected by his father and mother. He is firstly grabbed by the leg and thrown by Zeus into the high mist, and falls with his leg broken. Then, in a different episode, his own mother, Hera, grabs his other leg and throws him away, because she thought him a hideous child.⁶⁰

“Hephaestus’ ‘origins’ are not known. He could not be explained by the pre-Hellenic inheritance or by the Indo-European traditions. His archaic structure is evident. More than a god of fire, he had to be a patron god of the workers who ‘mastered fire’ or, in other words, a specific and rarer form of magic.” (Eliade, *Istoria credințelor religioase (A History of Religious Ideas)*)

Marie Delcourt⁶¹ has made the connection between the cutting of the tendons and the twisting of Hephaestus’ legs and the initiatory tortures of the future shaman. Like other magician gods, Hephaestus has to pay for his knowledge as a blacksmith and craftsman through physical mutilation. The wounded leg of any mythical hero is the symbol of abandonment, of vulnerability, and it involves the profound suffering

⁵⁹ The art of reflexology was known in Ancient Egypt, India and China. In the West, this therapy was introduced in 1913 by Dr. William Fitzgerald. Specialists *mapped* the body, each organ having a corresponding point on the sole or on the palm.

⁶⁰ *“Hephaestus is unique in the Greek religion and mythology. His birth was unusual: in Hesiod’s opinion, Hera begot him ‘in the absence of a love copulation, out of anger and in spite of her husband’. Above all, Hephaestus is different from all the other Olympians through his ugliness and infirmity. Both his legs are lame, twisted or contorted, and he needs support in order to walk. This infirmity is the result of his fall on the island of Lemnos; Zeus had thrown him from Olympus for taking his mother’s side, Hera (the Iliad, I, 590 sq.). In another version, Hera threw him in the sea after giving birth to him, ashamed of his ugliness (the Iliad, 18,394 sq.). Two Nereids, Thetis and Eurynome, took him to a deep cave in the middle of the Ocean. There, for nine years, Hephaestus learned the trade and craft of blacksmithing.”* Eliade, *Istoria religiilor (A History of Religious Ideas)*, I, 187

⁶¹ Euripides. *Tragedies completes* Brochet, p. 110

brought about by the lack of self-esteem. The right leg represents identity, the left one the social area. The feelings of eternal sadness burden the soul: separated from their parents, unacknowledged in society, anyone can become a slave. The Greek slaves, barefoot, bore these precise symbolic significances: without parents, without country, without a respectable place in society, *torn from the culture in which they appeared*. From an initiatory point of view, the leg is a soffit (Lat. *scafos*), a ladle, a boat floating in search of a meaning. With the very first step taken begins not only the first journey of man on Earth, but also his initiatory journey, and he can only travel this road by releasing his leg from all the weights attached to it. The ankle is a key (*cavicula*, which comes from *clavicula*, meaning small key), the key of *sol* (*Earth*). In the same anatomic region, the *astragal* is the leg bone that articulates with the lower calcaneus and the calf bones. In astrology, from ancient times, these bones were used in divination (*astragalomancy*), because they were deemed to be the place of destiny. The articulated step entails *being* in a multiplication of vital energies. Expressions such as *'to stand on one's own feet'*, *'to get back on one's feet'* underline precisely this idea. In the initiatory journey, inside the human body, the *tibia* is a flute. The Energy set in motion while walking makes the flute sound. In the Roman zodiac, Pan is the correspondent of the Aquarius (the astrological correspondent of this anatomic area). It is the moment in which the spirit allows itself to be known within the being.

In this cartography, the knee cap also bears numerous contradictory meanings. When it all seems steady *on its feet*, without any problems, the abyss appears. To kneel down, in all cultures, means *to die* on the inside. It is a gesture of humility and submission, resignation, acceptance of one's destiny. The spirit will have to overcome this threshold, *to articulate*. It is the myth of Psyche. Eros falls in love with Psyche and, darted through his knee (wounded out of too much love), he feels his breath being taken away: the suffering soul makes his knees melt (testimonial idioms: *it made me weak at the knees*); when the knee calcifies, the heart opens up. The knee is the wheel of destiny. The *gen* root shows the connection with tradition.

The *femur* has the same root as female. The *femur-thigh-pelvis* segments illustrate the cup of mystical union. It is the place where Jacob faces the Angel. The thigh reins in the horse and represents the rider. At hip level, the divine takes on meaning through the mystery of birth. The energies kindle the fire of conception. In his battle against the Hydra, the more Hercules sets out to cut her heads, the more they grow back. The energies identify with a shape, they in-form themselves and thus archetypes are created. The pelvis is therefore a place of purification. The Hydra has nine heads. The more we want to destroy the things we do not like, the more they strengthen. Hercules solves this labour in a pyretic manner. The severed heads and the blood are reminiscent of menstruation. The sacrum is a symmetrical and triangular bone which was formed through the cementing of the five sacral vertebrae and which joins the spine with the pelvis. It is called as such because it protects, anatomists say, the sensitive parts of the reproductive system. A symbolical reading would see in it the cup, maybe even the Grail, the mystery of creation and eternal life.

The chariot is only one aspect of Oedipus, of his body. Oedipus walks on the road, with a limp, but in the opposite direction from the chariot, mentions Souzennelle, underlining the symbolic significance of the hero's gesture. It contradicts his old side inherited from his ancestors. His first confrontation, the killing of Laius, is to destroy the old man in himself. His second confrontation, related to sight, will allow him to build the *New Man*. The tetramorph at the gates of Thebes, with the legs of a bull, the body of a lion, the wings of a vulture and the face of a man, which we also encounter in Persia, in the Bible, in different living beings, but combined in the divine chariot from Ezekiel's prophecy, which in the Christian prophecies correspond to the four evangelists: the Bull to Luke, the Lion to Mark, the Vulture to John and the Man to Saint Matthew. It is also called a Sphinx and, in its feminine version, it has the head of a woman and the tail of a snake. It corresponds to the four main levels of human development.

We can say that all the archetypal ideas built around the cup refer to illumination. "*Urnâ, an urn suggesting the vessel in India, designates*

the front pearl or Shiva's third eye, which resulted from the vibratory interaction of soul forces, located according to Tradition, in the pineal gland, while the forces of personality are located in the phlegm gland associated with the major frontal centre (...). In Sufism, the eye of the heart is also conjured (...), for Christians, the Christic heart" symbolised in the Western esotericism by the rose in the centre of the cross.

The mystery of life reverberates in the mystery of the heart, the centre of the body, the Sun of man. This is precisely why the Aztecs offered the heart to the god of life. The path of the heart is the path of the Grail, is the conquest of the self and the discovery of pure love. The heart and the lungs, in their juxtaposition inside the torso, resemble an overturned tree whose roots are planted in the sky. The universal breath thus penetrates the human body. The man is a tree, such a tree; it is only that nowadays he has forgotten it, punishing at the same time those who remember it.

Throughout the history of anatomy, it was quite difficult to settle on a name for *Ammon's horn*, the hippocampus, which belongs to the limbic system, plays a central role in what regards memory and is located in the medial temporal lobe, above the fifth circumvolution. Researchers wavered between silkworm and hippocampus, sea horse, the ram's horn, respectively Ammon's horn, the Egyptian god.

Adam's apple has appeared, according to the legends, in men's throats when a piece of the notorious fruit got stuck there: *Adam was eating heartily when the Lord, upset, yelled at him, and a little piece got stuck. They were in the middle of a garden in which there was an apple from whose fruit they were not allowed to eat, according to God's command. A snake nestled in the tree urged Eve to taste a fruit. She ate from the apple and lured Adam into eating as well, but Adam, while swallowing, remembered God's interdiction, so he clutched his throat and the piece of apple got stuck in that body part. That is why men have a prominence in the throat, but the woman doesn't, because she swallowed the piece of apple. Until then, the two had been naked, but, after tasting the forbidden fruit, they also realised they were naked and they were ashamed when the angel called them. The Lord cast them out and sent*

them to earth and, as punishment, they were destined to make a living by working with a fork and shovel (by: Elena Niculița-Voronca). It can be said that Adam's apple symbolises a rupture in the communication with divinity, man being confronted with the difficult choice between Heaven and Earth. On the other hand, this articulation allows the head to move on both axes, the neck thus bearing the task of carrying out the exchanges between conscience and the outer world. It can express firmness and weakness, nobility and humbleness. The symbolism of the bowed head is also seen in the masonic initiation ritual when the novice is asked to cross over the threshold of a low door, which they can only do if they bow their heads. This flexibility was also mentioned in the Bible as God's yoke, a symbol of wisdom. The idea is also present in India, the word *Yoga* being rooted in the word *yoke* and meaning *connection with the divine Principle*.

Sememe, sign and signification in an anthropological discourse

“Good child, are you a demon, that just at one glance / Of your large eyes with long lashes thrown softly askance....

That your pale features again I recall – For you... you are him.”

Mihai Eminescu, *Înger de pază (Guardian Angel)*

Had we not printed images, mirrors or even the gleam of water or of other conceptions, but just the memory of our senses, how would what we know of one another look, how would we recognise one another, how would we define place and space? How would we define what is beautiful, how would we separate it from what is ugly, how much is faith and how much pride in likening ourselves to Him, the Creator? Why do we not easily admit that what we call face is in fact the highest step of the soul, as Saint Maximus the Confessor teaches us? We do, however, utter very easily phrases like *“you can read their soul in their look”* or *“they were unrecognisable”*. Who are we and what do we want from our eyes and lips, from our looks, our smile and wrinkles? Have we ever truly looked at our hands and feet? Have we listened to the beats of our heart? How else can we read this ingenious architecture of flesh and bones?

David Le Breton⁶², a French sociologist and anthropologist, professor of social sciences at the Strasbourg University, bringing together the notions of face and sacred, considers the sacred a crystallisation of values, a sensitive differentiation that subtly hierarchizes the moments of existence or of objects in themselves (whether it is about a house, a piece of nature or just a garden). He also underlines once more

⁶² Le Breton, David, “Le visage et le sacré: quelques jalons d’analyse”, in *Religiologiques*, issue 12, Pritemps 1995, pp.44-64

the ambivalence of the sacred: holiness and sin, miracle and terror. Thus polarized, the following question is outlined: how can the face, from a social point of view, define itself by resorting to the sacred? By re-evaluating various body segments, one can consider as true the assertion that not all body parts enjoy the same importance in the eyes of the individual or those of the community. Some are definitely given more attention and are considered poles of the feeling of personal identity.

The body is a sign. Its limits, as well as its various senses, are of a religious, social or artistic nature. In a movingly beautiful book, Maurice Leenhardt⁶³ builds his discourse on the concept of the *body* of the aboriginals living on an island in the Malay Archipelago. The missionary who asked one of the elders of the place about his impression of the novelties brought by the *white man* receives the bewildering answer, seemingly meant to thwart his every effort: “*the body. We had the spirit, and you brought us the body*”. For the Canac Indians, the body is a part of the great universe and cannot be stripped from and considered as one segment. The existence of a Canac intertwines with that of the plants and the same name is used to define the skin and the bark of the tree, the muscles of the body as well as the pulp of the fruit, the cranium, but also the shells found on the beach, the veins and the lianas, the kidney and the fruit resembling it. Leenhardt thus demonstrates the belief of these people in a single substance on which all things are based.

This belief is not formulated solely in mythological stories, but lived at a fibre level, of the being, is felt. Any Canac knows that a tree in the forest has grown from one of its ancestors. The cult of the sacred log as embodiment of the dendromorphic ancestor also exists in the Western space and in Romanian stories. The chiselled trunk of the tree could be a boat, but also a coffin for those journeying to the afterworld. This dugout was associated with the *chariot* that led to the European notion of *carrus navalis*, which led to the celebration called carnival. Should we extract

⁶³ Maurice Leenhardt, 1947, Gallimard, 261 p., Do Kamo. La personne et le mythe dans le monde mélanésien, and the studies of Pierre Métais, in Revue de l’histoire des religions, 1950, issue 137-1, pp. 105-109, Maurice Leenhardt Do Kamo. La personne et le mythe dans le monde mélanésien. Essai sur la signification du terme «totem», 1951, issue 140-1, pp.83-119

the sympathetic nervous system from our body and look at it as such, we would see that it resembles a tree (the gift of the vegetable kingdom for the human body). Could it be the tree of knowledge, the creator of that apple, the fruit of love, of sin and knowledge? Venus and Aphrodite, as well as Lucifer, are animated by sexuality and bodily desires. In the Western mythology, the apple is associated with these deities. Lucifer (the snake) tempts Eve with an apple. Paris hands Aphrodite the apple, a gesture that leads to the kidnapping of Helen and the Trojan War. And it is the apple that is deemed the fruit of the goddess Venus, because the position of the seeds, when the apple is cut in half, reproduces the trajectory on which the planet moves during a 40-year cycle: a five-pointed star. *Even today, the vegetal element is an essential part of the human being.* (Black, 2007: 49)

Horizontal apple section, a symbolical reference to the Vitruvian Man, but also to the trajectory followed by Venus during a 40-year cycle.

For David Le Breton, as well as for other philosophers of the body, the human body is an extension of the vegetal, in a substance metaphor which, reaching the higher level of the anatomic diagram, professedly links the face to the concept of sacred⁶⁴. The face is the capital (*capita*) of the body, a diffuse hierophany, says Le Breton, whose loss (*disfiguration*) leads to the loss of even the smallest desire to live, profoundly destroying the feeling of identity.

On the same subject, from the very first lines, Michel Leiris⁶⁵ goes straight to the core of our debate and asks:

“What are the objects, places and circumstances that stir in me this mixture of fear and affection, this ambiguous attitude that determines closeness to a thing, both attractive and dangerous, prestigious and repulsive, this mixture of respect, desire and fear that may pass as the psychological sign of the sacred?”

⁶⁴ Lhuilier, Gilles, “L’homme masque”, in *Methodos*, 4, pp.1-24 2004

⁶⁵ Leiris, Michel, “Le sacré dans la vie quotidienne”, in Denis Hollier, *Le collège de sociologie*, Paris, Gallimard, 1979, p.60

In this situation, the *I* we refer to must be, in fact, a *plural I*.

The *face* is the area of mutual recognition. Our bare hands and face, left open to the regard of the others are signs of recognition through which we are identified and named. The uniqueness of our face names, in fact, that of man, of the individual as a social atom, *indivis*, aware of himself and relative master of his choices, standing in the womb of the *I*, not in the womb of *us*, *the others*. For an individual to exist from a socio-cultural point of view, it requires a space that he discerns and this space is the body that works as a frontier of identity. Moreover, it requires a face, an area of the body to make the distinction individual and which is, in fact, a cipher. The infinitesimal differences of the face make people distinguish one from the other. Faces are infinite variations of the same simple mould.

The unknown, the anonymous, the one who is lost amidst a crowd is a faceless man. If he has a name, he can integrate in a group of many and, in parallel, detach himself from the many. Recognition, seduction, beauty or ugliness is located in the face.

The Romanian *Făt-Frumos (Prince Charming)* in our stories bears a name that can be difficult to translate to another language. *Făt* comes from the Latin *foetus*, very close to the Greek *foton*⁶⁶, which means light, referring directly to *Phaethon*, the son of Helios, who is in fact a son of the Son. The simple utterance of the name creates in our imagination the drawing of a face deemed to be an ideal of beauty because we, humans, regardless of the meridian, are creations of light. An exercise of a chromatic reading of the never-ending beginning in eternal light is *Helios and Phaethon with Saturn and the Four Seasons* by Nicolas Poussin⁶⁷.

⁶⁶ φῶς in Ancient Greek and it means light. As an elementary particle, the term photon, also called the quantum of light, was created in 1926 by American physicist Gilbert Lewis. The concept appeared at the beginning of the 20th century, in the works (between 1905 and 1917) of Albert Einstein, who used the German name of the quantum of light, das Lichtquant.

⁶⁷ Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665), French painter during the baroque classicism. The painting depicts Helios, surrounded by the four seasons and sheltered by the astrological vault. Spring represents Cybele (or Kybele, in Greek Κυβέλη - Kubelē, in latin Cibelis, Cybele), a deity of Phrygian origin, the goddess of caves and Earth, protector of vegetation, protector of bees, considered *Magna Mater (Great Mother of Gods)*. In the

At the opposite pole in the Romanian folklore, a character such as *Flămânzilă* (*Famished*), whose “eyes are hollowed and shimmering like fireflies, and looking in all directions for food”⁶⁸ or, in the Western culture, the so-called monsters that drew curious people to the fairs and the fears that grew in the middle of the night in the shadow of cathedrals leave a completely different aesthetic imprint on our mind.

Very interesting, from the point of view of the structures of Romanian imagination, is the suite of mythological figures that seem to succeed one another on a sort of evolutionary ladder to the perfect human body. When there was nothing, the four elements allied in order to set the pillars of the mythological universe. Man did not exist and yet they took on a human image, or man was the only one who existed and they, the elements, embodied, appeared after him. Thus, a genuine tree of creation has risen. Where did *Știmele*⁶⁹, *Faraonoaicele*⁷⁰, *Dulful*⁷¹, *Vidra*⁷² and *Zburătorul*⁷³ come from and what is their connection to *Man*?

Greek mythology, Cybele was born from the seed of Zeus, first as a bisexual being, the Hermaphrodite, later on emasculated by the gods. The severed male sex organ fell on the ground and changed into an almond tree. A fruit of this tree touched her breast and Attis was thus conceived, who would later on become Cybele's husband. The guilty love Attis feels for the daughter of Pessinos will attract the anger of his wife. From Attis' emasculated sex organ appears the evergreen pine.

⁶⁸ Ion Creangă, *Povestea lui Arap Alb* (*The Story of Arap Alb*)

⁶⁹ The *știma* of the water is a female spirit of the waters. It appears to be a degraded variant of an ancient autochthonous deity of fresh waters on which the aquatic stability depended (Kernbach: 566), a white and cold female (N.-Voronca: 883), a young and vigorous woman “with breasts so large they could reach her back”, half woman and half fish, with hair that touched the ground and shimmered like gold (T. Pamfile: 284), who every night required the sacrifice of a human head. The *știma* of the money, a spirit of the treasures, is an invisible being who reigns over buried treasures (Evseev: 454). She is described in several ways; the *știma* of the so-called clean treasures is a man or a woman dressed in white, him with a white beard, her with white braids. The cursed treasures are guarded by *știme* who could metamorphose (man, fox, wolf, dog, cat, rooster) (Pamfile: 17) and acted like the devil, called *the ones who sit on the treasure*.

⁷⁰ *Faraonoaice* is one of the Romanian name, also encountered among the Slavic populations, for the fish women (Evseev: 132), half women, half fish, who live on the bottom of the sea, come to the surface on Saturdays and, in the place where they are about to appear, on the surface of the sea, three lines are formed: red, yellow and blue; they hold hands and sing beautifully, they do not wish to be seen by earthlings; they resemble the Greek mermaids; possible bookish influences, on the one side from Greek

Anthropomorphism occurs, naturally, when the sacred substance, circulated in multiple evolutionary states, from elemental to human, in all that is the “plotting of the world” (I. Muşlea, Ov. Bîrlea: 283), can bestow on mythemes, deciphering symbolic codes, even interpretations close to the Darwinist model. “The Darwinist theory explains the evolution of the successful instruments needed for survival as a direct consequence of success itself” (R. Dawkins: 365). And the jointing of the worlds, even if solely drawing the terms “to ordain” “to plot” close, rebuilds a genuine mythological DNA of the being. *“It would highlight ancient mythical structures related to the cult of the mother goddess, a deity always accompanied by one or several male partners”* (M. Coman: 215). In the Romanian imaginary, the Demiurge itself is subject to error. The

texts and on the other from Biblical texts (the soldiers in the Pharaoh’s army that pursued the Jewish people were swallowed by the waters of the Red Sea), combined with autochthonous beliefs.

⁷¹ *Dulf* is the Romanian mythical fish. He comes out of the sea water and turns into a lad. Once human, he tries to steal apples from a tree that grows on an island. The lad that stops him (a suitor) with his bow and arrows will get married, in exchange for sparing the *dulf*’s life, to one of the twelve sisters of the Sea Spirit (Pamfile: 306). His name, possibly a hybrid between *delfin* (dolphin) and *duh* (spirit), is imprinted with the symbolism of the dolphin: *eros, chastity, innocence*.

⁷² *Vidra*, integrated in the cult of the ancestors and linked to the representations of the afterworld (Evseev: 488), borrows its name from Slavic and is related to the Greek hydra, the “water serpent”, lives in an aquatic abyss, at the boundary of this world, at the entrance to the other realm, which she also guards. The role of fabulous beings is to fill the empty places of the unknown (M. Coman: 258), to find, in other words, and to match the missing link, in a permanent spinning of rites, in the right time and space.

⁷³ *Zburătorul*: one of the four fundamental Romanian myths (G. Călinescu), “symbolises all forms of sexuality, from the puberal one, to the hysterical one of women who only live for carnal pleasures” (R. Vulcănescu, 338), which can be escaped through the miraculous force of the word and by wearing a magical girdle made of five-leaved ivy (a *zmeu*’s braiding), kept for 40 days on a yoke pulled by two bulls “born of the same mother”. *Zmeu*: mythical saurian, often confused with *balaur*, snake and *Zburătorul*; beings with a human face, large and strong, with a scaly body and a tail, the enemies of the positive heroes in stories and legends, who carry a characteristic weapon, the mace, the link with the world of fertility daimons (Evseev: 502), in general of Chthonic origin, their name originating from the Slavic root *zmii*, which means earth. They also have Uranian and pyric traits and can appear as a roll of fire and bear jewels on their forehead; in the Romanian folklore, it represents the highest form of evolution of the snake, in 7-year steps: snake, *balaur*, *zmeu*.

cosmogonic errors are oftentimes remedied by zoological apparitions, ancient symbols, very knowledgeable of the environment they populate (water, air, fire, earth) who succeed in re-ordering the worlds. Axiomatic for such an interpretative endeavour may be the exclamation of the hedgehog: *What man and God!* (T. Pamfile: 33)

The tooth, very briefly, from totem to implant

“Grandma, why are your teeth so big?’ ‘So that I can eat you better’, says the wolf.”

We all know this story and tell it forward as often as required. Moreover, a short review of several characters in our fairy tales shows us that teeth enjoy a special attention when laying out defining marks:

- The hag: “with teeth as long as those of a rake”;
- “*Baba Hârca*” (Beldam): just like the name suggests, it comes from *hârși, hârșit*; a linguistic trace of an Iranian deity, it denotes the links with the ancient cult of human and animal craniums;
- *balaurul* (dragon, *zmeu*, snake, leviathan etc.) has multiple heads, wings, teeth and sharp claws, a symbol of the beginning of the cosmeticizing of the world and the instauration of social orders, can chase away the clouds, brings love to unfulfilled women, connects the worlds, carrying his heroes from one land to another. The *Golubatz fly* in the South of Banat was born from the head of the *balaur* killed by Iovan Iorgovan in the Cerna Valley. The *iron men*, says the Hellenic legend of Jason, come from the dragon’s teeth planted by the dragon itself;
- the dog, a chthonic animal, related to the wolf, a mediator between the two worlds, sometimes even a civilizing hero, as the discoverer of fire, both underground and celestial (the Latin word *canicula* refers to the hottest period of Summer), a participant to fertility rites [19], for us, Romanians, is an attribute of mythological deities that patronize the days of the week (aspects of the ancient mother goddess of nature: St. Wednesday, St. Friday, St. Sunday), who all have a “female dog with iron teeth and steel grinders” guarding their lands and outhouses from humans.

We can easily notice that in archaic cultures, human and animal teeth are overly important in sympathetic magic acts. Teeth are associated with aggression, with the desire to dominate. The tooth is also a synecdoche of man, also reflected in the biblical saying: “a tooth for a tooth”. The amulet containing the teeth of the totemic animal is granted fabulous apotropaic powers. Romanian folk magic identifies two important aspects related to this anatomic segment: infantile magic, referring to the pulling out of the milk tooth; 2. practices related to preventing or curing toothaches. (Evseev)

In the not so long ago past, when a child lost a milk tooth, it was not randomly thrown away, but carefully washed, thrown on the eaves and the following magical incantation was uttered, summoning a mythical bird that embodied the spirit of the ancestor: “crow, crow, I give you a bone tooth, you give me a steel one”. It was not a custom practiced solely by the children in the rural area. I have also encountered it in the city, somewhat adapted, but subsidiarily observing archaic laws: while uttering the same incantation, the washed tooth was left to fall down the drain of the bathtub or of the sink, never in the toilet (which was considered evil), and, based on the principle of running water, it would one day end up in the so-called Water of Saturday, meant to connect the two worlds. More recently, some children hold on to their milk tooth as a talisman, not so much invested with protective functions, but rather a link to a time they leave behind with nostalgia, but also with great pride. There is also the belief, says Artur Gorovei that the youngest children were not allowed to look in the mirror. *“If a child looks in the mirror before they turn one, they will teethe arduously”*. The joining of the two elements, one concrete, the mirror, and the other physiological, the growing of the teeth, may be explained through the symbolism of the mirror to which we have referred. The mirror does not only reflect the image, but also has the capacity to store it and preserve it, being thus able to make it available for evil forces. Fortunately, today we have other medical means, except for those cited by Gorovei, in order to ease toothaches. For example, the same father of the Romanian ethnography tells us that a wide-spread prophylactic measure consisted in the following: *“should a person rub his*

finger on the teeth of a dead man and then on their own teeth, their teeth will never ache again.”

At a European level⁷⁴, the most important symbolism of the tooth is situated at stone level. In Greek mythology, Deucalion and Pyrrha throw stones over their shoulder in order to repopulate the earth destroyed by the Deluge. These stones are precisely the seeds of a future race, the foundation of a future fortress. During the establishment of a town, a ritualistic crown was traced, resembling the dental arches, then the wall was built, serving rather as a connection with heaven first and only afterwards at keeping out earthly enemies. The lacy crenels have the same origin. *“The dental crown, a wall of the Holy City, surrounds and protects the tongue, the sword and the Word”* (Souzenelle, op.cit.). Moreover, the three roots of the wisdom teeth are connected in the symbolic thinking by Neptune’s sceptre, the trident, later on semantically bestowed with the values of the Divine Tri-Unity. *“A string of fine pearls”, “flocks of white sheared sheep”*, such are the teeth of the two lovers described in the *Song of Songs* and they represent the wall before the *Sword* (the tongue) and their role, beyond literally feeding the being, is to get involved in forming *the Verb, the Word*.

Rotten teeth, those that fall out, in the oneiric imaginary, make reference to the profound layers of the being, to the words uttered, as a punishment for the harsh and unjust words we have authored. The parental root of the teeth surpasses the boundaries of symbolism (“the parents ate sour grapes and their children’s teeth are set on edge”), it falls within the care of the dentist, who takes over, not only in order to preserve or obtain a healthy condition for their patient, but also in order to

⁷⁴ “In the Western iconography, a character endowed with impressive jaws often depicts a demon, sometimes a savage, at the very least an aggressive individual, ready to bite. At the opposite end, charming characters, as well as those endowed with high spiritual qualities are depicted with normal, even delicate jaws. In addition to this aspect related to the manducation function, the mandible plays a fundamental role in word articulation. From this point of view, it is representative for man’s condition on Earth. This is why we often find, at the feet of the gisants, a sculpture representing a cranium or a jaw.” (*Translation from Symbolisme du Corps, Marie Delclos/Jean-Luc Caradeau, p.254*)

restore the latter's self-confidence and, implicitly, freedom of spirit and confidence expressed through the smile.

When asked why she chose to become a dental practitioner, a young student in her first year of college answered spontaneously, without any hesitation: "*for a smile*".

I and the other; between us, the face

Any discourse on this subject certainly begins by invoking the good Platonist tradition according to which the original people were a sort of spheres with four arms, four legs and two opposite faces on the same head. These people did not need one another and were, evidently, androgynous. From Aristophanes, who in fact quotes Plato, we do not find out whether during those times, in the absence of the notion of *the other*, they were much happier or not. However, we do know that a profound feeling of utter boredom (it might just have been the *spleen* that was only defined in the 20th century) made them attempt to defy the gods and rummage through the welkin. Not at all pleased by their worldly and assiduous curiosity, Zeus decides to take sharp revenge and cuts these beings into two and destines them to always look for their missing half. In time, the sublime metaphor of the spheres cut in two has expended the ins and outs of the imaginary. The lack of symmetry of each being's facial traits makes every face have two slightly different halves. Since then, every human, following their destiny, will be searching for their missing facial part, hoping to find their own eternity, but will only know how to find it in the face of the other. The myth explains and encourages the revelation of love at first sight. All great stories resume this thread: people who have never seen each other, who have lived absolute moments inside the mysterious being and who, upon meeting their mate, simply recognised them and the story followed its course.

Certain anthropologists find the androgynous in the face. "*The lower part of the face*", says Annick de Souzenelle (1996:339), "*is feminine and reminds us of the female genital organs: the Eustachian tubes connect each ear to the mouth, just like, at a genital level, the Fallopian tubes connect each ovary to the uterus. The upper part of the face reminds us of the male genital organs: the nose corresponds to the penis, and the two eyes to the testicles.*"

The author reminds us that, no matter how daring the assertion seems to us, before judging, the genitalia in both females and males are not differentiated during the first weeks of foetal life. Symbols have the extraordinary quality of returning in unexpected repetitive sequences.

The appearance of the *prosopon*⁷⁵ in the Greek democracy in the 5th century A.D. has stimulated the art of the portrait and has highlighted the infinite traits of the human face. The Greeks were the first to claim the privilege of the *prosopon*. The term was used especially in the theatre and it seems that its initial meaning referred to that part of the cranium located immediately below the top of the skull. It will prove problematic solely when identified with the *mask*. In theatre, man can manifest differently than in their daily lives, may do anything, may even break the law, being thus granted an unhoped for freedom. In theatre they will also learn that they must face the consequences for their deeds. The mask covers them, creates a new identity for them, offers them a new person. The mask-man is not the same as the man beyond the scene. Nevertheless, in order to truly be a person, man will need to add something to his being, *hypostasis*. Just like the person wearing a mask is not the same with the person not wearing a mask, *prosopon* is not the same with *hypostasis*⁷⁶. Much later, the Greek way of thinking will equalise the manifestation of human personality with the human being itself. Endowed with organs of sight, hearing and speech, the *prosopon* opens the human body to the world.

Art history does not offer us any face before the 5th century quoted above. The stereotypic faces on the faded frescos in Egyptian graves, the schematic figures on Greek vessels and the Homeric heroes fighting monsters offer us not one single portrait. Why did it only happen in the 5th century? Why was it relinquished afterwards for another nine centuries, until the occurrence of the icon, which later on gave way to Humanism and Expressionism, is the question raised by numerous cultural historians.

⁷⁵ Combining form meaning “(referring to) the face”, “facial”. [Var. *prosop-* / < Fr., It. *prosopo-*, as per Gr. *prosopon*].

⁷⁶ Mauss, M., “La notion de personne”, in *Sociologie et anthropologie*, Paris, Seuil, P.U.F. 1983

The icon is not merely an object in front of which you pray. Its value consists in the power with which it is supposedly invested. In his attempt to define the notion of “*the true portrait of a saint*”, M. Albert-Llorca⁷⁷ underlines that his mention refers especially to Jesus and the Virgin Mary.

We seem to find a first answer in Pliny’s *Natural History*, who thus also becomes the first art historian. He insists on the principle of resemblance and on the progression of resemblance in the art of the portrait. Vasari⁷⁸, the second great art historian, will identify, at the end of the Renaissance, the same fundamental law in making portraits: the progression of resemblance. For this very reason, it is believed that the birth of painting is found in the legend of the potter’s daughter who traces the line of her lover’s shadow on the wall. We also find here the definition of the specificity of the Greek mimesis in which, the precision of the trait plays a fundamental role. The Greek portrayer draws, circumscribes and defines a being which, in the image of his gods, shows his perfection through his capacity to delimitate, to withstand any form of imprecision of measurement, age or accident. In this mimesis, colour is less important. One practices the expression of *tonos*, meaning energy, vitality and, at the same time, impulsiveness and fury, fatigue and renunciation.

It seems that, in general, in what regards the fidelity of the face painted, people do not worry overly much about the other saints in church calendars. In the end, a saint is an out of the ordinary man. Alternatively, Jesus is both man and God, and His face deserves adequate attention. His depiction must please the heavens, which makes this operation extremely difficult for mortals. This is how legends about icons not made by man appeared. Among such legends is the famous one about the icon in Edessa. The king wanted an icon of the Saviour and commissioned a

⁷⁷ Albert-Llorca, Marlène, “L’image à sa place. Approche de l’imagérie religieuse imprimée”, in *Terrain*, March 18, 1992

⁷⁸ Giorgio Vasari (1511, Arezzo, Italy - 1574, Florence), Italian painter, architect and art historian, who became famous for his work: “The Lives of the Most Eminent Italian Painters, Sculptors and Architects, from Cimabue to our times” (“*Vite de' più eccellenti architetti, pittori et scultori italiani, da Cimabue insino a' tempi nostril*”, 1550 and 1568).

painter to paint it. After several attempts that were in vain, the artist was about to give up, because a strong light surrounded His face, and His features were barely distinguishable. Then Jesus himself imprinted His traits on a kerchief. Returned to Edessa, the painter could complete his work, the icon was built in the wall, for protection, and was rediscovered in the year 544. The statement that the Saviour himself conveyed the image of His face also legitimizes its subsequent reproductions.

The painting of the icon, as we are taught in the Mount Athos Painter's Guide⁷⁹, practices hesychasm⁸⁰ and epiclesis⁸¹ in order to remove even the smallest trace of subjectivity, corporality or reference to a flesh and blood model⁸². It is a long process of purification, through fast and prayer, lifted to the sensitive areas of the welkin through odes and psalms, meant to transform the painter monk in a sort of medium. Thus sheltered from worldly influences, he must make the sacred prototypical icons, called *acheiropoieta*, as faithful as possible, meaning made not by human hands. The legend of the icon in Edessa, Veronica (*vera icona*) is in fact the legend of the face of Jesus imprinted, on His way to Golgotha, on the kerchief of the young maiden from Corinth. Veronica becomes the figure of God embodied in the Son of Man, come to Earth to redeem Adam and his sins, the absolute figure. Unlike polytheistic cultures that multiply the images of their gods or the democratic cultures that favour the portraits of their citizens, the monotheistic religions forbid facial configuration. The Old Testament God is the only one authorised to make faces. Any figure made by human hands shall be deemed impure and, implicitly, a blasphemy. The New Testament monotheism will preserve

⁷⁹ Dionysius of Fourna (approximately 1670 - 1745/6) was an important Greek Orthodox iconographer in the 18th century, known especially as the author of a Painter's Manual (or *Hermeneia*).

⁸⁰ Gr. *hesychasmos*, from *hesychia*, "*quiet, reconciliation*", is a recluse prayer tradition in the Orthodox tradition, whose practice is called *hesychazo*, meaning "*to keep quiet*".

⁸¹ Gr. *epiclesis* is the summoning / calling of the Holy Spirit to come "over us and these gifts" (bread and wine), in order for them to become "the true Body and Blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ".

⁸² Lafargue, Bernard, "Des figures du visage aux visages des figures", in *Figures de l'art*, issue 5: *L'art des figures*

this rule, but will also find an invaluable subterfuge in the mystery of Reincarnation and Transfiguration.

The image of the Greek gods who liked to seduce mortals and to see their duplicates in marble statues before going to Olympus is contrasted by the Christian God who becomes human, loves, suffers, dies, comes back to life and is transfigured, leaving behind Veronica, his image (*acheiropoieta*) of light, literally his photograph, as an object of veneration and imitation for all people. Being the emanation of Jesus' blood and sweat, *veronica* will imprint the figure of the Creator on the arch of the dome of the Hagia Sofia, as desired by the emperor Constantine⁸³, who will also declare Christianity to be the state religion. Several hundreds of years will have to pass until the Florentine Quattrocento, when the figures of Greek democracy will be left behind. A rigorous historical selection will only leave a few figures close to the Absolute Trinity to enjoy the ray aura of *veronica*. This is how they begin their spectacular dual journey, of both adventure and piety, to the much tried simple man. The monks will fiercely endeavour to create portraits that are as faithful as possible. However, human desire to show one's artistry will make icons differ from one another. To the bitterness of the iconoclasts who saw a new Pandora in this figure, the iconodules responded with new and increasingly individual faces in a time and space increasingly profane (see Giotto's creation⁸⁴).

⁸³ Gaius Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantinus (272 – 337), known as Constantine I or Constantine the Great, was a Roman emperor who reigned between 306 and 337. In 312, Constantine *converted to Christianity* and continued to be pontifex maximus, which also allowed him religious governance, which was the prerogative of all those who bore the title “Caesar”, meaning a leader of the Roman state and religion, position held by all Caesars. Following the meeting between Constantine and Licinius of Mediolanum (313), the “Edict of Milan” is issued, in which the emperor requested any persecution against Christians to be ceased, and the properties seized from them returned immediately.

⁸⁴ Giotto di Bondone, (1267, Colle di Vespignano/Mugello - 1337, Florence), Italian painter and architect, considered to be the innovator of Italian painting and the predecessor of modern art. Giotto replaced the ornamental Byzantine composition with the depiction of the three-dimensional space.

In Alberti's Narcissus⁸⁵, Renaissance will once again find the precision of the contour. To paint the surface of the stream in which Narcissus regards himself is, in fact, to paint profundity in the surface, the divine in man, the infinite in the finite, the universal in the particular, the absence in the presence.

Christ - respectively, the Self - is a mirror which, in Jung's opinion (1997:182), on the one hand reflects the subjective conscience of the disciples, meaning it makes it visible to them, and on the other hand, in which one recognises Him, the Only One. In other words, it does not solely reflect the empirical man, but shows him entirely, as if "a door knocked upon is open" (1997:183). Insisting on this idea, the father of modern psychiatry makes known to us that *the self is acquired by the many focusing on the centre. Without the objectification of the Self, the Ego would remain captive in a hopeless subjectivity.*

Therefore, we cannot speak of a face without granting it the place deserved by a ritual object of overwhelming importance to our theme. The mirror, be it made of well-polished stone, bronze or silver, has had from the very beginning a clearly stated metaphysical role. The name of this object uttered in various languages, bears in its semantic nucleus the notion of secret, of mystery, of reflection, of search. The Latin *speculum*, *mirror*, has led to the term *speculation*. In the beginning, it referred to watching the sky and the celestial bodies with the help of a mirror. The French *miroir* and the English *mirror* derive from a verb root *miror*, which means *to wonder*. In Romanian, the word *oglindă* is linked to the Slavic *ogledati*, which meant *to look* and *to look around*, to search (Evseev, 1997:334). Umberto Eco will call this instrument of self-knowledge a "semiotic object".

In synthesis, Professor Ivan Evseev writes: "*all mythical speculations and all magical uses of the mirror stem from the real characteristics of this mysterious object: 1. faithful copy; 2. the motion of the object is synchronous with that of the copy; 3. inverted reflection (left*

⁸⁵ Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472), complex Renaissance personality, important representative of the Italian humanist philosophy, writer, architect, painter, linguist, musician, archaeologist and sculptor.

becomes right and vice versa), 4. impenetrability; 5. impalpability of the image reflected (which creates the sensation of semblance, lie, illusion, unreality; the mirror also reflects the objects not located within our sight (all fairy tales in the world have mirrors through which the heroes can see at great distance or events that have occurred in the past or that are to take place in the future); 7. the ability of mirrors to multiply the image and 8. the mirror can distort the image (house of mirrors)”.

We also mention here the mythological and symbolical association between the eye and the mirror. Ancient Romanian beliefs, cited by A. Gorovei, forbid both looking in the mirror and washing one's eyes at night, in order not to allow the two worlds to cross each other and in order not to go blind (Gorovei, 1915).

Known throughout the world, the fairy tale that enchanted our early years and became a symbol of the wonderful golden age of childhood, *Snow White* (<http://www.xjocurinoi.com/>⁸⁷) is built around the mirror and is, for us, the perfect example of renewing a rite. From the point of view of anthropological hermeneutics, it goes beyond the symbolical suite and enters, with a natural grace, in the area of the social and microsocial, inviting both pre-schoolers and video game lovers to play, each having to undergo initiatory phases that will, in fact, reconstruct the characteristics of the mirror. The story of the Grimm brothers replaces a different one that had vanished for centuries, transmitted orally, from one generation to another, an initiatory story narrated in the rich families as early as the Middle Ages. Each character represents a trail in the deciphering of the mystery that will lead to finding a fabulous treasure. Here are several of the game's suggestions preserved from the medieval symbolism: Snow White is the treasure, the Evil Witch is the messenger of an illusion, the apple

⁸⁷ We quote from the website: <http://www.xjocurinoi.com/cautari/joc/3>⁸⁷ Snow White - A new special game for girls, where Snow White has laid the table for the 7 dwarfs, who are currently at work. Help her put on a special attire, in order to impress the 7 dwarfs.

Snow White - In this game, Snow White and the seven dwarfs challenge you to find the numbers cleverly hidden in their images. Use the magnifier to closely look for them and don't miss any of them.

represents the illusion itself, Snow White's sleep is the sleep of the uninitiated profaner, the seven dwarfs represent the seven jewels of the treasure, we find Prince Charming in each and every one of us, and the mystery, it seems, can be solved with a kiss.

However, is there truly a history of the kiss? Finding a detailed answer to this question is also a great challenge. In ancient times, at the origin of Western societies, during the Antiquity and the Middle Ages, the kiss, a sign of social homage, was first practiced by men and it is only during the Renaissance that it becomes a sign of affection between men and women.

We must mention here that there is no kiss depicted in the rupestral or funeral art of the Neanderthal man, not even at the beginning of Homo Erectus. The kiss is not depicted in any of the artistic manifestations of ancient societies (Sumerians, Egyptians, Mesopotamians). The Persians are well known for their men's habit to kiss one another, an expression of social equality in a rigorously hierarchized society (habit also borrowed by the Greeks after Alexander the Great's conquests). Nevertheless, Greek and Latin antiquity will imprint a different connotation on the kiss: a characteristic of same gender lovers. The kiss on the mouth as a sign of social recognition, together with other forms of kissing (of the feet, of one's bottom of the robe, of the hand, of the forehead etc.) will contribute to the mediation of social exchanges in the Middle Ages, especially in terms of Church institutionalisation.

It seems that the Bible is the first work in which the kiss is truly described (there are 40 occurrences in the Old Testament alone), which could mean that the Hebrews invented it. The first was the kiss of the Lord⁸⁸. Then came *the kiss greeting* between two men from the same family or tribe, a kiss accompanied by a bow, reverence that identifies the status of the two people involved and, implicitly, apportions social distances, *the kiss of forgiveness* of David, culminating in the *Song of Songs* with the invention of the most beautiful lovers' kiss.

⁸⁸ *And the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. Genesis 2:7.*

In the Middle Ages the kiss is once more practiced by men, in public, in front of men and the Lord, as a witnessed upon seal of a covenant and remains a symbol of social connections. Those who practice it usually have the same rank or belong to the same institutions. In addition, it is ritualised as a religious act, bearing the sign of the divine union between mortals and the Almighty God, *by blending breaths, it in fact blended souls*, the exact translation of the gesture meaning “*peace and love*”. During approximately the same period it will also suffer greatly. The kiss between seniors and vassals, reaching its climax, will be disgraced due to the tense and very corrosive disputes for supremacy between the state and the church. Under the plethora of anathemas and curses, the contact between bodies, flesh near flesh, is more than suspicious. Souls “*stopped blending*”. For a lot of time, the *kiss of peace* will be laid on an object functioning as an intermediary: a ring, a cross, the holy weave adorning the altar etc. Its social role weakens considerably, shifting, with adequate importance, to the intimate space.

In the Orthodox religion, its functions are preserved to this day, as varied as they are subtle.

During an initiatory exercise, the kiss may be synonymous with silence, recognition of divine perfection, humbleness. The kiss designates communion. In the liturgical ceremony, kissing the icons is a gesture that unites the community of participants, its repetitiveness making it the binder of the crowd, a form of manifestation of the sacred (Luca, 2004: 183).

In a potential hierarchy of the gestures that are part of the liturgical ritual, we consider it to be fundamental. The tongue, as a symbol, bears the marks of fire. For that reason, *the significant word is priceless, and silence is golden*. During the Egyptian burial ritual, the mouth was open in order to instil new breath into the defunct’s organs. During religious initiatory ceremonies, silence prepared the aspirant for knowledge. In the chaste kiss, the lips are drawn together, the fire of the tongue is extinguished. The two vaults of the lips (again, the up-down opposition, fig. 9) may represent the two worlds and their unified form, may draw the ellipse of the primordial egg or of the yet uncreated because

“in the beginning was the Word”. “The teaching of the word is organ, is nurture, is the best formation of air”, says Saint John Chrysostom⁸⁹. The sign of the cross that many elders still make nowadays retraces a much shorter path, solely on the length of the face: forehead, mouth (corresponding to the abdominal half in the long variant) and eyes (for the shoulders). Another old gesture that comprises various feelings into a single expression (emotion, wonder, surprise, shame, fear etc.) is putting one’s hand over the mouth. We consider this to be an inverted gesture of ordination. The latter, through the laying of the hand, invests a terrestrial being with holy spirit, dispensing them for the hidden word. The hand of the non-theologian, through its spontaneous gesture, seems to help the lips in their hermetic exercise. Under these conditions, the kiss can be synonymous with silence, with the recognition of divine perfection, with humbleness.

The kiss designates communion (see the icon called *The Meeting at the Golden Gate*, depicting the hug and kiss of St. Joachim and St. Anne). Kissing icons is a shared gesture for the actors involved in the Orthodox liturgical ritual. During the ceremony, the priest makes it once, at the beginning. The believers, as they enter the church, will also make it, humbly saluting their stepping into the house of the Lord, requesting, one could say, the state of worthiness needed in order to take part in such a mystery. The fact that each actor touches the icon with their lips (and hands) unites the community of participants. The repetitiveness of this gesture binds the crowd. This scenario will make the inner space change often enough, preserving the path outlined earlier, but from the opposite direction, aimed at the officiant, being simultaneously an invitation to closeness and an encounter. The priest, as a means of divine communication, will kiss, in turn, the gospel, the table, the clothes and the holy cross. For part of these items, the gesture will also become possible for the crowd during various moments of the liturgical scenario. During

⁸⁹ John Golden Mouth, also known as John Chrysostom (347 in Antiochia – 407), former Archbishop of Constantinople, one of the most important figures of Christian patrology.

the *vohod*⁹⁰, the believers will try to touch their lips to the phelonion or the epitachelion of the priest's attire, will want to kiss the gospel, the cross and the priest's hand. *The kiss is a form of manifestation of the sacred.*

“The sacred action is a dromenon, meaning something that is done. It depicts a drama, meaning an action, whether that action is carried out as a spectacle or a competition. The action depicts a cosmic event, but not only as a representation, but also as identification... Its function is not solely to imitate, but also to confer or to participate.” (Dumas: 2000)

The invisible boundary between the worlds is broken each time important events disrupt our lives. Sickness is one of such events and its reflection in the mirror is unsettling:

“From the day I found out I was HIV positive”, transcribes S. Mathieu the confession of a young woman, “I took even greater care of myself. I bought a large mirror, although I had never owned one until then. And, before going to work, I would spend a lot of time putting on make-up and primping. It seemed as if I were going to make an appearance on stage, as if I were an actress preparing to act. On the street, at work, everywhere I encountered people, I would say to myself: ‘It shows! I’m certain it shows! Everybody knows!’ and I would always feel slapped”. (Agora)

⁹⁰ Ritual during the Orthodox Liturgy; *exit*. *Vohodul mic (The Small Exit)* = exiting the altar with the Gospel, going to the middle of the nave, then returning and settling it on the holy table. It symbolises the exit of the Saviour to preach. *Vohodul mare (The Great Exit)* = exiting and entering with the holy gifts, observing the same ritual. – From the sl. *vohod*. DEX.

Signs on the face, meanings and time

Only five years after the end of World War I, the actress Fanny Brice, of Jewish origin, undertook a plastic surgery to change the shape of her nose. The intervention confused the entire United States, which criticized her harshly, wondering why such a famous actress would want to remove a clear sign of her ethnicity. 40 years later, when Barbara Streisand became famous for her role in *Funny Girl*, a character inspired precisely by Miss Brice's biography, the same USA wondered why the actress did not attempt to improve the body part in question. What happened and how did this change in mentality evolve is another argument in our debate, referring to the socio-cultural symbolism of the face.

What we call plastic surgery today was in fact born during World War I, when the doctors were thrust into the dramatic situation of reconstructing as much as possible of the faces destroyed by hail of splinters and the open fire of machine guns. In the very critical situations, when the doctors had no other solution left, they would require the help of an artist, who would make a mould modelled after the photography of the soldier patient, and using that mould, they would create a mask the latter worn in public, constantly. Following the war, the doctors wanted to develop surgery and its new ability and formed a target audience. The United States were at the top of the list in terms of renewing the myth of beauty and never-ending youth. Shortly after, France and Great Britain proved to be very interested in this subject. Nevertheless, it entailed great socio-political restriction, subordinated to the eugenic theories⁹¹, highly in fashion during the 1920s. Dictates were issued forbidding emigration to the

⁹¹ The stated purposes of this social purification theory are to create healthier and smarter people, to save society's resources and to end human suffering. The initial methods used to reach these goals were based on selective nutrition, but the modern ones focus on parental controls, foetus analyses, genetic counselling, pregnancy control, in vitro fertilisation and genetic engineering.

United States, first for the Chinese, and then for the Japanese. The emigrants from Northern and especially Western Europe were privileged and an assiduous spread of more or less scientific ideas regarding the theories of heredity and racial purity started. It is a known fact that at the end of the 18th century, anatomist Blumenbach⁹² spread theories, very well received in fact, according to which the European race was superior, an ideal type, by comparison with which all the other races seemed degenerate. In this science of physiognomy, Lavater⁹³ claimed that he identified the traits of the racial lines in order to study the shape of faces and brains. The emigrants that founded the United States, “*the old stock*”, as they called themselves, regarded the new-comers, “*the new stock*”, suspiciously in light of Darwin and Mendel’s theories⁹⁴, according to whom the positive hereditary traits should have been preserved and the negative ones removed. Also, all the magazines that popularized scientific progress clearly underlined the idea that mixed races led to irreversible degradation. Therefore, very clear norms of beauty standardization were imposed. The Italians and Jews set to conquer America, in hope of a better life, clashed heavily with all these matters and awakened in a clearly underprivileged position, due to a visible body part: the *nose*. In order to get a better, more interesting and better paid job, many of them had to accept to undergo plastic interventions in accordance to the criteria of ideal beauty established by “*the old stock*”, meant to remove ethnical emblems.

⁹² Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752 - January 22nd 1840), German anthropologist and biologist, one of the first to study the human species in the light of natural sciences, has applied comparative anatomy and has succeeded in classifying the human races, identifying five such racial types: Caucasian or the white race, Mongoloid or the yellow race, Malaysian or the brown race, Negroid or the black race, American (Amerindian) or the red race.

⁹³ Johann Kaspar Lavater or Gaspard Lavater (1741 - 1801), Swiss German speaking theologian and writer, known especially for his work about physiognomy: *L’Art de connaître les hommes par la physionomie* (1775-1778), Paris.

⁹⁴ Johann Gregor Mendel (1822 - 1884), “the father of modern genetics”, cultivated and studied pea plants, his experiences leading to the generalizations that subsequently became known as “Mendel’s Laws of Inheritance”: the law of hybrid uniformity in the first generation, the law of characteristic segregation in the second generation or the law of gamete purity and the law of independent assortment of characteristics in the second generation.

Paradoxically, hundreds of people who left in search of the principles of democracy for which they had amputated their past, their traditions and feelings, found themselves in the unpleasant situation of renouncing a distinctive physical and emotional mark, considered to be an ethnic and social identity mark, but which was, in fact, racial. The phenomenon enjoys a more than insistent publicity, all women's magazines depicting it as a sine qua non condition of social evolution, due to which during the 1950s, 50% of middle-class American women had already undergone such interventions. The photographs published on colourful pages, accompanied by advertisements such as "*it is vital to have a perfect nose*", "*look at this wonderful face!*" or "*lips impeccably hemmed, large eyes...*" obsessively launched the invitation to undergo such interventions and, moreover, in time, it generalizes them to the entire face. Elizabeth Haiken (1990) related a fact that became anecdotic. At some point, she met a young lady who wanted to make a brilliant career in acting and she was prepared to sacrifice anything in order to make it happen. On their first meeting, the girl left a very positive impression on her. She was a beautiful girl, with splendid golden complexion, regal bearing, slightly Creole, with a firm nose and black thick and shiny hair, who exuded, force and dignity. Several years later, she saw her again, on the stage, and almost failed to recognise her: blonde, with a tiny and perky nose, shaped slightly like a decreasing half-moon, softened her face covered in very palely coloured make-up. She looked like a doll and she only played small roles of personality-devoid dolls. She looked like all the other girls modelled after Brigitte Bardot, but without ever becoming B.B. When she lost her nose and her wonderful black hair she also lost her character, her personal and irreplaceable mask, the keeper of celestial rhythms, paid homage to since ancient times. In the *Song of Songs*, the king sings to the Shulamite: "*Thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus*". Annick de Souzenelle (1996: 365) explains in *The Body and Its Symbolism* that, in Hebrew, the tower – *Mighedal*, contains the *Meghed* root, meaning "*the best, the subtlest, the most precious*". The sentence "*which looketh toward Damascus*" (literally: "*which sees its face turned towards Damascus*") suggests wealth, superabundance. *Damascus*, in Hebrew *Damasec*, suggests radiance. It

contains the term *Dam*, meaning *blood*. If we replace the last two letters with the letter *Tav*, we obtain the three letters of the lexeme *Damot*, “resemblance”, and from it *the Man created in the image of Divinity*. The nose⁹⁵ proves to be a body part of overwhelming symbolism. Through the nostrils, the spiritual graces penetrate the body wrapped in an aroma of myrrh and frankincense. The breath exhaled by the Lord (YHVH) can make the earth tremble, can stir the sea and the heavens, but it also brings life to Adam’s body (*neshamah*, the living breath that penetrated his nostrils), Adam, who will later be cast out to earn his bread “*with the sweat of his face (nose)*”. In the Indian culture, the nose (*nâsâ*) is the gate to the inner world, through which *prana*⁹⁶ is absorbed. The left nostril is linked to the lunar symbolism and the right one to the solar symbolism. Left communicates with *Ida*, the lunar channel (*candra nadi*) that collects its energy from a point located at the basis of the spine, guides it on the left side through a sinusoidal motion, crosses the solar channel and reaches the point located at the root of the left nostril, *Ajna Chakra*, the third eye. In Ancient Egypt, it was believed that those who left this world could return by breathing in the perfume of a lotus flower, which in numerous ancient societies was also assigned a phallic symbolism⁹⁷.

⁹⁵ The Romanian language has various idioms that refer to this body segment: *a avea nas* or *a-și ridica nasul* (to venture, to dare), *a-și cunoaște lungul nasului* (to know what one is capable of), *a strâmba din nas* (to be dissatisfied), *a nu fi de nasul cuiva* (to be unworthy of something), *a lua de sub nas* (to profit from somebody’s inattention), *a-i ieși pe nas* (a particularly strenuous effort, but also disgust), *a nu vedea mai departe de lungul nasului* (to be small-minded) and so on and so forth. We encounter a similar semantic field in other European languages as well: *to have a good nose for something* (to have flair), *estar hasta las narizes* (to have no limits), *a vue de nez* (from afar), *montrer le bout du nez* (to let one’s secret intentions show).

⁹⁶ The vital energetic force sustaining life. *Pra* is a prefix that denotes constancy and *na* is motion. *Prana* is the constant force in motion, the continuous vibration that nothing can stop, is Brahman’s vehicle and the cosmic Conscience, generated by *Hiranya Garbha*, the matrix or the golden egg.

⁹⁷ Philippe Seringe, *Le symbolisme dans l’art, dans les religions et dans la vie de tous les jours*, Helios, 1988: the boys’ noses grow during adolescence, which is why they receive a phallic symbolism. Therefore, a Muslim will gladly cut the nasal pyramid of their rival, in order to punish adultery, a mutilation which, although it allows survival, leaves the face so hideous, that the punishment equals *death* in terms of significance. The same

Plastic surgery will gain experience due to worldwide VIPs in cinema and music, but will bloom especially on American soil, following World War II, targeting middle-class American women. Married at a young age, they will wake up around the age of 40 with a surplus of time and money, but also afraid of growing old. The most spectacular advertising campaign at that time was called “Farewell to Ugliness” (Haiken, 1990). The surgeons mentioned the war experience, saying that it had come the time for women, that they would use their talent and professionalism to serve women and give them the chance of a bright future.

Times publishes an amazing truth: in 1956, the American women spent 2.6 billion dollars on plastic surgeries, various diets and cosmetic products, which is twice the defence budget for a country like Italy. They were now offered the chance of eternal youth and unhopd for opportunities. The slogan started was “*to grow old is against nature!*” and it explained why women looked older than men who were the same age as them. The psychologists said that, indeed, women are more emotional than men and it is very difficult for them to control both their joy and their sadness, which leaves expression lines on their faces. A 40 or 50-year woman feeling young on the inside must not let herself be broken down by the appearance of her face, which could be easily corrected. It also claimed long-term professional success, under the pretext of restoring the harmony between the interior and the exterior through plastic surgery. Moreover, Adalbert G. Bettman, one of the fathers of plastic surgery, deemed the signs of old age (lines, double chin) deformities and presented them as such.

Not incidentally, this is the period in which the great beauty pageants appear, which will become the defender of imperiously necessary feminine beauty, the first criterion by which American women will judge one another, but also themselves. In conclusion, in spite of its material reality, the human body cannot be dissociated from all that inscribes it in culture and language.

author states that in Algeria a repair procedure based on pedicled skin flaps was developed.

The notion of corporality is a phenomenon that is both spoken and thought of, but especially manipulated, in a world whose organisation follows the rules of management. Taken into consideration as a cultural fact, the body will be declared an anthropological object of study. The contemporary valorisation of the ethics and ethos of “*self-mastery*” as a behavioural model makes our body, so tortured and condemned for centuries, overinvested on a narcissistic level. Through science, advertising and sports, the *body* phenomenon makes a rather loud entrance into the public space. The present day man progressively severs his ties with the community, is no longer dependent on a certain collective and not even on a cosmic trajectory. Thus, social segments are erased from his memory and with them the feeling of belonging to a historical group. Suddenly, the individual finds himself on his own, confronted with manifestations of his own body. The secularization of the body, a firm cultural mark of the West, confers modern medicine the authority to redefine the criteria of normality and pathology.

In 1993, two economists, Daniel Hamermesh and Jeff Biddle, proved that beauty is a capital functioning according to very precise economic laws, a product whose value could be calculated. Attractive people earned more money than the ordinary looking ones. If one was good-looking, one could earn 5% more per hour. The reverse also applied: ordinary looking people could easily lose up to 7% of their winnings for an hour’s labour with no explanation given.

“The man growing old”, writes David Le Breton, “as each of us will find out one day, is the child who once was: the same face, the same wonder at the world. From child to old man, there is an unsettling continuity, never refuted. For that very reason, while very old, we will die with the image of our childhood imprinted on our face, only that we will be the only ones to know it.” (1995: 52)

The face is thus a dual reality revealing the truths of the being, regardless of its outer form. Our face, as we show it to the world, is the proof that confirms our suspicions in *the other*: states of mind, material condition, social projects, weapons of seduction, piousness, social condition, personality, long ties with immemorial times, a path open to

new aspirations. Our care to present it as truthful to the individual ideal concept as possible has proven permanent from the very beginning of existence, currently reaching a magnitude that was hard to imagine in times past. Numerous concepts defining it have undergone changes, fadings, returns. Nevertheless, one thing has remained the same, even now, when mentalities seem to have burnt sufficient phases into sublimation: the manner in which contemporary society accepts the disfigured face, a visible handicap that exposes the person in question even more to the curiosity of the passers-by. Erving Goffman⁹⁸ recommends disfigured persons to show tactfulness, to create a threshold of balance before presenting themselves to future interlocutors: to slow down, to pretend to hesitate, to look around, thus granting the others time to hide their surprise and to act as if it were not a special situation. Thus, an ancestral veil of fears that smoulder in the individual's being every time they regard a face with serious deficiencies, hangs heavily over our senses and reason and gives free rein to nightmares and absolute fear, showing us how vulnerable and alone we truly are. This fear gives birth to the passion that pushes "everyone against everyone"⁹⁹, being the satisfaction of the pride and vanity of a few ambitious people. What Hegel called *desire for desire* or the search of recognition may be understood as nothing else than human passion which, in general, we call *pride* or *the feeling of one's dignity* (when we approve of it) and *vanity*, *haughtiness* or *amour propre* (when we disapprove of it)."

A mirror, with everything its semantic field entails, should measure our moods, our words and our actions, should place us in harmony with ourselves and then with the world. Our face, in His likeness, with Her smile, of the Immaculate, and our tooth, tried over several thousand years of history of which, only half written, represents what the sense of senses may reveal, leaving us at the mercy of a constant oscillation between *here* and *there*, between *the self* and *the other*.

⁹⁸ Goffman, Erving, *Stigmates. Les usages sociaux du handicap*, Paris, Minuit, 1975, p.140

⁹⁹ Fukuyama, Francis, *The End of History and the Last Man*, Paideia, Bucharest, 1997, p.138

The sea became blue due to its generosity of leaving the sky reflect itself in it. What colours will reveal themselves to the universe through the reflection of the Self mirrored in the world?

Bibliography

- Affergan**, F., *Exotisme et altérité*, PUF, Paris, 1987
- Agar**, M., "Le rôle de l'ethnographie dans les politiques de soins aux Etats-Unis", in *Agora*, Paris, 1994
- Albert**, J.P., "Ecritures domestiques" in vol. *Ecritures ordinaires*, Daniel Fabre (co.), P.O.L. Paris, 1993
- Aries**, Ph., *Images de l'homme devant la mort*, Seuil, Paris, 1983
- Bachelard**, G., *La poétique de l'espace*, P.U.F., Paris, 1957
- Badou**, G., *Le corps défendu: Quand la médecine dépasse les bornes, La science et le vivant*, Paris, 1994
- Baszanger**, I., "Les maladies chroniques et leur ordre négocié", in *Revue française de Sociologie*, 1986, no. 27
- Black**, J., *Istoria secretă a lumii*, Nemira, 2013
- Berdiaev**, N., *Le sens de la création*, Paris, 1955
- Bocșe**, M., "Rituri funerare pentru viață" in *Banatica*, nr. 12, 1993
- Bougle**, H., "Remarques sur le régime des castes", in *Année sociologique*, IV.
- Braden**, G., *The God Code: The Secret of our Past, the Promise of our Future*, 2005
- Bremmer**, Y., **Roodenburg**, H., ed., *O istorie culturală a gesturilor*, Polimark, București, 2000
- Camus**, A., *Le premier homme*, Gallimard, Paris, 1994
- Candrea**, I.A., *Folclorul medical român comparat. Privire generală. Medicina magică*, Polirom, 1999
- Cartoian**, N., *Alexandria în literatura românească*, 1990
- Cassier**, E., *Eseu despre om. O introducere în filozofia culturii umane*, Humanitas, 1994
- Cedru**, M., *Legendele Cosmosului*, Grai și suflet - Cultura Națională, București, 1994
- Certeau**, M. de, *L'invention du quotidien*, Gallimard, Paris, 1990
- Creangă**, I., "Povestea porcului" in *Povești*, Eminescu, București, 1980.
- Cristescu**, V., *Antropologia în perspectivă teologică*, Junimea, Iași, 1999

- Culianu, I.P.**, *Eros și magie în Renaștere*, Nemira, 1994
- Da Matta, R.**, *Carnavals, bandits et heros, les ambiguities de la société brésilienne*, Le Seuil, Paris, 1983
- Drouot, P.**, *Le chaman, le physicien et le mystique*, Editions de Rocher, Paris, 1998
- Duby, G.**, *Anul 1000*, Polirom, Iași, 1996
- Dulcu, E.**, *România, o antichitate arhaică*, Luana, București, 1998
- Dumas, F.**, *Gest și expresie în liturghia ortodoxă*, Institutul European, Iași, 2000
- Durand, G.**, *Figuri mitice și chipuri ale operei - de la mitocritică la mitanaliză*, Nemira, 1998.
- Durand, G.**, *Structurile antropologice ale imaginarului*, Univers Enciclopedic, București, 2000.
- Durkheim, E.**, *Diviziunea muncii sociale*, Albatros, București, 2001
- Durkheim, E.**, *Formele elementare ale vieții religioase*, Polirom, Iași, 1995
- Eco, U.**, *Istoria urâtului*, RAO, 2014
- Eliade, M.**, *Meșterul Manole*, Junimea, 1992
- Eliade, M.**, *Sacru și profanul*, Humanitas, București, 1992
- Eliade, M.**, *Încercarea labirintului*, Dacia, Cluj, 1990
- Eliade, M.**, *Nașteri mistice*, Humanitas, București, 1995
- Elias, N.**, *Procesul civilizației*, Polirom, 2002
- Erickson, Th., Nielson, F.**, *A history of Anthropology*, Pluto Press, 2001
- Evseev, I.**, *Jocurile tradiționale de copii*, Excelsior, 1994
- Evseev, I.**, *Dicționar de magie, demonologie și mitologie românească*, Amarcord, Timișoara, 1997.
- Fabre, D.**, et. al., *Écritures ordinaires*, POL, Paris, 1993
- Fabre, D.**, "Le rite et ses raisons", in *Terrain*, 8, Avril 1987
- Fontaine, J.**, *Cele trei corpuri și cele trei lumi*, Lotus, București, 1995
- Fontaine, J.**, *Medic de trei corpuri*, Lotus, București, 1993
- Foucault, M.**, *The archaeology of Knowledge*, Pantheon, N.Y., 1972
- Frazer, G.**, *Folclorul în Vechiul Testament*, Scripta, 1995
- Gallini, C.**, "Un ceremonial fotografico", in *Schema/8*, 1981
- Gimbutas, M.**, *Civilizație și cultură*, Meridiane, București, 1989
- Ginzburg, C.**, *Istorie nocturnă, o interpretare a sabatului*, Polirom, Iași, 1996.
- Ginzburg, C.**, "Présomptions sur le sabbat", in *Les Annales E.S.C.*, Paris, 1984

- Gorovei, A.**, “Șapte taine a Bisericii” in *Descântecetele românilor*, București, 1931
- Gourevitch, D.**, *Le IV.e Siècle grec*, Armand Colin, Paris, 1993
- Guidon, S.**, “Allez voir chez les Grecs ou la genèse du secret médical”, in *Agora*, 1996
- Hall, E.T.**, *La dimension cachée*, Gallimard, Paris, 1971
- Havilland, W.**, *Anthropology*, University of Vermont, 1991
- Hazard, P.**, *Gândirea europeană în secolul al XVIII-lea*, Univers, București, 1981
- Hammes, S., Raulin C.**, “Deep burns from Nd:YAG laser treatment for tattoo removal”. *Dtsch Arztebl Int* 2018; 115: 610a. DOI: 10.3238/arztebl.2018.0610a.
- Hidirouglou, P.**, *Apa divină și simbolistica ei*, Univers Enciclopedic, București, 1997
- Holder, G.**, “Manger le secret”, in *Agora*, 1996
- Huizinga, J.**, *Homo ludens. Încercare de determinare a elementului ludic al culturii*, Humanitas, București, 1977
- Hutchinson, H.**, “La passion de l’argent de Michael Stuart”, in *Terrain*, 1994
- Herskovits, M.J.**, *Man and His Works: The Science of Cultural Anthropology, first edition 1949*, Michigan University, google scan 2007
- Jauss, M.**, *L’anthropologie du geste*, Gallimard, Paris, 1974
- Jung, C.G.**, *Imaginea omului și imaginea lui Dumnezeu*, Teora, București, 1997
- Karnoouh, Cl.**, “Aider à naitre ou faire des ancêtres: un commentaire du roumain *Moașa*”, in *Civilisations, Revue Internationale des Sciences Humaines et des Civilisations Différentes*, Bruxelles, 1987
- Kertzer, D.**, *Ritual, Politics, and Power*, Yale University, 1988, first edition
- Kleinman, A.**, *Writing at the Margin. Discourse between Anthropology and Medecine*, University of California Press, 1995
- Levi Strauss, C.**, *La pensée sauvage*, Seuil, Paris, 1997
- Lévy, A.**, “Evaluation étimologique et sémantique du mot secret”, in *Nouvelle Revue de psychanalyse*, 14, 1976
- Lévy, V.**, *Entrétiens épistolaires*, Editions Mir Moscou, 1989
- Lewis, R.M.**, *Voyez le signe. Un livre sur le symbolisme ancien*, Editions Rosicruciennes, Paris, 1988

- Losonczy, A.** "De la femme de savoir a la sorciere: la bababoszorkany dans la pensee populaire hongroise", in *Civilisations, Ethnologie d'Europe et d'ailleurs*, revue de l'Institut de Sociologie de l'Universite Libre de Bruxelles, 1987
- Lowie, R.**, *Histoire de l'ethnologie classique des origines a la seconde guerre mondiale*, Payot, Paris, 1991
- Luca, G.M.**, *Vracul, preotul, medicul. Tipuri de inițiere*, Orizonturi universitare, Timișoara, 2004
- Luca, G.M.**, *Corpul uman în-semne și coduri. Mic compendiu de antropologie culturală*, Solness, 2011
- Luca, G.M.**, (coord.), *Water and Body Fluids. Anthology of Essays*, Eurobit, 2016
- Maheu, E.**, "Secret et transparence: un enjeu démocratique", in *Agora*, 1996
- Malinowski, B.**, *Les Argonautes du Pacifique occidental*, Gallimard, Paris, 1989
- Mauss, M.**, "Essai sur le don", in *Sociologie et anthropologie*, PUF, Paris, 1968
- Mihăilescu, V.**, *Antropologie. 5 introduceri*, Polirom, 2007
- Mihăilescu, V.**, *În căutarea corpului regăsit. O ego-analiză a spitalului*, Polirom, 2019
- Monaghan, J., Just, P.**, *Social & Cultural Anthropology – A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2000
- Morgan, L.H.**, *La société archaïque*, Anthropos, Paris, 1971
- Oișteanu, A.**, *Mithos și Logos. Studii și eseuri de antropologie culturală*, Nemira, București, 1998
- Pamfile, T.**, *Dușmani și prieteni*, Socec, București, 1966
- Pamfile, T.**, *Boli și leacuri la oameni, vite și păsări*, 1911
- Pamfile, T.**, *Sărbătorile la români*, Saeculum, București, 1997
- Parry, J., Bloch, F.**, *Introduction in money and the morality of exchange*, CUP, Cambridge, 1989
- Parry, J.**, "The Psychology of Human Communication", University of London Press, LTD, 1967, London
- Pauwels, L., Bergier, J.**, *Dimineața macigienilor*, Nemira, 2005
- Pavelescu, Gh.**, *Cercetări de etnomedicină în zona Sebeșului. Magia la români*, Minerva, 1998
- Perrin, M., Tripier, P.**, *Dictionnaire des sciences humaines*, Nathan, 1990,

- Popova, A.**, “Comment la sagesse vient aux femmes: réflexions ethnolinguistiques sur le terme baba en bulgare”, in *Civilisations, Revue Internationale des Sciences Humaines et des Civilisations Différentes*, Bruxelles, 1987
- Radkovski, de G.-H.**, *Antropologie generală*, Amarcord, Timișoara, 2000
- Rudhardt, J.**, *Image et structure dans le langage mythique*, Genève, (1952)/1992
- Segalen, V.**, “Essai sur l'exotisme”, in *Fata Morgana*, 1978
- Șeineanu, L.**, *Basmele românilor*, Univers, București, 1978
- Smirnoff, V.**, “Le squelette dans le placard”, in *Nouvelle Revue de psychanalyse*, nr. 14, 1976
- Souzenelle, A. de**, *Symbolismul Corpului uman*, Amarcord, Timișoara, 1996
- Van Gennep, A.**, *Riturile de trecere*, Polirom, Iași, 1996
- Vink, P. de**, “La guérison magique entre médecine et sorcellerie”, in *Civilisation*, avril, 1987
- Voronca, E.N.**, *Datinile și credințele poporului român*, București, 1903.
- Wenz-Dumas, Fr.**, “Des pulsions archaïques”, in *Liberation, dimanche*, 1997.
- Wunenburger, J.-J.**, *Sacral, Dacia*, Cluj-Napoca, 2000
- Zeebrock, M.**, “Histoire savante et pensée sauvage dans les nomenclatures botaniques en Europe”, in *Civilisation*, 1987

*** *Albina* 1946 – 1949

*** *Almanahul ziarelor Adevărul și Dimineața*, 1915

*** *Dictionnaire des symboles*, Laffont, Paris, 1982

*** *What is Medical Anthropology?* www.medanthro.net/about/about-medical-anthropology/online, 2020