

Discipleship and Tradition in the Romanian Philosophical Culture

Abstract: As we know, that discipleship, with the presence of those people by which it is concretely achieved and with its retake every new generation, may account for the alive and proper flow of a tradition. In this respect, I will consider such situations that may be deemed as relevant for the progress of philosophy in our cultural milieu. I will refer, for instance, to Dimitrie Cantemir and his relationship to scholars of his time, to the junimist period and the disciples of Maiorescu (in particular Rădulescu-Motru and Petrovici), to the generation of Eliade and Noica and their search for new existential reference points. One may ascertain, from Cantemir to the present, at least two types of discipleship, a technical one, related to a school or academy, and a life-concerning one, thus with ethic, existential orientation. At the same time, one may distinguish three situations concerning the relationship between mentor and disciple: first, the personal meeting of a mentor in the environment of one's own language or culture; then the orientation towards the mentor beyond, from an already established culture; lastly, the need to take a certain philosophical problem on one's own. The tension between some local cultural exigencies and the ones asserted in the Western milieu is still present today. They actually remake what might be called the "situation-in-the-interval" of the philosophical consciousness, for instance between the modern discourse and the patristic teaching ("between Kant and Dionysius the Areopagite", as Blaga says), between the established language of philosophy in an epoch and the mother tongue, and between the alert course of history and the traditional one. This fact in and of itself does not advertise any special glory, or conversely, any form of historical failure. The difficulties experienced in this respect – as real and obvious as they may be – may not justify a radical breed of skepticism with respect to the philosophical culture of this region.

Keywords: philosophical (academic and existential) discipleship, distinct forms of continuity, philosophical tradition, situation-in-the-interval of the philosophical consciousness.

1. I would commence by saying that discipleship, with the presence of those people by which it is concretely achieved and with its retake every new generation, may account for the alive and proper flow of a tradition. It may unveil its ability to be present in living minds, to create deep and durable impact. It is precisely for this reason that I will discuss some situations that I

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deem symptomatic for the evolution of the philosophy in our cultural environment.

Let me evoke a well-known fact, namely that in its long European history, philosophy means both theoretical training, logical or conceptual analysis, and the cultivation of values and attitudes, and an existential choice. As a matter of fact, it has been remarked that “philosophical discourse originates / if we consider the Greek culture/ in a life decision and an existential choice, not the other way around” (Pierre Hadot)¹. The ethical – after all existential – orientation of the philosophical approach is not lost afterwards, in the modern world or even nowadays, even though it becomes secondary or silent, more and more difficult to grasp. Even when it does not explicitly appeal to values and beliefs, when it follows a neutral analyzing methodology, philosophy still shows such intentionality, such as the wish to use an elevated way of understanding and relating to the other person. Real situations are never pure; in the European philosophy, I am not aware of any theoretical discourse devoid of any life choice or life choice devoid of any theoretical discourse. What matters is always the person’s belief about some life facts, as well as a certain discipline of thinking.

These implications of the philosophical approach are also observable with respect to the relationship between master and disciple. For instance, the icon of the master has at least two well-defined hypostases. The first is the master who knows how to orient their disciple towards study and research, and a discipline of thought, bringing to their attention a method of reflection and a relevant set of problems. This is the technical dimension of philosophy, where the discipleship might be called scholastic, educational, eventually academic. The other hypostasis is when the master attracts their disciples towards a peculiar way of life, while personally undertaking certain values or beliefs. The master unveils, for example, a form of self-care and the possibility of having profound changes in their lives². We may call this the ethos discipleship (in the broad acceptance of the word, related to the human ethos); possibly existential, save for its hubristic touch. In both cases, I would keep onto the account of the authentic mentor at least the following: the constant availability for dialogue, pedagogical skill – or even charm – and a certain vision, the ability to understand facts – both in human and in spiritual matters – and the underlying trends of their age.

Do we really meet the icon of the scholastic master in the Romanian philosophical culture? Of course, if we think for instance of Titu Maiorescu, the professor of philosophy whose lectures used to exert “high intellectual attraction” (Petrovici 1940, 33). The living icon of the professor – a real “priest who officiates” from the chair and charms the auditorium, nourishing “the sense of the importance of matters and the passion for great questions” – is described by his student with literary talent (Petrovici 1940, 53-66). He was able to mentor a whole bunch of young intellectuals

throughout their years of philosophical initiation: Constantin Rădulescu-Motru, Constantin Antoniadă, Constantin Dimitrescu-Iași, Ion Petrovici, Mircea Djuvara, and Mircea Florian. He encouraged critical thinking, with excellent applications to the cultural environment. Thus we may deem Rădulescu-Motru or Petrovici as disciples of Maiorescu and also, in their turn, good mentors for young people having a liking for philosophy. We may also think of other mentors in the academic sense. Let us remember that Ion D. Sârbu used to consider himself as a disciple of Lucian Blaga. So did Vasile Băncilă, as he wrote in a letter addressed to Blaga. Even though an exceptional philosopher in his writing, Blaga was rather rarely available for dialogue (as recounted by Ovidiu Drimba, his former assistant); thus, if discipleship was achieved in his proximity, it was based on other grounds than the above. In this respect, in the Iași academic environment there asserted Ion Petrovici and Nicolae Bagdasar, and later Ernest Stere, Petre Botezatu and Alexandru Zub. In a text called *Scurt portret al lui Dinu Noica (Brief Dinu Noica's Portrait)*, Emil Cioran implicates that the philosopher, like other cultivated spirits, wanted at any price to have disciples: "I have always been intrigued at subtle, cultivated spirits who will at all costs make disciples, sequester themselves in solitude, and wait for their pilgrimage [...]. What astonished me in Noica was his need to be surrounded by admirers that he helped and confused."³ However, I think that Noica not just wanted to be, but really was a good mentor with respect to initiating young people in philosophy.

Certainly, the terms "mentor" and "disciple" have a distinctive meaning in the Romanian academic environment. In Maiorescu's time, for instance, philosophical research was most often elementary, preparatory, aiming rather at the a good comprehension of western modern philosophy than the special and exigent analysis of ideas and concepts. In that period, there were few who made actual endeavors in philosophical research or creation, for example Vasile Conta and A. D. Xenopol. When Ion Petrovici talks about his teacher, Maiorescu, he remembers the latter's question to him immediately after having seen his recently published book *Teoria noțiunilor (The Theory of Notions)*: "All is well, but just one thing: isn't such a book premature in our culture? Are you convinced we have reached in the evolution of our culture this kind of works?" And after a pause, he goes on: "See the case of Rădulescu-Motru; he is very productive and has good things. But it seems to me, because of what I have just told you, that his writings flow sideways." (Petrovici 1940, 18-19) Without answering to him, Petrovici understood that, especially from his chair, he was supposed to teach at length "philosophical systems" that were already established in the West. Between Maiorescu's cultural pattern (who he admires and he considers efficient within the Romanian milieu) and Conta's pattern (described as speculative and detached from local history, delivered to his "philosophical creative demon"), he prefers the former. Of course, this

pattern is justified for that time, even though, looking from the temporal distance, it seems to have forgotten the essential correlation between research and education (*Forschung und Lehre*) instituted by the Humboldtian model of higher education.

This kind of discipleship seems to have been present, in a somewhat symptomatic form for the Romanian culture, since Dimitrie Cantemir. He owes his first knowledge in logics, ethics and metaphysics especially to his youth teacher, Jeremia Cacavela. In the letter that he sends him in the spring of 1700, together with the manuscript of his writing *Sacro-sanctae scientiae indepingibilis imago* (*Unportrayable Icon of the Sacred Science*), Cantemir considers Jeremia Cacavela *praeceptor* and *institutor*; he calls him several times *pater reverende* (“venerable parent”) and submits his work to the latter’s verdict. “I wanted to unveil to you the thought of my heart, my venerated parent, and this is why I present to you this first volume of the sacred science; I agree that you read it and read it again, I defer to your judgment, I accept that you tell me your opinion, I promise that I will cogitate just like you; leave aside what I have left aside, and should I make any mistake, forgive me and send it back to me corrected, as swift as possible. Farewell.” (Cantemir 2017, VIII) Thus we might believe that this relationship is similar to the one between a mentor and their prentice. But in Constantinople, Cantemir would come to discover that the real philosopher was another one. After hearing a series of lectures, especially on the philosophy of Jan Batista van Helmont, he is completely drawn towards his views. From his writings Cantemir puts together an impressive volume of excerpts, and he adds an encomium (*Praise the teacher and the virtue of his teaching*), a foreword to the reader, and a glossary. Thus the master in philosophical matters has now become a person outside his former language and culture. It was the Helmont’s view that that prompts the philosophical reflection in his most ample and ambitious early writing, *Unportrayable Icon of the Sacred Science*. The personally known master of the first phase makes room for another by whom philosophy itself seems to speak. However, later on Cantemir walks out of Van Helmont too; in his *Hieroglyphic History*, for instance, he does not mention his name anymore; nor does he in his writing *A Natural Research on Monarchies* (1714) or in *Unclear Passages in the Catechism published in Slavonic Language by an Anonymous Author* (1721). Thus simplifying things a bit, one may distinguish in Cantemir three cases with respect to the mentor-disciple relationship: first, the personal meeting of a mentor in the environment of his own language or culture (one should keep in mind that Jeremia Cacavela translated *The Divan* from Romanian into Greek, and *The Sacred Doctrine, that is of the Holy and Godly Liturgy* from Greek into Romanian); then, he orientates towards the mentor beyond his own culture, from the already established cultural environment; eventually, Cantemir would take up some philosophical matters and interpretations on

his own. In each of these phases one may see his wish to situate himself, as a philosopher, within the larger framework of the Christian vision.

These three distinct cases may be found – with some variations – in many Romanian philosophers between Cantemir and the present time. Particular relevance has the third case shown above, namely the reconsideration of philosophical matters and interpretations on one's own account. In the case of Cantemir, it preserves the tension between the secular and the Christian cultures⁴. In other cases, it is the obvious tension between the local culture – with its linguistic or conceptual possibilities – and the already established Western philosophy. This will nourish what may be called the “positioning in the interval” of the philosophical mind, which has been constantly reinventing itself in this environment.

2. However, as we have seen, there is also another kind of mentor in philosophy. It is the one that orients the disciple's attention towards his own way of life, more precisely towards his inner life and his relationship to the other, undertaken as such at the level of the sensibility and a certain belief system. In this case, what matters the most is the availability for a confession-like dialog. The capacity of mentor is checked here in an experience that concerns the self-orientation of the mentored, his decisive choices. In some traditions (such as the neo-platonic, but especially the Christian and the patristic), the form of this mentor resembles the one of a spiritual parent. As has been said, it concerns the experience as gathered in the power of the Spirit, as well as the charisma⁵. The relevance of philosophy is checked here in the living model of the guide and the living ways of the guided.

Is this kind of mentor observable in the Romanian philosophical tradition? It is not easy to identify, even though there are cases that let us get a glimpse of it. I think the same Dimitrie Cantemir envisions it, in an allegorical form, in his *Unportrayable Icon of the Sacred Science* (1700). For the real confessor is there neither Ieremia Cacavela nor Van Helmont. As we learn from the first pages of this work, the young prentice meets an honest and faithful friend, and shares with him inner crisis. The friend listens and clarifies the positive sense of his doubts, talks to him about the need for discernment and about the fact that he should think about the meaning of truth above all by means of his faith. Thus guided, the young man is unexpectedly shown the face of an old wise man who addresses him with infinite kindness and calls him “son”. He tries to restore his self-confidence: “Why is it, my son, that this posture has made you tremble so much? Have faith, hope, and believe!” (Cantemir 2017, 17) His words evoke the Christian virtues without which the road of true knowledge is not accessible. He brings forth, in his own words, the “sacred science of the eternal truth”, while the mirror in his chest is “the Holy Scripture and the designations of time.” (Cantemir 2017, 162) It has been noticed in respect to this new condition of the young prentice that it

bears two dimensions. On the one hand, the disciple in search of the truth, thus in relationship to his mentor, *id est* his spiritual parent “who initiates him into knowledge in a relation canonical for the Eastern Christian practice”; on the other hand, the human dimension which, “in the simplicity of his wish for knowledge, encapsulates the efforts that humankind never stopped making in order to reach this goal.” (Alexandrescu 2016, 80) Thus we may recognize in this place of Cantemir’s work the scenario of a possible spiritual initiation, which is understandable for a writing whose explicit intent is both philosophical and theological.

However, later in the local philosophical culture, one can hardly find mentions of the existence of a spiritual, or with a broader expression, existential master. It has either become very discreet, sometimes even up to anonymous, or retreated into such environment as the monastic. Thus we know, for instance, that Samuil Micu takes the vow early in life, and after giving philosophy lectures (in Blaj and Vienna), he returns to the “Sfânta Treime” Monastery in Blaj (1783-1806). His experience is not unique in our culture; the orientation towards the life of a monk – or most often, a similar one – is easy to recognize here up to the latest century.

Let us recall, however, that after the first Great War, it comes back to the public attention the possibility of having a spiritual guide. One of the people who may have played such a role was Vasile Pârvan, as writes Eliade in his postscript to the book *Roza vânturilor* (*The Rose of the Winds*) (1942). Pârvan understood early on the unusual seriousness of the situations that we were going through, during the first great conflagration and in the after math (as can be seen in his lecture *Datoria vieții noastre* /*The Duty of Our Lives*/, which opens his lectures on ancient history and arts history in Cluj, 1919). However, the historian and philosopher, in spite of his austere visionary character and his trembling voice that used to talk about the dramatic destiny of peoples, remained a solitary spirit, like a recluse who, from time to time, climbs down into the world. The other professors of that period did not manage to persuade the young generation with respect to the possibility of a radical transformation concerning the very ethos. This is well put in a nutshell by Ioan Petru Culianu. “In search of a master, Eliade approached, in turn, the philosopher C. Rădulescu-Motru, too old and ill to respond to the young man’s preoccupations, and the impassible P. P. Negulescu, too cold to arouse his enthusiasm. The young associate-professor Mircea Florian delights him, however without giving him an utterly fresh impression.” (Culianu 1995, 205) A certain acknowledgement enjoyed in that period Ion Petrovici and Lucian Blaga; yet the latter used to be often abroad with various diplomatic and cultural missions. With respect to Nichifor Crainic, he seems to not have had the sense of major changes and enough open-mindedness towards other cultural environments. Consequently, some of the young people feel drawn towards Nae Ionescu. “Chronologically, Nae Ionescu appears as an ‘inheritor’

of Vasile Pârvan. As of 1926 up to now, he has in front of him a mass of students who had grown under Pârvan's wizardry and who could not find now any other live support, any spiritual master", says Eliade in the same postscript.

It is important that, at that time, some young intellectuals were ardently looking for a spiritual guide in the very context of the philosophical endeavor. They feel dissatisfied with the certitudes of science and with those pedagogical methods as were limited to the formation of good scholars. "A generation of students, says Eliade, is never drawn towards the most erudite professor or the most efficient pedagogue. Students never look just for good and precise knowledge at the University. Above all, they look for a living and thinking method; a spiritual master, that is a man sincere enough not to falter in pointing out the futility of human sciences, and alive enough not to perish himself, crushed by the consciousness of such futility." It was not by chance, adds Eliade, that the professors who attracted generations of students after the 1900s, such as Nicolae Iorga or Vasile Pârvan, "avowed the tragic consciousness of life and nevertheless found a heroic sense of this life, which must be accepted and nurtured." (Eliade 1990, 427-428) No doubt, it is hard to say now which of the young people of that time have actually found such guide and precisely who, for how long and especially with which moral or political consequences. But after the second Great War, under the pressure of ideologies that completely overthrew old the former values, the image of the spiritual guide fades away for the most part from the public arena⁶. What we know is that the framework of the master-disciple relationship, in its existential sense, shrinks a lot, becomes discreet, or sometimes almost hidden, protected as much as possible under a directly personal form.

3. As a general rule, our attention is especially drawn towards the possible presence of epochal characters: absolutely remarkable masters, philosophers who are emblematic and broadly acknowledged in the period, or guides that appear as providential. In this case, one easily comes to negative conclusions about the fate of the Romanian philosophy and the description of desolate findings, at least for some historic periods. Yet one should not ignore the existence of common and modest, even humble, anonymous forms under which the philosophical consciousness may be nourished. For example, the lectures and discussions that may have taken place, even in an elementary form, especially in the 17th and 18th centuries, thanks to teachers that later fell into oblivion. For instance, we hardly remember old-time professors such as Nectarie Sinaitul, Spandonis Vizantios, Teodor of Trapezunt, Nicolae Kerameus and others, present at the Lordship Academies in Iași and Bucharest, in the 17th and 18th centuries, where they used to teach the works of Aristotle (that *universitas scientiarum*, as is called by Noica), according to such late interpreters as Teofil Coridaleu (1540-1646)⁷. Then, towards the end of

the 18th century, the lectures of Coridaleu leave room for the ones made after the “popular philosophy” of Christian Wolff, by his followers, Christian Baumeister and Alexander Baumgarten. This *translatio studii* towards the Western philosophy and the new sciences, takes place by the effort of such professors as Nikifor Theotokis (professor in Iași by 1765), Iosip Moisiodax (which is open for the writings of Descartes, Gassendi, Locke, Leibniz, and Fénelon), Nicolae Cercel (who translates from Wolff), Lambru Fotiade, Veniamin of Lesbos or Daniel Philippide (with translations from Condillac and J. J. Lalande). Thus they reconstitute, however flawed such reconstitutions may be, such philosophical traditions as the non-Aristotelian and the Wolffian, partly illuminist. Before them one may acknowledge, for instance, the stoic and the byzantine traditions, the latter with a profound patristic origin. It is not without great difficulty that we remember the existence of small philosophical communities, with the possibility of debates and publications, as happened around the 1800s (in 1795, Samuil Micu together with Ion Piuaru-Molnar found *Societatea filosofoască a neamului românesc în Mare principatul Ardealului /The Philosophical Society of the Romanian People in the Great Principedom of Ardeal/*, which aims at publishing a periodical, *Vestiri filosofoști și moralicești /Philosophical and Moral News/*). What I mean to say is that it would not have been possible to maintain the basic philosophical data (for instance, distinct language, specific thinking, philosophical sensibility) in the absence of the effort of teachers, researchers, and translators that we sometimes deem as modest, or who later became anonymous. Or in the absence of the people that, without leaving an impressive philosophical work, dedicated most of their lives to the founding and the animation of institutions: schools of philosophy, philosophical reviews and societies, small communities for discussions and dialog, forms of editing and translation. Without their effort – the people who later become anonymous – no living tradition is possible. Unfortunately, we hardly give any credit to this diffuse, continuous, and anonymous effort, so it is no wonder that its possibility is nowadays still difficult to maintain.

Thus if we talk about the building of traditions, and modalities of creating continuity, we shouldn't forget the great effort of unknown teachers and small communities, however anonymous. We should also not forget the simultaneous opening of philosophy from this area towards both the patristic tradition and the Western culture, by studies, translations, and publications. The former is related especially to the personal relationship between a mentor and his disciple, while the latter to the ever reiterated critical reflection about one's own cultural settings.

More obvious in its scholastic form, the philosophical discipleship is almost inevitably built by relating to an outside mentor, especially in the West. We have seen that Dimitrie Cantemir offers a first example, if we consider his

relating to Van Helmont. Something similar may be seen later, in the case of Samuil Micu, where decisive is his relating to the writings of Christian Wolff (by his followers, Christian Baumeister and Alexander Baumgarten). The same may be said about others, Gheorghe Lazăr (1779-1823, initially a Wolffian, rendering a *Curs de filosofie. Logica și Metafizică /Lecture on Philosophy. Logics and Metaphysics/*, after Kant, into Romanian), Eufrosin Poteca (*Elemente de filosofie, logică și etică /Elements of Philosophy, Logics, and Ethics/*, 1829, of Wolffian and Kantian inspiration, also drawn towards Victor Cousin), Eftimie Murgu (professor in Iași, with Kantian philosophical lectures), Ion Heliade-Rădulescu (under the influence of 18th century French and Hegelian thought), August Treboniu Laurian (professor at “Sf. Sava”, drawn towards the Kantian philosophy), George Barițiu, Simion Bărnuțiu (who elaborated his lectures after the writings of W. T. Krug, a popularizer of Kant), Timotei Cipariu, Ion Zalomit, and Al. Hasdeu. In the posterity of Maiorescu, that is after the return from abroad of some of his former students, Kant’s personality would dominate the Romanian philosophical milieu. A significant fact took place in 1889, as if it were to continue a message hidden in the pages of *Sărmanul Dionis (The Solitary Dionis)*: Constantin Rădulescu-Motru passes his philosophy degree with the thesis *Realitatea empirică și condițiunile cunoaștinței /Empirical Reality and the Conditions of Consciousness/*, in which he discusses and admits without reserves the Kantian apriorism. After abiding a while in the proximity of Wilhelm Wundt, he would defend his doctorate in philosophy, at Leipzig, with a dissertation titled *Cu privire la geneza teoriei lui Kant asupra cauzalității în natură /On the Genesis of Kant’s Theory on Causality in Nature/* (1893). Later on, say in his *Personalismul energetic /Energetic Personalism/* (1927), he would somewhat distance himself from the Kantian doctrine and try to deepen some philosophical matters on his own. A similar philosophical journey may be found in other remarkable scholars. One should not forget a detail from *Précis de décomposition*, namely that when Cioran, in the fragment *Adieu à la philosophie*, names the reasons why he considers philosophy of no use, immediately invokes Kant: “I have turned away from philosophy when I realized it were impossible to discover in Kant any human flaw, any real trace of sadness; in Kant and in all the other philosophers.” Thus important precursors in philosophy are almost always outside one’s own culture.

This latest fact may explain, in part, some weird discontinuities – at least at first sight – concerning the philosophical tradition. However one should not ignore, in this respect, other possible causes, such as, as I have mentioned above, the weakness of institutions (schools, reviews, scientific or research societies). Eventually the serious effects, in this cultural milieu, of the censorship of political dictatorships, at least for the 6th and 7th decades of the 20th century (Afloroaei 2003, 20-23). One should also not ignore the

considerable difficulties generated by what Rădulescu-Motru called “politicianism” (politicking), a phenomenon that here, in Eastern Europe, has been huge and durable, up to this day.

Yet could we recognize any form of continuity in the Romanian philosophical culture? Of course, if we consider in some cases, for instance, the simultaneous opening towards both the Eastern (especially patristic) tradition and the Western philosophy. Or, in other cases, the critical reflection about one’s own cultural setting, such as the illuminist and, later, the junimist. Or the constant comeback, after the 1800s, to the Kantian tradition and the Western authors who directly took it over. The tension between some local cultural exigencies and the ones asserted in the Western milieu is still present today. They actually remake the situation-in-the-interval of the philosophical consciousness, for instance between the modern discourse and the patristic teaching, between the established language of philosophy in an epoch and the mother tongue, and between the alert course of history and the traditional one. The condition of the interval may also be found in thinkers who seems to be completely separated from the local philosophical culture. For example, in the case of Vasile Conta, if we consider his philosophical language – both some concepts such as “fact”, “chance”, “fatality”, “fatalism”, “law”, or “matter”, as some of the representations by which their meaning becomes active⁸. This may even be ascertained in Constantin Noica: even though he used to often talk about a “God of culture” and a disciplined, almost military scholarly initiation, he was able to cultivate the personal relationship with the other, even a certain eremitism, a form of retreat, so that the intellectual discipline that he was trying to impose was not lacking the warm look of the “spiritual parent” from the Eastern tradition⁹. What Blaga says in a letter to Vasile Băncilă, namely that he situates himself, as a philosopher, between Kant and Dionysius the Areopagite, applies to a certain extent for many others who made possible here a form of discipleship in philosophy. This fact in and of itself does not advertise any special glory, or conversely, any form of historical failure. Yet it leads to a distinct way of configuring what we may call a philosophical tradition. The difficulties experienced in this respect – as real and obvious as they may be – may not justify a radical breed of skepticism with respect to the philosophical culture of this region. In fact, what matters is not a specific form of historical hubris or the imposition of a philosophy over another, but its actual and durable achievements in the living environments of communities.

(Translated by Adrian Oroşanu)

Notes

¹ I remember that Ernest Stere, while giving lectures in the history of philosophy at the University in Iași, used to say, whenever given the opportunity, that there is always ethical intentionality to the philosophy, as it concerns the very human ethos, the person's attitudes and decisions within the community.

² Some considerations about these forms of discipleship I have included in *Cum este posibilă filosofia în estul Europei (The Possibility of Philosophy in Eastern Europe)*, Editura Polirom, Iași, 1997, sections "Disciples, magisters, and heretics" and "The Condition of Discipleship in Philosophy".

³ Cf. Nicolae Manolescu, "Un text inedit" ("An inedited text"), in *România Literară*, 19, 2013, where he also offers the translation of the pages by Emil Cioran.

⁴ Cf. Lucian Blaga, "Dimitrie Cantemir". In: *Texte (Eseuri, Conferințe, Articole) / Texts (Essays, Conferences, Articles)*. Bucharest: Minerva, 1972. This tension is easy to spot in Cantemir, especially when discussing certain philosophical matters like time, world order, and life (cf. Afloroaei 2017, pp. LXIV-LXXXVI).

⁵ The mentor is here rather mystagogical and exemplary ("Be an example to them, not a lawmaker!" says avva Pimen), so that the disciple "advances, day by day, in the presence of his master, to freely reach a 'self' infinitely more vast and more luminous than the narrow 'ego' of his former identity" (Scrima 2000, 171-174).

⁶ Yet such expectation would be later met, at least in part, by a handful of people already asserted in the inter-war culture, such as Sandu Tudor, Mircea Vulcănescu, Sergiu Al-George, Constantin Noica (especially during his detention years), Ion Petrovici, Anton Dumitriu, and Vasile Lovinescu. Of course, other names may be recalled now by the voice of disciples or prentices.

⁷ Cf. in this respect Constantin Noica, *Aristotelismul în principatele române în sec. XVII-XVIII (The Aristotelian Tradition in the Romanian Principalities in the 17th and 18th Centuries)*, in "Studii Clasice", IX, Bucharest, 1967.

⁸ Cf. Afloroaei 1997, 44-57. I have tried to show the relation of this condition of "situation-in-the-interval" with some very easily observable data of the history of philosophical thought in this area: the domination of exegeses and commentaries (pp. 35-43, 69-72), the relaxed form of the philosophical language and the method (pp. 46-49, 110-118, 255-259), the recurrent presence of the polihistorian (pp. 58-60) and the availability of philosophers for alternative views (pp. 111-113, 127-131).

⁹ "It may well be that Noica has made an alloy between the rigorist 'intellectual dressage' and the Eastern warmth of the 'spiritual parent' (a notion mentioned as such in the *Jurnalul de la Păltiniș / Journal of Păltiniș*)" (Ciachir 1994, 39)

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