

Summary

In the paper *Dorian Gray Phenomenon. The Creation as a confession* I have tried an approach regarding the definition of art's signification through touching a sensitive and intimate reality of the creator, through its *confesiv* feature. Because arts manifests itself beyond an optical cover of perception, it approaches a more truthful and a more transparent reality, more comfortable with the laws of consciousness. Having this idea as a support, it was possible making an analogy between perception and consciousness, in the sense that the laws and forms of manifestations of consciousness are those that build the perception of the external world. The perception of the external world could be raised to the threshold of consciousness, but with the condition of situating the artist in a complete *freedom*. The consciousness doesn't fulfill in intuitions, it needs the *concept*, an active action of the reason, whose pathway moves from present to past and future.

As Andrei Tarkovsky says, in *Sculpting in time. Reflections on the cinema*, the condition of *the freedom* of the artist, against the background of which the process of *knowledge* can start, implies a complete and conscious involvement of this one on the way of his vocation.

The source of inspiration in elaborating the study of the theme of art as a confession was Oscar Wilde's novel, *The portrait of Dorian Gray*. This novel was entirely built on the skeleton of the *creator-confesiv* act made by the author. The character of this novel, Dorian Gray, is Oscar Wilde's *reflected portrait*, and this portrait reflected in its turn another type of portrait, the most truthful and the most interior, specific to the creator himself. The reflection of this *portrait* was concretized in a *diary*: "I write there a diary of my life and there is no day left in which I haven't committed my confessions¹ to paper", Dorian Gray said regarding his portrait painted by Basil Hallward that became a *self-portrait – the confesiv image* of what he had become in the present.

This reflection assumes that even in art there are other realities, an interior and complex portrait of it being thus created. The reality of activation of the consciousness's plan in art would suppose the re-introduction of a lost notion, that of *the revealing sacrum*. The aspect of the confesiv act in art is related to this dimension of the sacrum this way expressed. Dorian Gray phenomenon is adjusted to the initiatic journey that the artist, the creator has to assume. In this respect, the development of this paper assumed the election of four artists, through which our study about the theme of creation as a confession was argued. Through these artists we tried to comprise a portrait-metaphor of art's manifestation. The profoundness, the value and the contemporaneousness of the

¹ Oscar Wilde, *The Portrait of Dorian Gray*, The Publishing House for Literature, Bucharest, 1967, p 230.

art of every one determined us to choose them as cardinal points in the development of the discourse of art in this paper . The four creators are: the poet Nichita Stănescu, the painter Vincent van Gogh, the composer Arvo Pärt and the director Andrei Tarkovsky. The discourse that underlines the intersections between *the way of their personal lives* and *the way of their artistic lives* was structured in the second chapter of the paper , entitled *The four signs*. We considered it necessary to insert an introduction in the first chapter (*The Rebirth*) for a deep study of the sense and the definition of art in the life of creator, in order to summarize the history of the notion of art, of its characteristic features, of the notions of beautiful, creativity and creation, assimilating more profound levels specific for the dimension of creation *ex nihilo*.

We presented the biographies of each one so that we might situate ourselves in a more *familiar* framework regarding the creation of the four artists, their manner of creating, and, not at least, regarding themselves as persons. The insistence with which certain moments have been developed from their lives and creation was not casual, because these moments revealed us the artist's motivation, anxiety and sacrifice in a better way .It is not in vain that there was and there is so much tumult in debating the notions of the theory of art and aesthetics. The enormous question of the human's existence lies at the root of all. The life and conviction of each of these artists made them assume their artistic vocation in its entirety and in the deepest sense that this one has.

The subchapter of this second chapter assumed an introspection into the confessional dimension of the person- creator who, taking into account our study, guided to a significant theme in the context of creation: the theme of the idea of responsibility in creation.

Whoever understands the responsibility that one has towards everything that one is and does, one is not only a human being who possesses knowledge, but a human being who has knowledge. Nichita Stănescu said: "I am not important in so far as the greater destiny from which I am part has importance. I am happy only to the extent that the greater destiny from which I am part is happy. Because of this I have to do everything that can be done of what can be done and can't be done."²

Everything is the movement of consciousness. Our art cannot be true if we live falsely. The dynamics of our consciousness differentiates us from monkeys. The source of the human specific is here. "The play between the proper names and the common names, between "this" and "any" begins here. And just because "this and only this" is a new notion, it is itself the one that attracts firstly the attention of the child just initiated in the mechanisms of knowledge. There is no "I" without "others"³. *I and all the others, without me* have the possibility to unite *in a unitary and contradictory whole* at the same time only in the consciousness of the human being. Generally, art

² Nichita Stănescu, *Amintiri din prezent*, Sport – Turism Publishing House, 1985, p.128.

³ I. M. Lotman, *Cultură și explozie*, Paralela 45 Publishing House, Pitești, București, 2004, p. 55.

creates a new type of reality, that is different from the *habitual* reality through a bigger substantial degree of freedom. The creator concentrates his forces on those fields of life in which he can examine the consequences of the increase of liberty. “Art is a means of knowledge and, first of all, a means of knowledge of the human being. This thing is said so frequently, than it was transformed into a platitude. But nevertheless, what might we understand by the expression “to know the man”? The artistic subjects that we can characterize in this way have a common feature: they put the man in the situation of maximum liberty and examine the behavior that this one chooses.”⁴ Man becomes man when he becomes aware that he is a man. The true nature of man cannot reveal in the habitual reality. The art has the power to situate the man in the space of liberty, thus revealing his possibilities.

In order that the gesture of creation be a *total* gesture, the expression of celebrality needs to receive the ineffable warmth of the feelings, to arrive at harmony and equilibrium through the cooperation of the intelligence with the sensibility. Thus, it can be remarked that the modern man lost the expression of a certain integrality of the being, because of the discontinuation that was created between mind and senses, between intelligence and sensibility, these becoming many times even antinomic.

The importance of following an archetypal model reveals the unlocking of the problem of the deadlock, of the non- sense, of the disorder in which man is, because the dramas of modern world result from the profound lack of balance of the individual or collective psyche, provoked to a large extent by the growing exhaustion of the true imagination- because “to have imagination”, means “to imitate”, “to reproduce”, so, etymologically, the word imagination is united with “*imago*” (Lat.) that means “representation, imitation” and with “*imitor*” (Lat.), “to imitate, to reproduce”. The artist begins to feel the imperious need of a certain type of *listening* so that the true imagination should start to be a real fact in the creative act. The perception of *the senses* crosses the evidence of the historical time to another archetypal dimension, specific to the eternal time. The sense of the creative act should exercise in an “order”, in *an order of ideas*. In order to get an exercise of order, it is implicitly necessary a personal introspection. The regaining of the sense, of the motivation needs a certain inner disposition that may give birth to the wish of learning, listening, imitation of some positive archetypal models, models that should be similar to mountain springs with good and fresh water that may quench the thirst and the heat of searching – in order that a voice should be listened to, it must be heard first. It is needed quietness and instauration of peace so that one can hear.

⁴ *Idem*, p.200.

The third chapter of the paper was dedicated to the outlining of the artist's way, with analogies between the symbols used in the creations of the four artists and the world of symbol interpretations, with references to authors as: Claire Gibson (*Signs and symbols*), Solas Boncompagni (*The world of symbols: Numbers, letters and geometric figures*), Ivan Evseev (*Dictionary of symbols and cultural archetypes*), Gaston Bachelard (*The psychoanalysis of fire; Water and dreams; The fame of a candle*), Luc Benoist (*Signs, symbols and myths*). This chapter introduced into discussion a new theme, recently formulated and specific to the dynamics of transdisciplinarity. It is about *the fundamental experience*. In the book *The roots of liberty*, Basarab Nicolescu presents this theme like this: “*The irrevocable decision* has already been present in me *genetically*, from my birth. The decision was taken, to say so, in spite of myself, from the very moment in which I could turn my sight towards myself, around the age of four, because it has been given to me. Maybe it is strange, but it is like this.”⁵ *The fundamental experience*, by its eminent and even *genetic* fact, clarifies the sense of the notion of the *sacrum* that we have to incorporate to our lives, our creation, as the same author said in the recent interview mentioned at the beginning of the *Introduction*. Without *the fundamental experience*, not a single creator can take seriously his/her vocation, he/ she can not assume *the confession of his/her art* joyfully and in complete freedom. This experience makes possible *the sacrifice* of the creator- his complete *burning up to transfiguration!* The continuation of this step connects it with the fourth chapter, entirely dedicated to the theme of sacrifice and, again, to the theme of responsibility of the creator. The passing through stages in defining the presence of sacrifice in the work of a creator (with direct example taken from the creations of the four artists) assumed, as a first step, discussing again the theme of responsibility in art. This step implied the dimensioning and situating the other stages that complete the portrait of the creator that assumes the sacrifice responsibly and consciously. Consequently, the next stage contained in the final chapter of the paper was made up by inspiration, as *an archetypical revelation*.

The moment of true creation is an overwhelming moment, when the entire being is comprised, when all the attention is focused towards the deepest new interior substrata. The artist, once arrived at in this point, will feed himself with *the archetypical inspiration*. It doesn't go on in a historical, finite context, but it detaches the limits- the contextual time disappears and the ritual times appears, that serves to the realization of great works.

During the creative act, “the intensity of consciousness is enough for itself, without any referent than itself. I saw clearly that the way to be followed had to be effective, not only speculative or conceptual. It was not about philosophizing, but practicing, living in halves, as an

⁵ Basarab Nicolescu, Michel Camus, *Rădăcinile libertății*, Curtea Veche Publishing House, Bucharest, 2004, p.8.

actor and spectator of your own life, of one piece”.⁶ The meeting with the creative act is violently revealing. “You die in order to be born another or in order to admit that “I” is always the infinite other”.⁷ Because the one who becomes creator, through the irrevocable decision that he assumes, has to follow the way of an exile that leads to the clearing of origin, nature and sense of this search-of the Sense. The exile means a true initiatic way. The fundamental experience with which one enters this way is the first conscious experience of auto-transformation, experience that has nothing to do with the biological age. Michel Camus equates the fundamental experience, of consciousness of one’s vocation, with a lightning of an interior intensity, of acceptance with “jubilation of solitude; a nourishing solitude mysteriously- rooted in the depths of the being”⁸. This solitude is maybe the most difficult to reach and live because it doesn’t assume a solitude of emptying, of nonsense, but it is a solitude *primordial*, reflexive and full of inspiration *solitude*. It is a solitude of uncertainty. “The creator can be never alone, because of the pain of the word. A painless word is a sneeze of a stirred cat. More than this, I would try to say that the individual himself is not alone because he has got two eyes, not only one. The individual is so distrustful of himself that he is not monopod, but biped, and, generally, everything that can be divided into two seems to be an equilibrium, even though it is not. I suggest you to divide 10 into 2. It is 5 and 5. I suggest to divide 5 into 2. It is 2,50 and 2.50. I suggest to divide 2.50 into 2. It is 1,25 and 1,25. 1,25 divided to 2 is never 1.”⁹

In the last three subchapters of the paper *Dorian Gray Phenomenon. Creation as a confession* I made appeal again to the parallels with the world of symbols, insisting from now on more on the idea that *the plan of the symbolic* from the artist’s creation must reach finally a maturity, in the sense of approaching the symbol to the *existential* level. Each of the four chosen artists, in order to debate the theme of this paper, proved in their work the power of *assimilation* of the symbol to the mystical level, of mystery, of cult, of affirmation of *faith*. Why did Nichita Stănescu say that he knew Romanian language *seven* times? Because he had come to understand the faculty of reasoning of symbol at its highest level. He affirms his faith clarifying us with an answer to this question: “Romanian language is like a Sunday for me” – it is a liturgy, a transubstantiation, a worship of his creative faith. The highest aspect of art is that it is not anymore art, but Life. Vincent Van Gogh lived *the painting- life*, Tarkovsky was one with his films; he was *Ivan’s Childhood*, he was *Andrei Rublev*, he was the *Mirror*, he was *Nostalghia*, he was *Solaris*, he was the *Sacrifice* itself- all in one and one in all. Here is a possible interpretation of art. Arvo Pärt is every sound on the musical score, is every back on white: “I have to rediscover myself without cease. It is

⁶ **Idem, p.9.**

⁷ **Ibidem, p. 9.**

⁸ **Ibidem, p.8.**

⁹ **Nichita Stănescu, *Amintiri din prezent*, quoted publishing house, p. 212.**

a search of something that can feed me, exhausting sometimes, because the way is very narrow. Indeed, we have to limit ourselves always, we have to cut a lot of twigs, both in the inside, and in the outside of the self. And this one mirrors itself in the music too. When I don't know something about a thing, I have to keep silent. When, on the other hand, I have understood something, even very little, I can speak, but briefly, in the most direct and concentrated possible manner, the most suitable with this concentration in which I am. In this sense, my sounds seem maybe with some key- words".¹⁰

Doesn't the truth of art consist in a *three- dimensional atemporal* state of it? Is it not here that what Basarab Nicolescu said about *the fundamental experience* can be superposed? "*The irrevocable decision* has already been present in me *genetically*, from my very birth. The decision was taken, to say so, in spite of myself, from the very moment in which I could turn my sight towards myself, around the age of four, because it has been given to me."¹¹ The expression of *atemporal tridimensionality* formulated by us in this paper assumes the existence of the notion of *creation* before the *historical* presence in the world of the creator. Nichita Stănescu, in an interview taken in Serbia, said: "It is one of my ancient idea, that in what concerns poetry, the word is just the material of the poem, the color is just the material of painting, the line just the material of drawing, the sound just the material of song. The art of the word is the least important in the poet's profession. Kant said once that the form was the sublime case of the thinking and the perfect form attracted the content. I don't dare to contradict this wonderful philosopher, but I suppose that a wonderful, mysterious and revelable content entails a wonderful and revelator form."¹² So, if the word is the material of poetry only, the color is the material of painting only, the line the material of drawing only and the sound the material of the song only, then, *poetry, painting, drawing, song* are before *the word ,the color ,the line, the sound*. They are *the wonderful, mysterious, revelable content* that entailed all these wonderful and revelable *forms*, as man was created in God's own image. "Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the cattle, over all the earth, and over every creeping things that creeps upon the earth." And is God created man in his own image; in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them."¹³

¹⁰ Arvo Pärt, *Aphorisms*, review "Buisson Ardent", no. 1 (Cahiers Saint- Silouane L' Athonite), Paris, 1998, p. 84.

¹¹ Basarab Nicolescu, Michel Camus, quoted book, p.8.

¹² From the interview with Nichita Stănescu by Adam Puslojić and Dževad Sabljaković in Serbia, source: youtube. com

¹³ The Holy Scripture, Biblical Institute and Mission of The Romania Orthodox Church Publishing House, Bucharest, 1994, Book of Genesis 1, verses 26 – 27. Translation from The Holy Bible, New York: American Bible Society, 1980,p.1.

Also Arvo Pärt, in *Aphorisms*, writes about *the art* in the face of *the artist*:

“[...] Music can be born if you approach the silence with love. The composer must wait for this music for a long time. This expectation that awakens you is exactly the pause that I like so much.

Pray and wait. The power of writing will come by itself, at its own time. When you don't expect, then is music born.”¹⁴

“In my opinion, the greatest value of music is beyond the sonorous color. The special timbre of instruments is a part of music, but not the most important one. So, I venerate the mystery of music: the music must exist through itself... Two, three notes. The mystery should be present, irrespective of every instrument. The Gregorian Chant showed me that behind the art of combining two or three notes, a cosmic mystery is hidden.”¹⁵ Both the central idea that we take from Nichita Stănescu's poetry and Arvo Pärt's spirit of music converge to a common point: the existence of Creation in *an atemporal tridimensionality*, beyond the historical time of *human being- creator*.

Eugene Ionesco, in *The Intermittent Search*, marked the idea of the existence of art before its creation, through the person of its author. This before- genesis doesn't repeal the free will's involvement of the creator, nor the co-participation of this one in its revelation. Without assuming the creative act by the artist, the creation cannot contain revelation.

The atemporal tridimensionality of the confesiv creation is the centre towards which all author's searches converge. The ontological need of man of being able of creation leads to the outlining of a new answer, through what we write, in this paper. The introspection done on the art of true creators makes us think of the determination of a new and subtle feature of creation: *spatiality*. This quality of art was revealed to us both through intuition and revelation. It was enough to see the brightness of Nichita Stănescu's face in an interview with him, when, pointing to the books in which his poetry was published, he said that the true nature of poetry was not there, the creative act was not accomplished there, because the creative act couldn't be but one that belonged to tridimensionality, to spatiality, it was alive! Let's remember here Domenico's cry in Andrei Tarkovsky's film *Nostalghia*. He who yells while, sacrificing himself: “Zoe! Zoe!” that is to say: “Life! Life!”

We assumed with emotion and care at the end of this paper the idea that true art is not *flat*. It configures a re-change of “*its molecular structure*”, through its wonderful quality of being *Alive, spatial*.

¹⁴ Arvo Pärt, quoted book, p. 86.

¹⁵ Idem, p.87.

“I had once the feeling of writing and I abandoned it. And I will confess to you why I lost the feeling of writing. I prefer to conceive verses the entire night and after that to dictate them to my wife suddenly. Why? Because Guttenberg put all the words on a plan, but, the words are in space. Exactly like Niels Bohr who drew the atom scheme on a plan, but the atom is in space. The words are spatialised. They are not dead like these (and he shows the book with the published poems). They are alive, between me and you, between me and you, between me and you... They have life, they are told, they are spatialised and they are thus received. Obviously, I see the word with a cold eye and I correct it after my wife has written it. But I don't write it with a cold eye, because I know the Romanian language seven times, I am a polyglot of the Romanian language and I know the language of poetry twenty times and I have the tendency to perfect it, to make it glossy, to make it perfect. But, perfection has nothing to do with art! Perfection has nothing to do with art! Once, I wrote that the perfect cube ... after you made a perfect cube, you had to crush one corner so that everyone should be surprised why that cube was not perfect, how perfect it would be if one of its corners had not been crushed. I say it now, that if it had been perfect, nobody would pay attention to it. Perfection doesn't draw attention.”¹⁶

¹⁶ From the interview with Nichita Stănescu by Adam Puslojić and Dževad Sabljaković in Serbia, as previously cited.