

FEMININITY IN THE WORK OF IOAN PETRU CULIANU

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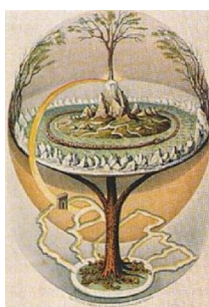
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Abstract

The femininity problem, tackled by a historian of religions and world-class writer of Iași – Ioan Petru Culianu – can be observed either in the *Dictionary of History of Religions*, or in different articles written between 1972-1991, or in his fiction.

The gnostic researcher constructs a special system of analysis, structured in fractals, which refer to several questions about: **the Actors**: lots of *She*-s for each *He*; **femininity**: a subjective, or an objective prevalent; **femininity's relation to aggressiveness**; **Ioan Petru Culianu**: a gentleman, raised by ladies; about **body** or **soul**; the **qualities of the soul**; about a **human being** either masculine/feminine or a combination of the two opposites; the **Christian tenet**; the **game on the truth** about femininity; about the **forms of good**; the **mandala symbols**.

Keywords: femininity, primary structure, cultural initiation.



*The Tree of Knowledge described in Edda,
by Oluf Olufsen Bagge, 1847.*

Motto:

*"Our being cannot be destroyed,
as it is not an organisation stricto sensu.
It's nothing else but thought that binds us and
a thought is indestructible".*

George Orwell, 1984

1. The Actors: Lots of *She*-s for each *He*; *is femininity an essential instance?*

To discuss the relation between the power systems and the femininity presence, we have selected from Ioan Petru Culianu's work the

feminine dimension in the human and religious associative rituals.

The first element would be that regarding the definition of the **power** concept, a concept related to adjectives such as: *civil, military, economic, political, religious*, by means of which I. P. Culianu accesses the relation with the **subjective** sphere of power, referring afterwards to the **objective**, cultural sphere of power, with no adjectives.

2. What is femininity: *A subjective, or an objective prevalent feature?*

As a subjective prevalent feature, power implies an internal change of purely energetic transformation, such as in S. Freud (*sexual change*) and C. G. Jung (*psychic change*). Another prevalent feature of power is related to nowadays' society manipulation, announced in 1960, by Elias Canetti, in *Crowds and Power/Masse und Macht*, following Gustave le Bon, (*Crowd Psychology/Psychologie des foules*, 1895), about the individual who, becoming part of a crowd, feels himself/herself invincible in anomy, through the *libido* hypnotic suggestion of the crowd upon the individual.

3. What is femininity's relation to aggressiveness: *Does aggressiveness depend on the ritual?*

The idea about the intraspecific aggressiveness, characteristic of fighting, seen in primates, with a reaction to the sacred and a rise in the feeling of power, comes along with the development of the oniric, mythologic and magic imagination, with the variegation of religious subjectivity² that has developed other abilities of the human spirit, such as peoples' ritualization manifested differently either within the ritual, with double motivation (*dancing*), with

sexual sociative motivation, with the subservience and dependence specific of animals, or with the alimentary kiss, or with the greeting, but also with innate elements, laughing, crying, dancing.

4. Is Ioan Petru Culianu: a gentleman, raised by ladies?

The author, Ioan Petru Culianu (1952-1991) comes from an old intellectual family from Iasi. He was the second child of Elena Bogdan, a university professor of chemistry and daughter of the "Al. Ioan Cuza" University's Rector – Petru Bogdan (Rector between 1952-1991). His father was the mathematician Sergiu-Andrei Culianu and his great-grandfather was Nicolai Culianu, member of the "Junimea" circle and founder of the Medical School (Neculai/Papa, Culianu – for a while vice president of the Romanian Senate, professor of mathematics at and Rector for eighteen years (1880-1898) of the University of Iasi).

In *The Sin Against Spirit*, I. P. Culianu suggests that his leaving to Bucharest represented a training for his long exile from 1972 onto his death – a tough experience that made him then capable of easily adapting himself to any place in the world. He majored in Italian with the paper "*Marsilio Ficino and Platonism in the Renaissance*" and his multiple studies are a close-up of a relationship with masculine/feminine duality, in favour of femininity. We know nothing about his death, he certainly was a specialist in magic³.

5. Is thinking dualistic: masculine/feminine?

From a notional perspective, dualism is a doctrine considering both matter and spirit as a principle of existence. Dualism as a philosophy is the relationship between mind and matter and this relationship is possible because of the assertion that, from a certain point of view, mental phenomena lack a material basis. **Dualism describes the state of two parts**, deriving from the Latin word *duo / doi*. Initially **the term was used** to describe a co-eternal binary opposition, an idea found in the metaphysical philosophical discourses.

6. Does duality refer to the masculine/feminine body or soul?

The dualistic concept of the relationship between body and soul is discussed by different systems of religious and philosophical thinking, from which we have selected:

- Zaratustra / Zoroaster (probably, X-th century B.C.)
- Plato (427-347 B. C.) in *Fedon*, about the material world which is not real, but a mere shadow of the real world: about forms explaining the notion of *universalii*. According to Plato, forms are prototypes or abstract representations of some types or features (i.e *universalii*) of the surrounding things that we perceive; forms are *universalia ante res*;
- Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), in his *Metaphysics*, drawing on Plato's ideas about *ousia* in *Parmenide*, claims that *universalia in rebus* is the same as *universalia ante res*.

Aristotle's concept, separated from Plato's soul image about man, becomes valid even today: **man** is composed of **matter** and **form**; the **body** is not matter but in a metaphorical sense since, as **primary** substance, the body must be also understood as a **form-matter** compound. Everything that is perceived by the body is an **act of the body**, i.e an acting form; the **individual soul**⁴ is, in its turn, a compound whose form is **intellect**, and **the soul, which is not body, cannot, however exist without the body**.

7. Are the qualities of the soul: masculine / feminine?

Soul's qualities (nutritious, appetite-related, sensory, of movement or thought) are not equally found in all beings. Aristotle analyses sensation and perception with extended theoretical and gnosiological implications. Plato had removed sensations from the circle of truth. However, Aristotle distinguishes even unequal degrees of objectivity as far as sensations are concerned, then he analyses their mental genesis, where he discovers the intervention of discernment itself.

8. Is Human Being either: *masculine/feminine*, or a combination: *masculine/feminine*?

For Aristotle there wasn't any breach between the world of sensations and that of perception⁵ (like in Plato). Man is a substance having as form the intellectual soul, a body dependent on Divinity (vertical axis); on the soul (transcendent axis); and on society, or organic metaphors applied to the political organism. The concept changes in time, either as exotic body and space (India, China, Japan, the Aztecs), or social body (the king's two bodies), or mechanical body (marionettes, machines):

- **moral being**, capable of actions in the service of **goodness**
- **social being**, (*zoon politikon*/social creature, having an innate tendency of living in a state and using the state as a means for obtaining autarchy, i.e the necessary condition for practicing dianoetic virtue)
- **aesthetic being** (art as an imitation of reality with a cathartic function: *katharsis*/purification of the soul through a discipline of passions)

The dualistic concept of the body and soul originates in the *Bible*, *Genesis 2.7*: "God, our Lord made Man out of earth, blew into his nostrils the breath of life and thus Man became a living soul."

In the *Dictionary of Religions*, by Mircea Eliade, Ioan P. Culianu⁶, one discusses the symbolic initiatic brotherhoods of a warrior Iranian society, with violent practices, that range from drinking *haomei*, to a monotheistic and dualistic pantheon. Judgment of the individual soul, an old motive established in stories, refers to the separation of the souls from the body: the good will cross the bridge with no trouble, the evil will fall into the flames of Hell and the ones who are neither good nor evil will go to a purgatory, as the soul ascends to heaven in three stages.

Greek religions are caught in the Minoan legends⁷ (XV-th century, B. C.), archaic and classic religion is the possessor of some myths and rituals to be observed in *Iliad*, with multiple dimensions, with sacrifices, with echoes in modernity through the individualization system in religion and philosophy: "we are inferior

creatures, but the inhabitants of the true Earth live in the Happy Islands (Plato: *Fedon*, *Cratilos*, *Timaios*, *Republic X*). The individual soul has fallen within the prison of the body (Plato: *Cratilos*, 400 b), and it can only liberate itself through philosophic life, it can be reincarnated in more successive bodies, provided it would be perfect and contemplate the eternal ideas. Philosophy is a religion and religion a philosophy. These things appear fixed in literature, religion, and they are reflected in the duality between Apollo, the brightly shining god of prophecies, ecstasy and healing and the mysterious Dionysus, representing: "The stranger within ourselves, the feared antisocial forces that the divine passion unleashes. The wine-induced drunkenness, the sexual excesses, the masks and the theater are just external signs of divine madness."⁸

9. How does the human model: *masculine/feminine* appear?

A collection untitled *Mind's Games*⁹, with a selection of the works between 1970 and 1991, identifies in femininity a universal key, *clavis universalis*, a beloved principle of both the medievals and postmoderns, an emblem for I. P. Culianu's thinking, form of birth of a natural fractal. Placing the problem at the core of religion, as an approach to C. G. Jung's thinking, in the idea that myth transposes a social code into an exemplary narration (religious phenomena being in general religious "projections" of some social factors), must be interpreted differently, at an "epistemological level", if we are to get to the meaning and intention of the myth, that are metaphysical. Rituals help either to fit the norm, or to liberate oneself from power by pressure releasing moments (*carnivals*, *orgies*). There are specialists of the power (*shamans*) who, in order to access the sacred, need first to die as laymen. Thus are explained certain paradoxes and antinomies, leading to the relationship with magic and witches.

The authors refer to the transformation of the Dionysian excesses into Orphic faith and of the image of the person who, after death, becomes a soul/ *psyché*, that may turn into a *daimon*, just as

a famous hero can become *heroon*, an intermediary heavenly being. Greek dualism was the basis of the Christian concept, as the sanctuaries/ *temenos* became churches and the holidays calendar was transferred.

The idea can be upheld within Culianu's **soul** concept that does not take into account the historical origin of these legends, but the universal models that any doctrine concerned with the limit between body and soul – wherever it may come from – can impose. He proposes two models of the original ecstatic patterns: a Greek one, consisting of Iatromanti's deeds, of Plato's myths¹⁰ and those of Plutarh, mentioned in the Hermetic and Gnostic writings of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. In combination with the scientific and cosmological theories, the Greek model becomes extremely complex, involving a heaven storied in seven spheres, specialized on virtues that condition the soul's destiny at its birth within the body (**descent** through the spheres) and at its leaving of the body through death (**ascent** through the spheres).

The other model, Jewish, comes from Babylon, developed by the Jewish and Christian apocalypses; in Arabian ecstatic traditions it does not surpass the analogue. Jewish mythology conceives the heavens as stages and not as planetary spheres. The Arabian legends depend directly on the Jewish tradition, but the Arabian writers' imagination has influenced them very much, so that they can be considered a true product of the Islam. An example of analogy given by I. P. Culianu is the "judgment bridge" (*sirat*) that the **soul** crosses to the world beyond in the Arabian legends, having the same function as the "narrow bridge" from the Jewish and Christian apocalypses of the Middle Ages. The feminine or masculine image needs a bridge between Plato and the *Bible*¹¹.

The "*Mind's Games*"¹² become important. Ioan Petru Culianu shows that for the art of memory, Giordano Bruno used images with erotically charged fantasies¹³, lots of them explained by Sophia's myth in the *gnostic system*, with a possible Pythagorean origin, later become an explanation in five points: Sophia: „1. Sophia as the perfect match of God; 2. Sophia as main

source of matter, evil and death; 3. Sophia who falls and leaves the heaven, but is forgiven and and her rights are restored; 4. Sophia who sins and is forgiven without leaving Pleroma; 5. The inferior Sophia, who remains outside Pleroma, but is forgiven and waits to have her rights restored"¹⁴

10. What is the Christian tenet?

The Christian tenet was completed within four decades, *The New Testament* represents the oldest layer and has *Jesus Christ* (1-33) at the center of religion. Paul of Tars' complex personality (executed in 62) determines the propagation of Christianity, Marcion (cca 80-55) deepens the breach between Judaism and Christianity, gnosticism, with its many spokesmen: Irineu (cca 130-200), Ipolit of Rome (dead in 235), Clement din Alexandria (dead in 215), transform the *Old Testament's* God into this world's God. Origen (cca 185-254), Plotin (205-270) disagree with the gnostics and believe in souls' prior existence, without overlapping Plato's metempsychosis. Ambrosius of Milan's theology (cca 339-397) starts from Origen, and Augustin (354-430) asks for absolute moral purity, because "all humans inherit the original sin" and grace can only be granted to the chosen ones¹⁵ whose souls get in limited number to heaven, the rest being *massa perditionis*. Due to translators, the bases of scholastic will be found on Aristotle, up to Abertus Magnus (1193-1280) and Toma of Aquino (1225-1274), aiming at a sanctification of purity that leads to *nominalism*, which opens the doctrine of worlds' pluralism and that of the non-central position of the Earth, posited by Nicolaus Cusanus (1401-1468).

Beginning with Humanism, the past is discovered as future, at Francesco Petrarca (1304-1374) and Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-1375). What Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499) accomplishes regarding the body/soul relationship is a platonic syncretism, i.e the idea of a primal revelation of God and the true or hidden meanings of other religions, for Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494). The Reform of Martin Luther (1483-1546) and Jan Calvin (1509-1564) refers to

papal authority and austere morals, found in the European evangelisation system, as a colonial model.

The Christian religious system¹⁶ refers to Christ's divinity, to the relation between the Father, Holy Spirit and the Son, to the human or divine nature of Christ, or to the relation with the icons or the church language.

11. Does the Game on the truth about femininity: depend on philosophers, fiction, or reality?

In *Tozgrec*, Ioan Petru Culianu challenges the entire humanity to *The Game of Truth*, a counterweight to what he considers "sin against spirit", found under different names: "immobility", "strengthened lie" and "cultural genocide", the last of the three having "the deadliest effect" and being "immediately visible". A proceeding of the cultural genocide is "the stagnation of ideas, coinciding with death", since the people in this stage are, neither more nor less, spiritually dead, although physically, they obviously continue living. One must discuss the connections of the soul's relations within Christian theology with images of the Christ's soul, human or divine, and with the connections within the Trinity, as one may argue the idea of a **pre-existing** or **non pre-existing soul (created by God/not created by God)**. One must also discuss, theologically, the Christian attitude toward the body transfigured by asceticism, that doesn't exclude a powerful soul/body dualism.

The concept about a new soul created by God becomes the orthodox concept, or derives from the multiplication of the parents' souls. The reform deals in fact with the predestination of souls to which Saint Augustine acceded. The relationship between the masculine and feminine soul, as well as one's survival after death in Hell, Heaven or Purgatory, depends on a large mystic tradition, related to void and love, with no clear distinctions between negative theology, love, mystical speculation, eucharistic mystic, with a certain technical character in Grigore Palamas (cca 1296-1359), spread in Russia as hesychasm and *Philokalia*¹⁷.

12. Does Good have: masculine / feminine forms?

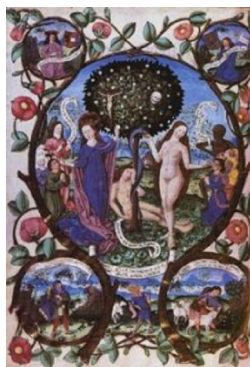
The problem of Good can be argued from the perspective of the Essenes, who were dualists and believed in two spirits, a good one and a bad one, with the redeeming victory of the good¹⁸. Obviously, this complex depends on the space and time location and on causality. Man is part of the nature and this duality starts from his position in the system of thinking, which may be dual, the feeling of unity being acquired through the image of the soul within the dream, through the symbolic processing of the world, the worship and praise for the divinity being present not only in sacred ceremonies, but also in lay activities. **Duality**, the fight of extremes, contradictions, bipolarities of phenomena (good – evil, suffering – happiness, light – darkness, interior – exterior, manifestation – unmanifest etc.) tend to become one by means of faith with differences related to the symbol. Dualism was not clearly concentrated in the religious systems, even in the philosophical systems it is structured on the joining of contraries/*coincidentia oppositorum*, different from monisms, which admit only one element and pluralisms, which refer to more philosophical solutions. R. Descartes' contradiction between *thought* and *extension* from *Meditations on First Philosophy*, shows that while dreaming we may even doubt our own body, and that is why the essential sentence remains: *COGITO ERGO SUM!*

13. Do the Mandala symbols: depend on the combination masculine / feminine?

The explanation refers to the fact that symbols have an interior mirroring: "Divinity's symbols are no longer felt by humans as existing separately from their existence, but as a center within themselves." Dreams in which the *mandala* symbol appears (Indian term, meaning literally "circle", but also a symbolic picture for meditation, in which the space is organized according to certain more or less established criteria) indicate the fact that those dreaming "become conscientious of their self, they can accept themselves as they are, they are able to make peace with themselves," and in this case,

“the symbol of divinity seems to be filled with human wholeness”. This wholeness is technically named “Self” (*das Selbst*), designating „the wholeness of the human being, the sum of the conscious and unconscious elements. The symbols are fractals¹⁹ and they are joined by love.

The term *mystic* is related to the biblical notion of mystery and designates the intimate connection between God and Man. This union is the mystery of divine Wisdom, the sense of His plan concerning the eternal destiny of humans, a meaning that is not even for angels to grasp, but which is revealed by God to the saints. The Eastern tradition has never distinguished very well between mysticism and theology, the personal experience of the divine mysteries and the Church tenet. If the mystic experience internalizes the communal content of faith, theology orders and systematizes it. Thus, the life of every believer is structured by the dogmatic content of the liturgy and the doctrine tells the intimate experience of revealed and shared in truth. Theology is mystic, and mystic life is theological, i.e the Holy Trinity reflected in spirit. Even from the IV-th century, the Fathers identify the mystery of salvation with the substance of the Sacraments, this fact explaining why Saint Cyril of Jerusalem named his sermons *Mistagogic Lectures*, why Saint Maximus the Confessor named his meditations on liturgy *Mistagogia* or why Pseudo-Dionysius reunited his treatises under the title *Mystical Theology*. Nicolae Cabasilas continues this tradition, entitling his treatise about the Sacraments *Life into Christ*.



The Tree of Life and Death, from Book of Prayers of Archbishop of Salzburg, 1481, Bavaria State Library.



Gustav Klimt, *Tree of Life*, combined technique, 1905-1909, Kunst Muzeum, Vienna.

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17. Ricoeur, Paul (1999) *Conflictul interpretărilor / Eseuri de hermeneutică*, Cluj-Napoca, Echinox.

Endnotes

- 1 The graphics are taken from the *Internet*.
- 2 Ioan Petru Culianu, *idem*, p. 179.
- 3 Culianu was aiming to radically change the methodology of the humanistic studies. At the end of the first trimester of 1990, he found himself for a short while in a situation he had not met for fifteen years. He had no contracts for new books, no urgent materials to hand in, and no conference tours coming. He was head of discipline at one of the most distinguished institutions for the study of religions. He had nothing left to prove to anyone. Confronted by lots of new theories of religion and history that he wanted to explore, he stood in front of an unplanned future, searching for a new career breach. He thus launched the project *Enciclopedia of Magic*. He considered the eight volumes work of Lynn Thorndike, *History of Magic and Experimental Science*, with the spirit of which he disagreed, reproaching the author's superficial understanding and "disdain" for magic. He wanted to write a truly scientific work on occultism.
Apud Anton, Ted, *Eros, Magic and Professor Culianu's Assassination*, revised second edition, translation by Cristina Felea, preface by Andrei Oişteanu, Polirom Publishing House, 2005; p. 247. Ioan Petru Culianu, *idem*, p. 179.
- 4 What is the soul, then? Through which coordinates is Aristotle's view still manifesting its presence? "We call life the ability of self – nurturing, growth and eventually decrease" (p. 37) Each natural body that "participates to life" can be considered as "substance composed, <organized>", i.e structured in a certain way, out of matter and in a form. Still, not any body endowed with life can also be considered a soul. "As the body is not of those to be affirmed about a subject <like the soul>, but rather it is itself substrate and matter. Soul is therefore, necessarily, a substance in the sense of a species of a natural body that has life virtually <empowered>. But the substance is an entelechy <reality in action>; so the soul is the reality in action of such a body".
Aristotle, *De anima*, Translation and notes by N. I. Ştefănescu, introductory study by N. Boboc, Scientific Publishing House, Bucureşti, 1969, p. 50. Ioan Petru Culianu, *idem*, p. 179.
- 5 "That's why on the one hand we have an intellect that can become everything, and on the other, an intellect through which all may become, just like a <permanent> state, such as light. Since in a certain way light too makes the existent colors' potential manifest itself. And this intellect is separate, unaffected and pure, being an act, by nature. As it is always the active factor that is superior to that submitted to affection and the dominant principle over matter."
- Aristotle, *De anima*, Translation and notes by N. I. Ştefănescu, introductory study by N. Boboc, Scientific Publishing House, Bucureşti, 1969, p. 93.
- 6 Mircea Eliade, Ioan P. Culianu, in collaboration with H. S. Wiesner, *Dictionary of Religions*, translation by Cezar Baltag, Humanitas Publishing House, 1993, p. 269-277
- 7 *Ibidem*, p. 159-277.
- 8 *Ibidem*, p. 164.
- 9 Ioan Petru Culianu, *Games of the Mind, History of Ideas, Culture Theory, Epistemology*, edition taken care of by Mona Antohi and Sorin Antohi, Introductory Study by Sorin Antohi, Translations by Mona Antohi, Sorin Antohi, Claudia Dumitriu, Dan Petrescu, Catrinel Pleşu, Corina Popescu, Anca Vaidesegan, Polirom Publishing House, Bucuresti, 2002.
- 10 Androgyny has been seen throughout time in different ways: sometimes, a being of two parts, or maybe a deity; typifying sulfur and mercury, figuring fire and water, with androgynous images symbolizing the union of contraries /*coincidentia oppositorum*, meaning the regaining of primordial oneness. From the French *androgyne*:
 - Primary perfection,
 - The whole,
 - The unconditional status,
 - Autonomy,
 - Paradise regained,
 - Reunion of primordial forces: masculine-feminine,
 - The joining of Heaven and Hell,
 - King and queen,
 - Two become one.
In *The Banquet*, Plato provides an explanation of love and its creation. According to this legend, at the beginning, the Earth was populated with androgynous beings. They looked like two people glued back to back: two women, two men or a man and a woman. They had an enormous power, they could do almost everything they could think of. Gods begin to fear the androgynous almost infinite power and separate them so they couldn't represent a threat anymore. But once separated, the parts wouldn't work anymore. On Earth there reigns complete lethargy. More and more die of sadness and because they are missing their halves. Seeing that they are running out of subjects, the gods search for a way of giving the new people a reason to live. Thus Eros is created, with the purpose of spreading love in the world. This way, people started living their lives searching for their half. The lucky few who would find each other would merge, forming the being that once existed.
In the legends taken from philosophers, the first perfect man appears as an androgynous: "unlike

today, in the beginning there used to live three kinds of people: man, woman and the third sex, that would have something in common with the other two. Today, only the name survived, the being itself disappeared. This gender was then called androgynous, since its appearance comprised, as its name did, a part of man and one of woman. Now, its name isn't but a nickname, given to offend someone. Beside all that, every human's body had a round appearance, the back and the ribs in the form of a circle. They had four hands and as many legs. They also had two identical faces, set on a round neck, a single head, on which the two faces were set, one facing the other, four ears, two genital organs and, in the end, all the other things that one can easily reconstitute by comparison to those stated so far." Plato, *The Banquet*, 189e-190a, translation by Cezar Papacostea in *On Love*, The Western Publishing House, Timișoara, 1992, p. 21.

- 11 As the Bible says, the first man was created in God's appearance. Adam, a man made of clay, is created by God in the sixth day of Creation, symbolizing the absurdity of freedom. He was banished from Heaven because he wanted to identify himself with God. The original man, symbolizing God living within Man is even now Adam Kadmon, the synthesis of the Universe (made in the center of the Earth/Mount Zion, conceived and forged out of the elements of the cardinal points, eternal symbol of love between God and earth, the primordial man).

Jacques Collin De Plancy, *Diabolic Dictionary*, vol. I, selection and translation by Rodica Rotaru, House of Publishing and Press "Viața Românească", București, 1992, p. 16-15.

- 12 Ioan Petru Culianu, *Games of the Mind*, History of Ideas, Culture Theory, Epistemology, edition taken care of by Mona Antohi and Sorin Antohi, Introductory Study by Sorin Antohi, Translations by Mona Antohi, Sorin Antohi, Claudia Dumitriu, Dan Petrescu, Catrinel Pleșu, Corina Popescu, Anca Vaidesegan, Polirom Publishing House, Bucuresti, 2002, p. 95.

13 *Ibidem*, p. 109.

14 *Ibidem*, p. 121.

- 15 Mircea Eliade, Ioan P. Culianu, in collaboration with H. S. Wiesner, *Dictionary of Religions*, translation by Cezar Baltag, Humanitas Publishing House, 1993, p. 105.

- 16 Although the words *εραυ*, *ερωζ* almost never appear in *The Old Testament* and are not acknowledged in the books of *The New Testament*, they are found in the ascetic writings of mystic fathers such as Gregory of Nyssa, Nicholas Cabasilas or Simeon the New Theologian, to express superior love for God. Simeon the New Theologian has even an extensive work on

the love of God, entitled *Σρωτεζ* (*Eros -es*). This is the meaning that the holy fathers, theologians and the Christian philosophers will embrace, although in most cases *ερωζ* will be used instead of *αγαπη*. *Philia* is generally associated with friendship and emotion. It means loyalty towards friends, virtue, equality, the joy of doing something together. Aristotle devotes an entire book to friendship, in *Nicomachean Ethics* defining it as the relationship between people who know they have good intentions and wish each other good. Divinity is the cause of creation, while love is the force that brings it to perfection. The way is a continuous upward journey to God, starting with the movement granted by God, continuing with *eros* and *ek-stasis*, until the human being unites with the loved one. This way, *Eros* is the highest degree of human's love of God, all virtues contributing to the divine eros, especially by means of righteous prayer.

Apud Pavel Florenski, *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth*, Polirom Publishing House, Iași, 1999, p. 257.

- 17 Mircea Eliade, Ioan P. Culianu, in collaboration with H. S. Wiesner, *Dictionary of Religions*, translation by Cezar Baltag, Humanitas Publishing House, p. 127.

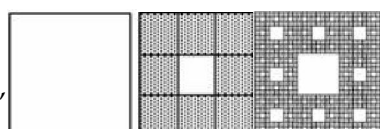
18 *Ibidem*, p. 215.


- 19 Let's say, the squares of a mathematics sheet of paper... are colored in a certain way (blackened or marked with little crosses), according to a rule that takes into consideration color (or the presence/absence of the crosses) from all the neighbouring squares (in the "primitive" cellular automata used to count only the immediately adjacent rows, possibly

just in one direction).  curves with tangent

lines,  Sierpinski's

t r i a n g l e , 

Sierpinski's sieve, 

 Sierpinski's carpet, snowflakes Koch.

The mathematician Benoît Mandelbrot proposed a simple algebraic rule to construct a connected two-dimensional figure, that highlights an incredible richness of complex details when examined at

smaller and smaller scales. The *Strange attractors* refer to a regular regimen that becomes irregular or turbulent, as a consequence to the actions of the strange attractors. In the chaos theory, attractors are (just as the influence of gravity) sets of values towards which the system migrates in time, also named "islands of stability". Within a formula, an attractor may be a single fixed point, a collection of points, a complex orbit or an infinite number of points. Attractors can be resembled to lakes, that gather all the rivers from a determined hidrographic basin, or to the processing (consumption) centers that center the traded goods currents from a certain

area. The adjective strange is due to the difficulty one has when presenting them and to their curious aspect. Attractors are usually fractals characterized by an irregular, complex geometrical structure. *Fractal forms* are any part of a fractal, enhanced, reflecting the whole. In management, it is assumed that the different levels of organization are similar to others, as a fractal in the managerial hierarchy. One form of the social structure can be examined in relation to the overall system characteristics at macro and micro level. Fractals can be used to build useful models of some unpredictable and chaotic systems, where linear equations fail.