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OUR DAILY BODY AND ITS INSTRUMENTAL ROLE IN
COMMUNICATION. AUREL CODOBAN'S READING
„BODY AS LANGUAGE”

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Abstract: As in religious traditions, the soul organizes entirely the human condition horizon; postmodern culture sets the body as the organizing centre of its sacralizing mechanisms. Some even speak about a cult and about ritual mechanisms having a religious charge. On the one hand, the body is attributed a symbolic dimension surfacing in the fight against the finite and life's lack of meaning. On the other, turning the body into a centre of the existential universe triggers a better delineation of the functions it may fulfill. An important role belongs to the networking function that crosses over the human inhabited worlds, from the physical one to the spiritual and religious one. To highlight these aspects, I called on the reflections in Aurel Codoban's communication philosophy. The new view on corporality brings the image of body as language, as communication instrument and as significant surface. Against this background, the body sets a self-concern whose consequence, symbolically, is a dialectic movement of body and soul nourishing one other and improving one another in light of authenticity.

Key words: religious traditions, postmodern religiosity, human condition, philosophy of communication, love hermeneutics, existential counseling, body as communication instrument, Aurel Codoban

1. Rediscovering the body and its sacrality

Postmoderns rediscover the body in the effort to rediscover themselves. Valorizing one's own corporality becomes part of the need to assert one's authenticity and personal identity. The body is the main element around which the human condition idea is built. It is almost impossible to describe the various individual manifestations of this condition if we attempt to ignore the fact that the human being is characterized by manifesting as a subject in a body with personal traits. As a matter of fact, the thematics of personal identity always considers, as a fundamental element of the interference with oneself and with the others, the interface of human beings' embodied nature. No matter what other elements are involved in defining humans, the body is a must. As it happened so far with the soul, the body is imagined as an intrinsic value. Thus, the body becomes a center around which the whole existence is organized, having a wide significance range. The body structures the various types of relationships aimed at valorizing the body as a source of experiences that may be associated with experiencing life's sacrality and ritualizing behaviors in our daily life.

In this context, one of the most interesting perspectives on the human body's rediscovery and valorization is found in Aurel Codoban's reflections of communication philosophy (Codoban 2013), love hermeneutics, existential counseling and postmodern religiosity (Frunzã 2011a, Frunzã 2011b). Aurel Codoban notes that we have reached a time in the cultural evolution in which „the body seems to be nowadays the great winner in our world history. It has gotten to be omnipresent in our civilization's discourse and practices, and its display, more or less nude, knows no limits of censorship or contrary symbolism. It is present for oneself, not in anyone's name, and the unwavering attention it receives has the exclusive reasoning of a cult” (Codoban 2011b, 7).

Highlighted here is one of the most powerful forms to valorize and sacralize the human body. By projecting his philosophical reflections against a double charged, Christian and humanist, background, Aurel Codoban achieves a synthesis of significances pertaining to corporality. However, on the one hand, the area of sacred remnants camouflaged in the corporality imaginary is displayed, following procedures we may read in Mircea Eliade's convincing dialectic of the sacred and the profane (Eliade 2013a, Eliade 2013b). Actually, Aurel Codoban is one of the most original philosophers of religion, who construes his own approach of the religious phenomenon starting from the works of Mircea Eliade and Ioan Petru Culianu (Codoban 1998). On the other hand, we find forms of body sacralization procedures, typical of postmodern man, marked by phenomena of life and corporal being reasoning, emptied of any mystery.

In Christian thinking, we are used to see the entire effort to spiritualize, to found the human being mystery, as coming from action of the soul as source of noblesse, purity, spirituality. Dumitru Stãniloae, one of the most significant Christian theologians in the 20th century, stated that „in the human soul, there are powers that organize matter in the body and act through it” (Stãniloae 1987, 41). Consequently, the body is an instrument created by vital energies for human historical action. The human being is soul in the flesh, given the fact that according to the human condition definition, man is a spiritual being par excellence, and compared to his spirituality, all the other elements are merely secondary. The soul is the centre and the margins, it is the origin element, the source of authenticity and ultimate scope, characterized by a perfection to be read in eschatological key. Benefitting from an energy source that may be associated to divine energies, man can transfigure his being’s corporal aspect. Most obvious is this possibility of human capacity to overcome biological, corporal feelings, through spiritualized feelings, integrated within the absolute manifesting horizon. A good example for the Christian way of thinking about this spiritualizing effort is provided by Dumitru Stãniloae when he describes the transcending phenomenon in the reciprocated participation in the other’s being, through the spiritual effect of the total love relationship (body and soul): „Man and woman have in their joined seed, concentrated, not only their bodies, but also, in a whole, each body and each soul, and their joined souls in the union of their bodies, give birth not only to a new body, but also to a new soul, certainly not without God’s work” (Stãniloae 1987, 41). The body is alive through love, and is embodied in the total offering of both in love. In this way, the soul of divine nature and the body of biological nature become a unique reality, without confusing or canceling one another. In a theological view, this union is fed on the union of human nature and divine nature in the person of Christ, and is permanently open to humanity in Christians’ access to the Eucharist. The human body is thus always reinterpreted theologically in an eschatological and Eucharistic view.

Unlike in the theological interpretations of the body, Aurel Codoban proposes a cultural view in which, without putting aside the Christian symbolism, the body is seen through the lens of Western cultural models. One of them is that of love, as it is expressed in potential interpretations of the androgyny myth described by Plato in his *Banquet* (Platon, 1992). One of the most important steps of perfection through love in Plato’s philosophy brings forth the beauty of bodies and their perfection. If we consider this stage of the need for body perfection, we note that the Western culture has exaggerated in its unilateral interpretation of the androgyny myth, in the symbolic quest for the soul mate. But, the androgyny myth must function as a total myth, as a totality myth. Recovering the unity broken once by the separation of the originary androgyny is the finality of the entire magical action of love. The absence

felt by the one in love urges attaining the final scope, to recover the unity of the mutilated body. Love, the erotical enthusiasm sending beings on the quest for the other half is only the means, the recovery of totality is the scope. In the Western explanation of love, we have forgotten the scope in the name of the spiritual participation to the world of Ideas. However, we have abandoned the body as a necessary condition for the magical recovery of oneness in the spiritual love of the two halves seeking to attain love. In this way we should understand Aurel Codoban's statement that „satisfying love means, to Plato, a recovery of the primordial androgyny, a return to the original indistinction, similar to a return to the sky of pure Ideas and to quenched desire” (Codoban 2004, 29). Postmodern man experiences love at this level, of similitude Corporal union occurs in a logic similar to participation in the world of Ideas.

Of course, postmodern man can no longer recover the Eucharistic imaginary of reflection on the body except for calling on a theological logic. However, using the philosophical reflection, he may think of a new symbolic integration of the biological body. One such example may be that of the mythologies that Aurel Codoban places at the foundation of passionate love, inspirational to contemporary man. One seeks a model to understand corporality by which it regains its dignity, so that the body should not be compelled to end as a corpse. One feels the need for a transcendent dimension attached.

2. Death and the body's symbolic investment

One of the ways to protect the statute of the body is the symbolic shaping of corporality. Due to its finitude, the body is associated to a symbolic communication system aimed at diminishing the anguish prior to the inevitable end. Death gets a dimension in eternity just because it is conceived as part of a complex system of sacrality generating constructions. In this perspective, the feeling of eternity is born out of impotence: man's vulnerability before its awareness of being a finite being, at least as regards the corporal resources. The body is the one that makes out of death a totally special reality. In the absence of the body centrality in the explanatory system of human life, death may lose its metaphysical force. Closely connected to the finite human being, death is the one that sets itself as a need to transcend and as a presence of transcendence.

We have here an open perspective on life de death, with a reciprocated integration force that functions both in the existential reality and in the imaginative registers. This explains the possibility to see the body as an imagined entity or rather, closer to Aurel Codoban's spirit, as a phantasmatic body. Abandoning the paradigm of death as an event somewhere down the existence line, we note that the human impossibility

to accept death's inevitability created the situation in which „Death may appear as an unnatural interruption of life and as a bad thing. One may suppose that the first summons of this evil was the indistinct representation of life and death, a sort of *coincidentia oppositorum* supported by the indistinction between the reality of the oneiric world and of the daily world” (Codoban 2011a, 118).

In such a symbolic and integrating perspective, the idea of death is closely correlated to the need to build a coherent view on the meaning of life. As a self-transcending form and as a form revealing transcendence, the meaning of life overlaps in the postmodern imaginary the meaning of death. Death becomes something absurd to a life perceived as meaningless. Only by the fact that we have the capacity to give meaning to our own life, death starts having a meaning. It becomes coherent in the meaning investment process, through the configuration of meanings heading to the future. It is one of the reasons for which life and death may equally contribute to building significance, making it possible to construct a life meaning therapeutics (Frankl 2009; May 2013; van Deurzen, Arnold-Baker 2005).

It is not at all accidental that in the revelation at the foundation of Western civilization, God's embodiment becomes a necessary event in the human becoming logic and in the logic of the divine intervention in human life. In the Western imaginary, absolute transcendence becomes body and restores itself the entire creation centered on man as a holder of transcendence marks. This Christian contribution to the development of the religious outlook and imaginary, is the most important part of the legacy that postmodern man may valorize in his commitment to rethink the rapport to corporality. The body is no longer the source of darkness and suffering, as no longer can it be a source of pleasures ending in increased intensity. The body is positioned, at the same time with Christianity, in a border zone that makes possible the encounter between the sacred and the profane, between flesh and flesh transfiguration.

This is a good opportunity for postmodern thinking to establish connections between humanist philosophies recovering the body and valorizing corporality, on the one hand, and the symbolic legacy of Christianity in the successive secularization stages of religious significance and human life representations, on the other. A possible symbolic reconstruction of the body may be the one that reintegrates to the body both its life and death. Life and death inseparateness in such a unitary structure brings the body close to the Being, makes it inseparable from Being. In existential reflections, the phenomenon is similar to the one in which Christian thinking associates to the death and resurrection of the body. Christianity gave resurrection to man to make death more bearable, to mark the possibility to cancel anything lacking in the being of the body in a process of exiting death through resurrection. This is the utmost spiritualization of the body that the Western man could conceive. It gives

the body its maximum content in that the Christian revelation sets a transfiguration of the body through death and resurrection, thus giving the body its own identity through its death and resurrection. This way, death appears in Christianity as a form of sacrifice and love.

In Aurel Codoban's reflections on love we note that philosophy tends to place desire at the foundation of love explanations. The metaphysical desire is directed towards an absolute entity, while desire understood as eros is most often directed towards finite entities. Postmodern man attempts a fusion of the two types of desire. Therefore the ambiguity in the way Aurel Codoban explains the androgyny myth and the soul's desire to return to the sky of ideas, mediated by the death of the body. Such ambiguity is maintained by the fact that we connect soul's ascension to the issue of immortality and reinterpret death in this view. This difficulty is overcome if we understand that „any desire is ultimately a desire for death, because any desire is the desire to no longer be what we are, to exceed our limits. The passion-love means allowing destiny to exceed our limited and boring freedom and responsibility. We have in ourselves a sort of passion for death, which is hard to repress: we all want to be different from what we are, which is to die as an individual form” (Codoban 2004, 28) followed within strictly delineated parameters by a certain stage of our becoming. This way, we have to accept that any desire conceals death as a symbolic form of exceeding the individual and entering the symbolic register of existence, which implicitly means a release from soul's pressure and human freedom to assert the corporal being.

Against the background of its symbolic recovery, the body may become a mystery to be explored, cultivated and valorized to the highest degree. It is not idolized, nor turned into a fetish, but rather a subject of ultimate concern. Although rendered absolute as an ultimate reality, the body benefits from a concentrated interest similar to the one that we normally associate to types of behavior in the sacred. It is a witness to itself and to its relational universe, it fills symbolic content into the whole world and posits itself in the midst of sacralizing ritual forms. Life and death coexist, cohabit and maintain our flow through time. Irvin D. Yalom stated: „death permanently whispers under the thin membrane of life, and vastly influences our experience and acts” (Yalom 2010, 43). Life as such becomes, this way, the ground for a series of complex connections developing under the sign of transcending and transcendence, even though they do not call on a transmundane transcendence.

For a clearer perception of the way in which Aurel Codoban connects life and death, the body and language, and its symbolism we need to appropriate the statement: „Human existence is, to our philosophy, a transcending without transcendence... Therefore my interest to the two situations in which this transcending without a transcendence exists: love and death” (Codoban 2009, 11). Love accompanies death, which in its turn

accompanies the dying body. Only in such expansion, may one discover oneself, and develop at a higher level.

3. Body centrality in the postmodern human condition construct

Man is positioned at the interface of transcendence and immanence. Such a position is mediated not only by the intertwined mundane and transmundane imaginary, but also by the fact that the Western human paradigm is the one looking upon man in view of the body and soul unity. Structured in a Christian way of understanding, the Westerner's perception on the human being is linked especially with his immortal soul, privileged in understanding human condition in connection with the passing body. In such a context, we may join Aurel Codoban to see the way in which the paradigm change occurs and leads in the Western Christian culture to a very nuanced understanding of man as a body and soul being. Thus, „until the beginning of the 20th century, Western thought has been governed by the hierarchical metaphysical dualism of soul and body through which the body was excluded not only from communication but also from the sphere of culture in general. The body has been religiously and philosophically devalued and kept at bay through discipline and will, through the stringency of ritual” (Codoban 2013, 13). Gradually, the emphasis on soul centrality in the Christian thought shifts to the postmodern thinking of body centrality. Such thinking does not intend to be anti-Christian even if it often sets off either in contradiction with theological thinking, or in reply to traditional interpreting, or to dispute the religious dialog on reality. It is rather about the need to strike a balance that postmodern man shows as a way to recover the body which has been degraded by so many religious representations. We should merely identify here forms of human life sacralization that keep the symbolic importance provided by the Christian world, but with ways to emphasize and fill in human significance, valorized at different intensity. When we place such constructions face to face with Christianity, we should rather see them as non-exclusive alternative forms, in some cases even derived from Christianity or from the dialog with it, instead of viewing them in conflictual positions.

Apparently, postmodernity becomes irreconcilable with the Christian view. Aurel Codoban shows that „when man was planned as a created being, predominantly with soul, his nature was planned top to bottom, from the transcendent essence to his particular flesh embodiment as a person... we have come to give to the body the respect that was once given to the soul. The change is not so much in reality – we are so far viewing man as body as we were viewing man as soul – but rather in a paradigm shift. Only now is the soul inevitably forsaken” (Codoban 2011b, 23). In

fact, we are not so far from the Christian valorization of life. Even when the soul seems forsaken, it does not leave the symbolic game of corporality. This is something similar to body abandonment or to the death of the body in the ascetic or mystic views. The mystics of the soul's union with the divinity did not abandon the body, it rather transfigured it, the body was improved to such extent that it kept the individuality and personal experience at the time of the passing to the supranatural world, in the godly process (Stãniloae 1993, 337). Even when the body becomes light, as on the Mount Tabor, it acquires a type of experience in which the corporal dimension is perceptible in the encounter experience and is recognizable as such.

When talking about abandoning body thematics, Aurel Codoban's statement should be interpreted similarly to the lone cry, to the feeling of being forsaken that Jesus had in the Getsemani Garden. It is about feeling abandoned, which but confirms the intimacy of coexistence, the inevitability of a connection and the sacrality of the connectivity that it brings with it. Extolling corporality and its centrality means but a relaunch of man in full swing of his natural, corporal life for his harmonious integration in the system of connections that life as such involves. The concern for the soul does not disappear, it is camouflaged in this need to live and fully valorize the immanent structures of personal behavior.

If in religious terms we may say that the body is temple to the soul, with the lay interpretation of corporality we may say that the temple is not only the temple lived by a spiritual entity. It is equally the resident of the temple. An important aspect in this sense is revealed by the corporal reconstruction, a major concern to contemporary man. One of the significant fragments in Aurel Codoban's text shows that „Relaxation, massage, bioenergetic techniques are all, like fitness, aerobic and body building, therapies and techniques starting from the body and working the body. There seems to be a cult of the body everywhere” (Codoban 2011b, 7). Even if, according to the author, this change is under the sign of a diminution of significance, the emphasis being on pleasure, relaxation and fun, the symbolic dimension is not lost in this focus on the body.

Attached to the symbolic dimension is a form of immanent spirituality. One of the forms in which this may be decoded is the mirror image. For instance, physical exercise in front of the mirror is part of an external mirroring process which occasions an internal mirror. The presence of the mirror is important in what we attach to the body-language as a symbolic image of the body. In a relational philosophy view, mirroring supposes exiting from oneself and mirroring in the other, as well as a recovery of the self in the practice of this act. I do not exclude that somebody may fall into a kind of narcissism trapping one in front of the mirror. Still, everything occurs in an atmosphere typical of the communication world. Thus, the corporal reconstruction techniques or

physical exercises suppose, for a background, a return to oneself, a recognition of the self, a sort of return to oneself and a self recognition. They have a meditation on the need for change. We may accept Aurel Codoban's idea, according to which in view of gesture semantics, „the current interest in corporal language only recently has started involving one's own symbolic corporal language (Codoban 2014, 93). However, once the interest in one's own body has started, it will also manifest as personal experience at all existential levels– from the physical one to the social, personal and spiritual one. Such a form of internalization leads to a probing for the ultimate significance that each individual may take further until his/her own culture horizon permits it. Thus, the body becomes part of culture, of interest in oneself, of the life style leading to an ideal version of good life, experienced personally and at community level.

4. Body as communication instrument

Aurel Codoban speaks about a cult of corporality centered on the body itself. Nevertheless, he insists it is not the body itself but the body valorized as a communication instrument that sets the new tendency in understanding and sacralizing the body in contemporary man's life. Consistent with the statement that „communication construes reality” (Codoban 2009), his discourse is not about the body as such, but about the body constructed for us. This way, he turns the body into a symbolic entity, valuable in itself because it has the resources to show itself, express and communicate. If for a long time philosophy excluded the body from the its area of concern in the philosophy of communication, in the society based on communication we are in the situation in which „the idea of the body as language, of the communication-body could assert and develop only in an environment dedicated to interpersonal relations therapy and to the pragmatic aspects of communication” (Codoban 2011b, 15). Aurel Codoban reproaches philosophers for their lack of interest in the body, and notes that philosophy did not have a problem „accepting the guess, or intuition of the state of the other's soul, communicating directly, even telepathically, between souls” (Codoban 2011b, 9), but did not have as open an attitude toward the body.

Aurel Codoban takes us to follow the Hegelian type of construction of alterity to argue that the other is perceived first of all as a body. With postmodernity, the relationship, mediated by the awareness of the presence of the other, is no longer an intersubjective relationship, but one involving two bodies. The body thus enters the communication field: „The idea of alterity was to the same extent like the idea of immanence the one by which the body enters modern Western thinking. As long as the soul is in dialogue with the total alterity of the divinity, the body becomes the way a soul appears to another soul” (Codoban 2011b, 10). Viewed ac-

According to the communication philosophy, the widest spread way to valorize the body as a communication instrument is that of „the body as language”. The importance paid nowadays to the body as language is rendered by the fact that in universities that educate and develop youth in the communication field, we have elevated to science the use of corporality to communicate and decode this communication. One of the courses in communication that students seem to enjoy the most is in non-verbal communication, based on generalized body language elements and hermeneutical practices associated to it in the professional world, in public space and in generally in communication situations

When he talks about body communication, Aurel Codoban means face expressions, eyes movements, physical expressivity, various hand and legs movements, tactile messages, voice modulation, according to regular semiotic practices (Pease 1993; Chelcea 2004; Ekman 2009; Messinger 2012). All these are analyzed with new nuances by gender, age, culture. Usually, body language supposes a face-to-face communication situation (Codoban 2011b, 15-16). However, research indicates that the interest in non-verbal communication has extended to a wide diversity of manifestations, from direct interactions to communication mediated by virtual space and new (Codoban 2014, 146). One potential question that may come up is turned into a hypothesis in the reflections on non-verbal language. It supposes a choice between the primordial corporal significance intrinsic in corporality manifestations and the prime symbolic theories on corporality based on which the entire gesture semiotics is developed into a corporal language hermeneutics. Irrespective of the area to which we took this working hypothesis, we have to note the effect in discursive practice. It translates in an increased importance paid to corporal language and use of body as communication instrument and body as language.

Although he talks about a cultural determination of gestures, originating in the religious, magic, alchemic, astrological symbolism substratum, or in mystic esoterism, repeatedly appearing is the idea that the body „is not a sign of precise significance, like the word, or a syntactic sign cluster, like verbal messages, but it is rather crossed by what we could call signifying intentions” (Codoban 2014, 11). The philosopher says that what is most obvious in public communication is the fact that social relations impose upon corporal interactions the clarification and behavior ritualizing that renders significance to corporal manifestations. Thus, the body becomes important in varied communication contexts. There may be distortions in this infusion of significance emptying initial meanings but keeping the symbolic structure of communication (Codoban 2014, 19). Proofs of this are the communication situations widely spread in commercials, music clips, commercial and cultural communication, etc. (Agamben 2014; Lindstrom 2011; Bruckner 2015).

The philosopher notes that gestures start falling off the body into a movement of expressivity competing to the one of the body as language. They belong, however, to a common reality, that of the relational function of communication. Aurel Codoban also examines other functions of the corporal language, like the expressive function, the phatic, conative and even poetic function. We are interested here only in the relational aspect, because our body reconstructs itself in the postmodern thinking in this effort to reconstruct the relations of the individual with his own inner world, with the world shaped by interpersonal relations, with the world of interactions in the environment or with the world of entities and spiritual manifestations. Each time, the body intervenes with its relational function. Overestimated corporality appears to the author as a paradoxical situation in which „The body seems to disappear behind its own visibility... The body presence, the imposed corporality denotes the Western culture’s adhesion to a certain communication type, although different from the information transmittal- relationing. Imposing communication as a relationship is in fact a celebration of the body’s pure vitality, namely of „nude life”, lacking the old symbolic-cultural determinations” (Codoban 2014, 25). Still, as a communication instrument, the body is saturated with existence.

One should note here that the author does not mention the disappearance of the symbolic function of the body, even though he places it in a obvious dissolution. In the statement according to which the body may disappear in its own reconstruction, a new way to expose the body is indicated, the one based on communication. Such a phenomenon occurs as the whole reality is built on communication. The body cannot become real except by achieving itself in a process of its communication. Precisely for this reason we must accept that with the body-language a metaphysical dimension of corporality persists. The body is saturated with being. But the old symbolism of the human body is replaced with a new one. The way in which the body-image game becomes relevant in the postmodern culture is significant, for the position of the body against the soul. The body is not in opposition to the soul, nor its replacement. It is reevaluated symbolically. Aurel Codoban shows that „In reality, the body was an interface not so much of the soul as of the cultural programs interfering with it. And the dialectic of the sacred and the profane says that any desacralization is a kind of resacralization, as much as in communication where every decoding is a recoding. The presence of the body in the public space and the interest for communication, as a reconstruction of the relationship and not as information transmittal is thus also the consequence of „sacralization” and of the nude life in ethics, politics and law studies (Codoban 2011b, 24).

One of the ways to empty the old contents associated to the symbolism of corporality lies in the statement: „But our consummism era’s sins are to eat without being hungry, to drink without being thirsty, and to

make love without loving” (Codoban 2004, 32). Undoubtedly, the ideologies of consumerism had an important role in the way the body self-consumes or is consumed. A new symbolic order is instituted here, very visible especially in the representations of erotism or of the erotics of the body in communication, with all the stereotypes associated to such representations (Frunză, Grad, Frunză 2016; Filipeanu, Luca, Anton, Cananau, Luca, Anton, 2015; Reichert, Lambiase 2002). The promise of a well-being state denotes new faces of desire and a new type of affection in which „Consumer behavior seeks to obtain bodily welfare because if the body feels well, man feels well, in obvious opposition to those old practices that valued the asceticism of the body for the well-being of the human” (Hosu 2012, 201). In addition its other functions, the body as language enters a dynamic of consumption and symbolic exchange.

5. In lieu of conclusions: body as communication instrument and restoring principle of the human being

In terms of communication and personal development, we note that postmodern man attributes to the body the founding role for all types of relations in which its development may be involved. This centrality of the body is given by its integration into a system valorizing human condition in conformity with valorizing existence according to communication and the construction of deep meanings of existence in communication. In such context, Aurel Codoban indicates the importance of the fact that „the body came to be omnipresent in our civilization’s practices and discourses. Now more than ever and apparently out of the sudden the body is perceived, theoretically and practically, as the *situs* and the means of numerous signifying systems: the expressiveness of the voice, gestures, behaviors or, from another perspective, cosmetics, clothes, signs of social status, of institutionalized relations, of politeness and etiquette, of feelings and attitudes, related to roles and social positions, signs of arts or of its own vitality. This generalized inversion of the asymmetrical relationship between body and soul, customary for the Western world – for the profit of the body, along with the corporeism of our days determines the body to enter the scene of communication and imposes the idea of body as language” (Codoban 2013, 15). Thus, passing from soul centrality to body centrality in the views on human condition in the Western culture is seen as a return of man to a natural environment, as a rediscovery of man as part of nature. Such statements do not counter the idea that what is natural and biological is significant, but rather the body culturally built in communication situations. A return of the body to itself, under the form that in Michel Foucault’s terms could be named self-concern (Foucault 2004, 13-14), to suppose the association of the physical; dimension

importance with that which spiritualizes man through internalizing and placing in a cultural discourse.

Such perspective compels nuances as regards nature and culture, the biological body and human body built as language, between body and its image. Considering a wide range of interpretations, when Aurel Codoban establishes similarities between the obvious triumph of the image and the triumph of corporality in contemporary culture, she deems believes: „Because what was wining, were only meanings of body, only body as language, and not the body as such in its metaphysical meaning, what triumphs now, in this civilization, is a particular type of image” (Codoban 2013, 24). In this view, the discussion on non-verbal communication is very useful here because „Gestures, that are purely human, are in fact intermediates allowing the passage from nature to culture, from body and behavior to signs and significance, to signs and collective validity of collective validity” (Codoban 2014, 16).

With postmodernity, benefitting from such a universe of significance, the human being re-enters possession of its own body. After for a long time, the history of western culture impressed upon us the fact that man is the owner of his soul and has to take special care of it, we note that the body catches up.

The human being rediscovers responsibility to its own body and gives it special treatment. I shall not open discussions on the extent to which we are owners and when we have total control over our body. It is complicated to decide on the liberties of using the body, often depending on modernity proving us that we are not the rightful owners of our own body or of parts of it. The state may intervene and take away this possession from us. This is a visible fact in the legislation regulating various aspects of bioethics and biopolitics on the human being as a corporal being (Frunză, Gavriluță, Ioan 2013; Koplin 2017). Such provisions may contradict the idea that man is the owner of his own body. A property may not only be ceased, donated, offered as gift, but also traded. A special part of bioethics restricts us in this sense.

Other challenges to corporality and its importance in the postmodern man's life may come from the trans-humanist theories that diminish the importance of the body through justifications favoring tendencies to improve features (including biological) of the human being (Hauskeller 2014; Schussler 2017; Staehler, Kozin 2017; Sandu, Vlad 2018; Acikalin, Watson, Fitzsimons, Platt 2018). As regards instrumentalizing the body, we may expect new intervention forms of the new technologies in the human life, including those focusing intimacy of human manifestations. For example, it is likely for new theories of pleasure to appear since the interaction with beings created through artificial intelligence may replace even sexual pleasure that we conceive is dominated by the corporal encounter with love register.

Any dangers that may be caused by an alienation of the human being shall be eliminated as long as the symbolizing functions of the body will be protected and valorized. Among the multiple functions of the body as language, we focus first on the relational function, because „any human communication is communication with somebody before it is the communication about something” (Codoban 2014, 146). The relational function is manifested at all levels as an existential given in the personal development of human condition: relations with the physical world, with the social world, with entities and spiritual beings, with one’s own internal restoring totality. This complex relational structure functions under the sign of total restoring of the human experiences.

According to a symbolic image, we note that as we can draw from the postmodern reinterpretation of the androgynies myth, applied to the dual nature of any human, and the essentialism of body and soul. The body as a part stands for the whole as much as its totality gives itself in each of the parts. This way, the dichotomy body and soul is overcome and their integration in the definition of the human condition is achieved. We are used with the totality of the human being, deeming the body to be secondary to the soul or something that needs to be mortified through ascetic techniques. The new way to perceive the body transforms it into a totalizing principle. Constructing itself, the body reveals an increased concern to internalize and showcase the beauty of the soul on the human face, charged with a special sacrality, in connection with the image construed in communication with the body. Having such a base, the totalizing of corporality is in the spirit of a revival of the ideal of *kalokagathia*, in a version adequate to contemporary man’s expectations.

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