

# RESUME

  

## DOCTORAL THESIS

**Logos and philosophic reasoning**  
**in the work of**  
**Nichifor Crainic**  
**- hypostasis of orthodox autochthonous spirituality -**

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Cluj-Napoca

2020

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Key Words: Logos, mystical Philosophy, ethnocentric, Theology, political Philosophy, anti-semitism

During the process of opening toward the patristic theology, philosophy proves itself to be a key element, fundamental and unavoidable for a holistic approach, close to the spirit in which the Parents of the Church wrote, have spoken the experience of the spirituality, understood as an application, as way to experience the Holy Gospel.

Although, in essence, the predilect way adopted by the theological act of philosophizing is often a theoretical one, in the sense of an exegesis of the „Word of God” (λόγος)<sup>1</sup> from the perspective of an ontology of the created world, as well as the reception of the uncreated energies<sup>2</sup> of the Grace of God, it is imperiously necessary that Σοφία<sup>3</sup> (wisdom) to „embody” the corpus of the practical experience, the mundane experience, in every day life. The metaphysical knowledge of the „Prime Essence”<sup>4</sup>, from the perspective of the pre-Socratic philosophy, as an equivalent of the holy essence<sup>5</sup>, later developed by the patristic theology through the *real presence of God himself*, defined as *negative theology/apophatic*<sup>6</sup> of the divine transcendence, has to be interpreted, in order to fulfil the mystical body, the ecclesial one, of the Church, in the key of an assumed lifestyle. Following the hypostasis of the Eastern spirituality from the perspective of a modernity not separated from the Truth and the Church, was a determining point in approaching myself to a *thinker, theologian, philosopher, poet, journalist, political figure and a man of great culture: Nichifor Crainic* (under his real name: Ion Dobre). Crainic’s way of thinking, but *especially his mystics*, with its multitude of profound and significant aspects that he presents – as well as the *applicability of the Crainician model* in a society still marked by the remnants of an ideology inimical to the divine light and wisdom, represents a generous, complex, but sometimes difficult to

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<sup>1</sup> See: Pr. prof. dr. D. STĂNILOAE, „Cuvânt introductiv” to *Viața și învățăturile Sfântului Grigore Palama*, EIBMBOR; București, 2006, p. 263u.

<sup>2</sup> D. STĂNILOAE, „Cuvânt introductiv” to *Viața și învățăturile Sfântului Grigore Palama*, p. 267.

<sup>3</sup> Christ as Σοφία= complete wisdom, but also as Accomplished Well of wisdom *sophia*- God’s (all)wisdom; *Wisdom* (sophia) is an attribute of God Who Care, nevertheless, shares this gift to just and honest people Mt.10, 16; I Cor. 2, 7; to be pointed out is especially Christian wisdom which emerges following preaching the Gospel I Cor. 2 6; Efs. 1, 8 based on reading and living the Holy Scripture which increases our wisdom and guides us to absolution;

<sup>4</sup> Understood in the key of pre-Socratic philosophy

<sup>5</sup> See pr.dr. John Antony MCGUCKIN, *Dicționar de teologie patristică*, ed. Doxologia, Iași, 2014, p. 29.

<sup>6</sup> John Antony MCGUCKIN, „*apofatism*” in *Dicționar de teologie patristică*, pp. 29-30.

approach and explicit theme. The exploration of Crainic's thought gives us hope that the mystical theology re-discovered by him, starting from the systematic study of the philosophy, as well from the fine knowledge and understanding of the patristic writings, alongside the infusion of Romanian culture, inerent to his approach, all can represent starting points toward a *re-discovering* of the real and viable function of Romanian Christianity, after the long period of official denial, caused by the communism and the materialist-atheist ideology, towards the XXI<sup>st</sup> century.

The search for practical wisdom plenary preached by Christ – The Word/ *Logos* through the perspective of a philosophical analysis – is, in fact, a way of instantiation of the whole orthodox spirituality. The triadic connection between *logos*, *spirituality/ascetical & mystical experience* and *philosophy* is supported greatly by the research, exposition and interpretation of the key aspect of Crainic's philosophical and theological work – an authentic visionary spirit of his times.

A powerful drive toward a research upon Crainic's thought and spirituality, framed within the vastness of the oriental morality was given to us by his Eminence father Andrei ANDREICUȚ, who stresses insistently and constantly the importance of a profound theology, empirically assumed<sup>7</sup>. The ethnocratic state project, as *a practical applicability*, as well as other *solutions* provided by Crainic, do not have in mind only the Romanian between wars society, but answer to the communicational need, as well a to the spiritual experience, rejoicing an incontestable actuality. The complex theological – mystical - philosophical concept of *logosity* is definitory for Crainic's thinking and inner experience, helping us understand his essential ideas of his writings, as well as of his political or editorial approaches, nurturing a hidden unity between a systemic philosophy, a metaphysical theology, an apophatic one, and beyond all that, a rational thinking process which is systemic, yet comprehensible for whomever opens his mind and heart before the revealed work of God, and the grace generously offered by the sacramental work of the Holy Church.

The (post) modern man finds himself at the border between a *mundane existence*, strongly marked by a manifestation of the “carnal”<sup>8</sup>, of the profane – an existence devoided of an openness toward an experience which extends itself beyond the functionality of the

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<sup>7</sup> † Andrei ANDREICUȚ, *Mai putem trăi frumos? Pledoarie pentru o viață morală curată*, Ediția a I (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Renașterea, 2012). pp. 14-15.

<sup>8</sup> Concubiscentia carnalis See: † Andrei ANDREICUȚ, *Spiritualitate creștină pe înțelesul tuturor* (Alba Iulia: Editura Reîntregirea, 2002). pp. 90- 92.

“natural world”<sup>9</sup>, empirically tested and validated only by means of the senses – and a *metaphysical level*, proper to a “beyond mundane” world – that of the sacred.

The sacred and the profane – which apparently exclude themselves – are interpreted, now a days, in the *context of a spiritual meagreness* generated – or at least favoured – by the secularisation of the thought and of the religious behaviour. Man is trapped between his *mundane existence*, marked by these manifestations of the flesh, and *his openness toward a deep experience of the beyond realities*, biblically, patristically and morally anticipated by the fulfilment of the divine commands and will, as well by means of our *total adhesion to this will and logic* which extends beyond human rationality.

The Christian perception of the problem of the sacred is profound, in the sense that religiosity generates the emotional experience of an asceticism on the footsteps of knowledge through natural revelation, determined by man’s own forces, towards a supernatural revelation, understood as a descendant motion from the sky to the earth.<sup>10</sup>

It comes as a natural process a better clarification upon the relationship between sacred and rationality, between faith and reason, between theology and philosophy. According to father Wilhem DANCĂ, philosophy is not a theology, even if it is more than present in theology, and, on the other hand, theology is not exclusively philosophy. Even though philosophy seems indispensable for the theological reasoning and expression, it is not necessary in theology given the twinning and the reciprocal support of the two sciences.

Man being equally *reason, will and sentiment*, man steps, via the path of philosophy, inquiring all the aspects and perspectives of the life, opening to the intimate work, but with effects of the Holy Spirit being seen. *The individual experience within the Holy Spirit*, means *the return of the soul to itself*, a return which generates a phenomenal knowledge of the things beyond reason and the world.

In fact, *theology and philosophy have never been, at a fundamental level, separated*, because, like the Holy Fathers saw the role of philosophy, it represented a constituent element of the faith, in the sense that, at a daily praxis, *filo Sophia* represented that reference

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<sup>9</sup>Dezvrăjirea lumii; Arhim. Teofil TIA, „Credibilitatea religiei și metamorfozele credinței tradiționale- astăzi” in *Altarul Reîntregirii*, nr. 2/ 1995; Alba- Iulia, p. 40

<sup>10</sup> See George REMETE, *Dogmatica Ortodoxă*, a III-a (Alba Iulia: Editura Reîntregirea, 2000). pp. 98-99, Editura Reîntregirea, Alba-Iulia, 2000, pp. 98-99, who details the relation between natural revelation and the supernatural one, immanent and transcendent, understood in an organic link

point and contextual framing of the practical life. Theology used to appeal to – and it still does – to philosophy in order to establish the conceptual interpretation limits, at the level of common language, of the especially theological concepts – of *coding* and *decoding of the mystical language* – used to apply within the world, of the principle, values and norms preached by the Revelation, of dogmatic formulation of those concepts proper to theology itself. In this way, philosophy works as one the normative forms used in applying within *praxis* of the *divine Logos*.

*The principle of theological bringing up to date makes the theology a perfectly adapted instrument to now a days' realities which we are facing.* This is due to the capacity of transfiguration of the innovative elements, in a Christological manner, without modifying or altering the content of the precepts of faith, nor of the values or principle which the Holy Scripture offers as reference point to the people. During our history, the Church, in her quality of depository for the (real) theology, had confronted itself with a long series of situations which were not normed as such. In these situations, the Apostolic Church makes appeal to a mechanism of philosophical loan from the Hellenic terminology. It is transfigured and adapted through “a decisive Christianization work of the antique Greco-Roman civilisation”. In the contemporary period, the process itself remains similar, the mechanisms of updating theology is substantiated upon the same perpetual actualisation of the divine act, shared to humanity through the uncreated energies (palamite thesis from the XIV<sup>th</sup> century).

Nichifor Crainic's personality is a prominent one, and of utmost importance for Romanian culture, on one hand because of his intellectual implications – easily analysable by means of the vastity of his theological, literary, poetical, essayistic, journalistic, or purely philosophical productions, as well as by means of his analysis generated in the most humanist style possible – similar to that of Montaigne – regarding theology, philosophy, religion, myth and mysticism<sup>11</sup>. His declared purpose is that to regain a spiritual and religious identity in the Romanian space. Therefore, he assumes a *missionary-saviour role*<sup>12</sup>, directed precisely toward the regaining of an authentic Romanian Orthodoxy during the inter-war period. In addition, Crainic is a thinker who will contribute intensely to the sketching of an important direction regarding the Romanian folklore and ethnography. But, perhaps the most important

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<sup>11</sup> Where it can be compared and linked to prominent figures in the Romanian culture such as Blaga, Culianu, and Eliade.

<sup>12</sup> See Diac. Ioan I. Ică jr. “Studiu Introductiv” în Crainic, *Cursurile de mistică* - I. Teologie mistică, II. Mistică germană. pp. 25-26

thing, Crainic is that grey eminence who will contribute fundamentally, during the between war period, to the development, actualisation and dissemination of Romanian Orthodoxy. All these come as a result of the assiduity with which he manages to encapsulate the quintessence of the spiritual energy proper to the Oriental religious belief in this active process of reshaping of the Romanian autochthonism. We have in vision a personal type of autochthonism which emerges as a result of his fervour implication within the socio-cultural Romanian space. The core is represented by the orthodox belief with its Romanian specificity.

Maybe, the most synthetic definition of mystic is that offered by the illustrious philosopher, theologian and man of culture NICHIFOR CRAINIC which states: “*Mystics is the science of Saints.*”<sup>13</sup>. He is the one who also states that the mystical theology is the hardest of all the theological disciplines, because the notion of mystic: “is the most unclear and the most fluid of all the theological disciplines”<sup>14</sup>, affirming nevertheless the point of view shared by the theologians accordingly to which it is exactly this fluidity which generates a large palette of possible definitions and, by doing so, even his proposed reductionist definition doesn’t take into account the full potential of perspectives regarding its theoretical origin<sup>15</sup>, nor of the experimental one. One last step to be followed, in order to conclude this conceptual introduction, is to establish, within the same mystical experience, the Eastern orthodox one, which are the variations of the concept of theological mystic within the Christian ethos.

If by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries there are to main dominant cultural currents in the Romanian space: *sămătorism* and *poporanism* both promoting at their core identity the rural culture, village life, sometimes ideal and idyllic, yet otherwise real, as well as the archaic experience of the Romanian peasant – as a counterpart to the cultural infusion of occidental origin within the Romanian space. **Crainic** continues this line of thought, introducing elements of eastern religious mystics. His prowess toward mystic represents for him the only path, a compensatory one, in face of the scholastic void which planes his theological formation in Bucharest and Cernăuți – a factor which augmented his

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<sup>13</sup> Nichifor CRAINIC, *Cursurile de mistică - I. Teologie mistică, II. Mistică germană*, ed. Jr. Ică, Ioan (Sibiu: Editura Deisis, 2010). p. 183

<sup>14</sup> Nichifor Crainic, *Cursurile de mistică* p. 181

<sup>15</sup> The origin of the concept of theoretical mystic proposes an axiological analysis of doctrinaire elements which generates a particular unique experience. This is given by the doctrinaire and language frames proper to each religious belief. More exactly, for example, the mystical experience in Hinduism has got an axiological meaning and, thus, as Nichifor Crainic points-out, the possibility of trans-religious communication of the mystical living is almost impossible (possible only at a superficial level) given the contexts, frames and the fundamentals of the deep living generated following a mystical experience.

persona existential traumas and failed to answer to those dilemmas which plagued in fact an entire generation.

Crainic is, nevertheless, much more than a lover of mystic or merely an ideologist of mystics because he remains *a philosopher of system who hides his philosophy behind writings which are rather essayistic*; “ [...] Crainic’s work has an obvious sequencer character and as much **pregnant philosophical content**, even if in some writings, “it transpires a theological one, also”, in less pregnant measure, nonetheless *Nostalgia Paradisului*, where the systemic structure and the philosophical substance are with intention projected. Crainic’s philosophical discourse will take the form [...] of the essay, an ideational structure by which [...] he will measure and shape his entire cultural, political and social projection [...] *the essay being* [...] a form of authentic philosophizing, like it usually happens when we talk about a philosophy of system, one which, often times, embodied the so called *essayistic philosophy*”<sup>16</sup>

The discovery of mystic doesn’t separate Crainic from his essence of philosopher but represents a refinement of another nature of his intellectual mechanisms. The mystical path that he fathoms it is not like the one of pagan mystics, but it is built on reason, philosophical analysis, a discursive one, but which keeps truthfully the line of patristic theology – infused by the eastern spirituality of the experience of God. The path from ratio to fide is a path of self-discovery and of God’s logos, but for Crainic it is not less important the way one arrives to this exaltation, or to God’s revelation. Crainic’s novelty and geniality is given by the usage of the rational acquired tools to “decode” the oriental mysticism. The philosophizing mechanism and the argumentative manner, proper to a philosophical approach, represents the way in which Crainic manages to link the ontological world to a metaphysical one.

Crainic takes up the patristic method represented by a dialogue between *ratio* toward *fide*. In fact, the restitution movement and the rediscovering of the mystical theology which Crainic explores, via a contact with the Viennese school, restates the following: “the recovery of the two elements of theology remaining neglected: 1) the subject of theology are the people 2) the followers of faith preaching and of the theological dialogue are people, not as objects, but as subjects of theology [...] because [a.n.] theology is a continuous reflection upon the

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<sup>16</sup> Gabriel HAȘMAȚUCHI, *Structuri filosofice în scrierile lui Nichifor Crainic* (Sibiu: Editura Universității „Lucian Blaga”, 2014). p. 10



Christian message, and the thought is, essentially, a philosophical activity. The common meeting ground of the two disciplines is man himself.”<sup>17</sup>

The Christian morality is the morality of the charisma and of the new life, that of Christ [...] The target of the Christian morality is not a psychological or social one, but a pastoral care or ontological. It does not follow satisfying man’s sentiments, or his social framing, but making him part of Holy Spirit’s charisma and spiritual life.”<sup>18</sup>

We speak, undoubtably, about an *ethos* proper to Christianity, steward of the Primary Apostolic Church’s identity, given the common denominator which propagates *ab initio* from the faith itself. This common denominator is represented by the Christian apostolic character, the Christian morality element which derives from the divine logos. The Christian ethos gives birth to a spirituality, proper to a apostolic experience, and generates a public discourse around the personal character of the evangelic Christianity.<sup>19</sup>

***The theological manifestation of the logos*** proper to Christianity in Crainic’s work is an apologetic one. The authentic manifestation of Christian ethos represents exiting anonymity for the paleo-Christian communities. In God a fundamental change takes place of the perspective through which baptismal faith constitutes equally a focal point and a starting point for the spiritual ascesis of the believers. Crainic considers the ethnic element as *proper for Romanians* – an essential element which generates and sustains an archaic-rural personal culture and a *strong identity-defining orthodox faith*.

The mystic, as an aesthetics of self, involves mainly a purification phase = *katharsis*. This step is a preparatory step. The cathartic process can be considered, thus, a mystical prologue. In this context Metropolitan Andrei, demonstrates, in this context, that, ontologically speaking, man is oriented toward complete freedom and acquires this freedom only he listens to God. No listening to his Creator, *human liberty becomes libertinism*, and the *libertinism* pushes him away from the path of virtue into vice and malignancy, toward

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<sup>17</sup> Wilhem DANCĂ, Teologia are nevoie de Filosofie? - Contribuții la înțelegerea conceptului de teologie fundamentală. p. 17-18

<sup>18</sup> I MANTZARIDIS, Giorgos, *Morala Creștină II - Omul și Dumnezeu Omul și semenul Poziționări și perspective existențiale și bioetice*, ed. Cornel Coman, Constantin (București: Editura Bizantină, 2006). pp. 10-11

<sup>19</sup> Mihai HINCINSCHI, „Ethosul Misionar Ortodox”, în *Ehtos și Etnos*, ed. Ștefan Iloaie (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2008), 119-31. p. 120

suffering and spiritual enslavement. In fact, libertinism brings, in this aspect, the loss of the initial liberty.<sup>20</sup> Thus, the mystical search is a search of beauty, of accomplishment.

The knowledge process of the world through itself is augmented by the creative, unitive, baptismal energy as a form of interior rebirth and of adopting of a new Christian identity. For Crainic, Christianity as much universally should it behave (starting from the theological concept of καθόλου) proves itself incomplete because it ignores the importance of the ethnic-cultural aspect in defining it, as well as promoting its adhesion. Crainic regards the ethnic as being an element proper to the Romanian people, thus its identity defines starting from a particularised ethnical aspect, which generates its own culture (ancestral and rural), as well as a Christian, orthodox belief, impossible to double in other contexts or geo-cultural spaces. Given the fact that, in Crainic's perspective, belief represents that core around which the whole of society crystalizes, including Romanian one, in order for it to be particularised and personalised for the Romanian space – proper only to it – becomes necessary for the ethnic element to be incorporated since the beginning in the definition of the Romanian orthodoxy. If not, the Romanian identity would lose itself in the context of cultural globalisation, projected in the interwar period.<sup>21</sup> The mystical search is a search of the beautiful through the rediscovery of self. The human beauty, exteriorly, represents a mirroring of the inner spirit, as well as a glimpse of the immanent life, in cathartic harmony with godhead. The human visage represents the immortality of the soul and a state of unity with God. The aesthetic representation, through iconography, of the transcendent, immutable, a-temporary, a-spatial and perfect nature of God generates a mystical experience, personal a non-communicable. As an organic, natural step succeeding the mystical experience, as a lived one within the being, *ratio* follows – a form of logos directed outward, through the spectre of thought, which tries to offer coherence in a logic-rational way to the mystical non-communicable experience.<sup>22</sup>

His volcanic, explosive, choleric, temperamental nature, interfused with his discursive and intellectual capabilities make out of the journalist Crainic a veritable political analyst who will fully use his analytic-philosophical faculties in the areas of Romanian politics, culture and society. Fundamentally, Crainic observes the opportunity to use his full potential in the purpose of regaining the conscience of a Latin vein. He looms the possibility

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<sup>20</sup> Î. P. S. Andrei ANDREICUȚ, *Am putea trăi frumos?- Pledoarie pentru o viață morală curată*, p. 65.

<sup>21</sup> M.HIMCINSKI, „Ethosul Misionar Ortodox”. în *Ehtos și etnos*, ed. Ș. Iloaie (Cluj: Presa Universitară, p. 127.

<sup>22</sup> Sorin DUMITRESCU, *Noi și Icoana* (I) (București: Fundația Anastasia, 2010). pp. 190-191

to be a reference point for the Romanian politics, a veritable “grey eminence” at an ideological and public policies levels of the interwar period. It is more than obvious that Crainic’s fascination for the German and Italian extreme right movements represents a starting and motivational points for his political demarche in Romanian space, respectively, a clear model to be followed for Romania and his citizens, in view of acquiring a clear and distinct national identity, as well as forging a state and people self-governed on the principle of ethnicity, regrouped around the Church, orthodoxy particularised to Romanian environment.

If we can define the “48” period as being of nations, of identity, of re-identification and regrouping around the concept and idea of nation, thus, in some measure, the concept of nation finds an interesting place (under the form of a pseudo-identity nucleus) in between-wars period. This period represents an “interesting” moment in the geopolitical, social, economical and cultural history of Romania, as well as a period of turmoil, at the level of political and doctrinal beliefs of the Romanian national state, freshly created (re-dimensioned and realigned at the level of Europe’s geopolitical map, following the unification of the ancestral provinces, as well as a direct result of the Paris Peace Conference of 1919).

*German ultra-nationalism and Mussolini’s fascism* – both representing forms of late romanticism – are elements toward which Crainic fostered a veritable political fascination, all these corroborated with the radicalisation of the perspectives upon man, ethnicity, race, kindred and spirituality.

As Andrei Oișteanu observes, starting from a rather theoretical interrogation, in his work *The image of the Jew in Romanian culture*: “Starting from the middle of the XIX<sup>th</sup> century, Romanian intellectuals and politicians have preferred to speak about tolerance instead of actually practicing it. The true, authentic Romanian nurtures an aversion toward the image of “the stranger” and, at some extent, his antisemitism is not assumed, but always found in the individual and collective and individual mentality, as well as in the collective imaginary<sup>23</sup> .

The hospitality and tolerance, rather their absence or suspension, transforms Romania into a sure prey for antisemitism as state policy. “Hospitality is perceived by Romanians as an important national quality. Instead, tolerance itself is perceived as a serious

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<sup>23</sup> Andrei OIȘTEANU, *Imaginea evreului în cultura română. Studii de imagologie în context est-centraleuropean*, ediția a I (Iași: Editura Polirom, 2012).

weakness which will allow “the strangers” not to tame to Romanians, as an act of foolish kindness, consequently as a major national flaw.”<sup>24</sup>.

From the start of the thirties, Crainic puts to work his political convictions regarding the mystic-religious missionary activity in order to save the individuals and the Romanian people through Christian-orthodox nationalism.<sup>25</sup>

Nichifor Crainic will play the role of gray eminence for the Romanian legionary movement, especially in the condition in which, at an ideological level, the fascist nationalism that they promote as a solution for Romania harmonizes perfectly with the core nucleus of his convictions. Crainic, as we have seen, nurtured a deep fascination for Mussolini, and his religious fundamentalism, as well as his vision regarding the ethnocratic state, both reasoned perfectly with what was wished for Romania under the legionary movement of Corneliu Zelea Codreanu and Horia Sima: an extreme right National-Legionary state, anti-Semite, anti-masonic, anti-communist, anti-capitalist, anti-Bolshevik, with an unique identity core, the Romanian Christian-orthodoxy.

Crainic had an obvious lean towards identity nationalism, and some of his affirmations are subscribing, in fact, within an argumentation of an apologetic type – having numerous and diverse types of senses, and hidden significations – which can be interpreted differently and can generate virulent controversies. A vast majority of his statements found in different public discourses as well as writings can be wrongly interpreted if where them to be interpreted in a superficial manner; but, if they are analysed with care, deeply, they show us that in his vision the Christian spirit is not violent, nor is it passive, it has “*a sacred moral violence* which brakes the obsolete forms of the ancient world, crumbles empires of crookedness, *wages war to legions of seen or unseen enemies*”<sup>26</sup>

Crainic does not promote or justifies Grobian violence, but the sacredness of moral change, of metamorphosing renewability; he militates for regaining national identity and for a people who governs himself on the principle of ethnicity, gathering around the Church, confessing and transposing in fact the orthodoxy with its Romanian specificity.

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<sup>24</sup> Oişteanu, *Imaginea evreului în cultura română. Studii de imagologie în context est-central european*. p. 37

<sup>25</sup> [...] nationalism, and I mean the new nationalism which, before yesterday, was crawling under the earth, it softens its enthusiasm in the unseen world of the angels. [...] CRAINIC. pp. 68-69

<sup>26</sup> Nichifor CRAINIC, “Calendarul”, section “*Reflexii duminicale*”, anul I, nr. 107, 22 July 1938;

Following the territorial expansion resulted from the creation of a national unitary Romanian state, the society has entered in a period of spiritual effervescence, in a search of ideals, models, and guidelines. Crainic's *autochthonism* is genuine and crystalized around the national Romanian identity, having a central core Orthodox belief.

The concepts of doctrine and ideology generated by Crainic and deeply influence by his *prophetic-messianic vision* linked to our national redefining, by the frame and way in which the Romanian people should rediscover their identity through culture (predominantly a traditional one, archaic). This complex identity – a true nucleus of Romanism – must be corroborated with Orthodoxy. Crainic has in view, an *Orthodoxy* which does not indulge in passivity, but it is in a perpetual dynamic motion, becoming even radicalized, or warrior, being a factor of metamorphosis and, at the same time, *a mean through which the full spiritual hidden potential of the Romanian citizen to be discovered and freed.*

One of the dilemmas which Crainic's controversial personality arises is that related to his *radical orthodox belief*. One could ask is his exacerbated nationalism is the generator of his orthodox belief, or if his a-priori "fundamentalist" orthodox belief is the source of his adhesion to the ultra-nationalist core. This question remains open, and can easily represent the subject for further research.

Aiud prison represented << o slow dive in Dante's circles of sufferings, hell imagined by his kind, a terrible return in mases' anonymity besotted by the camos [...]>>. During detentions, time and space re-dimension themselves to the point of dehumanisation <<man from the underground>>, described in Dostoievski's novel. A true interior decline begins when Crainic becomes the prisoner of his own proper ideology and country. For Crainic, *the experience of incarceration is dual*, and it involves that aspect of alienation from the faith, *alienation* augmented by the sentiment of abandonment, as well as that of *retrieval in God*.<sup>27</sup>

In what concerns Crainic and others like him, the path of mystical ascension, through a deep anchorage in religiosity and spirituality, have represented the only solution for psychological revival and of fight against attempts to destroy will and identities. Retrieving God and belief is more than a declared one, it represents the only method of survival before the horrors of prison. The Christian practice of fasting, practiced by Jesus Himself, in a state

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<sup>27</sup> Geta Marcela PÂRVULESCU, Nichifor Crainic - Monografie (Deva: Editura Emia, 2010). pp. 223-224

of solitude, as a precursory for the mission of Logos within the world, it potentates the idea of a spiritual fight with his own self. It is in this paradigm in which the Father of the Primary Church interpreted fasting, as an act of restoration of the primordial link between Adam and the paradisiac state, as healing for the state of the illusory state generated by the sin. The way Crainic describes this phenomenon of acute and perpetual famine is part of the Christian mystical path. The link that is realized, at an emotional level, between a state of martyr experience and Chris Communion, both meant to consecration, they correspond to the initial ecclesial state. Through these acts of contemplation, reflexivity and interiorization of mystical living (which generates a special *ars poetica*) Crainic approaches his mundane calling. His spiritual transfiguration couldn't have happened without the "uplifting" to the solitary confinement, nor without the preexistence of a kerygmatic substrata in the spirit of his theological calling.

The procession of the sufferings befallen in this period upon Crainic is stomped at his appeal to divine instance and the *imitatio Christi* act through prayers for the souls of torturers and oppressors alike. His prolonged incarceration can be interpreted as a period of spiritual catharsis for Crainic as man and intellectual. From a spiritual point of view, **Crainic finds again vocation and belief**. This metamorphosis is more visible especially in his poetic work. His inner trauma, but also his capacity to transform the lyrics loaded with a deep mystical meaning, becomes obvious in the post-carceral poetry. This no longer a descriptive act, but a inner living of the divine Logos, it is an interiorization of the mystical experience.

The concept of *logos* has a millennial history and a long evolution. In Christianity this extremely complex concept as meaning is associated with the second Person of the Holy Trinity, with Christ-The embodied Word. (In. 1,3) One of these most profound texts of the New Testament (namely, *the ioaneic prologue*) name Christ the Saviour; *the Word Λογος of God*, who inhabited between man, and saving them "The word body has been made "sarx" "incarnatione"/ expresses in simple and comprehensive words the teaching of the incarnation of the Saviour, one of the Christian soteriology. The concept of *logos* was used in Greek philosophy by *Heraclit* (500 B.C.), later by *Plato*, *Aristotle*; also, it appears in the stoic doctrine, where the *logos* and nature constitute a well contoured unity. In fact, the most important moment in the evolution of this concept is that in which it is recognized its quality of personal being. And the one who sheds light upon this fact is Filon of Alexandria.

He continues the platonic and stoic tradition and makes a step forward, giving to Logos a personal character<sup>28</sup>.

The idea that the logos represents the Face of God makes some *anthropological openings* which will find its complete meaning with the embodiment of the Son of God. The logos represents the face of God; through Him world was created; human intelligence or his capacity to reason represents, on its turn, a reflection of the logos.

**Christ Logos** is, at the same time, *Sophia* = Wisdom accomplished – which communicates to hearty people through faith, grace and the cultivation of virtues *Filon of Alexandria* hasn't considered logos as a simple metaphor, but has accentuated its role as **primordial element and mediator between transcendent and immanent**. The Holly Fathers have shown that *logos* (= word and science) transmits to the receiver a message, and essential knowledge. Saint *Athanasius the Great* speaks about the *logos of Creation*, showing that the seen world and the unseen world was created accordingly to an incomprehensible rationality for a man, and the Creation and all these absolute acts and our incorporation to into the Church transmits us essential teachings.

The peak of the beauty of patristic thought is the teaching about Logos and the divine wisdom. Pre-existent in Heraclit's philosophy, especially in the stoic one, the Logos gains with the Holly Parents a new and important meaning, becoming a core for the Christian thought<sup>29</sup>. Corporal, even with a subtle materiality, travelling like a fluid through all the elements of the visible world, for the stoics, the Logos keeps from the pagan philosophy only the name, it is within Christian philosophy generating principle and redeemer of the universe.

Crainic is not a theoretician of mysticism and nor is he a practitioner, but he remains a theolog-philosopher. From these perspectives, using the mechanisms proper to philosophy, he tries to actualize the evangelic message in a patristic manner linked to Filocalia. The Logos represents the fundamental axis of Eastern spirituality and can be analyzed rationally, philosophically, and in the same time experienced at a theological, mystical, level, Crainic makes a compared philosophical analysis, and this thing represents the point of difference

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<sup>28</sup> 245 See Marian Hillar, „The Logos and Its Function in the writings of Philo of Alexandria: Greek interpretation of the Hebrew Mith and Foundations of Christianity”, *A Journal from The Radical Reformation. A Testimony to Biblical Unitarianism* VII, 4 (1998), p. 50.

<sup>29</sup> “Christianity itself, not being a philosophical system, „is before all a historical person, that of Christ”. Basile TATAKIS, *Filosofia bizantină*, ed. F. Tudor, Eduard and Adrian Carabă, Vasile (București: Editura Nemira, 2010). p. 192

from the mystics, or from other philosophers of religion. Starting from this analysis of the logos he will find the “**lived**” logos, the experienced logos, in the equation of the reintroduction of the phenomenon of discourse regarding logos in the popular Romanian spirituality, one deprived of this philosophical vision, hence by the conceptual deepness of the living act.

The Logos represents that identifying element in a Christological perspective, linked to the kathological / universality of the ecclesial state. It is a common Christian element, but Crainic needs this philosophical approach and the reintroduction of this debate in the Romanian space in order to shed light on the specificity of Romanian Orthodoxy. The appeal to tradition, traditionalism, archaic spirituality, ancestral peasant culture, folklore and ethnography, in a revisited manner, represent the only solution to counter these prejudicial for the national identity of the village (as an idyllic-ancestral environment) and of the Romanian kind. Thus, the ideological quintessence of the gândirist movement is generated by the core of unitive logos between ratio and fide, in a Romanian cultural and spiritual approach, with a specific mystical approach. The decoding of this mystics is to be done starting from the analysis of the logos in a rational-philosophical manner.

The logos, the central concept of the mystical theology, as unitive manifestation, is introduced gradually by Nichifor Crainic. Like we have already stated, the fundament of Crainic’s argumentation in favour of a philosophical approach upon mysticism will be represented, inevitably, by the theological vision of the orthodox patristic. The didactic manner of his courses of mystic, representing his main theological work, includes, at the beginning of each lecture, justifying elements having an introductory role (*captatio benevolentiae*) of his own vision regarding the particular theological or philosophical presented element. Crainic builds an argued rhetoric, fragmentary, which contributes, element by element, to a construction of his theological -philosophical theory, as a whole.

Logos involves a special *dynamism* and has profound meanings and numerous which must be researched and experimented. In *gândirism* an original philosophical, cultural and literary movement some key elements of Crainic’s vision takes shape. This core includes concepts such as:

1. *The appeal to Romanian tradition*
2. *Autohtonomism*



### 3. *Orthodoxy*

Crainic and the gândirists consider and affirm that the re-update of the orthodox core as guiding element in the Romanian space is achieved through a repeated appeal to the divine instance, through appeal to history and the deepness of philosophy, thus ***logos must be argued and connected to the teachings of the Holly Parents, within the limits of the dogma and uphold, also, through references and the works of the reputed philosophers.*** In this context, Crainic rediscovers *the significations of Renan mysticism via Meister Eckhart of Hochheim* Logos as *theologia* points out the idea that Christianity isn't just a philosophical system, but it is – before everything – a historical figure of the Messiah. As Dumitru Staniloae underlines Crainic's theological thought, Crainic's work is under the sign of Logos, which is eternal (meaning, uninterrupted) and – at the same time – has descended among men for our redemption (meaning embodied). Believing in logos as divine reason for the world, the orthodox doctrine accentuates *the value of the teandric principle* – meaning of man's work (pilgrim on the path to the Kingdom of Heaven) in communion with God.

*Romanism or autochthon nationalism*, contoured and promoted by Crainic's writings and discourses is tightly linked to multi-secular Orthodoxy, as it's the nation and its Church. Using a large number of rational argued arguments, Crainic debated intensively with the philosopher Constantin Rădulescu-Motru, who launched the idea that româanism represented a new reality, constituted and affirmed especially after the fulfilment of the national desideratum (19180, after the creation of the Great Romania.”<sup>30</sup> Crainic has shown that the *autochthon nationalism* interpreted “in the authentic sense of the word” has got an undoubted Christian character and a lot of representants of mark within the Romanian thinkers and cultural representatives.

The professor Mihai Gheorghiu hold that even though Nichifor Crainic was a spiritual mentor for Romanian nationalism and has determined the inter-war intellectuality to carefully and sensibility re-evaluate the thesaurus of ancient traditions and of orthodox spirituality, he lacked political ability.<sup>31</sup> “*The mystics teacher*” has become a doctrinaire for the Romanian orthodox nationalism through his ideological-theological essayistic. The form

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<sup>30</sup> Nichifor Crainic, has contested and argued against a lot of his contemporary's Constantin Rădulescu Motru statements, debating with him along the time throughout articles published in *Gândirea* and through conferences held in university centres from Romania or from abroad. See Constantin Rădulescu- MOTRU *Românismul. Catehismul unei noi spiritualități*, p. 27.

<sup>31</sup> Professor M. Gheorghiu named Crainic “theologian, missionary, mystic lost in politics” Mihai GHEORGHIU, *Reversul istoriei. Eseu despre opera lui Mircea Eliade*, p.

of his nationalistic essayistic is the *sermon*<sup>32</sup> Crainic shows that the Christian teaching is the only immortal doctrine, perennial, which can offer eternal guiding mark to the disoriented man, almost lost in chaos. Crainic's nationalism, sometimes simply called "românism" or "autochthonism", represents in fact, a viable solution, an exit path out of the inter-war ideological chaos. Crainic considers that, through the discovery and the revival of the ancient traditions, deeply marked by the doctrine and orthodox spirituality, nation can avoid and counteract both occidental individualism and Bolshevik collectivism.

Analysed in an objective manner, Crainic's nationalism is not xenophobe, nor extremist (even if some of Crainic's articles expressed the frustration of a Romanian orthodox majority toward quick enrichment and economical power of some "foreign of kindred"). Crainic's nationalism represents a powerful reaction toward Romanian elites modernism, toward the like of discern in the selection of the models of life and moral conduct, toward the religious indifference and superficiality of his contemporaries.

Geta Marcela PÂRVĂNESCU held, regarding Crainic's political activity, that: "*entering in the labyrinth Nichifor Crainic proposed, in fact, re-establishing the ethnocratic state, which from his perspective represents a harmonious project, and especially viable*"<sup>33</sup> The ethnocratic state does not represent an utopic project and nor does it represent a simple imaginary element, abstract, dissociated from reality and history. Contrariwise, discussing about *românism*, about the history of the land inherited from the elders, Nichifor Crainic sheds light upon the personalities of recent history (19<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>34</sup> and contemporary (the historian Nicolae Iorga)<sup>35</sup>. These special individuals remark themselves also through the fact they have plenary contoured the shape of a spectacular Romanian state, a complete one – which, on one hand constitutes a *reality* (fulfilled by the constitution of the Great Romania) and, on the other hand, which still remains an *ideal model*.

Nichifor Crainic remains a controversial personality in spite completely adhering to the teaching of the Church and trying to put this in the corpus of the state, for it to be absolved of chaos and degeneration. He considered that Orthodoxy constitutes the essential element for românism and that the rejuvenation proposed and promoted by the Romanian elites alienates

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<sup>32</sup> Mihai GHEORGHIU „Nichifor Crainic- misionar rătăcit în politică” in *Reversul istoriei. Eseu despre opera lui Mircea Eliade*, p.

<sup>33</sup> G. M. PÂRVĂNESCU, „N. Crainic- gânditorul politic” în *Nichifor Crainic- monografie*, ed. Emia, Deva, 2010, p. 164.

<sup>34</sup> N. Crainic evokes the figure of **Nicolae Bălcescu**, as well as Eminescu's thought, manifested throughout his poetic work.

<sup>35</sup> Politically and philosophically speaking, Nichifor Crainic did not share all of Iorga's ideas, but he appreciated him greatly.

the people from the traditions transmitted and kept with holiness from a generation to the next.

The ethnocracy proposed and promoted by Crainic as a manner to structure and govern a people in the perspective of eternity and not only of our immanent, limited existence, presumes a constant relation to the Christian morality and teachings. *The ethnocracy* being a concept of Christian inspiration and funding, doesn't reduce itself only to establishing theoretical markers, but it assumes applying them in the daily life of a nation. Crainic has shown that this project is an achievable ideal; for him, the ethnocracy represented a program (authentic and not formal) for a Christian governance of the people, an applicable one which targeted an effective transformation of the Romanian realities.

*The relation between româanism and Orthodoxy* was further analysed by father Dumitru Stăniloae, who has shown that the elements of ethnicity and spirituality have merged harmoniously, in the multi-ethnic and poli-confessional context of Transylvania and in the whole area of Romanian Orthodoxy.

Like Nichifor Crainic, father Dumitru STĂNILOAE considers that underlying the spiritual particularities and the value of the inherited traditions, we are not hurting the national sentiments of other ethnic representative (minoritarian, even in the Carpathian space), but we contour and state our ethnic and confessional identity. From Stăniloae's perspective, overlapping the ethnic and spiritual elements have essentially contribute to the emancipation of Romanians found for centuries under foreign domination and to the achievement of the Great Romania. For him, as for Crainic, the Christian fundamentals and traditions of the nation have deeply marked the becoming and maintaining Romanians as people, as well as our adhesion and affirmation as ecclesiastic entity / community.

In the essay named *Short theological interpretation of the nation*, Dumitru Stăniloae points out, using biblical and eccentric arguments, that the nation doesn't represent a remanence of a pagan world, as some romano-catholic theologians would say, but a frame-community which can – and has to – be save through faith and deed". Unlike Nae Ionescu, who would consider that the apparition of nations on the scene of history is linked, even caused, by the fall of man under the sin of insubordination, Dumitru Staniloae has shown that Adam and Eve included, potentially all future nations of the world and, in spite of misunderstandings between nations, which degenerated in blood sheds, enslavement and conquests, at the base of every national typology acts a Godly model.

The theological interpretation of nation proves the deepness of Staniloae's thought; he surpassed Nichifor Crainic's summary theological argumentation, *exiting the sphere of the journalistic and ideological discourse proper to the inter-war epoch*. We can affirm that through his theological argumentation, Dumitru Staniloae did not fall in the allurements of (vulgar) nationalism, promoted by his contemporaries." Even though shedding light on the ontological link between Romanian spirituality and the orthodox living constituted a common goal for both of them, *Staniloae pointed-out especially the theological aspects of românism*, and Nichifor Crainic *gave to românism a philosophical-nationalist perspective*. Father Staniloae pointed-out especially the pastoral care of *românism*, insisting upon the fact that traditions and "traditional" values of the people must be rediscovered and updated; and Crainic gave to *românism* a nationalistic face, imposing the recognition of the ancestral value (and at the same time) rejecting the idea and influences of modernism and cosmopolitanism.

Even though Crainic's implication and political affiliation was disapproved by the younger Staniloae, they have collaborated for a long period of time for researching and pointing out the link between nation and orthodox spirituality. In the between-war historical and ideological context, sketching, and especially, growing awareness upon this link, represented a major challenge for both theologians. Nichifor Crainic and after him Staniloae have managed to theologially point-out the existential link between the Romanian soul and the basic elements for the orthodox thought and living.

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The relation of harmony and unity between the ethnic and confessional elements definitory for Romanian Orthodoxy non-particularized within the pan-orthodox community, “*Our orthodoxy is only ours... it is something else then Russian pravoslavia.*”<sup>36</sup> The outstanding connection between Romanic (ethnic) elements with orthodox (church) elements makes Romanian orthodoxy become a generous theme for analysis and philosophical meditation... “Of course, by reason of liberty, Romanian philosophy of tomorrow it is not obliged to make orthodox theology. The field of philosophy is huge and her deep perspectives, like the Romanian soul is. Our philosophy and nation, nevertheless, resides in the link with eternity, because of the Orthodox frame in which it has been formed and which pleads for continuity and the fulfilment of the calling and the historical destiny. In the ancient belief and teachings one can find or re-find a majority of the essential themes of philosophical analysis.”<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> D. STĂNILOAE, “Biserica Ortodoxă din Transilvania”, în *Gândirea*, an XXII, nr. 5/ 1943, p. 247.

<sup>37</sup> D. STĂNILOAE, “Biserica Ortodoxă din Transilvania”, în *Gândirea*, an XXII, nr. 5/ 1943, p. 247.

In another context, father Stăniloae affirmed: “We must now that from Renaissance onward, when the false lights of exaggerated humanism, of rationalisms and positivism, has appeared in culture and history, beginning the road of return to pagan philosophy – which existed before Christ. Humanism, as far from God philosophy, alienated man; from God, removing him from His authority, humanism has perverted man; Man betrayed his own received from the Creation destiny, and the nation lost immediately its inner harmony and spiritual equilibrium”

D. STĂNILOAE, *Duhovnici români în dialog cu tinerii*, Ed. Bizantină, București, 1999, p. 2.