

The *Coincidentia oppositorum* and the Feeling of Being

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Abstract

The *coincidentia oppositorum* formula abbreviates a profound tendency of human thought, which is present in all times and cultures. In other words, the thinking has always felt that its supreme and sublime task is to “make peace” between Perfect and Imperfect, Transcendence and Immanence, Spirit and Matter, Good and Evil. Also, almost all ontological projects axiomatically stipulate the primordially and the superior metaphysical competence of a *feeling of being*, a pre(non)-thinking disposition of the human being. In this sense, the case of Martin Heidegger can be brought forth, who argues that *affective disposition (Befindlichkeit)*, that is not “affects” or “feelings” or “state of soul,” pre-determines the entire perception, understanding and outlook on the world and ourselves, and it is one that provides, in the first instance, matching the *Dasein* with his being. This article examines how the *coincidentia oppositorum* and the *feeling of being* are assumed and operationalized in the ontological project designed by Mihai Şora, who is considered to be “the Philosopher par excellence” in Romanian culture.

Keywords: *coincidentia oppositorum*, feeling of being, Şora, metaphysics, purpose of being

1. Introduction

Analyzing the *coincidentia oppositorum* formula, Mircea Eliade comes to the conclusion that the expression coined by Nicholas Cusanus (1401–1464)¹ encompasses a profound

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tendency of human thought, which is present in all times and cultures: “the fusion of all things, the suppression of all limits, the suspension of any «forms», any distance and discrimination” (Eliade 1940, 25)². Indeed, although the “concrete universal” (another expression of *coincidentia oppositorum*) has had a full acceptance only in the philosophical modernity (to a large extent due to Hegel's work), yet the “concrete universal” is not, in essence, a modern invention. Whereas thinking has always felt that its supreme and sublime task is to “make peace” between Perfect and Imperfect; Transcendence and Immanence; Spirit and Matter; Good and Evil. And the metaphysical excellence of thinking, if we do search for such excellence, does not consist only in the fact of identifying and announcing supreme and sublime task, but it consists precisely in the fact of thinking that supreme and sublime task of thinking.

Although metaphysics is defined as *the science of being*, and thus it is an exclusive task of thinking, however, almost all ontological projects axiomatically stipulate the primordially and the superior metaphysical competence of a *feeling of being* (an affective and pre(non)-thinking disposition of human being). In this sense, the most eloquent case is Martin Heidegger, who has extensively endeavored to ensure metaphysics an undoubted distinction. The German philosopher argues – in *Being and Time* – that *Dasein* (“being-there” or “being-here”)³ has two basic modes (*Existenzial*) of being-in-the-world: *the affective disposition (Befindlichkeit or Stimmung)* and *the understanding (Verstehen)*. But this affective disposition (that is not “affects” or “feelings” or “states of the soul”)⁴ pre-determines the entire perception, understanding and outlook on the world and ourselves, and is the one that matches, in the first instance, the *Dasein* with his being.

“As engagement in the disclosure of being as a whole as such, freedom has already attuned all comportment to being as a whole. However, being attuned (attunement) can never be understood as «experience» and «feeling,» because it is thereby simply deprived of its essence. For here it is interpreted on the basis of something («life» and «soul») that can maintain the semblance of the title of essence only as long as it bears in itself the distortion and misinterpretation of being attuned. Being attuned, i.e., ek-sistent exposedness to beings as a whole, can be «experienced» and «felt» only because the «man

who experiences» without being aware of the essence of the attunement, is always engaged in being attuned in a way that discloses beings as a whole.” (Heidegger 1993, 126)

In this study we will focus on how the *coincidentia oppositorum* and the *feeling of being* are appropriated and operationalized in the ontological project conceived by Mihai Şora⁵, who is considered to be “the Philosopher par excellence” in Romanian culture, despite the fact that he did not (and does not) enjoy a reputation as wide as other prestigious figures in Romanian culture and philosophy (like Constantin Noica, Mircea Eliade, Emil Cioran, Eugene Ionesco or Lucian Blaga). For example, Aurel Codoban notes – with lucid admiration and in agreement with many others exegetes – that Mihai Şora “was, and remains, undeniably and in the most authentic sense, the Philosopher par excellence. [...] Şora appears to us today as the most austere philosopher in philosophical pursuits, who was not appropriated by a philosophy of culture, values or religion [...]. Şora’s thinking is one of those post-Husserlian philosophies that is indeed very rare in Romanian philosophy, therefore a really modern one in the sense of Western chronology.” (Codoban 1997, 92)

2. The spiritual background of Şora’s philosophical path

To connect ourselves as appropriately as possible to Mihai Şora's philosophy, we rely on the same guidelines that helped him, in one way or another, to take it out of obscurity, to view and assume that metaphysical location where it already is. According to the testimony of the Romanian philosopher, the first edifying contact was with Nicholas Cusanus. Although this medieval philosopher created a term (*coincidentia oppositorum*) which had a spectacular career – both in the public space and in the cultivated and sophisticated circles –, yet he is almost ignored by books of history of philosophy and is invoked only succinctly by the specialized exegesis⁶. But Mihai Şora was not discouraged by this “marginalization” and “vulgarization” committed by the posterity of Cusanus. So he got acquainted with the medieval cardinal in a sufficiently immediate and

uninhibited way so that this introduction was for him an early opportunity of (re)finding himself.

„Undoubtedly, Cusanus is an axis for my thinking, I am fully aware of this; I want to say that there is inside me, latently, a «polar» thinking, grafted on a keen feeling of infinity, only that there, in Cusanus, I finally found a model that suited me, the model of *coincidentia oppositorum* which goes beyond the limit of opposites, a model which then became operative in my own thinking.” (Tănase 2006, 256)

We must point out that this revealing intimacy with Nicholas Cusanus was somewhat prepared and announced by the encounter with Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas (in the context of those university seminars conducted by Mircea Eliade). So this encounter with Cusanus was the initial occasion that made Mihai Şora unambiguously to identify the metaphysical stake (and challenge). But he acutely felt the need to find the best possible ways (methods) to face this challenge. And so the most suitable way that he found was phenomenology. First, the one promoted by Edmund Husserl, who cultivated an irrepressible appetite for a radical sincerity towards the world and consciousness. But however, Husserl did not help him satisfy this appetite. So Şora searched further and this is how he somehow inevitably discovered Martin Heidegger.

Therefore, drawing on Husserl and Heidegger, Mihai Şora fully understood that the phenomenology is the only way one can *access* truth, freedom and being. But equally, and only through Heidegger did it become clear to him that phenomenology cannot clarify the being, scientifically and transparently (as Husserl wanted), but that phenomenology only puts us firmly and irrevocably in front to the mystery of being.

After these encounters, which have endowed him with a vigorous philosophical framework, Mihai Şora had another edifying encounter: namely with Blaise Pascal – who managed to give that *coincidentia oppositorum* a broad, dense and delightful amplitude.

„Pascal is explained by Pascal, because he is all-encompassing; paradoxically, he has his own logic: «*tout est un, tout est divers*», which transcends formal logic. For example, he urges you to appropriate two contradictory sentences at the same time, i.e. each

yes to be a *not*, and every *not* to be ayes. For me, reading Pascal was like a revelation.” (Şora 2005, 30)

Trying to synthesize these edifying encounters of Mihai Şora, we can say the following: while Nicholas Cusanus initially helped him to see his road (to strongly focus his gaze on the horizon ahead, which looks back at him), and Husserl and Heidegger encouraged him to start walking down this road, choosing his steps very carefully, Pascal helped him to convince himself that this was the right road to take.

These would be the most appropriate philosophical havens where we vigorously and effectively anchor, so as not to become shipwrecked in the confusing, erudite and overwhelming storm of Mihai Şora's philosophical texts⁷. The philosophical locations that are under the sign of *coincidentia oppositorum* (especially the coincidence between Unity and Multiplicity), under the sign of austerity and heroism of phenomenology, and especially under the sign of that frail, decaying and mortal reed, but sufficiently thinking, lucid and poetic in order to fully realize the greatness of perfection and immortality.

3. **The anthropological-metaphysical parameters of Şora's philosophy**

As Mihai Şora said, his first book (*Du dialogue intérieur. Fragment d'une Anthropologie métaphysique / About the Inner Dialogue. Fragment of a Metaphysical Anthropology*) is actually an essay, but it is based on a consistent and serious metaphysical legitimation contained in a volume entitled *Unité et Pluralité. Notes pour une métaphysique de l'« ens creatum » / Unity and Plurality. Notes for a metaphysics of the “ens creatum”* (but the manuscript of this volume was lost and therefore never published). However, despite its prosaic extravagances and wiles, we consider that, through its subtext, *The Inner Dialogue* provides an appropriate image of the metaphysical construct of that extensive and rigorous lost volume. Moreover, according to the frequent statements made by the Romanian philosopher, but also according to commentators who have studied *Thinner Dialogue*, the metaphysical anthropology prefigured in his French debut

volume is both the starting and the destination point of the entire philosophical journey of Mihai Şora (Dragomir 2009, 104). So all subsequent developments are actually enlightening extensions (sometimes very ample and complicated), but did not significantly renovate the ontological architecture of *The Inner Dialogue*.

In the following we present the anthropological-metaphysical parameters of *The Inner Dialogue* in a synthetic manner, as they can be identified in the Romanian philosopher's debut book.

In the onset, the assumption of the “created being” (*ens creatum*) is made. Specifically, it is the assumption of *the ontological difference* – an infinitesimal distance that is impossible to cover between *the pure and plenary being* and *the created and poor being*. As a natural consequence of this assumption, the *creature* condition of man, placed irrevocably under the regime of a *finite, precarious and stray existence*, is asserted. And with finitude, precariousness and straying (which allows the existence of freedom) implicitly and somehow inevitably, the assumption of *the temporalization* (of the real *becoming* – “the concrete destiny of the created being”) is put into play. Then, to manage somehow “with benefits” the metaphysical situation generated by *ens creatum*, the *ontological difference* and the *temporalization*, the assumption of *ontological redemption* (which does not mean a full and definitive recovery of purity and perfection) is assumed and put to work, but it involves only an exhausting and endless endeavor to disclose *the being* of created being (Şora 1995).

Even if man will never attain the graceful simplicity of a tree, he can choose, through sustained effort, to reach his limits, namely to find fullness. The real purpose of human life is *to be completely what it is within the given limits, here and now*. But being a “seeker of being”, man wanders through the “labyrinth of his inner life”, in order to prosper and “bear fruit” like a tree, he is forced to walk a difficult path of struggle with himself (which is expressed by this *inner dialogue*). This fight with “the inner obstacles” is an inevitable one, namely the *drama* of a permanent hesitation between alternatives, since man is not “infallible in distinguishing between his true and

false fruit". And rejecting the "false fruit", which are constantly offered to the human essence by the voice of protean appearances, is the stake and also the challenge of the inner dialogue. To cope with the torment of the inner dialogue, man has at his disposal the "existential-operational" attention (the concentration, the alertness), that can help him choose the "true answers" (Șora 1995, 32-47).

This is the metaphysical basis on which Mihai Șora has endeavored to ensure a strong and fertile ground on which his anthropology could take root. This anthropology can essentially be summarized as follows: wandering – conscious, free and especially fallen – through the corridors of a labyrinth (the inner dialogue), the human being must be subjected to a perpetual test to obtain the certificate of authenticity, to be what it is, within what is possible to be. A test at which only provisional pass can be achieved: a provisional, yet invigorating ontological redemption. And the durability of this metaphysical edifice is permanently ensured by a (meta)supposition: *coincidentia oppositorum*.

To better visualize the condition of *coincidentia oppositorum*, we will briefly present the *ontological model of the zero radius sphere* developed by Mihai Șora, a model which has an allegorical function similar to Plato's "allegory of the cave", and which also has a clear structural similarity with Plotinus's circle model (Cioveie 2011, 359-361).

It is a sphere with a center described as U.P. (*Universal Possibility to be*), a center from which an infinite number of rays extend to the surface, composed of an infinite number of points outside each other, a surface called *Existential Topicality* (E.T.). The radius beginning from U.P. is modulated in a multitude of *Intermediate Possibility* (I.P.), and culminates in *Terminals Possibility* (T.P.), the last stage before E.T. If we unfold the sphere, we get a plan sphere which transposed vertically would represent the geometric locus of interiority, as an equivalent of the (zero) radius, and which horizontally would represent the exteriority, as an equivalent of the surface. Every possibility to be, including the intermediate possibility, is in its way an infinite (but a "good" infinite, in the Hegelian sense – the synthesis of opposites –, not a bad infinite – obtained

through an endless repetition of the same). This infinite without exteriority is called “the infinite of pure compenetration,” by analogy with the *coincidentia oppositorum* coined by Cusanus: any beings on the E.T. level represent in fact an infinite, because the radius leading from U.P. to E.T. it is null (Şora 1978, 92-119).

4. The feeling of being and the purpose of being

There is no doubt, Mihai Şora was very well aware (lucid and edified) about the inevitable requirements and challenges of metaphysics. That is why he has set out on the road to metaphysics, trying to confront it. But beyond the urgent need to face the stringent pressures exerted by a world which is at the crossroads, this metaphysical commitment has proven to have a single stake: *the recovery (the reiteration) of the feeling of being (the feeling of fullness)*. And so, even when trying to place himself in the framework of metaphysics, Mihai Şora commits a metaphysical offence. Because the supreme stake of his commitment is not *the meaning of being*, but *the purpose of being*. In other words, he is not interested in “what is the being?”, because already has a pre-science, a pre-understanding of being.

„I realize very well that this «to be» does not catch it to its end from me and that even at this end I cannot tell in a comprehensive and appropriate way what I was *given* (occasionally) to *know* about it. I cannot *say* (as I can, for example, about beans and maize): it can only be *mumbled*. But still I *know* it. And yet *directly*.” (Şora 1985, 104)

And this pre-science about “to be” is granted by a primordial and overwhelming feeling of being (*feeling of fullness*):

„[...] for me [...], what gives meaning to the verb *to be* is a *feeling* –not just any feeling, but a fundamental one (...), an overwhelming feeling (which, in fact, you cannot oppose in any possible way) (...) –, a feeling of *fullness*, and the best name that I could find for this feeling was JOY. And this name I have not acquired at the end of an analysis, but it was *given* to me. It was given *from the very beginning*.” (Şora 1985, 25)

So this *feeling of fullness*, equated by Mihai Şora with “the joy of the fact of being,” is announced to be a pre(extra)-metaphysical “state”, a direct harmony with the being, and

somehow requiring to be recovered (reiterated, recognized as such). But the Romanian philosopher did not give us many details about this *feeling*, which he described as a “mysterious” and “personal” revelation.

For Şora, the question “what is the being?” is unnecessary and even illegal, because the being is completely inexpressible, “impalpable”. The Romanian philosopher considers that the single stake (and task) of metaphysics is, in fact, *the purpose of being* (“what can be done with the being?” or “what good is the being?”)⁸. Moreover, the task of metaphysics is not to think about *what is* the purpose of being, whereas the feeling of fullness already provides the pre-science of this purpose. Şora considers that the task of metaphysics is, in fact, to think *how one can accomplish* this purpose (the recovery of the feeling of fullness, the “cosmic integration”). Therefore, not only does metaphysics have to direct to a “beyond” (which is identified by Şora as a “transcendent-immanent”), but it should also provide guidance regarding access routes to this “beyond” – thus becoming a wisdom and a vital engagement.

“Conceptually speaking, I can’t conceive an ontology that does not direct to a beyond which is really that of metaphysics. That’s why I feel Heidegger’s ontology from *Sein und Zeit* as a egology, although the text forces me to not conceive it as a strict limitation to anthropology. And I do not know why, although it speaks of daily life, of the utility of *das Man*, I got the impression that the «fundamental ontology» of Heidegger does not provide a strong ground, because it does not oppose you from *outside*.” (Şora 2005,79)

By placing the metaphysics under a different imperative, other than that required by the meaning of being, Mihai Şora not only eludes, but somehow he even diverts the essential task of metaphysics: to be, first and last, a *science of being*. Indeed, it is indisputable that the question “what is being?” is pointless and perfectly devoid of sense (because it already possesses the pre-meaning of being). But exactly this perfect “emptiness” (concealment) makes the thinking be firm and unavoidably detained around (in front) of being. And also to be detained around itself, in trying to confront its own essence.

Although he committed this metaphysical offence, Mihai Şora still remains on the way to metaphysics. Even if his essential stake is the purpose of being, which places him in

anthropological territory (of man as a created being), the Romanian philosopher, however, constantly appeals to the prestige of metaphysics. Therefore, Mihai Şora's anthropology is a *metaphysical* one. All the pieces of his anthropological device receive an “ontological” determination (ontological unity, ontological redemption, ontological wealth, ontological imperative, ontological appetite and so on). In other words, metaphysics is used for the adjectival additions. Once announced and defined as a *science of being*, it does not mean that metaphysics is available freely and efficiently. And even less does it mean that metaphysics can forget or neglect its own essence. On the contrary, once barely announced and defined this way, metaphysics is placed on a single and appropriate framework in order to find (or not to find) some intrinsic essence: *the framework of the being*, and only of the being.

In the following we will make an analysis of the way in which Mihai Şora committed the offence which discredited *the metaphysical dignity (and vocation) of nothingness*, through his escape from (and through) the *coincidentia oppositorum* (on the basis of that *feeling of being*), precisely because nothingness would have radically devastated the anthropological edifice.

5. **The *Coincidentia oppositorum* and the metaphysical discrediting of the nothingness**

First we will elaborate on how Mihai Şora understands the *nothingness*. The Romanian philosopher considers that nothingness does not have the meaning of *non-being*, it does not have the consistency of metaphysical entities which radically delimit the being (uncreated, unchanging, perfect). The nothingness of Şora is only active in the framework of anthropology, of the man as a created and fallen being. Assuming that *being* means *to be completely what it is within its own given limits, here and now*, at the same time he postulates (only in the case of man) an imperative: *you (MUST) be completely what you are, within your own given limits, here and now* (Şora, 1985; Şora 1978; Şora 1995). And precisely through its imperative essence, this “MUST” brings with it the fact of freedom, i.e. the possibility of refusing the implications of this imperative. So, when the man refuses

(through his freedom) to comply with the requirements of his own being, he is in a decayed condition, which equates an alienation, an abandonment of the authenticity of his being. Here, and only here, the nothingness of “Șora” finds its place – he fully identifies with everything that is appearance, inauthenticity, wandering.

But how is it possible to provide such a condition of nothingness? How is it possible to discredit the metaphysical dignity of the nothingness? We can find the answer by examining the way Mihai Șora appropriated the *coincidentia oppositorum*, the way he (anthropologically and metaphysically) took advantage of this. Above all, we should discern the meaning of this *coincidentia oppositorum*.

When *something* tries to reclaim its identity to be *something*, at the same time it affirms its identity to be *something else* (that delimits something which seeks its identity). For example, according to the *coincidentia oppositorum*, when *The Perfection* tries to recognize, to assert itself as Perfection, then it finds that it is also fully identical with *something else* – *The Imperfection*. But this *something else* (which *delimits* and *ensures* the Perfection’s identity) does not have a *distinct* shape (as *Imperfection*), but it has the shape (identity) of *Non-Perfection*. And the *Non-Perfection* is, in fact, identical with the nothingness. *It is the nothingness*. Therefore, the coincidence of opposites (Perfection-Imperfection) can only work if the nothingness is evacuated, exiled. The coincidence of opposites can acquire its own prestige only if it discredits the metaphysical dignity of nothingness.

Mihai Șora has not taken any lucid precaution when he assumed and operationalized the *coincidentia oppositorum*. Moreover, in reply to this reproach, the Romanian philosopher would answer that, in fact, there is no need for any metaphysical precaution regarding the *coincidentia oppositorum*, whereas it is no more than an expression of the inexpressible (non-conceptual, pre-metaphysical) feeling of fullness, of that cosmic integration. Or, as Cusanus writes, *via rationis* (thinking) cannot figure out the coincidence between the absolute maximum and the equally absolute minimum. Of

course, both Șora and Cusanus are perfectly correct, but they are sacrificing metaphysics. And the being is even able to accept this sacrifice, but only because *it recognizes itself* (through thought) as being. Otherwise it would be completely impossible to identify that feeling of fullness as such.

The Romanian philosopher has allowed to place his stake on the coincidence (given “from the beginning”) between transcendence (the uncreated, unchanging and perfect being) and immanence (the created and poor being, the concreteness) only by discrediting the metaphysical dignity of nothingness, through its exile in the derisory territory of anthropology⁹, exile due to that ineluctable, preliminary – pre(non)-metaphysical – *feeling of an existential plenitude*.

The metaphysical discrediting of the nothingness is quite visible in the allegory of the ontological model of the zero radius sphere, a model which attempts to provide an insight into how the *coincidentia oppositorum* works in the case of the *potency-act* binomial. The zero radius which connects the center (*Universal Possibility to be*) with the surface (*Existential Topicality*) of the sphere is not actually zero. Because between the center and the surface of the sphere there is still an infinitesimal distance which is impossible to cover. Of course, Mihai Șora would justify this by saying that *the nullity* of the radius coincides with *the infinity* of the radius. Invoking the same *feeling of being* that grants – in a pre(non)-metaphysical way – the fact of this coincidence. But we say that, in fact, the Romanian philosopher commits a metaphysical evasion.

NOTES

¹ According to the fifteenth century cardinal, mathematician, and mystic Nicholas Cusanus (also referred to as Nicholas of Cusa and Nicholas of Kues), the *coincidentia oppositorum* – or “coincidence of opposites” – constitutes the “least imperfect” name for God and was the means by which humanity could achieve religious tolerance and, ultimately, world peace. The doctrine of the *coincidentia oppositorum* as it appears in Nicholas Cusanus’s treatises and dialogues has been studied extensively, though not exhaustively. However, we can distinguish five central tenets of this doctrine: (1) *coincidentia* is to be distinguished from *complicatio*; (2) the notion of *coincidentia oppositorum*

encompasses, but is not conflatable with, the notion of *coincidentia contradictoriorum*; (3) in God opposites coincide, and, yet, God is *beyond* the coincidence of opposites; (4) opposing ascriptions are coherently predicable of God; and (5) the declaration that opposites coincide is not necessarily to be construed as the claim that the opposites are identical (Hopkins 2011, 130).

² For all citations from books in Romanian, the English translation of the quotations is done by the author of this article.

³ The meaning of *Da* combines the meaning of “here” and “there,” excluding the spatial-relational distinction made by the English words; *Sein* is the infinitive, “to be”.

⁴ Regarding the meaning of *Befindlichkeit*, Joan Stambaugh – editor and translator of Heidegger’s works in English – says: “The word *Befindlichkeit*, which I have translated as «attunement,» needs some qualification and special comment. Another legitimate translation for this word is «disposition» (here one could refer to the French translation which uses disposition). But despite quite compelling reasons to use «disposition,» I decided that «attunement» was the better choice if only because it seems able to avoid suggesting that there are psychological connotations carried in Heidegger’s analysis of *Befindlichkeit*.” (Heidegger 2010, XXV – “Translator’s Preface”). Also, Joan Stambaugh claims that Heidegger told him that in his later work *Befindlichkeit* becomes *wohnen* (dwelling).

⁵ Mihai Şora was born on November 7, 1916, in a village near Timișoara (Romania). After graduating the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Bucharest (1934-1938), he was granted a scholarship by the French government. In 1939, under the guidance of Jean Laporte, he defended a doctoral thesis about *La notion de la grace chez Pascal (The concept of grace in Pascal)*. In June 1940, he left Paris because of the fascist threat, and settled in Grenoble, where he was appointed to “Jacques Chevalier” University (1940-1945). During this period he developed his first book, *Du dialogue intérieur. Fragment d’une Anthropologie métaphysique (About Inner Dialogue. Fragment of a Metaphysical Anthropology)*, which was published by Gallimard in 1947. From 1945 to 1948, Şora was a trainee researcher at the “Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique” in Paris. In the fall of 1948, he returned to the country to meet his parents again, but due to political complications, he was forced to remain in Romania. In 1978, after an assumed silence which lasted nearly 30 years, he made his Romanian debut with *Sarea pământului. Cantată pe două voci despre rostul poetic (The Salt of the Earth. A two voice cantata about poetic purpose)*, on which occasion he promoted “undercover” and in a dialogic formula the *ontological model of the zero radius sphere*, a model that had been already prefigured in *Du Dialogue intérieur*. Under the same vigilant censorship of the communist regime in Romania, he published the volume *To be, to do, to have* (1985), in which he tries to prove the metaphysical competences of the ontological model of the zero radius sphere in the aesthetic, ethical, social and political domains. After 1989, taking advantage of the cultural liberalization, he became increasingly present and prolific in the Romanian culture. In chronological order, after 1989 Mihai Şora published the following books: *Eu & tu & el & ea sau Dialogul generalizat / I & You & He & She or Generalized Dialogue* (1990),

Firul ierbii / The Blade of Grass (1998), *Câteva crochiuri și evocări / Some Sketches and Evocations* (2000), *Filosoficale. Filosofia ca viață / The Philosophical. The Philosophy as Life* (2000), *Mai avem un viitor? România la început de mileniu* (în dialog cu Sorin Antohi) / *Do We Still Have a Future? Romania at the Beginning of the Millennium* (dialogues with Sorin Antohi) (2001), *Locuri comune / Common Places* (2004), *Clipa și timpul / The Moment and the Time* (2005), *Despre toate și ceva în plus. De vorbă cu Leonid Dragomir / About Everything and Something More. Talking with Leonid Dragomir* (2005).

⁶ Cristian Preda delivers some arguments to confirm this marginalization of the medieval cardinal: “Nicolaus Cusanus is not mentioned in the Romanian philosophy textbooks, but the situation is not very singular, because he is not even present in French high school textbooks, although much time has passed from the public rediscovery of his texts. [...] Generally, the rediscovery of Cusanus in the nineteenth century coincides with the moment Morin's article «Nicolas de Cusa» was published in *Dictionnaire de théologie scolastique*, vol. II, Encyclopédie théologique Migne, XXII, Paris, 1856.” (Preda 1997, 268).

⁷ „In philosophical writings, rarely does anyone use such long sentences (some covering more than one page), with so many digressions and parentheses, and repeated exchanges of lively dialogue contained in a single sentence.” (Nemoianu 1995, 232).

⁸ Although he asserts with obvious conviction that “the explanation, the basis and the purpose, i.e. «why?», «what?» and «what for?»“ are inevitable challenges that philosophy must confront, however the Romanian philosopher evacuated the basis of the being from the territories of metaphysics (because the basis of the being – “what is the being?” – is entirely inaccessible and inexpressible) (Șora 1985, 75).

⁹ By saying “derisory” we do not promote some arrogant misanthropy, but we are just referring to the metaphysical incompetence of the beings (including human being). In this regard, we evoke the gesture of Martin Heidegger: after he completed the existential analysis (in *Being and Time*), the German philosopher endeavored to give up the metaphysical aspects of *Dasein*, taking a step back, to (re)orient his gaze towards the ontological difference, more precisely towards the being. In other words, Heidegger was quite aware of the “anthropological” failure of ontological difference, about the metaphysical incompetence of beings (of *Dasein*).

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