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ABSTRACT OF THE HABILITATION THESIS

„FUNCTIONALIST PHILOSOPHICAL THINKING: ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT”

I already started exploring the German modern philosophy with my PhD thesis – „The concept of the Transcendental Philosophy: Thematic Core and Diversity of Perspectives” – dedicated to the theoretical philosophy of Kant, Fichte and Schelling (2001). My training as a researcher at the Institute of Philosophy of the Romanian Academy had also continued through several scholarships in Germany and Austria. The results of this research were published in several scientific papers as well as in several books.

Being familiarized with the philosophy of Kant allowed me to see deeper in the change of the paradigm that the Kantian thought initiated in the Western Philosophy. Certainly, this paradigm change is admitted for a long time, but usually it is understood as limiting the philosophical interrogation to the world of experience. My philosophical research led me to the idea that, from several points of view, the actual philosophical and theoretical way of thinking is a functionalist one, being essentially marked by the Kantian philosophy. This philosophy is grounded in the idea of function, all of our categories being reoriented according to this new functionalist paradigm. Certainly, the concept of „function” is not always used as such in the post-Kantian philosophical creation, and therefore the identification of the functional content in the various conceptual areas requires a good knowledge of the origin of this type of thinking. Accordingly, following the development of the post-Kantian philosophy, my researches related to the history of philosophy were not only presentations of the philosophical problems of the past, in a historical vein. They were but more and more interpretations of the possibilities of these problems, starting from the increasingly clearer articulation of the functionalist thinking in the post-Kantian philosophy. The first work in which I research the impact of the functionalism in the post-Kantian philosophy was the book *The Concept of functionalisation in Max Scheler and Heinrich Romhach*, a book awarded in 2008 with the award of the Romanian Academy.

In the following years my research activity was focused on unfolding and determining the functionalist characteristic features within the thought of the philosophers of the German Idealism, but also on how this new paradigm of philosophical reflection had influenced the subsequent philosophical creation. This path of research led to a series of scientific studies that I have published after 2006 and that are now gathered in two volumes published in Romanian at the Romanian Academy Publishing House: „The Philosophy of the German Idealism: Benchmarks for a New Modernity” (Bucharest, Romanian Academy Publishing House, 2014) and „Functionalism and Ontology” (Bucharest, Romanian Academy Publishing House, 2014). These volumes may be considered not solely as significant contributions to the understanding of how the functionalist theme works in the background of the thought of many post-Kantian philosophers, particularly of those belonging to the time of the German Idealism, but even as pioneering works in the wider field of the history of philosophy.

One of the traits of the philosophy of German Idealism that can be seen as actual, is its fundamental method of archeology of concepts. In general, this conceptual archeology was considered at that time not only as an analytical undertaking, but also as the describing of the way the logic of the real processes deploy.

There were two main premises that grounded the idea of such an archeology: firstly, the idea that there exists a logical structure of the human thinking. This logical structure was that what Kant considered being the transcendental structure of the human subject. Secondly, this structure pertained not only to the human being but also determined the fundamental structure of reality. The philosophical consequence of these premises was that knowing the human subject meant also knowing the inner aspect of reality. Man was no more seen in the traditional way as the most important creature belonging to God’s creation, in this way he being inserted in an objective world. And this objective world is now conceived after the model represented by the structure of the human thinking. This inner relationship between the dynamics of thought and that of reality is the core of the new functionalistic paradigm.

In continuity with my earlier research, I will try continue to highlight the different functional features that ground the systematic thought of the German Idealism; in this sense, a central aspect of this future research will be the investigation of the manner in which central concepts of this philosophical stream are grounded on the idea of „synthesis”.

Also I intend to develop the systematic frame of the functional thinking, that I understand as a process thinking.

In my view, substantialism cannot any longer meet the actual challenges of the philosophical thought, and it is necessary to develop a new type of ontology and thinking that may correspond to the actual results of the scientific development. The core concept of this new kind of ontology is the concept of process. According to this ontology, reality is not grounded in some ultimate and immutable elements and structures, but it is a continuous interpenetration of transformations, i.e., „processes”.

I intend also to go beyond a mere external description of the process, by making the presupposition that processes are functional unities. Here the elements that build a processual unity reunite themselves as a consequence of the action of an immanent ordering principle of the function type, i.e., of a selecting principle. The functional order is not an external order, but an order that appears spontaneously through the interaction of the elements, and subsequently imposes a higher order in this interaction of the compounding elements. For the ordering principle that emerges is not a transcendent principle, the processes can further interact. Through their mutual interpenetration and the entanglement of their ordering functions new processes arise, coordinated by new functions, which leads to a functional reconfiguration of all the subordinated processes.

In my future research I intend to focus on the thought of several Romanian philosophers, such as Lucian Blaga, Constantin Rădulescu-Motru, Mircea Vulcănescu, P. P. Negulescu sau Camil Petrescu and to show the influence that conceptual structures belonging to the German and Western philosophy in general had on their ontology.

Also I want to analyze the impact that the functionalist paradigm introduced in philosophy by Im. Kant had on the Romanian ontology. In this sense, I emphasized already in several papers on the case of Constantin Noica the way how this paradigm was materialized in the creation of this Romanian philosopher. Insofar as also other Romanian authors develop modern thinking methods that are grounded in an intellectual approach peculiar to the western philosophy, one can assume that for them too the functionalist way of thinking represents an important feature that has to be taken into account for an adequate understanding.

I intend to publish the results of this future research as scientific studies or volumes as well as to present them in philosophical lectures.