The face without man
On human identities in postmodern era and on the metamorphoses of the subject

ILINCA BERNEA
Independent Scholar
Romania

Abstract:

Fragmentation of the conceived or imagined reality, perceptive and emotional fragmentation, collages and puzzles of experience pieces: this is the substance of our lives. Some fragments are in harmony and resonance with each other, some others are in conflict or in contradiction. The existence, even the inner existence, became for most of us, extremely heterogeneous, tensed; hard to handle and to bear. We cannot assimilate ourselves well. We cannot gather our being into a unitary image, into a single man, with a unique identity. The individual doesn't fit us, no more, or we are the misfits, we overpass its essential features. The individual is a procrustean bed for our minds and beings. We stated to brim over.

We became collage-people generating faces, once in a while. A face is not an identity but an exchange coin, a vehicle, a transitory state. Between who and who? Between who and what?

What is a face and what remains of an individual if, beyond this face or faces, we have no idea what the human kind is? How is the subject related to the individual? Is the ego its only center of gravity?

Where we started from? Have we ever been totally, completely human? Or our presumed essence of humanity has always been a collective fiction, a mutual ideal of the species?

I will try to explore these issues by following three levels/dimensions of human interferences existing in the actual world: the internet, the media and the social institutions. I will also discuss different types of addiction, dependence and imprisonment that people are submitted to within postmodern societies.

Key words: personal and impersonal identities, virtual realities, deconstruction, humanity, Mass Media.

Subject, individuality and social institutions

In his fabulous novel, *The man without qualities*, Robert Musil envisions "a satiric and utopian portrait of the modern occidental culture" (Musil 1996, 45). This man without qualities is, in his view, the thinker by excellence, the individual that refuses to subordinate his (her) self-image to various generic and impersonal identities, to wear social masks, the individual that doesn't let himself socially defined and prefabricated. The refusal of recognizable "qualities" is the refusal to enrol into a system of falsifying and falsified, purely operational identities. He is the man that cannot stand to live anyhow but authentically, with a surrogate image attached to his true self, to live in travesty.

Musil's parable captures, emblematically, the critical spirit of the modern age. The modern conscience refuses the mental enrolment and succeeds, better than any other, to calibrate its manifestations and expressions such way to obtain the ideal syntax between the domain of human identity and the one of human freedom. The postmodern men proved too much greed concerning the freedom: they aimed too much of it in the name of individuality and they have lost eventually a substantial amount of identity. Having an "identity" is not something one can take for granted. The activity of self-creation and presentation is the clue of individualization upon Michel Foucault.

There is a constant effort of self-creation, self-invention and self-culture to be done in order to achieve and preserve an identity, an effort that involves ethic and aesthetic exigencies, an intuitive sense of the truthfulness of his (her) own being (see Nietzsche's famous claim: "become what you are"), an adjustment of a fetish-self-image to the resources of a genuine, inborn-self done without betraying the moral consciousness either, the only one capable to generate senses and values. In his book, "The Century", Alain Badiou approaches the issue of

the human identity and the problem of the "subject" from multiple perspectives. He says: "In very different ways, between the years 30' and 60' the philosophers elaborated the idea that the reality of an individual, his constitution as a subject, is entirely modifiable" (Badiou 2010, 45).

Michel Foucault analyses the transformation of the human being into subject in most of his major works. He talks about methods of "subjectivation" and about the multiple techniques involved in the constructive process of self-image. There are object-orientated techniques, semantic and semiotic techniques, power techniques etc. The technology is necessarily related to the „construction" of the self. Foucault distinguishes three levels of individualism: the value of individuality, the private life and the relation of the self with itself.

Foucault defines the individual as an inquirer processing a continuous synthesis of insights: "Man is a mode of being which accommodates that dimension - always open, never finally delimited, yet constantly traversed - which extends from a part of himself not reflected in a cogito to the act of thought by which he apprehends that part; and which, in the inverse direction, extends from the pure apprehension to the empirical clutter, the accumulation of contents, the width of experiences constantly eluding themselves, the whole silent horizon of what is posited in the sandy stretches of non-thought. Because he is an empiric-transcendental doublet, man is also the locus of misunderstanding" (Foucault 1994, 76).

Foucault stresses on the freedom that upholds the difference of every self, a positive difference compared to the generic, impersonal differences such are those conceived between genders, races, nationalities etc. In matters of human identity he is a convinced anarchist. We shouldn't let ourselves defined through the mechanisms of political and cultural systems to let those generic identities socially inflicted upon us to take the control over our own way of seeing ourselves. Therefore he insists that all reformists of the concepts of gender or nation or race perpetuate in their views the existing structures of power. The individual truthfulness, he argues, doesn't mean a position "out of power" or "lacking power": it is

the essence of an innate and inalienable power that cannot be manipulated from outside.

The autonomy of the subject and its independence from the social mechanism has been largely discussed, as well, by Zygmunt Bauman in "Postmodern Ethics" (1993). He analyses the problem of the individual`s and subject's fragmentation in the context of the technologic systems and mechanisms that of our life-frames and experiences are addicted to. "There is no part of the ego to serve as a turning point for the restoration of the Ego's autonomy"... "The technology itself means fragmentation, disarticulation of life's substance into a series of problems and separate organisms of competence". To emphasise his arguments he refers to Ellul's work: "The technological society" (in Badiou 2010, 34). The result of this process of fragmentation is "the operational totalitarianism: no human side or dimension is independent of these techniques".

The human subject and its fictions in virtual realities

One of the reasons why the virtual reality of internet put "a spell on us" and continues to attract and fascinate us is related exactly to this essential inconvenient mentioned above: we are not happy to carry on the burden of these socially inflicted identities, to wear all the time a mask. These generic identities are, in most cases, a fake, a lie about ourselves: they turn us into pure actors of our lives, into simple functional beings... Through these identities we play parts in the social networks, our inner potential is reduces to purely functional attributions.

All social institutions ask of us such commitments: beginning with the family and ending with the professional environment. From the feeling of lacking authenticity, from a basic and natural discontent (we feel censured, amputated, falsified, obligated to diminish or to repress a series of personal features and freedoms) bursts the desire of surpassing the limits of these pseudo-identities. In "The Century" Alain Badiou discusses this issue via Lacan: "In the vocabulary of Lacan, a subject doesn't come to achieve an identity but after confronting

with a gap point, with a certain lack, with the feeling of lack-of-being or with the impossibility of reaching the being".

Basically, the individual, the spectra of his (her) identity describes the interval between the intimate being of someone and the conscious elements able to discharge the tensions resented by this being in relation with the impersonal features projected upon it from outside. For Badiou in *Theory of the Subject*, comments Tomas Marttila, Research Assistant at the Department of Sociology II, University of Bamberg, "the subject exists only insofar as it alters the existing structural configuration. The subject is never internal but always external to the structure. The structure is ultimately the result of the onto-logy of the subject, but there is no permanent correspondence between the two orders. It is the distance between the two in which the subject is born in the violent and for the subject internal distance of the law to itself, and it names the process through which the order… comes into being as other than itself".

The need of living authentically, of expressing ourselves unconventionally and freely is most often discharged in dreams, reveries and self-fictions. The internet permits us such transgressions from a limitative identity to a wider and more satisfactory one. But the internet is still an Agora, thus the "something more" we aim is captured into the trawl of a system of significations and interpretations equivalent to the one of the actual social and cultural formulas. The virtual reality reproduces mimetically the existing network of social functions, semiotics, axiology and power-relations: it is a secondary-reality, a mirrored one, an ethereal clone of the phenomenological anthropology.

The mechanism of thinking, the conceptions, the representations of human experiences, the way of relating with each other in the frame of virtual reality are the same - no freer or more authentic than their equivalent from the contingent reality – because we drag upon us all the stereotypes of perception and understanding of the human kind that we are accustomed with. Otherwise, ironically, the human interferences in hyperspace, instead of being more profound,

richer or more substantial as we wish, are obviously disarticulated and impoverished. Even though we came to express ourselves in a less inhibitive manner, more "authentic" or spontaneous (there are the cardinal qualities of the expression within the virtual reality) doesn't mean we are able to communicate with each other in a freer or more relevant way.

What our intuition and sensibility aims and "chases" on internet is a satisfactory expression form, an exaltation of the individual identity, the experience of a catharsis, eventually. Unfortunately, no society, substantial or ethereal, actual or imagined, can provide for the necessary conditions to assure such an expressive and communicative accuracy. A system of social interferences is, by excellence, distortive and obscuring in what concerns the real identities of the individuals.

Whatever the exteriority would represent, the interference with the alter-world occults or alienates our essential beings. We expect from the Internet – this huge novel written by itself (see Ghiu 2010) – is to offer us the quality of the aesthetic experience, the catharsis provided by the innate force of the fictions. But the internet is the world in the mirror: the same weird, colourful, exhausting, annoying, prosaic, dull, trivial world. The difference is that – this reflected world – appeals us with the temptation of power... Being freer to be anyone and anyhow on internet, to have an *optional identity*, we expect to be more powerful. The question is how is power related to the freedom and how is freedom related to control. Can we be in power, being involved in something that we cannot control? The world's novel writing itself is not in our control.

Of course, the encounters and the message exchanges on internet between persons knowing each other from reality, or the regular documentation activities are not the object of this analysis. The internet can function as well as a library or as a quick postal-service. When looking for information or expediting letters to known persons we are and act the same like in an ordinary contingent environment. My investigation

focuses the social networks and those materials that people share mostly with strangers and unknown persons.

The internet is a network of collective reveries. In fantasy everything is possible, reversible and weightless, but the internet is a collective fantasy, not a personal one. Therefore none can control more than his (her) own projections. The confrontation of one's reveries with another's could be tensed, disgraceful, upsetting, especially in a context of uninhibited communication. On internet people tend to be rougher and ruder with each other, (more honest!! most probably) to externalize easily their resentments, bad feelings, rage, disdain and moral misery. What they wouldn't dare to share each other in the actual reality become the raw material of the conflicts and injuries on internet. We expect from the human-interferences on internet to make us feeling stronger, freer and better and we end by being deluded and tricked.

The internet is still a social-space, one that we control even worse than the contingent one. Basically, this space of encounter between everyone's virtual identities is what the real society would be in an anarchic way, without clear rules and norms of behaviour. From this point of view the virtual communication reflects more honestly and accurately the social psychology, the way we imagine the "reality" of the others, the way we relate with each other in our minds, when not being constrained by an external abstract or formal authority.

On internet we make recourse to a travesty of our social identities, but this travesty is meant to disclose and to show off a hidden side of our inner desires, expectations, tensions, weaknesses, hopes, wishes etc. Beyond the pressure of social norms, ethical imperatives or aesthetical embargos we act freely, for sure, we feel freer, but the quality of this freedom is poor and poorer compared to the one of being in full ethic and aesthetic control of our expressive means and manifestations.

If the social norms and rules are questionable, fallible and sometimes absurd or unfair, the total lack of constrictions should be a great opportunity for us to improve and to coin better rules and norms, to invoke better morals and aesthetics, but most people – if not conditioned – act as if not being

interested in morals of aesthetics at all. Eventually, the internet is a vivid proof that men kind prefer to live without the burden of any responsibility or moral censure. The millions of pages of pornography (including infantile pornography), of materials instigating to hate, dispel and cruelty are the proof that men kind needs to be "disciplined" somehow. The human freedom, if uncontrolled, turns, in most cases, into sick addiction (thus the contrary of freedom), or pure selfishness.

Another aspect of the internet's fascination is related to the people's need of entertainment. The entertainment represents a transgression of the consciousness towards an infantile state. A child is not supposed to make difficult choices, to expose to a critical exam his (her) sources of pleasure. On the other hand the entertainment is a „light" way of relating with life matters. It offers us a superficial fulfilment that doesn't ask our responsibility in return. The entertainment is the sleep of the consciousness. People seek for this kind of pleasure in the virtual encounters and realities. There is nothing condemnable in this; it's a natural human need. But for this freedom – of turning into infantile beings in a collective fiction – we pay with the freedom of living as fully responsible beings in a world wherein our acts, gestures, words, experiences have real weigh, a world in which we cannot afford to have more than a single "true" identity (the tautology is intended). To conclude and to answer the questions on power and freedom I've put above I'd say that we have to discuss two types of freedom: one that gives us the power of being ourselves and the one that gives us the power of being nobody. The true power means control. We cannot be in control of an amorphous identity, of an identity without any axial line.

The cultures, all cultures are already systems of collective fictions weaved around a presumptive body of reality. A culture is a virtual reality, an organized system of conceptions, ideas, values, abstractions, meanings, significances modulating the vacuum of human existence. The real existence of human beings is already culturally shaped and conditioned. There is nothing purely natural in our way of living, according to the views of postmodern deconstructive thinkers. The culture

is a medium – a media – between the basic reality and the human existence.

A culture is an interpretation given to the human reality, a matrix enveloping the human experiences and an organization of the existence around axial meanings. We don't live, as human beings, in straight contact with a "pure" reality, but in a culturally mediated contact with something that we cannot entirely know or understand otherwise. The birth of culture is contemporary with the birth of human consciousness. Since then we live in virtual realities. All forms of consciousness reflect virtual realities, because the conscience itself is a mirror of the existence. The conscience invokes and deals with a secondary world, a reflected one. The conscience is not at all a perfect mirror, it can produce many distortions. If the cultural virtual realities are still in contact with the true reality (the purpose and the challenge of all systems of knowledge being to reveal what and how this reality is in fact), the virtual realities - of internet or of mass media - represent a reflected image of the image from a mirror. They mirror in a distortive way (of course) the worldly cultural variety, which is already a distorted mirrored image of a prime reality.

The problem of identity is a crucial one in the debate concerning the actual and virtual realities. What we look for in the first place is to find a mean to get rid of the distortive cultural identities we have to carry on. But the distortion comes from the virtual character of the social and cultural environment we already live into. If the culture wouldn't have been a bad mirror for the essence of individuality, if nothing could distort, fake or perturb our identities, then we haven't needed to free ourselves from the cultural networks, escaping into virtual realities like internet. Paradoxically, we suffer because of the collective illusions and false identities ascribed to us into the cultural-virtual-reality and we try to escape of their influence into an even more distortive and illusory environment.

Having an identity involves a certain coherence, consequence and responsibility, the capacity of responding with acts of consciousness to external stimuli. On internet – in the

context of social networks – this identity becomes the most relative matter: we are in nobody's land, on ethereal ground where everything is possible, allowed and anyone can be anyone. The voluntary imprisonment in this collective fiction is the expression of the human desire to escape the reality wherein the conscience is the coordinating element. The virtual realities of the contemporary world are more indulgent with the consciousness matter and more generous with the uncensored expression of desires, phantasms, pleasures, tastes and convictions. But the human identity is organically tied on the conscience's nucleus. As the conscience's leading role became a relative on internet, the only form of identity we can still talk about is related to "fragments" of humanity: ideas, states, emotions, feelings, disparate thoughts. All these experiences cease to have an author (a clear one*, de facto*) so that they turn into goods (or bad things) of the species. The one who insults or flatters you on internet is not the same with the person that, if you meet by chance in corporeal, would treat you with indifference instead of praising you, would treat you with kindness instead of cursing you, would criticize you instead of being prone to courtship you, would find you nice instead of disgraceful and so on.

The human qualities and defects, the beauty and misery we are capable of achieve a shape on internet (alike in literature or philosophy) that is independent of the real identities of the addressees and often even independent of our voluntary, conscious, assumed identities. In such virtual networks we don't fight and confront real people but ideas, convictions. In other words we reduce their human identity to their expressions. On internet *the persons* become *personages*, like in every fictional work. No matter if the novel writes itself or has an author our fictional interlocutors are characters, not real humans. Even if the sentiment of consistence of the personal identity follows us in all virtual encounters, in fact we react to and relate with ideas, voices, impressions, projections, feelings not with persons: we react to the rudeness or to the kindness, to the truthfulness or to the absurdity of materials from a virtual world. We assist to the performance of expressive

shapes, we contemplate the reflection of mental and semantic constructs; and we are such shadowy-shapes for the others as well.

The only ones that are, on internet, the owners of certain identities are those ones we can also identify in the outer reality. The public persons are often more moderate, controlled, and reserved, more nuanced than the anonyms. The temptation of the anonymity is the temptation of the "face without human", of the face drained of humanly valuable attributes and characteristics. This anonymity talks about the burden of "identity", about how much costs in inner resources this identity, about how much we would like to get rid of the burden of responsibility and about a basic level of human existence that has another "face" than the one of the individual.

The last issue I'd like to discuss in this chapter focuses the expression's freedom. A mediocre intelligence and sensibility, no matter how much freedom would have, remain caught in the web of clichés and stereotypes. With the promise of a larger amount of freedom – spontaneously obtained, without effort and conditions - the internet steals us the sense of controlled, rational, responsible freedom (that empowers us). The functional identities we take on, like actors, in the frame of the everyday life, are certainly not fully satisfactory. They don't represent us entirely. But, in a dimension wherein everybody can be anyhow and anybody, we have no choice to re-produce, restore and re-project these identities upon the others and to be the object of such projections in return. We also have to admit that a total freedom is a disintegration factor in what concerns the perception of our personal identity.

The human freedom is an extremely subtle domain and it defined the spectra of individuality. If we are not free to be in a certain way, we cannot talk about individuality. On the other hand, the freedom that generates elements of identity is available in the spectra of certain limits: it cannot overpass the surveillance of the conscience and the reign of responsibility. The liberty of being anyhow and anybody is in contradiction with the basic principle of identity: one has an identity being somebody and somehow and consciously controlling the afferent

features of the self-image. In other words, the personal identity is fundamentally dependent on acts of consciousness, on the freedom of will, on aesthetic and ethic benchmarks. Beyond these coordinates the human being remains amorphous and floats into vacuity, into a chaotic mixture of states, emotions, thoughts, impulses, desires.

The postmodernism is an extremist and excessive approach of the modern values that challenges and could even overthrow them. The Human Rights doctrine, for instance, leaded on one hand to the configuration of the social concept of *individual dignity* and, on the other hand to an expanding hyper-individualism, amoral, egocentric and cynical. To give another example: the modern liberation of the art shapes permitted the apparition of more inventive, refined and unpredictable artistic expressions, but on the other hand produced chaos in the field of art theories and aesthetics and also facilitated the birth of grotesque forms of vulgar art. There is a vertical axe of the freedom and a horizontal axe. The freedom expressed in virtual environments is a vertical freedom: it doesn't take in account hierarchic criteria of value, taste, or reason. It is, in fact, a sort of freedom that annuls the axiology.

The human without face and the face without humanity

Burka puts, literally and symbolically as well, the Muslim women in the situation of being *humans without face*. A human with no face is a generic human, non-individualized. The burka ravishes the identity of these women-humans and reduces them to their sexual condition. In those societies wherein women are supposed to wear a burka, they have no right to a visible "personal identity", but only to a generic, thus impersonal, one. In the occidental societies wherein the sexism is insinuated more subtly and hypocritically, being related to the consumerist propaganda associated to the cosmetic industry, to the clothing and technologic industry, to the alcohol, cigarettes and cars industry, things appear to be coined in an opposite way: men and women, as well, are predestined

through advertisement to a series of stereotypical tastes, activities and motivations and, in this way, they become *faces drained of human identity.*

Is it enough to have a face, an image, in order to be entirely human? of course not. All animals have faces. The humans "with no face" – the case of women wearing burkas – don't cease to be humans, to have, presumptively, an identity, in spite of the apparent censure. The face is the symbol of the individuation, a synthetic representation of uniqueness: any human being has a face, a body, a voice, a sight. The question is: this synthetic image is also an essence of individuality or only the spectra of manifestation/influence/expressive potential? Should it be conceived as mediator and communicator between the individual experience and the outer world or as a generator of individuality? How is the face related to the personal real identity? Is the face individualizing or the individual is the one envisioning, embodying?

The face (either physical or metaphysical) and the individual are perfect synonyms or the face is just a hypostasis of an embodied existence, a simple avatar among others? How many faces can a single human being have? How unchangeable is a face? Is it inborn or culturally determined? The contemporary art and aesthetics emphasize that we can have as many faces as we want: the individual's integrity and identity are in the background of our transformations or hypostases, but they never fill these shapes entirely. A face is a hypostasis of our individuality, no more or less. The man's individuality envisions and embodies; the vision and the body-image are just projections. Concerning the "metaphysical" faces, things have always been like this. Nowadays we can even operate radical changes on the "physical" faces: the actual aesthetic surgery is able now to transform any natural face into a different, desired one.

Being consubstantial to the biological being, the identity (either human or animal) cannot be extracted, annihilated or totally destroyed through cultural means: but it can be deformed, deviated, perverted, buried under fake appearances or can be dramatically censured. The occidental advertising, for

instance, reduces this human identity to simplistic, mostly hilarious representations, to the robot-portrait of: the man-desire, the urban-trendy-men, the man-on-the-street, the men-of-the-country, the man-lover-of-beer or the woman-obsessed-by-her-hair. These people don't exist and never existed in reality, they are just clichés, masks, but the more we are bombarded with their image, in all virtual-media-environments, the prone we are to take their "existence" for granted. These inexistent people have very clear faces. They lack individuality, an inner truth. Their *face* became the manipulative element of audience's perception concerning their "virtual" humanity. The men and women of the advertisings are nor typical or exceptional: they are not real. But their human appearances trick the audience, their faces suggest the "self-understood" existence of a real individuality behind these appearances. Any individual has a face, but not any face points out the existence of an individual.

The extended influence of mass media upon our minds makes the virtual-realities, the fake-realities, the impossible-realities to invade the real world and men's real perceptions and conceptions. We are surrounded in our own minds by armies of metaphorical men; we pay real thoughts on the in "existence" of the loser-man or of the all-time-happy-man… We even meditate or have strong debates concerning the condition of these men-clichés as if they would have existed for real. The media and especially the advertising and the entertainment industry have populated the world and the human minds with such cartoon-people, with "anime". The men and women from the advertisings are "objects" not subjects, they are the object of manipulation of true human subjects… Matei Vișniec (2006) wrote a dramaturgic parable entitled: "the Man-Garbage-Can" alluding to this huge media-mechanism that turns the human condition into the one of the Tin Man from the "Wizard of Oz" story.

The generic identities have been exponentially multiplied through mass media. A century ago we were supposed to carry on just the fake and improbable features ascribed to a race, a gender or an ethnicity. Now we have to get

rid of all the make-ups covering in the virtual-media-environments the image of a potentially real man.

Related to the human being, the face is just an interface, a photogram, a sketch, a reduced-identity, harshly simplified. Many critics of the advertising industry talked about the objectifying of the human being in the frame of the promotional materials. In all honesty, the publicity is to the real quotidian live, what is the pornography to the real sexual life. The man-drinker-of-beer form the advertisings is no less "obscene" than the one having intercourse in porno movies. The woman, ecstatically enthusiastic about a certain type of laundry soap is no less "deplorable" than the one exposing her intimate parts in such films. The "obscenity" is not in the visual sexual representation, in the image of human sexual organs or intercourse, but in the reductionism from the background of the pornographic representations.

A sexual interference between two human beings involves infinitely much more, because we are emotional, intelligent, complex beings, because we are individualities and not biological-machines. In every possible context the reductionism is the mystification of an ontological reality. The reductive view distorts the existential truth, denies or spoils it by trying to compress it into a ridiculous schema. The people washing dishes, drinking bear, eating biscuits and chocolate in advertisings or making sex and party in porno movies are not quite human, that's the issue. They are neither animal, because the animals have no sex parties and they didn't invented the soaps, shampoos, the beer and the biscuits. The simple face, extracted from the context of the plenary humanity, is even less than a virtual-being: it is a material-shape, an object, a futility. In advertising and porno movies even the pleasure and the desire are truncated and mystified: they are reduced to a simple mechanical sketch. "The face" of desire itself is distorted and faked. There is no purely material lust or purely physical attraction, not between living beings.

There are also other reductive-faces populating our media-worlds, fetish faces, such is the one of grief. The face of the sadness or of the pain is mummified and iconic. Mass

media, the television, the internet are all contributing to the expansion of this kind of fetishism. A face, extracted from the existential ground, loses its vital meanings and value, become an inanimate object among other inanimate objects.

Metaphysically speaking, the face is a particularity, a feature, a specific human treat and good, a mobile of expressivity. But what happens when the human being is suffocated under artificial faces? Mass media, the pop culture, the internet conspire all to the gestation of this mutant which is the *face without human*: a pseudo-individual and a pseudo-being.

What is a face without man? an illusion. Because the human being is still there, trapped, suffocated, mystified, imprisoned in the cage of the artificial face, of the mask. The man is still there, but invisible: the advertising industry and mass media made of his own face a burka, one that hides and betrays him in the same time.

The face without man is the man reduced to the mechanics of appearances.

Ontologically speaking, the face cannot be but subordinated, not considered equivalent to the human being. The relation between the man and the face is the same with the rapport between the self and the avatars of the ego. A face is such an avatar, a face is perpetually changing. The life of a person is the history of his (her) becoming. "We cannot bath in the waters of the same river twice"; we cannot have twice exactly the same face, that's why our identity cannot be resumed to the identity of a face. The kaleidoscopic pieces composing our inner image create every time other drawings. With every new configuration, the image of the previous ego dies and gets mummified in the exhibition hall of the memories. The ego is an inner face in a series of many. We define our-selves continuously. In terms of Jungian psychoanalysis *the ego* is meant to serve *the self*'s purposes and goals, to materialize in expression its innate experiences. When losing the contact with the deeper self, the role of the ego becomes parasite. The ego is

but a tool of the self, each face is such a tool, a mediator between the self and the outer world. Analogically, a face disconnected from the individual essence, is empty and becomes a parasite for its identity.

In the consumerist societies and in their cultural-media, man became alienated from the faces he bears; these faces mortify him, extract his inner vital substance and throw him into anonymity.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

_____. 2013. "The internet is redefining human identity." Accessed April 5, 2013. http://newrisingmedia.com/all/2013/1/22/the-internet-is-redefining-human-identity-in-the-uk.html

Badiou, Alain. 2010. "Secolul". Cluj: Editura Idea / LE SIECLE, Séminaire public d'Alain Badiou, Accessed March 2, 2013. http://www.scribd.com/doc/16143364/BadiouSiecle

Bauman, Zygmunt. 1993. *Postmodern Ethics*. Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell.

Dortier, Jean-François. 2010. "Identité. Des conflits identitaires à la recherche de soi." *Sciences humaines. Les grands questions de notre temps*. Accessed March 25, 2013. http://www.scienceshumaines.com/identite-des-conflits-identitaires-a-la-recherche-de-soi_fr_12390.html

Foucault, Michel. 1994. *The Order of Things, an Archeology of Human Sciences*. New York: Vintage Books.

_____. 1990. *Les mots et les choses, une archéologie des sciences humaines*. Paris: Gallimard.

_____. 1984. *Histoire de la sexualité*. Paris: Gallimard.

_____. 1983. *The Subject and Power*. The University of Chicago Press (2nd edition). Accessed March 10, 2013. http://foucault.info/documents/foucault.power.en.html

Fuchs, C. 2008. *Internet and Society: Social Theory in the Internet Age*. New York: Routledge.

Ghiu, Bogdan. 2010. *Evul Media*. Cluj: Editura Idea.

Musil, Robert. 1996. *The Man Without Qualities*, Vintage Books.

Strozier, Robert. 2002. *Foucault, Subjectivity, and Identity*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

Vișniec, Matei. 2006. *Omul-pubelă. Femeia ca un câmp de luptă*. București: Editura Cartea Românească.