

## Synthesis of Scientific Report

of project implementation during the period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015

PNII-ID-PCE-2011-3-1010 *Renewing Aesthetics: from Art to Everyday Life*

Project Director: Prof. Dr. Dan Eugen Ratiu

The project aims to review the core concepts and methods of philosophical aesthetics and to expand its scope towards areas of everyday life that were neglected by traditional or analytic approaches. In 2015 the following activities (A) were carried out according to the project plan<sup>1</sup> on two research strands (RS): **RS2: Aesthetic social situations and techniques of the self: body and fashion:** A1.1. Methodology-building: assessing methodological instruments in order to identify those appropriate for this strand's objectives; identifying the target population and methodology-testing. **RS3 Application of aesthetic theories to cultural policy and to arts management:** A2.1. Theory building: developing new concepts incorporating principles of aesthetics, aesthetic knowing for specific application in arts/cultural management and policy. *Intermediary milestone:* Refining tools (concepts, methods) for examining the case of policy and management through the lens of aesthetic principles towards formulation of concrete applications.

The scientific objectives (O) proposed for 2015 were accomplished in conformity with the corresponding research activities, namely **RS2 – O1:** *To create – drawing on the previous theoretical findings – methodological instruments aiming at identifying patterns of body and fashion self-creation techniques, and to apply them to the study of artistic community in the City of Cluj-Napoca.* **RS3 – O2:** *Developing an “action-oriented” aesthetics (new concepts, advancement in methods) for further expanding research and applications in the areas of cultural management and policy, better responding to problems and challenges in economic and political realms.* Both objectives will be continued in 2016, due to the revision of the project plan\*.

All team members participated in accomplishing the scientific objectives and corresponding activities – including dissemination of results in conferences and publications: Dan Eugen Ratiu, project director, and three young researchers, post-doctoral Stefan Sebastian Maftai, post-doctoral Ileana Nicoleta Salcudean, and Cristian Hainic (former PhD student, doctor since 2014).

Performance indicators proposed for 2015 in respect of publication/acceptance/evaluation of articles (*1 article proposed for publication in collective volume*) and participation in conferences (*1 international and 1 national*) have been fully met and even exceeded. The scientific activities

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<sup>1</sup>The activities 10.2 and 12.2 corresponding to initial objectives RS2-O10 and RS3-O11 were transferred in 2016 due to diminution in funding for 2015 (see Annex IV to the Contract).

resulted in 3 new publications, of which: 1 article accepted for publication in an ISI-AHCI journal and 2 chapters accepted in volumes at prestigious international publishing houses. In all cases there are “acknowledgments” of the support by CNCS-UEFISCDI. Also, former accepted articles were published this year: 1 article in an ISI-AHCI journal, 1 article published in a journal indexed BDI-EBSCO/ProQuest, and 1 review published in a journal indexed BDI-EBSCO/ProQuest (previously reported) (see APPENDIX). Dissemination of research results in the scientific community was also done by 7 participations in international conferences with rigorous peer-review procedures (in Norway, Serbia, Czech Republic, and Romania - Timisoara), and 4 participations in national conferences, and by organizing the 4<sup>th</sup> national conference of *Aesthetics and Theories of Arts* (see APPENDIX). As evidence of international recognition of project members I would mention that D.E. Ratiu organized, as chair of the ESA Research Network Sociology of the Arts, the session of the RN Sociology of the Arts within the 12<sup>th</sup> Conference of the European Sociological Association (Prague); also, D.E. Ratiu participated as a member of the scientific committee of the 7<sup>th</sup> Conference of the European Society for Aesthetics (Dublin), in the peer-review/selection of papers and chairing of conference sessions.

Research activities A1.1 (related to O1), within the research strand ***Aesthetic social situations and techniques of the self: body and fashion*** focused, on the one hand, on fashion and diverse everyday representations, aiming at exercising and evaluating some theoretical and methodological instruments adequate and applicable to the local context, for identifying patterns of techniques of construction of the self, and on the other hand, on formulating a philosophical framework adequate for the analysis of the “aesthetic social situations”.

Thus, D.E. Ratiu has explored an uncharted field of experiences of everyday life –clothing/fashion, corporal habits and manners illustrated in documentary or artistic representations –, in order to investigate their roles in the social process of identity/subject formation in Transylvania (during the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries). The aim of this historical approach was to understand the specific way in which multiples identities have emerged as effects of practices of subjection and control on people’s daily life that were embodied, reproduced and represented in various visible, everyday forms. The theoretical framework on which this research has drawn on was provided by the philosophy of identity or “making of the self” (Charles Taylor) that put emphasis on the background of social and dialogical relations with others, and the work of Michel Foucault that reveals the subject/subjectivity formation as ongoing historically specific process but that characterizes all social life framed by relations of power. Within such framework, the research has shown how manners, clothing/fashion and the production and use of images –documentary or artistic – took part in the “interplay between identity and power” and have expressed and reflected the process of identity formation or modernization. Far from being irrelevant, these everyday practices could bring into

light the “disciplinary” nature of this modern process, as well as those resistances to homogenization and uniformity. The research concluded that, while one could use a broad understanding of culture including “disciplinary practices”/“techniques of power” (Foucault), one should also account for their distinctiveness in Transylvania during the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries. This is related to its particularities and complexity of power relations: the mix of modern and pre-modern orders ongoing until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as well as the overlapping dependencies of this territory/society. This distinctiveness was explored through the concept of *un-discipline* or *discipline-other* which grasps the fact that, in Transylvania, long-term policies of excluding parts of population from civil life and disciplinary institutions (school, army etc.) have conversely excluded them from the “internal”, “productive” disciplinary modern power – that working from within individuals and producing them as “disciplined” (Foucault). This idea opens up alternative interpretation of the ways to (self-)construct “individual subjects and subjectivities” in Transylvania. This ways are sketched out through some micro-narratives implying the clash between Western modern individuality and what is commonly seen as the exotic “good savage”. Breaking with the exoticist interpretation, these micro-narratives related to clothing/ fashion, foreign travelers (visual) diaries, and diverse local artistic representations, aid to chart several ways in which these daily practices have functioned in the social construction of identities/subjects and have played part in the disciplinary process of modernization or, conversely, have constituted spaces for maneuver and resistance. The research results on this research line were presented by D.E. Ratiu in an international workshop at the University of Oslo and in the national conference *Aesthetics and Theory of Arts* (see APPENDIX).

St. Maftai resumed the research activities related to the “aesthetic social situations” aiming to show not only that phenomena and social practices, social situations which are apparently neutral can become objects of contemporary aesthetic theory but also why and on which philosophical basis – a model which was labeled here as *environmental*. The research design viewed the aesthetic social situations as elements of “environmental communication” – within the line developed by the aesthetic phenomenology of Arnold Berleant. From his starting point, a line of analysis of everyday aesthetic experience was followed which can be historically traced back at least as far as the early phenomenology or the pragmatism of John Dewey. Taking into consideration more comprehensive approaches regarding the general relation between aesthetics and natural science, such as Timothy Morton’s *Ecology without Nature* (2009) – that views the birth of aesthetics in the 18-th century as a reaction to the scientific articulation of the concept of nature starting with the 17<sup>th</sup> century –, a common pattern specific to the entire philosophical Romanticism was identified: within it, the term “nature” is reviewed aesthetically and “environmentally” (*avant la lettre*), suggesting a common interpretive model of humanistic disciplines regarding “nature”, a model that was labeled here as

“environmental”. The conclusion is that this interpretative model has made possible the emergence of a particular concept of everyday aesthetic experience and of phenomenological and pragmatist approaches to nature at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which was influential even to the “ecosystemic” model developed by Berleant, who extends the “environmentalist” approach to nature to the level of human experience itself; from here, one could grasp the consequences for the fields of social and political hermeneutics that Berleant relates to everyday aesthetic experience. Research results were disseminated by St. Maftai in 1 article accepted for publication in a collective volume at an international publishing house, and 2 papers presented in international conferences at the Technical University of Prague and West University in Timisoara (see APPENDIX).

In 2015, research activities such as theory-building continued on the strand ***Application of aesthetic theories to cultural policy and to arts management***, aiming at developing new concepts and methods based on the principles of aesthetics and “aesthetic knowing” for specific applications in the fields of arts management and cultural policy. The research activities carried on by D.E. Ratiu in this intermediary stage were directed toward the refinement of tools of practical aesthetics – concepts, methods sketched in the previous stage –, for designing case studies and examining the aesthetic everyday life in organizations. The research results on this research line were presented by D.E. Ratiu in an international conference at the Technical University of Prague. Also, 1 article is accepted in a collective volume to be published by an international publisher (see APPENDIX).

Within the same research strand, N. Salcudean continued and deepened previous research, starting from the categories of research in the field of organizational aesthetics (Taylor and Hansen) and the premise that art and aesthetics can reshape “a way of knowing an organization” (Carr). The case study targeted a contemporary art space, *The Paintbrush Factory* in Cluj-Napoca, focusing on aspects of aesthetic leadership and on the everyday cognitive and sensory experience of those involved, and exposing the experience of an “aesthetic ethnography”. A first conclusion is that the Paintbrush Factory creates a “central imaginary” (Castoriadis), both by bringing a memory of the past to light (through the conversion of a communist space) and by acquiring a leading role in contemporary art (through the type of network developed by this spontaneous, contextual space). The interviews conducted with three categories of people involved at the Paintbrush Factory – those involved in the management of this art space, artists or participants in events – led to the conclusion that the cognitive and sensory experiences (visual, auditory, olfactory) of those who use or are in contact with the Paintbrush Factory are different, depending on their role and involvement in the project, the type of activity they carry out, their interaction with space and their power of decision in relation to this space. Their presence was observed through the “intelligence of the feeling” (Witkin) and various symbolic effects, the incursion of the researcher into the Paintbrush Factory being a kind

of “aesthetic ethnography” (Warren), as she combined language with images and also engaged other senses (smell, touch, hearing) attempting to challenge her interlocutors to a similar experience, in the very flux of a typical day, in that space familiar to them. The results of research conducted by N. Salcudean were presented at an international conference at the Technical University of Prague and at the national conference of *Aesthetics and Theories of Arts* (see APPENDIX).

In 2015, C. Hainic pursued research activities on the research strand ***Everyday aesthetics and contemporary art: renewing concepts and methods***, deepening and expanding previous research. The main aim was to develop new concepts and research areas of everyday aesthetics drawing on Heidegger’s concepts. As a follow-up for the objectives previously accomplished, this year’s research was focused on the identification of the ontological background against which an action-driven aesthetics is possible. To this effect, the research target was the continental phenomenology of art, with certain applications to the Heideggerian influences of a series of current debates within everyday aesthetics. The papers published during the reported timespan established the measure in which the ontological grounding of art carried out by Heidegger is applicable to everyday objects, called “things” when approached ontologically. The main concept used to indicate the ontological relation to the world is that of the fourfold, or *das Geviert*. An ample conceptual analysis was carried out to show that in experiencing an everyday object ontologically, we step out of the ontic relations with other “simple objects” and gain access to a part of the structure of the world made possible by the everyday object in question, by means of its reliability (*Verlässlichkeit*). The conclusion thus reached is that “using” everyday objects without considering them ontologically does not imply that their reliability no longer exists. Quite the contrary, during these moments we accept to be *tacitly* connected to the truth that everyday objects carry with regard to the world. *De facto*, research indicates that this is actually the main manner in which we usually relate to everydayness. When everyday objects are no longer tacitly used, i.e., when we question the manner in which they confer the possibility of carrying out our everyday life factually (e.g., when they break), the possibility of undergoing an ontological experience of these objects is hereby present. The results of research were disseminated by C. Hainic in 1 article accepted for publication in ISI-AHCI journals, 1 paper presented in international conference at the University of Prague and 1 paper presented in a national conference at BBU Cluj-Napoca; also, the results of previous research has been published: 1 article in an ISI-AHCI journal, and 1 review in a BDI journal (see APPENDIX).

Project Director,  
Prof. Dr. Dan Eugen Ratiu

[http://hiphi.ubbcluj.ro/reinnoirea\\_esteticii/](http://hiphi.ubbcluj.ro/reinnoirea_esteticii/)

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## **APPENDIX.**

### **Results of national and international dissemination of research: publications and conferences**

#### **New publications 2015:**

##### **Articles accepted in ISI indexed journals: 1**

1. Hainic, Cristian. 2015. „On Overcoming the Ontic Interpretation of Heidegger’s Fourfold”, *Revue Roumaine de Philosophie*, vol. 59, nr.2, 21 p. ISSN: 1220-5400 (ISI-AHCI journal)

##### **Chapters accepted for publication in volumes at international publishers: 2**

2. Rațiu, Dan Eugen. 2015. „Everyday Aesthetic Experience: Exploring Applications for a Practical Aesthetics”, in: *Experiencing the Everyday*, edited by Carsten Friberg and Raine Vasquez, Aarhus: NSU-Aarhus University Press, 25 p. (accepted / to be published in 2016)

3. Maftעי, Ștefan-Sebastian. 2015. „The ‘environmental’ model as a philosophical framework for analyzing everyday aesthetics as environmental communication”, în: *Communication and Education in the Knowledge Society*, edited by Claudiu Mesaros and Maria Micle, Trivent Publishing, Budapest, 15 p. (accepted / to be published in 2016)

#### **Publications – actualization of 2014 results:**

##### **Articles published in ISI indexed journals: 1**

1. Hainic, Cristian. 2015. „The Heideggerian Roots of Everyday Aesthetics” (in Slovenian: „Heideggerjevski izvori estetike vsakdanjosti”). *Filozofski Vestnik*, vol.36, no.1, pp. 41-57, ISSN: 0353-4510 (ISI-AHCI journal)

##### **Articles published in BDI indexed journals: 1**

2. Hainic, Cristian. 2015. „Phenomenology and the Study of Art: A Note on Interdisciplinarity”. *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai - Philosophia*, vol. 60, nr.2, pp.67-75 (journal indexed by EBSCO, ProQuest, CEEOL).

##### **Reviews:**

3. Hainic, Cristian. 2015. Review of Constance DeVereaux and Martin Griffin, *Narrative, Identity, and the Map of Cultural Policy: Once Upon a Time in a Globalized World*, Farnham, Ashgate (2013), în *Agathos: An International Review of the Humanities and Social Sciences*, vol. 6, nr. 1, pp. 136-141, ISSN: 2069–1025 (journal indexed by EBSCO, ProQuest).

#### **Other results:**

##### **Editing of Conference proceedings:**

1. Dorsch, Fabian, and Rațiu, Dan Eugen (eds.) *Proceedings of the European Society for Aesthetics*, Vol. 7, 2015, ISSN: 1664–5278 <http://www.eurosa.org/proceedings/> (indexed by EBSCO)

##### **Inter-national conferences organized:**

1. The Conference of the European Research Network Sociology of the Arts, within the 12<sup>th</sup> Conference of the European Sociological Association (ESA), Czech Technical University, Prague, August 25-28, 2015  
<http://www.esa12thconference.eu/programme>

2. National Conference *Estetică și Teorii ale artelor/Aesthetics and Theories of Arts*, fourth edition, Babeș-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, Department of Philosophy, Center of Applied Philosophy, September 11-12, 2015.

Conference Programme: <http://hiphi.ubbcluj.ro/CFA/Program ETA 2015.pdf>

Papers Abstracts: <http://hiphi.ubbcluj.ro/CFA/Rezumat ETA 2015.pdf>

## Participations in international and national conferences

### International: 8

1. Winter Symposium *Exhibiting the Everyday: Representing, Mediating, Experimenting*: D. E. Rațiu, "Fashion and Everyday Representations of the Body: Constructing Identity and Otherness in Transylvania", Oslo University College / University of Oslo, Norway, March 19-20, 2015.
2. The 7<sup>th</sup> Conference of the European Society for Aesthetics (ESA): D. E. Rațiu [as member of the ESA Executive Committee], Dublin Institute of Technology, Ireland, June 11-13, 2015.
3. IAA Conference 2015 *Revisions of Modern Aesthetics*: St. Maftai, "Everyday aesthetics, green aesthetics, environmental protest: The aesthetic struggle of environmentalism in Romania", International Association for Aesthetics (IAA), University of Belgrade, Serbia, June 26-28.
4. 12<sup>th</sup> Conference of the European Sociological Association (ESA): D. E. Rațiu, "Applications for Everyday Aesthetics in Daily and Organizational Life", Czech Technical University, Prague, August 25-28, 2015.
5. 12<sup>th</sup> Conference of the European Sociological Association (ESA): St. Maftai, "Civic environmentalism in Romania and everyday social aesthetics: a framework for assessing environmental protests as aesthetic social situations", Czech Technical University, Prague, August 25-28, 2015.
6. 12<sup>th</sup> Conference of the European Sociological Association (ESA): C. Hainic, "On the social nature of everyday aesthetic experience", Czech Technical University, Prague, August 25-28, 2015.
7. 12<sup>th</sup> Conference of the European Sociological Association (ESA): N. Sălcudean, "Organizational Aesthetics. Case Study: Paintbrush Factory, Cluj-Napoca", Czech Technical University, Prague, August 25-28, 2015.
8. 2nd International Conference on Communication and Education in Knowledge Society (CESC): St. Maftai, „The ‘environmental’ model as a philosophical framework for analyzing everyday aesthetics as ‘environmental’ communication”, Universitatea de Vest, Timișoara, November 5-7, 2015.

### National: 4

9. National Conference *Estetică și Teorii ale artelor/Aesthetics and Theories of Arts*, fourth edition: D. E. Rațiu, „Modă și reprezentări cotidiene: construirea identității și alterității în Transilvania (secolele 18-19)”, Babes-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, Department of Philosophy, Center of Applied Philosophy, September 11-12, 2015.
10. National Conference *Estetică și Teorii ale artelor/Aesthetics and Theories of Arts*, fourth edition: N. Sălcudean, „Leadership estetic. Experiență cognitivă și senzorială în cadrul Fabricii de Pensule, Cluj-Napoca”, Babes-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, Department of Philosophy, Center of Applied Philosophy, September 11-12, 2015.
11. National Conference *Estetică și Teorii ale artelor/Aesthetics and Theories of Arts*, fourth edition: St. Maftai „Estetica cotidiană, estetica mediului înconjurător, protestul ecologist: un exemplu de analiză a ‘situațiilor sociale estetice’”, Babes-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, Department of Philosophy, Center of Applied Philosophy, September 11-12, 2015.
12. National Conference *Estetică și Teorii ale artelor/Aesthetics and Theories of Arts*, fourth edition: C. Hainic, „O problemă de contextualism ontologic în experiența estetică cotidiană”, Babes-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, Department of Philosophy, Center of Applied Philosophy, September 11-12, 2015.