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THREE PERSPECTIVES ON A JOURNALISTIC APPROACH

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Review of Nicu Gavriluță's *The Fools' Mother is Always Pregnant. A Sociology of Everyday Pathologies*. (Mama proștilor e mereu gravidă. Sociologia patologiilor cotidiene.) Foreword by Ștefan Afloroaei (Iași: European Institute, 2010).

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ILIE RAD

A MYTHICAL-RELIGIOUS ANALYSIS OF SOME PATHOLOGIES OF THE
CONTEMPORARY WORLD

Under a title which refers to a rather comical, humorous approach to reality, *The Fools' Mother is always Pregnant. A Sociology of Everyday Pathologies*, probably chosen for reasons of marketing, Nicu Gavriluță actually publishes a serious work of philosophy, which constitutes a very lucid and pertinent analysis of some relevant pathologies of the contemporary world (hence, no wonder that the author made no reference to the work of Rath-Vegy Istvan, *Cultural History of Human Stupidity*). Despite the explanatory preface (*In what sense "the fools' mother is always pregnant"?*) and the clear defining of the seven types of human stupidity (*stupidity as lack of knowledge and human ignorance, stupidity as social handicap, stupidity as deprivation etc.*), the meaning of the book is different and established exactly by the author himself: "This book proposes a mythical-religious reading of contemporary realities. Today's world tragedies, just like near future disasters, could be (and are) the inevitable punishment for the desecration of the earth. Nuclear experiments, pollution, the destruction of vegetation and wildlife massacre cannot be controlled without the (post)modern man's profound change of mentality towards the earth. Therefore, the archaic mass infusion of mythology and metaphysics regarding the earth is, in my opinion, an absolute necessity. "(p. 17).

Nicu Gavriluță, Professor and Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy and Social-Political Sciences of "A.I. Cuza" University of Iași, is known in the world of experts as one of the most knowledgeable scholars of contemporary religious phenomenon in the Romanian space, addressing an area with two illustrious Romanian representatives, Mircea Eliade and Ioan Petru Culianu. Indeed, the professor from Iași has published several important works in this field: *Mentalities and Magical-Religious Rituals* (1998), *Culianu - Mind Games and Multi-Dimensional Worlds* (2000), *The Social Imaginary of the Romanian Transition* (2001), *Fractals and Social Time* (2003), *Hermeneutics of Religious Symbolism* (2003), *Eastern Religious Movements. A Socio-Anthropological Perspective on the Globalization of the Yoga Practices* (2006), *Social and Cultural Anthropology* (2009). Together with Sandu Frunză and Michael Jones, he coordinated the volume *The Challenges of Multiculturalism in Central and Eastern Europe* (2005). *The Sociology of Sport. Theories, Methods, Applications* was written and published together with Cristina Gavriluță by Polirom Publishing House in 2010.

The author is not at his first publishing attempt. In 2006, he printed *Romania in the Bardo State. Journalistic and Cultural Dialogues*, Provopress Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca; the volume shows once again that the

great intellectuals neither stayed nor stay isolated in the “ivory tower “ , but they have been rather actively involved in the issues of the great City.

The book that we analyze includes some of the editorials published by the author in the daily newspaper *Ziua de Iași* between November 2008 and January 2010. Therefore, the author starts from the idea that the contemporary world is a deeply desecrated one, requiring resacralization. This need for the sacred arises from the the (post)modern man’s need for mythology, which “will seduce his imaginary and will symbolically compensate for his hidden desires and nostalgia. “

The four sections of the book (I. *Political Pathologies*, II. *Diseases of the Sacred*, III. *Religious Pathologies*, IV. *Social Pathologies*) are balanced in the number of the approaches and have a perfect unity of ideas given by the mythical-religious vision and by the literary approach. The events and occurrences of the world which Nicu Gavriluță writes about are part of our daily life: holiday shopping, globalization, people’s predictions regarding the Apocalypse, watching a movie, reading a new book, a trip abroad, a baccalaureate examination and college admission, a football game, a draft legislation etc. They are “happenings “ to which most of us are indifferent, without worrying about explaining their significance. Nicu Gavriluță comments on and interprets them, as already mentioned, from a mythological perspective.

For instance, the electoral confrontation between Traian Băsescu and Mircea Geoană reminds him of the old *ordeals* (religious and legal practices made by monks in the name of God through which the accused proved their innocence; for example, the ritual of holding a red-hot iron or of a pregnant but unmarried woman who could save herself by staying alive even if adrift in a boat with no rows etc.). Furthermore, the claim that Traian Băsescu won the elections thanks to the violet flame gives the author the occasion to imagine a long trip to the history of this myth. The meaning of Halloween is decrypted with the help of Celtic mythology: according to ancient Celtic beliefs, the souls of the dead would return to earth periodically, in the bodies of the living which they “possess “. To escape from the terrible captivity, the living resorted to all sorts of stratagems in order not to be found by the spirits of the dead, such as the face mask (often with lit pumpkins) and even a mask for the whole body for total stealth. Adopted by the Americans from the Irish emigrants in the nineteenth-century, the Halloween “holiday “ went “global “ fast, being strongly used for commercial and media purposes.

Moreover, without an excess of erudition, the author quotes Mircea Eliade, Ioan Petru Culianu, Max Weber, Pierre Brunel, Andrei Pleșu and others whenever he has the opportunity, exposing in each page his concern for anthropology and the sociology of religions, for interfering science with religion, and for a multidisciplinary approach to the mysteries of human condition.

In so many ways, this book is a look into the mirror of our reality as a people with vices and virtues that are specific to us. Alongside with the feeling of envy (“let the neighbor's goat die! “), I think that one of the features that characterize us is what I would call the “*culture of ingratitude* “. This is the explanation that the author of the book gives: “The person you helped has the highest chance to become your potential enemy. Why? Just because you helped him and his insatiable ego (“I'm somebody in my eyes “) does not allow anyone else to know the mystery of his own good-for-nothing abilities “. (p. 178).

An intellectual resembling the French moralists, Nicu Gavriluță comments and criticizes the hedonization and merchantability of Christmas, the manipulation of the sacred holiday for capital gain when, in fact, “the Christmas spirit is about assuming in a discrete and profound manner the exemplary incarnation of the Son of God for salvation “. In another essay (*The Swarovski Gifts and the Magic of the Crystal Worlds*), the essayist points out the profound human need of the modern man for mythologists and condemns “the propensity to excessive consumption and conspicuous waste. “ The celebration of St. Valentine in our country is the example of the man who seeks, as Mircea Eliade said, “plenitude in a moment and eternity in history. “ Another essay, *The Gentle, the Rifle and the Wide Belt*, offers an image of contemporary Romania with a scale of traditional values that are dangerously adrift: “What matters here is money, business, rich and short-term gain. Therefore, on the Romanian political and social scene, other <<virtues>> impose, such as insolence, aggressive stupidity, short-term friendship, influence peddling, electoral manipulation etc. The gentle's lesson should be a spiritual one above all: the return to the values established by God at the dawn of creation. “ (p. 79). Our chance for salvation would be man's spiritual revival, total dedication to God, the choice for eternal values: respect for the different one (ethnic, social, sexual), joy for the success of other people, common sense, humbleness, patience, discretion - Christian values.

Coming from the poetic Moldavia, Nicu Gavriluță pays great attention to the sentence and to its cadences, which reminds me of another Romanian philosopher also interested in literature, D. D. Roșca, whose *Tragic existence* was mentioned by G. Călinescu in his famous *History*. It is surprising how an author so intimately familiarized and interested in the scientific register can write so literarily, choosing the most suitable and appropriate words, using a stylistic register in which he mixes the specialized scientific terms and some newly borrowed English words (like *cool*, *hard*), but also some *ad hoc* linguistic creations (*OTV crimes*, meaning *media over promoted crimes*) or some slang in use (“*Baban gains* “ - meaning “*huge gains* “). I give one illustrative example, namely the inner harmony of the sentence and the skilful use of the characterizing epithet: “We unconsciously feed ourselves from the substance of old myths, often experiencing the deceitful delights of life

through delegation. It is as if some great holiday expenses could compensate for our failure, broken ambitions and pride. We perhaps have the domestic illusion that at least once a year we can afford to be like a rich VIP, bursting with generosity. “

I believe that if translated into an international language, one could easily notice that through the content, depth and subtlety of ideas and observations, this book is at the level of any contemporary European thinker.

The volume has a comprehensively applied preface due to Ștefan Afloarei, himself a noted contemporary essayist and philosopher.

It is said that a newspaper article lasts for only one day, because journalism as well as politics enter the area of the trivial and the ephemeral. Here's a contrary proof: the journalistic text written by Nicu Gavriluță can transgress the ephemeral because it pulsates with real life, with the author's culture, his care for the expression of truth, for objectivity and political impartiality, assuming the condition of the modest observer of our world.

AUREL CODOBAN

THE JOURNALIST AS A SOCIOLOGIST

... or the sociologist as a journalist? It is difficult to decide who actually works in the book of Nicu Gavriluță, *The Fools' Mother is Always Pregnant. A Sociology of Everyday Pathologies*, as a *free lancer* - who is here on his own, the journalist or the sociologist? It is difficult to decide especially because of the importance that media has today and which, by its impact and effects, exceeds the importance of education and research in the socio-human field.

However one might make a decision by following the construction of this book. Thus, we notice that the texts were first written for the newspaper and then collected into a book. As one of Sebastian's characters argues, the newspaper article lives only one day. Instead, the book lives more, like any organization with a structure that gives it autonomy and homeostasis. It is like the difference between tactics and strategy: the texts, which from a journalistic point of view might represent some direct, immediate, reactive and emotional statements trapped in a book, can show an unexpectedly strong structural connection of ideas, not just of attitudes. And I think that that is exactly what the double title of the book speaks of: the first title, “The Fools' Mother Is Always Pregnant “ is an explosive, strong and popular newspaper formula. Yet, the subtitle, “A

Sociology of Everyday Pathologies “, sounds academic, as a targeted sociological research.

The first title, the newspaper one, arouses newspaper-like connotations linked to the etymology of the word “stupid. “ Incidentally, it is curious to find out about the group of words with negative, even pejorative connotations that the otherwise admirable Slavic language background bequeathed to modern Romanian language. Besides “prost “ – “fool “, I am also thinking of, “năuc “ – “silly “, “narod “ – “oaf “, „silă “ – “reluctance “. “Silly “ is someone wrongheaded; yet, “nauka “ means science in Russian. “Nărod “ is a Romanian term that refers to someone without too much mind; yet, the original reference of “narod “ is to the people. “Reluctance “ in Romanian means something that is necessarily mandatory and unpleasant, while the first meaning of the Slavic word was power. It is the same thing with “fool “ - in the original language it meant “simple man “. The people that the journalist or the sociologist Nicu Gavriluță notices are anything but simple, as they appear lost in endless complications that lack logic but are meaningful.

Another good beginning of the book is given by the second title, *A Sociology of Everyday Pathologies*. Yet, this time what gives Mr. Gavriluță's book this characterization would be that sociological phenomenology of the Romanian daily life. It covers the last year and it shows, even if only on a short-term basis, what a “court of miracles “ Romania can be. Of course, it would be “stupid “, “pathological “ to transform this daily pathology into a country brand. What Nicu Gavriluță has in view is seen at global scale and it is connected to what Eliade defined as “the dialectic of the sacred and the profane. “ After the collapse of the sacred into history, a second failure follows, into what immediate life is. The sacralization of life in its immediacy is largely the source of this baroque cornucopia of often stupefying quotidian events. Of course, the careful sociologist Nicu Gavriluță distinguishes between four forms of everyday pathologies: the pathology of political life - among other: “Băsescu and the Occult Power of the Violet Flame “, the pathology of the sacred - among other: “Avatar and the Reactivation of Cosmic Religiosity “, the pathology of religious life - among other: “Biometric Passports and the Apocalyptic Beast Conspiracy “, and the pathology of the social - among other: “Prostitution - Sacred Art or Social Pathology? “. But as shown by means of the examples chosen from the four sections, the fundamental line is that of the current dialectic of the sacred and the profane, related to the new cardinal points of the earth and death, biological and sexual corporality. It is clear that beyond the Romanian case, the symptoms and diagnosis are rather global as they belong to a general dialectic of the sacred and the profane. If it were not too journalistic, I would say that after modernity, along with postmodernity, with the globalization that it theoretically generated, we are invited to return to a sort of Middle Ages ... The diagnosis of Nicu Gavriluță is not so apocalyptic, maybe because the idea that the so-often called young

generation lacks values and the spirit of sacrifice was contradicted by the events in Chișinău in April 2009.

Yet, beyond the fact that the example is at hand and we are interested primarily in it, why the pathology of Romanian everyday life? And why does daily life in Romania point out stupidity with such force only now? I think it becomes a major problem of the present-day Romanian society and this unfortunate success must necessarily be reported because it has succeeded in institutionalizing stupidity in our world. This: because a right analytical approach to the previous period of Romanian history was overwhelmed by the multitude of bombastic declamation speeches, and the institutions of our society have been flooded by the speeches of the big profiteers of the coup d'état which is known as the revolution. These discourses, which are a kind of electoral hypocrisy everywhere, led to actions that lack content and to social activities that have no style. That is why "the fools' mother is always pregnant" in Romania. Because the babbling of the meaningless speeches and of the *talk shows* are very coherently accompanied by the incoherence and inconsistency of social actions - which have placed Romanian economy in crisis, as a real connection to the global economy can only be very limited - and by the absence of style, as well as by the boorish political activities and social events.

What can provide a contrast to the lack of content and style of the institutions of our society is a lucid and rational analysis, which may sometimes take the form of some acidly ironical press discourses. This is where the solutions that Nicu Gavriliuță implicitly or explicitly proposes are to be searched for, not so much in order to eradicate stupidity, which is to be inscrutable and unpredictable in its manifestations, but in order to diminish its harmfulness and toxicity. With utmost care, I followed the solutions that Nicu Gavriliuță finds for an area that interests me directly, namely higher education and I can say that some of them would work effectively...

What remains to be said about the book before the readers discover it on their own is that stylistically speaking, it uses a well-mastered rhetoric of the formulas that express a lot, that are substantial and that make reading delightful. Moreover, it is a book that tells us about how the academic environment in the field of socio-humanistic education works in Iași: the book is prefaced by the exquisite intellectual Ștefan Afloroaei. The fact that two academics - a metaphysician and a sociologist - that are so different can meet so successfully tells us a lot about the high quality of the intellectual environment in Iași and it protects it from the pathology - I was about to say *the stupidity* - of other Romanian academic environments!

NICOLAE CREȚU

IN ROMANIA, “THE FOOLS’ MOTHER: ALWAYS PREGNANT “

The title of the volume signed by Nicu Gavriliuță stands out among the quiet titles around it: *The Fools’ Mother Is Always Pregnant*. Could it be a humorous book? After all, the current Dean of Philosophy is a sociologist and an anthropologist interested in “the strange symptoms of social normality,” as Stefan Afloroaei writes in *Foreword*, in the normality of the “weird “ Romanian quotidian. Why shouldn’t such an academic have humor on his side, the so-much needed humor in the “battle “ with the many forms of contemporary stupidity, for the benefit of us all? Yes, it is not a volume of humorous texts, indeed; the collection (“*Society & Journalism* “) and the serious subtitle (“*A Sociology of Everyday Pathologies* “) are convincing enough in this respect. Yet, maybe humor would find a place between its covers and only reading may give an answer to such assumptions. Let us find out!

Why would a non-gazetteer publicist choose to gather in one volume some of his Sunday columns published in *Ziua de Iași*? If the question is viewed from all perspectives, then the answer would be: because there is something important or even something serious in them that exceeds the journalistic ephemerid, maintaining validity and significance in a horizon of time (and space). If it is about “pathologies “, than the concern for their detection and study does not accept any hasty, superficial or accidental approach, and certainly, no abandonment of any kind will be accepted, especially since it is even about some therapies in finding “the social pathologies “.

Is it too much to ask from a weekly newspaper column? The author does not believe so and naturally insists on the necessary “descriptions “ of the symptoms, the manifestations of many “diseases “ (everything from a social extension that makes them worthy of sustained attention, able to penetrate more deeply, from the very beginning). These are always associated in one way or another with the much too prolific “pregnancy “, with irony (or humor?) revealed even from the title on the cover (left alone, without the additional soothing subtitle) and, as expected, the general, overall picture opens with the richly described aforementioned symptoms of politics.

Could the fuss about the “violet flame “ be missing in this chapter? Is it worth taking it into consideration? And if so, why? It is not the pathetic explanation itself, given by the election staff of the loser, that was ridiculous, but the enormity of media tall-tales (over-discussed by the media) together with the huge contempt for the electorate, believed to be able to swallow it with their eyes closed. *IMF - economic assassin or post-modern Messiah* is a tablet title, an observation sheet, with comments that

denounce the symmetrically arranged two exaggerations: on the one hand “the well-known Romanian disease “ of “framing-up “, and, on the other hand, the hyperbolism of the ‘pro antithesis’ that is so “messianic “ in its defending enthusiasm. In fact, the attitudes, both following the line of “the great chatter “ (Mircea Iorgulescu) known from Caragiale are still topical today, when the Romanian is no longer born a poet, but a political analyst on a large scale, from the domestic talk-show (today’s Leonida and Efimita) to the one presented on TV, with so many “Tanase “ and “Dinești “ that are suitable for any kind of “channel “.

The author does not seem to always lie in wait while looking for the pre-text; thus, he can use his column without the ironic rictus signaling real danger (*bioterrorism*), replying to some obvious ideological manipulation (*the Romanians - rape specialists?*), defining the echo “flower power “ that was historically and politically re-contextualized in Chisinau: *The power of flowers soaked in blood*, welcoming the early signs of “the resacralization of the earth “, or saluting the beginning of Obama’s presidential mandate, with hope for the better. He proceeds with no bitter tone and is beneficially non-predictable in the eyes of his readers (tone, attitude, rite verdicts, with so many possible rigidities that would only jam his communication from the position he takes in order to observe the attitudes and trends that he polarizes). His readers are his potential applicants, especially those that he addresses and thus chooses, namely those without prejudices and fixed ideas, able to discern and to ask questions that invite a more nuanced reflection against any pattern of response. And again, in such a process, the appeal to irony is necessary (MEPs, some of them as caricature characters, chosen by those who have chosen them to represent us in the EU - *Pentecost and the Holy Spirit in Brussels*); some other times, the “play “ is set on a severe background of contemporary fantasies derived from ancient *ordeals* that come back to life, and the answers are given with the hand on the Bible, therefore under oath, by the presidential rivals (violet or not), which is the object of some recent bitter and ultimately demystified comment (*The ordeal of the common sense*).

A great part of the texts are the target for the legible excesses of Romanian post-communist mimicry inspired from demonstrations in the field of the “religious “ that so many times appears in the form of some degraded and degrading versions of the sacred, as mercantile and transformed into kitsch. *Halloween between Celtic mythology and Romanian fun*, *Santa sexy dolls*, *The Pilgrimage - a Woodstock of the Romanian Orthodox Religion?* *Valentine's Day. For the love of God to overexciting vibrators*, *biometric passports and the conspiracies against the apocalyptic beast*, *2012-the end of the world*, *Madonna is not the metaphysical body*, *The Apocalypse. Baba versus Zdranga nanotechnology experts* are titles that speak for themselves. They speak about the very intention of making some therapeutic statements about the conjunction between the so transparent epidemic of imitative

behavior (in order to be “in trend, the hyperbolic style of mediatization - TV, in particular- through the rebound of the almost benign comparison, some Chirițe and Zițe of the good old times?), and the commercial advertising mechanism (tourism, auxiliary services, increase of sales etc.) Why should one miss the chance to transform Saint Valentine into an effective salesman, or Christmas into a necessary sexy adjuvant of every commercial calendar? Wouldn't it be a pity, so to say, to waste all these opportunities?

In the shopping fever and the figures of the holiday shopping, Nicu Gavriluță no longer recognizes any of the symbols of the deep, original, sacred order but he detects the signs of some growing ostentation and even escalation of it, which is not the only moment when he connects the detached tablet to a field of social psychology, with flashes of fantasy and eventually of irrepressible contamination.

Does the author take the role of a (symbolic) epidemiologist on duty? Does he alarm us in any way? No, instead of being a Don Quijote, Nicu Gavriluță, a lucid skeptic, relies not on a therapy or, moreover, on prevention in the field, but rather on the finger-pointing of the disease. In the understanding of the (vulnerable) cultural substratum of the discussed contagion, he entails a shy start, if not even a cure in the more measured, more balanced response to the seasons and moments of the recurrent 'fever', whose eradication is in nobody's interest, not even in the author's interest.

Once inside the “Museum of Swarovski in Wattens, near Innsbruck, “ he seems downright strange and unexpectedly fascinated in front of the “modern mythology “, with artists like Dali, Warhol as strategic allies. This makes the gradually fascinated visitor come into “a real fairytale world of treasures “, into multidimensional worlds, into spaces of “mysteries and fantasies “, where you can find the “poetry of light “ and “divine music “. This is a quite lyrical statement for a vigilant sociologist-journalist, who otherwise does not ignore or forget the Swarovski business. I would not say that what he does is hidden advertising (although, you might never know), but he lets himself seduced by the Austrian advertising model (he would like to see it in our country too, to satisfy not only the mythical nostalgia hidden in the social imaginary but also our atypical bias towards excessive and wasteful, conspicuous consumption), the final touch of the coming back from the trance of the crossing through the Museum inundated by the “magic crystal worlds “. Was he so deeply impressed by the wonders of the crystals? Even so, the exception for the lowering of the guard for a moment would only certify a sympathetic human vulnerability.

Other pages start with the Easter of the Gentle and go to “the rifle and the wide belt “ of some contemporaries that are less sensitive to the customs and traditions that have no pragmatic-profitable potential. *St. Elijah's Flame* is meant to open today's hot topics with humor

(multiculturalism, religious pluralism), balanced by substantial cultural counterparts that are not pretentiously or snobbishly exhibited (“cosmic religiosity “ and its hierophantic, positive history theophany and the invigorating Christian spirituality, with reference to Eliade and Culianu). *The Holy Cross and the non-transfigured paradoxes* are derived from quotes in a premeditated way (Blaga, Patriarch Daniel, Pleșu) and make reference to other brain cracking “paradoxes “, from the convergence zone of the Romanian vocation of victimization with some electoral Balkan conduct (candidates and voters). This is a deep and lasting “disease “ whose symptoms at the level of our social psychology are always operated by the appellant “stars “ (and their associated staffs) of the “eternal and fascinating “ Romanian politics.

As already shown by these reading notes, the thematic and attitudinal recurrences eventually progressively configure the ascendancy of a synthetic articulation, which is undeveloped but inevitable, thanks to a morphology of culture, to mentality, ideology and the practice of *l'œuvre* in the field of social pathologies. They configure a convergence that organically and deeply binds this book that remains more than a journalistic collection of texts because the unifying ribs of the whole appear right from the game of perspectives and tonalities modeled by a type of axiology (consistently suggested, sometimes demystifyingly engaged or sometimes frankly and clearly explained) derived from the author's reactions to so many forms of stupidity (and fooling) that generate more and more inventive and diversified proliferating “social pathologies “.

The fourth and last part of the book, entitled *Social Pathologies*, groups the texts which were not by chance given such a location: most of them address the crucial problem, in Nicu Gavriluță's point of view, i.e. the Romanian school at all levels at present, with little escape into something else: sports and violence, projects for the legalization of prostitution, and finally, a question with no hidden symbolic-suggestive dimension of serious irony that is not noisy or pathetic, but rather able to make us think: *Do the Romanians live in fear?*

Often present in the previous sections of the book, the great ideas that underline the supremacy of education and culture in their relationship, with their undeniable moral and spiritual values that shape the praxis of society, appear in their full severity, against the backdrop of irresponsibility, of inventive deceit, of ruthless and limitless means to get to an end, of corruption and patronage networks - the “unbeatable “ combination of hypocrisy (and, if necessary, of cynicism too), of robbery in broad daylight – all jointly supported by justice, police etc. – many of them being politicians “elected “ by us, some nabobs that keep helping with multiple election contributions (Could you know who “is elected “?), all protected (by both categories) and rewarded with astronomical salaries, and finally, the necessary allies (not only moguls) of all the partisan media

who also follow the same patterns of corruption meant to bring the necessary further benefits. In a puzzling and depressing but excellent overview that does not use the elegiac lyricism of self victimization denounced by Pleșu, we need a lucid revolt, converted into demystifying education, into forms and ways of revival consisting of genuine, tenacious and intransigent civic activism, a type of “prevention meant to shape and strengthen critical thinking able to dismantle clever and cunning, false advertising, designed to successfully sell the false picture (the *selling image* handled by the election staffs) by means of votes, an angelic image of so many candidates and parties whose goals are anything but doctrines and principles and are obviously not driven by patriotic feelings. The author does not clearly state it anywhere, but all his texts imply and suggest it: the metaphors for the disease (the pathology and symptoms), the therapy, the search and the interrogation of conceivable solutions are not simple rhetorical devices. Neither he nor anyone else can stop the “fools’ mother “ from getting “pregnant “, with all the expected consequences of such unfortunate prolific maternity.

Beyond the impact of the title that intrigues and challenges (and these are valuable qualities), in fact it does not talk about (congenital) stupid people and about stupidity but rather about the current continuous fooling, the new tricks that the younger generation permanently come back to.

However, Nicu Gavriluță still believes that there is something to be done. In his column from *Ziua de Iași*, in the good tradition of the great newspapers of the interwar Romania, he successfully described the picture of the symptoms of social pathologies, without pedantry or fierce rhetoric but with a natural and clear approach, often ironical, humorous. It is a first step toward the necessary therapies, the intelligent solutions and forms of prevention. It is obvious that, and his book strongly shows it, genuine education is needed, not only in schools but also in the entire area of the social, the political and the civic, in moral behavior and its social evaluation, in professionalism and real performance and these should not be simulated in the advantageous image that they have been created for.