

old forms as new, fashionable, and a lot more digestible forms of art. A *savoir-faire* in direct lineage from old masters rather than contemporary art, along with clever, often ironic reference to the specific pre and post totalitarian experience has become the label of artists coming from the east. This vision is of course reductive, the artistic reality, even in a close universe as “The Paintbrush Factory” being much more diverse, but the constant reference to this stereotype has made it into a real ‘country brand’. Symptomatic of this, is the fact that every single reproduction illustrating the two articles dedicated to the movement around “The Paintbrush Factory” contains either a reference to the past, or to past artworks.

The last two texts, “Finis Saxoniae and the art of return” by Dieter Schlesak, and a review of Schlesak’s novel “Transylwahnien”<sup>1</sup>, show us the other face of the coin, deconstructing the mythical image of the ‘German’ – a symbol of discipline, efficiency and order as opposed to Romanian messiness – revealing us a more gloomy image of the Transylvanian Saxons, fallen under the mirage of Nazism, bringing upon themselves the revenge of history, the burden of guilt and the tragedy of losing their homeland.

The big picture of *Herito*’s issue on Romania shows us – whether through compensatory narratives or critical analyses – a country in search for itself and for a place for itself among nations. The editorial choice of featured authors, artists and themes, although not an exhaustive one (nor could it be) offers an enriching insight, for both the Romanian and the non-Romanian reader, into a mental territory which has its unique cocktail of dilemmas and certainties, of self-assessment and self-enhancement inherent to any nation. I would remark the irreproachable graphical presentation of the magazine, all articles being richly and appropriately illustrated. *Herito* shows us that Romania is maybe not the ‘harvest of civilization’ that professional patriots vocally announce, but, definitely, is a country not to be ignored.

### **”To Be or Not To Be”\***

– Review –

Dana-Cristina HERTA  
‘Iuliu Hatieganu’ University of Medicine and Pharmacy Cluj – Napoca  
Romanian Alliance for Suicide Prevention

**Keywords:** suicide, monograph, suicide prevention, resources

**E-mail:** dherta@umfcluj.ro

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*Discussing* a comprehensive monograph about suicide, stemming from the experience of a teacher, healer, researcher, writer and active member of the community,

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<sup>1</sup> Claudio Magris, “Return to Transylvania, a spiritual Tower of Babel”, *Herito* 12 (2013) 219-225.

\* Doina Cosman, *Suicidology* (Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2013), 378p. ISBN 978-973-595-601-1

is not a simple task. However, the issue of suicide prevention is simple: suicide is the only death that can be prevented, and it is in the ability of each and every one of us, as human beings and members of the community, to use our available resources in order to prevent suicide.

Browsing through the 378 pages of the *SUICIDOLOGY* monograph from this viewpoint, every person that reads this book can find something that will resonate with their academic and professional training and, most importantly, with their personal experiences and history. One of the most important values of this book is the ability to create a complex and unitary body of evidence, from history of suicide to case studies, from the latest genetic data and epidemiological trends of suicide to state of the art approaches in suicide risk assessment and prevention.

Sceptics might ask why the age-old question ‘To be or not to be’ that haunts the psyche of the person who contemplates suicide remains unanswered. Professionals who manage persons at risk for suicide might ask why making predictions about short – and long – term risk for suicidal behaviours is such a difficult endeavour. For those who open this book searching for answers, the author provides one simple, undeniable reality from the very beginning: suicide is a constant event throughout the entire history of human race. This statement contains a caveat in hiding: suicide will potentially continue to exist, as an external social phenomenon and internal individual odyssey, despite all the developments in research and prevention strategies, despite all endeavours to end stigmatization and separate myth from reality concerning suicide on a global scale.

Does this generate a contradiction in terms with the fact that suicide is the only death that can be prevented? By reading this book and browsing through the vast list of references provided in the end of each chapter, you will realize that each person that dwindle at the boundary between life and death by suicide actually holds an infinite amount of untapped individual resources, and the key to those resources is shaped as the riddle of the Sphinx.

The most effective way of simplifying the problem is to first postpone the suicidal impulse, to delay the action of suicide and to help the person contemplating suicide to shed a light in the darkness and to explore alternative options, here and now. Hence the crucial role of the chapter concerning crisis intervention, in which Professor Doina Cosman clearly and loudly states that each of us can become parts of the solution to suicide as global public health issue, by becoming resources in our own communities, according to our own experience and training and based on individual and community needs. The moment to do something is right now, and simple gestures like looking into someone’s eyes, giving them a cup of tea or a blanket or asking ‘How are you today?’, ‘Is there anything I can do for you?’, or sharing the contact data of the nearest available suicide prevention services when we go online can make the difference between life and death.

This book has an undeniable destiny that will be carried out not through self-fulfilling prophecies generated by the helplessness – hopelessness – no escape frame of mind of the suicidal person, but through seeds of resourcefulness, positivism and humour. Why humour? Because, despite the tragic undertones contained in each life story of persons contemplating suicide, it is about **life** stories ultimately, with sunrises and springs and smiles coming after the darkness, despondency and tears. The author reminds us of that, in every page of the book and in every action that she takes as a dedicated professional, and shows us that, regardless of how long and hard the journey towards choosing life is, it begins right here and now, life is precious and worth every effort.