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SACRED ONTOPHANY AND THE COMMUNICATIVE CONSTRUCTION OF REALITY IN AUREL CODOBAN'S PHILOSOPHY OF MEANING

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Abstract
This article examines the place of meaning in Aurel Codoban's philosophy through a comparative reading of *Sacru și ontofanie*, *Semn și interpretare*, and *Imperiul comunicării*. It argues that manifestation, interpretation, and communication form three related dimensions of a recurring philosophical problem: how reality becomes meaningful to human beings. The analysis begins with sacred ontophany, where the relation between appearance and being raises the question of how an experience is recognized as significant. It then considers signs and interpretation as forms of mediation that make such significance intelligible within historical and cultural settings. Finally, it examines the body, image, and contemporary media to clarify the sense in which communication participates in the construction of shared reality. In dialogue with Sandu Frunză's studies, the article proposes a continuity of philosophical questions across Codoban's works without treating them as a single closed system. It also distinguishes the public formation of meaning from the truth of the claims communicated. This distinction reveals both the possibilities of communicative life and the need to assess critically the meanings through which people understand their world.

Keywords: Sacred ontophany; Interpretation; Communication; Shared reality; Aurel Codoban.

1. Introduction

Aurel Codoban's philosophy offers a way to examine a question that runs through both the study of religion and the study of communication: how does reality become meaningful to human beings? In *Sacru și ontofanie*, this question arises in relation to the sacred and its manifestation (Codoban 1998b). *Semn și interpretare* turns attention toward signs and the activity of interpretation (Codoban 2001), while *Imperiul comunicării* places communication, the body, and the image at the centre of contemporary experience (Codoban 2011b). Read together, these works invite an inquiry into the changing forms through which meaning is encountered, interpreted, and shared.

The relationship among these works cannot be described simply as a succession in which communication replaces the sacred. Such a reading would impose a break before asking what persists across Codoban's different fields of inquiry. A more productive question is whether manifestation, interpretation, and communication describe distinct yet related conditions of meaningful experience. The sacred raises the problem of how something appears as bearing a significance that exceeds its immediate presence. The sign draws attention to the mediation through which significance becomes intelligible. Communication, in turn, concerns the circulation of signs within relationships and shared forms of life. This connection is the interpretive proposal of the present article, rather than a conclusion assumed in advance.

Frunză's earlier study connects Codoban's account of the sacred with the claim that communication constructs reality (Frunză 2011). His more recent analysis extends this discussion to digital communication, political identity, and the contemporary uses of religious meaning (Frunză 2025). Together, these studies show how Codoban's thought has been applied to questions of religion and contemporary communication.

The movement from sacred ontophany to the communicative construction of reality therefore names a path of investigation, not a claim that Codoban abandons one subject for another. "Construction" must also be used with care. To say that communication participates in the construction of reality does not necessarily mean that reality is an arbitrary product of discourse. It means, more modestly, that the world people inhabit together is inseparable from the ways they identify what matters, interpret what they encounter, and make their interpretations available to others. How far Codoban's writings support this claim, and where its limits lie, are questions for the analysis that follows.

This approach brings the philosophy of religion into conversation with semiology, hermeneutics, and the philosophy of communication. Its central concern is the status of meaning across those domains. Does the sacred disclose meaning in a way fundamentally different from the sign? Is interpretation a response to an already meaningful world, or does it help constitute the world as meaningful? What changes when communication becomes a privileged setting in which reality is understood? These questions allow Codoban's works to be read in relation to one another without presuming that they give identical answers.

This article examines: *Sacru și ontofanie*, *Semn și interpretare*, and *Imperiul comunicării* in dialogue with Frunză's studies. While Frunză explores the relevance of Codoban's thought to religion and contemporary communication, the present article focuses on the philosophical relation among manifestation, interpretation, and communication. It argues that meaning remains a connecting problem across Codoban's writings, even as the conditions under which it appears, becomes intelligible, and is shared come increasingly into focus.

2. Sacred Ontophany and the Problem of Meaning

The starting point of Codoban's philosophy of meaning is the question of the sacred. In *Sacru și ontofanie*, he proposes a philosophy of religions concerned with the ways religious experience discloses reality (Codoban 1998b). The word *ontophany* is important here: it directs attention to the appearance of being, rather than treating the sacred solely as an object of belief or a set of doctrines. The philosophical question is how an experience can present something as real and significant, and how that significance becomes intelligible within a particular world.

Codoban's account of the sacred also requires attention to its relation with the profane. In a later essay, he describes the two as correlative terms whose meanings emerge through their relationship. He distinguishes interpretations that explain the sacred as a transformation of profane realities from interpretations that understand the profane as a place in which the sacred may be concealed (Codoban 2011a, 71–72). This distinction matters because neither approach regards appearances as self-explanatory. Both require interpretation, although they disagree about what interpretation should uncover. For one, the apparent sacredness of an experience points beyond itself toward human or social conditions; for the other, an apparently ordinary reality may bear a significance that is not immediately visible.

In his reading of Eliade, Codoban argues that the sacred and the profane cannot be understood simply as two separate domains. Their relation also bears on what human beings recognize as real and ultimately significant (Codoban 1998a, 89–90). The relation between the sacred and being gives this interpretive problem its depth. Discussing the origins of Western philosophy, Codoban argues that philosophical discourse emerged through a transformation of religious meanings. The first philosophical principles, on his account, can be understood in relation to earlier manifestations of the sacred, even as philosophical inquiry changes the way access to what is fundamental becomes possible (Codoban 2011a, 93–94). The point is not that philosophy and religion say the same thing. Rather, their historical relation shows that a change in the language used to describe reality can also change the form in which reality is understood.

Codoban makes the connection between manifestation and ontology especially clear in his discussion of archaic religiosity. He describes an early mode of experience in which what appears to consciousness is also apprehended as real, prior to a firm separation between different degrees or kinds of reality (Codoban 2011a, 116–117). Whether this reconstruction can serve as a historical account of archaic experience is open to question. Its philosophical significance for the present article lies elsewhere: it shows why *ontophany* concerns more than the perception of an object. It concerns the relation between appearing, being, and meaning. The way reality appears is bound to the way it is inhabited and understood.

This reading also helps clarify the role of interpretation. The sacred does not become philosophically intelligible merely because it manifests itself. Its manifestations are encountered through historically situated symbols, distinctions, and practices. Frunză's discussion of Codoban's dialectic of the sacred and the profane shows how this framework can illuminate religious meanings that persist or change within contemporary public life (Frunză 2025, 129–131). The present article asks an earlier question: what makes such meanings recognizable in the first place? Once manifestation is understood as inseparable from the problem of intelligibility, the move toward signs and interpretation becomes necessary. It is to that move, developed more explicitly in *Semn și interpretare*, that the next section turns.

3. Interpretation as Forms of Mediation

If ontophany concerns the appearance of what is experienced as real, interpretation concerns the conditions under which that appearance acquires meaning. The transition is significant: something may be present to experience without the meaning of its presence being immediately clear. In *Semn și interpretare*, Codoban brings semiology and hermeneutics into the same field of inquiry (Codoban 2001). For the argument developed here, their relationship raises a central question: can meaning be understood through the structure of signs alone, or must interpretation also attend to the historical world in which signs are encountered?

Ștefan Afloroaei's reading of *Semn și interpretare* adds a critical dimension to this account. He argues that Codoban's examination of signs and communication also raises an ontological question: what kind of reality becomes intelligible when the world is approached through interpretation? This reading helps clarify why the move from manifestation to interpretation concerns more than the decoding of signs (Afloroaei 2008, 114–116).

Ricoeur's account of discourse offers a useful point of comparison here: the meaning expressed in language cannot be reduced to the formal arrangement of signs, while interpretation asks how that meaning can be understood beyond its immediate context (Ricoeur 1976). Codoban's discussion of cultural interpretation brings this problem into focus. Reflecting on the encounter between Western and non-Western traditions, he identifies a difficulty in approaches that translate another culture's signs into formal relations while neglecting their meanings. Yet interpretation can produce a different distortion when it reads unfamiliar symbols entirely through the semantic categories of the interpreter's own culture (Codoban 2011a, 106–107). The problem is therefore more demanding than the decoding of a sign. Understanding requires attention both to the forms through which meaning is expressed and to the world within which those forms make sense.

A related hermeneutical difficulty arises in the interpretation of religious texts. In a study of Eden, Lazăr (2025) examines how literal and spiritual readings disclose different dimensions of the same biblical narrative. This example offers a point of comparison with Codoban's inquiry into how religious meanings become intelligible, while leaving open the distinct question of ontophany.

This difficulty also bears on the interpretation of religious experience. A manifestation of the sacred cannot enter philosophical discussion without being described, distinguished from other experiences, and related to symbols or narratives. These acts of mediation do not simply repeat an original experience. They articulate it and make it available for understanding. At the same time, interpretation cannot proceed as if a symbol had no history beyond the concepts brought to it by the interpreter. The movement from ontophany to hermeneutics thus reveals a tension that the present article considers productive: meaning calls for interpretation, while interpretation remains answerable to what it seeks to understand.

Codoban offers another way to clarify the stakes of this transition when discussing structuralism and Lucian Blaga. He notes that, in a semiological approach, meaning is produced through communication and its processes, whereas earlier philosophies of culture often assigned that role to knowledge. His account of Blaga complicates the opposition: where knowledge does not simply uncover a hidden essence, it may instead participate in the communication and signification of mystery (Codoban 2011a, 49). This comparison concerns Blaga and structuralism specifically; it should not be treated as a direct definition of Codoban's position. It does, however, identify a question that connects his inquiries into the sacred, signs, and communication: is meaning something to be discovered, something to

be interpreted, or something that takes shape in the act of communication?

The material form of a sign also affects the way it is understood. In "Knowledge Culture and Communication Culture," Codoban distinguishes a culture organized around printed text and learned signs from one increasingly shaped by images and more immediate forms of communication. He associates this shift with a change in emphasis from the transmission of information toward the construction of relationships (Codoban 2012, 1133–1135). The distinction does not imply that interpretation disappears when images become prominent. It suggests that interpretation takes place under changing conditions: what is visible, how it addresses its audience, and the relations it helps establish all become part of the production of meaning.

The sign, then, is more than a bridge between an experience and its later explanation. It is one of the forms through which an experience becomes intelligible and shareable. Ontophany raises the question of manifestation; semiology and hermeneutics ask how manifestation can signify. The next step is to examine what happens when communication itself becomes a principal setting in which signs circulate and shared reality is formed.

4. Communication and the Construction of Shared Reality

The move from interpretation to communication changes the scale of the inquiry. Interpretation asks how signs become intelligible; communication asks how meanings circulate between people and shape their relations. In *Imperiul comunicării*, Codoban examines this question through the body, the image, and forms of relating (Codoban 2011b). As Ioan Hosu observes in his review of the book, these themes bring semiotic and hermeneutic concerns into contact with the practices and technologies of contemporary communication (Hosu 2012, 198–199). The issue is no longer only how a sign can be understood, but also what happens when signs organize a shared social world.

Codoban describes this change more explicitly in "Knowledge Culture and Communication Culture." He contrasts a culture centred on knowledge and printed text with one increasingly organized around images, media, and relationships. In his account, the shift concerns more than the speed at which information reaches an audience. It changes the forms through which people attend to one another and establish social connections (Codoban 2012, 1133–1135). Communication thus becomes a condition of participation in contemporary culture: to encounter meanings is also to encounter the channels, images, and relationships through which they are presented. Carey's distinction between the transmission and ritual views of communication offers a useful point of comparison for Codoban's shift in emphasis from the circulation of information toward the formation of relationships (Carey 2008). The comparison does not imply that the two thinkers develop the same account of communication; it clarifies what is at stake when communication is understood as a social practice rather than solely as the delivery of a message.

The claim that communication *constructs reality* nevertheless needs a precise scope. It need not imply that communication creates the material world or that every account of reality is equally valid. In the context of this article, construction refers to the formation of *shared reality*: the ways events are identified, made significant, represented to others, and incorporated into collective life. Berger and Luckmann's sociology of knowledge helps specify this social sense of constructed reality, while leaving open the distinct ontological question raised by Codoban's account of the sacred (Berger & Luckmann 1966). A public event, for example, takes place independently of any one description of it, yet the meanings through which people recognize and respond to that event are shaped through communication. Frunză (2011) develops the claim that communication constructs reality in

dialogue with Codoban's account of religiosity. The present reading retains the force of that claim while distinguishing between what occurs and the meanings through which what occurs becomes publicly intelligible.

The body and the image make this process visible. They are not merely secondary vehicles for ideas that have already been formed elsewhere. They affect how a person appears to others and how relationships begin, continue, or change. Hosu (2012, 200–202) notes their central place in *Imperiul comunicării*, particularly in Codoban's discussion of contemporary media and social relations. This focus also marks a change from the interpretive situation considered in the previous section. An image may invite interpretation, but it may also establish an impression or a relation before its audience has formulated an explicit judgment about it. The philosophical task is to examine these effects without assuming that visibility and meaning are identical.

Codoban's later work with Alexandru Cordoș sharpens the problem. Their discussion of public knowledge and "post-truth" asks what happens when communication plays a dominant role in determining the significance of events (Codoban & Cordoș 2021). This does not settle the question of truth by reducing it to persuasive expression. On the contrary, it makes the relation between significance and truth more difficult to ignore. If communication shapes what a community takes to matter, an account of communicative reality must also ask how interpretations can be questioned, corrected, and judged. The construction of shared reality is therefore both a condition of social understanding and a source of philosophical responsibility.

This perspective brings the article back to its starting point. Sacred ontophany, signification, and communication concern different questions, yet each examines how something becomes meaningful within human experience. The sacred raises the question of manifestation; semiology and hermeneutics ask how manifestations become intelligible; the philosophy of communication asks how meanings acquire a shared presence and practical force. The continuity proposed here is a continuity of problems, not an identity among Codoban's answers. It allows us to read his work as an inquiry into meaning while keeping open the differences between religious experience, interpretation, and contemporary media.

5. Further Discussion: Continuity, Limits, and Critical Questions

The methodological problem of comparing these works deserves separate consideration. Codoban's books do not present themselves as consecutive chapters of a single treatise. Their immediate questions and materials differ. A chronological arrangement may make a movement from religion through semiology to media appear inevitable, although chronology alone cannot demonstrate philosophical continuity. The argument here is therefore reconstructive: it asks which questions recur in different forms and what changes when the terms of the inquiry change. The sequence from manifestation to interpretation to communication is an analytical proposal. It must be tested against passages in the works rather than attributed wholesale to their author. Such restraint matters because a persuasive thematic resemblance can conceal genuine tensions among the texts.

One such tension concerns the status of an experience before it is expressed. A strong account of sacred manifestation might seem to locate meaning in an encounter whose force precedes language. A strong account of communicative construction might seem to claim that nothing meaningful exists before its public articulation. Neither extreme is required by the material considered here. An experience can affect a person before that person has an adequate account of it; nevertheless, the experience becomes a subject of discussion only

through words, images, or gestures. Its pre-reflective force and its subsequent interpretation can both matter. The question is how to acknowledge the first without making interpretation dispensable, and how to acknowledge the second without treating experience as an empty surface onto which language projects anything whatsoever.

Codoban's discussion of the sacred and profane provides a useful test of that balance. The two are correlative in his account: a philosophical description of one depends upon the way the other is understood (Codoban 2011a, 71–72). Within a reductive interpretation, the sacred is explained through ordinary human processes and appears as their disguised expression. Within an interpretation attentive to the concealment of the sacred, the ordinary may instead become the site in which something other than its immediate appearance is disclosed. Both positions interpret; neither simply reproduces an uninterpreted given. Their difference concerns what interpretation is warranted in claiming to discover. This suggests that the question of meaning begins before a decision between religious affirmation and religious critique. It asks what sorts of evidence, experience, and conceptual distinctions could make either interpretation persuasive.

The historical connection between philosophy and religion adds another layer. Codoban argues that early philosophical principles can be read against the background of earlier religious meanings, while the philosophical pursuit of a fundamental principle reorganizes access to what a culture regards as real (Codoban 2011a, 93–94). This argument should not be simplified into the assertion that philosophy is merely secularized religion. Philosophical inquiry introduces its own standards of conceptual coherence and rational examination. Yet it does suggest that a change in intellectual form need not erase every question inherited from an earlier setting. What counts as real, how people orient themselves toward it, and what kind of life follows from that orientation can remain at issue as the discourse changes. This is one reason the article treats continuity as a continuity of problems rather than doctrines.

The speculative character of an account of archaic ontophany must also be recognized. Codoban's description of an early experience in which what appears may be apprehended as real serves a philosophical purpose in his discussion of the relation among being, the good, and evil (Codoban 2011a, 116–117). It does not by itself provide empirical evidence that all ancient communities inhabited an identical mental world. The present analysis therefore uses that description as a conceptual contrast: it makes visible a possible difference between experiencing the world as immediately meaningful and separating appearances from reality through critical reflection. Its value lies in the questions it opens, while its anthropological generality remains open to challenge. Taking this limit seriously strengthens rather than weakens the inquiry, because it prevents an interpretation of Codoban from resting on claims that the available evidence cannot bear.

Frunză's more recent analysis demonstrates why the sacred–profane relation cannot be treated as a closed historical episode. In his account, public appeals to religious meanings can take new forms within digital political communication (Frunză 2025, 129–131). Such examples do not establish that every political commitment is secretly religious. They show that symbolic resources can be displaced, reinterpreted, and used in settings beyond institutional worship. A sacred image may be invoked to establish belonging, authority, or a boundary against others. The public meaning of that invocation depends upon a communicative setting, yet it also draws upon earlier traditions of recognition. The question of manifestation consequently leads toward interpretation: to understand what appears in the public sphere, one must ask how its signs acquired their authority and how they are being used now.

A second methodological problem concerns the translation of meaning across cultures.

Codoban describes the limitations both of a formal analysis that preserves a structure while missing its significance and of an interpretation that replaces unfamiliar meanings with the categories of the interpreter's own world (Codoban 2011a, 106–108). This difficulty bears directly on a philosophy of religions in the plural. It would be inconsistent to value diversity at the level of subject matter while allowing a single interpretive vocabulary to determine in advance what every tradition must mean. Yet no scholar can dispense with concepts altogether. The task is to develop descriptions that remain revisable in contact with what they describe. A concept becomes useful when it clarifies an unfamiliar practice while still allowing that practice to resist the concept's expectations.

The interpreter is therefore implicated in the very process being studied. To describe a symbol for a new audience is to perform a further act of mediation. The description selects details, translates relations, and brings the symbol into a different conversation. It may clarify what was obscure, but it can also introduce distortions. This does not make understanding impossible. It gives understanding a critical discipline: the interpreter should distinguish what a source says, what a commentator infers, and what the present author proposes. The distinction has practical consequences for the citations in this article. Codoban's books remain the primary objects of interpretation; accounts by Frunză, Hosu, and others show how those objects have been read. A commentator's claim about a book cannot silently replace a passage from the book itself.

The material form of signs complicates interpretation further. Codoban's comparison of a culture shaped by printed text with one shaped increasingly by images is not a claim that technical inventions alone determine meaning. His discussion of reading emphasizes the practices and institutions that teach audiences how to use written signs (Codoban 2012, pp. 1133–1135). A printed page cannot become an effective cultural medium without readers able to interpret it. Likewise, images do not operate outside conventions merely because they seem immediately accessible. Their apparent ease can obscure the social training through which audiences learn to recognize bodies, gestures, and visual arrangements. A philosophy of communication must therefore attend to technologies, institutions, and interpretive habits together.

This perspective qualifies the idea of a simple transition from the knowledge of things to the communication of signs. In Codoban's discussion of Blaga and structuralism, different theories assign different roles to knowledge and communication in the emergence of significance (Codoban 2011a, 48–49). A more careful analysis separates discovery, interpretation, and public articulation as distinguishable activities, while acknowledging that they overlap in practice. An investigator may discover a feature of an unfamiliar practice, interpret its place in a wider pattern, and communicate that interpretation to others. Each stage can correct the previous one. Public criticism may expose an inadequate interpretation; a revised interpretation may disclose a feature the investigator previously missed. Communication, on this account, can be a condition for correcting knowledge as well as for circulating it.

The move to the body and image makes the stakes of public articulation more tangible. Hosu identifies corporeality, visibility, and relationship among the organizing concerns of *Imperiul comunicării* (Hosu 2012, 198–202). The body can be treated as a sign, but it is also the presence of a person who addresses and is addressed by others. A photograph, performance, or gesture may establish a relation before an audience has formulated a proposition about it. At the same time, the intensity of an impression is not a measure of its truth. A visible person can be misunderstood; an image can be selected to encourage a particular reading; a compelling performance can stand in for an absent argument. The communicative construction of reality thus includes both the possibility of recognition and

the risk of misrecognition.

Codoban's treatment of the philosopher as a public communicator develops the same concern in another register. The growth of mass media changes the circumstances in which philosophy can address a wider public. The philosopher's claim to wisdom or truth confronts the prominence of the journalist, the image, and the act of public presentation (Codoban 2009). This does not mean philosophy should become publicity. It means that philosophical discourse cannot pretend its reception is independent of its communicative form. Even a refusal to speak takes place within a field of possible addresses and interpretations. How a thinker lives and appears to others may also communicate a conception of philosophy, although that appearance remains subject to criticism rather than serving as proof of its own validity.

Frunză's studies of Codoban's account of desire and love show that these questions extend beyond media institutions. In one study, Frunză (2018a) presents philosophical reflection as an existential style through which persons reconsider their relations to themselves and others. In another, he examines desire and the wish to be desired within Codoban's hermeneutics of love (Frunză 2018b). These readings do not demonstrate that interpersonal relations are reducible to signs. They indicate that communication involves persons who can interpret and misinterpret one another, seek recognition, and remain vulnerable to the responses they receive. If a theory of communicative reality attends only to messages and technologies, it will miss the relational setting that gives many of those messages their significance.

The distinction between shared reality and unanimous agreement is equally important. A community can encounter the same image while dividing sharply over its interpretation. Political and religious discourse often supplies common objects of attention without producing a common judgment. Frunză's analysis of communication, religion, and politics in the digital age emphasizes contested identities and appeals to otherness (Frunză 2025). The term “shared reality” in this article refers to the publicly available field in which these interpretations meet and conflict. It does not imply that communication automatically brings people together or that the most widely circulated interpretation is the best one. The construction of a public world can create solidarities and exclusions at the same time.

The relation of communication to truth consequently cannot be deferred as a secondary matter. Codoban and Cordoș (2021) examine the prominence of significance in an environment where public accounts of events spread rapidly and specialist knowledge is contested. Their distinction among kinds of truth makes it possible to ask why an account resonates with an audience without concluding that resonance verifies its claims. A story can make an event intelligible while misdescribing what happened. An image can bring an issue to attention while concealing relevant circumstances. Communication may determine which questions are publicly asked, but evidential inquiry remains necessary to evaluate the answers. This tension gives philosophical weight to the concern about post-truth rather than allowing the term to function merely as a complaint about new media.

Codoban himself asks whether communication can have a form of wisdom (Codoban 2013, 163–178). The question is more difficult than asking whether people can communicate useful information. A culture organized around rapid exchanges and visibility may have little room for judgment about when to speak, what to show, and how to listen. The older philosophical association of wisdom with silence and reflection becomes relevant again precisely when communication is treated as central to human life. The aim is not to return to an imagined world without mediation. It is to ask whether communicative practice can include restraint, critical attention, and responsibility toward another person's understanding. The answer cannot be supplied by the reach or sophistication of a medium

alone. These considerations specify the limits of the reconstruction offered here. Manifestation, interpretation, and communication should not be understood as successive eras in which a new capacity simply replaces an older one. Religious experience is already shaped by symbolic practices; interpretation already depends upon the possibility of address; communication continues to involve questions about what appears and whether an account of it is adequate. The three terms distinguish dimensions of meaning for purposes of analysis. Their interaction is what makes Codoban's thought useful for discussing contemporary questions without detaching those questions from the older philosophical problem of being. What the later media analyses bring into focus is the public force of meanings that were never simply private.

The commentary on Codoban's work also shows that a single formula can travel between domains without retaining exactly the same function. “Communication constructs reality” can refer to the mediation of religious experience, the emergence of interpersonal identity, the circulation of political images, or the public significance of a health crisis. These uses are related, but their differences matter. The evidence appropriate to a claim about political persuasion is not identical to the evidence appropriate to an account of religious experience. A philosophical reconstruction gains clarity by specifying the kind of reality at issue in each case. The present article has accordingly restricted its constructive claim to the shared field of interpretation and response while leaving open more demanding metaphysical questions. This limitation makes possible a closer conversation among the texts without treating an arresting phrase as a universal explanation. It also clarifies what further research would require: direct examination of the three principal books, fuller comparison with Codoban's later writing on communication, and an account of how communicative meanings might be criticized by the people whose lives they affect.

A final critical question concerns the relation between construction and responsibility. If shared meanings are formed through communicative practices, participants can ask how those practices distribute visibility and authority. Who is allowed to name an event? Which images become credible? Whose interpretations are excluded as unintelligible before they can be assessed? The primary texts considered in this article do not provide a complete normative theory of these issues. Yet the trajectory from the sacred to public communication makes them difficult to avoid. A philosophy of meaning becomes philosophically consequential when it examines both the conditions that make a world intelligible and the obligations arising from the power to shape that intelligibility.

6. Conclusion

This article has examined Codoban’s philosophy of meaning through three related questions: how the sacred manifests itself, how signs become intelligible, and how communication shapes a shared world. The movement across these questions does not describe the disappearance of the sacred into communication. It shows a changing emphasis in the conditions under which meaning is encountered, interpreted, and made present to others.

The reading of *Sacru și ontofanie* placed manifestation at the centre of the inquiry. Ontophany concerns the appearance of what is experienced as real and significant, while the dialectic of the sacred and the profane shows why appearances call for interpretation. *Semn și interpretare* brings that interpretive task into sharper focus: signs make meaning available, but they cannot be understood apart from the histories and cultural settings in which they function. In *Imperiul comunicării*, the question extends to the body, the image, and the relationships through which meanings circulate in contemporary

life (Codoban 1998b, 2001, 2011b).

The article's central claim is therefore one of philosophical continuity with a change of emphasis. Across these works, Codoban asks how reality becomes meaningful to human beings. What changes is the aspect of that process brought into view: manifestation, mediation, or shared communication. Frunză's studies demonstrate the usefulness of Codoban's thought for analysing religion and contemporary public life (Frunză 2011, 2025). The contribution of the present article is to identify the question of meaning that links those applications to Codoban's broader philosophical work.

This interpretation has a limit. Communication may shape the meanings through which people inhabit a common world, but that claim alone does not determine whether those meanings are true or just. Codoban's later discussion of public knowledge and significance makes this tension especially clear (Codoban & Cordoș, 2021). The relation between the construction of shared reality and the critical judgment of its meanings remains a question for further study. It is also what makes Codoban's work relevant beyond a history of ideas: his philosophy asks both how meaning becomes possible and how we should respond to the meanings we create together.

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