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PHILOLOGIA

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SUMAR – CONTENTS – SOMMAIRE – INHALT

Studii și articole

Al. CISTELECAN , <i>The Bashful Paradigm (Matilda)</i>	5
Iulian BOLDEA , <i>Minimalist Transitivity. The Borders of the Poetic Language</i>	10
Dorin ȘTEFĂNESCU , <i>Le kérygme à l'épreuve de l'inter-dit</i>	20
Nicoleta SĂLCUDEANU , <i>The Cultural Cold War in Romania</i>	30
Luminița CHIOREAN , <i>Stănescu's Essay – A Palimpsest of Cultural Identity</i>	36
Florica BODIȘTEAN , <i>A Vision on Femininity in the Romantic Historical Novel: Walter Scott, Ivanhoe</i>	44
Doina BUTIURCĂ , <i>The Particular and the General in Idioms/Phraseologisms</i>	54
Eva Monica SZEKELY , <i>Constructing “The Other”</i>	60
Maria Dorina PAȘCA , <i>The Perceiving of the Word From Psycho-Pastoral Perspectives</i>	71
Dumitru Mircea BUDA , <i>Virtuality and Hypertext in Mircea Cartarescu's Levantul</i>	77
Maria-Laura RUS , <i>Orality and Originality</i>	86
Cristina SAVA , <i>The Identification of the Sacred Inside the Religious Experience</i>	90
Romelia POPP , <i>The Playful Reverie</i>	98
Eugenia ENACHE , <i>« Le bon sens » des gros mots</i>	103
Liliana ALIC , <i>Séquences libres, séquences figées et collocations dans la perspective de la traduction</i>	110
Corina BOZEDEAN , <i>Henry Bauchau, le lecteur-poète: aux sources d'un imaginaire</i>	119
Smaranda ȘTEFANOVICI and Bianca Emilia DAN , <i>The Difficult Passages from Tradition to Modernity in the Movie Doubt</i>	125
Niyi AKINGBE , <i>Harnessing Social Concerns in the Poetry of Jared Angira</i>	131
Attila IMRE , <i>Translating the English Could</i>	140
Naveen K. MEHTA , <i>Exploring Spiritual Consciousness in R. K. Narayan's the Guide and Bhabani Bhattacharya's He Who Rides a Tiger</i>	148
Dan H. POPESCU , <i>Memory and Mistake</i>	154
Dana RUS , <i>A Reconfiguration of Americanism: Reception Space and Cultural Exchange</i>	164
Bianca Oana HAN , <i>On the Issue of ‘Transadaptation’</i>	170
Corina Alexandrina PUȘCAȘ , <i>Considering an Intratextual Investigation of Philip Roth's Most Famous Series of Books</i>	175

Adrian NĂZNEAN , <i>Functionalist Approaches to Translation with Reference to Medical Articles</i>	186
Nicoleta Aurelia MEDREA , <i>Law and the World of Imagination</i>	191
Andrea PETERLICEAN , <i>Engineering Topics in Multimodal Texts</i>	195
LAKO Cristian , <i>Localization and Translation Studies</i>	202
ZOLTÁN Ildikó Gy. , <i>Weapons and Warfare in English Idioms</i>	209
Cristina NICOLAE , <i>Framing Life: The Other Reality</i>	218
NAGY Imola Katalin , <i>The Myth of the Family in Transylvanian Literary Discourses</i>	225

Reviews

Al. CISTELECAN , <i>The Masks of M. I. - Gabriel Liiceanu in dialogue with Mircea Ivănescu / Măștile lui M. I. - Gabriel Liiceanu în dialog cu Mircea Ivănescu</i> , Editura Humanitas, București, 2012.....	235
Iulian BOLDEA , George Banu, <i>The Trilogy of the Removal: The Rest, the Night, the Oblivion / Trilogia îndepărtării: odihna, noaptea, uitarea</i> , Cartea Românească, București, 2010.....	239
Doina BUTIURCĂ , Vasile Bahnaru, <i>Ascensiunea în descensiune a limbii române în Basarabia / The Rise in Decline of the Romanian Language</i> , Princeps Edit, Iași, 2011.....	242
Eugeniu NISTOR , Daniela Gîfu, <i>Violența simbolică în discursul electoral / Symbolic Violence in Electoral Speech</i> , Editura Casa Cărții de Știință, Cluj Napoca, 2011.....	244
Iulian BOLDEA , Ștefan Borbély, <i>The Diaphanous Existence / Existența diafană</i> , Editura Ideea Europeană, 2011.....	246
Dumitru Mircea BUDA , Cornel Ungureanu, <i>The Secret History of Romanian Literature / Istoria secretă a literaturii române</i> , Editura Aula, Brașov, 2007.....	249

THE BASHFUL PARADIGM (MATILDA)

AI. CISTELECAN¹

Abstract

The article explores the literary works and destiny of Matilda Cugler-Poni, one of the first Romanian *poetesses*, placed by Titu Maiorescu among the living promises of literary revival in his famous article *New Direction in Romanian Poetry and Prose* (1872). The present article argues that through her poetry the standard image of the feminine hypostasis might be detected: built from fragility, delicacy, sensibility and rhetorical passion and focused on suffering in love. Nevertheless, this pendant of femininity, worn with grace by the poetess until the period between the wars, will be corrupted by a first impetus of emancipation and translated in a violent type of sensualisation of the language, as well as in images that aspire to bodily concreteness and directness.

Keywords: Femininity, Sensuality, Body, Modernity, Romanticism

In his introduction to the *New Direction in Romanian Poetry and Prose* (1872), Titu Maiorescu establishes the defining group characteristics of the „new direction” which, in contrast to the old and forgotten one, is defined by its natural feeling, its truth and understanding of the ideas that the whole humanity owes to the Western civilization and, finally, by its success in maintaining and even intensification of the national element”². Among the living promises of this revival there is also one of our first *poetess*, Matilda Cugler-Poni (a precocious poet which has her debut in 1867 at no more than 16 years, in the magazine *Literary Dialogues*), towards whom Maiorescu acknowledges, a few pages further down the road, „our pleasure – and, maybe it’s not too much to say: a sort of recognition for her literary achievements”³.

It’s true, this recognition comes rather from the unpleasant contrast with the ‘old direction’ as well as with the ‘wrong’ contemporary direction: “Political intentions, emotional emphasis, forced expressions, crude language are at the order of the day for most of our poetry writers”⁴, for those outside the new direction, obviously. Such mistakes – at last! – are not to be found in Matilda’s literary production. When it comes to presenting her own poetry, Maiorescu assumes that ‘what must have enchanted the readers’ has to be, in them, ‘the elegance of language’ and – but this one only as a “maybe” – ‘the honesty of the feeling’⁵. “A special merit” goes to the “precision with which the poetry is composed and that successfully avoids the long repetition of the same idea”⁶. It’s true that the ‘poetry of miss Cugler’ suffers from the ‘compelling influence of

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² *Opere*, I, Edited by *Georgeta Rădulescu-Dulgheru* and *Domnica Filimon*. Introduction by *Eugen Todoran*, Bucureşti, Editura Minerva, 1978, p. 158.

³ *Idem*, p. 166.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵ *Idem*, *ibidem*, p. 178.

⁶ *Ibid.*

Heine and Lenau⁷, but at least it's Heine and Lenau, that is the general ingredients of the reigning whipping paradigm of the epoch! When, later, in the middle of some debates around the meaning of Maiorescianism (in 1943, in the article *Holes in Maiorescu's Critique*), Pompiliu Constantinescu will try to explain the stake in Maiorescu's wager, he will blame the 'team spirit' and the 'team critique' (necessary elements of a 'shock critique', as it was, in Pompiliu's view, the entire criticism of the XIXth century), whose first signs are visible even in this article⁸. But, around 1904, even Ilarie Chendi thought that one of Matilde's romances – *In the green forest* – 'conveys suggestively the last hope of a hopeless artist'⁹ (so, again, a sort of honesty of feeling; and this kind of honesty, as is well known, is a kind of art) that even if it were only for this poem, the poetess should be included in the basic anthology of Romanian literature.

Matilda was not exactly a dull representative of the Junimea group. Apparently, by means of the group's effort¹⁰, she got married, first, with Vasile Burlă, and after several years, with the chemist Petru Poni. Rumours had it, says Călinescu in his *History...*¹¹, that she was courted even by Eminescu (rumour denied, however, by the poet); the fact remains that the saloon of the Poni family was frequented, at the same time, by Eminescu, Slavici, Creangă and by the historicist A.D.Xenopol¹² (which, according to the same rumours, seems to have also developed a passion for Matilda, as is reported by Călinescu), as well as by other Junimists. Thanks to Maiorescu's recommendation, Matilde's entry into Romanian literature was not exactly discrete, even if disappointment didn't fail to appear right after the prestigious letter of reference. When it will fall under Călinescu's scrutiny, her poetry will appear to the latter as "chaste as an angel with the hands joined together. It is a poetry for retirement houses scrap books, with small birds, little butterflies, in the pious manner of the young misses who are supervised by their nannies. The sentimental situations are conventional"¹³. (On the other hand, this other statement from Călinescu is not at all true, namely that in Matilde's poetry everything happens exactly like in pictures"¹⁴; on the contrary, in Matilde, one suffers almost helplessly, with rare moments of joy). We are talking, indeed, of a sentimental scrap book poetry, gracious and naive (or gracious in a naive manner) in its images and delicate in its feelings (even if sometimes, the author passes through violent, even angry registers); a

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Pompiliu Constantinescu, *Scrieri*, III, edited by Constanța Constantinescu, preface by Victor Felea, București, Editura pentru literatură, 1969, p. 544

⁹ *Scrieri*, III, *Foiletoane, 1903-1904*, edited by Dumitru Bălăeț, Bucarest, Editura Minerva, 1990, p. 283. No wonder then that, after some time, Mircea Scarlat will put in a good word for her for the same qualities, tracing down in her poetry 'a genuine oasis of spontaneity, naivety and unstaged honesty' in a context of Junimism deeply saturated with studied Eminescianism. (Mircea Scarlat, *Istoria poeziei românești*, II, București, Editura Minerva, 1984, p. 142).

¹⁰ At least this is what Ion Nuță, in his *Preface to Scrieri alese*, Iași, Editura Junimea, 1971, p. VI, let's us understand.

¹¹ G. Călinescu, *Istoria literaturii române de la origini pînă în prezent*, second edition, edited and prefaced by Al. Piru, București, Editura Minerva, 1982, p. 423.

¹² Cf. *Prefața* lui Ion Nuță, p. VI.

¹³ G. Călinescu, *op. cit.*, p. 422.

¹⁴ Idem, *ibidem*.

melodramatic poetry, born out of a domestic romanticism, and made out of avowals and sufferings in love.

Articulated as a bashful mimosa (and very often tormented in love), Matilde Cugler's poetry no longer raises – supposing that it ever raised and that Maiorescu was more than simply polite – questions regarding its classification. (Dan Mănuță, the author of the articles on Matilde from the *Dictionary of Romanian literature from its origins to 1900*¹⁵ and the *General Dictionary of Romanian Literature, C/D*¹⁶, while going through the topic of the unhappy love, which belongs also to Matilde, underlines that 'the banal motifs and the fuzzy symbols, as well as the language without brilliance and the improper versification... diminish a lot from the poems' value'¹⁷; that, on condition that they had enough value so that it could diminish, which, honestly speaking, was not the case. Not even Mircea Popa's judgment, the author of the article on Matilde from *The Dictionary of Romanian Writers, A-C*¹⁸, is so far from this verdict, even if we are dealing here rather with 'technical' evaluations, that do no concord with Mănuță's appreciations: 'a spontaneous and simplistic eroticism, of a sugary feeling', which is deployed in verses that 'lack, in general, any vibration and die quickly because of short breath', but that might have had some success because of the 'discrete harmony of the rhythmic syllables'¹⁹). However, it is through this poetry that the standard image of a feminine hypostasis takes shape: a portrait built from fragility, delicacy, sensibility and rhetorical passion, a portrait which is focalized, of course, on the suffering in love and on its dialectic (in some poems, there is also a bit of coquetry psychology). It is a pendant of femininity that our poetesses will wear, with more or less grace, until the period between the wars, when this standard image will be corrupted by a first impetus of emancipation, which will be translated in a violent sensualisation of the language and in images that aspire to a sort of bodily concreteness and directness.

But for the time being, with Matilda Cugler, the feminine poetry is only in the phase of the bashful declamation and romantic feelings – mostly, erotic frustrations. Even the editor of the anthology from 1971 – Ion Nuță – must admit that 'Matilde Cugler-Poni's first creations belong to erotic poetry, most often deprived of any taste, with melancholic waves that build into a sort of annoying sweetness'²⁰. Even less successful are the attempts to 'philosophic poetry'. The model must be, for Ion Nuță, Alecsandri, but probably most of all, Eminescu (in whose manner Matilde has been writing even before him – which, in itself, would have been a noticeable achievement, if only it was true). However, what is true is that Eminescu's model is one that is accepted by all the poetesses of the epoch, and most of all by those belonging to the Junimea group; and in what manner!

¹⁵ Editura Academiei, București, 1979.

¹⁶ Editura Univers Enciclopedic, București, 2004.

¹⁷ *Dicționarul literaturii...*, p. 251

¹⁸ Editura Fundației Culturale Române, București, 1995

¹⁹ *Idem*, p. 741

²⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. VIII

Let's leave, for the moment, the flatness of these verses (highlighted enough and with very little clemency) and let us try to see what model of sensibility and attitude is taking shape inside them. Matilde places herself, from the very beginning, in the position of the worshiper, by borrowing the idealization mechanism that operated also in the 'masculine' erotic. Her idol is overwhelming and astral – even more, it is the center of fire and light of this world. Briefly put, by means of a simple analogy, he is the 'sun'; the worshiper, instead, is merely a 'small flower'. This is a mismatch not only of size, but also of species, which can lead to – and leads immediately to – dramatic consequences, which show, nevertheless, how dependent is the 'small flower'. Of course, the imperial sun doesn't even bother to notice her; he doesn't even know that her life depends on his sunrises: 'I know that the proud star of the day/ Will never turn/ Towards a small flower,/ That grows under its rays.// In the same way, you, my beloved/ Don't think, not even in your dreams/ That you could, oh my sun/ Love me, the small flower' (*One wish*)²¹. Such a love is nothing but a hopeless devotion. (The same situation, as a pure devotional relation, occurs also in Emily Dickinson's poetry; but, obviously, it is nothing but a worshipping cliché, hence universal). Of course, the feeling is only declared, it has no sensuous thickness whatsoever; the poetry of Matilde Cugler avoids the bodily corruption of the feelings; even the few corporal details are marked down in a purely 'idealist' manner. Love's vocabulary is strictly abstract and bashful. And the equation of the love relationship sticks to the same terms: he – a fascinating sun, regenerating star, life giving planet; she – the victim of this fatal seduction. It is enough for her to enter under the influence of just one sunray, for the 'love' to burst spontaneously in eternal flames: 'A quiet ray has fallen/ On me, from your eye/ And a never ending love/ Has burst in my chest' (*A quiet ray of light*). Love is always a substance made out of fire and light, not only in moments of pain, but also in joy. When in hope, love is the light that chases away 'the fog' and clears the sky, but most of all, 'fills' the poetess's chest with love: 'That fog is gone/ That painfully oppressed me/ And the sky is joyful again/ Like my heart.//...// And I, today, happy as I am/ Look towards the future,/ Because I wear in my chest a world/ A world of love' (*Happiness*). But the happy times don't last long; the seasons of love are not all the same; spring is short, the fall – eternal. Love's destiny is pain: 'Because only pain is eternal; pain never dies,/ Pain accompanies us from the cradle to the grave,/ Wearing on our heads its crown of tears and blood,/ As a sign of its dominion on earth' (*The pain*). The spaces and places of love don't suffer less than the abandoned lover; as a matter of fact, they are just as abandoned as she is: 'The garden is abandoned. Where we once walked/ Not even birds do sing with their gay voice,/ Grass is growing on the paths, on the small lake/ A boat floats, broken by the unmerciful time' (*The Osier*). All these disappointments end up generating a resentment even towards the sunny days; in fact, the cosmos itself should struggle anxiously and continuously, in order to be in touch with the poetess's soul: 'I don't like it when it is sunny and bright/ And among the leaves

²¹ The quotes are taken from *Poezii*, Editura Librăriei Frații Șaraga, Iași, f.a. (the orthography has been updated by us).

the peaceful wind blows;/ When all is happy, birds are singing/ And peace, profound peace rules the world.// The storm is to me what peace is for others;/ When clouds are filling the sky and they rage and thunder,/ When the wind blows through the woods and the trees are falling,/ Then I feel like I'm at home with myself, I feel like living!' (*I don't like it*). The ethos that the poetess would enjoy is, hence, the one of the intense living, of ravaging pain, life in its dramatic burning. Hence, not the domestic sweetness and the peaceful ray of feelings; of course, this is just a momentary burst of resentment, which Matilde cultivates from time to time, when in anger and deception. But after the disappointments, wisdom comes on the wings of experience, with its consolation, and then, knowing that all is lost, you give up 'asking for love till the grave' and enjoy the moment (*Just a moment*). This wisdom deduced from the fate of the world is, unfortunately, suddenly ravaged whenever the poet notices the contrast from her 'embittered martyrdom' and the indifferent joy of her lover: 'You spend your days in gayness/ I live in unspeakable torment./ Not even an hour without tears/ Has passed since you left.// The days seem like years/ The evenings without end/ And not even the night brings peace/ To my undying passion' (*You spend...*)²². When in the presence of her ungrateful lover, the worshiper is pretending heroically, to be happy, so as not to give him satisfaction: 'I keep quiet and suffer in silence/ With wild pride!/ I hide my pain/ And don't want no one to know about it!// You see my peaceful face,/ My smiling eye,/ My brow that doesn't bow down/ And you don't even know, don't even think that I'm dying' (*I keep quiet and suffer*). Obviously, it is only death which can bring peace to this torment: 'I struggled without chance,/ For a dream of immortality,/ I would have liked to have a place,/ In the world's remembrance...// Today, I cannot fight anymore,/ The weariness is overwhelming/ And slowly, on my mind/ The veil of night is stretching out...!' (*Resignation*)²³. Love dramas do not find peace but in death's final relief. (And Matilde's ballads, her tragic idylls, lead unmistakably to death). Until this death, life is nothing but pure melodrama made out of small – and short – joys and happy moments, in an ocean of prolonged suffering, that the poet is trying to immortalize. The domestic sensibility prefers, with Matilde, the elegy, but this only because of its excess of suffering; it's not sure we're talking about structural melancholy, since the deceptions and disappointments are always caused by some ungratefulness. Quickly erased from the cultural memory, Matilda remained, for Iorga, at the time of her death, 'an example from all points of view' for the Romanian women, even if he admitted that her poetry was read only in the epoch in which poetry was, most of all, about 'sincerity, feeling and simplicity'²⁴, that is, in times of poetic healthfulness.

²² Matilda Cugler Poni, *Scrieri alese*, edited by Ion Nuță, Editura Junimea, Iași, 1971, p. 42

²³ *Idem*, pp. 63-64.

²⁴ Nicolae Iorga, *Oameni cari au fost*, I-II, edited by Ion Roman, Editura pentru literatură, București, 1967, II, p. 261

MINIMALIST TRANSITIVITY. THE BORDERS OF THE POETIC LANGUAGE

Iulian BOLDEA¹

Abstract

M. Ivănescu is a poet that admits in every poem, in almost every line, his condition: that of prisoner of language, of creator living in the words' captivity, perceiving, with consciousness both their ontic efemerity, their fragility and their existential deficit and the power to communicate some of the most diverse experiences, to build a fictional world, with diaphanous shapes, with imponderable relief and an immaterial essence. Transitive and minimalist, fascinated by the nuances of real and livresque iridescence, constructing, by dull scenes and figures, an authentic metaphysics of the ordinary, Mircea Ivanescu's poetry is especially defined as a perpetual game between the parallel mirrors of the text and the phenomenal existence, with fluctuating and inexpressive contours.

Keywords: poetry, minimalism, transitivity, livresque, self-reflexivity

Pointing out the intertextual propensity of Mircea Ivanescu's poetry, Radu Vancu notes that beyond the „intelligent sophistication of allusions and references, the text must remain, even for the lazy reader or without the possibility or will of checking references, poetry (...) Otherwise, the text is merely a text ..., a 'fake'." In Radu Vancu's view, discretion is the vibrating central core of Ivanescu's poetic imagination, that configures/creates a whole atmosphere woven from recoil into imaginary, repeated delays, minimalist feelings/sentiments, transitivity, expectation and inert skepticism. Not without reason, Alex. Stefanescu finds a „developed chameleonlike style”, stating the epic expansion that clots the visions and fantasies, in a twilight and bookish atmosphere, where being anonymous is a faint echo, diminished up to the ordinary: “His lyricism often turns, most of the time, into the epic, and not an ordinary one, but one close to the ordinary, to everyday existence prose, to flat descriptivism. The poet has invented a few characters - *mopete*, *înnopteanu*, *rowena*, *the friend of Vasilescu's father*, *nefa* – who are followed in the most mundane moments of their daily existence: walking, napping, paying visits, chatting. All this insignificant ritual, narrated in a monotonous style, does not differ at all from the scenes of our daily existence, but, by using it, the poet does the exegesis of some feelings or emotions of a decisive importance. It's about love - taken to the mystical adoration of the beloved - the desolate feeling of loneliness, boredom, in the philosophical meaning of the word, fear of death, of the consciousness of the absurdity and futility of emphatic human gestures, the unrepeatable beauty of moments”.

Similarly, Mircea Ivanescu has significant affinity with the poetry of the 80s, both in the tectonics of lyrical imagery and poetic instruments, remarkably noted, with fine critical insight, by Al. Cistelean: „Ivanescu's gene is part of the eighties, at least insofar as it covers its syntax of biographical concrete, of unheroic gesture and of surfeited

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rhetoric, without imaginative intuition; the misleading style of resignation, the hollow drawing of irrelevant scene, the ritual of the recovery of daily sequences put into concrete scenes, like the non-imaginative and oral display of poetry, all are tributary to Mircea Ivănescu's style. Not to mention the reserve of self irony (even if in Ivănescu's style this becomes gentle, veiled). In many of them, even if only accidentally, the ritual of typical chattering, specific to M. Ivănescu, is also identified. The "weak" vision of many of them, as well as the strategies of moving away from expressivity, always "sabotaged" when the intensity crisis becomes impending, are also translations and adaptations of Ivănescu's poetic universe. Finally, the minimalism that follows could also be grateful to Ivănescu's poetry, for he is the one that imposed the "non-significant" poetry and the poems of "non-significant", the poetry of "empty", helpless words, as well as all the strategies of redundancy with the real and of the construction through "deconstruction".

Mircea Ivănescu is, as most of his critics have remarked, a scholastic poet, following a minimalist and transitive pattern, in other words, a poet whose visions are not the result of his own sensitiveness, not that of the so called native experiences or images, but they are rather the result of his rhythms, themes, lyrical and expressive effects acquired through intensive reading, through the assuming of the Romanian and universal "poetic library". It has also been noticed that M. Ivănescu's verses (poetry) from his debut to his last volumes are nothing but reformulations, adaptations, re-fictionism of the plans, themes and motives. They are, actually, variations of the same theme. In fact, the titles of his books are representative for this vocation of rendering the anonymity and for the poetics of the ordinary that the poet stages: *Verses, Poems, Poetry, (Poesii), Poem, Other verses, Other poems, new Poems*. The bookish/ livresque characteristic, as attitude and poetic modality, comes, one could say, from a deficiency, from a fissure, from devitalization, and expressive and gnosiological passivity, but it must also find its roots in lucidity, in a pathos of reflexivity, through which the poet becomes literally aware of the convention that his writings bring about, mirroring, in the plenary exercise of the demystification, his own image, his own style, his hidden identity. There is what Cistelean, one of the most competent researchers of the scholastic poetry, says about this matter: "The livresque poetry appears in the shadows of the classic, reflexive and visionary one, affecting the structure of its functional nucleus (core) and lives of ostentation and excess. Its fundamental lack of equilibrium occurs at the level of sensibility, where its process of enlightenment reaches a stage of inflation, which pushes the real down a slope of loss or just alienation. The livresque mediation between the poet and the world is an exaggerated one, a magniloquence of mediation. Sensibility is radically culturalized and it can no longer find, in fact, a common point with reality, his attempt to identify the real either constantly fails or it doesn't even occur."

In Ivănescu's poetry the livresque characteristic is translated especially through a faint representation of the real. Despite some details that send to the referential level, or the external universe, the world of Ivănescu's poems is a world made up rather of reminiscence, innuendos and affective reverberation than of effective observation of the

objects. Not few of these poems represent, as it has been noticed before, staging of some lyrical “events” of small sized proportions, “events” that keep their hypothetical status, and are set rather on the side of the possible, the vague, the probability than on that of reality with truthful drawing. In a poem such as: *The fight between angels and clouds or about lightning*, a parable of poetic fiction is figured, a parable always situated between the authenticity of the feelings and the conventions of the articulation: “We’re sitting on a large amount of time telling to each other / that this will also go away – and make a stage / with many actors, moving slowly through the room / surrounded by rainy weather // And the meaning, under such weather is just / that we move from one mood / to another (And we stage it -/ and we really believe that meanings get more real, / if we group them together and we give them shadows – similar to the figures / lighted by fire. And actually only us / Us alone have been here – moving from a time to another.)”. For the poet, the universe is a place of permanent metamorphosis, a transitory and ambiguous space, configured in the most disconcerting manner. Hence, the need of the lyrical self to trace an ideal peace, a protective territory of fiction, of imaginary, of staging his own voice, his own destiny. The world is thus transferred to a fictional and playful level. The real’s fluidity precipitates in the retort of the *livresque*, the time of strict chronology, of history slides in the time of poetry, a utopian and relative time, and the daily experiences are transferred within the limits of the fluctuating poem.

Convention and living, text and reality, subjective and poetic - these are, in fact, the aporias whose specificity transcends, plenary or in a discreet manner, from Ivănescu’s lyrical discourse. The poetic text becomes, therefore, a way of reconstructing the living , an image that looms feelings, moods, affective re(ve)lations combined in a lyrical equation by a poetic self that fervently lives his *aboulia*, searching to resuscitate an irremediably outdated duration: “Could it be really impossible, no matter how carefully / we place them, the words – couldn’t it be at all / possible to say something about this inner thing / that should be said? Only words / arranged in a dry crescendo just like / when you play a song perfectly composed, / with variations thoroughly arranged / around effects, and with the correct writing- / and to play it – and while doing this the time passes and the truth is / something different, beside outside / and you place the sound of the keyboard in a box, in this / room – and there is an evening sun outside / - as you got scared in your childhood, when you looked through the windows / and you heard, behind the piano’s flower with a funeral sound. And confused – for in words / you can say nothing – you feel that outside there is / something more real, inexpressible – torn apart every second - / life with the sun you could not hang onto, shadows / flooding you in your room, the fear- / and the words, the piano’s words mean / nothing.” The referential signs are quite unsubstantial, rough and unpredictable in Ivănescu’s poetry. A gap occurs between creative capacity and the “consciousness of convention”, M. Ivănescu being, as Al. Cistelean notices, the one that opens, in our poetry, the perspective of “poetic helplessness”. And the critic goes on: “The wounds caused by conventions to the creative instance, superficial or deep, treated with

indifference or by subcutaneous injections, have deepened. In his vision, the poem's ontology has lost any signification. Mircea Ivănescu found the castle of poetry totally ruined and, before getting in, all the privileges of poetry or of the poet's had been abolished. But this skipping of privileges was nothing but the beginning of total degradation: the poem was deprived of its elementary and natural rights. The creative principle has found itself in the abyss, suffocated by the void around. Between creativity and the awareness of convention, the relationship has become profoundly dysfunctional because of the pre-eminence of the latter". This exacerbated awareness of convention produces in Ivănescu's poetry a sort of detachment effect through which, the poet configures the "staging", he suggests a theatrical vision/a vision steeped in theatricality, an illusory hardly possible one, watched by the specter of fictional unfulfillment.

The events, the scenes, the parables in these poems with a self-telling touch are written in a minor tonality, drown in anonymous graphics pushed to the limits of neutrality. The most important thing is that these events suggest, through their lack of weight and ontological significance, rather absences than presences, approximations, in fugitive touches of an inconsistent and unsteady truth, of a delusive reality, just like in *A visit*: "There are no more / so events for you / except for the ones you make yourself / move in front of you in such rooms / just like in a theatre play. Shadows wave in front of you / in a game whose moves you sometimes understand (and you, at your turn, motionless, you play in a different, bigger – because beyond you –board of time and space, different moves in front of other. You have done it before". The lyrical emblematic "character" of this *livresque*, theatrical and utopian space is Mopete, a product of a text that continuously articulates and creates itself, fictional projection of a lyrical self ironical and burlesque, indolent and allusive work of different discursive instances that criss-cross, interfere and coexist in Mircea Ivănescu's poetry: "now mopete waters in his souls' vase / a resentment for the dark-haired / rowena. And he stares at how, under the fake moon of melancholy / bitter flowers swing, the blue // sadness – I mean the ingenuous – sadness of dark-haired Rowena, he says to himself / was it, then, deceiving? / mopete is trying / torn apart; from rare shards / spread within his inner time to gather / meanings – and they unfurl through his fingers" (*mopete and resentments*). M. Ivănescu creates, in the space of his serious, ironic and at the same time burlesque poems, a universe of *livresque* reverie and of sweetened playfulness where, as Ion Pop notices "the poet hides under different masks (...) the author, the actor, the direction, in the neverending replayed show of *poesis*". The poetic register is thus the playful one, in which great themes are rendered futile, and experiences are written with the fragile nib of scholastic aestheticism.

Like Bacovia, through the acute feeling of existential anxiety, through the persistent anguish of human solitude, "wandering inside moral and provincial labyrinths", Mircea Ivănescu is, as Nicolae Manolescu noticed, "Barbian because of the profound Platonism of his visions, of an affinity both minutely depicted and deceiving". His poetry, marked by transitivity in the sense of Gheorghe Crăciun's concept, is one of atmosphere,

with a vague theatrical touch, a falsely epic duality that maintains the illusion of verisimilitude of these “scenes” where the self is engaged into. Moreover, M. Ivănescu is the one that recants the Mallarmean postulates of lyrism, recovering the biographical and narrative line, bringing into poems of limited semantic proportions, the common language with its clichés and triviality. Noticing the last specificity of Ivănescu’s lyrism, Al. Cistelean finds that the poet “doesn’t flee from the tribal language and would not have written to anybody that he is descendant from the absolute. On the contrary, he descends from affinity and it is to this one that he wants to give consistency. On the one hand, by using the most improper language for poetic vocation, on the other hand by making the suggestive or imaginative performance irrelevant. Using the language specific to narrations, even if when writing the most elaborate sonnets (almost all of them with a surreptitious inaudible rhyme) he brings the language to a daily humility; rather in a denotative than connotative condition (but, in fact, using a sort of “deconotation”). His texts are dull in elocution and they also simulate the expressive monotony; the expressive events are rendered anonymous, flattened in the mass of the text, as if the latter should be one-dimensional”.

Illustrative in this respect is the poem *Indoor Scene* where the poet builds, from monotonous, dull images an environment made up of illusions, fictions and pieces of time: “mopete says – but what if we would now say / that from one day to another any moment / would turn into a scene unfolding in a slow continuity / of events – like in a novel where foggy characters are gathered / -men with sad eyes because of too much alcohol, women with their hair tightened in a black / shawl – and in the yellowish light, that reminds / you of the candle’s light would / start suddenly sophisticated discussions about life / and death and about soul and about I don’t know / what – and outside it would get dark”. The entire poem is nothing but a continuous search of self-identity in a monotonous rhythm and internalized glimpse cast upon himself. The human figures have turned into shadows, fragile silhouettes collapsed under the empire of time, lose their ontological consistency, and their apodictic presence, they turn into a mirage made up of interrogations and resignation: “and the shadows that have gathered of windows freeze / and, among them, when you raise / your eyes, to watch her face buried in the shawl – she’s not even here?”. Actually, *Indoor Scene* brings to light the tendency to demystify the serious poetic themes, which are placed in a ludic register and treated with familiarity, with certain burlesque instinct, with ironic and self-ironic detachment. “The sophisticated discussions about life and death” are thus mocked at, placed in opposition with a certain loss of meaning of the being that transfers its ontological vigor to the so fragile space of the word. The figures’ silhouettes seem so devoid of weight, detached from the real frame, living in a sort of materiality, a reality made of words, of pieces of dialogues, of ill-assorted fragments of discourse. It seems that even reality loses referential attributes and the data are transferred, within the space of the poem, life in a mirror that deprives things of weight, mirroring only the spiritualized image, totally dematerialized. The poem *Indoor Scene* is written in a similarly epic register, with representation of some lyrical characters,

of small events fugitively sketched, with reproduction of dialogues; all these ways of figuring the epic serve only to induce an idea that transcends them, to suggest a certain sacral substratum, hardly maintained by reserved gesticulation, by the anonymous drawing of the phase, substratum which is buried in the dense, thick slag of the profane.

M. Ivănescu is a poet that admits in every poem, in almost every line, his condition: that of prisoner of language, of creator living in the words' captivity, perceiving, with consciousness both their ontic efemerity, their fragility and their existential deficit and the power to communicate some of the most diverse experiences, to build a fictional world, with diaphanous shapes, with imponderable relief and an immaterial essence. On the other hand, the poet also experiences the important degree of conventionalism sheltered by the word's body, the figure of an improbable authenticity of the text being, thus, under the sign of skepticism. Ion Pop assumes that "the core of Mircea Ivănescu's poetry resides exactly in this feature: all his poetry proposes itself as a game *sui generis*, and re-sketches at the same time the act of its construction, as imaginary real or imaginary acquiring the status of reality. It is a poem, that contains its own "reading", involving the meditation over the expressive ability of the verb in connection with the authentic experience, and not in the least a questioning of the quality of the experience, as long as even the vital experience, the existential act cannot be transmitted but through words that hardly ever coincide with the inner mood of the subject". *Mopete and hypostasis* is such a poem that reveals Mircea Ivănescu poetics and *poietics*. It is a text structured on the principle of self-referentiality, that is the reflection of the poem, exactly the poem that is about to be created, in the most relevant structures, in its integrating dynamics. The poet, prisoner of words, but also of a reality that he wants to fix inside the text, writes himself, locks his own fictional being inside the restricted frames of the poem: "mopete is writing a poem about mopete / sitting at the table in the pub, writing referring / to a poem about mopete – (mopete has on his table a complicated volume / with wonderful things about the Middle Ages – and ink stains because of the notes he has been making)". What is mopete's condition, the one in the poem, creature of his own self, illusory vision which has a double identity, of creator and creature, of a self with a precise ontic status and fictional self, with a diminished existential importance? His striving for liberty and independence is quickly denied by his condition of livresque figure, a paper figure of illusory firmness: "mopete from the poem that he writes himself / has his own illusions about himself and / he thinks he is independent – but the owls- / symbols of wisdom – are watching him on his own forehead / because they know he is but a creation / that depends on any unimportant absurdity / of mopete when he wants to frown / without reason, and they forget about it." The end of the poem stages exactly the ambiguity of mopete's condition, this bivalence of identity and existential order. His being is twice fictionalized: once by the author, by M. Ivănescu, and the second time by himself. It is a second degree self-mirroring, a revelation of the self-being in his fictional hypostasis, as an imaginary model that reflects, chimerically, the miracle of real existence: "mopete overturned / which one? – him – the other? the other?" A diffuse feeling of

sadness emerges from this poem that configures the destiny of a paper figure, a figure that betrays its real inconsistency, the incapacity to live but through fictionalized illusory and irrelevant objects. The poet's drama is that of lack of authenticity and instability in defining his own identity. Situated between his own text and his ego – difficult to be fixed in the poem's mirror – the author watched by the “signs of reason” is always in danger of gliding from his condition of a being with a well – specified ontic status to the hallucinating frame, with deceiving marks of the poem. The closed space of the poem does not encourage expansions of enthusiasm towards the world, but on the contrary, the reality is forced to an existence through mandate, an inhibited, retractile existence.

Mircea Ivănescu's poems stage, as it has been noticed, an “unreal real”, an imaginary world of the category of those sketched by the fictive, deceiving spaces of the mirrors. Mircea Ivănescu's world seems an Eleatic one, frozen in its course, brought to a state of aggregation of lyricism that glorifies the usual, ordinary, common things. Actually, the same experiences, sentimental states, gestures and events creep through the body of the poem, in a universe where the ephemeral becomes eternity and the insignificant receives the brightness of exultant symbolism. Gheorghe Grigurcu considers that “it is specific to M. Ivănescu's poetry the figure of the feeling that contemplates itself, through restless resummptions, additions and retouches. His entire production is merely a bitter reversal, in many ways, the same states, attitudes, backgrounds, as to indicate a resistance to dissolution, a stop at all costs. Death is not opposed to perfection, but to ordinary life, in its agglomeration of elements, while, at a superficial look, do not exceed the insignificant, fail to elude a minor status (hence some critics' lack of trust in the aesthetic excellence of this creation, primitively mistaken with the quality of its “object”). A region where evanescence is blended with solidity, the vague with precision, estrangement with recovery, sufferance with jubilation”.

The wisdom of the Cat is part of the volume *Poems* appeared in 1970 and it is a representative poem for Mircea Ivănescu's epic lyricism, or „antilyricism” (Gh. Grigurcu). Structurally, the poem can be divided into three lyrical sequences. The first sequence of the poetic text is rather a meditation on the hypostases of a symbolic animal figure, with a literary and mythological tradition, that of the cat. Through the immobility and silence of its posture, the cat figure is associated with wisdom: „The Wisdom of the Cat - all agree / that the cat is a wise figure. And she herself / keeps this legend alive. (With much wisdom/ she creates her attitudes, and narrow-eyed, she watches people, flames, game / lights on glossy surfaces). But / - he once told me - cats are myopic. / Does it mean that wise eyes / are only a mask? That behind her yellow eyes / or green, cats cannot see faces / cannot see shades? (But maybe he is not right, / and cats see better than us, even during the day)”. The second sequence performs a translation of the poem, from animal symbolism to the figure of Socrates. Thus, it expands an epic description of the contrast between the biographical self and the deep one, between the philosopher's trivial exterior appearance and conceptual depth, interiority ecstasies: „Let's try otherwise. - Socrates was a wise, / had beveled nose and flowing matted beard as if algae on his chest - was ugly

and looked / dirty, as they seem - and are - careless people / by clothing and visible conduct . / But if you revealed his face, removing the / ugly, you would discover a petty world of figurines, so precisely carved that / you would daze if you tried to look, and would lose / your thoughts. And he took one of these statues- / in his hand, he showed it to you and you would see, listening to it, /for the first time new relations between the volumes and lines / and understandings, and refractions, and expectations „. The third sequence of the text brings a „moral”, a conclusion, a closure of unfolding lyricism, this is the need of an inner look, and not necessarily of a quantitative one, to measure distances and silhouettes of things. The important thing is, the poet seems to tell us, not to consider the surfaces of the objects, their external appearance, which do not say anything definitive about their full and deep identity, but to measure the essences of the world, to circumscribe that space of light and ontic enlightenment that gives breadth and understanding to a form, a shape, a creature („But Socrates himself was old. Maybe he - / as the cat - did not see very well - out. / Although – one may answer –he perceived / the movements of lights and shadows, and that / was enough for him. „). And in this poem, the echoes of intertextuality, and the conventions of a metapoetic construction clearly loom. Without rejecting the anecdote, on the contrary, building by minute and apparently trivial discretion scenes that seem cut from everyday life, the poet constructs in his fictions, a world of *livresque* in which ideas, concepts and cultural “experiences” flow naturally.

In the anonymous and insignificant universe configured by Mircea Ivanescu, *mopete* receives axiomatic value. A lyrical hero that lacks ontic consistency with a seemingly imperfect countenance, with unfinished gestures, *mopete* is a *livresque* figure par excellence, especially by his ironic attitude and allusive character, briefly sketched in a few elusive traits. Moreover, the poet places particular emphasis on surfaces, on the apparent aspect of things and beings, without having the intention to fix their essence, or to devote himself to the metaphysical fervor around them. This aspect is particularly noticed by George Perian „aiming to write outside of metaphysics, the author carefully avoids its terms, and even warns his readers that the world pictured in his lines is” without depth „and without” substance „, it is just a world of images. It seems that we live and move in an illusory world, that nobody and nothing has the consistency of reality and that eventually everything is a sham. What we got used to consider facts, for the poet are only „images, as in a book they read”.

The poetic effects arise in Mircea Ivanescu’s lyrics, especially from the volatile evocation of the atmosphere, from the setting of poetic framework, a framework dominated by crepuscular images, dark rooms and squalid streets where these heroes wander , with small ontic dimensions and allegorical vague names. (*v înnopteanu*, *bruna rowena*, *dr cabalu* ,*vasilescu’s father’s friend* and *i negoiescu* etc.). Mircea Ivanescu’s poems have the allure of some monologues of an exasperating monotony, where the same world without relief is evoked, in an atmosphere of meditation where the affects are suspended. It is as if, only an impersonal and neutral poetic instance would establish

the same vision full of agony, structured by an ostentation of absence, of ontological emptiness. The poems from the *Mopeteiana* cycle are structured through the lyric effects of a permanent game between the disconcerting space of reality and that of fictional universe. There are frequent interferences and sliding between text and reality, between the actual and literal status of heroes, in a halo of self-referentiality: “mopete is writing a poem about mopete / sitting at the table in the pub, writing referring / to a poem about mopete – (mopete has on his table a complicated volume / with wonderful things about the Middle Ages – and stains / ink stains because of the notes he has been making)/ mopete from the poem that he writes himself / has his own illusions about himself and / he thinks he is independent – but the owls- / symbols of wisdom – are watching him on his own forehead / because they know he is but a creation / that depends on any unimportant absurdity / of mopete’s when he wants to frown / without reason, and they forget about it./ mopete overturned. / which one? He - other? other? „- *Mopete and hypostases*).

Mopete in the Inner World is a poem in which we can notice the temptation of self-reflexivity and neutral tonality, but equally the author’s propensity for the lyric of atmosphere. The poetic frame is minutely drawn with a richness of detail, thus creating the illusion of a possible reality, a closed, claustrophobic one, with the attributes of an utopian and protector space: „one night, mopete was comfortably sat / by the fire, to read his paper - / behind him, the stairs leading to the attic /were crackling when the fire light plunged its egret / into a stair/ mopete was rustling when he was turning on the pages to follow what was written on one or another „. There is some complicity between the ordinary decor and the hero’s gestures, the mechanical acts of the characters leading to the alienation of the existential fact. Feelings are, in other words, transferred to the space of automatism, the dynamics of life takes a rigid aspect and the uniqueness degrades to a mass product. In his poetry, Mircea Ivanescu does not create a proper inner space, but rather a space of interiority, given in fade lines, frames and colours in a neutral tonality and reserved timbre. The cultural tics of the hero, bring about the suggestion of the livresque, a parody livresque, but with ironic innuendos. „every now and then he would write down on his cuffs/ an idea that he could later rewrite / on the wall above the/ bed. Next to him, on the table, there were the bottle and glasses / (he had waited that night for his /best friend – but he did not come). The / whole scene was a beneficent peace / the level of the liquid in the bottle would lower with a reassuring palm”. The poet treats his characters, like a director, highlighting a diverse range of attitudes, from ironic complicity to expressive mimicry, to denunciation of automatism, of livresque tics or some caricatural deformations.

The projection of the existential fact into the area of the aesthetics, of artistic convention does not necessarily exclude the proximity of these lyrical visions to the territory of the dream. The hero’s gestures, extremely slow, the contours devoid of determinations, so vague, all these infer propensity to dream register, to the fluctuating images of dreams, with their deceiving and unusual tectonics, with their strange

geography. In fact, the hero's acts rather suggest the idea of a pantomime of a living being that lives through automatism both in language and behavior, in a repetitive dynamics that translates nothing but a feeling of alienation fervently experienced by the lyrical being. Trying to define the author's lyrical territory of moped, Ion Pop notes, inter alia, that „as a whole, Mircea Ivanescu's universe appears to be (taking into account the random motion of the imaginary) an essentially hypothetical world: each poem is but the diagram of this dynamics of approximating reality and with it, its own self substances. A world where the only freedom of the subject is to assume, to build in the limits/frame of the existential, figures and facets possibly correspondent, but whose validity can never be sure. His texts materialize, in fact, a strategy of getting closer to the outer or the inner world, both blurred, inconsistent and menaced by death. „ *Moped in the the Inner World* is a symptomatic poem for how to write and feel Mircea Ivanescu's poetry. The lyrical vision designated here is one impregnated with livresque reflexes, with ironic and parody accents, tonality being in harmony with the atmosphere evoked: calm, neutral, briefly designated, in a few fugitive touches, no less suggestive. Transitive and minimalist, fascinated by the nuances of real and livresque iridescence, constructing, by dull scenes and figures, an authentic metaphysics of the ordinary, Mircea Ivanescu's poetry is especially defined as a perpetual game between the parallel mirrors of the text and the phenomenal existence, with fluctuating and inexpressive contours.

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LE KÉRYGME À L'ÉPREUVE DE L'INTER-DIT

Dorin ȘTEFĂNESCU¹

Abstract

The interpretation points out the function of the kerygma in some of Georges Bernanos' most famous novels. The goal is an interpellation of the transcendence as a defining difference of the interdiction: neither the already spoken, neither the gift of a speech the meaning of which is hidden in the common word. The affirmation of what is not affirmable in itself is rather a state of absence and of silence which is instituted by the unspeakable, expressed however as a witness in an interdiction zone, relieving the paradoxical discourse where the unspoken looks for a statute inside the language.

Keywords: Bernanos, kerygma, Christianity, unspeakable, witness

On sait que – du point de vue de la théorie herméneutique du discours – la fonction déictique du langage ne se rapporte pas seulement à la contextualité référentielle et à la situation communicative (au pur donné et au déjà atteint, ce qui prouverait l'insuffisance de l'ici et du maintenant), mais le *hic et nunc* a pour tâche d'actualiser et de re-créeer dans une présence de chaque instant un sens profond, de manifester la perpétuelle nouveauté du sens spirituel dans la vétusté de la lettre. Or, « cette nouveauté s'évanouit, si elle n'est pas nouveauté quotidienne, si elle n'est pas neuve *hic et nunc* ». ² C'est que le sens spirituel – l'éternité du principe originel –, en se montrant dans un événement temporel, en dévoile le sens existentiel, fruit d'une tension féconde « entre les deux pôles de la vérité éternelle de son objet et de la situation temporelle dans laquelle cette vérité doit être reçue ». ³ Pareillement – dans ce nœud herméneutique fondamental – la langue est révélée dans la parole qui l'insère dans l'acte vivant d'un appel kérygmatic : « la parole est ce qu'elle est, c'est-à-dire révélation, non d'après son contenu intemporel, mais comme l'interpellation qui nous est adressée *hic et nunc* ». ⁴ D'autre part, dans la perspective de l'herméneutique théologique, le principe divin ne d'identifie pas à un sens dont la vocation serait de le dévoiler et de le rendre compréhensible, mais en vue de la compréhension de l'existence humaine. En se situant face à un sens qu'il essaie de comprendre, l'homme comprend, dans cette épreuve même, son propre sens. Il entre dans un rapport herméneutique avec sa propre existence, en se rencontrant soi-même dans le mystère de la rencontre entre la grâce interrogeante de l'être et la réponse de la foi crucifiée. La transcendance d'un sens absolu et incompréhensible au premier abord est ainsi intériorisée en quelque sorte dans

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² Paul Ricoeur, *Le conflit des interprétations. Essais d'herméneutique*, Paris Seuil, 1969, p. 377.

³ Paul Tillich, *Systematische Theologie*, I / II, Berlin, New York, Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1987, p. 9.

⁴ Rudolf Bultmann, *Foi et compréhension. Eschatologie et démythologisation*, Paris, Seuil, 1969, p. 47. « Qu'elle soit interpellation, appel, c'est ce qui va de soi. C'est pourquoi, dans le Nouveau Testament, elle est souvent nommée kérygme, c'est-à-dire appel du héraut, ou évangile c'est-à-dire message. L'appel qui retentit et qui est perçu en elle est l'appel de Dieu » (*ibidem*, p. 146).

l'immanence de l'humain. Processus qui suppose une « démythologisation » des existentiels (dans les termes de R. Bultmann) en vue d'une prédication probante de sens, révélatrice d'une annonce kérygmatisée de l'être, événement à la fois eschatologique et épiphanique, vu que l'être passe de la mort à la vie, autrement dit il meurt pour renaître dans un *verbum præsens* qui réactualise continuellement son sens d'être. L'existence humaine signifie une éternelle réorientation de la compréhension de soi à travers la Présence du Kérygme, ce qui révèle aussi de l'état d'une proclamation en tant qu'entre-deux, écart définitoire de l'inter-dit : ni tout à fait le déjà dit (et le déjà trahi), ni donation d'un dire dont le sens se dérobe dans le langage.

Comprise de ce point de vue, l'expérience révélatrice de l'abbé Donissan, le protagoniste du célèbre roman de Georges Bernanos *Sous le soleil de Satan*, confirme la présence voilée mais réelle de la divinité comme une certitude de l'incertain, une réalité que l'on ne saurait exprimer dans sa présence discursive. C'est parce que la parole, indicateur dénominateur du concret, perd la vocation de son adéquation au réel dès qu'elle se trouve dans la situation d'en exprimer discursivement le mystère : « La langue humaine ne peut être contrainte assez pour exprimer en termes abstraits la certitude d'une présence réelle, car toutes nos certitudes sont déduites, et l'expérience n'est pour la plupart des hommes, au soir d'une longue vie, que le terme d'un long voyage autour de leur propre néant. Nulle autre évidence que logique ne jaillit de la raison, nul autre univers n'est donné que celui des espèces et des genres. Nul feu, sinon divin, qui force et fonde la glace des concepts. Et pourtant ce qui se découvre à cette heure au regard de l'abbé Donissan n'est point signe ou figure : c'est une âme vivante, un cœur pour tout autre scellé ; [...] il ne serait capable de justifier par des mots la vision extérieure d'un éclat toujours égal, et qui se confond avec la lumière intérieure » (*SS*, 197-98).⁵

La certitude et l'évidence n'y sont pour rien car elles ne peuvent s'aventurer que jusqu'aux frontières du monde invisible où la logique de la raison est forcée de s'arrêter faute d'horizon compréhensible. La compréhension touche la glace des concepts, l'aridité du premier principe, mais ce n'est que la grâce surnaturelle qui est en mesure de trouver, au-delà de la figure ou du signe, l'âme vivante dans laquelle brille l'étincelle divine : *la trans-figure* dans la figure, *le sursignifier* du signe. Or, cette vision paradoxale qui renverse le rapport entre l'extériorité et l'intériorité est inexprimable et indicible, la vaine affirmation d'un non affirmable en soi, l'extase ascétique d'une présence dont l'image est absente. Absence qui ne s'exprime que par le silence discursif,⁶ un non dire ou une non manifestation qui ne sont que le revers de sa présence kérygmatisée : « de la tête aux pieds, je n'étais plus que silence. Silence et nuit » (*JC*, 1189) ; « Silence et paix » (*JC*, 1255).

⁵ Bernanos, *Œuvres romanesques*. Préface par Gaëtan Picon. Texte et variantes établies par Albert Béguin. Notes par Michel Estève, Paris, Gallimard, 1988. Pour les citations nous utiliserons les sigles *SS* (*Sous le soleil de Satan*), *JC* (*Journal d'un curé de campagne*), *MO* (*Monsieur Ouine*), suivis par le numéro qui indique la page de l'édition mentionnée.

⁶ Il s'agit d'« une intériorisation de l'expression du surnaturel qui passe par une forme de négation, étape nécessaire de tout discours sur Dieu » (Pierre-Marie Mesnier, *Univers imaginaire et poétique du surnaturel dans « Nouvelle Histoire de Mouchette » de Bernanos*, Lettres Modernes-Minard, Archives Bernanos, N° 5, Paris, 1974, p. 94).

C'est un silence total, « un silence prodigieux » (*MO*, 1461) du surnaturel dont le seul signe expressif est une densité immatérielle : « l'effrayant silence [...] atteint en quelques secondes une densité surnaturelle » (*MO*, 1450). Immatérialité du silence même, d'un non Dire au-dessus de tout Dit qui situe le monde dans une nouvelle perspective dont l'harmonie repose sur le mystère d'un équilibre jamais rompu : « [...] le silence, qui n'est plus celui de la terre, [...] monte [...] de la terre profonde. Il monte, comme une invisible buée, et déjà se défait et se délient les formes vivantes, vues au travers ; déjà les sons s'y détendent, déjà s'y recherchent et s'y rejoignent mille choses inconnues. Pareilles au glissement l'un sur l'autre de deux fluides d'inégale densité, deux réalités se superposent, sans se confondre, dans un équilibre mystérieux » (*SS*, 265).

Le paradoxe de cette extase consiste justement dans le fait que la présence divine qui s'offre à la compréhension reste silencieuse, c'est-à-dire demeure imprésentable, présence d'absence qui ne s'exprime que dans le silence originel de son essence non manifestante : « Tumulte d'idées, d'images, de paroles. L'âme se tait. Dieu se tait. Silence » (*JC*, 1129). L'essence se tait malgré l'apparence qui essaie de l'exprimer, malgré son affirmation à partir de l'extérieur. Inexprimable et indicible, la transcendance ne montre son vrai visage qu'en blanc, sur les traces effacées d'« une présence invisible, devinée, désirée, redoutée » (*SS*, 266). « Le silence atteint à une qualité, une perfection véritablement extraordinaire » (*JC*, 1034) qui sont celles de l'intériorité qui ne refuse pas sa présence mais s'y renferme comme absorbée par une absence : « j'ai pensé que je tombais de nouveau, mais cette fois c'était dans le silence. J'y ai glissé d'un seul coup. Il s'est refermé sur moi » (*JC*, 1199). Le contact avec la profondeur de ce soi qui ne livre que son silence absolu représente d'abord l'absolutisation d'une solitude existentielle (« Ma solitude est maintenant si profonde, si véritablement inhumaine », *JC*, 1130), car silence et solitude vont de pair, symbolisent une même réduction de l'expérience mondaine de l'extériorité, de tout ce qui est immédiatement exprimable. Garder le silence serait une fausse vision concernant le rapport que l'être désire rétablir avec la divinité, car le silence ne lui appartient pas d'ailleurs, ce n'est pas l'être qui se l'impose ou en est le gardien, mais « c'est le silence qui nous garde » (*JC*, 1229) comme pour assurer la pureté de cet état électif. Quant à la solitude, elle reste intacte, même dans la prière qui l'accepte dans l'individualité de sa démarche : « la folle parole, mais faite pour retentir jusqu'au ciel, et briser le silence! Folle parole, amoureux blasphème » (*SS*, 268) qui résonne dans « le vide affreux » de l'angoisse : « la minute présente était toute angoisse. Le passé un trou noir. L'avenir un autre trou noir » (*SS*, 212) ; « la parole qu'il allait dire, sa propre et secrète pensée, se dissipa d'un coup dans l'unique réalité de l'angoisse » (*SS*, 245). Mais « on ne prie jamais seul » car la solitude de la prière entraîne l'absence de la divinité (« Je ne demandais Dieu que pour moi. Il n'est pas venu », *JC*, 1112), solitude qui dégrade la qualité du silence même, l'enferme dans l'impossible dire du pour-soi ; « cet insupportable silence » (*SS*, 139), « l'humiliant silence, lorsque la phrase commencée arrive à bout de course, tombe dans le vide » (*SS*, 138).

« Une grave, une merveilleuse attente » (*JC*, 1222) suit cette épreuve d'exprimer le mystère surnaturel, épreuve de la parole qui rêve l'appel divin. Or « qui veut prier ne doit pas rêver », sinon la prière « s'écoule en rêve. Rien de plus grave pour l'âme que cette hémorragie-là » (*JC*, 1187) par laquelle la raison même de prier quitte l'être pour le laisser retomber dans la fragilité de sa nature : « L'esprit de prière m'a quitté sans déchirement, de lui-même, comme un fruit tombe. L'épouvante n'est venue qu'après. J'ai compris que le vase était brisé en regardant mes mains vides » (*JC*, 1130). Ce n'est qu'une « paix muette, solitaire, glacée, comparable à la délectation du néant » (*SS*, 213) qui répond à l'appel de la foi limitée à la seule personne qui la professe. Foi trahie dans son essence kérygmaticque car l'être qui l'exprime s'exprime en tant qu'individualité jusqu'à devenir lui-même parole incarnée d'une exception particulière ; ce qui représente un écart, voire une hérésie, par rapport au non dire de la foi qui n'est que pour accueillir le Dire d'un Autre que soi-même : « J'ai manqué à ma parole le jour même où je me suis réellement senti une parole » (*MO*, 1381). Manquer à sa parole signifie manquer la parole que l'on adresse à une divinité *pour soi*, le faux dire où s'invoque l'idole. La parole n'est plus appel kérygmaticque, celle qui appelle parce qu'elle est appelée, mais « un cri de haine dans l'abîme, auquel aucun écho ne répondrait » (*SS*, 228). L'être qui ne trouve pas la parole fertile de son essence, qui n'est pas mis à l'épreuve dans l'épreuve même de l'appel est attiré par tout ce qui signifie apparence, création à rebours dégradée par un mal nominal⁷ : « il est à cette minute où Satan pèse de tout son poids, où s'appliquent au même point, d'une seule pesée, toutes les puissances d'en bas. Et c'est en haut qu'il lève pourtant son regard » (*SS*, 238). C'est par une inversion presque naturelle si elle n'était pas en fait surnaturelle, par un renversement de perspective qui fait que l'en bas écrasé par le poids du mal (et de ce monde immonde) devienne l'en haut d'un éveil, que l'on peut parler d'une minute révélatrice. Dans ce désastre, le regard levé vers le haut est comme élevé lui-même, aspiré par la lumière de l'astre qui surplombe le mal, frappé par un coup de grâce qui le fait voir et comprendre, *dire* d'une voix sans paroles, illuminée par le seul témoignage de ce qui s'offre : « Mais toujours, dans la foule, la grâce divine frappera son coup ; toujours elle marquera quelqu'un de ces hommes, vers qui monte la justice, à travers le temps, comme un astre. L'astre docile accourt à leur voix » (*SS*, 236).

« Jamais [...] il ne se sentit plus près du miracle, face à face. Il semble que sa volonté se détend pour la première fois, irrésistible, et qu'une seule parole, articulée dans le silence, va le détruire à jamais » (*SS*, 238). Ce n'est plus à l'être d'exprimer son angoisse devant l'absence de l'appel ; la profondeur de son silence n'est plus l'en-soi ou le pour-soi d'une

⁷ « Le mal a un nom, personnel et singulier, il n'est pas un abstrait, un principe, un code des disconvenances. Comme le bien, il est aimé et servi pour lui-même, il appelle d'une voix irrésistible, on se donne à lui comme à l'amour et à l'extase » (Emmanuel Mounier, « Un surnaturalisme historique », in *L'Espoir des désespérés*, Seuil, Paris, 1953, p. 155). En parlant de la perspicacité sacerdotale, A. Béguin se demande si « la réponse qu'elle est prête à donner, est-ce à l'appel de la voix divine, à la promesse de la rédemption ? ou bien est-ce à l'autre convocation nominale, celle que Satan adresse aux âmes hardies [...] ? De l'un à l'autre appel, il existe de troublantes ressemblances pour l'oreille humaine, et l'ambiguïté des manifestations surnaturelles correspond à l'ambiguïté des désirs qui jettent la créature vers l'inconnu » (Albert Béguin, *Bernanos par lui-même*, Seuil, Paris, 1971, p. 75).

attente sans horizon ; c'est cette fois le silence qui parle par soi-même, inexprimable mais compréhensible. L'angoisse illuminée par le rayon de la grâce « rétablissait le silence d'autrefois, le bienheureux silence au-dedans duquel Dieu va parler – Dieu parle » (*JC*, 1135). Un silence éloquent qui n'isole pas dans la solitude de l'individualité refusée par la grâce mais, bien au contraire, qui s'ouvre vers l'horizon surnaturel d'une communion de foi⁸ : « Le silence intérieur – celui que Dieu bénit – ne m'a jamais isolé des êtres, [...] je les reçois ainsi qu'au seuil de ma demeure » (*JC*, 1230). Bien qu'il n'y ait rien à dire – à proprement parler – , ce qui appelle dit le silence d'un dire non discursif, qui ne dit rien mais signifie et donne sa présence comme interdiction, c'est-à-dire comme bénédiction.

« Il n'y a de silence absolu que de l'autre côté de la vie ; par la plus mince fissure, le réel glisse et rejaillit, reprend son niveau. Un signe nous appelle, un mot tout bas murmuré ressuscite un monde aboli » (*SS*, 239). La profondeur du silence n'est plus l'écran opaque de l'incompréhension et de l'absence ; il est animé par le signe de la grâce qui l'appelle, par la parole discrète qui le réinvestit de signification. Bien plus : ce qui ne se dit qu'en tant que silence qui signifie n'est compris que dans un monde réduit au silence, dont les signes extérieurs se taisent. Le signe lui-même n'est plus une image de l'apparence, une figure de l'absence de ce qu'on ne peut dire que dans une représentation désignée. C'est un signe significatif qui appelle, rend compréhensible le dire d'une transcendance qui fait signe qu'elle *est* (« il semble que tout me fasse signe, m'appelle », *MO*, 1364). « Cet appel venu de si loin, d'un autre monde » (*MO*, 1460), « le suprême appel lointain » (*SS*, 143), « ce profond appel qui précède la prière » (*JC*, 1233), bien qu'il vienne de loin ne vient pas du passé, mais survient à l'instant même de l'apparition d'un sens qui se donne comme *autre chose* d'une absolue nouveauté. Il crée tout d'abord une image spirituelle, fruit visionnaire de la rencontre entre l'appel divin et la prière qui lui répond⁹ : « L'image se tenait là, sous mes yeux, dans une sorte d'instabilité merveilleuse [...]. Je me demande si cette espèce de vision n'était pas liée à ma prière, elle était ma prière même peut-être ? » (*JC*, 1135). Mais « l'image qui se formait en moi n'était pas de celles que l'esprit accueille ou repousse à son gré » (*JC*, 1197) car c'est une image qui est à la ressemblance de l'essence transcendante qui la crée, la manifestation visible de l'esprit invisible non manifesté tel quel mais incarné dans la Parole de la présence.¹⁰

⁸ « On ne peut séparer le thème de la mort de celui de la communion dans l'œuvre de Bernanos ; le passage de Dieu est toujours l'occasion d'un échange mystérieux entre les hommes » (Pierre-Marie Mesnier, *op. cit.*, p. 82). Concernant le sens de la solitude et de la communion, y compris une comparaison entre Georges Bernanos et Karl Barth, voir André Dumas, « Le message de Bernanos à 'nous autres' protestants », in *Georges Bernanos. Essais et témoignages réunis par Albert Béguin*, Éditions de La Baconnière, Neuchâtel, Éditions du Seuil, Paris, 1949, p. 178.

⁹ « Bernanos pose le fait et le problème de la rencontre avec Dieu qui nous offre son pardon en nous demandant notre acceptation de sa volonté, notre consentement à aimer » (Yves Congar, « Bernanos, romancier de la grâce et théologien de l'Église », in *Georges Bernanos*, l'édition citée, p. 90). « L'homme est considéré ici selon une certaine dimension qui est celle où il rencontre Dieu et prend parti d'une façon suprême et dernière. [...] Il a pour partenaire un Autre personnage, une autre réalité: disons la grâce, en n'oubliant pas que celle-ci est d'abord un acte de Dieu réclamant, de notre part, une libre réponse par laquelle se fixe notre attitude la plus profonde à l'égard de nous-mêmes, du monde et de notre destinée » (*ibidem*, p. 92).

¹⁰ C'est ce que Y. Congar nomme « la tangence de Dieu : voire la présence de Dieu, puisqu'il y appelle à l'amour et y fait sentir son pardon » (in *op. cit.*, p. 90).

« À chaque instant, il peut nous être inspiré le mot nécessaire, l'intervention infaillible [...]. C'est alors que nous assistons à de véritables résurrections de la conscience. Une parole, un regard » (*SS*, 223) ; ces instruments ineffables de la grâce suffisent pour fonder la foi dans un sursignifié sans frontières, illimité d'une joie éclaircissante selon la lumière de l'essence transcendante qui transperce l'apparence naturelle et ouvre la voix qui voit : « cette seule parole brève comme un regard [...]. À travers la mouvante angoisse passait tout à coup, comme un éclair, l'éblouissement d'une joie terrible » (*SS*, 245). Ce n'est qu'une « espèce d'éloquence élémentaire, presque tragique » qui réussit à exprimer le sens de la surnaturelle rencontre, l'éveil d'un dire intérieur jamais articulé, fulgurant et inattendu : « La dure vérité, qui tout à coup d'un mot longtemps cherché court vous atteindre en pleine poitrine, l'a blessé avant vous. On sent bien qu'il l'a comme arrachée de son cœur » (*SS*, 138). Bien plus, « la voix souveraine, au-dessus de l'éloquence, qui crevait les cœurs les plus durs, impérieuse, suppliante, et, dans sa douceur même, inflexible. De l'ombre sacrée où remuaient les lèvres invisibles, la parole de paix allait s'élargissant jusqu'au ciel et traînait le pécheur hors de soi, délié, libre. Parole simple, reçue dans le cœur, claire, nerveuse, elliptique à travers l'essentiel, puis pressante, irrésistible, faite pour exprimer tout le sens d'un commandement surhumain » (*SS*, 243). Ce langage retrouve toute la fraîcheur de son origine et de sa pureté car c'est un langage direct, qui va droit à l'essence des choses, nourri par cette essence, « un langage d'enfant » où « les mots les plus communs, les plus déformés par l'usage reprennent peu à peu leur sens, éveillent un étrange écho » (*SS*, 137).¹¹ Ce n'est que cette parole humble mais essentielle qui puisse témoigner de la vérité divine, et cela parce qu'elle retrouve son écho surnaturel, l'auréole d'un sens vertical qui transgresse toute image ressemblante, limitée à une représentation de niveau mondain : « Rien de meilleur que d'exprimer le surnaturel dans un langage commun, vulgaire, avec les mots de tous les jours » (*SS*, 223).¹²

Le kérygme est tout d'abord témoignage de la résurrection d'une conscience illuminée par la grâce (« le témoignage intérieur, le murmure déchirant de la conscience troublée dans sa source profonde », *SS*, 201), témoignage qui est « comme arraché par le fer » (*SS*, 308), par l'appel invocateur du verbe divin (« la

¹¹ Concernant le besoin ontologique de retrouver le langage originel, Bernanos écrit dans la préface des *Grands Cimetières sous la lune* : « on ne parle pas au nom de l'enfance, il faudrait parler son langage. Et c'est ce langage oublié, ce langage que je cherche de livre en livre, imbécile comme si un tel langage pouvait s'écrire, s'était jamais écrit ! N'importe ! Il m'arrive parfois d'en retrouver quelque accent » (*apud* A. Béguin, *op. cit.*, p.7).

¹² Langage enfantin qui est celui du saint. Le saint bernanosien « doit transmettre par la parole un témoignage profondément sincère : celui de la réalité du surnaturel, de l'existence du divin. C'est d'abord par le langage que le prêtre témoigne de la vérité de Dieu. Donissan restitue ainsi aux mots leur propre vérité, comme Bernanos tente, avec foi et passion, de rendre au langage romanesque sa pureté, son authenticité en le soumettant à la recherche de la vérité » (Michel Estève, « Notes et variantes », in Bernanos, *Œuvres romanesques*, l'édition citée, p. 1781).

parole de Dieu c'est un fer rouge », *JC*, 1071).¹³ Ce dont on témoigne c'est la révélation d'un mystère, le mystère de « la parole la plus triste de l'Évangile, la plus chargée de tristesse », car elle est le Dire de la Vérité et de la Vie. « C'est la Parole » (*JC*, 1078) qui incarne le mieux l'expression de la communion de foi par laquelle la souffrance et le malheur existentiels sont témoignés et communiqués, et par cela même sublimés dans la joie de la rencontre et de la reconnaissance : « je comprends tout le sens caché de l'expression devenue banale 'communiquer avec', car il est vrai que cette douleur, je la communique » (*JC*, 1096).

« Le christianisme avait lâché dans le monde une vérité que rien n'arrêterait plus parce qu'elle était d'avance au plus profond des consciences et que l'homme s'était reconnu tout de suite en elle : Dieu a sauvé chacun de nous, et chacun ne nous vaut le sang de Dieu » (*JC*, 1068). C'est une vérité qui « délivre d'abord », qui « console après » (*JC*, 1071) et elle ne peut être mieux servie que par un appel qui sollicite, celui de « la voix inoubliable » (*SS*, 143) qui signifie une convocation de l'être appelé, une exigence de la liberté et non pas une contrainte (« Il était sollicité, non contraint, appelé », *SS*, 187), un message profondément signifiant dont la parole « monte de l'abîme » (*JC*, 1046) pour porter au-delà du langage conventionnel, strictement dénotatif, mais aussi en deçà de quelque image représentative du déjà vécu transfiguré. Or « le langage rationaliste – le plus bête de tous » traduit ce message improprement, car il « te force à rapprocher des mots qui explosent au moindre contact » (*JC*, 1068). C'est que ces mots-ci ne réussissent pas à capter l'essence d'une signification surnaturelle qui dépasse de loin leur capacité – conformément à la logique qui en est la source limitée – de surprendre la présence transcendante, « l'effrayante présence du divin à chaque instant de notre pauvre vie » (*JC*, 1034).

La parole vécue implique l'être dans une expérience surnaturelle à laquelle il participe activement.¹⁴ Parole qui ne sert donc pas un principe abstrait et absent, propre seulement à une démarche strictement philosophique qui vise à la spéculation conceptuelle autour d'un principe métaphysique : « Je ne suis pas l'ambassadeur du Dieu des philosophes, je suis le serviteur de Jésus-Christ » (*JC*, 1096), exclame à la manière pascalienne l'un des personnages, le serviteur ou l'enfant ou encore le pauvre qui – et l'on entrevoit ici un reflet de sagesse franciscaine – témoigne d'une qualité surnaturelle tout à fait exceptionnelle et pourtant d'une humble dignité : « Notre Seigneur en épousant la pauvreté a tellement élevé le pauvre en dignité, qu'on ne le fera plus descendre de son

¹³ « J'étais réellement condamné à cette espèce de langage conventionnel qui est celui de l'écrivain. Je n'ai jamais pris très au sérieux ce langage, il m'arrive souvent de le haïr », avoue Bernanos dans *Les Enfants humiliés*. Et de continuer : « Ma musique vous arrive du bout du monde, ainsi que le témoignage non pas de mon art, mais de ma constance. [...] Car ce n'est pas ma chanson qui est immortelle, c'est ce que je chante » (*apud* Albert Béguin, *op. cit.*, pp. 65-66). Il s'agit – commente A. Béguin – de « la certitude de traduire par l'écriture une vérité qui dépasse de loin les contenus de la conscience claire » (*ibidem*, p. 66).

¹⁴ Le langage de Bernanos, « comme celui des mystiques, attire avant tout par son accent d'expérience vécue » (Guido Piovene, « Dialogue », in *Georges Bernanos*, l'édition citée, p. 219).

piédestal » ; « le pauvre est le témoin de Jésus-Christ » (JC, 1068, 1069).¹⁵ Il ne s'agit non plus du Dieu spiritualiste, tel qu'il est conçu par le piétisme, mais – malgré cette « effrayante présence du divin » qui pourrait rappeler une certaine odeur janséniste – d'un Dieu familier, intime, « comme un merveilleux ami vivant, qui souffre de nos peines, s'émeut de nos joies, partagera notre agonie, nous recevra dans ses bras, sur son cœur » (JC, 1051). Le rapport avec la divinité est celui d'un être à un autre être, de la nécessité aveugle à une liberté nécessaire puisqu'elle est la sublimation de la nature humaine dans la nature divine.¹⁶ C'est une relation existentielle et métaphysique à la fois, car la dimension surnaturelle de la divinité n'est ni un symbole rationnel, qu'on pourrait interpréter et conceptualiser, ni une transcendance absolue, inaccessible, hors de toute portée humaine, mais une présence qui rayonne dans la nature même de l'homme, qui participe au mystère ontologique de sa condition¹⁷ : « le Maître que nous servons ne juge pas notre vie seulement – il la partage, il l'assume. Nous aurions beaucoup moins de peine à contenter un Dieu géomètre et moraliste » (JC, 1097).

Si ce Dieu vivant dit quelque chose, il le fait selon la parole de la Vérité et de la Vie ; son Dire n'est pas le Dit du langage conventionnel, le déjà dit d'un discours qui exprime le déjà vu du monde, l'existant déjà là, objectivé dans sa signification transmissible, représentative. C'est un appel qui ne s'articule pas mais signifie la vérité d'un mystère, la parole celée qui ne dévoile son sens que dans la rencontre entre une âme qui appelle et la voix divine qui lui répond – et qui n'appelle que dans la mesure où elle est déjà appelée, fait foi du don de l'invocation – dans le dialogue surnaturel entre « l'appel doux et fort » (SS, 193) de la foi, souvent interrogateur (« il interroge, il appelle », SS, 137), et la lumière de la grâce qui féconde cette interpellation. La parole qui témoigne de ce rapport révélateur sort de l'abîme de l'âme et ce n'est pas sans une douleur joyeuse qu'elle s'élève au monde invisible pour porter le message humain : « lorsque le Seigneur tire de moi, par hasard, une parole utile aux âmes, je la sens au mal qu'elle me fait » (JC, 1072).

Mis à part l'abbé Donissan et le curé d'Ambricourt, ces hommes de Dieu pour lesquels l'expérience de la sainteté représente « une vocation, un appel »,¹⁸ qui engage l'être entier dans l'aventure du salut (et « qu'elle est puissante, la parole d'un homme de

¹⁵ « Un lien secret unit l'esprit de pureté, l'esprit d'enfance et l'esprit de pauvreté. La pauvreté dans le monde hante Bernanos. [...] La pauvreté est, ici-bas, un de ces lieux mystérieux où se consomme le mystère d'iniquité, où s'accomplit également le mystère de la grâce » (Charles Moeller, *Littérature du 20^e siècle et christianisme, I. Silence de Dieu*, Casterman, Tournai, Paris, 1965, pp. 381-382).

¹⁶ « La liberté de Dieu, c'est sa nécessité même », et cette nécessité est « le mouvement de sa nature, qui n'agit que dans l'être et selon l'être, par quoi tout le possible est accompli et en dehors de quoi il n'y a rien » (Antoine Giacometti, « Georges Bernanos, l'auxiliaire », in *Georges Bernanos*, l'édition citée, p. 83). Le sens de ce rapport est d'« amener le maximum de plénitude humaine au contact de la plénitude divine », de « baigner à nouveau la vie quotidienne, sans en excepter la moindre surface, dans la présence divine » (Emmanuel Mounier, *op. cit.*, p. 148).

¹⁷ « Ce n'est en aucun cas la nature qui d'elle-même appellerait le surnaturel : c'est le surnaturel, si l'on peut ainsi parler, qui suscite la nature avant de la mettre comme en demeure de l'accueillir » (Henri de Lubac, *Le mystère du surnaturel*, Cerf, Paris, 2000, p. 128).

¹⁸ « 'Vocatus – appelé' : combien de fois Bernanos n'a-t-il pas écrit ensemble le mot latin et le mot français ! Il n'est peut-être pas de leitmotiv plus fréquent sous sa plume » (Albert Béguin, *op. cit.*, p. 58).

Dieu ! », *JC*, p. 1197), Monsieur Ouine lui-même connaît la douloureuse épreuve de la parole témoignante, son éphémère minute révélatrice, avant d'être aspiré par l'ombre de sa double origine : « Et lui, Ouine, pour la première fois de sa vie – la dernière sans doute – essaie de faire comprendre, d'expliquer, tandis que les mots semblent jaillir d'une part oubliée, tout à coup retrouvée, de son âme, jaillissent comme d'une source intarissable » (*MO*, 1473).

La parole ne sert donc pas à nommer l'invisible ; la prédication transmet le message humain vers une présence indicible qu'elle essaie d'exprimer¹⁹ ; elle communique avec l'incommunicable et l'intransmissible.²⁰ Mais elle le fait conformément au langage de la foi, c'est-à-dire elle enracine sa signification dans l'expérience vécue, l'image-représentation devenant image-verbe. Le kérygme à l'épreuve du dire – s'il crée en fait une image – agit dans la zone de l'inter-dit, relevant de ce jeu où le non-dit cherche un statut dans la parole.²¹ Par cela même, l'état d'absence institué par l'indicible est exprimé par sa présence dans une situation existentielle concrète qui est justement celle de l'invocation.²² Son « extraordinaire épreuve » (*SS*, 142) kérygmaticque assure l'authenticité de sa vocation transcendante : c'est à la parole humaine d'exprimer comme révélateur la Parole de Dieu.

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¹⁹ Il s'agit souvent de « l'imagination surnaturaliste » qui « cherche à exprimer l'indicible » (Pierre-Marie Mesnier, *op. cit.*, p. 91), mais « il n'est que trop clair que le signifiant (le mot) renvoie imparfaitement au signifié (le surnaturel) » (Michel Estève, « Notes et variantes », in *op. cit.*, p. 1781).

²⁰ « C'est ce don que je voudrais partager – affirme Bernanos dans *Les Enfants humiliés* –, c'est la seule aumône que je puisse faire, et c'est lui, précisément, l'incommunicable, l'intransmissible » (*apud* A. Béguin, *op. cit.*, p. 65).

²¹ Cf. Pierre-Marie Mesnier, *op. cit.*, p. 87. C'est que la révélation divine « renferme l'informulé qui rend possible toute formulation » (Jad Hatem, *La Rosace. Prolégomènes à la mystique comparée*, Éditions du Cygne, Paris, 2008, p. 19).

²² « La transcendance de Celui que j'invoque s'affirme par rapport à toute expérience possible, ou même à toute supputation rationnelle qui ne serait encore que de l'expérience anticipée et schématisée » (Gabriel Marcel, *Essai de philosophie concrète*, Gallimard, Paris, 1967, p. 217).

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THE CULTURAL COLD WAR IN ROMANIA

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Abstract

The most important strategies, in Romanian culture, after the World War II, were designed at Paris. Communist ideology being rightly considered the main enemy of culture, the answer of exile, through its peaks, was also ideological, but opposite in sign. If the intellectuals from the country were "resisting through culture", the exile abroad assumed the role of a strong anti-communist militancy.

Keywords: communism, exile, literature, Cold War, Radio Free Europe

Although, as Dumitru Țepeneag says, „major Romanian literature is written there where Romanian language ia at home”, is no less true that the most important strategies, in Romanian culture, after the World War II were designed at Paris. As the totalitarian political climate tended to contaminate any nook of spiritual space, literary exile worked in its mirror control. As aesthetic performance was fully represented in the country, with the disappearance of the socialist realism without notice, exile especially incumbent upon ethical performance. Communist ideology being rightly considered the main enemy of culture, the answer of exile, through its peaks, was as well ideological, but opposite in sign. If the intellectuals from the country were "resisting through culture", the exile abroad assumed the role of a strong anti-communist militancy. After the euphoria of recovery of the exiled component of Romanian culture was also scattered, there are already increasingly more evidence of political contamination of their aesthetic valuing actions. The testimony of Dumitru Țepeneag here: “I would not like someone to believe that I was wrong welcomed in exile by its leaders, when I arrived in Paris. On the contrary, I was greeted warmly, with a slightly exaggerated kindness, with admiration for my political courage. That I haven’t understood immediately that everything, in exile, was interpreted politically. The “Onirism”, for example, was to exile and RFE (Radio Free Europe) an aesopic language and nothing more²; with accents somewhat bluntly, the same Dumitru Țepeneag speaks of "political fanaticism of the Romanians in exile who in their justified fight against communism tended to «punish» the writers from the country that accepted the compromise with power. It could be called also the primacy of politics and its consequences". Speaking of indisputable quality of written literature in the country, the writer believes that, definitely lower, exiled literature tended to

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² Dumitru Țepeneag, *Războiul literaturii încă nu s-a încheiat*, Interviu, Ediție îngrijită de Nicolae Bârna, Editura Allfa, București, 2000, pp. 260-261.

obscure the path to international perception, and therefore illusory, occupying the outpost, with a «lower-quality Romanian Literature».³

It happened that, unlike other Eastern exiles, ours was far less concerned about the translation and promotion of writers in the country. True, interest to Eastern literatures there was little in the West, maybe since the second half of the decade eight and only regarding the dissenting literature. Poles and Czechs have taken advantage of this opening, promoting "Solidarność" and Charter '77 by prompt translation of the writers of these movements. "The reason of the immediate appearance of translations in the West is interesting - historian Tony Judt points, illustrating the Polish example. This is because an entire generation of Polish intellectuals, from 1968 until the late 70s, begin to hold positions in western universities, Yale, Columbia, Berkeley, Oxford" and gives example Kolakowski and his followers, Hus and his followers like Alex Smolar, who is the founder of Bathory Foundation, "equivalent Soros Foundation in Hungary. Alex Smolar was a student in Paris in the early '70s, I did not know him, but it was one of those who translated Michnik. They all lived in the West, and were the chain by which the Pole dissidents were heard in the West".⁴ Romanian exile has chosen another way. Probably lacking the same means that have enjoyed their Czech and Polish counterparts, did not support the Romanian literature abroad, but for Romanians, aiming especially political purposes. The small number of dissenters was again an impediment, but when they were there, exile has made every effort to make them visible.

Located differently in the emergency of the political command, the exile, through its leaders, focused almost exclusively on directing its message to the country, in some cases with propaganda purposes. Oriented towards the country, the militant exile exercised its influence on the inside hierarchy of literature, primarily by ethical criteria, the aesthetic platform falling on a secondary background. Simultaneously, the approach only aesthetically of the most important critics in the country converged with the ethics of exile, aligning their platform to the ethical one, so they finally meet. The two views were in fact faces of the same reality, and their joint action concerned a same common enemy: the literature subservient to the regime. However the hierarchy made in the country did not overlapped on the one made outside so authors with real talent and aesthetic merits, because of their alleged "collaborationism", not always real, was concealed, while the merits of the "brave" were sometimes exaggerated. But - it must be said - the differences were not as pronounced as to prevent axiological perception closer to reality. Small distortions still had a role, insidious, it is true, with considerable effects in the long term upon literature, and especially on its policies. This does not mean, of course, that the ethical attitude of Parisian critics would have an intentional dogmatic position against the cultural act. To understand the historical and political circumstances that led to their political

³ *Ibidem*, p. 244.

⁴ Tony Judt, *Europa iluziilor*, Editura Polirom, Iași, 2000, pp. 19-33.

responsiveness, beyond their natural anti-communism against the Soviet occupation regime that had taken possession of their land, in their first two years of exile they faced with political circumstances designed to discourage all their hope to be heard.

France after the War was keen to erase from their consciousness collaborationism with the German occupier, much larger than the French resistance, and also, the "sins" of the Vichy government. On the other hand, for the French democrats the fascist regime was a still an open wound, still unhealed. The main currents of ideas in postwar France were as predictable as possible, anti-fascist and Marxist. In addition, the Soviets were allies. This Marxist period was extended until Solzhenitsyn's case became well-known. Until then, as Tony Judt points out, "different histories of anthropology, political science (not yet appeared in France a separate discipline of political science) were dominated by people trained after the war. People who studied at the Superior Normal School between - say - '48 and '55 ". It left all visible. In addition, the entire West seemed blind and deaf to the problems of captive countries behind the Iron Curtain. In addition to "forget ethics" - the war left behind an unbearable memory, as beneficiaries of prosperity due to the Marshall Plan of economic rehabilitation, funded by U.S., Western Europe had no mood no curiosity to know what is really happening in the new communist countries. Is there a selfishness of the developed countries of Western Europe. For example Judt had appeared shocked at the time, that "after what happened in Prague in August 1968, almost no one talked about these events. There was not, of course, total silence, but for most "Prague Spring", as Dahrendorf said, was a bourgeois spring. That does not really have anything to do with Western revolution ". In fact, the Prague Spring and the May '68 revolts in Paris, as complaints were justified, as legitimate as the seemingly antithetical. Yudt was shocked by "indifference, and cynicism about what was happening in Eastern Europe". As a reflection of a guilty conscience or not, "from 1956 to the mid-60s", French intellectual's interest would rather heading to Third World problems and the war in Algeria.

"After '68 world realizes, however, that something is moving in this area (Eastern Europe, NM, NS), but - says Judt - a whole tradition of forgetting had already established". Solzhenitsyn's arrival will change the perception. After his interviews, books translated into French, a small earthquake occurs in consciousness. In "Nouvel Observateur" is an editorial by Jean Daniel, "Oh! How I could not figure out what happened?" Not that he didn't know what happened, but "only Solzhenitsyn gave us a vocabulary to talk about all this." Until then, interest in the situation of the East was almost zero. Yudt speaks of a "Yalta of mind", that after 1945 "this part of the world becomes less interesting, included automatically in the Soviet world to simplify the analysis" and "area east of Vienna was a nebula." Politically, on the other hand, in the view of Yudt, "the second element of the postwar situation that facilitated the construction of" Europe "was the Cold War. Since 1947, for most European leaders became clear that the Soviet Union was a serious threat to Eastern

Europe and that, if only for their own protection, Western European countries had to create some kind of alliance between them first, then with the U.S."⁵

It is easy to guess the frustrations of Parisian exiles being unable to make their voices heard, to make known their own country drama in the hands of the Soviets, voices drowned, lost in a Marxist intellectual tumult. This frustration led to a kind of radical political intransigence, unable to understand French policy, no longer able to perceive nuances, even after left-wing French political language begins to differentiate. Idiosyncrasy to the political left will always remain, even despite the fact that another feature explained, but no less paradoxical, as evidenced by the exiled Romanian memoirs and diaries (Lovinescu, Dumitru Țepeneag, Sanda Stolojan, Paul Goma, Virgil Tanase), political struggle was supported, in utmost, just by press of the left, "what is even more humiliating for the communist regime in Bucharest" - says Mircea Iorgulescu, in a chapter from his volume *Tangențiale* dedicated to the diary of Monica Lovinescu. An explicable peculiarity, being known that the policy of left was more open to the pronounced problems of political or social injustice. The fact is that Monica Lovinescu and Virgil Ierunca, the Parisian outstanding literary critics, pushed by circumstances, will despise pluralism of political debate in France, choosing the right sort of an inflexible, suspicious radicalism. Something as possible "exotic" for those years of post-war Paris.

In part, the intransigence of anti-communist post-communism after 1989, among Romanian intellectuals, phobic to any shade of left through to deny any legitimacy to all came from this doctrinaire area, even with the risk of contradicting the idea of political pluralism. But we must say that this political inflexibility comes from a great solidarity. For that, referring to the political intransigence of Lovinescu-Ierunca spouses, Mircea Iorgulescu noted that not this intransigence will govern their relations with the writers from the country, but a sublime brotherhood; "A fraternal shared struggle unites Lovinescu and her visitors from Romania, even more than the directions of the great planetary confrontation in which this fight is just one episode. Not only intellectual and literary affinities or differences are listed in the background, but also the ideological and political ones. One of the great revelations of Monica Lovinescu's diary is that one is unable to specify the political identity of all his characters, except the author and Virgil Ierunca. They both are, without doubt, definitely anti-communist, and definitely anti-left. But as such are defined almost exclusively by reference to the French political space. Reflections and observations about the socialist president François Mitterrand, about the socialist government, about the various socialist leaders are distinguished by a radicalism often pushed to cruelty ("I do not know what injury would fit better," notes Monica Lovinescu at a time about Mitterrand); instead, when right-wing opposition wins the municipal elections in Paris the event is recorded with apparent satisfaction: "we vote and we win for the first time. Chirac's list won the first round and we get rid of the

⁵*Ibidem*, p.153.

communist mayor that we have since we live here. (...) Opposition becomes majority in the rest of France also. Perhaps with no trace, but comforting." However the anti-left attitude, constant and virulent, does not alter the judgment on events. Monica Lovinescu "hates" François Mitterrand, but notes honestly every situation when the French Socialist president takes a position against the regime in Bucharest, against Soviet policy or in favor of dissidents. Even if she can not control amazement, as happens during a visit made by Mitterrand in Moscow. "Incredible surprise" exclaimed Monica Lovinescu, "Mitterrand during the talks with Chernenko spoke about Sakharov, and on Afghanistan, and the need of Pershing missiles," he was "the first Western head of state who does!". Surprise or perhaps misunderstanding of the fine policies pursued by the «Florentine», as was said, the French president, a great lover of literature and writers, let us remember..."⁶ Moreover Mitterrand will be one of the few French politicians who will be involved - we see - rather than formal, concrete as possible even in matters of Romanian dissidence. One thing is clear. As shown in the diary of Monica Lovinescu, although their action politicized and fierce anti-left allowed and even recommended boundaries, as observed Mircea Iorgulescu, "guidelines, options and political sensitivities of the" illegal entrants "come from Romania", and, moreover, the exiles, appear as "colorless". Iorgulescu explained this by the strategic concept of *containment*, a concept "thought it essential to Cold War historians", the incredible solidarity that united the Romanian intellectuals against the regime, a solidarity that managed to short-circuit "many Romanias", that many Romanias in which we are divided because, for example, Marin Preda, although congener with Monica Lovinescu, obviously do not share the same single Romania. The miracle of coagulation comes from a common "widely shared adversity upon the communist regime, and probably should be extended to writers and intellectuals who do not travel to Paris or not enough". It makes up such a united front, very broad, and his goal is one: blocking policy regime. Lovinescu recorded in her Journal on 22 October 1983: "the impression that there and here we are - on the same barricades to defend the same culture. I welcome them ... from the front ". Because, really, this joint action of the critics in Paris and the "illegals" was a front because - says Mircea Iorgulescu - "images and language of fight are in fact perfectly proper, not" rhetorically inflated!". The fight involves, both sides, tactical movements, strategic maneuver, retreat, attack, concealment, enveloping, concessions, all to the interest of the unique cause. The evaluation criterion is efficiency. Consciously or not - notes Mircea Iorgulescu, this action falls within the boundaries defined since the launch in July 1947 by George Kennan of the American strategic concept of *containment* (...). Restriction, limitation, impoundment of the actions of the communist officials, first of all in their cultural actions, but also in the social and political ones, was the priority of the campaign ... "⁷ The containment strategies, which bowed on various

⁶ Mircea Iorgulescu, *Tangențiale*, Editura Unstitutului cultural Român, București, 2004, p. 141.

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 142

researchers⁸, the Cold War, applied within the culture, seem to belong to a conscious, coordinated approach, although Mircea Iorgulescu slips a margin of doubt, because we will see, cultural cold War indicates a concept for a reality orchestrated by the U.S. to a remarkable level. Otherwise, both concepts have come to the attention of prominent historians and researchers after the fall of communism, especially since the Cold War archives became available.

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⁸ See also John Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy*, Oxford University Press, 1982.

STĂNESCU'S ESSAY – A PALIMPSEST OF CULTURAL IDENTITY

Luminița CHIOREAN¹

Abstract

Our point of view about the essay is somehow far from the opinions until now, namely: we think that the essay is a distinct genre, always with an esthetic message, having a discursive architecture, a genre inside the “literature of frontier”. Being of a major importance for literary culture, the essay should be regarded as a palimpsest of human values.

Keywords: aesthetic, encyclopedic ego, essayistic discourse, essay, ethics, palimpsest

Why Stănescu's essay and not his poetry? From the interpretative retrospective and analysis on Stănescu's work one can notice that the essayistic discourse was only tangentially reached by the critics, and it was seen as a (more or less) poetic ‘adtext’ or some other times it is omitted from the poetic ‘calculus’ of the poetry reader. We want to reestablish the value of a controversial genre, as well as the importance of poetic essays in the unitary understanding of artistic work, rebuilding the whole.

For the beginning we underline the fact that the essay faithfully registers the aesthetic seisms, defining itself as pure and essential form of the discourse.

The strength of the essayistic genre resides in information about ‘paternity and diachrony’ [Tiutiuca, 1979: 24-35], a history of the ‘state of essay’ from 1580, first edition of Montaigne's *Essays* until the 20th century, to Emerson, Unamuno, P. Valéry. But the sources of the essay are found in antiquity: Plato's *Dialogues*, Plutarh's *Parallel Lives*, Seneca's *Lucilius' Letters*, Augustine's *Confessions*, didactic texts in that literature.

We stop at three aspects of the essay's etymons: (1) meanings in the 15th century, used by Montaigne's contemporaries, at the publication of his *Essais: gustus* (root *gust* = to try; *coup d'essai* or *apprentissage* or *expérience*); (2) Montaigne's meanings seen in his work [Eseuri, 1984]²: (a) *exam, test, trial* [I, XXV]; *experience* [II, XXXVII]; *taste, sample, specimen* [III, XIII]; *first try, attempt, exercise, apprenticeship* [III, IX]; cinetic meaning: *effort* [I, L]; *weirdness, novelty* [II, VIII]. And finally, (3), the etymologic meaning: Fr. *essais* from the Lat. *exagium*, which properly means *weighing*, and figuratively: *precise exam*.

Functionally the essay³ is announced through the meaning *experience (essays or experiences of life)*, contextually presenting either ‘the of course’ of the *attempt*, or that of *learning as a cognitive acquisition, a new gnosis or perception on reality*.

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² Michel de Montaigne, *Eseuri*, Trad. de Mariella Seulescu; prefață și note de Ludwig Grunberg, Ed. Minerva, București, 1984. v. cap. I, L: *Despre Democrit și Heraclit*.

³ In Romanian inter-war journalism where the term essay appears for the first time, there was an oscilation between the French neologism: *essai* (Perpessicus), *eseu* (Călinescu), *eseu* or *eseu* (Eliade, Ionescu, Camil Petrescu), and the English neologism *essay* (Zarifopol). Most of Romanian writers, critics and essayists make their option for the form adapted to the norms of Romanian language, namely *eseu* (Vianu, Lovinescu, Streinu, Nichita Stănescu, Marin Sorescu).

As aesthetic function, the essay knows a structural variety: from Bacon's conventional or *moral* essay to periodic (journalistic) essay, illuminist essay [Voltaire], the aesthetic one⁴ [Locke], the American essay (of manners, philosophic-speculative), the German essay of the 'monologue' type [Goethe] or 'Bildungs' essay [scientific pattern in Lessing's *Laokoon*, where there is a classification of arts in spatial and temporal arts], the Italian conventional essay, the Spanish essay of passion with neo-humanistic or metaphysical tendencies [Unamuno, Eugenio d'Ors, Ortega Y Gasset, 1982], coming back to the aesthetic essay [Valéry, 1929].

The *conventional essay (moral or ethic)* is dominant. What does the convention consist of? And what is the essence of the essay?

'The specific difference' inside the essayistic genre proves to be the method of transgressing the real. Because it is the configuration of the matrix of any essayistic discourse, imposing itself as the main principle of ideas, the ethic sustains the unity of the genre and its definition as an independent genre. The ethics gives the inner law of the essayistic discourse, legible as a tripartite structure of enunciation, modality, argumentation: *Ideea de frumos este o idee profund morală și tot în acest sens putem considera zona estetică o culminatie a zonei etice*"[s.n.] [Stănescu, 1990 - *FP/ Nevoia de artă*: 61] – an order in the chaos of ideas, an adjuvant of reason, added by us. By means of ethics, the essay is pulled out of the accusation of a meaningless writing.

On the contrary: under the incidence of the reading, the apparent emptiness of the texture registers an infinity of meanings 'hungry' for embodiment; thus we discuss about the *essay as a 'acategorical art'* [Borbely, 1995: 6].

The preference of the essayistic genre for lyric is explained through the liberty of the ideas which refuse limitation, constraint to a definition. There are vague ideas of logic, because they are made lyrical, they assume the role of the subject-creator; they are generous in the construction of the labyrinth. Furthermore: they seduce the reader too. In Stănescu's essay *Scrisori de dragoste sau inserare de seară*, Ioachim, the one who is carrying the stick and the book as divine marks, addresses the collocutor: *Toma, eu ard ca să-ți dau foc!* (*Toma, I am burning in order to set you on fire!*) This is really a very pleasant and exciting calling for catharsis: the two actants' purification by means of art (creator and reader), actants engaged in the work – creation and understanding.

The essay is the text-discourse that does not betray the emittent (the subject). The essayistic discourse becomes existence: it is the actant's way of action. Finally, we admit that the essay is the living document signed with your own being. As a speech it is a *hemolexia*; as writing it is *hemography* [acc. to Stănescu]. **The essay is an aesthetic palimpsest.** It is obvious that "[...] *eseul se dovedește a fi arta specifică [...] solitarilor. Porneste de la ecuația renascentistă a lui „uomo singolare”, transsubstanțiind-o mai departe peste secole.*" [Borbely, 1995: 6] (*the essay proves to be the art of [...] the recluses. It starts from the renescentist equation of uomo singolare, transsubstantializing it further on over the centuries*).

⁴ In our opinion the conjunct use of the terms *eseu* and *estetic* is a pleonasm: any essay catches the esthetics of a literary, scientific etc. object.

The first type of essay is represented by Don Juan, the character who aesthetically built his existence. But let's not forget Ulysses! The essay means placing between Ulysses and Don Quixote, an adventure of language. Therefore the essayistic genre illustrates human transformation, culture transformation [acc. to Vlad, 1970]. We are aware of the fact that the essay is an authentic writing, a chameleonic discourse in competition to the subject-author's existence.

Being authentic, the essay is enlisted in the theory of literary genres as a document, once it belongs to a lucid spirit who reveals the consciousness of the époque in which the work is written, indirectly as a part of the culture [acc. to the "morphologic interpretation of cultures", through Noica's metaphilosophical discourse [*Modelul cultural european*, Humanitas, 1993.]

The passion of real, the pleading for the truth of life as a mainspring of essayistic discourse represent the intuitive retort of art given to reflection, a naturalist and impressionist mechanism. The prejudice is wiped by authenticity, the metaphysical speculation gives up facing the physical reality (an aesthetic attitude present in Stănescu's discourse, poetic and essayistic as well). *Mirarea* (the wonder) is the state of grace that generously opens the essayistic composition: "*Mirarea poate fi declarată starea de grație a afirmăției, nunta afirmăției [...] Actul cunoașterii se schimbă din mirare în posesiune, din posesiune în nostalgie, din nostalgie în precept.*" [Stănescu, 1985, *Antimetafizica*: 91; 112]

The wonder is conditioned by the unpredictable as an element of aesthetic tension. Out of the pertinent observation of combining the knowledge and the wonder, it appeared a theory of art as a wonder [acc. to Blaga]: living the novelty, the pure sensation, the artist will give another reality to the metaphysical imaginary, a reality based on the values of reason and on the values of sensitivity: anti-metaphysics frequently understood as rediscovery of myth, *Force de frappe* – a title of the essayistic grouping *Răzgândiri* [*Secolul XX*, 1985; 2003/ V] – the dislocation of textual meaning as a synaesthesia primary nucleus. In the rediscovered anti-metaphysical reality, myth defined as "tragic knowledge" [acc. to Nietzsche] represents the basis of an existential project with consequences in building up a different distortion.

Leading to essence and mystery, myth mediates the way of rendering conscious the human boundaries: Faust, Prometheus, Orpheus and Sisyphus are avatars of humanity. In here the **Faustian project** chosen by the neo-modern writer (N. Stănescu) finds its purpose. The biographic truths dully written, with the diligence of a scribe in a file of existences, like the medieval chronicler, meet a new route: from metaphysical and mimetic to psychological. Subjective discourse, more than any other fragment, the essay underlines the traces of the subject-author, it reveals the intention and the effort of the work in the process of creation. You can feel its perspiration on your forehead. You have the privilege of shadow ... or even of the guardian angel. Moved, as a reader you feel the creator: one moment you are him. The aesthetic experience is more rapid and with more

impact over the reader, because at the level of the discourse, the empiric ego⁵ specific to any subjective literature (journal, memoirs) is interrogated by the essayistic ego⁶, very much alike, but never mistaken by the poetic ego. Hence we notice the poets' option for the essay, resembling an active creative ... break.

The essayist is temperamental, a feature asked by his reader. Once the essayistic ego reaches self consciousness, it becomes one with the universe; it participates in its existence, together with its faithful reader whom he cannot forget. It is that kind of reunion like that between Gilgamesh and Enkidu.

The essayistic pages appear to be autobiographical. But it is not an autobiography lived sentimentally, but intellectually, it is the creator's real biography. Differently from the (discontinuous, episodic) lyric ego, the essayistic tries to reach the spirit of the epic: **the encyclopedic ego**, continuous knowledge specific to "Martians", Nichita Stănescu wrote. And the gain is obvious: it drops out the frames of the intimacy, it is open to cultural values of all times, the masks that it adopts assuring it spiritual immunity, and last but not least it has intimacy with the collective ego, whose voice is easily posed. The observation becomes pertinent by means of the first person in the case of essayistic person as a sign of intimacy and of epic privilege as well; hence the essayist's statute of narrator-creator.

The frequently used technique of writing the essayistic discourse is the monologue. Of intellective nature, the essay does not ask for initiation, but for solidity of knowledge in order to suggest, once entered the game, many strategies as possible solutions, without assigning them as laws. The state of the essay is given by the liberty of the spirit.

The stylistic constants of the essayistic discourse are seen under the power of the critic spirit that raises questions over the truth. The aesthetics of essayistic voluptuousness is stimulated by the balance between certainty and skepticism; they are attitudes manifested from irony to hedonism lived the ethic plan. The rhetoric of essayistic discourse catalogues the charge, the paradox, the game as ambiguity, the irony, the contradiction seen at the level of antinomy (the game of antinomies or antagonistic), and the figures of construction and of thinking with dynamic consequences on the essay.

The artistic language will gradually give up metaphor. The artist's option will be the metonymy, the "Gordian knowledge" of paradox. "*Dacă aş avea de ales între un adevăr şi un paradox, mărturiseşte Eliade, aş alege paradoxul. Adevărurile se schimbă, dar paradoxul e de o astfel de natură încât rămâne întotdeauna plin, real şi justificat.*" (*if I have to choose between the truth and the paradox, says Eliade, I would choose the paradox. The truths change, but the paradox is of such type that it always remains full, real and justified*) [s.n.][Eliade, 1991: 68]

As a modality of presentation, the essay revolts against rhetoric, but especially against the systemic. Far from being hazardous, the essay tolerantly unifies the

⁵ The empiric ego refers to the statute of derived ego, the one who has fallen out of the "common" family of humanity.

⁶ The essayistic ego integrates in the artistic ego: the authentic hypostasis, the profile of creative personality.

provocative real of the objects inside the adventure of language. We mention the fact that the finality of the essayistic discourse becomes a “knot of light”, as the poet would say, the categorial knot of the good.

As we have already underlined, the self consciousness has the precedence over the essayistic subject, no matter who is he. It is also known that art does not imply only knowledge, but also a surplus of consciousness – self knowledge, hence the union between the esthetic and the ethic; and also the subordination of aesthetics to ethics. The poet concludes: “*Aesthetics is ethic*”.

Some critics pleaded for the composite genre as a didactic genre, literature that comprises: proverbs, sayings, wise saws, anecdotes, fables, skits, epigrams, didactic poems. We think this is superficial. The confusion is made due to the moral value absolutely contained in all these texts, and obviously in the essays as well. But things are not as simple as they seem to be. It is true that the essay is composite, as we have said before, but it is **not** a heteroclite genre. And we can bring arguments, such as the statute of the essay as a matrix or witness of authentic experiences that (sincerely) give the creator’s effort in writing his work. We underline: the essay is not a didactic genre.

In the rhetoric of the essay we can see influences from critics and journalism. From the chronicle, the serial, the reportage, the inquiry, the interview, the montage, types of the publicistic, the essay borrows the formula of writing literary journal, but without becoming “literature of popularization”, mass-media. From the critics it keeps the spirit and less the critical reason which is replaced by a philosophy of taste: namely the esthetic pleasure. Thus the essay will establish its esthetic discourse. Or better to say: aesthetics “speaks” about beauty only in the essayistic discourse. It is true that through its statute of science of arts, aesthetics calls on critical reason, but every time it appeals to esthetic tension, it requires the essay, a literary genre adequate to the discourse that “launches” the judgments of value over the object of all the arts, the universal beauty.

The essay is similar to the seismograph that registers the most intense creative mobility. How can you explain the dynamic phenomenon of ideas if not by the essayist’s adventurous spirit? His acquaintance with the experiment or the trial, a method compromised by naturalism, will give coherence and individuality to discourse; hence some artists’ option for literature or art as an experiment.

Even if the statute of a distinct literary genre is be disputed, the essay will survive as long as the human being exists, manifesting his existential needs.

Once the essay astonished a relatively great number of scholars of that time, philosophers, writers, estheticians, it means that it has a special feature; it has its own ontos. We agree to W.V. Ruttkovski’s classification [acc. to Tiutiuca, 1979: 163]. Referring to the concept of “literature”, there are three conceptual spheres covered, namely: “the basis of literature”, an exterior sphere that comprises the publicistic, the essayistic and the rhetoric writings; the intermediary sphere, materialized in belletristic and the inner sphere: poetry. Through the option for the real, “the basis of literature”

later identified in a syntagm frequently used in literary theory, “literature of frontier”, is in a dialectic relation with belletristic and especially with poetry.

Furthermore: we limit the area of “semantic field” of “frontier genre”: without forcing it, we put essay close to poetry. Unlike the epic or the dramatic, when the foreground is asked by fiction, “the tide of ideas” reestablishes the cosmic rhythms according to the poetic thought, new to reason: we refer to *dianoia*, a term belonging to Plato and borrowed by N. Frye to name the “theme”: “[Când cititorul se va întreba:] <<Care este semnificația acestei povestiri?>> Întrebarea se referă de această dată la *dianoia*, demonstrând că elementul revelației este prezent nu numai în cazul intrigii, ci și în tematică.” (*What is the meaning of this story? The question refers to *dianoia* this time, proving that the element of revelation is present not only in the case of the intrigue, but also in the theme*)[1972: 444]

Once the accent is moved from the fiction to the theme, the *mythos* receives narrative meaning. No matter the typologies, the criteria, the theme, it is obvious that the essay is an esthetic discourse, and the esthetic keeps its ethic matrix, its original nature, by the values for which it pleads.

For instance, let’s discuss about one classification: B. Berger [acc. to Tiutiuca, 1979: 172-173], a modern German theoretician decides upon the form as a criterion, bringing in the next classification: (a) mainly *descriptive and instructive* essay that uses the rhetoric inventory peculiar to epic and didactic discourse; (b) mainly *critical* essay, with the science as source, being intellectually and culturally motivated; (c) mainly *meditative-considerate* essay, of philosophic origin, attitudinally calling on distance, austerity; (d) mainly *ironic* essay, of the same semantic field as the pamphlet. On a close look, anybody can see that in here the formal criterion is not the real participant in differentiation, but the essayist’s attitude.

The essay is only one, but attitudinally it can manifest in a variety. Actually the attitude refers both to the author of the original work of the subject which becomes the theme of the essay, and to the essayist, whose discourse depends on the value of the essay: the esthetic value. Therefore, in order for the essay to have a life, there is a need for compatibility of knowledge and method: the subject that incites the essayist’s thought, the “antigenre” needs to be given an “antibody”. We have thus reached the delicate term of “antigenre” given to the essay. We reject this because the truth is exactly upside down, if we follow the path of science: namely “antigenre” identifies with the phenomenon or the subject that incites the interest in esthetic approach, and “antibody” would be the equivalent of the essay. Is there urgency in naming “n” terms for the evidence of essayistic genre?

We plead for the esthetic nature of essay, no matter the theme. The esthetic man does not live in an imaginary that can be (de)constructed, neither accessible to any ... terrestrial individual; in the existential route, he rests in a *mundus imaginalis*, he can “fly” in the territory between worlds – *inter mundii*.

The essay is generous with all the problems of mankind, permanently changing “the reference system” or the criterion, as the poet gives arguments for changing the

theme and of course, the structure: “*Cititorule, închei aici, alunecându-mi gândul într-un cu totul și cu totul alt sistem de referință...*” [1985, in *Secolul XX, Răzgândiri*: 189]

... And the reader, Toma or any other disciple intensively lives the master's existence: “you – you are him”, as Eminescu would say [*Înger de pază*]

Our point of view about the essay is somehow far from the opinions until now, namely: we think that the essay is a distinct genre, always with an esthetic message, having a discursive architecture, a genre inside the “literature of frontier”. Of a major importance for culture **the essay is a palimpsest of human values**. “The substance of the essay” is the proof of the classic ideal towards the man accedes: a document of man's special nature in cosmos.

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A VISION ON FEMININITY IN THE ROMANTIC HISTORICAL NOVEL: WALTER SCOTT, *IVANHOE*

Florica BODIȘTEAN¹

Abstract

The study presents the role of femininity in the historical/heroic Romantic novel through a significant example: *Ivanhoe* by Walter Scott. With the help of the two women conceived in the mirror, the Scottish writer accomplishes a critical takeover of the mediaeval canon, Rowena being the inheritance of the chivalrous heroic structures and Rebecca – a perfect Romantic century character, the way to finding a moral transcendence that has nothing in common with the institutions created by people.

Keywords: historical novel, romance, femininity, chivalry, religious fanaticism

Literature and history in the Romantic view

Romantic historicism derives from a highly acute perception of time. In matters of vision, this is the most distinctive feature of the heterogeneous and proteiform Romantic movement that depicts life's dynamics artistically, destabilizing the artificial classical Eleaticism. One recognises that, epistemologically speaking, "in Romanticism, the border between history and literature is unstable and the interdependencies between the two fields are complex and mutual"². Like the historian, the writer is a "child of the century" and the innovation Romanticism brings about in matters of historical novel is the national, patriotic and democratic feeling. Three ingredients blend aesthetically in this novelistic formula: heroic chivalry, the love for the ideal woman and patriotism. Heroic chivalry of mediaeval origin is dedicated to non-earthly ideals above all, while the Romantics place the ideal within the national context.

In a literature that seems obsessed with historical subjects, the hero, the genius personality, is very valuable, a reflex of the interest in everything that is great, grandiose, imposing, spectacular, amazing. The key character of the Romantics will be the Great Man, be he a poet, a priest, a warrior or a monarch. From Thomas Carlyle the philosopher, a contemporary of the Romantics who explained the whole history through heroes' deeds, to Tolstoy, with his national-popular concept, "a line crosses the spiritual globe and divides it in two parts"³, questioning the role of individuality in the river of

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² Vera Călin, *Romantismul (Romanticism)*, Bucharest, Univers Publishing House, 1975, p. 62.

³ Tudor Vianu, *Filosofia istoriei în Război și pace (The Philosophy of History in War and Peace)*, in *Studii de literatură universală și comparată (Studies of World Literature and Compared Literature)*, 2nd edition revised and enlarged, Bucharest, Academia Republicii Populare Române Publishing House, 1963, p. 516.

becoming and every voluntary, conscious action oriented towards a purpose that is accessible to human intelligence.

In romanticism, heroism as a literary product matches historical evocation perfectly. After Cervantes, the heroic novel subsisted in structures blended with pastoral poems and the Hellenistic novel whose invincible model was Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*. Such are the works of Gomberville (*Polixandre*) or Madeleine de Scudéry (*Cyrus the Great*) and such are all the classical pseudo-historical novels that depict essentialized, "typical" and contemporary realities under historical disguise. The 18th century proved to be fundamentally anti-chivalric, promoting the hero *sine nobilitate*, and fundamentally anti-heroic, oriented towards social reform. Only at the beginning of the 19th century will the Romantics invent the historical novel as a way to recover the golden age for which the chivalric model is the most available example. Tempted by the Homeric posture, Scott signs the birth certificate of the genre, also establishing its specifics, its procedures, its medievalism with Ossianic features and takeovers from the dark novel, all this blended in a descriptive realism combination through which novelistic heroism gains credibility.

The Middle Ages is, not only for Scott, but also all Romantics, the heroic "etymon", this being the reason for the faithful worshipping of Gothic and primitiveness. Both Vigny in *Cinq-Mars* and Manzoni in *The Betrothed* chose pre-classical or non-classical epochs, the reappearance of Antiquity as a novel theme indicating a separation from Romanticism, as Flaubert also shows in *Salammbô*. The historical Romantic novel accomplishes two great goals simultaneously: it promotes the national cause by evoking a heroic past in which the ideal was active and it represents an evasive answer to the prosaic side and mediocrity of the contemporary world. For "instead of accepting that it was absolutely necessary for the noble souls to be defeated, the 19th-century idealist prose writers planned to discover and study the sociological and historical environment in which they could flourish"⁴. And traces of this ideal can be found in the historical past. The purpose of the novelist is not the antithesis arisen from grasping the excellence and the spectacular features of bygone times, as in the Gothic novel that uses the mediaeval framework strictly in its fantastic side, but the discovery, within this illustrative fragment, of the laws of history and social morality, laws that can be imported to serve the present. Consequently, fantasy is restricted by the norm of credibility and the past-addicted attitude promotes the Romantic idea of constant transformation.

As a product of the Biedermeier age, the historical Romantic novel develops a new concept on the universe, which intends to sound plausible by eliminating the contradictions of essential Romanticism through synthesis. The solutions differ from writer to writer, but they all deal with national regeneration as part of an integrating project of restoring spiritual values, either through the return to the code of chivalry, as Scott pretends, or the rediscovery of common people's morality, according to Manzoni.

⁴ Toma Pavel, *Gândirea romanului (Thinking on the Novel)*, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 2008, p. 226.

History in the patterns of chivalry

In Scott's works, the pattern of knightly morality, fundamentally anti-utilitarian, becomes an "agenda" of fighting against bourgeois demoralization⁵ in a novelistic texture whose specific feature is to harmonize Romantic imagination with realistic scruples in reviving old epochs. The essence of Scott's historical philosophy derives from the *confrontation of opposites*, always materialised in intermingling personal destinies. This confrontation is the fight either between the Saxons and the Normans (*Ivanhoe*), the Jacobites and the Hanoverians (*Waverley*, *Rob Roy*), the crusaders and the Saracens (*The Talisman*), the Stuarts and the Tudors (*The Abbot*), royalty and dissident aristocracy (*Quentin Durward*) or the old aristocrats and the newly rich (*The Bride of Lammermoor*). Love is the battlefield for these opposites, both after the model of the mediaeval epic and the Romantic key. In point of fact, love's triumph is the triumph of natural laws.

There are two types of knights in Scott's work. One belongs to an order, like Brian de Bois-Guilbert, a Templar knight, the other is a knight-errant, an outlaw with incognito appearances, living the life of a wanderer, a brigand, a pirate, a Romantic demonic character. At the same time, he is an apostle most faithful to justice and his own ideals – among which honour comes first – not to the prince or the monarch who are political beings first and only then knights. This rebel is given a restoration mission in the historical becoming, a mission that he will complete while attracted to a centre – the labyrinth-castle or infernal laboratory – by the mirage of love. Once the erotic impulse fulfilled, the central aggressive space is abandoned in favour of the secondary, original space – the knight's abode where time is circular and history flows into the Greater Time. The exceptional character is thus recovered by the great mass from which it was individualised, while the end marks the triumph of the bucolic charms of domestic life.

Such is the destiny of the Ivanhoe – Rowena pair that fulfils its mission as a mediator that this writer with conservatory views expects. It is the mission of bringing about the reconciliation between the Norman conquerors and their Saxon subjects. The knight, who is the right hand of the Norman king Richard Cœur de Lion, wins the heart of a true-born Saxon maiden, a descendant of King Albert. The idea of reconciliation and compromise and the model of bucolic society are fundamental for the late "Biedermeier" Romanticism, holds Virgil Nemoianu in *Îmbлъnzirea romantismului*⁶, as a way of changing the concept of plenitude or synthesis that is typical of *high romanticism*. Even absolute love has, in the Biedermeier era, more suave tonalities and more credible circumstances and has no chance but to make room for the glorified domestic love in the bosom of one's family and peace of one's home.

The historical novel is the product of the English Biedermeier age exclusively, a consequence of abandoning the forbidden patterns of essential Romanticism, of adapting

⁵ Tudor Olteanu, *Morfologia romanului european în secolul al XIX-lea (The Morphology of European Novel in the 19th Century)*, Bucharest, Univers Publishing House, 1977, p. 105.

⁶ Virgil Nemoianu, *Îmbлъnzirea romantismului. Literatura europeană și epoca Biedermeier (The Taming of Romanticism: European Literature and the Age of Biedermeier)*, Bucharest, Curtea Veche Publishing House, 2004, p. 240-241.

the idea of Revolution to national microcommunities; the shift from general to more specific events, from cosmicity to historicism, occurs through this novel. History is the divinity of late Romanticism that believes that the return to a paradise-like state is possible by going back to a certain moment in the past. Late Romanticism is the age that pursues the acceptable solutions of social amelioration rather than the solutions of the spectacular metamorphoses found in the works of Saint-Just, Blake or Hölderlin. Similarly, the idyllic vision upon life with its set of moral meanings is part of the system of moderate, miniature rational values bearing the mark of the Enlightenment century, reconciling idealism with pragmatism. Making the hero anonymous again is part of the same pattern that changes the ideal of uniqueness with that of community. The human model is resized to the dimensions of the possible, and the ideal is moderate. For Scott, greatness means adaptation and the recognition of the universal dialectic. The idyllic finality of his novels, as well as Manzoni's, although apparently utopic, is more plausible than the revolutionary visions, than paradise-like perfection, but equally complex, as it involves "the desire to restore or compromise without losing the hope of paradise completely"⁷. In its essence, Scott's philosophy is neither heroism nor revolution; it is their neutralisation through restoration.

The Lady of the Heart and the Disinherited Lady – mission *versus* heroic calling

Ivanhoe is the novel with two knights and two ladies, two pairs that develop complex relationships among themselves, each male character forming a love triangle with the feminine double: the ambitious Brian de Bois-Guilbert wagers that he will win beautiful and proud Rowena, but ends by falling in love with the Jewish maiden Rebecca; eventually, Ivanhoe will take his Queen of Love and Beauty, but he will always be filled with nostalgia for a feeling he has never allowed himself to have for Rebecca. Similarly, the Jewish maiden keeps loving him secretly, but gives up everything that might mean her fulfilment as a woman by giving her jewels to Rowena. Rebecca is the new element of the heroic journey, Rowena – the predictability and the end of the journey. The archetypal design does not deny itself, it brings a double heroine in the hero's way – the double is a Romantic obsession, as well as a figure of mythical heroism which Durand and Baudouin speak about⁸ – a kind of Calypso and Penelope in a competing relationship of the Venus - Demeter type that breaks the classic "binomial" pattern of the obstacle-woman versus the target-woman.

Rowena is transparent; she does not suggest more than she shows. The Hero-Lady pair plays a merely heroic and national role, that is why the interest it stirs is only epic, not psychological. The two have been friends from childhood; the obstacle, which is

⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 58.

⁸ Gilbert Durand, *Realismul și rezistența mitului: Lucien Leuwen sau eroismul pe dos (Realism and the Resistance of Myth: Lucien Leuwen or Reversed Heroism)*, in *Figuri mitice și chipuri ale operei – de la mitocritică la mitanaliză (Mythical Figures and Faces of the Work – From Mythocriticism to Mythoanalysis)*, Bucharest, Nemira Publishing House, 1998, p. 179.

necessary in any love story, is raised only when Cedric sends his son away from home to stop the evolution of feelings that might harm the Saxon cause whom he sees triumphing through the union of Rowena, the descendant of the legendary Alfred, with Athelstane, a chieftain claiming royal blood. The fact that Ivanhoe made a pact with the Norman king, Richard Cœur de Lion, and followed him in the crusade makes Cedric disinherit him. The solution to the familial intrigue is simple and, according to the adopted chivalric model that involves the triumph of morality, it can be only one: Athelstane himself gives Rowena up, knowing her reluctance, and she is rightfully given to Ivanhoe, the man who dedicated her his victory in the Ashby tournament. The knight and the lady cannot have their own share of complexity, they are both more and less than what they really are, that is to say they are both symbols and puppets in the scenario. She must be noble, faithful and proud, accustomed to exercise her authority, while he must place sacrifice, honour and generosity before any personal interests.

In this heroic fable, from which the woman's traditional inciting role cannot be absent, the distribution of the heroic matter occurs between two magnetic poles. This indicates not only that *the model of femininity is no longer unique, like in the chivalric novel*, but also that *the "institutionalised" model of the knight is amendable*. Rowena and Rebecca are in an antithetic relationship with variable poles: the power of noble origin and the lack of power of a despised and oppressed people, noble origin and noble soul, the pride of the chosen race and the dignity of the oppressed. Rowena lives an austere Saxon lifestyle, but without giving up the standards of her royal blood; Rebecca lives in luxury, but under constant threat, a fact that turned her a "temper which, under other circumstances, might have waxed haughty, supercilious and obstinate". Physically, the two heroines are also opposites: Northern and Oriental, suave and sensual, blonde and brunette, day and night, pale complexion and blue eyes, dark complexion and dark, sparkling eyes. One is an explosive beauty in a game of contrasts; the other is a quiet, subtly harmonized beauty. While Rowena appears authoritarian and unapproachable, Rebecca emanates a kind of sensuality, which explains why the men at the Ashby tournament feel instantly attracted to her. Her look suggests comparisons with the bride in *Song of Songs*, and King John, forgetting that she is Jewish, is ready to proclaim her the Queen of Love and Beauty. In this case "Nigra sed formosa" in the Biblical text becomes "Jewish, but beautiful", as we are in the middle of an epoch of religious vanity.

The difference between the two women lies not in their beauty – only taste can decide which of them is more beautiful – but in their impact on men. Morally speaking, the difference lies in revealing their inner strength and in this regard Rebecca is a "round" character. "The lady of the heart" does not have her own share of evolution or unexpected turns in her epic destiny: she waits for her lover to return from the crusade with the feeling of their predestination, she vouches for his honour, she patronizes the tournament after he has chosen her, and when the last hardship has been overcome, she finally becomes his wife. Rowena is a *donna angelicata*, by all means "cruel" in men's eyes; with her imposing stature and free nature, she looks "as if born to exact general

homage". Her coldness, control, arrogance and air of superiority rouse men's ambition to conquer her – a test of virility and courtesy – but not their desire. Brian de Bois-Guilbert wants her because he is a conceited man, incited by Prior Aymer, De Bracy kidnaps her because he considers her a good match for his plans of personal aggrandizement. In contrast, Rebecca is obviously an Aphrodite-like being, she emanates sensuality involuntarily, she causes a storm of passions around her and in turn lets herself caught in the whirl of infatuation for Ivanhoe – the forbidden, "treacherous" passion. Her paralysing impact on men lies in not only her sensuality, but also mostly in what one can guess behind what is visible: the idea of the sublime, a non-human inner accomplishment that characterises the epiphany of the divine. Fascinated by the structures of chivalry, the novelist places her above the conventional, closer to eternal symbol: the integrating beauty that can make the world a better place will break down pride, shake discretionary powers and eventually lead to redemption. It staggers the perjurers, those "hardened and inflexible villains" who accuse her of witchcraft, and even the Grand Master, who is absolutely determined to turn her into an example of how to punish the low morality of the Templars' Order. In this game of representations, we come to wonder which of the two women is the known prototype of the ideal woman.

Scott was reproached with the fact that historical specificity does not develop also from his characters' psychology. They remain timeless characters, descriptive realism being manifest only in evoking the social framework and the diversity of social morals. Among the conventional lovers created by Scott, all indifferent to the described epoch, Rebecca and Brian de Bois-Guilbert make a distinctive pair, illustrating both the mentality of the mediaeval century and an idea very dear to the Romantics and used by Chateaubriand (*Les Martyrs*, *Atala*): the conflict between love and religion. In *Jerusalem Delivered*, Tasso subordinates the war-centred intrigue to erotic complications, Christian knights falling in love with pagan Amazons. It is Rebecca the Jewish maiden the one who manages to change a destiny and generate a typical Romantic story, the fable of the humanization of a disappointed, misogynistic being, victim of an old treachery. She proves the Templar that bravery, courage and the power to sacrifice yourself for an idea are not male features exclusively. Up to a certain point, Rebecca is the classical example of the weak woman at her conqueror's mercy and *Ivanhoe*, following the same logic of reversed symmetries, provides her alternative in Urfried, the classical "war booty". Urfried is the woman who, once Front-de-Beuf the Norman has taken her and her castle, becomes a tragic slave of pleasure, so that by the end of her lascivious life all she is left with is madness and the desire for revenge.

Rebecca *versus* Urfried is a kind of "what if..." story. The daughter of Isaac of York is also a victim of male persecution: kidnapped by Bois-Guilbert to retrieve her freedom by herself, through love and beauty, she is suggested to embrace Christianity so that she can become his favourite, but she would rather jump from the castle parapet than be dishonoured. The confrontation between her and her captor is the well-known war between nobility as a virtue and nobility by birth. The knight is overwhelmed by the

“supernatural” moral strength of a defenceless being he admires and he undergoes a sudden transformation: he changes his threat to possess her against her will with the proposal to stand by her side as part of an exceptional destiny, that of Grand Master of the Templars’ Order, in which case he could give her what her people has never had: power. His passion comes to the ears of the Grand Master of the order and, since in that century the border between feminine charm and witchcraft, between the art of healing and occult practices is unstable, the Templars’ tribunal sentences her to death to pay for their brother’s release. According to tradition, she can be saved only by a knight who is ready to fight against the knight assigned by the accusers; as an irony of fate, the assigned knight is Brian de Bois-Guilbert himself. The fight in his soul is the fight between love and honour, the eternal dispute between weapons and women: if he appears in the lists, she will be burned at the stake, if he does not, he will be a “dishonoured and degraded knight, accused of witchcraft and communion with infidels.” Since Rebecca does not promise to love him and compensate for his losing his honour and being excluded from the Order, Brian de Bois-Guilbert accepts to confront her defender, Ivanhoe; a victim of his own strong, contradictory feelings, he dies in the lists before his enemy’s lance even touches him. His death is the Romantic conclusion of a story about sacrificing one’s career, power, life, and, eventually, the woman one loves.

Rebecca’s “novel” demonstrates what fatal force can emerge from associating the Venus-type beauty with the Amazon nature. Medievalism is outdated, it has learnt something also from the voluntarism of the Renaissance women; the woman is no longer a decorative object that stimulates heroism by convention, because Rebecca’s power to change a destiny focused on absolute social accomplishment comes from an internality that matches a masculine set of values (“proud as thou art, thou hast found in me thy match”, says the Templar to Rebecca.) The superior woman as a Romantic asset, shows Scott, is the way to perfection and the gateway to a transcendence with which the institutions created by people, even the so-called religious ones, have nothing in common. If Rowena is the inheritance of the mediaeval canon, with “frigid”, elitist and ostentatiously pious manifestations, Rebecca is a perfect Romantic century character placed in an intolerant, superstitious and rigid context that gives value to the force of the challenging spirit in the name of universal ideals.

Saxon and Norman, Christian and pagan. Criticising chivalry

The theme of religious fanaticism is at least as powerful as that of chivalry, which it adjusts in view of reconciliation and the evolution typical of the Biedermeier Romanticism. Scott’s opinion on chivalry is marked by the modern era that throws away everything connected with conventions and unauthentic or ineffectual behaviour. One of the stronger conventions of medievalism is the “accredited” attitude towards women, an aspect that, in Scott’s works, once again underlines the difference between the Saxon and the Norman knights. In *Ivanhoe*, the acts of domination over women combine, in the same perspective of the virility asserted by the Norman conquerors, with a code of

French courteousness. The austere and direct Saxon morals despise this code for what it might hide – brutal, violating behaviour and debauchery. It is a code expressed in a frivolous language, full of cheap display of emotion. Divorce is deepened by the Templars' contempt for women. For them, women are but “toys”, “frail baubles” which amuse the ambitious knights in their “lighter hours”. Religious chivalry, with its set of restrictions, is unnatural and dangerous, says Scott, because by holding back the aspiration of natural individual fulfilment it deviates it towards the arrogant, ambitious masculinity and its excessive manifestations. From this point of view, the distant, melancholic, inconspicuous Ivanhoe is superior to the exuberant and polished Brian de Bois-Guilbert. This lasts until the brilliant Templar falls in love. Compared to his impetuous desire to win Rebecca, Ivanhoe's conformism resembles that of a mediocre mind suffocated by prejudice. The restlessness the latter feels when seeing Rebecca, the “healing angel” of the wounds he received in the Ashby tournament, vanishes as soon as he finds out she is Jewish, substituted by a behaviour suggesting nothing but gratitude. As a matter of fact, Scott's opinion on chivalry is rendered in various ways. The arrogance of Ivanhoe, who believes that the values of chivalry can only be perceived by the Christians, since the concepts they are based on – sacrifice, generosity and honour – are Christian acquisitions, opposes the lack of rhetoric of a Jewish maiden, but also her courage and unsuspected devotion. Chivalry makes the difference between noble and low souls, but Scott proves that chivalry is not a political and religious institutions, but an inner dimension. The Jewish maiden challenges its moral resources and stereotypes, demonstrating that even a discredited being like her, even a woman can share ideals that shape a heroic vision on life. In a manner different from Cervantes', Scott speaks about the danger of formalism and exclusivist pride that threatens chivalry, deviating it from its higher purposes. If the knight's desire to fight is nothing but a rush for glory and a name for posterity, Rebecca denies it in the name of the values of life. “The fantastic chivalry of the Nazarenes” is nothing but vanity as long as it feeds on vanity, taking lives in the name of certain religious ideals that, seen from the other side of the barricade, are but a form of repression and fighting is justified only as a means of defence against oppression; the remaining superior values are the peace of one's home, love and happiness. A largely humanitarian perspective that transcends both the opposition between men and women and the one between pagans and Christians. Rebecca gives the two strong men a fitting rebuff and does this in a matter of fighting and honour, which makes it even more significant. In Romanticism, the chivalry model undergoes major changes through the appearance of the superior woman vested with a supervalue: she knows the “path” to the true core of existence, to a transmundane and universal essence. Hugo holds the same in his *Nôtre-Dame de Paris*, through Esmeralda. His knight, Phoebus, is a diurnal being, an unfortunate, common mediocrity without feelings, a shallow philanderer, smug and cynical. In Hugo's work, women mean totality and authenticity, while men represent flawed parts of a complete masculinity: intelligence (Frollo), soul (Quasimodo), beauty (Phoebus), creation (Gringoire the poet). Joining these virtues that gather the four men

around Esmeralda leads to catastrophe. The woman is a sexual victim, but she is as strong as her torturer.

Is it by chance that, morally speaking, the most significant character of *Ivanhoe* as a “political novel” is this “stateless” maiden who renders the dispute between the Saxons and the Normans useless, turning it to glorifying values that belong to the generic human being? Between the two fighting parties, Scott seems to say, there is a free territory that has never been conquered either by Cedric, or by Richard, either by Prince John or the knights-errant, either by Templars or by Christians or pagans. It belongs to everybody and nobody. The idea of mediation, the foundation of Scott’s historical philosophy, is, from the epic viewpoint, materialised into a woman, a mediating archetype by nature, the representative of an old nation spread throughout the world that shows that the values tradition has assigned to a historical institution – chivalry – are pan-temporal and pan-cultural. Chivalry, says the writer through this woman’s voice, is not ambition, is not noble origin, is not religious belonging; it is an attitude towards life and history, a sum of virtues that the chivalric institution has cultivated but is now at risk of losing by deviating them towards external aims. Only by purging chivalry of this Party-principled spirit can chivalry serve the national ideals. For, according to Scott, chivalry for the sake of chivalry, non-aligned on behalf of goals above personal interest, is useless. Between Richard, the adventurer monarch, a knight rather than a king, “the brilliant, but useless character of a knight of romance”, and Brian de Bois-Guilbert, the Templar who fights for the triumph of chimerical, segregationist ideas, between fighting for the sake of danger and glory and fighting out of pride, the solution is *Ivanhoe*, whose offensive is applied and subsumed under a progressive goal. He illustrates, as Lukács said, a conservative writer’s preference for the “middle course”, including the selection of the characters. Instead of the demonic, eccentric and socially useless hero, appears the common, honest and narrow-minded individual who is fair and capable of self-sacrifice, but cannot embrace an overwhelming passion for a great cause⁹.

Through Scott’s extraordinary intuition, an overcoming of Romanticism with its cult for heroes, a shift towards the superior level of realistic objectivity, takes place. Romanticism does not explain the epoch through its great representatives, but through depicting daily life. Situated between the upper and lower classes, between the ascetic noble Cedric and his thrall Gurth, between Richard and Robin Hood, *Ivanhoe* represents the life of the people as a totality and is the bearer of the idea of continuity and historical development. In this recuperating history, women play a civilising role, either as pieces of a totality of political and national representations that are materialised once the “lady” is gained, like Rowena, or trace, through Rebecca, the “absolute” path and meaning that fade away into the relative and the conjectural when masculinity deviates towards values that are unknown to eternal chivalry.

⁹ Georg Lukács, *Romanul istoric (The Historical Novel)*, vol. I., Bucharest, Minerva Publishing House, 1978, p. 48.

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THE PARTICULAR AND THE GENERAL IN IDIOMS/PHRASEOLOGISMS

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Abstract

The research with the title The particular and the general in idioms/phraseologisms starts with the assumption that the study of idioms, of phraseologisms in general is not a linguistic problem but one that is concerned with the forms of culture as well, on the second hand. What link is there between language and culture in general and between language and phrasology, in special? We have highlighted this aspect through the concepts of “homogeneity”, the “continuity of cultural experience”, of “the behavioural models” and of institutions. The research also values the concepts of “general” and “particular” in phraseology, concepts based on which a distinction can be made between idioms and idiomatic expression. The conclusion of the study is that the cultural patterns remain the subtle invariables of the linguistic “variables” which are called in general idioms by “linguistics”.

Keywords: idioms; idiomatic expressions; cultural patterns; general; particular in phraseology

0. The study of idioms, of phraseologisms is not a problem of linguistics, but one of culture. The idioms are an integral part of a culture, of a socio-human and historical context. They are inseparable of the domain of religion, of the archaic codes of laws, of the metaphysics of a nation. The cultural dimension represents the most valuable way of communication. The phraseologisms talk about the realities that define the different stages of culture of a nation, of another group of languages. Linguistics, the philosophy of a language has diverse objectives. We can identify and analyze common elements of culture, but the traits as well which differentiate a culture from another culture. The translatability or intraslatability of idiomatic expressions is before all a problem of culture and only then a problem of language. If the differences between two languages can be regulated through linguistic conventions, the differences between two cultures/mentalities cannot be regulated artificially.

1. The homogeneity of idioms/phraseologisms can be given by the continuity of cultural expressions, from one nation to another, by the capability to adapt to other's traditions/behavioural model. The idiom *Oeil pour œil, dent pour dent* ; *Ro. Ochi pentru ochi, dinte pentru dinte* (eye for eye, tooth for tooth) concentrates the Talion Law, a law of reciprocity, appeared around year 1730 B.C. in Hammurabi's law book, the first book of law invented by King Hammurabi, King of Babylon. In order to ease judging social cases, one of the 282 laws is the following: “A tooth for a tooth, a bruise for a bruise, a foot for a foot, a hand for a hand, a bone for a bone, an eye for and eye.” In the Old Testament, after the Jews set their camp at Mount Sinai, Moses

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pronounced besides a series of commnads, this Talion Law: “If people are fighting and hit a pregnant woman and she gives birth prematurely[e] but there is no serious injury, the offender must be fined whatever the woman’s husband demands and the court allows. But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise” (Exodus 21, 22-25). The law is reuttered again in Leviticus and Deuteronomy: “The judges must make a thorough investigation, and if the witness proves to be a liar, giving false testimony against a fellow Israelite, then do to the false witness as that witness intended to do to the other party. You must purge the evil from among you. The rest of the people will hear of this and be afraid, and never again will such an evil thing be done among you. Show no pity: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot” (Deuteronomy 19, 18-21). Under the influence of Jesus Christ’s teaching, Christianity abolished the Talion Law, this being replaced with Christian forgiveness: “I tell you:” “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matthew 5, 38-44).

1.1. We can see that the translatability of the expression introduces another problem, not just a linguistic one, as the judicial origins are evident, while the concept of the Old Testament ensures the keeping of not only the senses. *Eye for eye, tooth for tooth* concentrates: a common behavioural attitude, repeatable for different forms of culture; this is the essence of the moral behaviour of long historical periods, the common note of communities manifesting it as law of existence and of social or religious development. It is a behaviour reflected on the level of consciousness through the idioms that developed something from the sententious character of proverbs. It is not accidental that the Dictionnaire de L’Académie française specifies: “On dit proverbialement, *OEil pour oeil, dent pour dent*, pour signifier La peine du talion” (Dictionnaire de L’Académie française, 5th Edition, 1798: p. 180) The *sentence-idioms* are part of the stable, translatable and homogeneous junctions both as a meaning and as lexical structure and are maintained in all languages regarding their structure: Germ.: Auge um Auge, Zahn um Zahn; En. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth; Bg. Око за око, зъб за зъб; Ru. Око за око, зуб за зуб; Sp. Ojo por ojo, diente por diente; It. Occhio per occhio, dente per dente; Gr. Οφθαλμόν αντί οφθαλμού και οδόντα αντί οδόντος; Hu. Szemet szemért, fogat fogért; Swedish: Oega foer oega, tand foer tand. The identification of expressions based on the criteria of “adaptation ability” to other’s traditions / behavioural model presupposes a good knowledge of the source culture. The meaning of words entering the components of this type of expressions does not differ from the matrix from Hammurabi’s law book. The joinings which concentrate general values are not mental paraphrases at their origin. The idiom *OEil pour oeil, dent pour dent* is a type of “denotative equivalence” (S. Fiedler 2007; 118) in the languages considered, through which they share general

values and/or common encyclopedical ones. *Eye for eye and tooth for tooth* had a denotative sense in the text of the law, it maintained the idea of a sentence in the *Old Testament* as well. The lay posterity, the modern linguistic codes value only the expressive, stylistic dimension of phraseologisms. The joins are adapted formally to the requirements of the languages. Based on this type of “linguistic equivalence” (Bassnet 2002: 33) a high degree of homogeneity is maintained on the linguistic level, between the idiom of the source language and the idiom in the target language. In the idioms of axiomatic value we can find the memory of oriental, Indo-European practices and/or ones belonging to the Middle Ages, the memory of a form of culture, the memory of a certain religious behaviour. We use the expression: “The play has been played”. The Latin model is famous: “Acta est fabula!” the usage of which is linked to a representation in the ancient theatre. The *sentence idioms* do not belong to some linguistic system, but also to cultural codes. The fact does not remain without consequences on the study of language: the idiomatic expressions, such as (the selection is aleatory) Ro. “Vodă da și hâncu ba”, Ro. “a umbla de dorul lelii / de frunza frâsinelului” puts the problem of intractability, of the structural semantic differences within the linguistic systems; the non-idiomatic expressions are translatable; the idiomatic expressions confer the conceptual model particular and specific values; the non-idiomatic expressions have general and/or specialized values (jurifical, scientific etc.); idiomatic expressions always have a metaphorical model; the conceptual model of non-idiomatic expressions is not *ad fontes* metaphorical, the structural elements are based on denominative value. “Total equivalence” or “partial equivalence” (in traductology) depends on two aspects: on the conceptual, metaphorical model on the one hand, on the denotative value on the other; on the particular and/or general incidence of the model in the source language. The meanings of the words *eye*, *tooth* overlap in case we have in mind the Romanic, Germanic, Slavic languages. It is an overlap possible due to the monosemantic character of the *eye* and *tooth* lexemes. That is the origin of lexical and semantic similarities. The information of the expression is of a cultural nature. Under the stylistic aspect “Eye for eye and tooth for tooth” does not have a high index of expressivity, fact that excludes it from the category of idioms, the dominance of which is the pronounced expressivity (compared strictly under the aspect of stylistic effects with: Ro. “a vedea (pe cineva) Sfântul” (“to be unlucky”), “a tăia frunze la câini” (“to do something unnecessary”), “se face luntre și punte” (“to try everything”)etc.) The expression does not put the problem of discrepancy between “cultures” even if typologically we speak about a lay code of laws and a Christian religious code, given the general, human, social and cultural contexts.

2. The idiomatic expressions confer the conceptual model of the eyes particular and specific values of one language to another. Two are the examples we refer to. The first one is “Avoir bon pied, bon œil”, (to have an air of health). In the Middle Ages the variant “bon oeil” was used, which means honesty, frankness. Later

on, in the XVIth and XVIIth centuries the term “to go on a good foot” was born where “foot” symbolizes the idea of a quick and healthy march. In the XVIIIth century the variant “bon pied bon œil” was born in which “bon pied” symbolizes stability and rapidity, while “bon œil” sight and visual acuteness. The idiomatic expression “voir bon pied, bon œil” signifies the fact that a given person is in good health. Given the fact that the idiom seems not to put problems, we read the following in the Dictionnaire de l'Académie (1694): “On dit au figuré "bon pied bon œil" pour avertir un homme de prendre garde à lui. Et, que "il faut avoir bon pied bon œil avec quelqu'un", pour dire, que "il faut être extrêmement alerte pour s'empêcher d'en être surpris". With the exception of the Italian language (Sicily) where a quasi-equivalent variant is used (“Aviri l'òchciu vivu”) organized based on the same somatic matrix, in the other Indo-European languages it does not include the metaphorical model of “the eyes”. In the Romanian language the recent idiom appeared “A fi în formă” (‘to be in shape’). The equivalent used in Holland “Van zessen klaar zijn” (*Les expressions françaises décortiquées*) expresses the idea of vivacity based on conceptual model specific to the Dutch tradition. Concentrating its representations on the zoomorphical sphere - “Van zessen klaar zijn” circulated with the meaning “a good health” through the image of “4 legs and two eyes of a good horse”. The benefic part of the mythical and folcloric horse is strongly marked, the peculiarity of the Dutch culture being individualized through their own patterns. In the Spanish language the association of the enunciation “Estar más sano que una manzana” with the idea of vivacity has been made in the sphere of the symbols offered by the vegetal kingdom, present in all of Western Europe. The *apple* is a symbol of plenary life, of health. The expression has exceeded the negative representation of the first Christians in the *Holy Scripture*, the apple is the fruit “of knowledge and sin” as well as that of the Graeco-Latin mentality. [In the Greek tradition the Apple of Discord, given by Paris to Aphrodite represented the pretext of the Trojan war. In the Latin language “malus” means “apple” but also “bad”].

2.1. The second idiomatic expression is the French *À l'œil*. In the first part of the XIXth century *À l'œil* circulated in France with the meaning of “credit” in the domain of commercial relations. Duneton (1990) considered that the meaning of “credit” “on credit” has circulated a long time parallel to the acception of “free”. A merchant did not accept to credit someone he did not know. If appearances made a good impression, at first sight, the newcomer gained the trust of the merchant. In researching the meaning of “credit” the expression has, the French sources appealed to an old practice of merchants, in which in order to account for the debts of the clients they used wooden sticks they marked with a knife with a /v/ shape for every debt. The poor received bread based on the quantum of their credits. This sign was compared later on with two eyes. Here one should look for (Duneton 1990) the meaning of ‘credit’, ‘for credit’ of the expression *À l'œil*. After the alphabetization of the population the wooden stick for the credits disappeared, being replaced by a

natural stone board. Out of the significance of credit the French linguistic sources retain the development of other idiomatic expressions, such as: “avoir une ardoise chez quelqu’un”, “faire (ouvrir) un œil à quelqu’un” (with the meaning of opening a credit), “fermer (crever) l’œil à quelqu’un” (to refuse someone a credit). The last two are not used in contemporary French language. The conceptual model of the *eye* used in expressions with the meaning of “free/credit” cannot be found in idiomatic expressions of other Romance languages, only by chance: It. *A ufo / A sbafo*; Sp. *Ir de gorra / Por la cara, por el morro*;). In the Romanian language we have the expression “Pe ochi frumoși” (for the nice eyes, meaning ‘free, for nothing’), a linguistic calque from the Slavic languages: Sk. *Pre pekné oci* (on line Slovakian - Romanian dictionary), Pl. *Na ładne oczy / Na piękne oczy* (on line Polish-Romanian dictionary).

In this complex domain of phraseology culture remains one of the subtle invariants of linguistic “variables” we call idioms through the need to know our own human species; the need of a nation / a socio-historical group to establish intercultural relations; the need of the human being to understand phenomena through their own cultural and religious matrix. If in the language we cannot speak about equivalence nor about perfect synonymy, we cannot speak about a symmetry of languages, especially the conceptual models, the cultural patterns etc. remain on the other hand the secondary dimensions, able to decipher the causes (even if only partially!).

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CONSTRUCTING “THE OTHER”

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Abstract

The positive pedagogical significance of the globalization signifies recognizing the expanse of the educational languages, founded on the value of the pluralism, beyond the national frames, in order to establish both some authentic relations of communication between cultures/ nations and to avoid some risks as the xenophobe closing in someone’s own culture, the imperialism and the cultural mimesis. Through education is discovering a space and mind continuously opened towards the culture of the other, a space of the otherness, a mixed space at the spiritual meeting point of the own self culture and the foreign culture of the other. It is a space of identity consonance but especially dissonance with different / altered aspects of the multiple linguistic social and verbal consciousness are waited by a Tower of Babel or by a community of different cultures forming a kind of “coalition of players” according to C. L. Strauss – ready not only to live together indifferently and peacefully, but to communicate and learn innovatively together. Our intention is to argue the importance of the strategies of the intercultural languages and of the transfer of conflicts between generations in the field of the culture.

Keywords: difference between cultures, intercultural awareness, self and the otherness.

1. The context of the problem: communication in the postmodern world

Unlike the situation in the United States, where intercultural competence was already being discussed in the 1960s, this topic was only taken up by the profession late in Western Europe, and more later in Eastern Europe. This process of promoting the intercultural approach was accelerated in the 1990s and coincided with the acknowledgment of its relevance not only in the countries of Western Europe that were the most important targets for migration, but also in other parts of Europe, such as the southern countries, themselves confronted with recent migration, or the countries of Central and Eastern Europe where issues of cultural identity and diversity have become very important after the fall of the communist regimes in this area. The Council of Europe played a very important role in better structuring and promoting the concepts such as “intercultural approach”, “intercultural education” or intercultural learning“. The debate was preceded by a history of changing theory, involving a whole variety of directions and patterns of interpretation. This is reflected, for example, in the change of paradigm in the educational literature from “education for foreigners” to “intercultural teaching”. Significant progress in this sense was made in the 1990s through the project of the Council of Europe called “Democracy, Human Rights, Minorities: educational and cultural aspects” and through the European Campaign against Racism, Xenophobia, Antisemitism and Intolerance, better known by its logo “All different, all equal”. As a result, the integration of an intercultural approach in teacher training and youth activities was organised by the Council of Europe.

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In the years 2000, particularly after 11th of September 2001, the issues of intercultural learning, intercultural dialogue and an intercultural approach in education were given again a high profile on the agenda of the Council of Europe, ONU and UNESCO.

Our most important argument over “intercultural languages”, “intercultural competence” and “intercultural openness” has brought about another shift, towards a more inward looking point of view, according to the most significant document that was adopted by the Ministers of Education of the member states of the Council of Europe, in November 2003 in Athens, of a Declaration on Intercultural Education:

1. observing the diversity of our societies in terms of ethnicity, culture, languages, religions and education systems;
2. having noted the social conflicts and disagreements that may result from coexistence of different value systems.

The best tool for understanding culture, especially intercultural communication, is an open mind. Bennet (1993) defines intercultural sensitivity in terms of stages of personal growth. His developmental model posits a continuum of increasing sophistication in dealing with cultural difference, moving from ethnocentrism through stages of greater recognition and acceptance of difference, which Bennett calls “ethno relativism”. The main underlying concept of Bennett’s model is what he calls “differentiation” and how one develops the ability to recognize and live with difference. “Differentiation” needs an open mind and then refers to two phenomena: first, that people view one and the same thing in a variety of ways, and second, that they maintain patterns of differentiation, or world views.” This second aspect refers to the fact that in Bennett’s view, cultures offer ways how to interpret reality, how one should perceive the world around us. This interpretation of reality, or world-view, is different from one culture to the other. Developing intercultural sensitivity thus means, in essence, to learn to recognize and deal with the fundamental difference between cultures in perceiving the world.

According to this model, we define intercultural educational languages as ways or methods for educate an open mind, ways or methods for developing intercultural awareness and for understanding an ancient proverb states: “What you see in yourself is what you see in the world” (Reynolds, Sana, Valentine, Deborah: 2004: 5). This fact supposes education for communication through which we understand education like sending and receiving information, either verbally or non-verbally. When we add the phrase “intercultural” we refer to the communication that occurs between people who have different cultural backgrounds; such people may come from different countries or from the same country.

The contemporary man is exposed to the promotion of a semi pathological way of communication, which excludes Face to Face meeting, honest desire to know the other persona, emotional and responsible engagement in the faith of the Other.

2. Constructing the Other and the model of “coalitions of players”

The increased number of human contacts has as a result the superficiality of the encounter: survival in the space of the big city is conditioned by the ability to establish ephemeral relationships, to “participate” while your mind is somewhere else, to learn “avoiding techniques”. The encounter is most of the times a “false encounter”, a “sterile accident” in the life of the parties. (Bauman, Z: 2000:33). The postmodern world must return to authentic communication, and school ought to be a part of this complex process of recuperation. Intercultural education languages lead to and maintain *authentic communication*, having effects on both sides; from the perspective of the future, the authentic encounter becomes a meaningful meeting: *cause that opens towards a row of effects* in the lives of the characters.

Education has a historical character as well as a social appearance, thus to the problems such as the alert rhythm and globalization of history, crisis of resources, ecological and demographical crisis, economical gaps, peace and interethnic/ religious war issues obviously we can add the crisis of communication and contemporary moral discourse problems. Regarding the latter A. MacIntyre (1998) finds that its main characteristic is that it is used to express endless disagreements which give the impression that we live in a culture in which there is no rational way to achieve moral agreement.

The fundamental issue raised by globalization is according to J. Delors is: How could we live in the “global village” if we haven’t been able to learn so far how to live next to each other in the local communities we are part of? The report of the International Commission on Education to UNESCO in the 21st century refers to a possible edifying answer: by placing emphasis on intercultural and moral dimension of which we shall make use, too (Delors: 2000: 34-35)

The authors of the report consider that education today has an important role to play not only in human development, but also in “overcoming concentration on own identity in favour of understanding the other on the basis of respect for diversity” (J. Delors: 2000:36). Unity in diversity and solidarity suppose a pluralist education and bringing upfront of the importance of languages and intercultural educational forms:

- teaching people to become conscious of their own cultural roots;
- teaching them to pay attention to the preserving of diversity (which is the most eloquent expression of the richness of the human spirit);
- teaching them how to communicate interculturally through different means: rediscovery of universal body languages, through word and image at the same time;
- teaching them active tolerance which means not only acceptance of the other but also collaboration

In order to be able to respond to the need of integration and respect for difference at the same time, authors consider that the principle of cultural pluralism should be made a part of contemporary school politics. Modern states were established

on the principle of ethnic homogeneity or in reality very few contemporary states are monoethnic (ibidem: 201). To be short one of the tasks of education is to teach people how to communicate in an authentic way, to understand alterity, get rid of stereotypes in judging the other, tolerate “the foreigner” acknowledged as another face of his own, or as his shadow, which is what we set out for ourselves through the present work.

After a brief outline of the cultural diversity landscape in Central / Eastern Europe, with specific comments focusing on Romania’s case, we will present the way intercultural learning and its theoretical background have been adopted and adapted in Romanian Language and Literature Applied Didactics classes of Romanian students from Faculty of Sciences and Letters/ Targu Mures. These students will become teachers of Romanian language and literature in Mures area / Targu Mures town and its proximity. The main element characterizing cultural diversity in all countries of Central and Eastern Europe and, in the same time, all regions of Romania - Transilvania, Muntenia and Moldova - is the presence of national minority communities with a cultural specific, linguistic, religious and ethnic identity, in most cases associated with the national identity of another state of region. Unlike the immigrants in Eastern Europe, these communities live in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, sometimes concentrated, and sometimes dispersed among the majority population, for a long time. In many cases their presence is the result of the policies of the three main empires that dominated the region until the First World War: the Habsburg/ Austrian - Hungarian, the German, the Turkish and the Russian Tsarist Empires. For instance, in the case of Romania, there are around twenty minority groups that benefit from various kinds of support measures from the state. Mures district is a part of Transilvanyan region where important minority communities are living which are associated with a Western neighbouring country, Hungary, part of formal Austrian-Hungarian Empire that was historically dominantly represented in Romania by the Hungarian minority. This community became the main target of the communist assimilation policies and instilled fear among members of the majority. We want to show by these details that the presence of national minorities was always at conflict with the national building process of the majority population and represents a major source of social and political tension in some cases. The interethnic and inter religious tensions associated with the presence of national minorities emerged strongly on the public agenda in most countries of the region in early 1990. The first half of 1990, the 15 March, was also the time when the Hungarian minority and the Romanian majority was fighting on the streets of Targu Mures town. They accused each other: minority as nationalist groups of plotting against the state or the interest of the majority and sometimes of secessionist intentions, and majority was accused of discrimination and xenophobia. And a similar situation it’s possible to become reality in today’s time.

In conclusions, we understand a pedagogy of “constructing the Other” like a variety of intercultural competences having as a main goal to support an intercultural

dialogue as mechanism for conflict prevention and another one in the intercultural challenges of teaching religion.

To the incoherence of moral language the divorce between the attitudes and experiences of the contemporary man has added. On one hand each and every one of us is taught to consider him or herself as an autonomous moral subject, on the other hand each of us engaged in manipulative relationships with others (MacIntyre: 1998: 93) The consequence of this double bind on contemporary human morality is that “it shows itself to us in an uncomfortable way like a theatre of illusions” (ibidem: 100). Giving credit to the positive way of thinking, Maria-Tereza Pirău considers that “globalization can be seen as walking towards an educational fortress capable of integrating different cultures” which places us in a situation that reminds of C.L. Strauss’s “coalitions of players”. We can easily imagine together with Strauss, the author continues, “what would happen if the players at the roulette in a casino formed a “coalition”, placing into common all the numbers that each of them obtains on their own: each player would reach in short time the combination that is winner. Intercultural educational language innovations resemble very much this imaginary situation, they (the languages) mean the new and ingenious combination of values that were thought of separately before. In an analogous way to the casino example the globalized space of the contemporary civilization creates very difficulty the premises of a perfect space, but it is compatible with an open space: a heterotopy. M Foucault defines the heterotopies through the contrast to utopias which are more mimetic. While “utopias are placements that lack a real place /.../ which have a general direct or reversed analogic relationship to the real space of society”, heterotopies are “*sort of actually accomplished utopias in which the real placements to be found inside the culture are at the same time represented, contested and inverted, some kind of places that are outside any kind of place, even if they can be actually localised/.../*” and, Foucault continues, “I believe that it is undoubtedly possible that between utopias and these placements that are completely different, these heterotopies, *there is a sort of common experience which shall be the mirror*”(Foucault: 2002:47-48).

We consider that the space of these experiences is an intercultural one. Otherwise said, through teaching of intercultural languages a positive context is created for placing in common the different cultural values and offers the students a chance for unimaginable progress in foregoing societies. This is possible if entire groups of people from the same country or different countries, belonging to different cultures/ mentalities will be willing to “play together” in what we called the heterodoxy (Szekely: 2006: 139-142). In other words, we are talking about specifically human needs: to establish authentic communication relationships, on one hand, and to avoid risks, like xenophobic enclosure in our own culture, prejudices and stereotypes, to avoid imperialism and cultural mimetism, on the other hand.

In the end, here is the interweaving between interculturality and morality with which we will operate in the following applications, thus motivating, on one hand our preference towards intercultural educational languages, on the other hand placing face to

face the ideas of C.G. Jung and of the postmodern moralists, A. MacIntyre and Z. Bauman (2000:93): morality means more placing “shoulder to shoulder”, together, dissolved in a collective “we”, morality means “being” for the Other, who I have in front of me, without being interested in reciprocity meaning his movements toward me; morality does not exist beyond the proximity of relationship, beyond that state of perception of the Other as different and at the same time “as alike close physically and psychologically”.

In this way, learning takes place on three different, inter-related levels: on a cognitive, an emotional and a behavioural level. Real learning involves all three levels and intercultural languages are ways to accomplish complete education.

3. Looking at constructing “the other” according to Milton J. Bennett’s developmental model of intercultural sensitivity.

Learning takes place on three different, interrelated levels: on a cognitive, an emotional and a behavioural level. Real learning involves all three levels and intercultural languages are ways for realize that complete education, that implies the awakening of intercultural sensitivity. Milton J. Bennett, a specialist on multiculturalism, states: “Intercultural sensitivity is not natural. It is not cross-cultural past, nor has it characterized most of human history. Cross-cultural contact often has been accompanied by bloodshed, oppression or genocide. Clearly this pattern cannot continue” (Bennett: 1993: 11)

Cognitive learning is the acquirement of knowledge or beliefs: knowing that this model is based on the passing from the ethnocentric stages (when the individual assumes that his/ her view of the world is essentially central to reality) at the ethno-relative stage (the assumption that cultures can only be understood relative to one another and that particular behaviour can only be understood within a cultural context).

Emotional learning is more difficult as a concept to grasp. Perhaps everyone can look back and remember how they have learned to express their feelings, and how these feelings have changed through time. What caused fear twenty years ago might not have the same effect any more, persons we did not like in the past might become our friends etc.

Behavioural learning is what is visible of learning: being able to hammer a nail straight into a piece of wood, to write with a pen, to welcome somebody in the “right” way, to understand and practice intercultural communication, build on an implicit or explicit idea about culture(s). Culture has been referred to as the “software” which people use in daily life; it is commonly described as being about basic assumptions, values and norms that people hold. There are many theoretical and practical arguments and discussions about concepts of culture. Is culture necessarily linked to a group of people, or does “individual culture” exist? Can one establish a “cultural map” of the world? Do cultures change? Why and how does the change? How strong is the link between culture

and actual behaviour of individuals and groups? Can one have several backgrounds - and what does that imply? How flexible is culture, how open for individual interpretation?

The following learning experiences are looking for answers to these questions starting from the idea that very often, looking at culture implies looking at the interaction of cultures. Culture, therefore, cannot be thought of simply as “culture”, it has to be thought of as “cultures”. Consequently, it makes sense to advance in this paper from ideas that are mainly focused on culture in itself to ideas that focus more on the interaction of cultures and nations, on intercultural experiences.

The variety of versions of human rights implies the need for intercultural dialogue and debate over the differences. They also mean that the substance of the indispensable core of human rights has to be defined. In this way, those involved will arrive at a shared understanding of what is a right. The following example of international discourse about shared values and norms is the emergence of policies on anti discrimination and equality as part of European social policy.

We will suggest a packet of problems / questions for intercultural dialogue to combat discrimination in schools during the learning process and on grounds of race or ethnic origin. These examples show that intercultural competence can no longer be concerned solely with the internal actions of a nation - state. The growing trend towards globalization, and the irrelevance of national borders to the activities of global players in the education, economic, cultural, political and social field, influence local informal action in education. However, we - out of excessive enthusiasm - should not glorify the multi- / intercultural world society, but should realize that the process of globalisation produced and will produce, maybe, again contradictions and will be driven counter - movements such as nationalism and racism.

Conclusions

Intercultural values and attitudes are nothing but (a part of) the moral dimension of the formed person towards which all the cognitive and communicational competencies should be oriented (Piaget-Kohlberg line). If the process of development of the cognitive structures has as condition the practice of the ability of moral judgement, it is accomplished through the ethical dilemmas, Kohlberg says (raising the issue, network discussion, debate, case study), young people thus understanding that values are dependent on context, they change according to space, time and culture. These ethical & ethnic dilemmas are narrative actions - of which literary texts and books in general are full - in which a conflict is placed in the scene, an issue that needs solving through personalized decisions - arguments, as a result of communication students have the revelation of prejudices and accepts the challenge of surpassing of stereotypes. Their methodological value consists in the fact that it allows the distribution in stages of the students in a class, which never is homogeneous, so that those who are at a lower level adapt their rationalization integrating arguments that were formulated by the advanced

and this they evolve. In addition, through the way in which the teacher leads the debate, he/she can help the student in restructuring arguments according to the next superior level's expectations compared to the level where he is, evolution in three steps: experiencing the cognitive dissonance, conscious solving of the dilemma through observation and weighing of more alternatives and responsible choice of the best solution for the given situation.

The stake of these educational languages is to place face to face the intercultural destinies of two writers from two different periods (before and after the Second World War), differently described by their contemporaries, with the intercultural (work)/ biography of students today, from the same locations, or other similar ones (in our case, Târgu Mureș, city in the center of Transylvania, region which was part of the former Habsburg Empire, during the childhood of I. Slavici, where the Romanian majority and Hungarian minority for three centuries has been debating in relation to outnumbering, the effects of the 1990 street riots being felt even today).

Through these intercultural educational languages we plead in didactical communication for the abandon of passive comprehension, which brings nothing new in the comprehension of the discourse, it only doubles it, aiming as a supreme limit towards the complete reproduction of what is already given in the intelligible discourse, without exiting its context and without enriching what "is intelligible". As a result:

- what the student can't learn through own experience about human nature/ ethics can be learned through the means of intercultural experience/ through literary characters, through narration;
- puberty is the best time to study history and human characters through moral fables/ dilemmas;
- in order to achieve the state of generalization that the conscience of alterity supposes, the young person must obtain a repertoire of impressions, representation always associated to an experienced feeling, and not to a perception;
- the emotional state that the subject experiences will be stored in his memory as well as the mental image it accompanies, only through the experienced feeling, which the intellect acknowledges as a significance of representation.

Teachers don't do puberty justice by considering it an age; actually all the difficulties related to education at this have their origin in pedagogical incompetence" (J.J. Rousseau). Thus we are convinced that it is possible that teacher who animates interaction and intercultural and moral communication, a circular communication under the mediating professor "spokesman of the unconscious of the group and of the effects of new meanings that the group sets free", unblocking conflicts. By the above suggestions for intercultural communication we hope to have shown that in order to raise motivation, the teacher can give up being a good "specialist" being more of a generalist who offers starting points, frames or references to those who don't have them and supports them in creating their own imaginary world which appears, up to a point, as "substitute of cultural world". The teacher can be a character who not only wakes up, but

also “awakens”. “We are talking about political awakening to the world and presence of things”; “moral awakening to the other and to co-presence” (J.R. Resweber: 1988: 98).

Constructing “the Other” through awake intercultural awareness are ways to build an “intercultural society” in the sense that has been given to it by some Council of Europe documents and publications, meaning a society that, not only acknowledges its internal cultural diversity and the inevitable character of mutually influential intercultural interactions and interferences, but it also affirms that cultural diversity and intercultural contacts may have positive consequences at various levels (of the society, individual and group). Among the principles that we had situated at the basis of our work for the promotion of intercultural learning the most important ones are:

- concerns and brings together both majority and minority, young people and adults, brings the student to a better understanding of his/ her own position and to a fruitful analysis of that of others;
- aims at encouraging young people and adults to develop and to affirm a positive cultural identity, but also supports a view of cultural identity as dynamic and possibly multiple, while refusing heteroidentification and stereotyping; in addition, it contributes to an active participation in social and political forming of opinion and decision-making;
- activities effects the whole population, favours and are favoured by direct interaction and cooperation between majority and minority young people and adults; it opens new perspectives and new ways of participating in political and democratic matters;
- intercultural learning is effective only if associated with educational activities aiming at stimulating active citizenship; furthermore it strengthens democratic structures and solidarity as it prevents all forms of racism and cultural arrogance in the long term.

Constructing the Other the school cultivates the intercultural imaginary and dialogue paying equal attention to both / more cultural specificities put in value as space for literary and scientific creativity, has its resources in the ability to wonder of the educated, moral communication being in tight relationship with hermeneutics and contextual interpretation. Thus, wondering incites to poetical reconstruction and speculation, “the power of the imaginary being coextensive to that of the unconscious”, it “is nothing else, but the writing of the world at the edge of unconscious”. Actually, Resweber says every valid pedagogical strategy consists in opening the ghost of spiritual nourishment towards the imaginary of culture and at the same time taking away the ghost it was carrying at departure” (1988:99). This is also the axis of pedagogical intentionality of our discourse regarding the relationship between education and communication in general, especially intercultural communication.

Having looked at different ideas about learning, culture and intercultural experiences, it may have become more clearly that intercultural learning is a process to grow from ethnocentric stages to the ethno-relative stages. This process demands that the student know himself and where he comes from, before being able to understand

others. It is a challenging process as it involves very deeply rooted ideas about what is good and bad, about structuring the world and our life. In intercultural learning, what we take for granted and feel is necessary to hold on. Intercultural languages are ways for emotional and behavioural learning, a challenge to one's identity – but it can become a way of living, a way of enriching one's identity at the same time, as Bennet has pointed out. Bennet has also given his model a more political outlook: whereas intercultural learning is an individual process, it is essentially about learning how to live together, learning how to live in diverse world. Intercultural learning seen in this perspective is the starting point of living together peacefully starting from the assumption that cultures - values, attitudes and beliefs – can only be understood relative to one other and that particular behaviour can only be understood within a cultural context.

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THE PERCEIVING OF THE WORD FROM PSYCHO-PASTORAL PERSPECTIVES

Maria Dorina PAȘCA¹

Abstract

Starting on the road of **word represents** a cognoscible and also an intellectual adventure, behaviors and statements. Therefore, knowing **the word** is synonymous with knowing the light, making the first steps, but also knowing virtues and laws that govern the human value.

That is why the perspective of its psycho-pastoral values determines a new perceptual attitude giving to the word various interpretations and motivations.

Thus, the word brings people close, defines cultures and interferes values identifying with a state trademark, of some concepts and cognitive evolutions. All this starting from the words “in the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God”. (John 1, 1)

Keywords: word, perceiving, attitude, code, psycho-pastoral.

Starting on the road of **word represents** a cognoscible and also an intellectual adventure, behaviors and statements. Therefore, knowing **the word** is synonymous with knowing the light, making the first steps, but also knowing virtues and laws that govern the human value.

That is why the perspective of its psycho-pastoral values determines a new perceptual attitude giving to the word various interpretations and motivations.

In this context through correct perceiving of **the word** it is necessary to understand the operating **mechanism** of this one, fact demonstrated by the multitude of functions and interpretations that it may code and than decode at a certain moment. Therefore we considered as stringent the need of beginning with the element that defines **the etymology** as being, Zamboni Etin (after Sala M. – 1999, p.8) “the science that studies the origin of words or, in other words the investigation of the formal and semantic relations which relate a word to another unity that is historical preceded and from which one derives”.

In this context the study of a word, Sala M. (1999, p.21) takes into account three axes:

- a) – diachronic = makes reference at the word age in language;
- b) – diatopica = the geographical use of the word;
- c) – diastratica = the affiliation of the word in common language at a more restrained group (technical terms) or/and belongs to a social variant.

If generally to a word we determine criteria under the form of basis criteria and (phonetic and semantic) and supplementary (geographic, functional, semantic-onomasiology and historical and social) in the value construction of our paper work, its importance derives

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from implications that it has in shaping a profile remarking also its psycho-pastoral identity as exponent of knowledge. Only in this way etymology constituted as study of word origin may outline structural the component that defines in time attitudes and concepts giving the value of human sequence in determining the personal identity. It builds and as in “the water flows the rocks remain” the words last but talking slides along knowledge leaving behind them the knowledge of human to understand them.

We can't robotize the meaning of the word but making it closer to men never forgetting as Nichita Stanescu said “Mind the way you talk because the words attract the facts” completed by Victor Hugo “The word knows a secret of the Human Spirit” (Duta V. – 1997, p.6) synthesized in Romanian's people wisdom that says “The good word heal and the bad ones hurt” therefore the word left in writing remains “a sweet burden” that leads to knowledge, human evolution.

Are we ready to feel the word? Do we perceive it? Do we identify with it? Here are some questions that have as joint **the word**. Is it only that?

Psychologically talking it may appear when similitude is shaped into the form of mystery and knowledge. For our study the sayings that will follow Duta v. (– 1997, p.333) certify the semantic load given to **the soul-word**, leaving interpretation up to the reader:

- The one that suggests us to know ourselves suggests us to know our soul – Plato
- As we know the soul represents a form of existence relatively independent of space and time. – G. Jung
- The souls that never confess their mysteries... are like rooms with closed doors that never get fresh air. – O. Goga
- Even the most modest souls are not living in vain in this world. V. Parvan
- The soul is the force that makes you think ideally, is the connection that helps you to tend to it. – V. Duta
- The soul helps the body and sometimes it lifts it from the ground. Is the only bird that carries its cage. – Voltaire
- What use is for the man to win the whole world if he loses his soul? – Gospel of Marc

We end thus to perceive **the message of the word** through its cognoscible load that may have at a certain moment. Is actually the road-word between transmitter (T) and receiver – the finality deriving from the strategy of message communication (understanding, acceptance and learning).

It comes as application the way in which we outline the path-word Chirila P. and Valica M. (1992-p. 49) – “And looking to the skies he sighed and said: Effata! which means Open!” (Marc 7, 34) – where **the heard word** becomes **believed word** and further **word understood** and further on **healing word**.

The receiver (R) receives the word that manifests through its complexity in the sense that its importance as psychical load imposes or not a behavioral attitude remarkable being the interpretations:

a) – A kind look cheers the heart and a good news strengthens the bones (Parables 15,30) - in the idea that Chirila P. si Valica M. (1992- p.69) **the power of the good word**, of the nice word is overwhelming; the good news between people gets to the rocky walls of the bones as a healing balm.

b) – In the judgment day our **words** will be present with their nuances, their weight, with the truth that they contain: “Because from **your words** you will be found as honest and from **your words** you will be condemned.” (Mathew 12,37) (Chirila P and Valica M (1992- p. 76).

We determine thorough the conceptual structure the fact that (saint Gregory from Sinai in Philokalia) “In man is **mind, word** and **spirit** and the **mind** can’t exist **without the word** nor **the word without the spirit** and those are one in each other... Through this the man carries an image of the Trinity...” We can see from the context that all the elements have as common element **the word** defining in the same time the starting point to knowledge of human personality.

If in sacred texts and religious literature the word takes the shape of the Greek for **logos** the identity of Jesus Christ to be and the Creating Logos is relevant after He becomes the Savior Logos. Thus, Manzat I. (1997- p.217) “Saint Maxim the Confessor showed that the entire creation has its fundament in a rationality that finds its origin into the Divine Logos”. The centrality of the Logos into creation is pointed out by Saint Maxim the Confessor when says that “the many reasons are one and the one is many”. M. of Unamuto show that in the words there is a creating potential. The word is creating. Christ made miracles using the word sometimes without any action.

It is the moment when spirituality become value and virtue of Christian religion. The man tends towards transfiguration that becomes possible (the psychoid universe at C.C. Jung) when the spirit does not remain exterior to the substance but within it.

What is than the constructive valence of the word spirit? Does it bring as touch to knowledge? After Larousse- the dictionary of psychology (2006- p. 297) – the word spirit is the surprising assertion that uses often the resources specific to the language that Freud demonstrated its technique to explain the special satisfaction that it causes and in a more general manner its role in psychic life. Do we find it in pastoral life, or we remain in the area that spirit as word determines discharge? Still, if we want to see the word spirit under another light, in the idea in which it can reveal the truth, we should accept the scholastic interpretation as element of evolution.

If, Larousse (2006- p. 298) with the aid of the word spirit the subject may finally speak, only making him laugh it disarms the other who may criticize. Freud underlines the position of the third person concerning the word spirit; a joke may target a certain person: but it only becomes a word of spirit only if it is enounced for a third person who, laughing, will confirm that it was perceived. This third may be considered one of the sources on the base of Lacan founds the concept of Other, that resort that we try to make recognizing our truth. In other words, the word of spirit is one of the most exact representations of discharge.

If our previous demarche made a “willful misconduct” towards the word of spirit as a sign of un-limitation in what concerns empirical knowledge, it is the time to return to the spirituality of the soul, Chirila P. and Valica M. (1992- p.89) understanding that the soul does not consist from ponderable material as the body, but it is a fine immaterial substance with reason and freedom, lacked of the known attributes of material as dimension, divisibility and weight. The spirituality of the soul concerns another attribute which is the independence of the body. The cause of the spiritual phenomena can't be the body; their cause may only be into the soul.

The self conscience tell us that inside us there is a special principal, the soul due to which we can make ourselves object of thinking – the material alone can't think upon itself. The man passes through several anatomic and physiologic transformations but also through spiritual transformations. It what concerns the spirituality we can see at the child manifesting mostly the fantasy, at maturity judgment and memory at adult and old age the will.

Thus, we gave importance to the word, through word all being triggered by it because “And He said: It is indeed so, but happy are those who hear the word of God and keep it”. (Luc 5, 12)

In our work we ended to a theological perceiving of the word and we'll make first steps making appeal to the dictionary Ciobanu R. (1994- p. 55) starting from:

- the Latin **conventum** = agreement, bargain;
- it appears in sacred texts comments under Greek form – **logos**;
- the second person of the Holy Trinity, The Son, inseparable by the Holy Trinity being God Himself is eternal and manifested as Creator of the world, implicitly of the substance;
- Jesus Christ is embodied hypostasis of the word told by Saint John the Baptizer and discovered in its complexity by God himself;
- God – the Word is the light as the only true and absolute word and in the same time love of men in its absolute expression;
- The creation itself of the man, artistic, literary and scientific is a reflex of the word which resides, more or less relevant, in each of us;

considered as a culmination of those mentioned before and having a remarkable construction, nothing being beyond than:

“In the beginning was the **Word**, and the **Word** was with God, and the Word was **God**. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. ...And the **word** was made flash, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.” (The Gospel according to Saint John, 1, 1-4; 14).

The **word** appears in similitude with the **light** thus John 1, “In the beginning was the **Word**, and the **Word** was with God, and the **Word** was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing

made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the **light** of men. And the **light** shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not”, fact that certifies the existence of the two marks: the **word** and the **light**, the **light** and the **word** to which **Creation** is reported...

But until we get here, the Savior Jesus Christ gives value to those said by him “My **words** are **spirit** and they are **life**” going on “**Heaven** and **earth** shall pass way, but my **words** shall not pass away” (Matthew 24, 35), ending to the wisdom “Man shall not live by **bread** alone, but by every **word** that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matthew 4,4).

Thus we aspire to a culture of the spirit through **God’s word** that is, Noica R. (2002- p.24) life given word, giving the possibility to this word to **live** within us discovering that it guards and **leads** us further.

In Noica’s acception (2002) the **word** is the creating **energy**. It is (p.11) the word of God living in man. God through the energy of the word tries to contact the man. The man through the word of prayer tries to answer to God. The man shows his freedom and his free choice when he answers to God through prayer, when he can say “Amen” to God, to God’s call. But what redeems the man is not what the man does in his uselessness, but what makes **the word of God** living within him. In this way “the man in **prayer** gets to the highest **state of word**, where his word is fortified”. (Working miracles from saints)

But the **word**, Noica R. (2002- p.29) in spiritual living is also **communion** because feeds the man at every level: at the level of word, of sense, at the actual level of feeding. And when the Savior said that not only with bread shall live the man, but from the word said by God’s mouth (Matthew 4, 4), **if we heard** than in the desert this **word** who could have thought that this word **that came** from God’s mouth will be given to us under the form of **bread** as **Eucharist**? Do we have an answer? Only when we start towards the **word** as **obedience**, the word being **hearing** and **discerning** (Noica R. 2002- p.19) remembering that obedience means **listening the word** as essence of hearing, knowing that this one (the word) **shares** only in **godly living**.

In this way the word of Christ is **the transition from discipline to life** (Noica R. 2002- p.25), and grown in us this word, the word of God himself, the **Word** discovers what **He** really **is**.

And yet tender as a thread we go back to John 6, 63 “It is the spirit that quickneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life”, remembering that “In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God”. (John 1, 1)

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VIRTUALITY AND HYPERTEXT IN MIRCEA CARTARESCU'S *LEVANTUL*

Dumitru Mircea BUDA¹

Abstract

The paper initiates the exploration of Mircea Cartarescu's epic poem *Levantul* from a technical perspective, noticing the high number of textual strategies employed in the discourse and trying to reveal the effects they have on the themes, characters and concepts developed by the parabolic narrative. *Levantul's* Postmodernist nature is linked to its ability of creating virtual, fictional worlds between which the hypertext works as a means of communication, expansion and illusion. A sort of Poetics of simulation, undermined by a post-Romantic obsession of totality, may be identified in the dynamics of the text.

Keywords: Virtual Reality, Postmodernism, Hypertext, Simulation, Fiction.

Among other aspects, Postmodernism means, in the field of writing, a revenge of minor registers against the high, elitist one. `The end of the great narratives`, like the entire boost of anti-canon dialectics which defines Postmodernist literature, has been used by writers in such a way that they eventually became simple cliches. However, beyond common things, confusions and exaggeration, the avant-gardistic heritage that Postmodernism employed has engaged into the demolition of a sort of mythology of literature, preserved throughout the entire modernity. With the rise of Romanian Postmodernism during the 80s, Nicolae Manolescu noticed the change of perspective brought by this new sensibility: „*Postmodernismul, writes the critic, e oligarhic și tolerant. Menține ca esențială orientarea lirică, expresia intuitivă și fantezistă, dar n-are cultul purității sângelui poetic, ca modernismul. Nu e, de aceea, atât de elitist și de dificil.*” One may thus understand that the oligarchy and tolerance have gone in all the directions and almost everything has changed in the esthetical order. All that was lasting in great literature has lost its credibility. Since the bet between art and transcendence was lost, the cultural discourse of Postmodernism has lost its prerogative that made it a modern one. Postmodernity has based its Metaphysics on a Rhetoric of the end. Francis Fukuyama, who wrote about one of the most spectacular theses regarding the entrance of humanity in Postmodernism, was particularly appreciated by Postmodernist writers. Mircea Cărtărescu's *Postmodernismul românesc* seemed to be written to create controversy and to confirm the antidoctrinarian features of Postmodernism, while at the same time rejecting the non-Postmodernist features of other poetic schools besides that of the generation of the 1980s.

The theoretical elements of literary Postmodernism are determined by the dialectical features of the deconstructive instinct which makes the relationship between

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text and tradition more dynamic. When the originality and ambition for novelty are diminished to zero, Postmodernism appears, as Eco defined it, as a simple question of quotation. Obviously, this `soft` type of Postmodernism works through an assumption of the tradition, its cultural discourse being related to the previous ones. But this abolishment of the singularity of a work of art makes it function in a continuing dialogue with the texts written before, and thus the soft Postmodernist literary texts ritually return into the historicity of a preexisting discourse.

For the soft Postmodernist, the cultural history is a deposit of props, an unexhaustable list of masks that satisfies the literature's histrionic gene in a sort of creative game only meant to display virtuosity and virtuality of all techniques and effects. The world becomes multi-identitary, like the succession of discursive displays it is seen through, its fragmentarity being perpetually complicated.

In all its concepts, tradition benefits of this soft side of Postmodernism. The implicit relativity does not affect the consistency of great themes which are reused, not even the credibility of the great discourses, but it reactivates them, integrated with today's culture. Rewriting is not an unrespectful gesture, however ironical or playful, but on the contrary it represents a recovering attempt, a means of re-mythologizing the world.

Levantul was read, from beginning, through such an angle. Ovid. S. Crohmălniceanu thinks, in the postface of the first edition, that the poem is about a reactivation of the entire Romanian poetry. In his famous review published in *Romania Literara*, Manolescu also reads it in an ludic manner, impressed by the erudition and by the technical virtuosity in Cartarescu's writing. „Chiar dacă nu se reduce la atât, writes Manolescu, *postmodernismul nu poate fi înțeles fără această modă retro, fără dorința de a scoate din muzeu genuri, specii și procedee literare uitate. E drept a preciza că Mircea Cărtărescu era cel mai indicat s-o facă. De la prima carte (Levantul este a patra), el s-a arătat atras de farmecul vechiturilor acestora, i-a plăcut să rescrie, să transforme, cu un cuvânt să recupereze. A avut un simț suplimentar pentru tehnicile poetice ieșite din uz. Și, desigur, disponibilitate pentru stilurile ori registrele de expresie cele mai diverse. Pe acest fond ludic și sentimental, el era meșterul pe care epopeea românească îl aștepta ca s-o repună în funcțiune*”.²

Gheorge Perian's view is not very different itself. He observes the dissociation of the reading between the level of fiction and that of writing, in a way which „*reînviind o specie moartă, cum părea epopeea, poetul concentrează, practic, întreaga istorie a poeziei românești într-o carte al cărei caracter sofisticat, în ciuda aparențelor de accesibilitate constă tocmai în această perspectivă anamorfotică. [...] Levantul, spune Perian, este nu numai o epopee fantezistică a luptei pentru libertate, ci și epopeea comică a formulelor poetice mai importante înregistrate în istoria literaturii române*”.

Levantul is by no means a paradise of coherence and harmony, as Mircea A. Diaconu remarks. The excesses of interpretation are those corrected by the critic, trying to set a fantastic principle of the text, a deeply symbolic and visionary mechanism of visionary surrealism that intervenes at most unexpected times into the poem. Rather a phrase of the chimeric and dionysiac fall into fantasy, `Levantul` cannot be seen simply as

² Nicolae Manolescu, „Comedia literaturii”, in *România Literară*, nr. 47-48/1990, p.3

an elaborate role play. On the contrary, Mircea A. Diaconu finds in it what he calls „esența burlescă și iluzorie a lumii, [...] reveria postmodernistă și substanța fantasiei, manifestate, interferent, atât în planul anecdoticii istorice cât și în cel al instanțelor narațiunii”.³

The permanence of an absurd dimension is also put in balance. This type of absurd does not refer especially to the text, but expresses the absurd and at the same time grotesque dimension of the employed cultural artefacts, from which the poet assembles a puzzle of fictional realities. This inner dynamics of Cartarescu's poetry was diagnosed by Iulian Boldea, who writes: *Își face loc în volumele din urmă ale lui Cărtărescu, în Levantul, dar și în Dragostea, o tot mai accentuată tendință spre joc, spre exercițiul barochizant împins ușor spre absurd, prin alăturarea unor elemente ale realului din cale afară de disparate, și care, astfel, fac translația spre lumea imaginarului, un imaginar buf, burlesc chiar, cu iz fantastic, dar și cu ecouri din întrupările meconomorfe ale lui Urmuș*⁴.

In fact, in *Levantul* a sort of game with the great literature takes place, as the historical themes of Romanian poetry are being called to life. Without seeing the entire constitution of Cartarescu's literary work, everything would be an unsuccessful experiment, without any kind of finality, an evanescent piece of literature.

Each time we refer to his work, Cartarescu himself insists on the singularity of this book and he often declares himself unsatisfied with how the book was perceived. There has been a lot of reactions. For instance, in an interview taken by Mircea Mihaies, he said that „singura carte care-mi place din tot ce-am scris, singura din care recitesc [...] Singurul text complet izolat”, which „nu-l consider ca făcând parte din latura mea poetică, nici din cea prozastică. Este cu totul și cu totul altceva”.

One of the most pregnant ideas that Mircea Cartarescu's words generate on this book is that it represents a revelation of the apocalypse of a certain way of writing. It seems that there is something far different from the ludical, tolerant and condescending recovery, performed with naivety, like a farce, being developed deep in the text. There is a profound finality of the text, not at all a positive for the tradition being reassessed by the poem. To great literature, to great poetic history, Cartarescu seems to give their last word, the farewell word. *Levantul* is not an Eden where the main themes are saved, but it appears to be the hall where their requiem is being sung.

The process of virtualization may be regarded as a feature of 'hard' Postmodernism. The crisis of the new hard Postmodernism lies in its impossibility to believe in hierarchy, canons, rules, and this generates its specific difference from any other of its versions. Hard Postmodernism is no longer controlled by a tolerant and recovering consciousness, but by a deconstructing and destructive instinct that unmystifies everything and eventually deconstructs the lasting forms of tradition, thus satisfying a new sensibility that claims virtuality and simulation. There is no longer room for any Metaphysics and the weight of great literary narratives turns into a general

³ Mircea A. Diaconu, „Mircea Cărtărescu”, in *Poezia postmodernă*, Brașov, Editura Aula, 2002, p.35-36

⁴ Iulian Boldea, „Mircea Cărtărescu” in *Scriitori români contemporani*, Tg. Mureș, Editura Ardealul, 2002, p.75-76

impoderability, placed under the sign of utopia, of illusion. The fundamental crisis of the new hard Postmodernist spirit determines a new type of ontology, a virtual ontology that substitutes the reliability of the existence or consciousness with the infinite multiplicity of relative alternatives. The human being itself is emptied of identity, just like the discourse of literature and the reality of the existence.

The idea of the end of history was first formulated by Gianni Vattimo when he wrote about the concept of 'weak thinking' (*pensiero debole*). „Gândirea slabă, states Vattimo, *acceptă elementele postmodernității: sfârșitul metafizicii, sfârșitul viziunii unitare. Aceste sfârșituri nu sunt niște decese după care să ții doliu, ci sunt eliberări, chances*”⁵. The same thing happens to all literary elements, once they enter the poetics of 'hard' Postmodernism – each time their rigidity breaks, there is a chance of new breath, of a new conquered freedom of thinking, when new remodelations, rewritings, become possible, based on discourses that essentially virtual. The text seen from an literary angle, can consist in texts integrated in texts and in texts...and so on and so forth. A new Methaphysics, a sort of virtual and weak Methaphysics is born.

Derrida explores the relationship between repetition and iteration, revealing at the same time the mechanism by which the literary work gains virtuality and autonomy. „Dacă scriitura e inaugurală, thinks Derrida, *nu este pentru că ea creează, ci pentru că, grație unei anumite libertăți absolute de rostire, ea face să răsară, în semnul său, ceea ce este deja prezent (le déjà-la) talmăcindu-i, astfel, augurii*”.⁶

What happens to major literary themes in *Levantul* is probably the first didactic Postmodernist writing experience in Romanian literature, anyway the most explicit case. Cartarescu speaks here about all the great literary themes of Romanian poetry, from adventure, love, time, history, to poetry, freedom, creation, dictatorship, etc. Cartarescu wrote on purpose a labyrinthic text filled with coherent yet asymmetric symbols. *Levantul* is itself a virtual writing that operates in virtual reality, in a random way although apparently logically, autonomous from exterior reality. There is a circularity of this epic poem, which is in fact stated by the author in the *Cantul al Patrulea*, in one of his interventions that Nicolae Manolescu used to like so much. It is a moment when the author speaks to his female Reader, in accordance to all the principles of interactive virtual literature:

„Fii, gingașo, răbdurea,
Că nemica nu rămâne în final neexplicat.
E rotundă epopeea-mi ca și globul fermecat
Care poartă-n mijloc. Dară iar anticip, ce nărav!”⁷

⁵ Gianni Vattimo, *Sfârșitul modernității. Nihilism și hermeneutică în cultura postmodernă*, Constanța, Editura Pontica, 1993, p.23

⁶ Jacques Derrida, *Scriitura și diferența*, București, Editura Univers, 1998, p. 211

⁷ Mircea Cărtărescu, *Levantul*, București, Editura Humanitas, 2004, p. 72

However, in the subtext, the thematic matrix lacks the apparent clarity and stability of the poem. At the beginning of the epic poem is a very relevant combination of two great themes on which the text would be built at least on its political fable level. The first part of the discourse, written with the verve and pathetic spirit of the great antique writers, like a hymn to *Levantul* itself, the work of art and the world, the reality dictating itself, showing itself to its Creator is, in fact, Manoil's string of thoughts, Cartarescu's alter-ego and favorite character, the young adventurous hero embarked on a journey to free Valachia from the tyranic dictatorship of Vodă. The already famous first lines:

*„Floare-a lumilor, val verde cu lucori de petre rare,
Mări pe care vase d-aur port piper și scortişoare,
Părând piepteni trecuți molcom printr-un păr împarfumat,
Stop de rouă-n cari zefîrul umfle-ai sei obraji de seu,
Cu simțiri aprinse umpli neguros sufletul meu!
O, Levant, Levant ferice, cum nu simți a mea turbare,
Cum nu vede al tău ochiu cu văpăi de chiblimbare
Noaptea turbure din peptu-mi, zăbuciumul ce am în sân,
De când sunt deștept pe lume, de cânt știi că sunt român!
Cum n-am ochii mii, ca Argus, ca cu mii de lăcrimioare
Să jelesc ticăloșita a poporului meu stare,
Preste care lupi și pardoși s-au făcut stăpâni deplin
Zgâriind cu gheare lunge al Valahiei drag sân!”*

fail to install the obvious theme of liberty, the *quest* for regaining the lost, original, Ithaca and then the theme of love comes from beyond, a theme which is told by Manoil's sister, Zenaida, portreyed as a `femme fatale` and modeled with refinement but also with subtle caricatural lines. Let us see how this second theme is built over the first one, with the declared contribution of the omniscient Author who represents himself struggling not to say more than he should, not to fall into the `diegesis`:

*„Tu te duci la Zante, unde în barcaș, la felinari
Te așteaptă a ta soră cu treizeci de palicari.
A ta soră, Zenaida! Cine-o vede se uimește,
Cine buzele de rujă, cine ochii i-i zărește
I se pare cum că Hero vie s-au împielit
Să-l aștepte pe Leandros lâng-al mărilor palat.”*

From this point forward starts the enumeration of Zenaida's elements, in which Cartarescu uses everything that is best in old-school poetry - analogies, paradoxes, methonimies and so on and so forth, aware that Zenaida is beyond any of art' mimetic abilities:

„Machedoana, nu am coarde l-a mea arfă îndestule
 Să îi cânt zălufii negrii, sînurile nesătule
 Și sprîncenele-mbibate, parcă-i arcul lui Amor:
 E trufașă dar e dulce și-are ciucuri la botfor”

What we witness at the beginning of *Levantul* is not at all arbitrary, but it is actually difficult to say if it is a result of the aware construction of the text or of its intimate reality. The great themes are activated with their entry in the text and there is a reaction and an inner-reaction between them. This principle has been described by Roland Barthes: „Chiar și atunci când rămâne fără putere, chiar și-atunci când puterea îi stă împotriva, rivalitatea renaște, jargoanele se despart și se luptă între ele. Un topos nemilos stăpânește peste viața limbajelor; limbajul vine întotdeauna dintr-un anumit loc, el este un **topos războinic**.”⁸ What is obvious at the level of language is also perfectly valid at the level of the topos. The great themes of literature are in Cartarescu's *Levantul* in a sort of war, in which every theme competes to be the First and all themes are provoking each other. All this made possible by a Creator who himself is a warrior, a symbolic predator. In this 'hard' version of Postmodernism, Creation is replaced with disintegration. Cartarescu becomes a sort of collector of themes with not that much nostalgia for their irrecoverable history (since this nostalgia is consistently simulated, the true nostalgia being that of integrity, of the power to see, experience and express Everything – a Romantic nostalgia, as it has been noticed). He performs all this scenario only to provoke old themes to dematerialize themselves, to relativize them in such extent that they would turn into virtual entities, populating the unreality that is more and more impossible to distinguish from concrete reality. It is not only the characters of *Levantul* that are 'beings of paper', chimeras, holograms controlled skilfully to create Illusion (the supreme principle of virtuality), but also the great themes of literature activated by the epic poem.

It is the first time in Romanian literature when a text asserts its virtuality and its practical lack of meaning. Cartarescu does not use themes and characters, ideas, words or images, but simulations of these. Roland Barthes describes the relationship between the author and his text, the low power that the author has over it. *Textul*, writes Barthes, *este un țesut de întrebări crescute din nenumăratele centre de cultură [...] Autorul poate doar să imite un gest care e întotdeauna anterior, niciodată original. Singura lui putere este de a mixa scrierile, de a le opune pe unele celorlalte, într-un asemenea mod încât să nu stăruie niciodată asupra unuia dintre ele*.⁹ The observation fits best to *Levantul* due to the dynamic feature of the text generated by the crossing from one theme to another. The universe from *Levantul* is highly dynamic: everything changes, the text has the ability to control and to adjust itself so that it assures

⁸ Roland Barthes, „*The Pleasure of the Text*”, Richard Miller (trans.), Hill and Wang, New York, 1975, trad. aut., p. 174

⁹ Roland Barthes, op. cit., p. 49

its perpetual update. The fact is also assumed in the amused self-explanatory discourse of the Author who states, at some point:

*„Cetitor, cu fantasia-ți tu vezi scene ce vitralii-s
Tot cetind la epopee.”*

In another part of the text, he speaks about the improvisation through which he achieves the ilusion, unaware yet (before descending in the text) that fiction works as an analogon of the real world. To be better understood, he draws and analogy with a method from an Antonioni film. The frangment is full of irony and memorable:

*„Tu, care cetești „Levantul” tolănită pe sofa,
La bulgari văzuși ieri filmul „E la nave va”?
Cătră fine îți arată studioul dă filmare,
Schela urieșă unde mișcă marile vapoare,
De tu crezi că e aieva un tangaj mehanicesc.
Postmodern e procedeu, deci și eu îl folosesc.
Află dar că bătălia ce-i găsi în aste pagini
Prin efecte speciale, suprapuneri dă imagini,
Decupaje, animare, totul pe calculator
E minuțios filmată, ca-n „Războiul Stelelor”.”*

The themes are, in *Levantul* linked to a discourse of their own. The poetic thesis of Cartarescu could be this, that there is a discourse, a unique one which is able to move a theme in the world of the text. Every time he speaks about a battle, in *Levantul* follows a metamorphosis from Eminescu`s `Scrisoarea III`, even if the battle is one between angels and demons. Consequently, when he speaks about philosophical meditation he uses a discourse close to the one used in `Memento mori`.

*„Cine sîntem? Nu se știe. Ce am fost? E doar părere,
Viața ni se trece ca prin cregi de măr o adiere
-Scintilație stărnită pe-un ecran de un atom –
Slujbe și canalizare, receptoare și mixere
Și din când în când în brațe o uitată de muiere
Iar apoi un Vierme lacom – iată datul unui om”.*

The excess of hyperreality is obtained from virtuality, through insertion in fiction, from details of the author`s own biography. The virtual reality has a maxim coefficient of analogy, beacuse the space and time are filled with the identity of the author-reader. In a fragment it becomes clear that the author speaks about a real book, *„Poeme de amor”*, which he has previously published:

*„Am crezut și eu o dată în amor. Am scris o carte
Ce-o găsești în fișierul galben de la B.C.U.”*

The mythology also suffers a metamorphosis and famous characters from Romanian literature are upturned. This kind of process is observed by Jean Baudrillard¹⁰, who talks about *„relativitate totală, comutare generală, combinați și simulare [...] în sensul că, de acum înainte, semnele se schimbă unele cu altele mai degrabă decât cu realul (și nu doar că se întâmplă să se schimbe între ele, ci fac astfel tocmai pentru a nu mai fi schimbate cu realul)”*.

Another mutation the themes and symbols go through is achieved by the distortion of their inner-relations. The distortion is made between themes and subthemes, literary motifs, symbols but also between themes themselves and their relationships in the text. If before *Levantul* intertextuality was the basic Postmodernist creative principle, a much more complex principle – hypertextuality – is now fully employed.

For instance, the hypertext is understood by Ion Manolescu as a process in which a substitution of a discursive element with another that is wider takes place. The hypertext is an expression of the dynamic part inside the world of the text but also a symptom of the competing topos. *Levantul* is fully built on the laws of hypertextuality. In a part of the text there is a hypertextual intervention, made in order to avoid the defeat of the heroes: the author turns some pages and even the numbering on them, seen by the characters, is used as a hypertextual element. The same happens with the typing machine, which is understood in a hypertextual sense (it eventually draws the author and the characters in and out of the textual world, working as a portal between the two realities).

But there is, also, a distorted mechanics of the hypertext, visible in the way it generates an inversion of logic, or a substitution by another one, a nonrational logic, if we might put it this way. For example, the scene described by Cartarescu after his fall in the text, when he realises that the characters act in his presence as in a religious canon, the way they should act in the presence of the Creator. The church they enter is used as a Christian symbol, but the elements of hypertext are diminished here:

*„Am intrat pă sub arcade. Pe păreți, icoane strâmbe,
Parcă de Soutine văpsite cu vâpselele scâlâmbe,
Zugrăvind nu pă Maria cu pruncuțul ei dă poală
Ci-un bărbat purtând în brațe pruncă dodoloață, goală
Iar pă crucifixul mare care strejuie altarul
Nu Isus, ci o fâmeie răstignită e, ce harul
Îi șiroaie ca și părul ce să-ncreață pân pe șale
Picurând pe sânuri limpezji în cărcei și rotocoale.
În triumghiul plin dă umbră dântre coapse și pântec*

¹⁰ Jean Baudrillard, *„Symbolic Exchange and Death”*, (1976) in Rivkin R., Ryan M., *„Literary theory. An Anthology”*, Blackwell, 1998, p. 125

*Își dășchide-un ochiu pleoapa licărând ca un întântec,
Ochi ce-au cunoscut vitejii zăvergii: același este
Ce în cântul cinci ivise dântre noui, fără veste.”*

A self-visionary structure of the epic poem, which works intertextually, is easily detectable here. Almost every part has a self-speculative key that directs the interpretation to the ultimate structure and condition of *Levantul*. Everything turns into the theme of the abyssal poem, which feeds with the body and soul of its creator, a super-poem conceived from the chimeras and inconsistencies, from the discordant humanity of the author.

The theme of death also has its virtual avatars. At some point, Death cuts off the heads of three mythical monks, in a symbolic key of poem that diminishes the poem's virtuality, but remains resistant with every read-through. Stopping the dynamic version at the last (eleventh) song of the poem, the Author walks through the paralyzed characters and utters one of the most memorable fragments of the text:

*„Nimic, nimic nu există. M-am născut și voi muri. Lumea s-a născut și va muri. Nimic nu e concret și etern. Suferim, luptăm, râdem, gândim în mijlocul unor vârtejuri de aburi colorați. Ce rămâne din dragoste, din tinerețe, din tortură, din imaginea sclipitoare a unui scoruș de munte, plin de boabe roșii, din labirintele primei copilării? Rouă colorată pe pereții minții. Nici măcar moartea nu există. [...] Am fost un om, am avut ochii negri, fața subțire, am fost întâi copil, apoi adolescent, am scris cărți, m-am căsătorit și am o fetiță. Îmi amintesc milioane de lucruri. M-am agitat, am plâns, am iubit, am gândit, am avut toate viciile și toate virtuțile. Am încercat să înțeleg totul. Dar viața mi se va stinge și va urma o noapte nesfârșită. Nu voi mai fi. De-aceea spun acum tot ce am înțeles trăind:
Nimic, nimic nu există.”*

We can find here one of the most shocking dramas of a the Postmodern spirit. With the virtuality of the entire existence comes the awareness that it is impossible to live completely. It is impossible for human mind to achieve the type of vision which is able to perceive the totality of the universe. This is what generates nostalgia and thus the virtuality of the real can become a torture.

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ORALITY AND ORIGINALITY

Maria-Laura RUS¹

Abstract

Ion Creangă's great art consists in his relation to the language. The expression that best characterizes this oral discourse is "to spill the beans/to give oneself away" ("a-l lua gura pe dinainte"). Creangă creates a world and the instrument of his creation is the word itself, the speech. Elements as orality, dialogue, dynamism, redundancies, puns, paroemiological constructions etc. are marks of his originality.

Keywords: orality, dialogue, dialogism, dynamism, originality

Ion Creangă's epic art was always seen by the critics as extremely vivacious², without supplementary descriptions. The writer is able to pass easily from one scene to another, his dialogue is extremely dynamic and his overflowing humour is rendered with joviality. The oral feature of his style and the richness of the paroemiological constructions are also marks of his narrative art. We must also mention the power of portraying by means of a single retort or by means of a significant detail.

Resorting to a linguistic and factual material, ever since the world began, Creangă remains, nevertheless, original and personal: the more "archaic" he is (following some linguistic patterns), the more refined becomes. The narrative art is particularly outlined in Creangă's work and this may also be because the author aims at the later called "pedagogy of reading" (a fact underlined in the foreword of his fairy-tales).

Creangă relates³ the events with verve, without any sign of tiredness, as if he were in a house with a fascinated audience: "și după cum am cînstea să vă spun...", "vă puteți imagina ce vrea să zică a te scălda în Bistrița" etc. Hence the main feature of his narrative art, the scenic tendency, the oral technique of the "telling". He writes as if he interpreted the text, having pleasure in imitating, parodying, exaggerating, passing from monologue to dialogue, living a part of a character.

Creangă does not contemplate the objects of his world, but communicates with them by means of a dialogue. It is quite normal for an artist and an observer of faces to resort to dialogism, a modality by means of which everything is vivid. Hence, the critics discuss about the dramatic feature of his work (the dialogue – the essential mark of the dramatic – reveals the continuous addressing to listeners; the verve, the picturesque, the extraordinary chattering). Thus it is considered that this dialogism is fundamental, because it is not used up in the exterior dialogues, compositionally expressed. His entire

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²In one of his books – *Ion Creangă. Nonconformism și gratuitate* – Mircea A. Diaconu talks about "the vivacity of the events" (Editura Dacia, Cluj-Napoca, 2002).

³We use this verb for the Romanian "povesti", because we think that it is semantically stronger than "to tell".

work is a dialogue from the very beginning until the end⁴. Creangă lets himself guided by the dialogic intuition (Constantin Trandafir) that allows him to enter the articulations of the world he presents.

“Sliding pleasantly on the slope of popular orality, discrete and modest, Creangă perpetrates a self sacrifice as a writer. Creangă passes with serenity over the paradox lived with the indifference of an author: he writes the orality”⁵.

The art of telling consists in a series of “stylistic follies”⁶, from puns to phrases that seem natural until they turn unexpectedly into different constructions, from lexical to syntactic⁷ and paroemiological constructions etc. All these serve for the same goal: orality.

Creangă went to “the school of popular teller”⁸, taking over his gestures, mimic, commentaries and his jokes⁹.

The dynamism of the action, the joyfulness and the spontaneity of the story are rendered by means of pluralism of converging mechanisms. Interrogations, ellipses, exclamations, the reader’s requirement, direct appeal to characters by changing the grammatical person, even depersonalization give the text an alert rhythm and a vivid colouring. The latter implies a certain detachment of the speaker from himself, but not from the author who remains beside his characters by changing them into their own observers. The use of “dramatic present” is also another means of giving dynamism to the action.

During the speech, pauses can many times underline irony or equivoque (familiar to the author). He makes his characters enter in a competition of jokes, riddles: “ba din tâlcuri, ba din cimilituri, ba din păcălit, ba din una și de colî până coala” (*Moș Nichifor Coțcariul*). As a matter of fact the critics underline the main quality of Creangă’s sentence: the relief, its lively rhythm, its intonation with ups and downs¹⁰.

Popular language is not a common one in Creangă’s work, because he changes it into artistic language; hence the stamp of his remarkable originality. Rough expression becomes literary art in his work. Orality is seen by one of his critics – Mircea Moș – as “a quality of the natural universe itself” and he talks about this quality with the meaning of a “partner” in the dialogue. This dialogue is between “cosmos (created on the oral way,

⁴ G. Călinescu talked about the “powerful dialogic structure”.

⁵ It is a translated quotation from Dan Mănuță, *Ponciful „oralității” lui I. Creangă sau despre re-oralizare in Convorbiri literare*, 4 (28) aprilie, 1998, p. 14.

⁶ According to Vladimir Streinu’s syntagm, “pozne stilistice”

⁷ “Syntactic cunnings” (“șiretenii sintactice” – Vl. Streinu)

⁸ According to Zoe Dumitrescu-Bușulenga (“școala povestitorului popular”)

⁹ “vorbele de duh cele mai șugubețe”

¹⁰ According to G.I. Tohăneanu “The main quality of Creangă’s phrase is the relief. Its sustained and lively rhythm is not familiar with the softness sometimes drawling and equal of the phrase. Intonation is all the time modulated, full of unknown, with ups and downs, sometimes abrupt” (translated quotation from *Stilul artistic al lui I. Creangă*, p. 13).

through the creator's mouth which makes the word concrete) and its pattern, the writing"¹¹.

The anecdotal dynamism is a special feature of Creangă's narrative art, outlining the charm of his style. The exceptional and suggestive word, the picturesque idiomatic expressions, the emotional mainspring present in the elements of communication, "amplifications and verbal redundancies" (Ș. Munteanu), the humour and so many other elements lie at the basis of an exquisite narrative art, an art to which we try to underline again the complexity and the refinement.

The spring of his art is found, according to Eugen Todoran, in the author's words, because the distinct charm in life, as well as in his writings resides in the joke which he relates with. He relates everything he sees in the surrounding world, in the confrontation between reality and ideality. The excerpt the critic talks about is from *Povestea lui Harap-Alb*:

Zică cine-a zice și cum a vrea să zică, dar când este să dai peste păcat, dacă-i înainte te silești să-l ajungi, iar dacă-i în urmă stai și-l aștepti. Mă rog, ce mai la deal la vale? Așa e lumea asta și de-ai face ce-ai face, rămâne cum este ea, nu poți s-o întorci cu umărul, măcar să te pui în ruptul capului. Vorba ceea: Zi-i lume și te mântuie.

Some criteria have recently been established on the basis of which Creangă's narrative art has been outlined. Thus it is talked about the disguises encountered in all of his stories, about the temporal segmentation in two well-delimited parts, about the "road" as an authentic character etc¹².

Creangă's great art consists in his relation to the language. The expression that best characterizes his oral discourse is "to spill the beans/to give oneself away" ("a-l lua gura pe dinainte"). Undoubtedly this does not mean the writer puts labels to simple objects. If it had been like that, Creangă would have been an ordinary writer. But he creates a world and "the instrument of his creation is the language. Instrument and product at the same time, the speech creates itself. It is a self-generating logos. Creangă's humanity is built by means of words and it exists only through words"¹³

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¹¹ It is a translated quotation from Mircea Moț, *Ion Creangă sau pactul cu cititorul*, Editura Paralela 45, Pitești, 2004, p. 12.

¹² For details one can see the chapter "Arta prozatorului român" in Dan Grădinaru, *Creangă*, Editura Allfa, București, 2002, p. 389-446.

¹³ It is a translated quotation from Dumitru Micu, *Periplu*, Editura Cartea românească, București, 1974, p. 11. We must mention the fact that the translations from different Romanian critics belong to us.

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THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE SACRED INSIDE THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

Cristina SAVA¹

Abstract

The paper entitled „The identification of the sacred inside the religious experience” approaches the concept of sacred from the point of view of the between the two wars. The research is not focused only on the word’s etymology, but also on the subtle relationship between the different stages of the concept’s development/ readjustment. Thus, for example, the idea that we plead for is that the Hermeneutics of the sacred reveals the soul’s inclination towards the acknowledgment of the absolute through the hierophany of the symbol, subdued to the level of knowledge and will. The halving of the world, through an emotional reassessment, represents a significant step in the establishment of the sacred.

Keywords: the sacred, symbolism, religious experience, numinous, hierophany.

Introduction

Throughout this article we attempt to simply produce a radiography of the human experience in time and space, using notions or concepts that human knowledge usually operates with, in order to be able to identify the importance of a fundamental concept: „the sacred” as part of the „religious” experience. Our goal is to emphasize the importance of the conceptual „sacred” inside all stages of religious development of the man, especially in the period between the two world wars.

Along the years, trying to find an appropriate definition to the term „sacred” brought many difficulties. This happened due to the numerous researches made upon a large number of so-called „sacral elements”, having a rich variety of other related concepts, such as: myths, rites, symbols, plants, animals, sacred places, consecrated people, cosmology, each category having its own morphology. Additional to these, methodological difficulties are to be mentioned, due to heterogeneity of the documents regarding the „sacred”. The great number of hierophanies, the dialectics sacred-profane, the reassessment of the primary religious phenomenon, are regarded as epiphanies of profane realities, facts or fundamental acts which are inherent to archaic consciousness, enabling the human being to come closer to reality, to fully and efficiently integrate in a natural or social order. The difference between „sacred”, understood as an *a priori* category of the rationality and „the sacred” as seen in religious experience that we try to demonstrate in our study, led to the well-known difference between internal and external revelation, between the general and special revelation, the latter making the relationship between reason and history to become available.

Starting from all these reasons and taking into consideration the opinions of some representative researchers of the phenomenon of the „sacred” as well as the recognition of their contribution in order to develop Philosophy, History, Religion and

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Hermeneutics, we try to emphasize from the outset the idea that "the sacred" always manifests itself as a reality of a completely different order of „natural” reality, representing the center of any hermeneutical approach, within the definition of *homo religiosus*.

Features of the concept of „sacred”

Considering its complete meaning, the word „sacred”, represents a category which consists of both rational and irrational elements. Viewed from this perspective, the „sacred” is considered to be an *a priori*² category. Our language can only briefly play notions such as: *tremendum, majestas, mysterium fascinans* that circumscribe them, using terms drawn from the natural or secular spiritual life of man. Analogue terminology that is often used comes precisely from man's inability to express that *Ganz Andere*³. The identification of understanding the concept of „sacred”, Roger Caillois in *Man and sacred* view that the term „sacred” is used most often in a figurative sense, which has by no means its original meaning. We usually understand it through an attribute which is synonymous with „absolute morals”⁴ or the „perfect good”⁵. He believes that rational and irrational ideas are circumscribed to the „sacred”, implying its objective existence and the indispensability of recognizing the truth.

German historian Rudolf Otto insisted on the importance of the etymological meaning of the „sacred, especially on the feeling of „sacred”, considered to be living in all religions; he believes that it is the most intimate part of the religions. The historian states that this „alive” fact is felt inside both the Semitic and biblical religions. There, it has its own name, that of *qādos*, which corresponds to *hagi* and *sanctus* times, and more specific, *sacer*. In all three languages these words imply The Good and The Absolute Good, reached on the highest stage of its development. Present language uses the concept of „sacred”. Deepening the interpretation and evaluation of this controversial concept, Rudolf Otto, in *Sacred*, recalls its complexity, drawing attention on the terminology that involves its composing elements.

„It is a complex category and therefore bears within an element of a special distinctiveness, one that avoids the rational in the sense adopted above and remains completely inaccessible to a conceptual understanding, it is an *arrèton*, something ineffable.”⁶

In his deciphering of the „sacred” word, Rudolf Otto seeks Semitic equivalents, deriving from Latin, Greek and other ancient languages and considers that they primarily denote a surplus rather than a moral component, and he also does not refer exclusively to it. On the other hand, he tries to combine all the linguistic knowledge,

² Rudolf, Otto, *The Sacred*, in Romanian by Ioan Milea, (Cluj-Napoca: Dacia, 2002), 128.

³ *Idem*, 11.

⁴ Roger Caillois, *The Man and The Sacred*, translation from French by Dan Petrescu, (Bucharest: Nemira, 1997), 20.

⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁶ Rudolf Otto, *short title*, 11.

methods, Ethnography, History of religions and Theology, Psychology and Mmysticism, Metaphysics and Aesthetics, a fact for which he was branded as an „irrational” philosopher, on contrary to the glory brought by his work, *Das Heilige*. It is worth noticing the philosopher’s observation considering the fact that nowadays, linguistically, the given meaning of the „sacred” is a moral one. Thus, it is necessary to discover a different name that would designate what the "sacred" does not contain: the element of morality⁷ and even that of *rationality*⁸. This research was necessary both for highlighting its special feature – on one hand - and for indicating its incipient forms and stages of development – on the other hand. The area of understanding deepens through the association with the term *numinous*⁹ and *numinous category*¹⁰ involving the interpretation and evaluation of the sacred; the *numinous mood*¹¹ that makes its presence known when necessary is associated with an object perceived as numinous. It involves an attempt to guidance, path analysis, to the point of the soul in human existence. Just as in the situation when any given original and fundamental aspect cannot be rigorously defined through the word, but can only be analyzed.

In his *The Nostalgia of Origins*, Mircea Eliade appreciates the subtle approach of the German philosopher regarding the concept of „sacred”. Rudolf Otto is considered an „emotionalist”, a genuine descendant of Schleiermacher. His works are appreciated as being complex and he deserves to be regarded as a philosopher of religion, the first to work with documents regarding the History of religions and Mmysticism¹².

In his study *The Man and The Sacred*, Roger Caillois points out that the Greek lexicography explains that hágos means „impurity”, referring to the „sacrifice that clears up and removes the impurity”. They also say that the term “hágios”, noted in their studies, was used for decrypting the „dirty”. The difference is fixed later, through the symmetrical *hágēs* (pure) and *enhágēs*, (cursed), marking by their transparent composition, the ambiguity of the original word. The Greek „a osioun” and the Latin „expiare” is etymologically explained as „bringing out the sacred element (from itself) (*ósios, pius*) that the impurity has introduced it.”¹³ Roger Caillois approaches a psychology of the „sacred” in order to emphasize the fundamental role of the pure and impure, categories that play an important role in the sphere of the „sacred”. He also rejects the ideas of Father Lagrange from *La méthode historique*, where he disagreed with W.R. Smith. Callois’ conclusion was:

„we could be right in front of the impurity – and we know that it attacks the inner parts of the Being. The word that means *to purify* in „primitive” languages, they both could mean *to heal* and *to disenchant*; we could recognize the purity that we

⁷ Rudolf Otto, *short title*, 11.

⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁹ Rudolf Otto, *short title*, 12.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*.

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

¹² Mircea Eliade, *The Nostalgia Origins. History and Significance of Religion*, translation by Cezar Baltag, (Bucharest: Humanitas, 1994), 45.

¹³ Roger Caillois, *short title*, 39.

assimilate with health and then when we reach the sanctity with maximum of vitality, an extraordinary power, irresistible, dangerous right through its own intensity. Starting from here we obtain the other two categories: *sanctity* and *impure*, which are also contained into the *sacred* and the *profane*".¹⁴

Through its recitals, Roger Caillois takes into discussion the polarity of the sacred, referring to the two elements, *purity* and *impurity*. He believes that the sacred is affected by the coexistence of contraries: one that attracts and the other that rejects. Caillois believes that the dialectics of the „sacred”, by their degree of complexity, arouse fear and desire to use it for ones self. On one way it is rejectable, on the other it seems to be simply fascinating.¹⁵

Religious experience in the approach of „the sacred”

If we refer to the „sacralization” of the world, this would be done from different directions, from multiple plans, that are reconsidered and valued through the perspective of the „sacred”, meaning old representations about the afterlife, the soul, death, the sacred signs, deities. The world’s sacralization through religious experience marks a specific moment of Gnoseology, of socio-historical practice. In specific conditions of social existence, humanity searched for ways of development, according to social laws, contrarily to religious influences. The mechanisms of social life become sacred springs, a mythical sociology twinned with a mythical history, where the sacred cosmos becomes a mythical geography. Philosophical knowledge of the world has contributed to a rediscovery of culture and a revival of the archetype, as critic Cornel Moraru considered, in his study of *Sacred Romanian poetry*.

Time, space, causality receive sacred dimensions and interpretations. Man and his whole system of usual practices, with his economical, judicial or moral standards are firmly incorporated in this process of „sacralization”. The Universe becomes a closed system by hierophanies. At one moment the hierophany means „a specific way of knowledge and of world evaluation”¹⁶. In Al. Cistelean’s opinion, the critic, the word transposed from the general plan into the creativ one makes posible the manifest of sensibility as connection, „opening a perspective of the real only by ignoring a cultural-referential layer.”¹⁷ „The Sacred” starts an inverted action against its genesis way by mirroring the human facts, which turn deformed back upon human being.

In his study *The Sacred Genesis*, Pompiliu Caraioan names this hypostasis of „the sacred” a „mirror image”, in which the human doesn’t recognize himself anymore as a social and creating Being, but as „a strange and superior power, being able to influence in a way or another his own existence.”¹⁸ In the same *The Sacred Genesis*, Pompiliu Caraioan

¹⁴ Roger Caillois, *short title*, 53.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*: As an example we have “the sacred” character given to the „sacred” *hima* place present within the semitic religions. It is the most dangerous place, where you cannot reach without suffering serious consequences.. Luther learns (considering the veneration of the holy places), that this is mixed with fear.

¹⁶ Pompiliu Caraioan, *Genesis of The Sacred* (Bucharest: Scientific Publishing House,1967), 83.

¹⁷ Al. Cistelean, *Poetry and Bookish*, (Bucharest: Romanian Book, 1987), 8-9.

¹⁸ Pompiliu Caraioan, *short title*, 80.

considers that the duality of the world, starting from the fenocripts and from genesis of cartofons, pointing out an evaluation of the world, represents a decisive step in the genesis of „the sacred”. The cryptic¹⁹ does not represent only the result of a fantasy, it can bear real but „hidden” attributes of objects that become visible only in the process of refinement. The interior balance between fanic and cryptic breaks the moment when the cryptic becomes dominant to „the fanic”. The improvement of „hidden” comes from the transfer that man accomplishes upon the cryptic, growing it rich by his experiences. We have to underline the idea that within the framework of cryptic there are two types of experiences: “ones are effective, real - as that of production, the other ones are false, simply mental, they are never so much as experiences, but just imaginations.”²⁰ In connection with splitting „the sacred”, Father Augustine advices that this could transmit hatred and love in the same time: „Et *inhorresco*, et *inardesco*”, from one side, due to the consciousness of the absolute difference between the Being and the sacred, named eagerness, to the other side, due to the profound identity of the two. The theologian observes the conservation of the double aspect of divinity that distinguishes that element, as terrible as captivating, called the study by Rudolf Otto, *The Sacred, tremendum* and *fascinas*.

In one shape or another, the „religious” experience is played by Rudolf Otto in terms of *rational* and *irrational*. In his study he shows that the *rational* and the *irrational* elements of the complex so named „the sacred” category are *a priori* elements and their penetration into the religious sphere is on one hand, an internal necessity of their connection, and on the other, their insinuation in the moralization process of the divine²¹ that becomes simply implied. German theologian resumes in its research study, the manner of spreading the action of „the sacred” across the world, taking the work of Fr. Schleiermacher as a starting point. This work talks about *religion*, includes speeches of erudite people who despise it and where is said about *divine* being as a possible faculty that knows and recognizes the truly sacred in its concrete manifestation.²² Mircea Eliade in *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries* considered that the thesis of the German theologian are very appreciated in terms of originality of the perspective adopted, where the modalities of religious experience are examined and not the idea of God of religions. Gifted with a special and psychological distinction, having a specific knowledge as a theologian and

¹⁹ *Ibidem*: In every historic era, the criptic became a deity, having a double character, meaning that projection of the “human” essence upon criptic. In time the specific instinctive sentiments are born; they get humanity and cover the most important public places, the balance between human relations, care and respect for the public wealth, respect for the others, the sentiment of traditions, of devotion, of personal sacrifice. In the background of these positive affective states that do not exclude others such as fear, dependence, the instinct of defense by submission gradually builds up the religious sentiment that is directly subjected by the history of religions.

²⁰ *Idem*, 67: It must be revealed the fact that Religion, since its beginning, has fed itself through these menthal „experiences” and this nourishment consists of the „human essence”. This certifies „the hystoric essence and destiny of religion since still birth.

²¹ Rudolf Otto, *short title*, 151: The inner evidence of this process represents a problem that cannot be without the assumption of an obscure, synthetic knowledge *a priori* of the necessary and essentially between these elements. Logically, this connection is not necessary at all. The signal of any *a priori* recognition is that of a firm indication of a personal conclusion, the truth of an assertion, when this assertion is clearly expressed.

²² *Idem*, 158.

historian of religions, he achieved to mark out the content and the specific characteristics of this experience.

Thus, while Otto treats in his *Das Heilige* the „terrifying” aspects of religious experience, Mircea Eliade, in his study of „sacred”, based on Rudolf Otto’s book, expresses a more complex view of method used by the German historian, with reference to the divine idea: „Divinity is always conceived under two aspects, [...] angry and gentle, ruthless and forgiving easily, terrifying and soothing”²³. He emphasizes the concept of *coincidentia oppositorum*, in which opposites coincide, coexist without dominance of one rule and without being too high. This concept is found in most religions. The Duality of Divine, says the Romanian philosopher, can be understood through what we would call the divine activity or inactivity, which could be virtual or real, latent or demonstrative. Iulian Boldea, the critic, referring to sacred as language, in *Introducere la estetica sacrului*, (*Introduction to Esthetics of the sacred*) stressed that the sacred is „the universal language of culture [...] and „knows te most variate metamorphosis in romanian and european literature’s speech”²⁴.

Revelation in terms of the *irrational* allows the comprehension of things completely different of each other: pure reality opposed to the law, *empirical* to *ratio*, accidental opposed to demand, gross product opposed to by-product, psychological opposed to transcendental, what is known as *a posteriori* opposed to what can be defined *as a priori*. German theorist believes that by no means *irrational* is not yet subject to *ratio*; the world mechanism is reluctant to rationalization: in the usual sense of the word it refers to an unusual event, which- by its depth - escapes from rational explanation.²⁵ Otto advances a series of analogies that naturally bind the *irrational* aspects of the *numinos*, of the divine. The German theoretician believes that by no means *irrational* is subject to *ratio*; the mechanism of the world is reluctant to rationalization: in the usual sense of the word it refers to an unusual event, which- by its depth- escapes from rational explanation.²⁶ Otto advances a series of analogies that naturally bind the *irrational* aspects of the *numinos*, of the divine.

We need to make some considerations in order to emphasize the idea that the opposition between rationalism and religion was seen as a denial of the miracle. The miracle was considered to be a temporary interruption of the natural laws chain, caused by an irrational *Being*. The rationalists have approved and built *a priori* the possibility of the miracle, based on *the Being* that masters the real’s attributes by the two known components: *summum ens – the supreme Being* and *ens common - Being in its generality*. The difference between *rationality* and *irrationality* was realized at the level of the *qualitative*,

²³ Mircea Eliade, *Reintegration Myth*, in *The Way to the Center*, anthology by Gabriel Liiceanu and Andrei Pleșu, (Bucharest: Universe Publishing 1991), 310.

²⁴ Iulian Boldea, in *Introduction to Esthetics of the sacred* by Doina Butiurca, (Bucharest: Ars Academica, 2008), 4.

²⁵ Mircea Eliade, *short title*, 309-310.

²⁶ *Ibidem*.

taking into consideration the mood and emotional content of faith, the latter essentially dependent on the relationship between *rational* and *irrational* in the idea of God.

Conclusions

Investigation upon the Phenomenology of the religious leads to the idea that any religion that tends to be more than just a traditional belief based on authority, as Christianity, which would give rise to some inner and personal beliefs, has to assume that there are some *a priori* principles of the soul, which could be recognized as true in themselves. Religion does not depend on the *telos* or the *ethos* and does not exist according to postulates. Any religious concept of the world involves a distinction between „sacred” and "profane”.

The Sociology of the „sacred” refers to the human attitude towards the absolute in front of the prestigious forces he is beware of or trying to approach. Representations and rational and irrational concepts belong to religious experience, being part of the *numinos*. The spiritual experiences such as love, compassion, mercy, without referring to the religious inclination, imply the specific attitude of the soul raising towards the „sacred”.

Religion as a *summum* of various manifestations of the *religious experience* strengthens the relationship between human and *divine*. The *hierophany* reveals the spirit's quality towards the appreciation of the *absolute* upon its religious nature, subordinated to the level of knowledge and volition that assures the connection with „the sacred”. Religion is thus a product of history in which knowledge is growing its predilection for discovering and knowing „the sacred”; moreover, in some parts of it, it is a proper manifestation of the „sacred”.

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THE PLAYFUL REVERIE

Romelia POPP¹

Abstract

Poet Vintilă Ivănceanu cultivates an artificial, powerful type of Onirism which is at the same time charming; he bears the inheritance of the Surrealism, but marked by the reverie of the gothic. His main quality is that of resuscitating a modern Middle Age, a place where the grotesque and the monstrous are diaphanous, as they do not exist in their pure state. Like Leonid Dimov and Emil Brumaru, Vintilă Ivănceanu loves to play and does it in a crazy and fantasist way. There is sensuality and also a mystical attempt which haunts his poems and the demythologization they are subjected to is an angelical one, since the tonality is carnal, the religious element is subdued to a pagan ritual of tempting the senses, in a playful manner.

Keywords: reverie, grotesque, reality, unusual, belief.

In his first volume, Vintilă Ivănceanu has the honour of being the subject of pamphlet for the retrograde spirits; a special honour which obliges us to pay our respects to him, from the very beginning. We wonder what could have irritated so much within the lines of the poet. It might have been the flap of wings belonging to the chosen talents, the depth of the problematic issues, an artistic language, surprisingly evolved and the premonition of an unusual spectacular evolution. Its iconoclastic features are generally uncomfortable for the protectors of the self-content, in the same way as it became comforting again and encouraging for the bearers of an evolved artistic ideal. Vintilă Ivănceanu's presence is seen as one of the most vivid in current poetry², an advanced position of the avant-garde's lyricism, in a natural disagreement with the circumstantial hypothesis of common sensibility.

Most of the opinions articulated about *Special Honour* have noticed the poet's virtuosity, his exceptional availability regarding the expressive means and the poetical techniques, insisting even on its parody-like tone, inviting to a very lucid evaluation of its domain's borders.³ A poet, who proved to be in most of the cases a fine reader of verses, recommended even the passing over this stage, considering it sterilised, capable of creating a certain crisis of the trust. The volume seems to be articulated in a stern register, imbued with an exasperating dramatism. The abnormal intensity of the lyrical state changes the shape of the verb, making effects belonging to the grotesque, composing figures of fear which sometimes unfold into gatherings of a great purity. The lyrical fantasised scenery, populated with demons and graceful goddesses, a pathetic and restrained protest, a delicacy of a provincial minstrel are the constituting notes of this

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² Aurel Dragoș Munteanu, [The big loves - Aurel Dragoș Munteanu](http://www.marileiubiri.org)'s pages, www.marileiubiri.org.

³ Ibidem.

book. They are so well-structured and well welded in their own vision, that they are almost in each of the parts of the *Special Honour*, without making them monotonous.

The unity of the volume is so remarkable that we can easily quote any poem, the differences of value being unnoticeable. What seems to be totally remarkable is that these poems are indeed very beautiful, in the classical sense. They are not animated only by the soul of a true poet, but they are shaped with the thoroughness and the skill of a traditional school craftsman: respectful towards his public, although he is a little subject to the general taste.⁴ A poem similar to the splendid *Classical romantica*: „My love! Your breast is the Moon / which gently climbs over the Pamir. I am alone, my darling, like / typewriters in a cemetery. // or *Bosch Figure* or *It will be*: „Give me the mine. / There will be so much warmth around, / that a tram will melt down / and the travellers will die singing. / Give me your mouth. / A wave of heat will come / If we go around naked / through the city's ashes” are edifying. This last poem seems to be a love poem worthy of being written in the strictest anthology of the genre. The image of the people, melted in an anthem of glory like in an apotheosis of love or of an absolute loneliness from the first stanza, appears to be certifying this poet's exceptional calling.

The concentrating of the means conjugated with a remarkable associative power are other features which prove the fairness of the observations. Vintilă Ivănceanu is one of the poets with the most acute conscience of his mission; the poet seems to be a sword carrier, and his war will be a general one, both against the persuasive elements and against the tranquilisers, all of them suffocating for the spirit. The walls and the swamps are equally dangerous and against them, the poet brings redemption: „Sing you thieves, sing / the apotheosis of the horse with wings. / Do you like the cold? / You thieves, inside the catacombs they ski / Up North the snow falls like / the crazy and the intoxicated, / O Lord / Not even one tie / Suits me / There is no tie / For my murderer violinist body! / Our Father who are in fogs / In checks and in what-s, / My shoes are too tight, too strict / The atmosphere is filled with angels / Just like the lady, filled with perfume and lipstick. / I want to slap myself, I am thirsty / who / who / can give me a glass of water”. (*Evil eyes*) This poem contains the elements of the lyrical protest from *Special Honour* and it represents a sample of the expressive technique used by the Romanian poet. The prayer tone embeds the solemnity note specific to all of his poems⁵, while the overturn of normal rapports gives the provocative, fighting character to these lines. The poet will therefore address to „the Lord, little god” who is found „within fogs, in checks and in what-s”. The perfect knowledge over the linguistic instrument allows such fencing schemes which are both graceful and dangerous.

What seems to be stirring the most Vintilă Ivănceanu's poetical revolt is the mechanisation, the uniformity of the existence through chance, through absolute determination. His appetite for the free expansion is always contradicted by the

⁴ Mircea Cărtărescu, *The Romanian Postmodernism*, Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2010, pp. 329-331.

⁵ Dinu Flămând, *The text's intimacy*, Eminescu Publishing House, Bucharest, 1985, p. 162.

inflexibility of the laws and of the universal norms. A wonderful halo is created by the recognition of this reality.⁶

The most significant poetry in the direction stirred above is *Mythological*, exemplary otherwise under all the aspects: „I caught my woman / In adultery with a god, / And the child born from adultery / before teething / he would eat oat, flakes-flakes of snow // out of horse, / and it wore a white tailcoat / tailored by himself / from / the Moon, / and because of him a woman / committed herself in hospital, // And he would give cello lessons to the world's conservatory, / and kicked a paralytic, // And the paralytic kicked back / in a statue, / and the statue kicked the museum's guard, / and the museum's guard / put his foot into a hole, / and when they got him out / on his leg was tangled / a chest of Spaniards / buried by the cardinal of Ardeal / together with the heretics' bodies / and the bodies of the peasants // who didn't pay for their debt. // this child / saying good bye / from: / the hospitalised woman, / from the peasants' and the heretics' dead bodies □. The depth of the feeling of death offers grounds for the *Mythological* offering a supplementary dimension to the Special Honour, a poem of a ravishing beauty. It proves the fact that the *meta-physics* is not refused.

Vintilă Ivănceanu's volume ends with a profession of belief: „I am tired. Words are heavy / like elephants and they are quiet. / Their shadows die in lace, / Giving birth to baby werewolves. // other words from Hell! [...] // I need other words / pure and holly cows, / to hang them in a hook // to sacrifice and to whip them / just like a horse and to raise them / in an incubator, in the cold. This final sonnet confesses the poet's will to reconstruct intellectually the language, to regain his lost purity, a noble attempt from an artist. *Special honour*, a book made up as a sonata built strictly from four cycles, opening and closing like a sonata, having at the end of each cycle also a sonata, it is a first probe towards the mysterious and unsolvable core of the Poetry.

Dumitru Micu considered Vintilă Ivănceanu's book as a manifestation of the unusual, of a certain taste in the Romanian literature.⁷ If T.S. Eliot considered the traditionalism as an expression of some cultural permanence, as a presence in a work of art of the entire artistic thesaurus, then Vintilă Ivănceanu is a traditionalist in the best meaning of the word. If we do not restrain ourselves to the surface of things, to the phenomenon, but we look for the meaning, the concept, the specific determination under a theoretical rapport of the instruments which make up our knowledge apparatus, the impression of paradox of the assertion is erased.

Vintilă Ivănceanu is the bearer of a very well assimilated and continued poetic culture. The integration in tradition is made based on a remade unity, following the new phenomenon, as the English poet and essayist noticed. Unfortunately, the shallow observation does not take into consideration this new unity, keeping the old, untouchable, closed and ancient one. Nevertheless, the culture is a dialectical and

⁶ Mircea Cărtărescu, *op. cit.*, p. 330.

⁷ Dumitru Micu, *Modern languages in today's Romanian poetry*, Eminescu Publishing House, Bucharest, 1986, p. 280.

objective phenomenon, always rebuilding itself based on the innovations which reinforce tradition. In Ivănceanu's poetry we can easily notice notes specific to George Bacovia, or to Breton, especially his 66 alluviums. These two roots can definitely ensure a further work of art, built on a strong poet's stem.⁸

In the 70s, Vintilă Ivănceanu used to be one of the terrible children of the literary movement of the time, in good company with Dumitru Țepeneag or with Virgil Mazilescu, young nonconformists like he was: rebellious, full of gestures, without even trying to get back from showing off, when they could, on the contrary, he tried to challenge them. Like any other members of the oniric group, from which Vintilă Ivănceanu was a part of, he first enjoyed the support of M. R. Paraschivescu, the lucky discoverer of talents. Ivănceanu was published in the *Word's story*; the supplement of *The Branches*, his small volume appeared in 1967, in the popular creation for debuts „The Star”, „a totally special talent”, a personality „in full evolution”.

If we were to make the statistics of the words from the area of the belief and of the cult from the volume *Verses*, from 1969, like: cardinal, Satan, Lucifer, Christmas, Parsifal, Bible, the Holy Ghost, archangels, etc., the reader can be left with the feeling that this poet is totally religious. Nevertheless, the poems balance between surrealism and oniric, the whole work standing out through its experimental character, through the diversity of the formal searches, the religiosity passing under the sign of the experiment.⁹ Ivănceanu's surrealism, through the lines of the *Domain*, crosses the unitary feeling of the poetry, even if the images separate from each other as they succeed, and each of them tends to conquer the autonomy which contradicts the whole: „Kingdom of vertebra and / Black crystal, of a crazy swan / A sphinx screams in the Virgin's throat / like a nailed forehead.” The poet can give up, if he wants to, the logics of the surrealists, leaving the metaphors, independently conceived, to unfold as natural as possible and according to the affect's own impulse: „Don't cry, Clotilda, don't cry, / For you I gather the kneecap of saints and thieves, / You will be the snow on which blood drips / From the bodies of Catholics and Huguenots.” *Engraving IV*

There is a similar lyric along the lines where the surrealism caves in front of an unleashed oniric parnassianism, getting close to the oniric poet Leonid Dimov¹⁰: „Lapis lazuli! The helmets go around / through the golden, marble and bloody ponds / Howling, the wolves bow to the dogs. [...] / The lofts turn themselves into humans, / Tears drop from green stars' eyes.”

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⁸ Dumitru Micu, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

⁹ Ion Negoïtescu, *Contemporary writers*, Dacia Publishing House, Cluj, 1994, p. 229.

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« LE BON SENS » DES GROS MOTS

Eugenia ENACHE¹

Abstract

In this corpus (Raymond Queneau's novel, *Zazie dans le métro* / *Zazie în metrou* in Romanian translation by Laszlo Alexandru), we tried to analyze, first of all, the way the thematic and semantic coherence in the familiar register is conveyed ('tonton', 'ptite mère', 'je t'emmerde', 'elle est foutue', 'bordel', 'je m'en fous') in which the characters evolve in the source-text and the target-text. Secondly the analysis is centered upon the familiar and vulgar exclamations and interjections ('con', 'cul', 'merde', 'sacré', 'sacrebleu') that are uttered without any kind of affront. The acceptation that we give to the expression 'bon sens' (right meaning) is situated at the level of the semantics which refers to the meaning of measure, of justness in the translation of the expressions and structures with or without a depreciatory content in target-language.

Keywords: meaning, 'right meaning', affront, thematic coherence, semantic coherence, equivalence, fidelity

Le texte sur lequel porte notre intervention est *Zazie dans le métro* / *Zazie în metrou* dans la traduction en roumain de Laszlo Alexandru. Le roman présente l'histoire de Zazie qui est confiée, par sa mère, pour quelques jours, à son oncle Gabriel. La petite fille est obsédée par l'idée de circuler dans le métro parisien, mais son désir ne sera jamais assouvi, à cause d'une grève. En échange, ses balades dans Paris vont lui procurer des expériences diverses et les réalités sociales qu'elle a connues lui vont faire franchir le pas dans le monde des adultes. Son séjour à Paris va se résumer à « J'ai vieilli. », la réponse donnée aux questions de sa mère : « Alors tu t'es bien amusée ? » ou bien « Alors, qu'est-ce que t'as fait ? ».

Queneau propose une expression alerte, ironique, immédiate, le français parlé quotidien et périphérique, avec ses imprécations et ses grossièretés qu'une traduction devrait rendre pour retracer l'aventure parisienne de la jeune Zazie. L'analyse textuelle ne permet pas une transposition systématique du texte source sur le texte cible. Le choix de la traduction dépend de facteurs multiples et complexes, tels que la réceptabilité sociale, les structures langagières, lexicales et rythmiques de la langue cible. L'analyse cependant, loin de restreindre la créativité du traducteur, permet de parer à la provocation de ces lexies marginales.

Dans la traduction littéraire la question de l'identité, du respect aussi bien de la forme que du fond, de la lettre que de l'esprit, se pose avec une acuité particulière. À chaque mot correspond un seul sens malgré l'infinité de valeurs ou effets de sens qu'il peut avoir, en fait, dans le discours et dont chacune représente un point de vue partiel, une visée particulière sur le sens. Le sens ne se limite pas à la signification, mais il découle

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des connotations du mot dans le discours. Lorsqu'on veut restituer le sens dans une autre langue le problème qui se pose c'est si le sens se dégage aussi clairement de la traduction que de l'original.

L'acception que nous donnons à l'expression « bon sens » se situe au niveau du sémantisme qui se relie à la raison, à la mesure et au « juste mot » dans la traduction en langue cible, en l'occurrence, le roumain, des expressions et des structures au contenu plus ou moins dépréciatif. Le « bon sens » ne veut pas dire la capacité de bien juger et sans passion, mais plutôt la bonne traduction, l'équivalence adéquate du point de vue du sens du mot, en fonction des contraintes du français et du roumain et des préférences stylistiques du traducteur. Le « bon sens » est issu de l'analyse rigoureuse du texte de départ et des circonstances communicationnelles qui l'entourent.

1. Dans le corpus analysé nous nous proposons d'étudier, dans un premier temps, la manière dont on restitue la cohérence thématique et sémantique de certaines séquences du registre familier dans lequel évoluent les personnages dans le texte source et dans le texte cible.

Retrouver dans le texte la singularité d'une parole c'est une tâche assez difficile car traduire signifie non seulement rendre le sens d'une expression mais aussi reconstruire un monde. Pour une bonne traduction, il faut observer le niveau linguistique, le niveau dénotatif, le découpage ou la fragmentation des expressions, des unités phraséologiques et syntagmatiques afin de choisir les équivalences qui sont le reflet d'une situation culturelle spécifique où se font sentir les influences du statut de la langue. Au niveau textuel, la cohérence thématique ou sémantique des mots qui n'ont pas la même force ou sphère conceptuelle, est en conformité avec la situation de communication, le rythme et la tonalité ; les rapprochements morpho-sémantiques, la polysémie constituent quelques obstacles pour lesquels le traducteur doit proposer des solutions qui puissent dégager une interprétation conforme aux intentions du texte source.

Les quelques exemples choisis montrent le fait que le traducteur se trouve, souvent, dans la situation de ne pas pouvoir exprimer toutes les dimensions du texte à traduire puisqu'il doit respecter les intentions du texte même au niveau des mots. Et c'est encore plus difficile de restituer, à la fois, le caractère licencieux de certaines expressions, sans outrager les bonnes mœurs, et le même degré d'accentuation d'une idée, d'une attitude ou d'un sentiment. Le traducteur doit ajouter au vouloir-dire de l'auteur un vouloir-exprimer qui soit fidèle autant que possible, en tenant compte du texte original qui se constitue en un univers de mots, de formes langagières et séquences appartenant au registre familier.

La séquence « ptite mère », employée lorsqu'un personnage s'adresse à une femme inconnue, est traduite par « duduie » ou bien par « mătușico » ; mais les deux équivalents ne recouvrent pas une même réalité dans les deux langues ; « duduie », un équivalent de mademoiselle, est un terme poli adressé à une jeune fille ou à une femme non-mariée ;

« mătușico » constitue un diminutif gentil qui montre de l'affection pour une femme âgée faisant partie de la famille.

Quant à l'appellatif « mon tonton Gabriel », en roumain « unchimeu Gabriel », celui-ci ne rend pas la signification de « tonton » qui est un surnom donné aux homosexuels et dont l'équivalent est « poponar » ; mais cette acception ne serait pas justifiée par le contenu du texte car pour Zazie « tonton » implique de la tendresse et, dans ce sens, l'équivalent le plus approprié pourrait être « unchiulețul ».

Parfois l'expression roumaine « mi se filfîie » (p.13, p.19)² impliquant l'indifférence et le désintéret, est l'équivalent de deux expressions françaises : « Jm'en fous. » (p.11) qui signifie « ne pas s'intéresser, être indifférent à quelque chose » ou bien « Ça me fait mar(r)er » (p.20). Dans le premier cas, le sens est le même dans les deux langues ; mais pour le deuxième exemple appartenant au registre familier le sens est de « s'amuser, rire, rigoler, plaisanter ou bien s'ennuyer. » ; nous trouvons la traduction est un peu exagérée puisque Charles qui l'emploie est plutôt agacé par la petite Zazie.

Pour le lecteur roumain, le français possède certaines expressions qui ont des sonorités particulières et qui font rapidement penser à des mots grossiers comme, par exemple, « elle est foutue ». La séquence « elle est foutue » (p.28) qui signifie « en mauvais état » est traduite, par « nu mai e bună de nimic » (p.24), en ignorant la sonorité qui pourrait renvoyer à une expression grossière, en roumain.

Le mot « bordel », maison où l'on pratique la prostitution, recouvre, dans la traduction en roumain tout une autre réalité. Il évoque le grand tapage et le désordre : « Merde, rugit Charles, y a pas moyen d'être tranquille dans ce bordel. » (p.138) / « Rahat, rage Charles, nu-i cu putință să stai liniștit în tevatura asta. » p.102 où seule compte l'idée de scandale et où l'on renonce au sens d'absence d'ordre.

Un mot qui pourrait poser des problèmes au moment de la traduction est « emmerder » ; il dénote, dans le registre familier, une attitude d'agacement ou bien une attitude hautaine à l'égard d'une personne ou d'une situation que l'on considère négligeable ; d'autre part, le terme signifie aussi « ennuyer » ou dans un registre très familier « faire chier ». Les syntagmes qui restituent la langue source connotent l'indifférence et l'irritation et sont, en même temps, une preuve de la pauvreté du vocabulaire des personnages : « Je t'emmerde, hurle Gabriel. Tu entends, je t'emmerde. » (p.27) « Mă pupi în cur, urlă Gabriel. Înțelegi, mă pupi în cur. », (p.24) « Vous, dit Gabriel, je vous emmerde. Non, mes amis, ajouta-t-il à l'intention des autres, non, c'est pas seulement ça (sourir) (silence), mais j'aurais tellement aimé que Marceline puisse m'admirer, elle aussi. » (p.156) « De tine, zise Gabriel, mă doare-n cur. Nu, prieteni, adăugă el pentru ceilalți, nu-i numai asta (suspîn) (liniște) dar mi-ar fi plăcut așa de mult să mă fi putut admira și Marceline. » (p.115)

² Les pages entre parenthèses renvoient à l'édition Queneau, Raymond, *Zazie dans le métro*, Paris, Gallimard, coll. « Folio plus classiques », 1959, 2006, pour le texte français et, respectivement, à Queneau, Raymond, *Zazie în metrou*, traducere și pseudopostfață de Laszlo Alexandru, prefață de Luca Pițu; <http://193.226.7.140/~laszlo/Zazie.pdf> pour la version en roumain.

2. Dans un deuxième temps, l'analyse porte sur les exclamations et les interjections familières ou grossières qui sont proférées par dérision, sans aucune intention d'offense. Comment traduire les « gros mots » qui manquent de raffinement, de finesse, de délicatesse et qui offensent la pudeur et sont contraires à la décence ? Le gros mot est l'expression du milieu, il intervient sur le plan communicatif et émotionnel et exprime l'indignation, le mépris, la colère, le refus ; ou bien, il peut marquer un mouvement de surprise, d'étonnement. Leur emploi caractérise le personnage, un être frustré, sans culture, mais il peut devenir, aussi bien, une formule de routine.

La traduction de ces « gros mots » est un travail d'interprétation littéraire, d'une part et, naturellement, un travail de la langue parce que l'expression verbale ne recouvre pas similairement les contenus, le sens des mots n'a pas la même surface conceptuelle. Le choix des mots et des expressions que nous proposons pour l'analyse a été fait en fonction plutôt de la « sonorité » de ces syntagmes et de la ressemblance phonétique, aléatoire, avec le roumain.

Dans le cas de l'interjection négative et méprisante « mon cul », pour laquelle le dictionnaire donne comme équivalent « pe dracu ! », le traducteur a choisi la variante littérale, mais dépréciative, « cur » tout en ignorant la signification anatomique, en s'arrêtant au rapprochement phonique ou bien orthographique pour restituer l'oralité ; mais l'intention de refus, de déni, de parole par laquelle on désavoue ce qu'on a dit est supprimée ; le décalage entre la traduction littérale et l'intention, en tant que faute contre les règles du savoir-vivre de la part de celui qui prononce avec un ton de sarcasme et de mélancolie « mon cul », est important : « Snob mon cul » (p.12) « Curu-i snob » (p.13) ; « Napoléon mon cul, réplique Zazie. » (p.14) « Curu Napoleon, replică Zazie. » (p.15) ; « Mélancolique mon cul, réplique Charles. » (p.20) « Curu melancolic, replică Charles » (p.18). Même si, parfois, le ton change, l'expression « cul » reste la même partout, répétitive, comme un ancien disque. Utilisée par Zazie, l'expression connote une maturité feinte, un détachement à l'égard des situations qu'elle traverse ou des événements qui se déroulent pendant son séjour parisien. Le mot « con » qui signifie « imbécile, idiot, bête, crétin, débile » reçoit en roumain des équivalents différents : « Nu mă-nteresează absolut deloc umflatu ăla, cu pălăria lui dă bou. » (p.15)/« Il m'intéresse pas du tout, cet enflé, avec son chapeau à la con. » (p.14) ; dans l'exemple, le sens se rapproche à celui de bête, animal en évoquant l'idée de force, de violence et de manque d'intelligence. Pour « un vieux con » (p.16) on a l'équivalent « un boșorog tîmpit » (p.16) qui, cette fois-ci, exprime l'impuissance, la débilité. Si l'on pose le problème de la traduction de l'intention, on pourrait utiliser des substituts ou équivalents plus triviaux qui seraient mal digérés, mais qui pourraient mieux restituer l'intention et annuler l'écart temporel et accentuer, à la fois, l'écart entre deux univers culturels (celui français, plus raffiné, en expression, celui roumain, moins polis). Mais dans la séquence « c'est drôlement con les contes de fées » (p.31)/ « sînt ciudat de tîmpite poveștile cu zîne » (p.27) le mot « con » recouvre les significations de ridicule ou d'inepte. Ce sont des expressions d'une gaieté licencieuse,

socialement peu délicates, mais sans violence ; elles ont un caractère spontané, décontracté et, pourtant, contraire à la morale, aux bonnes mœurs.

Un autre mot qui poserait des problèmes de traduction est « merde » car le contexte offre plusieurs interprétations. Comme interjection le mot peut exprimer un sentiment d'impatience : « Alors quoi, merde, dit Zazie, on va le boire, ce verre ? » (p.17)/ « Rahat, zice Zazie, o bem odată, dușca aia ? » (p.17) ; de refus : « Merde de merde, je veux pas dans ma maison d'une petite salope qui dise des cochonnetés comme ça. » (p.20)/ « Rahatu mă-sii, nu vreau în casă la mine o mică ștoarfă care să zică așa niște porcăciuni. » (p.19) ; de surprise : « Merde, qu'il dit en se reculant, ça me fout le vertige. » (p.86)/ « Rahat, zice dându-se înapoi, mă prinde amețeala. » (p.65); de mécontentement : « Merde à la fin, gueula Gabriel, c'est pas drôle quoi merde ce petit jeu-là, t'as pas encore compris ? » (p.101)/ « Paștele mății, răcni Gabriel, nu-i deloc amuzant jocu ăsta, ce naiba, n-ai înțeles odată ? » (p.76) ou « Merde, pourtant, ça a fait assez de foin. » (p.51)/ « La naiba, totuși a făcut mare vîlvă. » (p.41). Dans les deux derniers exemples la traduction littérale est remplacée par des équivalents qui sont de termes injurieux ou de paroles insolentes d'une familiarité excessive.

Restituer certaines expressions relatives à la religion telles « sacré », « palsambleu », « crénom » dont l'équivalent en roumain est assez offensant n'est pas une entreprise facile.

« Sacrée cloche, lui dit Charles affectueusement. » (p.70) « Afurisitu naibii, zice Charles afectuos. » (p.54) ou « Sacré Gabriel, dit Gridoux, toujours le mot pour rire. » (p.190)/ « Al naibii Gabriel, zise Gridoux, totdeauna ar vrea să rîdă. » (p.138) ou bien « Sacré maladroit. » (p.185) / « Mare bleg mai ești. » (p.135). Posé avant le nom, « sacré » peut renforcer un terme injurieux ou, comme dans les exemples choisis, qualifier une chose qui provoque une impression désagréable. L'équivalent dans la langue cible accumule une connotation religieuse « a afurisi – anathémiser, maudire » et une connotation commune « afurisit – méchant, endiablé ». Pour le dernier exemple et pour le registre familier, c'est la nuance ironique qui prédomine

Quant à l'expression « palsambleu », un euphémisme pour « par le sang de Dieu » est un juron à des connotations religieuses en usage au XVII^e siècle, selon le dictionnaire *Le Petit Robert*, et dont l'équivalent en langue cible garde cette connotation religieuse : « Palsambleu, hurla Turandot. » (p.182)/ « Mnezeiimășii, urlă Turandot. » (p.133)

Parfois la restitution des significations change de contenu, comme dans le syntagme « crénom » qui appartient au langage populaire et provient de l'expression « sacré nom » qui renforce un juron. La nuance de dépit et de déception que le syntagme connote se rapporte à une situation, mais au moment de la traduction cette connotation porte sur la personne : « Crénom, murmura le flicard mis en appétit. » (p.107)/ « R-aș al dracului, murmură polițaiu cu ciudă. » (p.80)

En guise de conclusion

En s'arrêtant aux quelques équivalences proposées par le traducteur, on remarque le fait qu'elles cherchent à reproduire la forme du texte de départ, ou bien à répondre aux besoins du destinataire. Parfois la traduction privilégie le mot, parfois elle prend en considération le contexte et la signification pour mieux rendre le sens de l'expression. L'expression équivalente appropriée respecte autant le registre de langue (familier), le style que l'expressivité pour obtenir une identité affective et pour recréer un autre texte porteur d'une charge suggestive et sémantique semblable au texte source, en dépit de la langue cible qui, parfois, brise l'unité sens-son initiale, en imposant sa résonance, ses rythmes et ses sonorités.

La traduction s'avère un acte complexe au cours duquel le traducteur, qui sert, à la fois, deux maîtres, la langue source et la langue cible, reformule le message original en l'adaptant au besoin de la culture cible. Le langage du roman illustre le français tel qu'il se parle, le langage vrai, le langage effectivement utilisé dans la vie d'aujourd'hui, le français parlé contemporain, le lexique familier, voire argotique, un langage non conventionnel qui ne respecte pas les conventions sociales traditionnelles. Du point de vue de la langue parlée, si l'on traduit d'une manière correcte en privilégiant le « bon sens », la bienséance on risque de ne pas restituer le parlé français contemporain. En lisant la version roumaine nous nous trouvons devant un texte, à la fois, fidèle à l'original et par conséquent assez grossier et infidèle, mais convenable et privé du charme et de la saveur de l'original. Ce que la traduction du texte de Queneau impose c'est la fidélité au sens de profondeur du texte, en changeant la référence, mais pas beaucoup, pour donner, à part la lettre, l'effet même que le texte voudrait obtenir. La fidélité lexicale est une illusion qui s'oppose à la traduction de l'esprit d'un texte au lieu d'offrir la garantie de l'exactitude. Le mot juste serait celui qui adaptant la lettre de l'original devient à son tour une expression originale traduisant l'esprit. Nous avons voulu montrer que la visée du traducteur était de naturaliser l'œuvre originale en privilégiant le sens, l'équivalence dynamique des paroles marquées d'irrévérence et la cohérence textuelle en langue cible et de restituer le même degré d'accentuation d'une idée, d'une attitude ou bien d'un sentiment. Si la réexpression du registre familier n'a pas posé de grands problèmes, la traduction des mots dont le sémantisme se retrouve dans le registre péjoratif (ces mots ont perdu leur dénotation et ont reçu des connotations contextuelles) se situe sous le signe de l'approximation ou de l'hypothétique. Dans la traduction les mots peuvent avoir le même signifiant ou bien un autre mais ils doivent garder les mêmes équivalences d'effets et de valeurs affectives.

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SÉQUENCES LIBRES, SÉQUENCES FIGÉES ET COLLOCATIONS DANS LA PERSPECTIVE DE LA TRADUCTION

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Abstract

This paper tries to clarify the problem of types of sequences of linguistic units specific to a specialized text and to suggest some solutions for their translation. In the process of translation of specialized texts, the first task of the translator consists of identifying the types of sequences of linguistic units, which may be syntagms, frozen structures or collocations. The following task would be to find the most adequate equivalent of those linguistic units in the target language, which are to be checked in various texts and similar contexts.

Keywords: frozen structure, collocation, translation

Introduction

Depuis quelque temps, les préoccupations des linguistes tournent autour des textes spécialisés, autour de l'étude des corpus linguistiques formés à partir de textes de ce type et, de plus en plus, autour des structures mono- ou polylexicales qui foisonnent dans les textes mentionnés.

On parle non seulement de texte spécialisé mais aussi de discours spécialisé, les deux constituant des manifestations de la communication spécialisée (Laurent Gautier, 2008). Il semble que les linguistes ont renoncé à la notion de langue de spécialité qui « souffre d'induire une fragmentation et une marginalité qui sont contre-intuitives. [...] La notion de langue spécialisée est plus pragmatique : c'est une langue naturelle considérée en tant que vecteur de connaissances spécialisées. En passant de 'langues spécialisée' à 'discours spécialisé' nous souhaitons insister encore davantage sur sa dimension fonctionnelle » (Laurent Gautier, 2008).

Bakhtine disait que « apprendre à parler c'est apprendre à structurer des énoncés parce que nous parlons par énoncés et non par propositions isolées, et, encore moins, bien entendu, par mots isolés » (Bakhtine, 1984 : 285).

Les deux auteurs cités, tout en se rapportant à des aspects différents de la langue, soulignent fortement la nécessité de prendre en considération des ensembles plus vastes de la langue pour pouvoir comprendre le sens et le message de la communication.

Ce qui nous intéresse particulièrement c'est la compréhension des textes spécialisés en vue de la traduction. Il ne fait aucun doute que les textes spécialisés s'adressent aux spécialistes, mais ces textes sont d'habitude décodés par des traducteurs qui ne sont pas nécessairement des spécialistes du domaine visé. Ils appliquent alors une stratégie qui commence par la familiarisation avec le domaine et qui consiste dans la recherche de documents traitant du domaine : des articles publiés dans des revues de spécialité, des

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manuels, des glossaires terminologiques, des dictionnaires. Une lecture assidue de ces textes va permettre au traducteur de s'appropriier le domaine de spécialité et, en plus de cela, d'identifier des séquences significatives. Ces séquences significatives peuvent être des séquences librement constituées, ou des syntagmes libres, des séquences figées ou des collocations.

Dans l'étude des textes spécialisés, l'approche du traducteur sera plutôt une approche phraséologique qui visera non seulement l'identification des unités de sens mais aussi l'identification d'un équivalent dans la langue cible de la traduction.

Pour ce qui est des textes spécialisés, une remarque faite par John Humbley et Oscar Torres Vera (2010) a retenu notre attention. Dans leur article, les deux auteurs disent que « le texte le plus basique de ce genre est la recette de cuisine » et ils donnent un exemple de ce que nous avons appelé « séquence significative » : *farine type 55*. A un premier abord, cette séquence ne pose pas de problèmes de traduction, sauf que la farine en question présente quelques caractéristiques de contenu qui se retrouvent dans un type de farine en France et dans un type de farine qui porte un autre nom dans un autre pays, en Grande Bretagne, par exemple. Dans ce cas, le traducteur doit faire des recherches assidues pour identifier le type de farine fabriquée en Grande Bretagne qui correspond aux caractéristiques de *farine type 55* fabriquée en France. Nous avons donné cet exemple pour illustrer la complexité de l'identification des unités significatives qui ne sont pas toujours aussi évidentes pour tout le monde.

Dans les textes spécialisés ou non spécialisés, les unités lexicales se combinent selon des affinités syntaxiques et/ou sémantiques. Les affinités combinatoires des unités monolexicales conduisent à la formation d'unités polylexicales qui sont plus ou moins soudées. Leur analyse en vue de la compréhension et de la traduction tient de ce que Philippe Thoiron (1991) appelle « *un problème de stratégie de décodage* ». Il arrive souvent que l'explication d'un terme de stricte spécialité se trouve dans une reformulation à l'intérieur du même texte ou après quelques signes de ponctuation, comme les parenthèses et les tirets. Mais dans la plupart des cas, il revient au traducteur d'identifier le sens des structures libres, des structures figées ou des collocations.

Notre étude se propose d'étudier ce trois types de structures lexicales dans des textes spécialisés en suivant particulièrement leur formation et leur fréquence. Pour l'étude, nous avons choisi deux textes du domaine financier parus, l'un, dans une publication qui s'adresse au grand public et aux spécialistes, en l'occurrence latribune.fr/ et l'autre publié sur un site spécialisé qui s'adresse uniquement aux spécialistes, www.legifrance.gouv.fr/. Les textes concernés sont l'article *Les banques rappelées à l'ordre par le conseil de stabilité financière* (www.latribune.fr/) et respectivement les réglementations prévues dans *Le code des marchés publics. Première partie. Disposition applicables aux pouvoirs adjudicateurs. Titre 1er Champs d'application et principes fondamentaux* (www.legifrance.gouv.fr/.)

La combinatoire lexicale

Nous reprenons le terme de *combinatoire lexicale* employé par Greimas et Courtès (1979) et par T. Cristea (2001) pour désigner les unités polylexicales de trois types : les séquences libres, les séquences figées et les collocations. Il s'agit d'unités significatives ou signifiantes, évidemment dans des acceptions différentes du terme.

Ces unités sont constituées grâce aux affinités combinatoires que les lexèmes manifestent entre eux. Les résultats de ces combinaisons sont plus ou moins stables ou, si l'on préfère, plus ou moins destructibles. L'axe syntagmatique est le lieu où se manifestent ces aptitudes de certains lexèmes à se combiner entre eux. Le plus souvent, ces combinaisons ont comme résultat des syntagmes nominaux, pronominaux, adjectivaux, verbaux ou adverbiaux. Du point de vue d'un locuteur natif, celui-ci ne se posera pas de questions devant une suite de termes comme *les fonds propres de la banque* car il est tout à fait naturel de considérer cette séquence de la chaîne parlée comme un syntagme nominal dont la tête est *fonds*. Il en va de même pour la structure *rendre le système financier plus sûr*, encore un syntagme, verbal cette fois. Par contre, une suite comme *Bon nombre de banques traînent la patte* (www.latribune.fr/) ou *Tiff Macklem a enfoncé le clou*. (www.latribune.fr/) ne sont pas si facilement décodées et elles sont perçues comme des séquences problématiques, car leur sens n'est pas la somme des sens des unités composantes. On dirait que le sens de *risque à l'échelle mondiale* ou *présenter un risque systémique* n'échappe pas au traducteur, mais il se voit obligé de trouver une structure semblable dans la langue cible, car dans *échelle mondiale* l'unité lexicale *échelle* met en fonction certaines de ses propriétés sémantiques et syntaxiques) pour se combiner avec l'adjectif relationnel *mondiale*, tandis qu'un *risque* nous paraîtrait plutôt qualifié par un adjectif axiologique comme *grand*, *énorme*. Si on a choisi le déterminant *systémique*, cela veut dire que les deux termes ont ensemble un certain sens, que le sens de *risque* est complété dans ce contexte par le déterminant *systémique*.

Nous avons affaire à trois types de structures lexicales:

- structure combinatoire libre ou syntagme : *fonds propres / fonds propres de la banque*;
- structure figée: *traîner la patte, enfoncer le clou*;
- structure collocative ou collocation: *risque systémique, risque à l'échelle mondiale*.

Evidemment, les structures en question sont employées avec une certaine intentionnalité et en connaissance de cause par l'auteur du texte. Le décodeur-traducteur se trouve devant la tâche de choisir les combinatoires lexicales qui disent la même chose dans la langue d'arrivée. Autrement dit de trouver dans la langue d'arrivée une séquence lexicale transmettant le même sens que la séquence de la langue de départ.

Les structures combinatoires libres

Les combinatoires libres ou les syntagmes représentent les combinatoires les plus fréquentes dans les textes, quelque soit le genre auquel ils appartiennent. Ce sont les valences combinatoires des termes qui entrent en jeu, et les surprises sont rares. L'axe syntagmatique est l'axe des « rapport *in praesentia*, des rapports effectifs qui unissent deux

ou plusieurs unités qui se suivent dans l'ordre linéaire de la chaîne » (Frank Neveu, 2010: 281). Même si les rapports entre unités linguistiques peuvent s'établir à n'importe quel niveau (Gabriela Bidu Vrânceanu et alii, 1997 : 459), nous allons accorder un intérêt particulier aux mots qui se combinent pour former des syntagmes.

Dans les deux textes mentionnés, les syntagmes libres sont les plus nombreux et l'explication est tout à fait simple. Dans la chaîne parlée, les mots se combinent entre eux selon les classèmes qu'ils ont en commun. Par exemple, dans le syntagme *le premier sous-gouverneur chargé de l'application des réformes bancaires*, la tête de ce syntagme, le nom-composé *le sous-gouverneur*, a un déterminant qui est un adjectif, l'adjectif numéral *le premier*. Leur combinaison est tout à fait possible grâce au classème [masculin], commun aux deux termes. Le nom qui constitue la tête du syntagme est encore déterminé par l'adjectif verbal post posé *chargé de*, qui est à son tour suivi obligatoirement par une détermination (chargé de quelque chose). L'enchaînement des mots sur la chaîne parlée se fait conformément aux classèmes qui permettent aux termes de se combiner, conformément aux affinités combinatoires sémantiques mais aussi aux combinaisons qui se réalisent sur la base des règles syntaxiques. La complémentation de *chargé de* est *l'application des réformes bancaires*, complémentation qui s'inscrit parfaitement dans le contexte.

Le texte spécialisé extrait du *Code des marchés publics* présente lui aussi un nombre appréciable de syntagmes dont nous citerons *répondre à leurs besoins en matière de travaux, de fournitures ou de services*, un syntagme verbal. Dans ce cas, le verbe *répondre à* sera suivi, conformément aux règles syntaxiques, par un complément indirect, *répondre aux besoins de quelqu'un*.

La prépondérance des syntagmes (nominaux, verbaux, adjectivaux) ne surprend pas et, de plus, n'est pas de nature à poser des problèmes au traducteur.

Les structures figées

Des structures comme « *Tiff Macklem enfonce le clou* » ou « *nombre de banques traînent la patte* » ([\(www.latribune.fr/\)](http://www.latribune.fr/)) sont caractérisées comme des structures figées. Le figement, comme nous le dit Salah Mejri (2008) est « *un processus linguistique qui engage toutes les dimensions du système* ». Selon le même linguiste, ces unités syntagmatiques bien formées sont fixées dans le lexique. Les séquences figées, tout en ayant la même configuration que les séquences libres, se sont formées grâce à la mise en place de certains mécanismes de la langue comportant certaines spécificités.

Toutes ces considérations nous portent à croire que la structure de ces séquences est en quelque sorte conforme aux règles de combinaison sur l'axe syntagmatique, car *enfoncer* suppose bien un complément d'objet direct, *le clou*, en l'occurrence, mais le sens doit être cherché ailleurs. Il peut s'agir d'un sens figuré ou d'un sens acquis dans une circonstance quelconque, mais assez significative pour marquer la naissance d'un sens nouveau. A la recherche d'une explication pour le sens des séquences figées, Gérard Petit et Evangéla Liberopoulou (2008) considèrent que les locutions figées sont « *des macrostructures pouvant avoir la structure et le format de syntagmes complets* » dont le sens « *sera*

supposé se résoudre à partir de celui du mot simple qui constitue la tête syntaxique de l'expression ». Ceci revient à dire qu'une séquence telle que « *enfoncer le clou* » pourrait être comprise, selon des auteurs d'un dictionnaire électronique, par l'intermédiaire d'une analogie avec l'activité répétitive exprimée par le verbe « *enfoncer* », qui donnerait à la séquence mentionnée le sens de « *répéter de façon insistante, comme pour enfoncer le quelque chose dans la tête de quelqu'un* » (www.linternaute.com/expression/langue.../). Selon les auteurs du Reverso (dictionnaire.reverso.net/francais-definition/enfoncer%20le%20clou), un autre dictionnaire électronique fiable, la séquence signifie « *continuer dans un chemin ou une initiative qui a permis d'obtenir des premiers résultats* ». Le contexte d'emploi de cette séquence prouve qu'une combinaison des deux explications de sens serait la solution du problème. Il en va de même pour « *traîner la patte* » où la métaphore qui se trouve à la base de la séquence figée laisse peu de doutes sur son sens.

On est amené à comprendre que les séquences figées posent deux problèmes au traducteur: l'identification du sens et l'identification d'une séquence équivalente de tous les points de vue, si possible: équivalence de structure et équivalence de sens. Pour ce qui est de la première séquence figée, « *enfoncer le clou* », une structure équivalente pourrait être « *a bate la cap* » dans le sens d'insister pour faire admettre une idée, mais il y a une autre solution pour la traduction en roumain par l'intermédiaire d'une locution verbale, « *a toca la cap* », (www.webdex.ro/online/dictionar/toca, www.dex.ro/) qui signifie « *a vorbi mult, vrute si nevrute* », « *a plictisi pe cineva spunându-i vrute si nevrute* », « *a bate pe cineva la cap cu același lucru* ». En roumain, conformément aux dictionnaires cités, on insiste sur l'ennui causé par tant de bavardage inutile (*a vorbi vrute si nevrute*), tandis que la séquence française insiste plutôt sur la répétition, sur la réitération d'une chose jusqu'au rassasiement de l'audience. La solution la plus appropriée pour une bonne traduction d'une séquence figée française en roumain doit s'appuyer sur un grand nombre de contextes dans lesquels la séquence est présente. Vu que le sens de la séquence est identifiable grâce au contexte, il est plus que probable que l'un ou l'autre des contextes favorisent l'actualisation de certains traits sémiques dans un contextes et d'autres traits sémiques dans un autre contexte. Cela expliquerait les sens légèrement différents de la séquence dans deux des dictionnaires en ligne consultés. Mais dans la plus grande partie des cas, comme dans « *traîner la patte* », le sens est dépourvu d'équivoque ou d'ambiguïté. La métaphore est reprise au monde animal, où n'importe qui a le malheur de traîner la patte ou d'être lent à faire quelque chose n'aura pas beaucoup de chances dans son activité. Dans ce cas, il est plus facile de trouver une traduction adéquate, grande partie à cause de la transparence de la séquence figée. Même s'il s'agit d'un oiseau, on peut traduire la séquence en roumain « *a șchiopăta* », « *a-i merge rau* ».

Dans les textes spécialisés publiés dans les journaux ou dans les magazines destinés au grand public, il n'est pas rare de trouver des séquences figées, employées pour des raisons de style. Ce qui n'est pas le cas des textes spécialisés publiés sur des sites spécialisés, comme le *Code des marchés publics*, mentionné dans cet article. Dans ce genre de textes, destinés aux spécialistes, ayant un but prescriptif ou injonctif, n'étant donc pas

destinés au grand public, l'expression tend à se maintenir dans les limites de la désignation et du sens dénotatif. Les combinaisons les plus fréquentes dans ce genre de textes sont, évidemment, les séquences libres et les collocations. Les séquences libres sont inhérentes, vu que des termes employés dans leur sens dénotatif sont employés dans les contextes les plus communs. Quant aux collocations, celles-ci se rapportent plutôt au sens particulier d'une cooccurrence particulière de deux ou trois termes et au sens donné à la séquence respective juste à cause de la cooccurrence.

Les collocations

Le degré de spécialisation d'un texte consiste dans la qualité des termes employés: plus les termes de spécialité sont nombreux plus le texte est spécialisé. Un texte de spécialité s'adresse uniquement aux spécialistes du domaine et il suppose de la part du destinataire et du destinataire un certain volume de connaissances qu'ils ont en commun. C'est ce qui rend possible la communication spécialisée mentionnée par Laurent Gautier (2008).

Le vocabulaire spécialisé se caractérise par la présence de certains termes et notions de spécialité et par l'emploi d'un grand nombre de collocations. Autrement dit nous avons affaire à un grand nombre de termes monolexicaux ou plurilexicaux. Une séquence comme « *un risque systémique* » n'est pas une simple combinaison sur l'axe syntagmatique du nom « *risque* » et de l'adjectif « *systémique* », car c'est un terme qui s'emploie surtout dans le domaine financier, donc elle a un sens spécialisé, qui s'actualise uniquement dans ce domaine et qui signifie qu'une banque est menacée d'un risque de faillite, de panique ou de retrait massif des dépôts. Dans un autre domaine, le sens de l'adjectif *systémique* sera différent surtout en combinaison avec le nom « *risque* ».

Pour un terminologue, « *un risque systémique* » représente une collocation, tout comme *droit national*, *prendre du retard*, *un ratio de fonds propres durs*. Selon Agnès Tutin (2005), les collocations sont « des expressions linguistiques bi-partites, récurrentes dans la langue, comme *essuyer un échec* ou *peur bleue*, dont la base (par exemple *échec* dans *essuyer un échec*) conserve son sens premier, alors que l'autre, appelé collocatif (*essuyer*, dans *essuyer un échec*), bien que souvent transparent, est plus difficilement prédictible ». Si on applique la classification des collocations faite par Tutin et Grossmann (2002), on pourrait dire que *droit national* est une collocation transparente, car le collocatif est interprétable, mais non prédictible ; *risque systémique* est une collocation opaque, car l'interprétation du collocatif n'est ni transparente ni prédictible ; *prendre du retard* où l'association est interprétable et prédictible, est une collocation régulière.

Les classifications des collocations se font selon des critères différents, mais ce qui importe c'est de les identifier et de les définir. Pour ce qui est de l'identification, elle se fera selon des traits spécifiques. Dans la plupart des cas, les collocations sont binaires (*risque systémique*) et à l'intérieur de la collocation il y a un élément important, qui laisse prévoir le sens, *risque* dans *risque systémique*, et un élément secondaire, qui spécifie le domaine, *systémique* dans notre cas.

On identifie les collocations dans les textes dits spécialisés mais aussi dans les textes non spécialisés. C'est la sélection lexicale qui intervient dans leur formation ou ce que Mel'čuk et Haussmann appellent cooccurrence restreinte (Mel'čuk et Haussmann cités par Tutin et Grossmann, 2002) : « Haussmann suggère dans sa formulation que la base impose la sélection du collocatif. Cette perspective apparaît encore plus claire chez Mel'čuk pour qui la collocation doit être envisagée dans le cadre de la production. Pour lui, « il y a collocation lorsque, voulant "produire" une suite de deux expressions, le choix d'une expression n'est pas libre, mais imposé par l'autre. Pour lexicaliser le sens d'*intense*' en cooccurrence avec *peur*, le locuteur choisira *bleue*. La cooccurrence n'est pas libre, mais restreinte ». Ainsi, dans le cas de la collocation « marché public » on constate que le choix du collocatif « public » n'est pas libre ce qui devient encore plus claire si on lit la définition de la notion de *marché public* figurant dans la *Code des marchés publics* (www.legifrance.gouv.fr/): « Les marchés publics sont les contrats conclus à titre onéreux entre les pouvoirs adjudicateurs définis à l'article 2 et des opérateurs économiques publics ou privés, pour répondre à leurs besoins en matière de travaux, de fournitures ou de services ». Alors, le sens ne pourra être exprimé par aucun autre déterminant de la base de la collocation, *marché*. *Marché* peut se combiner librement avec un grand nombre de collocatifs, sans avoir le même sens. Nous avons identifié 24 combinatoires avec le terme *marché*:

marché hors cote, marché libre, marché au comptant, marché bancaire, marché centralisé, marché conditionnel, marché contingent; marché d'instrument financiers, marché de capitaux, marché de capitaux, marché efficient, marché en équilibre, marché financier, marché gris, marché monétaire, marché obligatoire, marché primaire, marché parfait, marché réglementé, marche spot, marché secondaire, marché spéculatif, marché à l'équilibre, marché à terme.

(www.vernimmen.net/html/glossaire/definition_marche.html). Il est incontestable que chacune des structures binaires mentionnées ont un sens qui se forme autour de la base de la collocation mais qui est précisé par le collocatif. Les constituants de la collocation ne s'associent pas au hasard et pourtant cette association n'est pas figée. C'est pour cela que beaucoup de linguistes soulignent le non figement des collocations.

Une dernière précision s'impose, et elle concerne le processus de traduction: dans la langue cible, c'est toujours la base de la collocation qui aura le plus grand poids dans l'équivalent de la collocation.

Conclusion

Les associations des mots sur l'axe syntagmatique se font sur la base de leurs affinités combinatoires. Les syntagmes libres, les syntagmes figées et les collocations se forment selon des règles bien établies ou selon des règles qui fonctionnent à un certain moment de l'évolution de la langue.

A côté des règles de formation de ces structures associatives, ce qui compte pour les linguistes, pour les terminologues et pour les traducteurs est l'identification du sens de ces associations. Pour pouvoir donner un équivalent exact, le traducteur se trouve dans la

situation de faire un travail complexe qui consiste dans l'identification des sèmes constitutifs de l'unité de sens, l'identification de ses possibilités combinatoires et des contextes les plus fréquents dans lesquels ces unités apparaissent.

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HENRY BAUCHAU, LE LECTEUR-POÈTE: AUX SOURCES D'UN IMAGINAIRE

Corina BOZEDEAN¹

Abstract

If Henry Bauchau's imaginary is, on one side, tributary to the reality it is part of, its many readings are, as well, a true source of inspiration, reflection and configuration of subjectivity and his imaginary. Bauchau is thus enrolled in an entire generation of poets who have chosen the semantic and lexical register of the mineral matter in order to express the theme of the suffering and ruins caused by war, but also the return to the immediate reality, as the only viable perspective. In this context, the meeting with the work of Philippe Jaccottet is meant to awaken in Henry Bauchau the taste for the spectacle of the real and for the excitement it is able to create.

Keywords: imaginary, intertextuality, mineral, writing, inspiration

Si les journaux d'Henry Bauchau montrent combien son imaginaire minéral est tributaire de la fréquentation de l'espace minéral de la montagne suisse², ils disent aussi le nombre impressionnant de lectures qui constituent une véritable matière d'inspiration, de réflexion et construction de sa subjectivité et de son imaginaire. D'ailleurs, l'intertextualité représente une des tendances prégnantes de l'époque contemporaine quand, comme l'indiquent Dominique Viart et Bruno Vercier, « il n'est écrivain qui ne soit aussi lecteur, toute œuvre s'écrit d'abord avec d'autres œuvres, dont elle s'alimente »³.

Plusieurs études critiques ont déjà signalé les nombreuses affinités et influences subies par Henry Bauchau dans la formation de sa personnalité littéraire. Le nombre des écrivains ayant fécondé son inspiration et modelé son écriture est grand ; il s'agira ici de montrer notamment comment la lecture de Philippe Jaccottet a pu contribuer à la configuration de l'imaginaire minéral bauchalien et la manière dont il a orienté sa poétique.

En effet, toute une génération de poètes s'est montrée fascinée par la matière minérale et a choisi ce registre sémantique et lexical pour exprimer le thème de la souffrance et des ruines de la guerre. C'est une époque à laquelle, sans avoir encore publié, Henry Bauchau écrit déjà⁴. La lecture des écrits d'Henry Bauchau à cette époque

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² Voir à cet effet notre étude « Paysage suisse et imaginaire minéral chez Henry Bauchau », *Revue Internationale Henry Bauchau. L'écriture à l'écoute*, no. 3/2010, Louvain-la-Neuve, Presses Universitaires de Louvain, p. 91-101.

³ Dominique Viart, Bruno Vercier, *La littérature française au présent. Héritage, modernité, mutations*, Paris, Bordas, 2005, p. 71.

⁴ Myriam Watthee-Delmotte signale que l'écrivain s'essayait à quelques formes poétiques dès 1932 ; voir à cet égard Geneviève Duchenne, Vincent Dujardin, Myriam Watthee-Delmotte, *Henry Bauchau dans la tourmente du XXe siècle. Configurations historiques et imaginaires*, Bruxelles, Le Cri, 2008, « Biographie » que l'écrivain s'essayait à quelques formes poétiques dès 1932, p. 131.

révèle une consonance problématique avec ses contemporains : un sujet en crise, préoccupé de dire sa blessure, aliéné et à la recherche d'une identité. Henry Bauchau connaît bien la plupart des poètes « minéralogistes » analysés par la critique⁵. Comme Jaccottet, Bonnefoy, Char, Ponge, Gaspar, Guillevic, du Bouchet, Henry Bauchau a vécu les événements bouleversants de sa génération, et a tenté de trouver dans la littérature une manière de surmonter psychiquement cette réalité. Sa bibliothèque léguée au Fonds Henry Bauchau – qui ne contient pourtant pas l'intégralité des volumes qu'il a lus – rend compte du fait que ces poètes ont fait partie de ses lectures. Même si ces volumes ne contiennent pas d'annotations, différentes notes de lectures, dédicaces ou lettres témoignent de l'inscription de Bauchau dans un champ littéraire et dans une tradition de l'imaginaire de la matière en général et du minéral en particulier, à laquelle il fait écho à sa manière. Ces poètes sont souvent mentionnés par Henry Bauchau dans ses journaux, leurs vers cités et commentés afin d'illustrer ses propres états d'âme, ou tout simplement parce qu'ils ont été retenus comme formules poétiques ou réflexions intéressantes. À cela s'ajoute la relation directe et constante qu'il a eue avec quelques-uns de ces poètes, repérable elle aussi dans les pages des journaux, les correspondances et les divers témoignages. Il y a chez Henry Bauchau un besoin permanent de se rapporter aux productions littéraires de son époque afin de définir son identité d'écrivain. Ceci lui permet de mieux saisir son œuvre dans sa spécificité et d'élargir son univers référentiel.

L'émergence du minéral dans l'œuvre d'Henry Bauchau semble s'inscrire dans une tendance généralisée du vingtième siècle, visant à retrouver un nouveau rapport avec le monde, après le désarroi des deux guerres, et à reproduire en mots les sensations engendrées par la réalité concrète. Le devoir de l'écrivain devient ainsi celui de se faire « un four à brûler le réel »⁶, selon les mots de Pierre Reverdy, c'est-à-dire de faire fusionner sa flamme intérieure et le caractère fragmentaire de l'existence. Ce « nouveau réalisme » poétique, comme le définit Gaëtan Picon⁷, représente un retour de l'écriture à la réalité la plus élémentaire, comme défi au rêve surréaliste d'enchantement poétique. Cette orientation thématique, ayant pour but l'appréhension de l'immédiat, suppose le recours à des pratiques poétiques spécifiques, dont le haïku, que Bauchau rencontre au cours de ses lectures et qu'il se propose de mettre à profit dans son écriture.

Pendant la rédaction de ses premiers écrits, Henry Bauchau réside en Suisse. Philippe Jaccottet est à l'époque un point de repère essentiel pour sa création. Des notes de journal en rendent pleinement compte : « Philippe est un de ces esprits aériens et concrets qui me fertilisent non pas en idées mais en rythmes » (*GM*, p. 334). En outre, Bauchau découvre dans les vers de Jaccottet une transposition de sa sensibilité, de sa pensée : « Philippe Jaccottet exprime bien ce que je ressens quand il écrit : vous m'empêchez d'entendre non pas dieu / mais quelque chose qu'on eût pris pour lui peut-

⁵ Voir à cet effet notamment les études d'Anne Gourio (*Chants de pierre*, Grenoble, ELLUG, 2005) et de Bruno Tritsmans (*Livres de pierre*, Tübingen, GNV, 1992) portant sur l'investissement poétique du minéral au XXe siècle.

⁶ Pierre Reverdy, *Gant de Crin*, Paris, Flammarion, 1968, p. 52.

⁷ Gaëtan Picon, *Panorama de la nouvelle littérature française*, Paris, Gallimard, 1976, p. 242.

être / dans un monde moins incertain que celui-ci » (*JA*, p.121). En lisant une remarque de Starobinski sur l'œuvre de Jaccottet, Bauchau constate que le propos littéraire de ce dernier coïncide avec le sien : « cette invite à l'éclosion d'un pouvoir intérieur, toujours plus libre et plus pur. C'est aussi ce que je cherche, avec moins de ténacité, plus de hauts et de bas, plus de fuites que Philippe » (*JA*, p. 320). Plus encore, le *Journal de La Déchirure* montre qu'à cette époque Henry Bauchau lisait constamment les écrits de Jaccottet : le 7 novembre 1961 il évoque une lecture de *L'Obscurité* faite le soir précédent, dix jours après il fait référence à une lecture d'*Éléments d'un songe*, le 17 avril 1962 il signale sa lecture du *Livre des morts*, le 25 décembre 1963 la lecture de *La Semaison*. Certains articles du 3^e numéro de la *Revue Internationale Henry Bauchau* rendent largement compte de l'échange personnel et intellectuel entre Henry Bauchau et Philippe Jaccottet. Dans la notule sur leur correspondance qui y est publiée – une quinzaine de lettres et une carte postale adressées par Jaccottet à Bauchau –, Catherine Mayaux et Anne-Sophie Miccio notent le ton affectueux du poète suisse, ainsi que ses remarques attentives sur les écrits de son ami, qui lui fait part aussi de ses réserves⁸. Daniel Maggetti le note également en analysant la réception d'Henry Bauchau dans les journaux romands⁹. Le critique insiste sur l'influence littéraire de Jaccottet sur Bauchau, qui l'a déterminé à s'orienter plutôt vers la poésie que vers le théâtre. Enfin, il convient de rappeler également que Bauchau a dédié son poème « Géologie » à Philippe Jaccottet et à sa femme, Anne-Marie, et que le rôle fondamental du poète suisse a été reconnu par Bauchau lui-même dans un entretien : « [Jaccottet] m'a beaucoup influencé. Je n'aurais jamais écrit *Géologie* sans ce contact relativement prolongé avec lui. Je me suis alors rendu compte que les choses de la vie courante avaient aussi beaucoup d'importance en poésie. Et pas seulement l'histoire, les grands thèmes, etc., mais que c'était intéressant de restituer les rites simples de la vie »¹⁰. À une époque où Bauchau était encore hanté par les grandes figures historiques¹¹, l'échange avec Jaccottet a travaillé à ouvrir son inspiration du côté de l'affect et de la sensation, et à déterminer une inscription de l'écriture dans l'expérience immédiate, dont la montagne s'avère un élément privilégié.

Au niveau de la thématique, des correspondances sont repérables dans leur manière d'investir les lieux, comme le laissent lire le poème « Géologie » du recueil éponyme et le poème « Le locataire » de Philippe Jaccottet, dédié à Francis Ponge : Nous habitons une maison légère haut dans les airs/ le vent et la lumière la cloisonnent en se croisant,/ parfois tout est si clair que nous oublions les ans/ nous volons dans un ciel à

⁸ Catherine Mayaux et Anne-Sophie Miccio, « Notule sur quelques lettres inédites de la correspondance entre Henry Bauchau et Philippe Jaccottet », dans la *Revue internationale Henry Bauchau. L'écriture à l'écoute*, « L'ancrage suisse », Louvain-la-Neuve, Presses Universitaires de Louvain, N^o. 3, hiver 2010-2011, p. 12.

⁹ Daniel Maggetti, « Une réception discrète et attentive : Henry Bauchau dans les journaux romands, (1959-1975) dans la *Revue internationale Henry Bauchau. L'écriture à l'écoute*, « L'ancrage suisse ». N^o. 3, *op. cit.*, p. 113-116.

¹⁰ Henry Bauchau, « De Gstaad à Paris », entretien avec Marc Quaghebeur et Sylviane Roche, dans la revue *Ecritures*, n^o 61, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

¹¹ Henry Bauchau a rédigé et publié dans cette période la pièce de théâtre *Gengis Khan*.

chaque porte plus ouvert » (Philippe Jaccottet, *Le locataire*)¹². Le poème de Jaccottet, publié dans le recueil *L'Ignorant* (écrit entre 1952-1956), correspond à un rêve d'élévation et de vaporisation, dans une remontée vers la source du monde. Mais le titre indique l'état temporaire de ce séjour aérien, l'illusion de légèreté due à la permanente attraction vers le pôle du bas, fait de la « pétrification des papillons et des essaims », « cimetière de la graine et de la pierre », comme il le dira dans un autre poème, « La promenade à la fin de l'été »¹³.

« Le locataire », qui repose sur l'image des lourdes montagnes absorbées par une lumière vaporeuse, dit le double mouvement de la vie entre le haut et le bas, la lumière et l'ombre, en laissant entendre la voix du monde et une inscription de l'humain dans le cosmique, ce qu'on peut lire aussi dans le poème « Géologie » d'Henry Bauchau, écrit en 1956 : « Peut-être ai-je connu un grand bonheur là-haut/ et dormi dans la cérémonie des branchages/ quand se faisait l'accouplement des eaux du ciel/ après l'hiver velu dans le tronc paternel (PC, p. 13). Le poème d'Henry Bauchau, écrit en 1956, s'approprie en partie l'imaginaire de Jaccottet, en disant la connivence anthropomorphique du moi et du cosmos, un accouplement qui représente la substance même du poète. C'est une rêverie autour d'un là-haut qui fait entendre la voix du moi dans celle du monde, lieu où s'origine aussi le poème. Le poème « Géologie » repose sur une même dialectique entre légèreté et pesanteur : les montagnes affrontent « l'irréparable » par « l'aisance et la simplicité dans la lumière », mais, assaillies par le temps, elles deviendront un jour « comme de vieux soldats harassés par la guerre » et finiront par s'étendre « pesants, contre la terre / sur le sein maternel sans résistance au vent ». Cette dialectique est soutenue par l'ambivalence de la matière minérale, dure et durable, mais également friable (« les décadences de la pierre »), qui fait que, sous l'effet temporel, les chaînes des montagnes prennent l'image de « la grande Commune des plaines » (PC, p. 15).

Mais, si Jaccottet semble privilégier le haut, en tant qu'espace du fluide et du léger, par rapport au terrestre relié au dur et au rude, comme l'observe Jean Onimus¹⁴, Bauchau valorise pleinement le mouvement vers le bas, comme il l'affirme dans « Géologie » : « Si j'aime, j'aime tout ! Non dans la transparence, mais sur le sol » (PC, p. 17). Lieu des profondeurs souterraines et de l'enracinement, en écho à son intérêt pour la psychanalyse, la prédilection de Bauchau pour le bas le rapproche plutôt de Jouve que de Jaccottet. Il convient de rappeler que Jouve affirme ne pas s'être « penché sur le sol comme l'entomologiste ou le géologue »¹⁵, peut-être précisément à cause de sa méfiance à l'égard de la dimension psychanalytique de la littérature. Si l'univers poétique de Jaccottet est généralement reconnu comme lié au transparent, celui d'Henry Bauchau tient avant tout de l'obscurité des profondeurs. L'impératif géologique reste fondamental

¹² Philippe Jaccottet, « Le Locataire » dans *L'Ignorant*, Paris, Gallimard, 1957, p. 48.

¹³ Philippe Jaccottet, « La promenade à la fin de l'été » dans *Poésie, 1946-1967*, Paris, Gallimard, « Poésie », 1990, p. 85.

¹⁴ Jean Onimus, *Philippe Jaccottet, une poétique de l'insaisissable*, nouvelle édition revue et augmentée, Seyssel, Champ Vallon, « Champ poétique », 1993, p. 95.

¹⁵ Philippe Jaccottet, *La Promenade sous les arbres*, Lausanne, Mermod, 1961, p. 80.

chez Bauchau et détermine le sens de l'expérience personnelle et du processus d'écriture, ce qui le différencie de Jaccottet, qui manifeste ses réserves à l'égard d'une écriture « sur laquelle Jouve étend encore une ombre tutélaire »¹⁶. Une année après cette remarque faite par Jaccottet dans la *Nouvelle Revue de Lausanne*, le 9 juillet 1964, Bauchau s'interroge dans son journal du 1^{er} avril 1965 sur le rapport entre sa poésie et la réalité, et sur sa tendance à s'en détourner : « Il faut dire qu'il y a dans mes composantes une part flamande, nordique, baroque, que sais-je, qui ne me permet pas d'aller à la réalité par les mêmes chemins que Philippe Jaccottet. Le passage rapide et continu de l'air à la terre, du Verseau au Taureau, produit des différences de niveau, des explosions, des brisures, qui doivent se révéler dans mon œuvre » (*GM*, p. 389).

La composante baroque que Bauchau constate chez lui est peut-être une réponse au reproche de grandiloquence, de tentation du « trop grand » par « les inflexions de Claudel et de Saint-John Perse »¹⁷, que fait Jaccottet à l'occasion du compte-rendu sur « Géologie », en août 1958¹⁸. Comme l'observe Daniel Maggetti, ce premier compte-rendu pourrait être assimilé à un espoir secret de Jaccottet, celui de « voir Bauchau arpenter des territoires poétiques plus proches de sa sensibilité »¹⁹. Or, la nature de Bauchau est faite de deux pulsions divergentes, comme l'écrivain lui-même le constate.

Ce qui importe cependant dans cette filiation, c'est que dans les années où Bauchau cherche sa voie poétique, la fréquentation de Jaccottet éveille en lui un goût pour le spectacle du réel et l'émotion qu'il engendre. Bauchau développe une perception proche de celle de Jaccottet, qui se fait selon Hélène Samson en termes de « sensation d'univers » au sens valéryen²⁰, à savoir un système de rapports entre les êtres, les choses, les événements et la matière qui s'appellent les uns les autres, et résonnent l'un par l'autre.

Certes, il n'est pas question pour Henry Bauchau d'imitation, mais d'un partage d'affinités. Ce qui unit Bauchau à Jaccottet, ce sont les problématiques que développent leurs créations, l'intérêt pour les existences individuelles et les conditions sociales, où le minéral se fait une grille de perception de la réalité. La matière devient le lieu de projection d'une sensibilité inquiète face à une réalité angoissante et dépourvue de signification après le chaos monstrueux de la guerre ; mais elle se fait aussi un des appuis envisageables, un support de l'émotion. Le minéral arrive à traduire sur le plan poétique non seulement le sens du réel, mais aussi une poétique qui emprunte à la matière sa simplicité et renonce à tout artifice superflu.

¹⁶ Cité par Daniel Maggetti dans « Une réception discrète et attentive : Henry Bauchau dans les journaux romands, (1959-1975), *Revue internationale Henry Bauchau. L'écriture à l'écoute*, « L'ancrage suisse ». N° 3, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 114.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Hélène Samson, *Le « tissu poétique » de Philippe Jaccottet*, Hayen, Pierre Mardaga éditeur, 2004, « Philosophie et Langage », p. 84.

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THE DIFFICULT PASSAGES FROM TRADITION TO MODERNITY IN THE MOVIE *DOUBT*

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Abstract

The movie *Doubt*, picturing a catholic school in New York City in the year 1964, presents the dichotomy between old and new, with the two main characters being the archetypes of the rigid tradition on the one hand, represented by Sister Aloysius, and on the other hand the symbol of the liberal, modern future, embodied by Father Flynn. These two very strong characters clash many times through the entire length of the movie, making us question the truth behind their actions. Another theme of the movie is the changing times, symbolized by the omnipresence of a strong and furious wind, which is itself an important character. The wind follows us in every stage of the story, underlining the most important moments. Finally, there is the circle of doubt, which is present from the initial sermon of Father Flynn, culminating with the final scene of Sister Aloysius overcome with grief and uncertainty regarding her actions. The feelings of doubt form a full circle, starting with suspicion, then escalating to the climax of doubt transformed into belief, and ending with the most heart-breaking collapse of Sister Aloysius's certainty into the ever-present feeling of doubt which has followed us all the way through the story and which symbolizes the weaknesses of tradition and rigidity. But in the confrontation between tradition and modernity, it is always the progress that wins. Development and progress are irrepressible, and therefore they will always triumph.

Keywords: doubt, wind of change, tradition, modernity, passage

The movie *Doubt* is set in the year 1964 in the Bronx, New York City, in a predominantly white Irish and Italian Catholic neighborhood. The action takes place in Saint Nicholas Catholic High School, the central point of a neighborhood consisting mainly of devout white Irish and Italian immigrants. In those times, a year after Kennedy's assassination, people were confronted with hopelessness and despair, as Father Flynn preaches in the movie's opening scene. People are worried and lost, and overcome by uncertainty, but the reverend speaks about doubt as being a state of mind just as strong and sustainable as certainty. His sermon about 'doubt' installs the seeds of distrust in the heart and mind of Sister Aloysius, the principal of the school. She resents him for his liberal views and modern approaches, whereas she is a ferocious guardian of tradition. She already has a fundamental distrust of the young pastor. He is much too jovial for her tastes; he suggests that the school Christmas play should include a secular song like "Frosty the Snowman," which Sister Aloysius considers a heretical message about magic; as for his personal habits, he likes too much sugar in his tea, he wears his fingernails too long, he uses a ball-point pen and possesses other hints of sensuality and adaptation to the modern world. Father Flynn harbors a similar disapproval of Sister Aloysius's strict attitudes and demeanor, which he considers to be holding the school and the parish back from the newer vision of 'a welcoming church.' Consequently, she begins

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to suspect that the reverend has a guilty conscience; therefore, she doubts his vows and commitment to Catholicism. She encourages the other nuns to keep their eyes open, somehow instigating them to spy on him and to interpret every single gesture or word he says. When the naïve, young nun Sister James expresses her concern about Father Flynn having a private conversation with one of the altar boys, Donald, who came back from their confidential meeting in a state of visible discomfort and with the smell of alcohol on his breath, Aloysius considers it a proof that the reverend is a child molester. Donald Miller is the first and only black student accepted by the school, which, furthermore, singles him out as a very likely victim of bullying and abuse.

Quickly advancing from doubt to certainty, Sister Aloysius starts a crusade against the reverend, trying to reveal him as a pedophile. Although he never confesses, and actually convinces Sister James of his innocence, the principal succeeds in determining him to ask for a transfer. She lies and threatens, and she almost convinces us, the viewers, of the reverend's guilt. However, this victory is not hers, as much as she seems pleased with her deeds and the success of her blackmail; in the end, Sister Aloysius finds out that the reverend has been promoted to a much better position, in another, more prestigious school, which is a horrific rebuke as far as she is concerned.

The final scene of the movie shows us a desperate and doubtful principal, worried that she has made an irreparable mistake. Hence, the movie begins with a germ of doubt, just a hint of it, which grows into an absolute and atrocious certainty, only to fade back to doubt at the end, but a much more intense and unbearable feeling of doubt, thus creating a complete circle, emphasizing the main theme of the story. It is a subtle piece of writing, raising major social questions and with the answers, in the end, cloaked in ambiguity. Somehow, not getting the answers, makes for an enthralling film that keeps you thinking long after the credits roll.

The Dichotomy between Tradition and Modernity

One of the most striking themes of the movie *Doubt* is the strong disagreement between the conflicting points of view of Sister Aloysius and Father Flynn. While the nun is rigid, inflexible and takes the path of archaic intolerance, the reverend is a forward-thinking, energetic priest. While she is religiously authoritarian and medieval, Father Flynn preaches love and compassion. They are utterly opposed and their personalities clash inevitably numerous times throughout the movie. She is completely and egregiously convinced of his guilt, in spite of the fact that she has no real proof and he denies any wrongdoing. In the end, the old seems to prevail, but it's only the illusion of winning. Sister Aloysius finds out that the reverend has been endorsed a leading position in a more prestigious Catholic school, which is a terrible punishment for the nun. The priest was highly appreciated for his modern views on teaching and interacting with the students. The new way of thinking wins the battle again, progress is unstoppable and old traditions are doomed to perish in the end.

A second dichotomy between the old and the new is the struggle of the immigrant parents in their passage from an old, traditional world to the new land. The church and the school makes their passage to America easier, offers them comfort and support, gives them a familiar place to belong to. As a columnist states in his article: “The children’s homes might be filled with Irish music or perhaps Italian opera, but the school dances introduced baritone saxophones, early rhythm and blues, and the beginnings of rock. The teachers knew that their role was to bring their charges into the new land and the new society, secular though it may be” (Flanigan 1). America was a blank sheet on which their identity was yet to be inscribed. “It was a kaleidoscope of shifting possibilities.” (Bigsby 2) There were too many new prospects, and the immigrant parents needed guidance and moral support. The old traditions would always be part of their lives, but they gladly embraced the new path towards the progressive, modern new world, offering them a better, new life.

Finally, there is the dichotomy created by the complete circle made by Sister Aloysius’s feeling of doubt, which progresses, from a vague suspicion in the beginning, to the confident, biased, full blown certainty of the sin, which gives her the strength to lie and threaten to destroy the priest’s reputation, only to descend in the despair of the doubt by the end of the movie.

Old traditions and customs never prevail; they will ultimately be replaced by modernity, by novelty. It is the natural evolution of the human race, the normal tendency to advance towards the future, to develop and to expand our horizon.

The Wind of Change

The strong late autumn wind is in itself a prevalent character of the movie, emphasizing the violence of the feelings and the changing times. Change is the leitmotif of the movie, and it almost seems that it is part of the cast. Wind is a symbolic presence throughout, the storminess designating both the ugliness in the Catholic Church that would be revealed decades later and the winds of change sweeping through it – for instance, the Second Vatican Council, which addressed the relations between the Roman Catholic Church and the modern world.

Firstly, we have Sister Aloysius making a comment after a devastating storm that “the wind has changed”. The destruction made by the strength of the storm is unusual; the courtyard is filled with broken branches. Also, quite a few times the wind sends dry leaves into her office through a window which is accidentally left open, making her wonder about the strength of the wind gusts. She also makes an interesting comment about the wind, saying that it is “so peripatetic this year!” showing that she has an amazingly extensive vocabulary, making us wonder about her education before becoming a nun. But she is immovable in front of any tempest. To Sister Aloysius, it's all about standards, morality and tradition. “Every easy choice today will have its consequences tomorrow, mark my words,” (*Doubt*) she fumes and she sets about blowing away the

priest like a whirlwind for something that has, in more recent years, become the shame of the Catholic Church.

Secondly, Father Flynn talks a lot about change, trying to convince Sister Aloysius that the times are new, the church has changed, and he suggests that the nuns should be friendlier to the children. He is regarded with contempt by the nun for even suggesting to be friendly with the parishioners or children, when her authority was based on fear. Another reference to the power of the wind is made by him in a sermon about gossip, held after the naïve Sister James initiates the hunt for pedophiles by expressing her concern about the unnatural relationship between the priest and Donald. In this sermon on gossip, Father Flynn tells the story of a priest who instructs a woman to cut open a pillow in the wind and retrieve the feathers, thus referring to the implacable power of wind in spreading everything on its wings. He also refers to the wind in his final sermon, when he tells the congregation about his decision to leave, saying that the wind which pushes him through life is now taking him away from this beloved parish.

Lastly, the attitude towards the oppressed ethnic categories is also changing. We are told that Donald is the first and only “negro” in the school, which shows an attitude of acceptance towards the African-American community, considering the fact that this is a white Catholic school. Furthermore, there is a vague hint that Donald has homosexual tendencies, consequently having had to transfer from the public school system to a private catholic school in order to escape bullying. In addition, another level of evil operative in the parish neighborhood is revealed when Sister Aloysius holds a private conference with Donald’s mother, who works as a cleaning woman in a nearby apartment complex. In their disturbing and thrilling conversation, Mrs. Muller reveals other facts about the boy’s home life and his personal confusion, as well as her own attitude towards the accusations, exposing some dark truths about race, class and the desperate search for upward mobility that private education promises to inner-city children.

The old ways are also changing in reference to the subservient role nuns have always played in the Catholic Church and the resentment towards their medieval degradation of women. As one critic noticed, “the film exposes a deeper layer of institutional injustice that may account for Sister Aloysius’s need to dominate the only realm under her control. As she remarks at one point, in the Catholic Church, men run everything. Even she must admit that, in the Church’s patriarchal system, Father Flynn is technically her superior.” (Tueth 2) Sister Aloysius has the courage to speak up in a time when people were afraid to talk about pedophilia, a time when people blindly trusted the clergy. She is a leader, a very strong and determined woman, obsessively pursuing wrongdoing, so unlike the innocent, sweet and dedicated Sister James, who is easily convinced of Father Flynn’s innocence.

In conclusion, times are changing and the wind is there, with its strength and blasts, to underline the uncontrollable power of development, of evolution.

The Circle of Doubt

Doubt is the central theme and the most recurrent motif of the film, hence the title. Sister Aloysius is an extremely intolerant and biased nun, therefore trying to find a way to destroy or to eliminate a priest that she doesn't like, mainly because he doesn't conform to her strict rules of conduct. In her rigid, inflexible manner, she cannot accept a priest who is liberal, modern and kind. She even resents Father Flynn for using a ballpoint pen instead of a traditional fountain pen, for liking sugar in his tea or for having long fingernails. She is constantly searching for reasons to confirm her doubts about him, and she finally convinces herself that he is a child abuser, in spite of the complete lack of evidence.

She plants the seed of suspicion in her mind at hearing Father Flynn's sermon about doubt, considering that he must have an underlying reason for choosing it as a speech theme and thinking that the priest himself must doubt the authenticity of his own vows. From here on, she obsessively tries to find evidence of his wrongdoings, convincing herself that she is correct in assuming the worst about him and that a guilty conscience has made him want to talk about doubt. She lies to him and she makes threats in trying to convince him to confess. Her doubt grows into a full-scale certainty, and she has the confidence to convince herself of the righteousness of her actions. As a movie reviewer stated "the drama pulls us between our admiration of Sister Aloysius's uncompromising search for the truth and Father Flynn's promotion of tolerance and compassion" (Tueth 2). They are both extremely strong characters and neither of them can convince us, without any trace of doubt, that he/she is telling the truth.

He finally leaves after she promises to destroy his reputation. She feels victorious, but she is the one who is defeated in the end. The priest gets a promotion, while she is devastated by the thought that she has caused harm to a possibly innocent man. The feelings of doubt form a full circle, starting with suspicion, then escalating to the climax of certitude, and ending with the collapse of Sister Aloysius's certainty into the ever-present feeling of doubt which has followed us all the way through the story and which symbolizes the weaknesses of tradition and rigidity. The circle closes in the end, the movie ending on the same note with the feeling of doubt, and it also leaves us uncertain of the priest's guilt. As viewers, we permanently oscillate from believing one of them to trusting the other.

Conclusions

In the clash of the old with the new, it is always the progress that wins. Traditions are valuable and will always be preserved and cherished, but development is inevitable and unstoppable. The times are permanently changing, and the force of evolution cannot be halted. As much as we want to perpetuate our heritage, the only viable solution is to be open-minded and forward-thinking, acceptant of modernity.

Love and tolerance are the universal answer to well-being and harmony in the world. Kindness does not always denote weakness, and rigidity is not the definition of

strength and virtue. The old ways were austere and inflexible, but they were replaced by adaptability and resilience. The passage from the implacable old times to the sympathetic new ones will be always difficult, because transitions are seldom easy, but change will occur regardless of our sternness and intolerance of the new. Old traditions never transcend modernity; they will ultimately be replaced by innovation, by novelty. It is the natural evolution of the human race, the normal tendency to advance towards the future, to develop and to grow.

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WRITING DISENCHANTMENT: HARNESSING SOCIAL CONCERNS IN THE POETRY OF JARED ANGIRA

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Abstract

Socio-political consciousness of literature in African society is an inevitable phenomenon which has remained an enduring, even necessary motif in African poetry. Murky politics of post-independent African countries has constantly provoked contemporary African poets to outrage and to near-fatalistic vision of history of their respective countries usually rendered in acerbic tone in their poetry. As may therefore be imagined, the discussion of social issues in African poetry is often graphic and accusatory.

Jared Angira is a politically-committed poet whose radical ideological position is explicit in his poetry collections: *Juices* (1970), *Silent voices* (1972), *Soft Corals* (1973), *Cascades* (1979) and *The Years Go By* (1980). For Angira, social concern is not optional: it is the very basis of his work, and he has brought a marxist-oriented class analysis of society to bear upon his writing. In doing this, Angira conformed to Louis Althusser's notion of art as being "to make us see, and what it allows us to see, what it forces us to see, is 'the ideology from which it is born'" (Bennet and Royle, 132).

Consequently, in Angira's poetry social issues are not perceived as being the result of chance and circumstance, rather, they are seen as emerging from clearly discernible socio-political and economic factors whose workings could be subjected to detailed scrutiny and rigorous analysis.

This paper examines how Jared Angira has entrenched social concerns in his poetry for the purpose of proffering solutions to the perceived social and political problems in Kenya.

Keywords: Disenchantment, Harnessing, Social concerns, Writing

Introduction

That African writers from South Africa to the North Africa and from West Africa, East Africa to the Central Africa, have struggled with the issues of social concerns since independence is incontrovertible, while the major social concerns have focused on political and economic imperatives, wars, religious differences and Aids pandemics have often poised significant challenges to daily existence in Africa.

The language of African poetry over the last decades has thrown up fierceness, passion, originality and vitality which is lacking from much of recent Western poetry (Moore, 1998). Indeed, it is rare to encounter a commentary on African poetry that ignores social concern in its thematic preoccupation, this underscores T.S Eliot's submission, that poetry has the ability to communicate "some new experiences or some fresh understanding of the familiar or the expression of something we have experienced but have no words, which enlarges our consciousness or refines our sensibility (1957).

Jared Angira typifies a vibrant voice in the literary corpus of East Africa. In his five collections of poetry: *Juices* (1970) *Silent Voices* (1972) *Soft Corals* (1973) *Cascades* (1979)

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and *the Years Go By* (1980), Angira's voice has been fiercely established as one of the most critical voices imbued with artistic vision in Kenya 'It is in the conscious use of irony that Angira is distinct from other East African Poets. While Okot P' Bitek uses a single personal in each of his poetry collections, Angira uses varied ironic characters in his poems. Richard Nturu also uses irony in some of his poems but not as pervasively or effectively as Angira. Compared with Okello Oculi, Angira's scope is wider and deeper' (Ezenwa – Ohaeto, 87).

For Angira who represents generation of African post – independent poets in the moulds of Tanure Ojaide and Niyi Osundare who are disillusioned with political failure, economic cesspool and corruption among government functionaries in post-independent Africa. Angira's poetry takes from the historical processes of the past and the present to construct the future. He criticizes corruption, oppression and social inequality in Kenyan society with its attendant impoverishment of the masses .The increasing ambivalence and decline in corporate social responsibility by Kenyan government to its citizenry as identified in the poetry of Angira, relentlessly calls to mind the intersection of poetry and politics as grounded in the interrogation of “when the internal subjectivized ambivalence is confronted by the sociopolitical, seemingly ‘objectivized’ ambivalence” (Shirley Geok-lin Lim, 13-32), as abundantly demonstrated in Wole Soyinka's *A Shuttle in the Crypt* , which sufficiently interrogates dimensions of human experiences when poetry intersects politics. This intersection is further explained in the words of Reed Way Dasenbrock, in his essay: *Poetry and Politics*:

*Today most critics and theorists hold that the connection
Between poetry and politics is not limited just to situations in
Which poets become politically involved in an explicit way, but
Instead all cultural expression is related to the social and political context
- whether implicitly or explicitly- in which it is produced....All poetry is
Political in one way or another, since even the choice to eschew explicit
Political involvement or reference constitutes a form of political action
(or perhaps more precisely inaction)(51).*

In Angira's poetry, this intersection is discernible, and constitutes a vibrant motif and convenient locale for articulating the suffering of the masses, towards mobilizing them to confront their oppressors. The intersection typifies a paradigm for search of a form of expression that will significantly articulate the aspirations of the downtrodden Kenyans in their quest for liberation.

This essay is preoccupied with the evaluation of the depth of social concerns in the poetry of Jared Angira, and an examination of how Angira in the selected poems have used poetry as a mode of discourse with which he delineates the socio-political malaise of corruption, abuse of power, poverty, hunger and oppression in Kenya, while remaining committed to his calling as a literary artist.

Jared Angira in “*obligato to from public gallery*” expresses a deep seated disillusionment with democratic posturing of the government. The distilled Anger of the masses at the corrupt members of the political parties who are termed Zombies are brought to the open. The main thrust of the poem is that it captures so compellingly the unquenchable desire of the masses for a better welfare condition, which demands unequivocally, that the government should rise up to its primary responsibilities of providing basic human needs, foods to the public, so as to maintain continuity of life:

*The public now wants bread
At least to breed tomorrow
The public now wants rice
At least to rise tomorrow
(Cascades, 88)*

Angira’s exposure of the deceit and manipulation of the masses by the politicians in ‘*Obligato from public gallery*’, resonates Chinua Achebe’s seminal article “The Novelist as teacher” where he articulates African writers artistic obligation to his society, which is primarily to enlighten the society and bring it to self – awareness and knowledge regarding what needs to be done as to move such society forward.

In “*Out patience, the Diagnosis*” Angira clinically evaluates the social disparity between the poor and the rich. Images of pain and suffering is juxtaposed against the image of affluence and opulence .Two patients in the hospital are complaining, the poor yawns for lack of food the rich one yawns for over-feeding. Images such as constipation, out patience, diagnosis, lying in bed, disagreeable stench of the mouth, and nursing a heavy hangover, provide the signifiers of social disparity between the rich and the poor. This disparity is further pursued in the poem, with the comparison of he types of laughter produced by both the rich and poor patients.

*One laughter is madness
The other for suffering
(Cascades 100)*

The issues of artistic commitment to the uplifting of their societies constitute a recurrent phenomenon in the works of African poets. Social and artistic commitment is discernible and constitutes a common strand in Christopher Okigbo’s *Labyrinths*. Wole Soyinka’s *A shuttle in the crypt*; Ochia Ofeimun’s *The poet lied*, Niyi Osundare’s *A nib in the pond* and *village voices*, Okot P’ Bitek’s *Song of Lavino*, Taban Lo Liyong’s *Frantz Fanon’s Uneven Ribs* and Tanure Ojaide’s *labyrinths of the Delta*. In these poems, the recurrent thematic preoccupation is grounded in how the artist can transform their societies. In the poems there is always a future orientation in the social vision, even though, as in Soyinka’s *A shuttle in the crypt* and Okigbo’s *labyrinths*, that vision may not always be an optimistic one. (Aderemi Bamikunle, 75). Angira’s artistic commitment in his poetry is reverberated by his dissatisfaction with the social inequality, crass materialism engaged in, by the Kenyan politicians and the despoliation of the masses by the ruling elite in Kenya.

The nature of poetry as an art form which earn its effect largely by indirect means, affords Angira the needed platform to speak with passionate angry tones which defy conventions of restrained art, to significantly address social issues in Kenya in its immediacy.

This is characteristic of the entrenched thematic- preoccupations of poverty; corruption; ethnic crisis; unemployment and political oppression in post- independent poetry in Africa as sufficiently grounded in the poetry of Jared Angira, Syl Cheney Coker, Odia Ofeimun, Tanure Ojaide , and Femi Osofisan ‘ who ranged on the side of the underprivileged and tended to concern themselves more with socio-economic issues rather than culture, which formed the major preoccupation of the earlier generation of Soyinka, J.P Clark, Kofi Awoonor, and Lenrie Peters. These “ new ” poets also expressed more of class conflict as they relied more on African oral traditional techniques rather than the modernists in their expression of the current African reality. Thus Africa’s history and politics are connected’ (Tanure, Ojaide, 13). These poets in their works constantly strive to expose injustice and social inequality as perpetrated by African leaders.

“*On market day at Ugunja*” Angira deplores verbal irony significantly to juxtapose a peaceful market scene and disturbing dangerous weapons under the fig tree;

*It may be peacetime we know
But under the fig tree
Are clubs and shields
Ropes for our bulls
Axes and jembes for our farms
and all for
nation building. (Juices, p.21)*

Dangerous weapons and nation building are two irreconcilable divides in the poem and one does not think of a nation building, while amassing weapons of destruction like: clubs, shields, ropes, axes and jembes (cutlasses) at the same time. The poem makes mockery of the peace effort by some countries in Africa who are having internal strife, but still busy acquiring arsenals of war. It is sad to note that while the leaders of such African countries are busy moving from one country to the other in search of an elusive peace and reconciliation, they are also busy amassing instruments of warfare, squandering the scarce resources that could be used to take adequate care of their citizens in the area of health care, education and provision of the much needed agricultural produce. Angira’s robust use of verbal irony in this poem and his other poems has significantly corrected the hasty misreading of his poetry by Adrian Roscoe, Angus Calder and Abdul Yesufu who earlier on unanimously believed that, although Angira has successfully enlarged the readers consciousness through his thematic concerns, but have not examined his artistic use of irony. Adrian Roscoe though, acknowledges that ‘good clear imagery, a gift for compression, lyrical delicacy’ (Roscoe, 94) are among Angira’s achievements. Angira has been described by Angus Calder, as an

alert, witty writer (Calder, 37). While Abdul Yesufu also regards Angira's poetry as, 'an acutely ideologized' body of works (Yesufu,327). This essay however agrees with Ezenwa – Ohaeto's remarkable observation that, Angira is one of the most exciting poets in Africa and his achievement lies in his utilization of irony to explore the social realities of his country, Kenya (Ezenwa- Ohaeto, 87).

Jared Angira's poetry represents an interstice between history and artistic creation which mutually constitute the modes of perception and portrayal of human experience in Kenya. His poetry is focally concerned with the representation of human experiences through phenomenistic weaving together of these experiences in symbol, irony, myth, legend, imagery, anecdotes, metaphor and other figures of poetry. In this way, Angira takes his exploration of the Kenyan socio-political and economic landscape beyond the limits of factuality in to the limitless realm of the imagination. His focus dwells between emotions and imagination. Through his poetry, Angira has been able to portray the tortured landscape of the frustrated, disillusioned and despairing Kenyans in need of a succor.

In *Your Homecoming*, Angira condemns an education and knowledge that is not constructively useful to the needs of the society. Angira's condemnation is hidden in the persona's voice: 'every time you come /I see you less of us /and more of a guest' the persona further interrogates the alienation which more acquisition of education further manifests, "this homecoming was odd/you still dream of reading more books." The persona is not primarily against the acquisition of knowledge , but such education must conform to the culture and embrace the intrinsic values inherent in the communal development. This anti-cultural norm has its signification in the poem:

*Then read all the books of the world
 One day you'll find
 The length of the night
 The fur of the sheep
 One day you'll find
 Thunder's dwellings (Juices. 49)*

The poem cast an aspersion on the negative aspect of western education, which does not recognize the application of western education to the cultural ethos of African community, and which tends to subvert the traditional essence of African cultural practices as inferior to the Western culture. However, the persona also predicts that such knowledge will soon find its destruction "one day you'll find thunder's dwelling". This implies that the searcher is bound to get in to a cultural conflict when a cultural norm is transgressed which will in turn attracts a severe penalty. Whatever could have informed the reason for the persona's comment on western education, we were not told in the poem but there is a striking difference between the primarily individualistic, parochial and often exploitative quality of western education and traditional African perception of the narrow use of such education by the individual involved, to achieve exploitative and manipulative tendencies as exhibited by the government political functionaries in some

African nations. Some of these who are highly educated but turned out to be oppressors of their people in their respective countries.

In *the years go by*, there is a presentation of a typical African society, where the appropriation of the resources of the people by the rulers is done effortlessly, when it does not attract a compelling risk. Here, Angira condemns the exploitation of people and resources of their countries. The wealth of the people is stolen at will by the “Caesars” of the land while the people are overlooked, neglected and left in their abject poverty.

*But when Caesar begets vices
Vices unto the poor are given
When Caesar's of the land
Bring forth poverty and decay
Unto man are these passed. (The Years Go By. 3)*

In this poem, Angira emphasize that ‘Caesars’ should not only be demanding endlessly the harvest of wealth of their lands, but they should also be ready to bear the full wrath of the consequences of their actions, when it triggers pestilences:

*What is good
Is everyone's desire
What is bad
Belongs to nobody
When misery sings
Who dances the tango?
(The years Go By, 4)*

Angira believes that wrong formulation of policies, breeds misery which has no impact in the lives of the rulers, but which adversely affect the general well-being of the masses. Angira's anger is directed at the political leaders whose self-serving policies orchestrate economic degradation of their respective countries.

In *The years Go By*, Angira illustrates the burden borne by the poor as a result of social stratification. The poem is garnished with various devices of capital market. Angira's thematic concern here is on the misfortune of the oppressed, who “must buy existence “which underscores the injustice of inequitable distribution of national resources which are typified by the melange of imageries scattered in the poem:

*Today,
We must buy existence
At the going price
Of the stock exchange
Today,
We must hide
In the drawers
Skeletons of Stone Age
For to stays in daylight
The price so high*

Keeping to the lane

From the iron Heel. (The Years Go By, 89)

The poem proceeds with a number of interlocking woes for the poor. The need for the poor to 'buy existence before the going price for them to' hide in the drawer'. One of the distinctive features of this poem is the art, with which dreadful events are portrayed so that the full depth of oppression of the poor by the rich is conveyed without the goriness of detail,

The poor have to constantly, live in fear of been trampled upon by the rich, keeping to the lane from the iron heel. The poor and the rich are perpetually locked within this background of mutual suspicion, which makes it impossible for the poor to breathe any air of freedom both during the day and even at night. Angira indeed heightens his condemnation and inveighs against this oppressive subjugation of the poor by the rich which has sufficiently traumatized the general psyche of the poor and rendered them worthless. The poem is not simply about the portrayal of the misfortune of the poor. It is also a social and political testimony on the deplorable condition of the masses in post-independent Kenya.

Out of this comatose situation of the masses, suspended between fear of expressing their marginality and the need to confront this debilitating pressure of grim experience, has necessitated the reaction of Angira, to poignantly condemn this despicable attitude of the rich in the poem, as to reiterate the utilitarian aesthetic of poetry.

This theme of social stratification recalls Taban Lo Liyong's *student's Lament* in which liyong reassesses the social-climber image of African politicians, past and present:

Politicians rule us all

Henpecking man and wife,

Usurping stool and wand

Before the hair is grey,

To intellect is theirs too

With only primary four

They rule, we carry stone.

(Frantz Fanon's uneven ribs, 117-118)

The poem laments the plight of a country trapped in mis-governance by dubious politicians, who have foistered dictatorships on African political landscape. These dictatorships no matter their guises, have in their throes, depression which manifests in harassment, detention, torture and killing of dissent voices.

In *Decay*, an evaluation of a metaphorical death of a man, who fails to exercise with his brains. The poem establishes a paradox: Death of a plant from its head rather than from the root, the poem commences with "trees die from their heads" which tends to examine when a trees leaves wither, it apparently indicates a death process. The poem foregrounds instalmental death of a man from his head, if he fails to continuously engage in mental exercise. This obviously satirizes old and irrelevant politician who have

constituted a sit-tight ring in African political landscape. The poet wonders aloud what meaningful administrative skills could a leader who have ruled his country for more than thirty years contribute again, to the development of his country:

*When we resign from thinking
And resort to collective laziness
When we can not remember the present
Nor conceive of the future
Since the past is no more.*

*And that past which is gone forever
Is all we can see
When reason takes leave
Of our little heads
What else can it be
If not withering from the head?
(Soft corals, P.94)*

Angira in this poem stridently deplores his sarcastic and satiric jabs at Africa leadership sit-tight syndrome. The poem is significant in the sense that it has in its repertoire, a plant imagery which is employed to dramatize human degeneration. One would have assumed that it is only plant which vegetates, but with the robust employment of plant imagery, Angira has graphically demonstrated that most of the poor policies emanating from sit-tight African leaders, are significations of their vegetations and one should not expect sound policies from decaying heads. The irony in the poem is predicated on the fact that one would have taught that when a plant is dying, it would have started from the roots. On the contrary the plant dies from its head. On a more general note it can be said that the success of this poem is due not only to the fact that it symbolizes, but perhaps more importantly the fact that, the plant in the poem is a metaphor of a man who has ceased thinking, because he is bereft of ideas, and this inability to think is the beginning of a biological death.

In conclusion, this essay has emphasized the interplay of society, literature and social reform in the poetry of Jared Angira. It has also evaluated the identifiable interconnections between art, ideology and social commitment in the selected poems. By focusing on the notion of social and artistic commitment, the essay has significantly articulated how contending social forces arise as a result of socio-economic and political difficulties experienced in post-independent Kenya, and sought to discover the precise nature of the literary depiction of social problems within the context of Kenya's political milieu. The essay has also assessed the significance of literary insight in delineating social issues and the efficacy of the manner in which it proposes solutions to them.

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TRANSLATING THE ENGLISH *COULD*

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Abstract

After having examined the possibilities of translating the English *can*, *must*, *need* and *should*, we are interested whether it is worth creating a database for translating the English modal verb *could* into Hungarian. Computer assisted translation (CAT) offers the possibility of creating and investigating a large database (e.g. *SDL Trados* or *MemoQ*), and we will check whether there is a possibility of enhancing productivity in case of *could* analyzing fiction and legal texts.

Keywords: term base, modal verb, *could*, fiction, legal texts.

Introduction

As Palmer correctly observes, the English modal verbs are “extremely messy” (1990:49), and he does not believe that there is a ‘basic meaning’ regarding modal verbs. However, scholars try to categorize modals, although this may be both arbitrary and forced in order to conform to the criteria established for certain investigation (cf. Greere–Zdrengea 2000:35).

As we are primarily interested in modals from the point of view of translation, their meaning becomes the most important criterion, even if we accept that there is no basic meaning. Although many grammar books and dictionaries list modal verbs as irregular verbs (e.g. Bădescu 1984:367, Soars 2000:143), we cannot agree that – for instance – *can* appears in the first column (Infinitive), *could* in the second (Past Simple), whereas the third column (Past Participle) is either empty or *been able* is given. In order to support our statement consider the following examples:

[1] *Jack could be anywhere.* (present meaning, possibility)

[2] *Jack could read when we was five years old.* (past meaning, ability)

The possibility of using *could* in present or past context is presumably 50-50% (see the next section). Greere–Zdrengea (2000:38) correctly observe that those who hesitate to call the verb after the modal an infinitive could hardly call it a present or past tense form. Palmer (1990:3–4) establishes 7 criteria for differentiating modal verbs from other (primary auxiliary) verbs, which includes their behaviour in interrogative and negative forms, as well as their formal characteristics. However, for teaching purposes, the

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description of modals should be simplified, but it should be rigorously analysed for translating purposes.

Modality is the grammaticalized expression of the subjective attitudes and opinions of the speaker including possibility, probability, predictability, necessity, obligation, permissibility, ability, desire, and contingency, and it is external to the content, being part of the attitude taken up by the speaker (Bybee et al. 1994:176–181; Kosur 2009:1; Halliday 1970:349, cited by Greere–Zdrengeha 2000:29). Modals and 'quasi-modals' are used to express hypothetical meanings as possibility, futurity, necessity, obligation, ability, intention, permission and assertion (Greere–Zdrengeha 2000:33, 91), thus the most flexible concept of modalisation must include both of them. Kosur (2009:1) also states that modal verbs are not the only grammatical categories expressing modality, as in modern English both modal verbs and grammatical mood is defined as a set of inflected verb forms that express modality of an action or state.

From the point of view of translation, we are primarily interested whether feeding samples of modal verbs into the translation memory (full sentences) and the term base (words and expressions) enables us to enhance productivity or not.

Translating *could*

Modal constructions (especially epistemic) involve some kind of comment on the environment within which a particular act does or does not take place (Antinucci–Parisi 1971:28–9). Modal sentences cannot be understood at all apart from considerations of their being anchored in some social context (Greere–Zdrengeha 2000:13), which seems to leave no hope for computer-assisted translations (CAT), as no one can expect from a software to take into consideration environment. Nevertheless, these programs can take into consideration the immediate 'context' of the sentence in question, which means that the sentences prior and after are also checked (*MemoQ Help*).

The problem Fillmore presents (cf. 1973:111) – either polite or ironical meaning of a modal verb – can be tackled, at least partially, by feeding into the translation memory and term base as many instances as possible, for the translator to select the most appropriate meaning. As large databases are collections of human-translated texts fed into translation memories and term bases, so – unfortunately – these can be of either top quality or poor one, as in many cases it is difficult to check the source.

We started our investigation by extracting *could* from a collection of more than 1,300 sentences containing English modal verbs (Asimov: *Foundation*, Carson McCullers: *The Ballad of the Sad Café* and five texts from the European Parliament Register of Documents); all in all 187 sentences contained various forms of *could*; their distribution is presented in the table below:

<i>COULD</i>	Instances	Percent
Affirmative/interrogative	148 / 11	79.14 / 5.88
Negative/interrogative	39 / 1	20.85 / 0.05
Present meaning	93	49.73
Past meaning	94	50.26
Active voice	155	82.88
Passive voice	32	17.11

1. Instances of *could*

After having examined the possible translation of other modal verbs (*can, should, must, need*), we have certain presuppositions, which are enlisted as follows:

1. *Could* is not really worth adding to the term base of a translation environment (see the case of *can* (Imre 2011));
2. Fiction should contain much more instances of *could* than non-fiction (Recski 2002); in our case, specialized texts (EU documents) should contain very few epistemic meanings;
3. When *could* is translated into Hungarian, about two-thirds of the translations will contain only the suffixes *-hat, -het, -na, -ne, -ná, -né* or no distinct marker;
4. When *could* is followed by a verb referring to the five basic senses, the meaning of *could* should disappear; interestingly, this may be the marker of a professional translator.

Then we have investigated how the 187 instances of *could* were translated into Hungarian. Before presenting the findings, it is worth remembering some facts about the discrepancies in English – Hungarian translations. Hungarian has a much more elaborate system of affixes, especially suffixes compared to Indo-European languages; thus, the possible translation of *could* into Hungarian may result in a full verb, a suffix, or the combination of a word or suffix(es). As a full verb, the following words may appear:

a. *tud* (able to):

[3a] *You killed the wolf, but **could** not get rid of the m...* (Asimov)

[3b] *Maguk megölték a farkast, de nem **tudták** lerázni az em...* (P. F. Nagy)

b. *képes* (capable to):

[4a] *I have handy little gadgets that **could** do tricks.* (Asimov)

[4b] *... egy okos kis szerszámot, amely csodákat **képes** művelni.* (P. F. Nagy)

c. *lehet* (possible):

[5a] *What **could** you do with it?* (Asimov)

[5b] *Mit **lehet** vele kezdeni?* (P. F. Nagy)

It is worth noticing that after *tud, képes* and *lehet* another verb follows with the infinitive suffix (*-ni*), but this only a tendency, not a rule, as further words (even verbs) may also precede the infinitive (*Could you do this? **Képes** vagy ezt megtenni?*, my example, A.I.).

Could is often translated with suffixes:

d. *-hat, -het* (possibility suffix):

[6a] *I **could** retool your factories.* (Asimov)

[6b] *Aján**hat**ok új gépeket a gyáraikba.* (P. F. Nagy)

e. *-na, -ne, -ná, -né* (present conditional mood suffix):

[7a] ... *he **could** make war on heresy, as represented by you...* (Asimov)

[7a] ... *hadat ü**zen**ne, mondjuk, a maga képviselte eretnekségnek...* (P. F. Nagy)

Nevertheless, there are more complicated possibilities as well:

f. the combination of a suffix (*-hat, -het*) and the invariant past conditional auxiliary *volna*, which is the third person singular condition form of ‘to be’. In this case the meaning is invariably past conditional:

[8a] ...*we **could** have done the same...* (Asimov)

[8b] ...*mi is meg**het**tük **volna** ugyanazt...* (P. F. Nagy)

g. double suffix, that is the combination of the possibility suffix and the present conditional mood suffix:

[9a] *Ponyets **could** have handled them at a pinch.* (Asimov)

[9b] *Ponyets, ha úgy adódna, könnyen elbán**hat**na velük.* (P. F. Nagy)

[10a] ... *he **could** say that he had lured me on into a trap...* (Asimov)

[10b] ... *kívá**ghat**ná magát a**zz**al, hogy ... lépre csalt engem...* (P. F. Nagy)

In these cases the combination of the suffixes results in a more weakened conditional meaning (cf. Benő 2011).

h. the combination of one or two words and one or two suffixes:

[11a] *I wonder if you **could** tell me exactly what happened.* (Asimov)

[11b] *Meg **tud**ná mondani, mi történt pontosan?* (P. F. Nagy)

[12a] *It **could** be arranged, Trader Mallow.* (Asimov)

[12b] *Meg **lehet**ne oldani, Mallow kereskedő.* (P. F. Nagy)

[13a] ... *we **could** possibly hope to do.* (Asimov)

[13b] ... *mi **képes**ek **lehet**nénk.* (P. F. Nagy)

Naturally, there will be cases when *could* is not translated into Hungarian, mainly for two reasons:

i. in case of verbs referring to the five senses, *could* can hardly be traced either as a verb or a suffix:

[14a] ... *he **could see** a torrent of madmen ...* (Asimov)

[14b] ***lát**ta, hogy eszük**et** vesztett emberek özö**ne** ...* (P. F. Nagy)

j. the translator’s freedom of choice:

[15a] *He had not spoken, nor, as far as Mallow **could** tell...* (Asimov)

[15b] *Amennyire Mallow visszaemlékezett rá, szó**tl**anul...* (P. F. Nagy)

Counterexamples can be also found, for instance in case of passive constructions:

[16a] *there **could** be heard in the town the thin wild whistle of the train.* (Asimov)

[16b] *hallani **lehet**ett a városban ... a vonat vékony, vad füttyszavát.* (P. F. Nagy)

A further aspect is negation, which may refer to either the meaning of the modal or to the meaning of the main verb (Palmer 1968:105). Greere–Zdrengha (2000:92) say that “it is obvious that negation, questioning, emphasis and combinations of these three processes result in changes of meaning that are not immediately predictable from the negation or questioning or traditionally accepted content of modals”. The negative

instances (about 21%) present more variability, if we look at a few the possibilities: *could not*, *couldn't*, *could never*, *neither could*, *could no*, *could scarcely*, *could in no way*, *there was nothing she could do*. This means that the Hungarian negative possibilities are also varied, and the best options are the ones when full verbs are completed with one or more negative words (*nem képes*, *aligha tud*, *sem lehet*, *semmit sem tudok*). However, there are also negative suffixes (*képtelen*, *lehetetlen*) or cases when we can observe a combination of the negative and suffix to render negative *could* (*sem mondhattuk*). Whatever the case, in our opinion negative suffixes are not worth adding to the database, as it takes time, and when new instances are to be translated, it is faster to translate than search the best option out of many, not forgetting that any of them is just a few characters long. Another interesting case is when antonym translation is activated, during which an English negative may turn affirmative:

[17a] *I couldn't squeeze to nothing...* (Asimov)

[17b] *bármely pillanatban összeszoríthatom a markomat* (P.F. Nagy)

Conclusions

Although it was easy in the initial phase to suspect that it is not worth the effort saving *could* into a database, we tried to bring arguments to support it. Let us check the table below:

COULD	HU			
	Fiction	EU texts	[nr.]	[%]
word [+suffix]	71	2	73	39.04
suffix	46	13	59	31.55
Ø	49	6	55	29.41
TOTAL	166	21	187	100.00

2. Translations of *could*

At first sight, the possibility of a successful English–Hungarian term base regarding *could* may seem viable due to the 73 instances when a word for word translation is possible (39%). However, the root *tud* has conjugated forms (*tudok*, *tudsz*, *tudjuk*, *tudjátok*, *tudják*), let alone subjective and transitive (objective) paradigm (*tudom* – *tudok*), which is further complicated when the possibility suffixes and present conditional suffixes accompany this word (*tudhatnám*, *tudhatnád*, *tudhatnánk*, etc.). It is easy to observe that the variable suffixes stand for the longer part of the words, so they are not worth adding to the database. The only invariable word is *képes*, which only appears 11 times out of 187 (5.88%). The other 62 instances when *could* was translated with a word are conjugated (past, present) and/or suffixed, so there is a huge variability. Still, if we

take into consideration that the same occurrences may also show up in case of translating other modal verbs (*can, may, might*), our findings may appear in a better light. For instance, in the case of *can* we could identify about 37% instances of *tud, képes* and *lehet* (Imre–Benő 2011).

Suffixes should not be added to the potential term base (59 instances, 32%), and the remaining 55 *could* instances (30%) were not even translated (cf. *could* + five basic senses, language diversity and the translator's freedom of choice). One can easily realise that the moment matches are shown in any translation environment (as translation options) that we are going to have too many hits (too much time to check the correct one), and it is much easier to type the proper word or suffix, which – by the way – may even overlap (cf. the translation of *can, may, might*).

The interrogative (negative) forms are quite promising, although there are only 12 cases (6,41%) to check. There were 2 instances with no translation, 2 with suffix translation, one with double suffix translation, but 7 sentences in which words appeared: *lehetett volna, lehet, lehetne, tudná, tudta, talán* (maybe) and *vajon* (whether, I wonder). The words in bold signal the vast possibility in translating modal verbs.

When comparing fiction to other types of texts, we will find that the instances of modal verbs are more reduced (cf. Recski 2002) on the one hand, and on the other hand their vast possible meanings is also reduced. We have checked more than 500 pages, out of which only 21 instances were found. This is not necessarily due to the fewer number of pages, as within a single 146 pages-document more than 500 instances of *shall* were found, in which not a single *could* was tracked (EP – *Position of The European Parliament* 2008). Out of 15 translated instances the large majority (13 instances, 86%) is translated with suffixes, and only 2 with words. Although few instances were found, we can state that the specificity of legal documents resulted in a high occurrence of passive constructions with *could*. However, *could* is preferred in these legal documents when a possibility is active under particular circumstances, so these are rather reduced possibilities (closer to 0% than 50%, which is further supported by the 3 double suffixes); remember that we have already observed that double suffixes weaken the possibility.

To sum up, we tend to think that *could* is a further 'worst' modal verb, alongside with *can* as far as translation into Hungarian is concerned, compared to other modal verbs, which are much more 'translation-environment-friendly,' such as *should* and *must* (Imre 2010, Imre–Keresztesi 2011). Only 3 Hungarian words may be added to the English–Hungarian *could* term base: *tud, képes* (ability) and *lehet* (possibility and permission). The productivity in using translation environments will surely not derive from the Hungarian database of *could*, as even the developers of *MemoQ* accept that productivity in case of non-technical texts is 10-30% (*MemoQ Quick Start Guide* 2011), and *could* is predominant in fiction.

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EXPLORING SPIRITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN R. K. NARAYAN'S THE GUIDE AND BHABANI BHATTACHARYA'S HE WHO RIDES A TIGER

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Abstract

Spirituality is the drawing out and infusion of spirit in one's life. It is also realized as an active and passive process. Spirituality is also described as a capacity and tendency that is innate and unique to all persons. It moves the individual toward knowledge, love, meaning, peace, hope, transcendence, connectedness, comparison, wellness and wholeness. Spirituality is one's character or quality that makes one transcend the barriers of worldliness, caste, creed and sensuality and realize one's connection with the Truth. The present paper aims to explore the spiritual consciousness in R.K. Narayan's The Guide and Bhabani Bhattacharya's He Who Rides a Tiger.

Keywords: Spirituality, life, self-realization, non-attachment, sacrifice.

Introduction

Spirituality is the realization of universality of truth and the experience of bliss. Therefore, spirituality leads one to search for and discover meaning in life, a meaning that goes beyond a merely material experience, however successful. This is a deeply personal search, which can bring a person to inner peace even in the presence of adverse circumstances. Spirituality is a state of interconnectedness, an intangible reality and animating, integrating life-force that cannot be comprehended by human reason alone but is nonetheless as important as reason, intellect, and emotion in accounting for human behavior.

To Indians, spiritual enlightenment has always been represented as the ultimate goal of life, the one thing that gives it meaning and purpose. The average individual, however, would need many incarnations to become enlightened, to see God, to become one the Absolute, to merge one's mind with cosmic consciousness, to become spiritual. Those who follow the fast track, mostly men are *Sadhus* or *Swamis*^[1], the "spiritual men" of India. They abstain from sex, cut all family tie-ups, no possessions, no house, wear little or no clothing and eat little and simple food. Usually they live by themselves, on the fringes of others and spend their days in devotion to their chosen deity. Some perform magical rituals to make contact with gods, practice intense forms of *yoga*^[2] and meditation to increase their spiritual powers and acquire mystical knowledge.

According to the *Bhagwad Gita*^[3], "he, who performs all actions as his duties without a desire for their fruits, is the true *Sannyasi* and a *Yogi* as well, and not one who shrinks his duties like sacrifices, rites and social service."¹ They have no personal

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attachment or private ambitions, but embody in their own spirit the freedom of the world. They are: "Solitary souls who have not any personal attachments or private ambitions but embody in their own spirit the freedom of the world. They take on the wideness of the whole earth, dwell in love and walk in righteousness. The social order regards the *Sannyasi* as a parasite since he does not contribute to it materially and does not care for its forms. The state looks on him with suspicion as he does not function in any industrial factory, social system or political machine. These *Sannyasis* do not serve our policies that make the world unsafe for human life, do not promote our industries that mechanize persons, and do not support our national egoisms that provoke wars. Patriotism is not enough for these fine souls life, and not India's life or England's life, demands their devotion. They look upon all men and all groups as equal."²

In the *Bhagvad Gita*, it is said that fearlessness, purity of mind, steadiness in knowledge, concentration, charity, self-control, sacrifice, self-discipline, practice of austerity and simplicity, non-mischievousness, self-denial, composure of mind, truthfulness, spirit of accusation, compassion to all beings, absence of malice and too much pride, gentleness, un-covetousness, forgiveness, cleanliness, fortitude - all these are the assets of a man who is born with divine nature. These accomplish transformation, elevation and renunciation of mind and transmutation of self quickly and surely to achieve which otherwise needs many births and complicate processes of acquisition of knowledge from the *vedas*^[4] and scriptures of through self-purification through meditation or observance of penances.

The concept of spirituality has been regarded as the prime source of 'self-realization'. This self-realization leads one to the path of salvation or renunciation. The process of renunciation has been recognized by all the great world religions as it helps one to subdue his sufferings, pains and troubles. The feelings of spiritualism liberate the human soul from the materialistic world. The teachings of spirituality convey the lessons of compassion, non-violence, truth, self-discipline and self-realization. It enlightens the inner spirit of human soul.

Raju as a Spiritual Guru^[5]

In R.K. Narayan's *The Guide*, the concept of spirituality is represented by Raju. It is a story of penance and self-realization. Here the concept of spirituality is experienced through various ideologies. The Indian ideology of sacrifice and renunciation is the basic theme of the novel. Raju, as a spiritual figure influences other characters in the novel. His philosophy, his ideas and talks on spirituality affect the entire society. Raju has always been whimsical in his life. It is the general pattern of his life. His sudden drifting into the role of a spiritual person in the Mangala Temple, therefore the author remarks: "Raju soon realized that his spiritual status would be enhanced if he grew a beard and long hair to fall on his nape. A clean-shaven close-haired saint was an anomaly. He bore the various stages of his make-up with fortitude, not minding the prickly phase he had to pass through before a well-authenticated beard would cover his face and come down his chest. By the

time he arrived at the stage of stroking his beard thoughtfully, his prestige had grown beyond his wildest dreams." (The Guide: 47)

After the expiry of his term of imprisonment, he takes refuge in an old temple by a river, while sitting on the steps of the temple one evening and reflecting on the future course of his life, he is taken for spiritual person by the village folks. The convict thus drifts into the role of a spiritual person. People come to seek his advice in domestic problems. When a draught hits the districts, the peasants turn to him for spiritual help and pray to him for performing a penance. Penance which is the symbol of Hinduism, paves the way for Raju to become a 'spiritual force'. In his role of Swami forced on him, reluctantly agrees to undertake a fast to end the draught which gets world wide publicity and finally offers him *Moksha*^[6] which reflects the Buddhistic spirit.

During the early days of the fast he has thought of escaping from the whole matter. But he could not betray the simple faith of the villagers. "He felt moved by the recollection of the big crowd of women and children touching his feet. He felt moved by the thought of their gratitude." (The Guide: 97)

Raju felt that his role itself had a certain power. Raju's act of sacrifice transcends his self. This is a moment of illumination, a moment in which an individual acquires the spiritual power to go beyond the barriers of his self:

"For the first time in his life he was making an earnest effort, for the first time he was earning the thrill of full application, outside money and loves; for the first time he was doing something in which he was not personally interested. He felt suddenly so enthusiastic that it gave him a new strength through with the ordeal." (The Guide: 213)

Raju achieves the *Nirvana*^[7] and turns into the saviour spiritual saint: "A minor Oedipus, Raju lives on to redeem himself; the bogus holy-man changes into a dying God sacrificing himself for the people." ³

Thus, the Indian institution of *Sannyasa* or the renunciation from worldly goods and attachment for the sake of spiritual pursuits is an ideal that remains constant in the character of Raju. Therefore, Raju's death at the end is for the *Dharma*^[8] that holds the suffering humanity and justifies the Hindu concept of spirituality. The story of Raju is a story of affirmation of the human possibilities for the self-recovery and self-transcendence rather than as a story of enforces sainthood.

Kalo as a Social Reformer

He who Rides a Tiger is based on the ancient saying, "He who rides the tiger cannot dismount". This novel is regarded as one of the masterpieces of Bhabani Bhattacharya. In He Who Rides a Tiger, the concept of spirituality is reflected through the character of Kalo. He represents the ideologies of self-realization, self-assertion and social-reformation. He is presented as a champion of social freedom. His sympathy as pseudo-*brahmin*^[9], priest affects the lower class of society more than the upper class of society. He teaches the lessons of untouchability. He believes in equality, which is closely associated with Buddhism. Thus, one can find the touches of Buddhist spirituality in his

speech. **Chandrasekharan** said that in this regard : "Kalo experiences a moral and spiritual conflict between love of ease, power and prestige on one side and desire to be true to himself, on the other."⁴

Meenakshi Mukherjee says about the masquerade of Kalo as a pseudo-Brahmin that "whereas Kalo at the end throws away the mask and goes back where he began, Raju finds it more and more difficult to tear off the mask until he finds the mask has become his face."⁵ Thus, Kalo who at first sees himself as a social crusader exposing falsehood with falsehood finally attains spiritual redemption by dismounting the tiger.

The concept of freedom from all bonds has been observed in the characterization of Bhabani Bhattacharya's Kalo in He Who Rides a Tiger. The character of Kalo is not that of *Yogi* concerned with mystic experiences. It is a story of deception of an imposter. **K. Venkata Reddy** rightly points out that "Kalo masquerades as a Brahmin priest and encompasses a miracle - rising of a stone of God Shiva out of the earth. He builds up a temple of his adroitly contrived fact. Kalo, the blacksmith is metamorphosed into Mangal Adhikari, the Brahmin, just as Raju, the railway guide, is transformed into a 'spiritual guru."⁶

The present study also reveals that Kalo's character reflects the concepts of self-realization, social-reformation, freedom, love and non-violence boldly and elaborately. Kalo becomes spiritual after passing the deep ocean of suffering, sorrow and famine. He decides to take revenge on the society. The novel is an attack on both who profited on people's misery during the famine and those who exploited them as a caste-tyrant. "It is a legend of freedom, a legend to inspire and awaken".⁸ It is rightly stated the desire is the cause of suffering. So Kalo's wishes have no purposeful end. He has deceived not only his supposed enemies but his own inner-self. Thus, he has the necessary strength of character to face all the consequences of his honest confusion.

Therefore, Kalo who at first sees himself as a social crusader exposing falsehood with falsehood, finally achieves spiritual redemption by dismounting the tiger. He reveals to the big crowd that has gathered the bitter truth about himself: "Now listen well, priests and *pundits*^[10] listen to the truth..... I have installed a false God, for there was no dream at all. I have made you commit sacrilege and blackened your faces. There is no expiation for you --- may be the writers of the holy books have not dreamed that such a thing could happen! ---- A downtrodden *Kamar*^[11] has been in charge of your inmost souls, souls corrupt with caste and cash."(He Who Rides a Tiger: 227)

Conclusions

This study observes that just as Raju, the railway guide is transformed into a spiritual guru whereas Kalo rejoices in hood winking his followers mentally that comprises of unscrupulous tradesmen and black marketers for whom worship is atonement for all the sins committed. When Kalo's daughter Chandralekha becomes a prey to the society, he wanted to defy the social oppressiveness. But conscience overtakes him in the last phase of drama, which he has enacted and he burst out passionately with

all vehemence. This reveals that fraud never triumphs over conscience. Kalo like Raju passes through the stages of a thief, a prisoner, a corpse-remover, a pimp, and finally a priest. His progression through these stages corresponds to the stages of his spiritual progress, climaxed by his spiritual triumph. It has been also revealed that Kalo has got all the courage and drive to dismount from the tiger in the hour of crisis. Unlike Raju who can not do so, Kalo has the strength and astuteness to face the situation and go back to his original state in order to identify himself with the society from which he has come up.

Notes

- [1] *Sadhu/Swami/ Sannyasi/Yogi* is a saint or yogi or a great devotee of god.\
- [2] *Yoga* is a state of Meditation.
- [3] *The Bhagavad Gita* is a sacred Hindu scripture, considered among the most important texts in the history of literature and philosophy.
- [4] *The Vedas* are the ancient scriptures or revelation (Shruti) of the Hindu teachings. They manifest the Divine Word in human speech. They reflect into human language the language of the Gods, the Divine powers that have created us and which rule over us. There are four Vedas, the Rig Veda, Sama Veda, Yajur Veda and Atharva Veda.
- [5] *Guru*: The word 'Guru' literally means the 'weighted one' i.e. the one who is profoundly endowed with spiritual knowledge or divine wisdom
- [6] *Moksha*: 'Moksha' is the liberation of the soul from the materialistic world, the cycle of death and rebirth or reincarnation and all of the sufferings and limitations of the worldly existence. In Hinduism, self-realization is the key to attaining Moksha. In Buddhism, it is treated as Nirvana; it occurs when the self is extinguished from the cycle of rebirth.
- [7] *Nirvana* is the state of being free from sufferings.
- [8] *Dharma* is an Indian spiritual and religious term that means one's righteous duty or any virtuous path.
- [9] *Brahmin* is the highest ranking of the four varnas or social classes in the ancient India.
- [10] *Pandit or pundit* in India, a scholar or expert, especially of traditional Indian law, philosophy, or music
- [11] *Kamar* is considered a downtrodden caste in the ancient India.

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⁴K.R. Chandrashekharan, Bhabani Bhattacharya. New Delhi: Arnold Heinemann, 1974), p.77.

⁵Meenakshi Mukherjee, The Twice Born Fiction. (New Delhi: Arnold Heinemann, 1974), p.119

⁶K. Venkata Reddy, Major Indian Novelists. (New Delhi: Prestige, 1990), p.71

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MEMORY AND MISTAKE

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Abstract

My paper is an attempt at drawing a parallel between the memoirs of two novelists writing in English, one Canadian and the other one British. In analyzing Timothy Findley's *Inside Memory* and Paul Bailey's *An Immaculate Mistake* I have as starting point images of a childhood fascinated – and here I intend to slightly adopt Maurice Blanchot's existentialist perspective on children's way of getting into fascination –, with stories about war, and especially the Great War, later reflected in some of the writers' major works. Timothy Findley and Paul Bailey, who couldn't take part in either of the two World Wars, seem to have been heavily influenced by the accounts provided to them by fathers and other relatives – possible father substitutes – during childhood & youth years, when searching for / trying to accomplish their artistic identity.

Keywords: memory, childhood & youth memories, stories of the World War I, artistic identity

1. Memoir vs. Autobiography and a nutshell poetics of *memory*

1.1 *Memoir* (from French: *mémoire* / Latin: *memoria*, meaning *memory*, or *reminiscence*), is commonly perceived as a literary sub-genre, more flexible than the traditional story tracing the development of personality – from birth to (sometimes) old age –, to be found in an autobiography. According to Gore Vidal, “a memoir is how one remembers one's own life, while an autobiography is history, requiring research, dates, facts double-checked.” (*Palimpsest*). In this respect, Timothy Findley's *Inside Memory: Pages from a writer's workbook* might appear to have a narrower focus on the author's memories or feelings than Paul Bailey's *An Immaculate Mistake: Scenes from Childhood and Beyond*. Both writers *recall* and describe significant *episodes* that helped to shape their emotional intelligence as well as their artistic career. Apparently, Findley chooses to circle them around the writing of some of his novels, out of which six are lending their titles to the chapters. Among the other five one could count an introductory chapter, an interview, and pages from a diary kept while staying, actually living for a good number of years, at an old Ontario farm. Unlike Findley's, Bailey's book, also published in 1990, has forty shorter sections of a more or less chronological linear narrative that stops somewhere at the beginning years of his acting career. Nevertheless, in both works one can feel the presence and the persistence of history, “requiring research, dates, facts double-checked.”; and there are, in the two books, flash-backs and flash-forwards or other narrative devices that usually prompt the stories and add to the flavor of memories displayed.

The importance of *memory*, of *reminiscence* is made obvious within the *dedication pages*, on which not the names of the persons mentioned are especially relevant for our research, but the quotes belonging to writers from other, older times. Bailey resorts to Montaigne in order to underline the importance of telling the truth from what could be just the

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opposite: “He who is not very *strong in memory*² should not meddle with lying”; and continues by warning us that the “scenes from childhood and beyond were written” with the French authors’ caution in mind. Findley chooses the words of a character created by Dostoyevsky, a paragraph in which the function of memory is to ensure the link between the individual destiny and the collective memory of the community:

And so we will remember him all our lives. And even if we are occupied with the most important things – if we attain to honour or fall into great misfortune – still let us remember how good it was here, when we were all united by these loving feelings which made us, for the time we stood together, better perhaps than we are.

Alyosha, *The Brothers Karamazov*

Both writers employ the word *remembrance*, Findley for the title of the very first chapter of his book, and Bailey making it part of the title for the last section in his, “Remembrance Day”. Interestingly enough, Findley also refers, in his introductory chapter, to Remembrance Day – the official day of remembrance for the dead of two world wars in the Commonwealth countries. But, unlike Bailey, who moves on to giving an account of the events and the meetings of such a particular day in the year 1989, the Canadian writer succeeds in turning the phrase into a key element for shaping his own poetics of memory:

I like Remembrance Day. I’m fond of memory. I wish it was a day of happiness. I have many dead in my past, but only one of them died from the wars. And I think very fondly of him. He was my uncle. He didn’t die in the war, but because of it. This was the First World War and so I don’t remember the event itself. I just remember him. But what I remember of my uncle is not the least bit sad. (Findley 6)

1.2 Most authors writing – generally from the first person point of view – memoirs & autobiographies, be them politicians or members of the court, military leaders, businessmen or writers, besides dealing with their careers or private life, attempted at producing / developing their own poetics of *memory* and / or of the act of *remembering*. And probably the most successful attempt so far has remained a piece of fiction, although written in the first person point of view and starting with the words “I recall”, entitled “Funes el memorioso”, a short story by Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges. “Memoriososo” in Spanish means “having a vast memory”, therefore the English translations hesitated between “Funes the Memorioso”, the latter being a rare word in modern English, and “Funes, His memory”. The many occurrences of the phrase “I recall” in the first paragraph of the story, together with the augmentative images associated with it, give the readers a hint at what dramatic – almost tragic – value memory might have:

² Italics mine.

I recall him (though I have no right to speak that sacred verb – only one man on earth did, and that man is dead) holding a passion flower in his hand (...) I recall him – his taciturn face, its Indian features, its extraordinary remoteness (...) I recall (I think) the slender, leather-braided fingers. I recall near those hands a mate cup (...) I recall, in the window of his house, a yellow straw blind (...) I clearly recall his voice (...)
(Borges, 91)

It is mainly the voice – that accounting for the *remoteness* felt – of a young man the narrator recalls, a young man who, having lived for nineteen years completely unaware of his terrifying gift, and after having been “bucked off a half-broken horse” and “left hopelessly crippled”, discovers that “his perception and his memory were perfect” (Borges 96). So perfect that other cases of prodigious memory cataloged in Pliny’s *Naturalis Historia* – “Cyrus, the king of Persia, who could call the soldiers in his armies by name; Mithridates Eupator, who meted out justice in the twenty-two languages of the kingdom over which he ruled” (Borges 95) – fail by far to amaze him. The protagonist and the narrator meet several times, the encounters gradually changing for the latter into increasingly alienating experiences that prove the sometimes scary *insanity* of such a perfect memory:

It was then that I saw the face that belonged to the voice that had been talking all night long. Ireneo was nineteen (...) he looked to me as monumental as bronze – older than Egypt, older than the prophecies and the pyramids. I was struck by the thought that every word I spoke, every expression of my face or motion of my hand would endure in his implacable memory; I was rendered clumsy by the fear of making pointless gestures. (Borges 99)

Of the two writers our paper is focusing on, Timothy Findley is the one who constantly develops a poetics of *memory*. Paul Bailey’s dispersed remarks or considerations on the subject make it hard for us to draw an accurate or consistent conceptual map. But that does not diminish the pleasure of reading, his book having a different structure and employing a different strategy. Findley approaches us *via* the plays of Anton Chekhov, in which one could always notice the occurrence of a moment of silence, almost always broken by the words “I remember...” In most situations, it is the voice of a woman that breaks the silence, and two things happen as a result of her resuming her memories: she is transformed and the audience is also transformed. **(1)** A woman in tears remembering happiness or a smiling man remembering pain give the people watching the play “depth and contrast” at the same time and the reassuring feeling that “Memory (...) is the means by which most of us *retain our sanity*³” (Findley 4). As opposed to Funes’ *perfect*, yet frightening memory, the *bits* of either sad or happy memory from Chekhov’s characters are more comforting. And better than nothing, for “In going back, we recognize that we’ve survived the passage of time – and if we survived what we remember, then it’s

³ Italics mine.

likely we'll survive the present" (Findley 4). So, the cathartic dimension of memory speaks forth about hope and survival.

The next step in elaborating his own poetics of *memory* is questioning the implications of Remembrance Day, in the sense that he finds it strange to confine "ourselves to remembering only the dead – and only the war dead" on such a day. Findley makes a very fine distinction between *being a child in memory* – therefore being capable to recover scents or sounds or images closely associated with the ones he loved such as parents, siblings, relatives – and *being a child in photographs* bearing his name. It is the distinction between mobility and immobility, of both memories and people; the physical immobility of his Uncle Tif – Thomas Irving Findley, his godfather – dying at home, and who "was always in a great tall bed – high up – and the bed was white" (Findley 6), and the mobility of his image *inside* the author's memory:

I know he sacrificed his youth, his health, his leg and finally his life for his country. But I'd be a fool if I just said thanks – I'm grateful. (...) my being grateful has nothing to do with what he died for or why he died. (...) I am grateful he was there in that little bit of my life. (...) Remembrance is more than honouring the dead. Remembrance is joining them – being one with them in memory. (Findley 7)

2. Childhood & Youth memories and stories of the World War I

2.1 In 1990, when their books were published, Timothy Findley was sixty years old, and Paul Bailey was fifty-three. This means that there was no possibility for them of getting physically involved in either the First or the Second World War. Nevertheless, both writers displayed a manifest interest in the horrors of war and their impact on people, especially on those who were close to them and whom they loved and felt compassion for. These people don't show up as characters in the novels of the two writers, yet they served as models and / or propellers of the narrative. Robert Ross, for instance, the protagonist of Timothy Findley's *The Wars*, published in 1977, was inspired by his uncle Tif, to whom the novel is dedicated, and also by T. E. Lawrence – a figure of outstanding iconicity for the Middle East warfare of the second decade of the 20th century. According to the author

The whole setting of that book in World War I had been the stuff of my childhood. I was born twelve years after the First World War ended, and I grew up with stories of that War around the living room and the dining room table, because it so greatly affected my parents' families that they never got over it. (as qtd by Olos, 72)

Paul Bailey's *Old Soldiers*, from 1980, features "two septuagenarians assailed by memories of the First World War" (Hickling). In the section "Historical" from his *Immaculate Mistake*, Bailey provides the readers with an explanation for the subliminal power of this quasi anachronism in his works:

Other boys' fathers had served in the Second World War, which had recently ended. My father had been in Flanders, in the First. He was an old soldier, a veteran of the trenches, a survivor of Passchendaele. His fighting days had finished thirty years earlier, when my friends' fathers were no more than toddlers. He was, I remember, almost historical. (Bailey 29)

2.2 In the first full-length study on Timothy Findley, *Front Lines*, Lorraine York seems to be convinced that the Second World War – the war of Findley's childhood, constitutes his “touchstone among wars, the conflict to which he returns obsessively” (61). He tackles it in his second novel, *The Butterfly Plague*, published in 1969, in *Famous Last Words*, in 1981 – a novel seen by Linda Hutcheon as an epitome of historiographic metafiction –, and in a section of *The Telling of Lies*, in 1986. *The Wars* then appears to Lorraine York to be only a kind of *intermezzo*, though part and proof of the author's “fascination with twentieth-century warfare”. *Fascination* may be the right word here, yet for the wrong purpose; or direction. Because when reading between the lines of *Inside Memory*, it is the First World War that comes “to the front”, so to say, as a consequence of the stories heard, over and over again – when being a child, or an adolescent, or a young adult – from father-substitutes such as his uncle Tif, and the actors Ernest Thesiger and Wilfrid Lawson.

Maurice Blanchot believes that childhood fascinates us because it is the moment of fascination itself. Being a *golden age*, it is accompanied by a splendid light, alien to any revelation, for there is nothing to reveal, it is just pure reflection. In this respect, mother is fascinating because the child is fascinated, and everything *it* remembers from childhood has a certain immobility that pertains to fascination (Blanchot 28). It is only through this conceptual framework, I believe, that one could fully understand the attempts – or should we call them trials – undertaken by Findley when trying to imagine, for some of the major scenes in *The Wars*, the ordeal his uncle had been through:

Did people really do this? Survive this? I mean the freezing rain, the wind and the mud. (...) This is the mud experienced by Uncle Tif (...) This the mud that he and all those men in that Flanders campaign had to live in every hour of every day for weeks and months on end. My determination was that I would go down the lane and stay there twenty-four hours. I would do all the things they had to do and I would do them – as best as I could – in weather conditions matching theirs. This, of course, was impossible. (Findley 148)

As a young actor, Findley had among his mentors Ernest Thesiger, who had his hands crushed in the First World War after a building he was hiding in collapsed during a bombardment. Thesiger told Findley how he was waiting for rescue for “almost all of one day” and that he could not see his arms or his hands, but he was happy that he could feel the pain in them. His happiness lasted until he “dimly remembered” what other friends had told him – friends who had already lost their legs and arms –, that those were actually *ghost pains*. He could not imagine his life without hands, and, as he wanted to be an artist,

he prayed that he would die. Luckily, his arms and his hands were saved, but that was when “needlework entered his life – as a therapeutic activity by which he could regain control of his dexterity” (Findley 43). The pages containing this particular episode and others related to the life and personality of Ernest Thesiger begin with straight references to the ways human memory works, somehow strangely similar to the work of *ghost pains*:

My memory keeps delivering the past in brown-paper parcels done up with string and marked “address of sender unknown” One such parcel arrived the other day. Winter. Early evening. Not quite dark, but dark enough to turn on lights. (Findley 39)

I don’t know how it arrived – I don’t know why. But slowly, as I moved about the room adjusting lamps and thermostats, I was gradually overwhelmed by a certainty that someone was about to speak. (Findley 40)

The other British actor haunting Findley’s early Canadian evening at his Ontario farm is Wilfrid Lawson, and the author’s first ever memory of him was from the 1938 film of George Bernard Shaw’s *Pygmalion*, in which Lawson played Alfred Doolittle, the dustman – Eliza’s father. Findley’s relationship with Lawson was “greater in terms of intimacy” – as he had to make every effort possible, while on tour, to get the older actor to the theatre *on time*.

*We more or less marched. It was supposed to be good for our lungs. **Take in lots of air, Findley. Take in lots of air!** My nightmare was that he would spot a pub and want to go in. That never happened. I guess it didn’t need to. Primed before he left the digs – his dressing-room was pub enough to welcome him upon arrival. (Findley 52)*

Lawson’s problem was drinking, which he deliberately had chosen over morphine to deaden the pain caused by a metal plate in his skull. For, just like Ernest Thesiger, “Mister Lawson had been dreadfully wounded in the First World War”. Findley remembers that, although not sharing a room, he had to go to Lawson’s during the night “out of flames and battle-sounds and the cries of other people dying” and save him “from his fallen aeroplane and the horrors of the mud” (Findley 51-52). The wrecked bed used to be the aeroplane from where the young actor would take Lawson to the bathroom, wash his face and pretend he was adjusting his senior’s uniform. And in the morning, as requested by Lawson, Findley, standing like a soldier, had to report that “nothing untoward had happened in the night”.

In spite of such nightmarish scenes, and of the images triggered by the horrific events they had been through, the two senior actors made their way, and *room*, into the written pages of Findley’s memoir. Memory can accommodate them both, making justice to their *mobility*, restoring it for the purpose of ensuring the readers’ delight.

Ernest was not alone in the package I received that late afternoon. Perhaps in some ways it was inevitable that in my memory, especially, he should always keep the company of another with whom, in real life, I doubt very much he would have kept company at all. (Findley 46-47)

They came – already old – into my young life. They left an indelible and wondrous impression – and they gave me the gift of their company whether for good or ill. (Findley 53)

2.3 For Paul Bailey, the horrors of the First World War turned into a rather strange opportunity to clarify family relationships. In one November afternoon of the year 1948, he came home to find his father “in a restless fever, in the bed my mother shared with my sister”. Given the limited size of the house and the physiological changes in his sister’s body and his, he had been his father’s bedfellow since he was eleven. But now he could witness whatever his father had refrained from expressing during the conversations they used to have on their Sunday walks together. The boy was intrigued by the names shouted in his father’s delirium, some of them unrecognizable to him: “They belonged, I think, to his comrades in the trenches, many long dead” (Bailey 25). Some names were addressed with tenderness, others with rage, but when asking about Esther, the one which truly stirred his curiosity, little Paul was told to just go and do his homework: “Esther, I learned in 1985, some months after my mother’s death, was my father’s first wife. She had gone to live with another man while he was in Flanders. I owe my existence to her unfaithfulness” (Bailey 26).

At his father’s funeral, he is reunited with his half-brother and his half-sister, whom he had never met before. They exchange information, a letter follows after one year, yet it is “entirely accidental” that he meets his half-sister again, on that Remembrance Day of 1989 – described in the last section of the book –, so there is a time span of more than half a century in between the two encounters. And it is only then that the writer finds out the truth about the circumstances of his father splitting with Esther, and as a consequence never being able to fully love his first two children, because they constantly reminded him of his wife’s betrayal.

The writer takes the opportunity to elaborate on the way memory plays its games *on* and *with* people: “Late on that Remembrance Day, I thought of my half-sister’s father, who did not seem like my own father at all” (Bailey 163) He remembers *his* father playing bowls “as the soldier he once was”, or talking, in a “vanished foggy London”, about the miserable mess of Flanders: “Heroes, my arse’, he’d said’ (Bailey 164).

For him, *his* father had embodied history, in his “three-piece suit” he would put on for his Sunday walks at “what he called a ‘gentlemen’s pace”, or when he would produce a pocket watch on a chain from his waistcoat. The course of his father’s life had followed the rise and the decline of the music hall, and Bailey feels that the best way to conjure the image of his parent is when listening to an old record of George Robey and Violet Loraine (2). Yet this is but another chance to bring forth the *war motif*, pointing at broken hearts and fractured lives:

My father might have sung 'If You Were the Only Girl in the World' in Flanders, for it was a great favourite with the soldiers in the trenches. His 'only girl' was Esther, who was to 'mar his joy' when he returned to England soon after 'the war to end all wars' was over. (Bailey 31)

3. Poetic Justice

Written and published when the two authors were at the height of their literary reputation, the two books of non-fiction allow the readers to get a glimpse into the writers' lab or to decode, and uncover, both the material and the immaterial elements that make up for the essence and the structure of their fictional works. Images and motifs to be found in memoirs or autobiographies usually account for the certainty and universality of the approach encountered in novels, plays, poems, etc. An American critic dealing with the topic "novels vs. histories or biographies" admits that her "central subject is the ability to imagine what is like to live the life of another person who might, given changes in circumstance, be oneself or one of one's loved ones" (Nussbaum 5). Her plea for literary works that, due to their very essence, "promote identification and emotional reaction" is grounded on the efficiency with which they cut through any "self-protective stratagems" meant to keep knowledge at a so-called *objective* distance from the reader.

But sometimes it really takes time to achieve that ability to imagine in order to promoting any emotional reaction. In a 1998 interview, when speaking about his writing of *The Wars*, Findley insists on him being affected for decades by the stories of the First World War overheard during his childhood years: "And therefore it was the thing I had had all my life – this bloody war. And I was forty seven before I wrote that book. That's a long period of digestion – a long period of gestation." (qtd. in Olos 72) (3) Findley's partner remembers how happy Tif was when finding the subject for the new book and that it was going to be a book with a positive approach, in spite of the dreadful things that were awaiting the protagonist. But "To write means to enter the assertion of solitude where one can feel the threat of fascination"⁴ (Blanchot 28). And Findley did find the kind of solitude assaulted by a certain fascination that helped him to produce his first major novel:

I have always believed that concentration lies behind the images we remember – a concentration of energies or of focus or of space. (...) I have been making notes in preparation – while the things gels in me. Reading Uncle Tif's letters – looking at photographs – steeping myself (but lightly) in the times. By "lightly" I mean cautiously – lest I get over-burdened with detail and lose touch with imagination. (...) Characters have their own names and will tell you, if you wait... (Findley 142)

As for Paul Bailey, the image of the father who, hadn't he died too prematurely, would have been a true ogre for his son's aspirations to become, first an actor, and then a writer, which definitely didn't mean "doing a proper job of work" in the eyes of his family, that

⁴ Translation mine.

kind of image didn't stay. Instead, he remembers the father he understood best, and who talked, one Remembrance Day, of the terrible mess that was Flanders. And just like Findley, he did find the kind of solitude assaulted by a certain fascination that helped him to become a true artist:

It was this father, the man who had given brief expression to his knowledge of futility, I cherished. They were welcome to their dictator, their man of absolute judgements, unafflicted by doubt. I had been granted a few precious moments of his despair, and they gave me a curious sustenance. They made me want to write. (Bailey 95)

Endnotes

1. In an interview given in June 1998 – and later integrated in a book published in 2001 –, to Ana Olos, Timothy Findley confesses about the pleasure of reading plays, especially by Chekhov and Shakespeare. He believed that such writers and their plays always work: “And the beauty of *The Cherry Orchard* to me is in its everlasting connections to all those people who are basically lost in a moment of change” (qtd. in Olos 79)
2. George Robey, born George Edward Wade, was an English music hall comedian and star, who lived between 1869 and 1954. During World War I he raised over 500, 000 pounds for war charities; Violet Loraine, born Violet Mary Tipton, was an English musical theatre actress and singer, who lived between 1886 and 1956.
3. These remarks are in obvious contradiction with Lorraine York's assumptions on the Second World War as being the touchstone of wars in Findley's works. The author seemed to be *marked* by the stories overheard in his family for years, and this is a proof that the discourse that affects us more is the one produced by who has the power, as Foucault suggested.

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A RECONFIGURATION OF AMERICANISM: RECEPTION SPACE AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE

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Abstract

The present paper presents and analyzes the current assumption of Americanism in the circumstances of the contemporary accusations of “cultural hegemony” and globalization. In accordance with the principles of “New Americanism” regarding the role and function of Americanism in nowadays world, this study suggests some directions of research based on notions of cultural identity, cultural exchange, cultural mobility, contact zones and proposes a shift of focus towards the space of reception of the American culture.

Keywords: Americanism, reception space, cultural mobility, cultural exchange

The present study is an attempt to address a current trend in the interpretation of the role, function and importance of the American culture in the conditions of the increasingly globalized world that we are living in. The starting point of this study is a hypothesis which has been scholarly explained and sustained in many forms throughout history². It pertains to the perception of the American cultural space as an alternative space, juxtaposed to the physical territory, being essentially a discursive invention facilitated by a perception which is mediated by myths and symbols which are specific to the rhetoric of the exceptionalist discourses. The present study shifts the focus at the level of the reception of the cultural communication of the American space, in a perspective which is likely to provide a more narrowed-down image of Americanism and one which should be in more accordance with the postmodernist condition laying special emphasis on subjectivities, on particulars and on marginalities.

Spatiality, perspective, distance and context (geographical, ideological, social, historical, cultural) are considered to be essential elements of the perception of the American culture, thus providing its several interpretational values. The perception from a distance of the American cultural space, in a transatlantic perspective, via multiple traditional and modern communication channels creates the conditions of a specific type of reception, conditioned by the receiver’s European / Romanian context. The argument of shifting the focus from the space of production of Americanism to the space of reception, in a multidisciplinary approach which combines historical, sociological, ideological and cultural considerations can find justifications at various levels.

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² Among the first scholars who introduced the concept of America’s fictionality is Edmundo O’Gorman, in *The Invention of America : An Inquiry into the Historical Nature of the New World and the Meaning of its History*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1961.

The first justification of such an approach constitutes a reaction to what has come to be regarded as a cliché in the description of the contemporary cultural phenomenon, which abuses of concepts such as “globalization”, “cultural imperialism”, “cultural hegemony”, “cultural war”, all in relation with American culture and subcultures. At the end of the previous century, when these concepts were merely beginning to become reality, there were voices who urged for the reconsideration of Americanism and pleaded for its interpretation in a larger context, more suitable for its accurate perception given the realities of the world. Jane Desmond and Virginia Dominguez (1996) claimed that American studies needed to be contextualized in a “critical internationalism”³ and they called for “a new kind of scholarship about the U.S.”⁴ What their article mainly implies is a need which is perceived as urgent, in the increasingly globalized world, of reconsidering the paradigms of American studies and to resituate them in a broader global context which should be more consistent with and truthful to the current stand of Americanism in the world.

In a similar approach, Norman R. Yetman and David M. Katzman (2000) confess a sense of perceived “uneasiness” with what they call “an insular focus” within American studies scholarship which is seen as “inconsistent with and oblivious to the new economic, political, social, demographic and cultural realities at the end of the American century”⁵

This re-contextualization of American studies and of Americanism which the contemporary world has made inevitable triggers a reconsideration of the factors involved in the process of cultural communication. Once the “insular focus” repudiated by Norman R. Yetman and David M. Katzman had lost its predominant characteristic in informing the American canon, a reconsideration of the larger context of its reception was the next natural approach. The approach of Americanism in a spatial perspective, one in which distance becomes the significant element and the essential factor in the correct assimilation of the message of cultural communication thus becomes a very actual one, part of the postmodern paradigm of interpretation which lays strong emphasis on the receiver’s decisive role and on his/her subjectivity in interpreting cultural messages.

This decentrism of American studies is currently the main direction of the study of Americanism at a global level, marked by a perceived spatial turn as a new modality of approach which tends to become general and turn into a norm. The exceptional character of the American culture, perceived not qualitatively, but motivated by its historical and cultural realities, determines the necessity of a cultural mutation at the level of its global reception, a mutation which should consider the spatial perspective as the determining factor. This perspective determines an extremely topical reconsideration of the American cultural phenomenon, founded upon a reformulation of the entire concept of western

³ Jane Desmond and Virginia Dominguez, “Resituating American Studies in a Critical Internationalism”, *American Quarterly* 48:3 (September), 1996, pp. 475-490.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Norman R. Yetman and David M. Katzman. “Globalization and American Studies”, *American Studies*, 41:2/3 (Summer-Fall), 2000, pp. 5-10.

civilization through its geographical uprooting and its transformation into a global model, a “labyrinth of Euro-American relations”⁶

This reconsideration of perspectives pertaining to the transnational turn of American studies also implies topical concepts such as cultural mobility and intercultural exchange, which are characteristic of the so-called “New Americanism”. This new approach marks a departure from the traditional practices of American studies, rooted in the monocultural norms of the exceptionalist-type discourses, thus being in concordance with the multicultural imperatives of American studies.

In this context, there is a perceived double phenomenon at an international level: on the one hand, we note the internationalization and re-territorialization of Americanism and, on the other hand, a renunciation at the direction of the old American school. This school, whose theoretical framework was built in the period of the Cold War, was based on the equation myth – symbol – image and by incorporating this equation in exceptionalist monocultural discourses it was meant to create and impose a set of americanist attitudes. The “New Americanism”, conceptualized and given theoretical shape by scholars such as Donald Pease, Philip Fisher, Jane Tompkins, Jonathan Arac, Sacvan Bercovitch, Myra Jehlen, Laurence Buell represents a break this type of unitary exceptionalist discourse in favor of moments and processes of intercultural exchange, from the perspective of the globalization of American studies. This openness of Americanism radically changes the balance of the factors involved in the process of production, transmission and reception of the American cultural phenomenon. Once Americanism loses the centrality of its exceptionalist discourse, the emphasis is directed towards marginal groups, fact which leads to an increased importance of the role played by the interpretation of the plurivocal discourses of the American culture. The perspective of the reception becomes essential and it is conditioned by certain ideological, social, cultural and historical contexts which shape the received image of America.

In this renewed and reinterpreted assumption of Americanism, it is important to find and use adequate scholarly resources which should permit the proper analysis of the American cultural signs from the perspective of their mobility and intercultural spatiality, of the versatility of their perception according to the different contexts of the reception spaces. These theoretical tools can subsequently be used for particular purposes of analyzing the ways that American culture manifests itself in different spaces of reception. These different spaces of reception lead to particularized interpretations of the cultural message, according to the ideological, cultural and historical character of the reception space and the purposes of the cultural exchange. These particularized interpretations are likely to create the conditions for the emergence of some dominant patterns of representation of American culture in different spaces of reception and for the critical conceptualization of the mechanisms which assist the emergence of these patterns.

⁶ Tiziano Bonazzi, “Europe, Zeus and Minos, or the Labyrinth of Euro-American Relations”, *Ricerche di Storia Politica*, 2004 (1)

The major outcome of this approach to Americanism is its opening to multicultural reception, through the extraordinary diversity of some apparently disparate themes belonging to some domains which were once considered marginal, but which find their privileged positions in the postmodern world. The refusal of the cohesive element of the old American scholarship, element which conferred its singularity to a culture which was expressed and articulated through exceptionalist discourse has determined a mutation at the level of the reception of the American culture in the world. This reception is no longer unitary; it is subjected to a set of cultural norms and practices.

This process of transatlantic mirroring of the image of America according to the particular subjectivity of the reception space may also be considered a source of identity building for the recipient's inner structure. The cultural image of America has always been a comparative standard; this assumption is particularly valid in the case of the Romanian space of reception, which is a liminal one, situated on the geographical border between the East and the West, but also on an ideological border, between its communist past and its profoundly European cultural values and beliefs.

In order to achieve a coherent mechanism of representation we suggest a limited number of methodologies and approaches which are considered essential for the reinterpretation of Americanism.

Firstly, the terminology that we suggest as a proper tool for such an approach is an interdisciplinary one, making use of such concepts such as: cultural identity, spatial identity, multiculturalism, cultural hybridity, cosmopolitanism, alterity, frontierism and contact zone, alienation, cultural mobility, intercultural exchange.

Secondly, any approach to this new interpretation of Americanism should inevitably include references to modalities of constructing American cultural identity as an intentional concept, culturally constructed, which can be communicated via different informational means. In this respect, it is useful to approach identity from the perspective offered by Samuel Huntington, using the equation "identity = imagined self"⁷, which accentuates the role of the imaginative processes in creating the idea of cultural identity. Similarly, Benedict Anderson's concept of "imagined communities"⁸ is relevant in this new approach to the global concept of the American identity insofar as it describes national identity as an abstract concept, an imaginary product of the members of a certain community. The importance of this theory is given by the enlargement of the space where cultural identities are shaped, beyond geographical borders, in an approach which favors the transatlantic perception of cultural landmarks.

Linked to the concept of flexible identities is the idea of the alterity as a psychological necessity in defining individual and group identity. The different aspect of the American culture can be interpreted as cultural standards for the shaping and

⁷ Samuel Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004.

⁸ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1991.

reinforcing identities of the reception space, either by similarity or by opposition. In analyzing the reception and the different modes of manifestation of the American culture worldwide, as well as the diversity of the effects that it produces, it would be relevant to apply Vamyrk Volkan's interpretation of the "other" seen as another image of the self, a repudiated or rejected one, for various reasons⁹. Volkan's "other" is seen as a rich source of identity and is used as an external stabilizer of one's sense of identity. This perspective of the "other" is even more meaningful from the transatlantic – and mediated – perception of the "other", the messenger of the hegemonic American culture, opening the way to interpretations which involve the concepts of marginality, centrality and their reconfiguration in the postmodern times.

The change of focus from the space of production to the space of reception of Americanism and the dynamics of cultural signs is bound to take into account the paradigm of cultural mobility. The 'hegemonic' character of the American culture is part of a larger cultural concept which James Clifford calls "traveling cultures"¹⁰. This concept is centered on the complexity of localizing culture in nowadays post-neocolonial conditions, due to the multitude of cultural connections. Real spatial mobility, which was once the only means of intercultural connection, is nowadays replaced by forces which cross the cultural space and have a great impact at the level of their reception. This traveling aspect of culture is valid in the case of Americanism which, especially under its popular forms, travels extensively throughout space in a global way: television, virtual communication, globalizing economic practices.

In close connection to the concept of the traveling culture, it is also relevant to interpret the new assumption of Americanism with reference to what James Clifford calls "border" (which is culturally and semantically different from the typically American spatial metaphor of the "frontier"). In cultural terms, and with implicit reference to American cultural exports, this "border" stands for the common space where the cultural exchange takes place. It is a place of special hybridity, a space of transgression, of discursive negotiations which create cultural identities. This perspective is also in direct connection to the theoretical framework introduced by the "New Americanism", where the metaphor of the "frontier" and that of the "melting pot" (of an exceptionalist, unifying type) are replaced with the more flexible concepts of "borderland" and "contact zone", which facilitate a specific perception of Americanism.

One of these specific perceptions, made possible by the historical, ideological and economic context can be labeled by what Homi Bhabha called the fetishization of cultures. The fervent attachment to alien cultures and symbols is seen as an attempt to localize global symbols. The impossibility of physical mobility in another cultural space (because of ideological restrictions or economic difficulties) triggers this fetishization which has a substitutive role.

⁹ Vamyrk Volkan, *The Need to Have Enemies and Allies: From Clinical Practice to International Relationships*. Norhtvale: J. Aronson, 1994.

¹⁰ James Clifford, *Routes. Travel and Translation in the late 20th Century*. Cambridge: Harvard U.P., 1999.

All of these possible ways of approaching Americanism are but a mere sample of the many possibilities which were made possible by the change of perspective that this field of knowledge has suffered lately. The lack of a unifying discourse has granted scholars with the enormous liberty of approaching the idea of Americanism in a manner which should suit their particular research interests. One of the major advantages of this type of approach is the accent on the reception of American culture, which can be a never-ending source of interpretations and perspectives.

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ON THE ISSUE OF ‘TRANSDAPTATION’

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Abstract

Due to the difficulty implied by the attempt to render words from one language into another, especially if those are culture specific items, there are instances when translation needs to go further, to that so-called ‘transdaptation’, (i.e. if we may, combination of the terms translation + adaptation). For the present paper, we are briefly viewing Mona Baker’s opinion on the matter regarding the issue of culture specific elements and their equivallation.

Keywords: culture specific elements, ‘transdaptation’, individuality

The present article is part of a postdoctoral scientific research, entitled *Communication of the national spirit by translating culture specific elements*, and focuses upon aspects related to the translation of literature from Romanian into English, aiming mainly at issues concerned with the inter-linguistic and inter-cultural transfer of those terms that attempt to maintain and preserve the local atmosphere and air specific to every nation. We are interested in that special category of untranslatable terms, real “mill stones” for the translators, as they bear geographical, historical, socio-cultural experience: the so called ‘culture specific elements’, i.e. ‘CSEs’.

They say that our identity is what makes us who we are. They say that national identity cannot be rendered by means of translation in another language without betraying it up to a certain extent. We say we ought to try and to succeed. We consider that by translation we gain more than we lose, from many points of view. This might stand as a simple explanation to the necessity to ‘declare war’ to the linguistic difficulties of a certain language; since the individual is not meant to live separated from a community, the community needs to build bridges of communication between members of different nations.

We ought to be clear that, by the efforts in translating (here, we understand also the process of equation, adaptation, re-invention, rendering etc.) the CSEs in a different language, there is, on the one hand, always a certain amount of loss implied as well as, on the other hand, a certain amount of gain. All that due to the fact that ‘any translator brings along a certain amount of new items, imposed by the continuous, never-ending renewal of concepts, of civilization, of international language.’ (Bulgăr: 3) Once again, we have to embrace the idea according to which the translation has the capacity to access and decode linguistic conventions otherwise unique, specific to a certain people, proper to a certain culture.

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This debate cannot escape the idea that there will always be the ardent issue of *non-equivalence* in question; according to Mona Baker (21), there are certain common issues to be regarded when touching the matter:

Culture-specific concepts – item referring to the fact that one word from the source language text expresses a concept that is unknown in the target language. The word can relate to culture-related items, like traditions, religion, food or drink;

The source-language concept has no lexical equivalent in the target language – this would mean that the source language expresses something that is easy to understand in the target language and an equivalent can be found, although not an equivalent that is able to recreate the impact of the word in the source-language text.

The source-language word has a complex meaning – this might imply certain problems since there are words that are very complex when it comes to the meanings that they encompass. This would mean that a single word can have more meanings, or denominate a set of actions, characteristics, etc. Bolinger and Sears suggest that: “If we should ever need to talk regularly and frequently about independently operated sawmills from which striking workers are locked out on Thursday when the temperature is between 500° and 600°F, we would find a concise way to do it” (ibid.:114). These statements would refer to the fact that the words that pose problems by expressing complex meanings, usually appear from the need of expressing a concept that is intensely used.

There are differences between distinctions in meaning in the source language and target language – this implies that the target language may have more or less distinctions in meaning than the source language. These distinctions in meaning are related to the cultural differences that may occur, hence, a word that relates to a cultural concept has many meanings in the source language, while the target language does not hold other meanings than the basic one.

The target language lacks a superordinate – the target language might contain the specific words that make up a certain semantic field, but lacks the main word that superordinates that semantic field.

The target language lacks a specific term – this would imply the opposite situation of the item above (5), which means that the target language lacks a term from the semantic field of the word in question. For example, the word “beer” can be translated in Romanian only as “bere”, while in English, there are many distinctions:

- “ale”
- “lager” – light beer (Romanian: bere blondă)
- “brew” – colloquial for “beer”
- “stout” – beer type (Romanian: bere neagră tare)
- “bock” – German beer
- “shandy” (UK) – beer and lemonade

(<http://www.wordreference.com/roen/bere>).

Differences in perspective – Baker explains this item by the differences in physical and interpersonal perspective that may be given different values and meanings from one language to another. She relates this topic to the physical relations with the expressions that concern people and their interaction, the circumstances that involve people. These expressions may come in pairs, as: come-go, give-take, etc. for instance “Japanese has six equivalents for “give”, depending on who gives to whom: yaru, ageru, morau, kureru, itadaku and kudasaru” (McCreary, 1986) (Baker, 23).

Differences in expressive meaning – this would concern the differences between words in the source language and target language, in terms of expressive meaning. The translator may encounter a word that can have a strong expressive meaning in the source language, while the word that has the same propositional meaning in the target language is rather neutral. The common technique in such case is to add expressiveness by means of an adverb, or another element, or to emphasize later on in the text.

Differences in form – this refers to the fact that there are certain words from the source language that do not have equivalents in the target language. And Mona Baker refers here to the fact that “Certain suffixes and prefixes which convey propositional and other types of meaning in English often have no direct equivalents in other languages (...). It is most important for the translators to understand the contribution that affixes make to the meaning of words and expressions, especially since such affixes are often used creatively in English to coin new words for various reasons, such as filling temporary semantic gaps in the language and creating humour. Their contribution is also important in the area of terminology and standardization.” (Baker, 24-25). By this mechanism, English allows the creation of terms that often do not have direct equivalents, the case of

- “conceivable”, which in Romanian will be translated as: “care poate fi conceput”, even if there is the possibility of using “imaginabil”
- “lovable”, Romanian: “care poate fi iubit”, even with the existing “atrăgător” and “simpatic”.

Differences in using of certain terms–“Even when a particular form does have a ready equivalent in the target language, there may be a difference in the frequency with which it is used or the purpose for which it is used. English, for instance, uses the continuous *-ing* form for binding clauses much more frequently than other languages which have equivalents for it, for example German and the Scandinavian languages. Consequently, rendering every *-ing* form in an English source text with an equivalent *-ing* form in a German, Danish, or Swedish target text would result in stilted, unnatural style.” (Baker, 25). – this is representative for the fact that the translator has to know certain particularities that occur at a general level.

Using the loan words when translating – False friends; This final item that Baker classifies here deals with the loan words being used in source language and the issues of transferring it to the target language. This raises issues because it is not always

possible to find a loan word in the source language that can have the same meaning. “Quite apart from their respective propositional meaning, loan words in English are often used for their prestige value, because they add air of sophistication to the text or its subject matter” (Baker, 25).

- Examples from Italian to English: Adagio, Broccoli, Espresso, Pizza, Spaghetti, Umbrella, Violin, Sonata, Arsenal Balcony, Cappuccino, Casino, Opera, Zucchini (<http://www.english-for-students.com/Italian-Loan-Words.html>)

- Examples from French to English: bon vivant, camouflage, cabaret, coup d'etat, coupon, crayon, entrepreneur, espionnage, faux pas, hors d'oeuvre, laissez faire, lieutenant, mayonnaise, memoir, menu, par excellence, rendezvous, reservoir, roulette, séance, savoir faire, souvenir.

(http://www.kryystal.com/display_borrowlang.php?lang=French)

False friends—are the words or expressions that may have the same form but mean different things. This could be an issue because of the fact that an un-experienced translator may attempt to render the word in the source language, without realising that it is placed in a wrong context

We are to understand that translation is a means to enrich the vocabulary of a language, considering the strategies it uses in order to achieve this prerogative; thus, during the translation process, the translator activates various linguistic and semantic areas by appealing to: borrowings, neologisms, collocations, idioms, euphemisms, stereotypes, CESs, etc. Among the other strategies of translation, one could also mention certain linguistic-hiding techniques, using footnotes, endnotes or explanatory notes, attempt to reconstruct vague equivalences. (Croitoru 2004: 8) R.T.Bell states, and he is not the first one to do it, that “the ideal of obtaining a complete equivalence is a chimera”. All these imply the participation of extra-textual factors (socio-cultural, historical frame, data regarding the author, authorial intent, spatial-temporal coordinates of the source text and the receiver etc.) and also intra-textual factors (regarding the subject, plot, content, composition, vocabulary, surface and deep structures of the phrase, style etc.)

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CONSIDERING AN INTRATEXTUAL INVESTIGATION OF PHILIP ROTH'S MOST FAMOUS SERIES OF BOOKS

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Abstract

Several times in his career Roth has undertaken to write linked novels, therefore, this study focuses on one possible method of reading Roth's series of novels for unity, in order to reach a pattern, a coherence, an overarching meaning, a wholeness and neatness in the design of each of the books which make up these series - this method is called *intratextuality*. First, I will define the concept of *intratextuality*, then I will describe the range of textual features it entails, furthermore, I will shift my focus to the way these textual features responsible for *intratextuality* contribute to the multilayered communications between authors of narratives and their audiences, and, finally, I will show how Roth's most famous series of books (the Zuckerman books) can be read *intratextually*.

Keywords: intratextuality, linked novels, reading for unity, Philip Roth, the Zuckerman project

1. Theoretical considerations. If the very vast majority of the critical projects on Philip Roth's several series of books are concerned with chunks of text (every book in itself), which systematically break these off into even smaller pieces, with the intention to achieve the compartmentalization so necessary for a thorough understanding and appreciation of the richness of the texts, this study focuses on how to put things together, how to adopt the large perspective, oblivious to most details, and how to read Roth's series for unity, i.e. reading them univocally. This is in my opinion the most natural type of reading, the one which involves the movement or drive towards some sort of unity, because that is how we make sense of things. The commonly used technique of chopping up the text in order to use it (a process specific to professional readers) needs to be completed by reversing the process with the aim to reach a wholeness and neatness in the design of the an author's books which make up series. It is the process Rabinowitz describes as "setting out the basic coherence of literary works, their 'unity' or 'basic pattern' or 'overarching meaning'"¹⁴¹).

There are two literary axes along which critics want to assess coherence (the objectivists' axis and subjectivists' one, i.e. the formalists' and reader critics'): on the one hand, they want to evaluate the formal relation among elements of a book (coherence as a textual property), on the other, they want to view coherence as a quality of the vision of the writer or of the world he describes (making coherent as a critical activity). Indeed, recent reader criticism is making increasingly clear that when critics discuss coherence, their true subject is less a quality in the text or the author than an activity on the part of the readers. Susan Horton highlights literary critics most important role in this matter,

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when she calls "the critic's rage to pattern" (40). Culler similarly claims that the unity of texts "is produced not so much by intrinsic features of their parts as by the intent at totality of the interpretive process: the strength of the expectations which lead readers to look for certain forms of organization in a text and to find them" (91). Similarly, in *The Act of Reading*, esp. 118-25, Wolfgang Iser conceives of the reading act as a activity pointed at "consistency-building".

This approach implies working with the concept of *intratextuality*. Researching the concept has revealed it is new and largely undealt with in most critical debates. In what follows, a minimal theoretical framework is described: a definition, a set of characteristics and number of sub-concepts all in agreement with the tenets of the rhetorical approach to narrative all based on structuralist and post-structuralist views on this matter and on Rabinowitz's guidelines in his *Before Reading*.

2. Definition, principles and concepts.

Viewed from a formal perspective, the notion of *intratextuality* in a series of different and autonomous books by the same author is connected to the text's design to provide unity. It is an internal system of connections and references placed in the text in order to help readers decode particular courses of actions, circumstances, attitudes etc. and highlight architectural design of the entire series. The rhetorical perspective, on the other hand, means recuperating unity, the concept of *intratextuality* being directly tied to the concepts of authorial audience and authorial intention, in other words, to the reader's attempt to read and understand the whole as the author intended by wittingly joining a particular interpretive community, to the acceptance of the author's invitation to read in a particular socially constituted way that is shared by the author and his or her expected readers.

Intratextuality is a relatively newly-defined critical tool/analytical category, barely tackled by literary critics. However, *intratextuality* makes no claims to being fundamentally new, since clearly questions of this nature have been asked since antiquity. *Intratextuality* is a term which seems to have been recently coined independently by a number of critics and theorists (as Alison Sharrock² points out in her introduction to *Intratextuality: Greek and Roman Textual Relations*) on the analogy of *intertextuality*, to refer to internal relationships within a text. Thus while *intertextuality* defines the relationship between different texts (links to other texts), *intratextuality* defines the relationship between the parts of one specific text, more precisely the internal tensions and linkages between components of a whole, which may be one text or a series of texts (characterized by the same authorial signature).

² The term 'intratextuality' that Sharrock thought to have coined herself she later discovered it used in a number of places: Frangoulidis (1997a), Kolarov (1992), Orr (1991), Boyle (1993), John Henderson, via Pucci (1998), who quotes Perri (1978). Used extensively in Reid (1992), under the heading of 'framing' (his definition of intratextual framing starts from the physical paragraph of the printed book, and moves to embedded narrative; Reid – formalist interests). Grigley's (1995) book on art, text and theory ends with a chapter entitled 'Intratextuality'. However, these theorists all have slightly different conceptions one from the other.

In a review by Ellen Oliensis of *Intratextuality: Greek and Roman Textual Relations* we find the combined definition of *intratextuality* given by the editors: “This is a definition grounded in form, ‘*intratextuality*’ as a practice of textual segmentation and recombination: ‘part-ing,’ as Sharrock puts it (11); ‘a property of texts where the internal design, structure, and partition of the text are particularly paraded,’ in Morales' words (326). One paradigmatic strategy of *intratextual* reading is to consider the contribution of seemingly wayward parts (digressions, purple patches, etc.) to the ‘wholes’ from which they diverge; one key issue, especially for Sharrock, is the possibility of resisting this movement toward totalization, of granting the parts some measure of autonomy” (30).

Intratextuality is characterized by conceptual bagginess. It refers to the relation of literary parts to the literary whole that leads to a well formed plot, but it can also be used of any relationship within a text, for example the imagistic and thematic structures of coherence and continuity beloved to the new critical and structuralist traditions, and the relationships of discontinuity highlighted by post-structuralist reading practices.

3. Intratextuality, as a strategy of recuperating unity - the rhetorical point of view.

When we read, by the very act of reading, we are driven towards some sort of ‘unity’. It is a very common critical move to argue for unity, and find reasons why apparently divergent passages are really contributing to the whole. Contemporary literature with its particularities and diversity makes the vast majority of reading strategies to involve some form of the following two approaches: either to celebrate (or deprecate) disunity, whether or not by denying the significance of the parts to each other, or to argue that it must all really be unified. Both are forms of unity in diversity. However, most theorists are more inclined to take the second one.

Reading encourages us to conceptualize texts as units within boundaries. The physical book, the act of performance, the title, the prologue, the ‘sense of ending’, even the practice of excerption: all these things contribute towards creating a sense of (a) text. *Intratextual* parts, text and criticism are all one (to use the metaphor of wholeness) – not a seamless whole all nicely congruent, but rather a dynamic tension or a series of tensions all ultimately linked in the act of reading (Sharrock 24-26).

4. Aspects specific to *intratextuality*.

First, *intratextuality* implies that among the potential (infinite) range of assumptions an author can make are the ones that their readers have knowledge of the previous book(s) in the series and that his readers are constituted in an interpretive community around this knowledge of the series of books. *Intratextuality* entails one major advantage and one disadvantage with respect to the author. The advantage is: no necessity to explain again. Roth does not take the trouble to explain at all who Zuckerman, Kepesh or Roth is, his background and his personality. He assumes that the readers in already familiar with this knowledge. He seems very comfortable with this decision not to remind

readers, feeling based on his assumptions connected with *intratextuality*, which range from the recurrence of characters, settings, themes to technique and style. The significant limitation entailed by this assumption and signaled by Rabinowitz and Mary Pratt is that once a writer has undertaken to write linked novels, they have to give up some of their freedom. Specifically, once Roth has made certain initial decisions, whatever he wishes to communicate—even when he wishes to communicate ambiguity, as it happens in *The Counterlife*—, he has limited the range of subsequent choices. On the other hand, because intratextuality places a greater weight on the role of the audience or reader in constructing relationships, as it entails operating with some version of a reader-response criticism and there is a loosening of authorial control, both this advantage and this limitation concern the reader to the same extent. The communication is efficient, without boring repetitions, but for an accurate decoding/evaluation the reader is bound to have already read what happened before.

Secondly, in her chapter in *Intratextuality: Greek and Roman Textual Relations*, Alison Sharrock shows that *intratextuality* implies a number of aspects regarding the relationship between parts and wholes. Thus, *intratextuality* entails emphasis on the interaction of detail and big picture. Both authors and readers keep thinking how parts interrelate with the wholes. Reading *intratextually* means “looking at the text from different directions backwards as well as forwards, chopping it up in various ways, building it up again, contracting and expanding its boundaries both within the opus and outside, dividing and rejoining in the act of reading” (7).

Sharrock also shows that *intratextuality* seeks to put the relationship between parts more firmly on the critical map, and so to offer by example a more explicitly self-conscious ‘perspective’ on the contribution of internal textual relationship to the reading of the whole. She puts forward the hypothesis of intratextuality that “a text’s meaning grows not only out the readings of its parts and its whole, but also out of readings of the relationships between parts, and the reading of those parts as parts, and parts as relationship (interactive and rebarbative): all this both formally (e.g. episodes, digression, frame, narrative line, etc.) and substantively (e.g. in voice, theme, allusion, topos, etc.) – and teleologically” (7-8).

An important element in intratextuality is the fact that sometimes parts do not relate to each other in tidy and significant ways, but stick out like sore thumbs. “Intratextuality is about how bits need to be read in the light of other bits, but it is also about the bittiness of literature, its uncomfortable squareness-in-round-(w)holeness” (Sharrock 9). Therefore, when one is more concerned with dwelling explicitly on how texts are put together, one has to deal with those elements which pull texts apart. These are a number of ‘formal’ issues of textuality, such as digressions and narrative line faults, and they must necessarily be considered as part of the intratextual strategy.

Thus, critics have to draw attention to the self-advertising bumpiness of narrative “digressions”. In his essay included in *Intratextuality: Greek and Roman Textual Relations*, Richard Martin shows the necessity to reclaim ‘contradictions, repetitions, digressions

and other anomalies` as creative sites of meaning. Martin`s intratextual strategy highlights the rhetorical power of a textuality not subject to `the tyranny of Aristotle`s Poetics`. He stresses the value of textual material that – by canonical standards - does not fit very well (in tone, content, size, and detail) with other textual elements. These elements (their contextualization, in fact) release particular political and narratological meanings. Fractures in the continuity of the communication process, i.e. failing to provide linkage, in other words to supply the expected intratextuality, is not necessarily a faulty/imperfect or vicious literary strategy, particularly when it is the distinct authorial intention to create these instances. impaired intratextuality exists because the author of the book intended to achieve particular effects on their authorial audience at particular stages in their reading process. These effects can be cognitive, emotional and ethical. To extend our argument, an intelligent and diligent author ensures intratextuality or fails to do it, delays intratextuality or, on the contrary, stresses it readily and excessively as means to support his or her strategy. (Granted disregarding intratextuality can also mean, with less valuable and sloppy writers, an unacceptable defective/imperfect, shallow strategy, due to careless omissions.)

5. The narrative line and the resistance to it.

Sometimes texts offer the challenge of the labyrinth as a reading strategy (in preference to the impulse to unity), as they deny narrative linearity: the progressivism of linearity being sprinkled with complex twists and turns. Fragmentation and linear indecorum are evidence of playfulness and an unstable, ambivalent authorial voice which refuses any easy putting together of the novels`s structure. A classical intratextual move, when reading a notoriously digressive, intratextually indecorous text, is the relating of apparently disparate parts of the text, in order to enhance the reading of each. Writers are consciously in control of the intratextual relationships in the text and force their audiences to navigate around their disjunctive, fragmented texts, and challenging the fact that they have learnt to read for unity, wholeness and smoothness. “In this reading, the messy bittiness of the text releases a subtle political reading when one text is read in the light of another” (Sharrock 9-10). Diversity is a constituent of coherence. It might include digression, but any such must be smoothly articulated with the surrounding text. Even the existence of `parts` which apparently deny all relevance and claim for themselves an absolute aesthetic value does not imply that interaction with other parts is wholly unimportant. To stress the ultimate interconnectedness of everything, we have to acknowledge that texts necessarily come in parts; they come apart. Therefore, it is inherent in the act of reading that we, as readers and critics, divide texts into bite-sized chunks. This may help us find our way but also it breaks up the continuity that the text can offer. Fragmentation is a positive value - an approach which involves pulling texts apart allowing us to appreciate intricate structures. It means denial of linear teleology and an awkward juxtaposition of disjointed elements. Intratextuality may help us to say positive things about spectacular irrelevancies, just as intertextuality helped us say positive things

about poetic debt. The idea that fragmentation might be a principle of organization, or might produce coherent readings, returns us, by the back door, to design. Finally, formal textuality is directly connected to thematic textuality. Making the parts of a text fit together means making sense of it in order to be able to read it. However, this matter of finding the whole, has to be completed with problematizing its wholeness, with “reading a text as universe (the ultimate whole)” (11).

6. An intratextual investigation of the Zuckerman series- general remarks

As stated previously reading intratextually or reading for coherence means looking at the bulky Zuckerman text from various directions (backwards, forwards, diagonally), chopping it up according to particular topics and presently building it up again, as well as expanding the boundaries of each opus so as to turn the perception of natural fragmentation into the perception of a clear design and thus stress the ultimate interconnectedness of everything.

As far as we know, the concept of intratextuality has not been used as terminology to talk about the Zuckerman series. This does not mean though that critics and reviewers have not spotted the multiplicity of relations between the parts that make up the Zuckerman project. Thus, W. H. Gass, in his review of *The Counterlife* writes:

The book comes to us wrapped in more than its dust jacket. It continues and seems to conclude a series of affairs, ambitions and other anxieties taken from the life of Nathan Zuckerman; a life whose telling began before its tolling in "The Ghost Writer" of 1979, and which, after two more novels, "Zuckerman Unbound" in 1981, then "The Anatomy Lesson" in 1983, was advertised as ending in 1985 with the addition of a novella, "The Prague Orgy," so that the entire collection could be called "Zuckerman Bound," a volume you were encouraged to buy in the belief that at last you had hold of the whole thing. So our present text is legitimately preceded, if not surrounded, by the four books that carry the Zuckerman name to this point.

According to the principle of intratextuality, the nine novels of the Zuckerman project are the parts which make up the whole and arise out of the whole. At this point in time when the series is announced to be complete, our own perspective is: standing outside the centre looking inward, as a result we perceive only the parts which are between us and the internal unit. If in chapter three the macrostructure, or division of the Zuckerman text (project) into books and chapters, provided the point of departure for interpretation, in this chapter the partitioning becomes less important, the interpretation relying more and more on internal structuring elements of the project, its microstructure, for its organization. In other words, an intratextual reading of the project based on its microstructural composition.

The nine novels known collectively as the Zuckerman books interact on several levels, forming a complex network of interrelationships, a microstructure. As a result, a full deciphering of the complete text requires knowledge of all nine books. An internal

system of references and correspondences structures the text in a systematic way, providing a clear perspective to the architectural composition of the entire Zuckerman series. There are instances of *intratextuality* in every element involved in the rhetorical communication.

7. Difficulties in retrieving the coherence

According to the reader criticism and to the rhetorical approach criticism, readers of the Zuckerman books are required quite a generous degree of activity in order to make the series appear completely coherent. First, because they are dealing with a nine-book project. Second, because Roth took twenty-seven years to complete it, a period when these books were interspersed with others. Third, because the project contains such a variety of configurations and patterns. Forth, because over the years the treatment of the character Nathan Zuckerman (the main coherence device) has shifted dramatically, being used to serve a variety of purposes. For all these reasons the project is not immediately coherent, to put it another way it falls into the category of “the not-yet-coherent” (Rabinowitz 146). There are numerous surface inconsistencies/ruptures that need to be explained and readers require a special effort and the application of particular rules of coherence to make sense of all the project’s potentialities.

On the other hand, before we proceed to the desired activity of reworking elements into a total pattern, we would like to point out that it is *because* of these surface ruptures, *because* of the extraneous details and the unexpected patterns, *because* of the elements of surprise that characterize each new installment of the character Nathan Zuckerman and *because* of the complex system of significations this Roth’s series of novels has been so highly appreciated in current academic critical discussion.

In view of the explanations above, the analysis of the coherence of the Zuckerman project which follows is based on conceiving coherence as the readers’ pursuit in which they partake in order to determine as much as that is possible the authorial intention. According to Rabinowitz (149) readers do that by identifying and building their explanation on the shared conventions of coherence, by means of which writers planned their effects. Rabinowitz points out that the fundamental rule of coherence is to start from the premise (even if this eventually proves to have been a mistake) that there is an implicit coherence and that “apparent flaws in its construction are intentional and meaning bearing” (146). Therefore, here is my assumption about the basic element of coherence of the Zuckerman project: the series presents Roth’s stand on what making literature means and on the way this profession impacts the writer’s everyday life and eventually decides his destiny.

In *Before Reading* (148) the theorist identifies three types of situations in which texts appear to be incoherent. First, texts can be insufficient—that is, they can be apparently incoherent because of gaps in their fabric, holes that need to be filled in. Second, works can be overabundant—they can have a surplus of information that we need somehow to tame, including details that seem to contradict one another and that we need to reconcile.

Finally, works can be simply disparate—and we need rules to help us bundle them together into convenient packages.

The Zuckerman project, due to its bulkiness and particularity, includes all three to a larger or lesser extent. Firstly, I will refer to the gaps. The series chronicles an American writer's life. It starts with the writer in pursuit of authorial validation in his early twenties and ends with the writer's acknowledgement of the decline of his physical and, most importantly, authorial powers in his late seventies. In between these two biographical points Nathan Zuckerman is depicted:

- trying to cope with the consequences of achieving editorial fame (*Zuckerman Unbound*)
- enduring an unnamable pain and creative impotence (*The Anatomy Lesson*)
- attempting to retrieve a dead writer's stories from behind the Iron Curtain ("The Prague Orgy")
- experimenting with the creation of fictionalized counterlives (*The Counterlife*)
- researching and chronicling the lives of three remarkable people in his entourage (the American trilogy)

These are exactly seven selected moments in the life in Zuckerman flashed on the page, all concerned with the evolution of his writing career, evolution conveyed (mostly) by means of Zuckerman's own books or journal entries.

What about the holes in between, what about what is going on in the interstices? As a rule every reader assumes that what is not depicted is not an important or relevant. Zuckerman's childhood and teenage are not depicted, nor are his marriages or divorces for that matter. And the list of such textual lacunae can be enlarged. Our view on this matter is that by means of these gaps the author/narrator leaves out information which tends to be repeated, as we have already witnessed Zuckerman's dealing with certain major issues, or unproblematic periods in the character's life. Actually, getting divorced and being diagnosed with cancer and being completely estranged by your only sibling are far from being unproblematic, but these aspects have either been tackled or they do not condition his writing career or his conception of literature which are the subject of the series. Therefore, when, occasionally, references are made to any of these biographical periods not depicted extensively, it is because the implied author intends to make a point about grounds or consequences of his character's calling.

Secondly, I will comment on the surfeit in each novel. Indeed, there are pages of information which appear extraneous and make the text a little excessive. According to Rabinowitz, however, in general these are only apparently irrelevant textual features. Admittedly, they do not contribute to plot or characterization, or do not serve some immediate function, like the provision of verisimilitude or local color, but they "are to be treated as figurative"/symbolic (154). As for contradictory information in this over 2,500-page project, there are just a few, unimportant pieces. Rabinowitz clarifies this matter also: characters are more likely to be correct after undergoing experiences worthy of narration than before them. Thus Zuckerman's final perception of himself and his art, his

altered views are to be considered by the reader as wiser and more understanding than those views he holds at the beginning of the series. We, the readers, are to accept the last vision in a text, as it comes from a reliable character.

Many critics have noticed, the Zuckerman books do “not merge smoothly into a continuous narrative” (Wallace 18), as there are a number of aspects which challenge the readers’ smooth grasping of Zuckerman’s saga. Thus, the most significant are discontinuities of point of view (*The Ghost Writer* is related in the first person, *Zuckerman Unbound* and *The Anatomy Lesson* are in the third person, the epilogue, “The Prague Orgy,” is presented as an extract “from Zuckerman’s notebooks”, then the rest of the novels are to first person narrations interspersed with third person and with free indirect discourse), inexplicable gaps between the events narrated in each book. Knowing the genesis of the series, one can understand why Roth, shifted direction on so many axes while working on this project. The sequence not been published “serially” with other novels written in-between. Several unexpected shifts throughout the series. (Maybe four in all). In every trilogy Roth goes deeper and deeper and twists around to different perspectives again and again. Then somehow he makes entirely new shifts, recasting all previous books in a deeper light. his felt like the perfect conclusion.

Thirdly, the Zuckerman project appears to be a mixture of disparate materials. In order to bundle such material academic readers, in particular, name and thus classify works—for instance, by appropriating them to particular generic categories, by elucidating their central theme, or by finding their governing metaphoric or mythic structure. Roth’s comments on the project are of utmost importance in figuring out the bundle rule. Thus, in a recent interview Roth refers to his character Nathan Zuckerman, as depicting “the drama of his own life”, and to the nine books as “charting Zuckerman’s adventures as a writer”. In light of this statements, the variety of configurations, progressions, topics, techniques are subordinated to a organizational design: the biography of a writer, from the moment he is validated as one till the demise of his literary power and capability.

Roth enhanced the coherence of both his every book taken individually and his project by using different bundling conventions:

The Ghost Writer – Roth has Zuckerman call it a bildungsroman and alludes to his becoming a writer.

Zuckerman Unbound – Roth gives this book a governing metaphor as the title, and makes sure that the end makes it explicit. In the economy of the project the title suggests a phase in Zuckerman’s life in which his ties with his old life are cut off and he is completely left to devote to his calling.

The Anatomy Lesson - In a wider sense, a lesson is an insight gained by a learner into previously unfamiliar subject-matter. The lesson in Zuckerman’s case is triggered by pain and it teaches him about the relationship between life and literature.

“The Prague Orgy” – Roth has Zuckerman, the narrator himself, name this story a “parable”³, to point out that the brief journey to Prague is to depict a universal truth, which as it was already shown in the previous chapter is related to the relation between literature and the historical, social and political condition of the writer.

The Counterlife – In the title Roth makes it clear that the writer Nathan Zuckerman is playing with the potentialities of fiction to fabricate counterfates.

The American trilogy – The three novels make up a loose trilogy. The bundling activity in their case is “facilitated through the use of parallelisms” (Rabinowitz, 159). Parallels along the axis of Zuckerman’s interest in other people’s destinies imply parallels along another: the protagonists are all exceptional men, attempting transgression and ending in failure. The novels are variations of the same theme, i.e. it is appropriate to see them as three different exemplifications of the same metaphoric meaning: exceptional individuals’ attempts at transgression promised by the “American dream” crushed by historical circumstances.

Exit Ghost – “Exit” is a theatrical term instructing an actor to leave the scene; therefore, the novel is a "swan song" - an idiom referring to a final theatrical or dramatic appearance, or any final work or accomplishment. It is a novel employing the character-narration technique; this, together with the title, carries the connotation that the performer/the narrator-protagonist is aware that this is the last performance of his lifetime, and is expending everything in one magnificent final effort.

8. Conclusion.

When one observes the sequence through the lenses of the intratextual features, the nine texts which make up the Zuckerman books turn out to be formally discrete narratives which represent *reflections of one another, as different ways of saying in chronological order what is, in the end, the same story.*

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³The word "parable" comes from the Greek *parabolē*, the name given by Greek rhetoricians to any fictive illustration in the form of a brief narrative. Later it came to mean a fictitious narrative, generally referring to something that might naturally occur, by which spiritual and moral matters might be conveyed. A parable is a short tale that illustrates universal truth, one of the simplest of narratives. It sketches a setting, describes an action, and shows the results. It often involves a character facing a moral dilemma, or making a questionable decision and then suffering the consequences. As with a fable, a parable generally relates a single, simple, consistent action, without extraneous detail or distracting circumstances.

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FUNCTIONALIST APPROACHES TO TRANSLATION WITH REFERENCE TO MEDICAL ARTICLES

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Abstract

English has undoubtedly become the *lingua franca* of scientific writing. Since more and more medical journals are published in English worldwide, the translation of such articles becomes of undisputed importance. Researchers communicate the results of their research in various journals. With the increasing awareness and interest of people in their own health, such articles are also translated in order to be published in popular health magazines. Thus, the translation of medical articles is gaining mounting significance and is becoming as important as any other translation.

Keywords: specialised translation, medical articles, strategy, problems, methods

“It has been practically proven that the more specific the use of knowledge and information in a text, the harder it is for the translator to know in advance every possible script, frame or schema” (Kostopoulou 2007:151). Should this mean that the translation of highly scientific language such as that of medical articles should not be attempted for fear of failure? On the contrary, such a language could represent a vast and rich area for translation studies.

Medicine is one of the three oldest recorded fields of human knowledge and discovery, along with theology-philosophy, and astronomy-geography. The history of medical translation dates back to times that precede the writings and the work of the Western father of Medicine, Hippocrates. Pilegaard quotes Fischbach who states that medical translation “is the most universal and oldest field of scientific translation because of the homogenous ubiquity of the human body” (cited in Trosborg 1997: 160). This is due to the fact that Greek medical scholars had access to earlier writings in languages such as Sanskrit or Egyptian. Other great civilisations like Indian or Chinese also produced writings of medical research. They sometimes combined their medical observations with elements of religion or magic in order to try to explain different phenomena.

After a contribution of over 2,000 years, Greek and Latin have shaped today’s medical English. English has “inherited” roots and affixes. Thus for a professional in the field of medicine, reading papers in English or other languages may not be so difficult since many European languages, along with Romanian, have built their medical terminology on Greek or Latin.

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However, with the emergence of the necessity to communicate the research results of scientists in this vast field, translations have become of utmost importance. Without translating such articles published in the constantly growing number of journals worldwide, communication among scientists would be impeded. Before any attempt to translate such texts is made, some theoretical premises need to be addressed.

Functionalist approaches in Translation Studies are the consequence of the developments in the field of pragmatics. In order to make translation “scientific or objectively justifiable” (Fawcett 1997:104) it was necessary to adopt the idea of text function, that is, analysing the way in which a text works. In her attempt to find a way to assess the quality of a translation, Katharina Reiss realised that the text type will decide what translation strategies should be used. Thus, she divided text types according to their function into informative, expressive and operative. Nevertheless, text types cannot be classified as pure, there will be intersections between them and overlaps of different types. These types will also include subdivisions: plays, novels, poetry, propaganda, reports, etc, but the type of equivalence and the strategy to be applied will be determined by the “overall text type” and not the subdivisions (ibid.:105). Regardless of interferences between text types, one function will predominate in any text. Consequently, each language function will have an equivalent “language dimension” (ibid.:104). As a result, informative texts will use logical language, expressive texts will rely on aesthetic language whereas operative types will make use of dialogic language. In spite of the function the source text may have, the translated one has to convey the same effect in the receptor language.

It is the type of the text which will determine the translation strategies to be applied. Nevertheless, identifying the text type does not mean that a particular strategy in its translation has to be applied. One text type can be translated to function as another one in the target language. “Giving primacy to the function may seem like a sensible thing to do; and it may seem like a desirable thing to do (...) but it is still not a necessary thing to do” (ibid.:107).

Jeremy Munday quotes Mary Snell-Hornby (2008:76) who includes medical texts in the category of special language translations, along with legal, economic, science or technology language. According to her classification, medical texts belong to the group of informative texts in which the language is expected to be objective and factual, logical, and the target text (TT) should “transmit referential content”. Pilegaard quotes Brunt (in Trosborg 1997:159) who attributes medical English to the field of “technical” or “scientific English”.

The *skopos* theory, developed by Katharina Reiss and Hans Vermeer around the 1980s, signalled a change in thinking from the structural linguistic approach that had been the dominant one. According to Vermeer (in Dimitriu 2002: 55), “defining the translation *skopos* is the first step translators must take before actually proceeding to the translation proper”. A distinct advantage of this theory is the fact that it allows the text to be translated in different ways depending on the purpose of the target text. In Vermeer’s

theory the translator's work must be guided by two rules: that of intratextual coherence and of intertextual coherence. Thus, the translated text can have the same function as the source text (ST) in the source language and culture or it can have another function. However, in the translation of medical articles it is desirable that the purpose of the TT be the same as that of the ST. It is the translator's decision whether the text should be summarised, abridged, reduced or whether certain parts may be left out. However, such omissions of parts of the text should not affect the TT in any way, on the contrary, they should improve the quality of the text. Apart from omissions, the translator may decide whether explanations or extensions would be necessary to make the TT coherent and clear for the reader. Annotations or exemplifications can be inserted in the text but these should never be disruptive or too extensive to raise difficulties for the readers.

According to Vermeer, two main concepts pertain in the functionalist approach towards translation. These are:

- the coherence rule;
- the fidelity rule.

The coherence rule requires that the TT should conform to the standard of intratextual coherence, while the fidelity rule entails an intertextual coherence between the TT and the ST. Fidelity, however, does not imply that the final product of the translation process is a "mere copy" of the original (Neubert 2003:68 in *Translation Today. Trends and Perspectives*). Ideally, however, all the features of the ST are rendered in the TT (Dollerup 2006:157). Fidelity to the source text can be the *skopos* for specific translations but it is not the only goal of translation. Maximum fidelity to semantic content can be achieved by the use of notes which also contribute towards the production of a clean text (Pym 2010:90).

Specialised translation defines the translation of texts produced for practical purposes and not aesthetic ones. These types of texts are characterised by specialised terminology, the target group is a restricted one and they are difficult to understand without knowledge in the field (Borja 2009:58).

Although medical articles abound in highly specialised language, the aim of terminology "is the efficient transmission of specialised information" (Beeby 1998:262). In order to approach terminology the mere use of dictionaries to translate such articles might fail since "translators must go beyond dictionaries and grammars to investigate the contexts of related discourses" (ibid.:5).

Christiane Nord establishes a typology of translations from a strictly functional perspective distinguishing between the function of the process of translation and the translation as a result. From the point of view of translation processes translation can be of two types:

- a) documentary translation: the translation has a function which is independent from the original text and is perceived as a translation. Word-for-word and literal translation can be included in this type. Here, certain culture-specific

lexical items may be preserved in the TT, in order to maintain the “local colour of the ST (Munday 2008:82).

- b) instrumental translation, or ‘function preserving translation’, as Nord calls it (cited in Munday 2008:82): the translation has in the target culture the same function that the original text had in the source culture; thus, the text is perceived as an original one. The function of the TT may be the same as that of the ST.

The purpose the translator has in producing a documentary translation is “to provide a kind of ‘document’ of communicative interaction between the author and his/her source readers that takes place in the SC” (Dimitriu 2002:56)

Using the instrumental translation, the TT will have the same function as the ST. Here, different scientific and technical texts can be listed (instruction manuals). In the case when identity of functions between the ST and the TT is present, such texts are equifunctional. They can also be heterofunctional if there is an attempt to achieve similar functions as the ST, or homologous.

Due to their highly specialised character, medical articles belong to the second type of translations. Such articles carry vital information the distortion of which could easily alter the main purpose for which they were written, hence, an equifunctional translation has to be applied in order to maintain the functional feature of the text.

There has always been the question regarding who should carry out translations of medical articles: the translator or the physician. Because “knowledge of language [is] clearly not enough for successful translation” (Beeby 1998:16), because “the process of translation involves more than exchanging words in one linguistic system for another, more than an appreciation for the lexis, grammar and register” (Fischbach 1998:107) and because a mistranslation can have serious repercussions, the process should be performed in cooperation. As Jo Ann Cahn states “a professional translator (...) with medical knowledge is probably better than a dilettante doctor with some linguistics knowledge” (cited in Fischbach 1998:73)

Medical articles written for publication in journals have a rather strict structure divided into sections: introduction, material and method, results and discussion. However, not all physicians keep to this structural rule, either misplacing information in the wrong section or simply disregarding the purpose of the section. It is the responsibility of the translator to correct such errors and to arrange the text according to the format of the scientific paper. Simply translating the text and checking the correctness of the terminology proves insufficient in the case of poorly written texts. Translators should take greater responsibility and also do macroediting in order to ensure that the text is coherent and cohesive.

Due to the purpose of medical articles and their scientific terminology, the most useful theoretical approach to their translation is, undoubtedly, the functionalist one. By adopting it, translators will become increasingly aware of the similarity of functions between source and target texts they will need to achieve when translating medical

articles. Besides, a coherent and cohesive translation of a medical article will imply that it should read as if it were an original. With the *skopos* theory in mind functional translations can be achieved. Thus, “translation (...) should be understood as communication not as the search for an exact equivalence” (Gonzales 2004:114).

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LAW AND THE WORLD OF IMAGINATION

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Abstract

This article is trying to establish the connections between two worlds that at first seem to have nothing in common, namely the world of literature and that of law. The main argument is that those training to become legal professionals could benefit from reading literature as this experience equips them with the necessary skills in dealing with the intricacies of the case at law and this way they can adequately describe it, interpret it and render their perspective effectively.

Keywords: law, literature, legal professionals, discourse, arguments

One may ask the question what literature and law have in common as former is generally regarded as the expression of individual feelings and perceptions that are tested by the criteria of authenticity and aesthetics, and the latter is about a set of rules that are enforced according to the criteria of rationality and justice. In his search of arguments and methods of analysis the lawyer resorts to the findings and techniques of sciences like sociology, psychology or history. Literature is not part of this array as it does not establish propositions about the world on the basis of which the lawyer is building up his arguments.

Literature is art and the question arising here is how the lawyer can benefit from this world of imagination. How can a lawyer benefit from reading Shakespeare? When the playwright wrote his plays he was not doing this for the present lawyers, for our present concerns but out of his own motifs and hopes. His plays do not provide us with consistent and coherent sets of values or beliefs as social or natural sciences do, yet when approaching his works the lawyer has to do this without limiting his mind and spirit to any rigid theoretical scheme and be ready to expand his understanding of himself and of the world. This is what literature teaches us, never to accept as final any view of the world, of ourselves, constantly to question any established rules and be ready to “complicate” our sense of the world and of ourselves.

For the person working in the field of law the experience of reading literature followed by a new reading of the text of law may reveal new characteristics of the language used by the text of law. The literary texts, in a way, equip the legal professionals with the skills of identifying the inadequacies, gaps, imperfections of the self-assumed propositional character of the legal language and open the way to the prolific realm of speculations that a legal professional must master. Thus, it is variety that literature teaches the legal professionals and not new propositions; variety in tone, style, direction of

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thought and this variety is born out of the multiple engagements literature offers its readers.

The openness to another way of living, another way of imagining life engages the relationship between the reader and the text which emerge as newly created identities: the reader assumes an active role in the act of reading by exploring the interpretative horizons offered by the text, which in its turn, through the act of reading is redefined and assigned new meanings. This active way of reading confronts the reader with what Roland Barthes called the “writerly text” which opens multiple interpretative horizons to a reader whose reading becomes a form of work. Such an active reading questions the thoughts and feelings we have taken up to that very moment as natural. It is true that this active reading draws on previous conventions, norms and concepts and that the text is shaped within cultural, historical and cultural contexts, but it is equally true that the act or reading is an interpretative one through which the reader ascribes new meaning to the text, as well as to his Self and to the world. This act of interpretation creates a new perspective, a new world and the interpreter becomes responsible for it. The reader becomes responsible for the ways he attunes himself to what he reads, for how he judges it and for who he becomes in relation to the text.

This reasoning applies to the world of lawyers whose reality is not language free and who are responsible for what they see and say and their questions and answers are ultimately literary. The lawyer should not expect to find answers to the questions of law when reading Jane Austen or Thomas Hardy, yet the way he chooses to interpret the ready-made methods and materials of law, the way he tells the story of the case, the way he addresses the judge or speaks as a judge all these get him close to literature. He addresses the rules of law in his arguments but he’s doing this in an interpretative act that considers both his thoughts and way of expression and those of his adversary, of the judge or, if the case, of the jury. Consequently we learn that the graduate of law should be learned not so much about the rules of law but mainly about the successful way to interpret law and to render this interpretation by using language well. Literature can offer the future legal professional a good way of training his interpretative skills and, comparison with other texts and discourses can reveal the characteristics of the legal language, both its limitations and resources. Such a comparison surely develops the capacities of better understanding the intricacies of the human mind and the nature of the human language and by employing this comparison the law student can apply his talent of analysis to the discourse of law. It’s true that when interpreting the law, when building up the arguments lawyers resort to the findings and methods of sciences like sociology, economics, psychology or history. Yet the very process of translating these findings into the legal context is in fact literary, it is a form of art, it engages the problem of language and discourse because it is the lawyer who has to determine which findings are authoritative and give meaning to his arguments and what relations should be established between other discourses and the law.

Therefore the literary text can function as a recipe for understanding the workings of the law because it offers not final propositions, not findings but experiences of

language that engage our interpretation and consequently get us closer to what the heart of justice is: not a dry distribution of fixed rules but an interpretation of the rules of law perpetually challenged by matters of fact. Justice is defined by the capacity of the mind to read and interpret authoritative texts, to pay equal attention to the opposing parties in a trial, to the opposing claims, to be open to new situations, to new voices and to be able to produce a result for which it is held responsible. Justice is after all a matter of choice and not something that is dictated by fixed rules. It is a matter of perpetual interpretation that engages reason and emotion, politics and aesthetics. Thus literature and law get to function on similar grounds. The power of the law rests not so much on its rules and decisions but on its language and its coercive character. The legal professional must master the language of the law which implies reading the literature of the law, speaking and writing in this language and always doing this by making something new out of existing materials. This experience of discovering, determining, interpreting and composing the legal texts renders the legal professional as a creator of new meanings, as an artist whose work is not dictated but it is the expression of the relations and connections *he* makes, an expression of *his* choice, an expression of *his* way of thinking.

The lawyer is thus an artist with language and thought and his turning to literary texts can help him understand the workings of law and then make his choice. In order to do so he should grasp de variety of discourses imbedded in the discourse of law as this is about people and their actions, their way of acting and speaking, and not about a rigid set of rules and policies. It is only when the lawyer feels the different voices of the case at law that he can adequately describe it, interpret it and render his perspective effectively. Unfortunately the traditional way of teaching does not encourage students of law to express their own thoughts but rather to follow certain patterns. Instead of thinking for themselves and express their thoughts in an accessible way for themselves they are encouraged to think within the limits of templates and little attention is paid to the substance of their writings. Literary texts may break these barriers if read as alternatives to legal texts and thus they can unchain the students' capacities to freely express themselves and to better deal with the intricacies of the language of law.

This experience of reading literature may be revealing to those training to become legal professionals as law is by its nature literary and the lawyer in his plea is turning into an artist, who, by interpreting the text of law, is the creator of a new meaning, of a new world for which he is held responsible. The lawyer in his profession expresses his Self on different levels, according to the responsibilities and opportunities defined by his relation with the client, according to the requirements of law, according to the professional aims and purposes and the way he manifests his Self should be appropriate to the situation. The way he expresses his Self is obviously judged and learning how to express in such situations is fundamental in his legal education.

Literature is one source for this education as it can provide the legal professional with ways to escape clichés, to think for himself and be able to use his language in ways that are appropriate to his thought. As a matter of fact literature offers us a way of reading all kind of texts, a way of focusing our attention on the languages that we use, on

the relations we establish between them. It teaches us a way of reading that becomes a way of writing, a way of acting and reacting. And this is also true for lawyers who, by reading fiction, learn how to become true professionals, not simple recipients of practical and theoretical knowledge but creators of new meanings for which they assume full responsibility.

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ENGINEERING TOPICS IN MULTIMODAL TEXTS

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Abstract

Audiences usually expect texts to be accompanied by graphics which meet requirements that influence comprehension and accessibility of technical texts, such as the use of special fonts, colors, types of graphics employed. Multimodal texts or documents are those that incorporate any combination of graphics, verbal text, animation and sound. In this paper we analyse some samples of discourse on engineering topics, published in scholarly articles and popular science magazines.

Keywords: text, graphics, visual communication, visual rhetoric, accessibility, multimodal text

Background

A complex analysis of discourse presupposes a close observation of its constitutive elements since they all contribute to the overall meaning of the text. The role of images and their power may even be greater than that of words, to attract and keep attention, to create emotions so that people move closer to a product, are better informed and eventually perhaps even buy it. According to literature “we can divide visual messages into two classes: orthographic (words) and iconographic, including elements like pictures and diagrams” (Darian 2003:187).

Graphic illustrations are found in every medium – newspapers, television and most technical communication media, in a variety of contexts all over the world. Persuasion, achieved by using powerful visual rhetoric has been studied by discourse analysts all over the world. Visual rhetoric focuses on the way papers are organised, including the use of print and color. It investigates the relationship between images and writing. Scholars have coined the term visual literacy as a matter of being able to read multimodal texts.

People have been communicating through drawings and paintings in addition to verbal language. It is therefore no wonder that pictures or signs are used in texts for the purpose of informing and persuading. Research has shown that the human brain processes the information transmitted through visual images much faster than through words and this information is remembered for a longer period of time. Moreover, pictures attract attention. Visual images can be recognised much faster than a text and they can create fictional realities more easily. This phenomenon is known as the ‘picture superiority effect’ (Nelson et al.:1976:523-528).

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Purpose of the study

Images can create multiple meanings that need to be decoded in order to be understood. However, pictures are seldom used without words as it is the words that anchor the picture in time or help avoid ambiguities. The relationship between images and words is quite complex. Visual communication has been the object of study for many scientific fields such as psychology, brain physiology or semiotics. Researchers have agreed that language is the product of both hemispheres of the brain while picture processing is the result of the activity in the right hemisphere only, which processes information received from the left side of an image. Moreover, a picture needs to be closely correlated with the text and logically positioned within the information flow. In the volume *Discourse and Technology, Multimodal Discourse Analysis*, edited by Scollon and LeVine (2004), Theo van Leeuwen drew attention to the fact that visual communication should not escape the attention of linguists.

In the following we will try to illustrate how visual aids influence the (re)creation of meaning in articles from the field of engineering. Generally, engineering texts contain imagery that is used to explain concepts, enhance the meaning of chunks of text and even suggest realities beyond graspable ones.

Sources of evidence

In the general sense, we understand the term graphics as a generic name for non-textual parts of documents. In technical discourses we frequently encounter tables, figures, charts and graphs as well as pieces of technical drawing. They are used according to what the purpose of the graphic is in the spot that best suits this purpose, for example on the same page as text reference in the case of a simple visual such as a table, especially if it is a small one. Technical drawing pieces will most frequently appear in such papers as scholarly articles, as they are illustrative of research that involves basic engineering disciplines and use of graphic signals to describe specific information, such as the following examples, Fig. 1 and Fig. 2 taken from research articles that were submitted to us for translation into English in the year 2010:

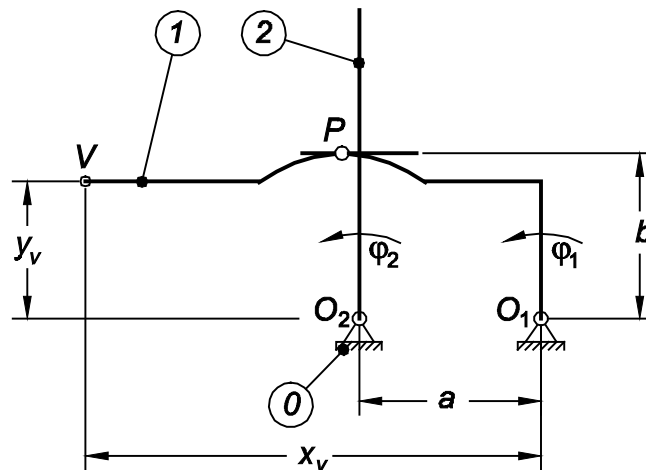


Fig.1. Sketch of a clamp mechanism

This drawing is a sketch of a clamp mechanism, with letters that stand for the parameters of description of its function: coordinates, distances and contact elements. In order for a lay reader to understand this he must have an accompanying text with definitions and explanations, whereas an engineering graduate or a skilled technician could understand this drawing by merely seeing it as a visual.

This illustration of a mechanism is closer to the way the object looks like in reality, showing the major influence of Computer Aided Design in representing objects in more than two dimensions:

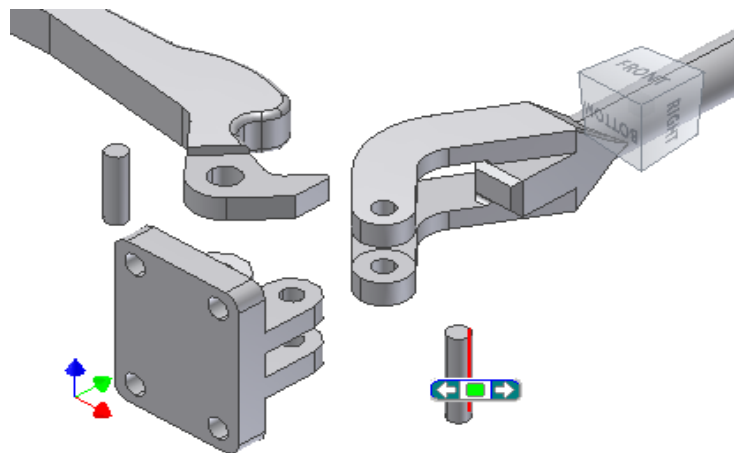
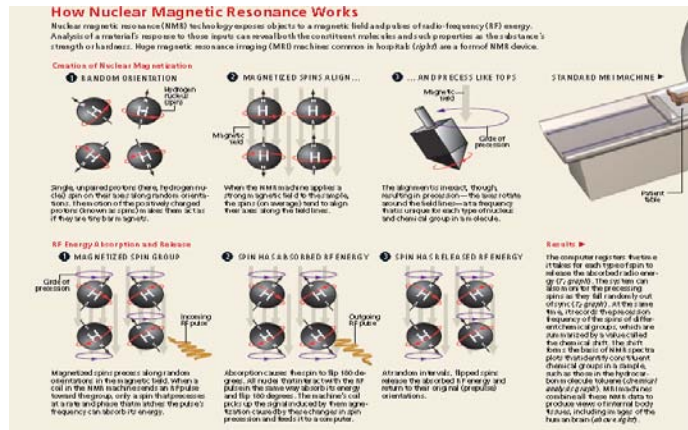


Fig. 2. Clamp mechanism represented using CAD

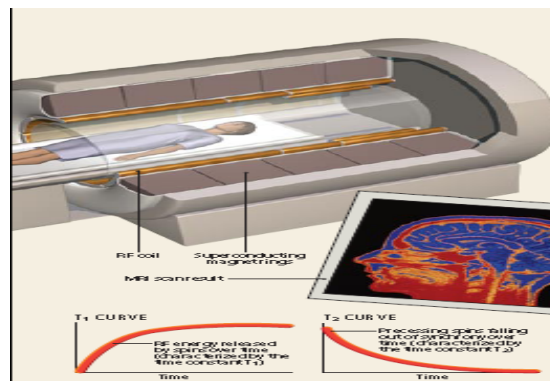
Visual rhetoric stresses on the fact that images express cultural meanings. Wikipedia mentions the textbook, “Designing Visual Language: Strategies for Professional Communicators”, whose authors list ”six canons about the rhetorical impact of a document: arrangement, emphasis, clarity, conciseness, tone and ethos. They deal with the organization of visual elements to make clear some structures, highlighting certain parts, appropriating content to context, suggesting attitudes, earning trust of message receivers. Such visual cognates can be used to analyze images rhetorically” (www.wikipedia.org).

Let us study some some examples:

- a. Making clear some structures – using numbers to make the steps explicit as well as explanations in figures and words. The use of different colours also aids in understanding that there are different components in the process described



- b. Highlighting certain parts – a close up of the machine described in the article, with short explanations in words, as well as a graph plotted on two axes to explain the timescale.

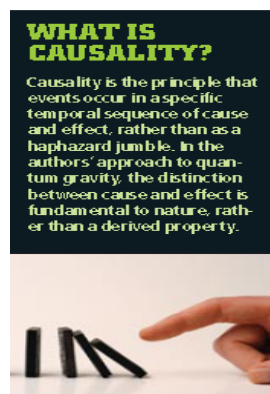


- c. Appropriating content to context – with metaphorical implications.

<p>Then it could derive a result the formula the uni- thing ce.” under- t cast a ises through- ought to facing parts. nberg ism poi- oint down- gans, to rd ulti- ncom- , then, atur alize the</p>		<p>This problem is not merel puting power, ical probl levels. & these hi Simi. the self-c ness, morality <i>The Mind</i> I show : comple: grow as and how self-driving f ifying to detailed “cannot al powe emergent creative proces</p>
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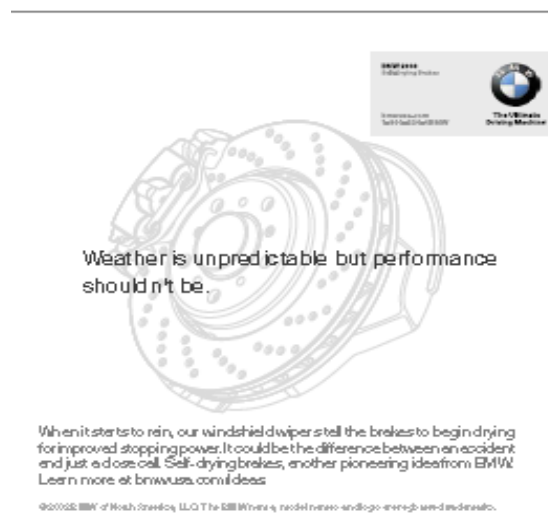
Sacred Science, the title of the article where the previous image was taken from, beautifully illustrates what could perhaps be understood as levels of communication, from the basic facts of science, dealing with matter and concrete reality, governed by elements symbolized by the splash of water in the shape of a crown, which leads towards the angelic circle above. All these elements describe the importance that should be assigned to science and its discoveries, giving it a powerful status of an entity which governs our lives. At the same time, it could be regarded as an analogy to lexical, pragmatic and semantic levels of language:

- d. Suggesting attitudes – usually images that contain pictures or caricatures of people, as inanimate entities will not convey psychological messages, but mostly information.



In the image above, a simple gesture illustrates what the text explains. Without the written text, the interpretation would have been open to a number of possibilities. However, words suggest a type of responsibility as attitude of humans when using scientific facts.

- e. Earning trust of message receivers – this persuasive function is usually achieved through the use of short, catchy phrases, or a blend of image and text. It is usually employed in case of advertisements, whose main purpose is to persuade users to buy what is claimed to be a reliable product, as in the following BMW advertisement.



It may be argued that in some cases, previous knowledge of the visual – in this case the logo – that exists in the conscience of the audience establishes a familiarity on basis of re-call and boosts the power of the message through few words, including the modal verb ‘should’, which functions both as recommendation and statement of excellence (through the acknowledged tradition of the car maker).

Factors such as perspective, modality, and spatiality are factors included in an analysis of multimodal texts. The angles from which the work can be viewed depend greatly on the audience. How real the image of an object is and how much it portrays also depend on the viewer, while composition and spatiality blend the authors’ intentions and the audiences’ perceptions in a realm of persuasion. Composition is how the elements of an image are arranged within the frame.

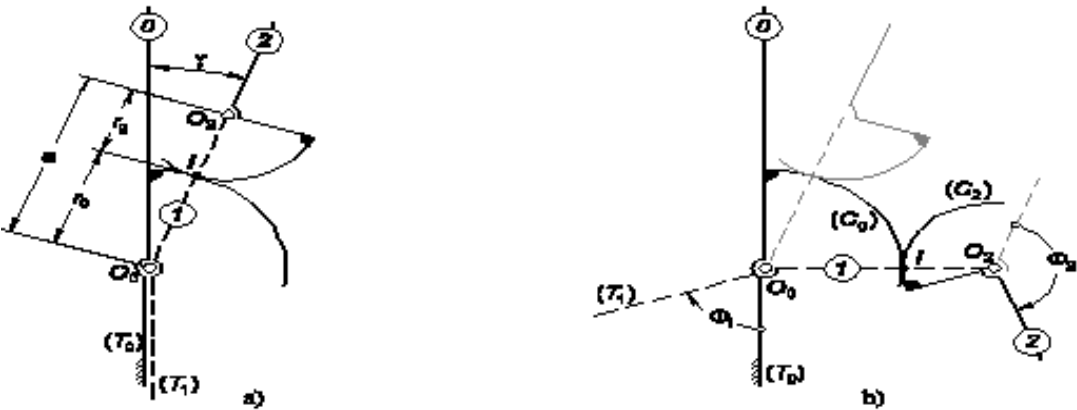


Fig. 3a. The mechanism of a scissor and its geometrical parameters

How an image takes up space directs our eyes and gives it meaning. The third dimension is something that needs to be explored because it is highly persuasive, as we can see when comparing the figures describing a mechanism. Here is another example:

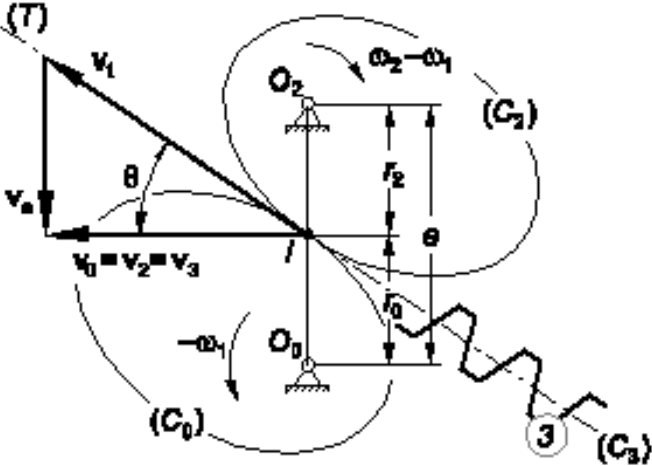


Fig. 3b. General principle of generation of noncircular gears

Even if figures 3 *a* and *b* contain only black and white elements with special notations that should be understandable to professionals, it is clear from the drawings and the accompanying text what kind of information they contain. These are very good examples of how a combination of graphic and linguistic elements is needed for a clear and unequivocal understanding of the messages conveyed.

Conclusions

We started our investigation of visual elements in popular science magazine by looking at elements that belong to a different type of discourse, but this comes to show how types of discourses blend in social practices. It is not only images that catch the eye of the reader in popular science magazines but also the way in which images blend with text in presentations about different scientific findings and applications. These relationships need to be further explored.

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LOCALIZATION AND TRANSLATION STUDIES

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Abstract

In recent years there has been much debate on localization of products and services and how this relates to translation in the light of a quasi-globalized market. This paper discusses the ways in which localization, translation and other associated concepts relate to one another.

Keywords: localization, globalization, internationalization, localization, personalization, translation studies

1.1. Globalization

Globalization started out as a natural consequence to the ever need of companies to extend and enter new global markets. Thus, the term *globalization* was initially used in an economic context, at decision-making levels of powerful companies looking to offer their products and service on a greater scale, to various customers around the globe. Only later did it come to the attention of the scholars in translation studies, when the need to offer products and services in various languages became a marketing necessity. *Globalization*, abbreviated as *g11n* by the business community, turned into a compulsory step in the process of translating a product and service related content to an internationally available content.

Merriam-webster.com defines globalization as “the act or process of globalizing : the state of being globalized; *especially*: the development of an increasingly integrated global economy marked especially by free trade, free flow of capital, and the tapping of cheaper foreign labor markets” Dictionary.cambridge.org defines the same term as “the increase of trade around the world, especially by large companies producing and trading goods in many different countries • when available goods and services, or social and cultural influences, gradually become similar in all parts of the world”. These dictionary definitions cover the social and economic aspect of globalization, but do not include any reference to the communication processes involved, namely communicating with the global market in the language of each of distinguishable local markets. Thus, globalization involves translation as well. Multinationals and professional associations such as MultiLingual.com, which already have a lot of experience in offering products and services to different language communities, give more precise, translation studies oriented definitions. The December 2011 issue of the online MultiLingual Magazine defines *globalization* as "... the process that addresses business issues associated with launching a

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product globally, such as integrating localization throughout a company after proper internationalization and product design."

Globalization is the very first step, a decision made in the marketing department, which initiates all the other consecutive processes: *internationalization* (L18n), *localization* (L10n) and *translation*. It involves rather managerial aspects such as deciding which markets (locales) are targeted (usually affluent nations are targeted first) or where the return on investment - ROI - is more significant. Globalization sets a budget for the other consequent processes, sets and oversees sticking to deadlines, etc. Although only a selected number of markets are selected at first, a good product or service design will allow adding any number of market prospects. The extent to which globalization may be adopted is restricted very often by objective external factors: competition on a certain local market, costs involved in the subsequent processes (internationalization, localization, translation) when the markets are rather different from one another especially in terms of language and culture, geo-political issues, environmental problems, etc. For instance, keyboards on laptops are rather tricky to be set appropriately for various languages. The first computer keyboards were based on the 26 letters of the English alphabet, but many languages have more than 26: Romanian - 31, German - 30, Hungarian - 44, French - 26 + 6 diacritics and 2 ligatures. In the beginning, Microsoft solved the issues of extra characters from software (in Office Word you can still add various symbols from any language into your document). Only much later were special characters added to the keyboards, and that is because this added extra cost to development and production. They were first added only from the operating system, and it was quite awkward to get used to finding where special Romanian characters (Ș, Ț, Â, Ă, Î) were supposed to be placed. Programming those keys to have several functionalities from the software and accessing those functions by pressing various combinations of keys involved more costs and implementation time. The extra characters were engraved onto existing keys only later, depending on the size of the potential market. There are even bigger issues with languages such as Chinese, considered to be using an ideographic alphabet. With modern gadgets, however, such as those using virtual keyboards on their touchscreens, planning for globalization is now a lot easier, as operation systems can include virtually any number of keys to match any targeted language, while being able to zoom or move the keyboard around the screen. Thus, although the initial costs for developing a touchscreen controlled gadget is more expensive, the processes to internationalize, localize and translate related content is far more reduced, because most of it is done from software, and software can be maintained and upgraded a lot easier.

1.2. *Internationalization*

The next step down the line is internationalization (I18n). Schäler defines the term as "...the process of designing (or modifying) software so as to enable users to work in the language of their choice (even if the software is not localized) and to isolate the linguistically and culturally dependent parts of an application in preparation for localization."(2009: 158) Software is not the only product that can be internationalized. Internationalization is not only about preparing a product or service for language changes. Inappropriate or partial internationalization, especially if in the target culture products or services aimed for the source culture have already been used, can be troublesome or, at least, some readjusting is needed from the part of the user.

For instance, when using keyboard shortcuts such as CTRL+S for saving a document, "S" for "saving" works for the Romanian "salvează" as well. The same happens for CTRL+C ("copy"- "copiază") and CTRL+P ("print"- "printează", used more and more instead of "tipărește" when using a printer). But even in English some of the shortcuts are not necessarily indicating the operation to be done. "Undo" and "redo" cannot use the "U" and "R" keys as they are used for "underline" and respectively for "align right". On the other hand the use of CTRL+X for "cutting" is rather iconographic (a welcome tendency especially in the use of gadgets - a triangle used for "play", a square symbol used for "stop", etc.). "Open" and the Romanian "Deschide" are using the same combination - CTRL+O. Hence, preparing software for a new market would be rather difficult. It is better in such cases to let the user learn the key combinations. The process of preparing a service, in this case keyboard software, can be taken even further. For non-English users you can even choose between using a standard keyboard layout with diacritics and a programmer keyboard layout with or without diacritics. Another argument is the usage of a slightly different keyboard in the UK - an extra £, as compared to the standard US keyboard.

Thus, internationalization is not only about preparing the way for providing your product in several languages. It is about preparing your product for local rules and regulations, habits and needs while keeping and generating common communication patterns. Offering various customers from different parts of the world the opportunity to use commonly recognizable icons such as the previously mentioned "play" and "stop" buttons on gadgets could be a plausible solution. Considering the above remarks, the definition for internationalization found in the *MultLingual Magazine* encompasses much better the current realities about this phenomenon: "... the process of generalizing a product [or service] so that it can handle multiple languages and cultural conventions (currency, number separators, dates) [and legal regulations] without the needs for redesign."² Like *globalization*, *internationalization* is rather a managerial decision involving financial and technical aspects. Microsoft is using for the same concept the term *localizability* in its documentation for Visual Studio 2005: "An intermediate step prior to localization is testing for localizability. In this step, you ensure that you have separated

² December 2011 issue, p. 49

the application's resources that require translation from the rest of the application's code."³

Apart from separating the resources that require translation, the main technical aspect involved in the internationalization process is delimiting and separating the localizable parts from the whole. Good planning at this level can save time and money when moving to the *localization* process.

1.3. *Localization*

Localization (L10n) is a process that cannot be done without going through the globalization and internationalization processes first, as already shown in the previous pages. Cadieux and Esselink define the term as "...adapting a thing to the needs of a given locale."⁴ The online MultiLingual Magazine, defines in its terminology section *localization* as "the process of adapting a product or software to a specific international language or culture so that it seems natural to that particular region. True localization considers language, culture, customs and the characteristics of the target locale."⁵

Although the software industry started to be interested in localization as early as the 1980s, scholars showed no interest in it before Anthony Pym (1999) and David Brooks (2000). Later on, several researchers started tapping the subject, either from a linguistic perspective (David Crystal (2006)), a technical one (Cutroni Justin (2010)) or from a multidisciplinary perspective which, nevertheless, involves translation studies to a high extent (Dianne Cyr, 2003, Anthony Pym, 2004, 2005, 2010 and others).

Most often, when speaking about localization, scholars in the humanities refer only to language and cultural issues. The language aspect is covered in broad lines by the **translation** process and maybe rightfully considered to be the most time consuming part within the localization process. **Culture** is acknowledged to play an important role as there can be significant cultural differences from one language community to the next even when they are using the same language. For example, American English and British English have both their language and culture particularities, due to different environmental, historic and economic conditions. The same is true for French. Canadian French is slightly different from that used in France or Belgium. **Customs** can lead to even more particularization, as customs can vary from region to region.

1.4. *Personalization*

Schäler (cited in Baker, 2009: 162) observes that a specialized type of localization is *personalization*. Applications allow users to pick from a range of options. For instance, Yahoo Mail allows you to change the lookout of the email service (colors, fonts). Firefox

³ <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/h6270d0z.aspx>

⁴ <http://www.translationdirectory.com/article127.htm>

⁵ December 2011 issue, p. 49

browser allows changing its background image. Other applications, like Adobe Flash, let you change the layout of the menus and toolbox windows (re-placing menus, minimizing or expanding certain sub-menus); you can use a designer layout or a programmer layout, or you can set your own layout. This type of localization is called by Schäler (ibid.) *development localization*.

1.5. *Culturability*

Many of the above mentioned aspects related to localization, especially to website localization are referred to as **culturability** in some academic papers: "<<culturability>> is the merging of culture and usability and represents a relationship between design elements and culture". (Badre, 2000; Cyr, 2004).

Along the same lines, Nielson (cited in Pym, 2010: 7) pointed out back in 1994 the features to be considered when thinking of website usability (often referred to, by website or application developers, as *user-friendly* design and content):

- *Learnability* seen as easiness of usage of the design the first time. Design should be simple and intuitive. Iconic menu buttons are a good example. And tooltips can be added so that the user can find out quickly information about the tool.

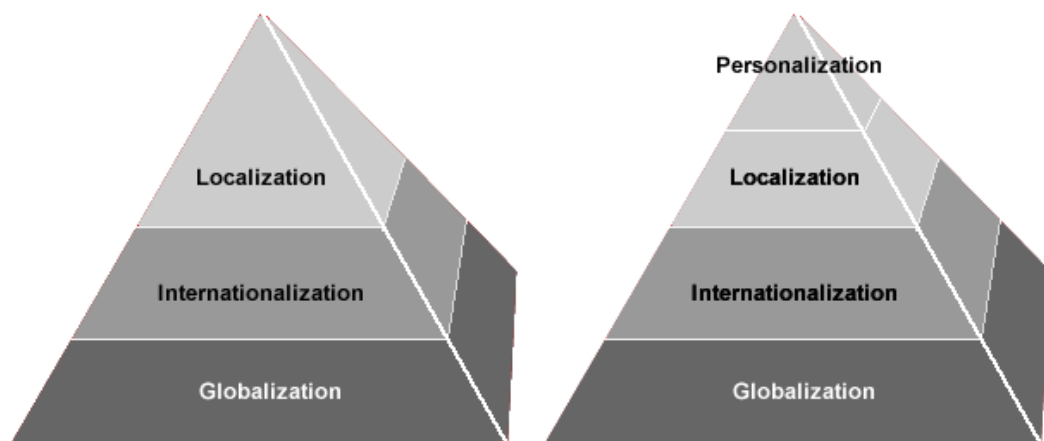
- *Efficiency* refers to how fast a task can be accomplished with minimum expenditure of time and effort. On a website or in an application, testers often test for the number of clicks needed to achieve a certain task, for instance getting to a certain piece of information on a site. Google recommends clicking no more than twice for getting to any page of the website. Learnability and efficiency put together are called *accessibility* by some publishers

- *Memorability* refers to the ability of a user to recall the usability of a design after a longer period of non-usage. I think this is not so relevant for the fast moving economy of computer technologies, as technologies are continuously evolving, always adding more and better features for the users. For instance, the design of Microsoft Office Word 2007 was considered by many to have been quite radically changed, as compared to its predecessor, Word 2003. However, even if menus were far better organized in the more recent version, for those used to the 2003 version it was rather difficult to find their way. So, it is more important to avoid steep learning curves. Intermediary versions would help but would add to development costs so they would not be economically viable.

By *errors*, Nielson refers to the number of errors and their severity. This aspect has become somewhat unnecessary nowadays. Through careful planning and design most potential errors can actually be excluded. I suggest guiding the user by restricting his/her input and actions. For instance, in the case of sign up forms there is often used a step-by-step, subsequent order for input.

According to Nielsen, *satisfaction* refers to the degree of fulfilment when using a design. Based on the explanations and examples above I think that satisfaction in usability is actually depending on all the features previously mentioned. It is a sum up of learnability, efficiency, memorability, and error-free functionality of the design.

All these usability features need to be considered in the process of localization in general and personalization in particular. That is why I would add personalization as well to Richard Sikes' graphic below that shows the interconnection between globalization, internationalization and localization (from the Multilingual.com guide: Localization – 2009 issue⁶, p. 4)



Personalization as a custom type of localization

The two graphics show the interdependence of the four processes. Globalization is the building block, on which all the other processes are based. The closer to the tip of the pyramid, the more specialised and specific the processes and skills involved. I added personalization at the top as it is a specific type of localization.

While localization requires a wider set of skills, translation is a more specific process dealing strictly with text. Translation is an integrated part of the localization process, which in turn is inherent to internationalization, while the whole process is commenced by the assignor through the globalization initiation.

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⁶ <http://www.multilingual.com/downloads/screenSupp103.pdf>

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WEAPONS AND WARFARE IN ENGLISH IDIOMS

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Abstract

Weapons may have evolved from the primitive axe made of chipped stone to the more ‘sophisticated’ means of mass-destruction, but they have undeniably accompanied humankind all through its history, just like the wars that have been fought with them. Most of these weapons are no longer in every-day use, but they have been preserved and kept alive in that colourful keepsake album of language: idioms.

Keywords: weapon, war, word, idiom, origin

The noun ‘war’, as late Old English or Middle English *wyrre*, *werre*, comes from Old Northern French *werre* (variant of Old French *guerre*), of Germanic origin, where the original sense was ‘to bring into confusion’. It is cognate with Old High German *werra* ‘strife, broil, confusion’; Old Norse *verri*, Middle English or late Old English *werrien* (tr.) ‘to make war upon’, related to the German *vernirren* ‘to confuse, perplex’. It appears in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (originally late 9th century) and can also be found in Cnut’s Law Code of 1018: ‘armorum oneribus, quod Angli war-scot dicunt’. This word was not a common choice, the usual Anglo-Saxon correspondents being the more poetic *wīg*, *hild*, *winn*, *gúð*, *beaðo*. There was no common Germanic word for ‘war’ in those early days, and the Latin ‘bellum’ was translated with the Germanic *gewin* ‘struggle, strife’ because the former was felt to be too close to ‘bello’, i.e. beautiful. The word *warfare* is a derivative, meaning war-expedition, from the Anglo-Saxon *faran*, to go.

The word ‘weapon’ is from before 900. In Old English (or Anglo-Saxon) *wæpen*, in Middle English *wepen*, meant ‘instrument of fighting and defense’, from the Germanic *wæpnan*. It is related to Old Saxon *wapan*, Old Norse *vǫpn*, Icelandic *vǫpn*, Danish *vaaben*, Old Frisian *wēpen*, Middle Dutch *wapen*, Old High German *wāffan*, Gothic *wēpna*, German *Waffe*; all from *wepno-m*, of unknown origin with no cognates outside Germanic. The word is allied to the Anglo-Saxon *wæpman*, a full-grown man, a male. The word today denotes any instrument or device for use in attack or defence in combat, fighting or war, such as a sword, rifle, or cannon.

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A Brief History

War is described as a state of armed conflict between two or more entities. These can be states or nations, in which case we speak of international war; or they can be rival political factions within a state, when it is called civil war. It can have political, economic, ideological, racial or religious conflicts as its cause. Wars have been fought for various reasons throughout history: in the name of some ideal or in necessary self-defence, but mostly (though usually not so declared) for territories, resources or other means that would ensure power and supremacy.

Whether we like to admit it or not, war has been present in the history of humanity since the dawn of our kind. From primitive times to ancient states, it used to be a joint effort of all members of the community. The separate warrior class emerged when society divided on a functional basis, and these fighting forces became themselves more varied and specialised, as war became more of a science – or art – with the development of strategy and tactics.

The earliest weapons used by hominids five million years ago were probably wooden clubs and unshaped stones. The spear can be considered the first unambiguous missile weapon used for jabbing and throwing. Originally, it was a simple wooden stick sharpened to a crude point at one end, later the head was made of more resistant materials, such as flint, bone or metal.

Alongside the spear, the sling, the axe and the bow, the sword and similar edged weapons appeared in ancient times, as well as the first siege weapon, the battering ram, used for breaching fortifications. When the recently domesticated horse was involved in battle, it was used to draw chariots – but it also brought the dawn of cavalry. Ever larger warships started to be employed in maritime battles. Gradually the materials and the crafting techniques for making weapons improved, and warfare became more complex due to the development of military technology.

In the middle ages, the mounted and armoured knights brought new tactics into battles. They used the bow from a distance, the lance in a charge, and the sword at close quarters. The supporting infantry fought with spears, billhooks and later with pikes, and the staff sling or trebuchet, a type of catapult, became the siege weapon of choice.

The knights' period of glory was ended with the introduction of gunpowder in warfare during the Renaissance. This was used in rockets, cannons and the first muzzle-loading firearms – and it changed the face of armed conflict for ever.

The effectiveness of firearms constantly increased up to the nineteenth century, by which time the machine gun had already made its appearance in the American Civil War.

World War I brought the technological escalation to fully industrialised warfare. Aircrafts and tanks were introduced to the battlefield, and the first weapons of mass destruction were invented.

Weapon development reached unprecedented speed before and during World War II, culminating in the atomic bomb; and the subsequent nuclear arms race of the Cold

War period took the world to the point where the entire planet could have been destroyed in a nuclear war, had it ever come to that.

Weapons & Arms

Weapons have always been a symbol of power, typical attributes of heroes and war-like gods. However, their symbolical reference is inherently equivocal, considering that they can be used for attack and aggression as well as for defence and protection.

An impressive range of weapons figure in English idioms. When you are overly well equipped with whatever you intend to use as weapons, you are *armed to the teeth*. Today's figurative use is derived from the original meaning, which was 'fully armed with a variety of deadly weapons or other military equipment and prepared for any attack', like knights used to be in their head-to-foot armour. This suit of armour, however, did occasionally prove less than infallible: an opening or gap in it could allow a weapon to penetrate and wound the wearer. This is why *a chink in somebody's armour* came to mean a small defect, weakness or imperfection in somebody's otherwise invulnerable protection or defence, that might provide a means for either attacking or impressing him or her.

Conflict situations can imply an argument or dispute with somebody: *to cross swords* used to be the literary term for a duel between adversaries. A reference to sword-fight is also in the phrase *cut and thrust*, meaning a vigorous and spirited exchange of opinions or ideas.

A more or less friendly competition or argument would mean *to break a lance with somebody*, which takes us back again to knights on horseback. In combat they usually tried to throw each other from the saddle using lances, and the more formalised variant of these tilts or jousts were performed in tournaments for the entertainment of the audience – and, of course, for a prize.

A *freelance* today is a journalist, musician, writer, designer, performer, etc., who does not have a long-term contract with one employer but receives pay for the different items of work undertaken for various persons or organisations. The term originally referred to a medieval mercenary who was willing to hire out his skills in combat with a lance to any cause. Most of these were from the 'free companies', groups of disbanded soldiery who roamed France in the mid-14th century, plundering and pillaging. Their lance was free, not in the sense that they made no charge for their services but that they were free of any long-term loyalty to one particular master, so they were available to sell themselves to any cause or master and take up arms for whoever paid the most.

The cudgel is a short, thick stick or club. *To take up the cudgels* means that you defend or support a person or cause with great energy and determination. More serious conflict, bitter argument, open hostility and readiness to attack is suggested when two people are *at daggers drawn* or *at loggerheads (over something)*. The original loggerheads were long-handled implements that had iron bulbs or balls on the end and were used to

melt tar. During medieval times, they were used in maritime battles: tar and pitch or some liquid was heated up in the loggerheads and thrown at the enemy ships.

If you manage to settle an argument and become friendly again, you *bury the hatchet*. The expression refers to the old custom of the American Indians who took the tomahawks and other weapons of the leaders of the warring groups and literally buried them in the ground so that they might not be reminded of past quarrels when they smoked the pipe of peace with their old enemies.

The hatchet or tomahawk is in fact an axe. Battle-axes with long handles were frequently used as a weapon up to the middle ages. However, the phrase *battle axe*, meaning an overbearing and belligerent (usually middle-aged or old) woman, originated in America in the early years of the women's rights movement. 'The Battle Axe' was a journal published by the movement and the expression is thought to come from it. The term was obviously not originally meant as an insult but as a war cry. The fact that it soon came to refer to a domineering, aggressive woman of a certain age could well be a reflection of what many people thought of the movement's members.

'Old-style' weapons feature in several other expressions as well. You are said to *shoot your last arrow* when you are left without resources in a contest, and you *draw the long bow* when you exaggerate. A good archer was supposed to be able to hit between the fingers of a man's hand from a considerable distance, and could shoot his arrow as far as a mile. The tales told about longbow exploits, especially in the Robin Hood stories, fully justify the application of the phrase to somebody who magnifies his feats beyond the limits of the truth.

In the middle ages, the petard was an explosive device that was exploded to make a breach in the gate or a wall of an enemy's castle. To lay such a device was a risky operation, and since the charges were not always well put together, the slow-burning fuse sometimes exploded prematurely and the military engineer firing the petard was blown up with it. Based on this, it is easy to understand why *to be hoist with your own petard* means to become victim of your own plans to harm others when these plans backfire on you. Similarly, if someone uses an argument that could harm as well as benefit him or her, or makes a compliment or statement with a double meaning, it is a *double-edged weapon/ sword*: it cuts both ways.

Another, heavier type of sword is the sabre, with a one-edged and slightly curved blade, used mainly by cavalry. Whoever *rattles the sabre*, expresses anger and fierceness or makes threatening statements in an attempt to impress or frighten an opponent or enemy, but without actually taking action to support these feelings. If you do not even get as far as expressing your feelings, just give fierce or angry looks to a person, glaring or scowling with obvious hostility but without speaking, you *look daggers* at them.

Moving on to later weapons and accessories, the warning given in case of imminent attack or upcoming danger is to remain calm and prepared for immediate

action: *keep your powder dry*. As gunpowder will not ignite when wet, this you have to do in order not to remain defenceless.

However, if you still have to accept the prospect of pain or some other unpleasant experience, do it with courage or stoically: *bite the bullet*. The most frequently cited explanation of this phrase is that before the introduction of anaesthetics, the wounded soldiers who had to undergo painful operations without drugs were encouraged by army doctors to bite on a lead bullet during treatment, which was supposed to help them withstand the pain. Another variant holds that the method was used by soldiers being disciplined with the cat-o'-nine-tails, the infamous whip with nine knotted cords used for corporal punishment, to prevent them from crying out loudly in pain.

Powder and bullets are used in a firearm but, to be able to fire it, you need the complete weapon, with nothing omitted or changed in any way: *lock, stock and barrel*, which means completely, wholly, in its entirety – in reference to anything that has constituent parts, no matter how small or insignificant. These are in fact the three basic parts of a gun: the lock is the mechanism that ignites the charge, the stock is the handle and framework holding the other parts in place, and the barrel is the metal tube through which the bullet is fired.

Further idioms that make reference to firearms include *to hang fire*: to wait or be delayed, to be slow in taking decisive action – like a gun that is not working properly and is slow in firing. When things (like a plan or ceremony) happen or start too early before everything is ready so that something goes wrong during the process, they *go off at half cock*, like a gun that fires too soon. If someone is at the end of his or her resources, they have *no more shots in the locker*, which was originally the compartment on board a warship in which the ammunition was stored.

Guns can have different shapes and sizes, and whatever they say, size does matter in their case. A special effort made to defeat one's opponent by using something powerful that has been held back is *to bring out the big guns*; the same effort and energy applied in order to do very well and be successful means *to go great guns*.

On the other hand, when you have to defend your position against strong opposition, you *stick to your colours / guns*, and if you suffer defeat fighting manfully to the very end, you *go down (with) all guns blazing / firing*, like the noblest (or most desperate) western-movie heroes.

To avoid such extreme situations, you might want to prevent your enemy's plans from being fulfilled by *spiking their guns*. This expression is derived from the method of literally 'spiking' muzzle-loading cannons, which could be put out of action by driving a spike, a pointed piece of metal, into the small hole through which the powder was ignited.

Police officers in free countries around the world share a common problem. They may catch a person whom they suspect is guilty of a crime, but they cannot put the person in prison unless they can prove his guilt to a judge or jury. An expression that

became popular in the second half of the 20th century and has since been used referring to such indisputable evidence is *a/the smoking gun*. It is based on the fact that a cloud of smoke rises from the end of a gun after it is fired. The person holding the gun may try to deny it, but anyone seeing the smoke knows the gun has just been fired.

The present-day descendant of the petard, the bomb, figures in more recently coined idioms. *To put a bomb under someone* means to urge them to do things faster, especially by sending him or her a reminder. A person or thing will *go down a bomb* if they prove to be very successful, much liked or admired, but *to go down like a bomb* means to be a great shock, surprise or disappointment. Similarly, *to drop a bombshell* would be to suddenly disclose or deliver some surprising, disturbing or even shattering news or information.

Shell-shocked was a term used for a medical condition suffered by those traumatised by being under fire in war. (Today in psychiatry this kind of stress disorder is called battle fatigue or combat neurosis.) By metaphorical extension, the phrase can now be applied to any state of stunned confusion, dazed distress or shock: after a divorce, being made redundant, the death of a loved one, etc.

Battle

The idiom for a hard-fought struggle or a fierce encounter where the antagonists are intensely engaged (usually in large numbers) is *a pitched battle*. This was originally a battle where time and location were deliberately chosen and the arrangement of armed forces had also been planned.

On the other hand, *to fight a losing battle* means to struggle against something with little or no chance of success. A disagreement, argument, etc., that goes on for a long time can be called *a running battle*, like a naval engagement between two hostile fleets while they are on the move, one advancing and the other retreating.

Another phrase originating in nautical usage is applied when you have to make a quick get-away, quit or flee: *to cut and run*. The saying conjures the image of a sailing ship that is cut loose from the anchor line (the cable used to be made of hemp) in order to make sail instantly without waiting to wind in the anchor. 'Run' here means to sail downwind, i.e. before the wind. This procedure was sometimes necessary in an emergency, to save the ship either from a storm or from enemy attack.

If you are *in the line of fire*, you are unfortunate enough to be caught between two opposing persons or groups and thus in danger of being harmed by their attacks on each other.

When you refuse to retreat or give up, you might find at the end that you have won *a Pyrrhic victory*: an apparent victory which in fact is no victory at all, because it has been won at too heavy a price. Such was the one won by Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, at

Asculum in 279 BC, which cost him all his best officers and many men. After the battle he remarked: "One more such victory and we are finished."

More classic figures are evoked in the following pair of sayings: *to hold the pass*, that is, to support or defend an opinion, purpose, etc., and *to sell the pass*, to be disloyal to one's friends or one's beliefs, to yield to one's opponents. The reference is to Thermopylae, the famous pass from Thessaly to Locris, only 25 ft. wide at its narrowest part, which is celebrated for its heroic defence in 480 BC by Leonidas, with some 300 Spartans and 700 Thespians, against Xerxes and the Persian host. Eventually, treachery allowed the Persians to get to the rear of the Greeks and the Spartan king and his band were all slain.

When you take care of things, look after a business, while the person in charge is absent, you *hold the fort*. To 'hold' in a military context has meant 'to keep and defend against an adversary' since the middle ages. However, 'Hold the fort, for I am coming,' is popularly believed to have been the military order that general William Tecumseh Sherman wired to fellow Union General John Murray Corse as he faced a Confederate attack at Allatoopa Pass on October 5th, 1864, during the American Civil War. Records show that the signal from the top of Kenesaw Mountain really read 'Hold out, relief is coming', but the misquote caught popular imagination and the expression was further popularised when it became the refrain of a gospel song.

Tactics

Originally, when soldiers *closed ranks*, they moved closer in a military formation. Today the expression refers mostly to a group or organisation: the members come together and unite forces, especially by overlooking petty differences, either to publicly show support for each other when they have to face some danger or threat from the outside, or when they want to keep something secret.

The original military meaning of the phrase *to take by storm* was to seize a castle, military position, etc. by a sudden and violent attack. In today's usage it means to become suddenly and extremely successful, to make a great impression upon a group of people, to quickly win popular acclaim.

When you choose the easiest possible method of doing something, of dealing with a person, etc., you *take the line of the least resistance*; when you shift your attack to a new target, approach a problem from a new angle, you *open a new front*. An army can get ahead of the opposing one by marching on while the enemy is resting, so if you gain an advantage over somebody by doing something earlier than expected, you *steal a march on* your opponent.

Acting in a way that makes it impossible to return to where you came from would be to *burn your boats/ bridges*. The expression originated with the Romans. Their generals, e.g. Caesar, did at times burn all the Roman boats after invading foreign

territory in order to strengthen the determination of his troops not to retreat. In time, bridges were burned for the same reason and the phrase came to have the figurative sense of committing oneself irrevocably to a particular course of action.

A final remark, act, gesture made at the moment of parting, especially one that is humorous or makes the listener think deeply, or is hostile but allows the recipient no opportunity to give an answer to it is called *a parthian/ parting shot*. 'Parthian' shot or shaft refers to an ancient people of south-western Asia who became famous for shooting their arrows rearward at an enemy army from whom they were fleeing – or pretending to do so.

Another related pair of expressions takes us to sea again: *to sail under false colours*, and only *show one's true colours* at the decisive moment, usually of some impending altercation or battle. These idioms connected to sailing and trade by sea are probably as old as the 'profession' of piracy itself. It was a trick used by these villains to approach 'under false colours', i.e. flag, (pretending to have a certain character or beliefs, principles, etc., which, in reality, they don't have) an unsuspecting trading ship they had spotted. They would raise their real flag (with the skull and crossbones), the one to which they were really loyal only when they were close enough to attack and the trader could no longer escape being robbed and possibly even destroyed. The phrase is used today to describe a person who eventually shows his or her true character, who has stopped acting falsely or pretending to be that he/she is not.

Military Practice

Drums were formerly very much a part of the war machine, as soldiers marched to the drum and took their orders from its beat. Retreat was one such order and would sound every evening. It was a signal for the soldiers to get behind their lines as darkness fell, and for the guards to present themselves for duty. Of course, if fighting was taking place but things were not going well, the retreat would sound to signal to the army to withdraw. Thus, *to beat a (basty) retreat* means to leave in a hurry, to abandon an undertaking.

When you go through an ordeal, especially an unpleasant experience in which you are criticised by many people, you *run the gauntlet*. This was originally a form of military punishment of Swedish invention that became prominent, so it seems, in the Thirty Years' War (1618-48), although similar practices had already been present in Roman times. The gauntlet – gantlope/ gantlet comes from the Swedish 'gatlopp' or 'passageway' (gata = lane, street; lopp = a running, chase). The offender, stripped to the waist, was forced to run between two lines of soldiers who faced each other and who would attack him with clubs, whips, switches or other weapons. The well-disciplined army of King Gustavus Adolphus clearly impressed the British military commanders. The navy implemented the punishment in 1661, for example, to deter theft from on board ship,

but here they used rope yarns to flog the offender. It was abolished from the military in 1813.

Another punishment is recalled when instead of 'I won't mention anyone by name' you say *no names, no pack drill* when somebody is trying to discover the guilty parties. This punishment, formerly used in the British army, meant that the soldier in question was made to march up and down carrying on his back a heavy pack of full equipment.

The calling together of soldiers or sailors for inspection, e.g. to make sure that their dress, weapons, etc. are in satisfactory condition, is called muster and it happens with daily regularity. If something or somebody is considered satisfactory, good enough, it will *pass muster*.

When you enjoy yourself very much by doing something that you get great pleasure from, something different from the daily routine, you *have a field day*. In its original sense in the military this meant a day for military exercises, manoeuvres as practice for battle or as display, especially before an audience of high-ranking officers. Later the meaning was extended to similar days devoted to outdoor sports and athletic competitions at schools, then to any special outdoor activity, like nature study or a trip. Since the early 19th century, it has been used more loosely, and it can also refer to an outdoor social gathering such as a picnic or a festivity; or indeed to any special occasion, a day or time of exciting and successful activity, great opportunity, unusual pleasure or unrestricted amusement.

Any learner of the English language can have a field day with idioms when they discover how interesting their background stories can be and how much their study can help if we want to understand them better and use them correctly.

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FRAMING LIFE: THE OTHER REALITY

Cristina NICOLAE¹

Abstract

What is real and what is fictional? Where does reality end for fiction to begin? In *To the Lighthouse* (which the present paper deals with, with a focus on Mrs Ramsay) as well as in the other novels, Virginia Woolf challenges the very concept of reality, changing the conventional rapport between the world outside (outer events) and the world inside (inner events/movements). The writer focuses on the characters' inner reality perceived as the "true reality", an attempt to frame and give meaning to life, built on experiencing, on contemplating the external world.

Keywords: inner reality, lighthouse, waves, sharing, self-exposure, beauty

The way we perceive ourselves and the outside world dictates the identity path we follow, always on the border between exterior reality (objective reality) and inner reality (subjective reality; reality filtered by the mind, the past conditioning the approach to reality).

The novel the present paper focuses on, *To the Lighthouse*, is both fictional and autobiographical, being partly regarded as an elegy on Woolf's dead parents, a lamentation rooted in her childhood, thus, to a certain extent, a representation of her own self, meant to help her come to terms with her past, bringing forth not only the characters' inner reality, but the writer's as well.

In *To the Lighthouse* the focus is on the mother figure, Mrs Ramsay, and to a lesser extent on the father figure, Mr Ramsay, on the parents Virginia Woolf needed to bring back into the present by means of the written word. These characters' inner reality dictates the rapport established with the others, that is with the world outside themselves, either making the others feel attracted, even fascinated by them (Mrs Ramsay – serene, beautiful, mysterious, genuine, young-at-heart, compassionate, protective), or making the others resent them (Mr Ramsay – frustrated, mediocre, weak, false, egotistic).

Memory and feelings constitute the bridge that connects the two perspectives on reality in the novel. In the preface to the translated edition, Vera Calin (1972: VI) states that in her novels, Virginia Woolf employs involuntary memory, triggered by common, insignificant sensory facts which bring to consciousness flashes of the past, while exterior reality is absorbed "in the texture of the characters by means of emotion" (VIII, our translation). Calin also emphasises the fact that the "tunnels" or "caves" (as she calls them) that Woolf creates in the depiction of each character, represent attempts to encompass the mystery of human nature and "to extend inner reality" (VII).

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Inner reality becomes then, the true reality Woolf refers to in her diary (Woolf 2005: 74), outweighing exterior reality, still escaping any definitive analysis. The masks imposed by the conventions of objective reality disappear and the characters reveal themselves in all the incommensurability of the interior labyrinth, where chronology and space lose their contour and weight.

According to Calin (XIV), we can distinguish in *To the Lighthouse*, a certain rapport established by the writer between “the inner flux and objective behavior”, where external behavior belongs to an artificial existence characterized by rigid patterns, while the individual’s experiences (seen from the perspective of inner reality/duration) are free of any imposed-on limitations, spontaneous, genuine.

We can ‘trace’ Virginia in Rose the child, in adolescent Nancy, in Cam, in Lily the woman painter, in animating scenes rooted in Woolf’s memories, in the characters that remind of people in her life as she rewrites her own family history:

She ‘is’ the child Rose, choosing her mother’s jewelry in the parental bedroom; she ‘is’ the adolescent Nancy, making an empire out of a rock pool and drawing in her skirts at the sight of adult passion; she ‘is’ Cam in the nursery being talked asleep by her mother, and Cam in the boat adoring and hating her father; she ‘is’ also Lily, painting this book. (Lee in Woolf, 1992: xxx)

Painting the book indeed, for Woolf’s process of writing (game and/or struggle) is just like her character’s endeavoring process of painting, trying to catch the essence, to (re)create a world in which her dreams as a(n) artist/writer and her need to go into her past in order to be able to cope with the present are brought together. “The external frame of *To the Lighthouse*”, says Gruber, “is like a static canvas, with chiaroscuro settings” (1935: 122), and she further asserts that the painting represents the attempt to objectify the problems and to explain life: “It is painting which has brought this explanation of life, painting with its defined object and its limitations of static time. It is painting which creates a satisfying form within the uncertain fluency of life” (123). We can assert then that writing is for Woolf precisely this way of creating form, of giving contour to life by means of representing inner reality, a process (“its attempt at something”, *TTL* 225), a journey which finds its completion in a fathomless moment of illumination (“I have had my vision”, says Lily Briscoe), when that unknown, missing something finally takes shape on the ‘blurred’ canvas of life.

Nothing extra-ordinary takes place in the novel, nothing that goes beyond the borders of common life, and yet, it is this common life that comes to frame the self in *To the Lighthouse*. If we refer to Mr Ramsay, it is obvious that the reality he accepts is not a deep one, but one of “simple objects and simple truths” (Apter 76), a reality ‘enslaved’ by his ambition to reach R in the alphabet of thought/knowledge which “engaged the energies of his splendid mind” (*TTL* 39), by his disappointment and frustration of never

being able to reach Z, by his need for Mrs Ramsay's reassuring words and presence, and by his concern with the survival of his porous fame.

He reached Q. Very few people in the whole of England ever reach Q. [...] But after Q? What comes next? After Q there are a number of letters the last of which is scarcely visible to mortal eyes, but glimmers red in the distance. Z is only reached once by one man in a generation. Still, if he could reach R it would be something. [...] In the flash of darkness he heard people saying – he was a failure – that R was beyond him. He would never reach R. On to R, once more. R – (TTL 39)

Moreover, the distinction between the two classes of men Mr Ramsay depicts reflects his need for personal confirmation and his vanity as well. He is not one of “the gifted, the inspired” ones, as he calls them, but rather a “steady goer” repeating the letters of the alphabet one by one, struggling to get further and further:

[...] he could see, without wishing it, that old, that obvious distinction between the two classes of men; on the one hand the steady goers of superhuman strength who, plodding and persevering, repeat the whole alphabet in order, twenty-six letters in all, from start to finish; on the other the gifted, the inspired who, miraculously, lump all the letters together in one flash – the way of genius. He had not genius; he laid no claim to that: but he had, or might have had, the power to repeat every letter of the alphabet from A to Z accurately in order. Meanwhile, he stuck at Q. On, then, on to R. (TTL 40)

Mr Ramsay's reality is not his wife's: he rejects sympathy, beauty and hope, leaving him in a world of loneliness (Apter, 1979: 76), while Mrs Ramsay's comprises all three; this empowers her to give her husband the sympathy and comfort of beauty he longs for, to comfort and give hope to her children and to the ones in need while being concerned with her kids' survival and wishing to become “an investigator, elucidating the social problem” (TTL 13). A reality built around vanity, shallowness, helplessness versus one built around beauty, sacrifice, acceptance. And all these bring us to the idea of sharing, understood in terms of influencing the evolution and perception of the self. In *Virginia Woolf. A Study of Her Novels*, Apter points out the fact that in *To the Lighthouse*, “the consciousness, with its creative sensibility, not only discovers a true picture of the world but discovers a picture which can be shared” (75). External reality is not excluded and, as Apter asserts, the characters' personal visions can be communicated; one character can understand another character's perspective on the world outside, which may bring about an understanding of the world inside.

“That man [...] never gave; that man took” (TTL 163) says Lily Briscoe, her words reflecting Mr Ramsay's egotistic view of the world which denies the openness to the others (frustration and loneliness triggered, perceived by the others as signs of aggression due to an inability to communicate/share coherently and, let us say, assertively); still he

needs the others (especially Mrs Ramsay) to open up to him, to reassure him of his self, to balance this 'cracked', vulnerable sense of self: "It was sympathy he wanted, to be assured of his genius, first of all, and then to be taken within the circle of life, warmed and soothed, to have his senses restored to him, his bareness made fertile, and all the rooms of the house made full of life" (TTL 43). When Mr Ramsay looks into himself, says Apter, all he can find is "ignorance and emptiness which continually eat away at him", while his reality is "stark and immobile and deadly objective. He is unable to recognise his own individuality [...]. As a result, the world has no meaning for him; it is blankly opposed to him, and he can discover nothing in it" (77).

However, sharing (understood as self-exposure) implies running some risks as well: on the one hand, giving so much of one's self to the others makes one's self/identity wither (Mrs Ramsay) and on the other hand, revealing one's self triggers a certain vulnerability (the others' answer to and impact on the exposed self; Lily Briscoe). Mrs Ramsay is both an observer (waiting for the others "to reveal themselves to her" Apter 84) and a sharer, and her beauty and sympathetic knowledge bind people together. But in doing so, her own self dissipates: "she often felt she was nothing but a sponge sopped full of human emotions" (TTL 37), "there was scarcely a shell of herself left for her to know herself by; all was lavish and spent" (44).

Apter (86) brings into discussion Mrs Ramsay's belief that the windows (which stand for the eyes) are the ones that should be open and not the doors (which stand for the self); it is exactly this feeling of privacy that one should protect in order to prevent the self from dissolution – windows allow a kind of distant investigation/contemplation, while open doors imply exposure, allowing a direct access to one's self. As Apter underlines, this sense of privacy, this self that Mrs Ramsay finds in solitude represents the basis of her responses to her family: "This self, however, which emerges in total isolation, is not opposed to her responses to her family, but the basis of those responses; it is from this silence that her knowledge of others comes" (86).

[...] it was a relief when they went to bed. For now she need not think about anybody. She could be herself, by herself. And that was what now she often felt the need of – to think; well not even to think. To be silent; to be alone. (TTL 69)

What Mrs Ramsay experiences in this egoless state is a feeling of liberation, peace being brought to her (Fand 48). Nevertheless, the path of this self is not a linear one. Mrs Ramsay's beauty (a beauty of the spirit, first of all, through which her caring consciousness is shared) fades away when experiencing personal emptiness, together with the beauty of the reality she sees, the beauty of the world outside. "But what have I done with my life?", Mrs Ramsay asks herself at the dinner table as she feels "being past everything, through everything, out of everything, [...] outside that eddy. [...] There was no beauty anywhere." (TTL 91). She is now "a fading ship", as Lily perceives her, "drifting into that strange no-man's land where to follow people is impossible"; "How old she

looks, how worn she looks, Lily thought, and how remote” (92). People being separate is what Mrs Ramsay sees outside herself now, feeling that “the whole of the effort of merging and flowing and creating rested on her.” This ‘ship’ returns to the world of the household patterns, of domestic roles, the familiar pulse being felt again and “life being now strong enough to bear her on again” (91).

The bond between Virginia Woolf and her mother is reflected in the bond between their fictional representatives, Lily Briscoe and the subject of her painting, Mrs Ramsay (Diment 73). The first part of the novel focuses on Mrs Ramsay, on her tidal sea of beauty and the sense of balance she gives to the people around her. Passing away, she becomes the great absence still present in her family’s and friends’ inner reality, still influencing them. Her death alters everything and the balance is obliterated; the empty house with its doors locked, full of dusted memories, deepens the feeling of time that passed, life that is gone – a wreck of feelings and memories Mrs McNab and Mrs Bast try to infuse some life into while waiting for the long-departed ones to return and to complete the trip to the lighthouse (just another sign of Mrs Ramsay’s influence). In the third part, the focus is on Lily Briscoe, the other important female character in the novel, representing “an alternative, creative path for women, than the marriage prospectus set out by Mrs Ramsay” (Goldman 61); she is a discoverer trying to find answers to her questions, and her search for truth/reality is reflected in her attempts to complete her vision, to portray on canvas not only Mrs Ramsay but also her own feelings, overcoming both her (that is, Mrs Ramsay’s) absence and influence. The painting, which Goldman labels as “a self-conscious analogue for the novel in which it appears” (61), is an extension of Lily’s (undisclosed) self and allowing somebody else to look at it implies self-exposure - a strange mixture of agony, excitement and intimacy:

*But that any other eyes should see the residue of her thirty-three years, the deposit of each day’s living, mixed with something more secret than she had ever spoken or shown in the course of all those days was an **agony**. At the same time it was immensely **exciting**. [...] But it had been seen; it had been taken from her. This man had shared with her something profoundly **intimate**. [...] one could walk away down that long gallery not alone any more but arm in arm with somebody – the strangest feeling in the world, and the most exhilarating. (TTL 58, 60, emphasis added)*

Intuition seems to be the one that reveals to Mrs Ramsay the others’ hidden, true reality, making her see beyond false frames, beyond layers of conventional identities. She sees in her husband whom the kids resent, a man in need for compassion, for the certainty her love and beauty provide. Moreover, Charles Tansley is perceived by the others as an unpleasant, artificial individual, dominated by ambitions, while Mrs Ramsay intuitively senses his need for love, compassion, friendship; her comforting presence changes him, making him feel flattered, proud of himself and as if he had revived (TTL 15, 19).

Mrs Ramsay's perspective on the outside world is shaped by sensory perception, by "the scale of sounds pressing on top of her" (*TTL* 20), sounds that are filtered from the perspective of the vacillating human consciousness, of the sounds of mental and emotional waves.

Present in almost all her works, the waves - as a symbol - suggest the passing of time and the rhythm of life where monotony is driven away by the movement and the newness of each wave, and anxiety, the feeling of being left adrift in the sea of emotions and thoughts is alleviated by the comforting presence of the lighthouse, which in the novel the present paper deals with is represented not only by the tower-like structure, but also by this privileged character, Mrs Ramsay, the driving force in the novel, flashing out light on the other characters' reality, guiding these travelers through their inner turmoil. Her tranquility is challenged once the rhythm is broken, especially when "her mind raised itself slightly from the task actually in hand" (*TTL* 20). The moments when she senses these breakings of the soothing rhythm are moments of emotional turmoil when she moves from tension to the other extreme, as if "to recoup her for her unnecessary expense of emotion" (20), waiting for "some habitual sound, some mechanical sound" (21) that would make her feel at peace again.

[...] the monotonous fall of the waves on the beach, which for the most part beat a measured and soothing tattoo to her thoughts and seemed consolingly to repeat over and over again as she sat with the children the words of some old cradle song, murmured by nature, 'I am guarding you – I am your support', but, at other times suddenly and unexpectedly, especially when her mind raised itself slightly from the task actually in hand, had no such kindly meaning, but like a ghostly roll of drums remorselessly beat the measure of life, made one think of the destruction of the island and its engulfment in the sea, and warned her whose day had slipped past in one quick doing after another that it was all ephemeral as a rainbow [...]. (*TTL* 20)

It is this rhythm of the waves, and by extension, of the world outside that Mrs Ramsay needs in order to keep the rhythm of the world inside, just as Woolf needs the rhythm of writing (her inner reality) in order to cope with the outer reality. The selves Woolf needs to display not only in *To the Lighthouse* but in the other novels as well, move from fiction to autobiography, mirrors framing the writer's adventure that brings together labyrinths, caves, mirrors, (inability to) love, longings, phobias, loneliness, death, survival, change, time, memory and inability to forget. The very quest for an identity that needs to unlearn reality outside and rethink reality within.

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TTL *To the Lighthouse*, London: Penguin Classics

THE MYTH OF THE FAMILY IN TRANSYLVANIAN LITERARY DISCOURSES

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Abstract

Ioan Slavici's *Mara* and János Kemény's *The Witch of Waters* are two Transylvanian novels which deal with the topics of Family and Womanhood in the context of the Transylvanian small town or rural society in the second half of the 19th century. In this article we approach issues like single parenthood, male and female roles, family interactions etc. In Slavici's and Kemény's fiction the traditional patriarchal family pattern is still very strong, but symptoms of its alteration become visible.

Keywords: patriarchal family pattern, monoparental family, shifting roles, absent father, mother with masculine identity, self-made woman

The 19th century was one of the most dynamic periods not only in point of social and economic changes imposed by growing capitalism, but also in point of the shifts that occurred in family life, family roles and patterns. The population of Transylvania in the XVIII-XIX centuries was very heterogeneous in social status, ethnicity and religion. In the four decades prior to the Big War a dense railroad network was constructed, with a direct impact on migration patterns too. The changes that affected other Central European regions were present there too, along with them the changes of traditional family patterns. Old assumptions, absolutes, norms, values started to be questioned, especially in the second half of the long 19th century. "The Industrial Revolution profoundly affected the modern family, relieving mates of many burdens, yet also placing many extra strains upon them: a person's role was no longer something automatic, unquestioned, pre-determined by a static social order and by prearranged manners and customs, roles often had to be learned anew for new situations. Worth had to be earned. It did not come as birthright. Even if it did come by being earned, it was still uncertainly relative. Old patriarchal definitions of the male as the head of the house and the female as belonging in the home went through a re-evaluation. Confused men and women, reacting to the new equalitarian ideals, found themselves questioning and worrying about everyday family tasks and roles" (Satir, 1983: 30).

We will try to make a short comparison between two literary texts, Ioan Slavici's *Mara* and János Kemény's *The Witch of Waters*, two novels that share numerous common features, mainly in point of themes and motives. They both refer to the same Transylvanian milieu of the second half of the 19th century, and they launch the figure of the self-made woman, who is trying to be a single mother and a successful businesswoman in the same time, but forgets to be a woman. The world around the main

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characters changes, along with its norms, values, roles and functions start to take up new facets.

According to D. Vatamaniuc the action of *Mara* takes place around 1848-1860. Slavici's characters are average people. Mara is the first self-reliant woman figure in Romanian literature. She begins as a humble, impoverished widow and mother-of-two. Later she turns into a resourceful businesswoman, who manages to escape her condition and class. *Mara* is also a Bildungsroman, as it chronicles the way Mara's two children, Persida and Trica grow up, turning into young adults. The action takes place in a small rural town in 19th century Transylvania. The key feature of this period is the interpenetration and interdependence of the human beings and the social norms and values that shaped that specific context.

In the 19th century Transylvanian society, that was midway between *preindustrial* and *industrial* phase in Mendas's terms, or *traditional* and *modern* in Vedinas's words, one of the basic values was represented by the Family. One could refer to a cult or a myth of the Family. The business and the crafts were kept within the family: the examples of Huber and his son, Natl or that of Bocioaca who chooses Trica to become his son-in-law are relevant. In the same way, Marci from the other novel learns the trade to continue Jolka's business, and the old *witch* marries little Jolka to one of his business partners, not only because that man loves the young girl, but also for family business reasons.

The theme of the Family is a basic one in Slavici's fiction. The Romanian novelist presents two families, two different family types that foreshadow the future changes that will take place later, in the next century. Mara's family is, in a sense, the monoparental family of the 20th century, that is centered around the figure of the mother, as the head of the family. Maternal role is strongly altered by the role of the money-earner. Mara's family evokes the birth of a new world. The other family is the Huber family, they symbolize the old patriarchal family that is gradually falling apart. Cornel Ungureanu makes some very interesting remarks related to the fictional world Slavici creates: it is a women's world, in which the fathers die or decay, and women overtake the power men used to hold. And due to this very power, women finally fail their destiny. „In her own way, Mara would like to protect her children. Her secret is the treasure-the money that will protect them in the absence of the Father. Deprived of the father-figure, her children will experience a different kind of relationship with the world. Persida is beautiful, she receives good education, but she is frightened by the presence of men. She fails the relationship with Codreanu, then she fears Natl” (Ungureanu, 2002: 165). Mircea Zăciu seems to share the same opinion, as he calls Slavici one of the greatest Romanian novelists, with a dramatic call for failure (Zăciu, 1996: 109-121). Later, in her married life, Persida will have a lot of conflicts. Within the young couple the presence of differentness in another – in point of wishes, habits, tastes, expectations, opinions – is used destructively, rather than as an opportunity for enrichment: disagreement is often seen as an insult.

Pompiliu Marcea considers, in the volume *Ioan Slavici. Evaluări critice* (1977: 27), Mara not a miser, but rather very practical, which is normal for a poor widow like her. But

for her practicality, she could have ended a beggar. The critic says that her sense of perspective is a defensive mechanism against a society which did not favour single mothers of modest condition. Money can pervert people if it is not used for the progress of the Family (Natl spends a lot of money on gambling because he cannot get used to living in poor conditions and becomes more and more irascible, Marta Bocioaca, who spends money to save Trica from the army and to ease her preplanned adultery, will see her plans ruined).

Family ethics is very strong and maternity reinforces this ethics. One's primary responsibility is towards one's family that belongs to an ethnic and religious community.

The newborn even manages to mature his father, Natl, and the young family reintegrates into society, as their married status is revealed. Being married is still an important attribute of social legitimacy. After all, Slavici is said to have been a moral writer, and each of his writings hides a moral teaching. The supreme values for Slavici, the moralist, are Family, Duty and Traditions. That is why those who ignore family values are punished: Huber is killed by his illegitimate son, Bandi, just when the father absenting from his childhood decides to make it up and take care of his illegitimate son. Nevertheless, the elements that will structure the 20th century family patterns and functions, and the symptoms of the decay and alteration of the traditional patriarchal family are all present.

As Magdalena Popescu puts it in her volume *Ioan Slavici. Evaluări critice*, not only does Slavici undermine several aesthetic and literary conventions of his time, but he also changes the conventional way of perceiving Tradition and Family. He discovers new ways of fulfillment for the individual. Financial and emotional security make an independent woman, in this sense Mara, her replica, Persida and Kemény's heroine, Jolka announce the Woman figure of the next century – socially successful, reaching motherhood, yet alienated in many ways. Mara can perfectly master her economic decisions, Persida does so with her emotional options. Slavici's feminine characters have the courage to go against the stream and act in ways and manners nobody would have expected. Mara does not learn a trade, and she does not send her daughter to the monastery in order to become a nun. Basically, they avoid all the career options available for women in that time, and they become businesswomen, who still consider motherhood important. It is the fictional portraying of the present day dilemma career versus family.

In the literature of the 19th century, male characters were in central position. Female characters appear in the frame of their family and household, and the classical feminine types of the 19th century fiction were those of the muse, wife, mother or lover. With Mara, females leave the private space and step into the public space, previously controlled by men. Slavici introduced a number of elements indispensable to modern fiction, i.e. „a focus on human interiority, a strong aesthetic-formal concern, and a phenomenological rather than merely historical description of reality... Slavici insisted that events and characters be true to the circumstances of a certain place. He also asked that every word contribute to a consistent narrative atmosphere” (Pope-Neubauer, 2002: 444).

Gavril Scridon thinks that the female character of *The Witch of Waters*, Jolka is, up to a point, a kind of Mara (Scridon, 1996: 144). Kemény's heroine is different in the sense that the *demons* of wealth and money change her profoundly, alienating her not only from people, but also from her former self. The action takes place between 1834-1914, a time when capitalism was penetrating Transylvanian economy and the old world was slowly sinking.

The witch of waters is the story of Jolka, the 16 year-old daughter of a forester, who lives in the mountains of Maramures. One day, she meets Manoila, a poacher, instantly falls in love with him with teenage fascination. When she hears her father's plans of capturing Manoila, she runs to warn him, manages to save his life, but radically alters her own. She ends up horribly beaten up by her father and has to run. Jolka leaves her mountain home, spends the summer in the cottage and under the protection of old Ilia and his shepherds. When the time comes, the sheep go down in the valley, and she travels down the Big River (i.e. the Tisa) on a raft that transports wood to the lowlands. She finds work in the house and inn run by Mr. Szénási, the port administrator in Vadu Mare.

She grows into a beautiful young woman who catches the eye of the middle-aged widower. She becomes his wife, they have six children, and Jolka becomes a good wife, but not a loving one. After Mr. Szénási's desperate affair with a fair-haired woman of bad morals, Jolka is made to confess her long-time repulsion for her husband, and ends up being almost beaten up, the scene echoing the situation in her mountain home. As she cannot tolerate violence, she takes her children and the money she saved, and runs back in the Maramures mountains.

Once there, she starts to put into practice a plan she had made. Jolka seems to love power and the only way of getting this power and security for herself and her children is to make money. By all means. She obtains the concession of a remote valley, obtains a deforestation and transportation licence, finds the best workers and starts exploiting the big forrests, transporting high quality wood down the Big River. She becomes, in some years, the most influential person in the woodcutting and rafting business. She proves to be as brave and as daring as a man, doing jobs that had never been done by women, earning the nickname she'll be proud of-*the witch of waters*. The people around her either fear or admire her, but very few people love her. Except for old Ilia, aunt Sara and her two elder children, nobody loves her and she loves nobody.

Jolka fills six boxes with money and valuables for her six children, as Mara fills the socks with money for her offspring. The world around her starts to change, the railway network is spreading and the end of the 19th century is nearing. Together with it, the end of rafting and water transportation is on the horizon. Jolka does not have any regrets, and adapts to the changing world. She organizes the last rafting season, and secretly builds a sawmill. If the world is changing, she is ready to change with it too, the same way as Mara has a remarkable sense of adaptation to the needs of the surrounding world. Destiny strikes, and her beloved son Marci dies during the last travel down the river. After three days of mourning she is back in business, and, even if she does not admit it, this will

prove to be the turning point in her life. She makes the arrangements she wants to make, marries young Jolka's daughter, her granddaughter to her businesspartner. Then she takes the six boxes filled with valuables, goes high up in the mountains and gets rid of the wealth she had gathered during a lifetime, spreading it into deep clefts and dark caves.

János Kemény's novel is a *Bildungsroman*, the story of eight decades: it is also a success story, but a success story with nuances. Jolka becomes rich and enjoys the power she has longed for and the independence her wealth has brought, but her personal life is marked by a long list of failures: she is expelled and cursed by her father, not looked for by her mother (one of her greatest disappointments), her unhappy marriage, the death and the betrayal of the only man she loved (Manoila becomes her lover after escaping from prison, but she wants to keep the relationship secret, and when he is finally killed, she is deeply hurt: not only because of his death, but mainly because she finds out that all this time she has been *the other woman*). The tragic death of her son and the failed relationship with her other children can only add to her drama.

The 19th century promoted a very intense cult of the Family and of the so-called *privacy*. Family was expected to be a closed space, a kind of *hortus clausus*, where people's true virtues were stimulated and protected from the dangers and violence of the outer world. After 1880 a new category of successful people emerged, that of entrepreneurs, who were almost exclusively men (Frevert-Haupt, 2002: 36). Women could inherit big fortunes or businesses, but they did not administer their wealth. Yet, Frevert and Haupt mention that in rural Austria, for instance, peasant women had the freedom to spend the money they earned through selling different products the way they wanted. The liberty of making money and spending it was not completely unfamiliar for women in Central Europe. So what Mara and Jolka will do in terms of making money might not be completely odd. Both women use, basically, the good old survival ethics of their peasant ancestors.

What is new in the literature about women of that time is not merely the fact that they want and do make money, but the fact that they restructure or at least announce the restructuring of womanhood, women's roles and the whole family pattern. The Catholic canon of the *exemplary wife* and *mother* or the bourgeois feminine ideal of *mother, wife and angel of the house* is not validated in our two texts. Mara and Jolka leave the private space that used to be occupied by women and enter the public space that used to be reserved for men.

In patriarchal paradigms women hold a secondary position, and their access to financial resources usually takes place with the mediation of men. In Slavici's and Kemény's fictional world the situation starts to change, and mothers become money earners. "In the case of monoparental families the authority is exercised by the single parent. From this viewpoint, monoparental families resemble the authority model that is specific for the 20th century, where authority is held by the person who earns the living (Stefan, 2006: 45). If the monoparental family reproduces the relations functioning in a patriarchal society, that parent becomes supreme authority in the family. When women

are socialized in such a model, they tend to reproduce it in their own families. The family system is the main learning context for individual behaviour, thoughts, feelings, and a child learns how to structure the world in the family. The adults provide the blueprint by which the child grows from infancy to maturity. Once a child grows up in a dysfunctional family, he is likely to form the same family pattern, as an adult. That is why Jolka becomes the replica of her ruthless father, and that is why Persida becomes the authoritative Mara in her adult life.

As Tomka Béla puts it, at the dawn of the 20th century, the rate of divorces was very high in Hungary, and the number of births out-of-wed was even higher than in Western Europe (Tomka, 2000: 89). The situation must have been similar towards the end of the 19th century Transylvania too, so Jolka's attempt to separate from her husband must have been a familiar gesture. But the fact that she is not willing to face the Vadu Mare community and her husband only when she has reached success and the latter has left the village, is rather meaningful. Community censorship can explain many of such gestures. Sorina Bolovan emphasized the lower status of women within the Transylvanian rural community of the time we deal with, but also the existence of several forms of family life. „Despite all the negative side effects, divorce and concubinage offered the institution of marriage numerous variants of family organization, and led to a readjustment of matrimonial relation according to the ideals and the needs of the community members... the obvious differences from other geographical areas emphasize the existence of different mental structures, which gave family life in Transylvanian villages specific characteristics. Marriage and family life were not just a personal matter. They involved the community” (Bolovan, 1994: 101-107).

The symptoms of the changes in Europe's population trends are the following: decrease in marriages, an increase in non-marital unions, cohabitation, the number of single people, increasing divorce, one-parent families, births out-of-wed, childlessness, and a drastic decline in fertility (Brigham, 1986). The pluralization of family life forms involves illegitimate births, alternative forms of cohabitation. Conjugal instability produces particular dynamics within the family, but also produces social changes and new family patterns (monoparental families, reconstructed families etc). According to Jack Goody, between 1750-1850 the number of illegitimate children soared all over Europe (Goody, 2003: 182). In both texts, there is a number of people of uncertain origin or who were born out-of-wedlock (the case of Bandi, Huber's illegitimate son, and the case of Mr. Szénási, who was born as an illegitimate child etc). Yet, having or being an illegitimate child was still shameful, that is why the pregnant Jolka fools Mr. Szénási into marriage, and Persida insists on getting married before running away from home.

Jack Goody asserts that the main variables of the development of the European family are the economic and the religious factors, these variables operating on a large scale all over the European continent (Goody, 2003: 25). Both factors have suffered radical changes in the two fictional texts we deal with: women have gained economic independence and they do not rely on men as money earners, and they do not turn to

religion. Even though tradition is still very important, marriage is still seen as a haven of safety for the happy couples of the stories, and non-familiar forms are still not often favoured (Mara does not even consider that Persida might become a nun), adultery, premarital sexual relations are not accepted or publicly assumed, emotional betrayal is punished or regarded as blameworthy, child-rearing is still the mothers' responsibility, but it seems to be equalled sometimes with the desire to work or to make money and the myth of the happy nuclear family starts to fall apart. Fathers start to be absent more and more often, thus they cannot serve as models for their sons. Mothers start to work, and the traditional gender roles start to change. In capitalism, instead of the nuclear family, as Jack Goddy puts it, we deal with smaller, more dispersed and more fragmented families. Family life changes in the 19th century, due to the changes that take place in the way men and women earn their living (Goody, 2003: 200). New problems arise, such as the issues of reconciling work and family roles or the problem of property, which is a key concept in the changes that occurred in this field. In the second half of the 19th century, for the first time in history women's work is conflicting their domestic and maternal duties (Goody, 2003: 187). Phenomena like marginalizing men or irresponsible fathers appear, and women become more and more important, assuming the role of the head of the family (Goody, 2003: 13). These are the phenomena that one can identify, while analyzing family patterns and roles within Mara's and Jolka's families. *Mara* by Slavici is a family novel that presents several family types, Mara's family foreshadows the single-parent households or monoparental families, Huber's family mirrors the patriarchal family pattern. Jolka's family is also the prototype of modern day monoparental family, where the mother works and assumes the role of the Absent Father.

Yet, neither Mara, nor Jolka is happy. They do not function as women any more, they are money-earners or working mothers, displaying very few moments of feminine tenderness. Mara is satisfied but often very lonely, and the only moments of true happiness for Jolka are the ones when she becomes, for a very short time, the woman she used to be, and not the male she has turned into. They are never seen living in a functional relationship, Mara is never mentioned as Mara Birzovanu, bearing her deceased husband's name, and numerous elements suggest a rather mediocre marriage, later beautified by Mara's incessant, self-pitying complaints. Jolka's marriage lacks personal fulfillment and satisfaction, and the only affectionate relationship she has (the one with Manoila) is never assumed publicly, and, what is more, ends in an awkward manner. They succeed as *men*, but fail as women.

If we try to explain Mara's and Jolka's maternal behaviour based on some modern theories and interpretations, we could state that they are authoritative parents. Gender-based schemata attribute roles: they are mothers and substitute fathers in the same time. According to J. E. Williams, cited by John Brigham, there are general pan-cultural sex trait stereotypes which are evident in all cultures, but can be modified to a certain degree by specific cultural influences (Brigham, 1986: 327). Applying the set of masculine and feminine traits to the two women subject of our analysis, we will clearly see that both

Mara and Jolka display numerous traits associated with men (*active, autocratic, courageous, daring, dominant, enterprising, independent or inventive*), but very few female traits. Mara can be perceived as *complaining, curious* or *self-pitying*, and Jolka, in her youth, is *feminine*. But nothing else.

In this half rural-half urban Transylvanian milieu the life of a single mother would normally have been poor, or, at best, she should have asked for male relative's protection and help. In Sorina Bolovan's words, the 19th century Transylvanian widows' or single mothers' life was tightly controlled and censored by the community: "the written and the unwritten laws, the legislators and the moralists reserved for the woman or the widow a much harsher, unforgiving and closely controlled status....In the Transylvanian rural communities during the modern times, the woman's right to life was *buried* with the deceased husband... the widowed woman remained isolated, marginalized by the community, harshly sanctioned if she did not live in mourning for the departed one, suspected that she wanted to waste the wealth gathered by her late husband and his family" (Bolovan, 2001: 3-11). Cristina Stefan observes that the experience of single parenthood may "masculinize" women (Stefan, 2006: 48). When single mothers try to reestablish order by replacing the Father who has disappeared, they turn into *pater familias*, and their relationship with their children becomes difficult, due to the intersections of roles they assume (Stefan, 2006:133-134). In fact, the heroines cumulate multiple roles: that of the mother, of the father and of the divine element. "Mara is, in fact, a *pater familias* who watches over her children's destiny, an authority whose word must be listened to" (Slavici, 1985: 276). Things are similar with Jolka too, after a while she becomes more of a distant father for some of her children, and she never turns to God because for a woman who cannot forgive, a Christian God of forgiveness cannot exist.

In point of mating strategies, it is obvious that both mothers are willing to choose partners for their children, according to their own mate selection strategies (Jolka makes two exceptions, for her two favourites). They want an extension of themselves, a surrogate or substitute parent for their children, so Mara intends to see Persida married to Codreanu, and advises Trica to tactlessly submit Marta Bocioaca and fool her until she gets the Bocioaca girls as wife: this way, he'll have a well-off wife and a fearful mother-in-law.

In Central Europe the traditional family pattern persisted for a longer period of time than in the west of the continent. The second half of the 19th century brought about some changes (urbanization, industrialization, railroad networks etc) that finally led to the modification of this family pattern. The Transylvanian rural family of that time, as seen by Ákos Egyed, was mainly the nuclear family type (Egyed, 1981: 262). There are several features of the society that was slowly becoming capitalist, among these one can mention the role of fairs (in *Mara* the main character is not a peasant who produces goods, but a retailer who buys and sells), or the presence of paid labour force in the family business, that exceeds the labour done by family members (Jolka has, at a certain moment some 240 employees). According to Ákos Egyed Transylvanian literature promoted the ideal of

a specific Transylvanian life standard and lifestyle which he calls *honest poverty* (Egyed, 1981: 227)². Nevertheless, the two novels do not promote this ideal.

There are numerous and complex links between literary texts, the moment of writing and/or the moment they refer to. Texts can explain other texts, through intertextual mechanisms, but they also explain, if not mirror (in an aristotelian sense) the reality that generated them, the social context they belong to and they refer to. Therefore, it is remarkable that two works that were written at a seven decades' interval, present such strikingly similar elements referring to the topic of family and womanhood. What links them is the theme of the Family and the motive of the willful Transylvanian woman, the surprisingly modern motive of the single-mother-turned-businesswoman of the 19th century Transylvanian society. This might suggest, on the one hand, the modernity of Slavici's novel (as it announces 20th century phenomena and characters), but also the persistence of the topic (the decay of the patriarchal family) well after World War II (Kemény's novel appeared in 1965). Without asserting the existence of a special type of Transylvanian woman, one could wonder about the causes of the constant emergence of Mara/Jolka-like women figures in Transylvanian literature(s). Ioan Slavici's *Mara* and János Kemény's *The witch of waters* equally „present a fairly unexplored realm of rendering the individual's emancipated will wrestling with the illusion of attaining plenitude of life in a changing world” (Jucan, 2004: 141-156). The families portrayed in these fictional worlds are still deeply rooted in the old patriarchal system, but they already present symptoms of the decay of this traditional pattern. Values start to change and roles start to shift, rendering people, especially women more and more independent and economically stable, but not necessarily more fulfilled.

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² He uses the expression *tisztes szegénység*

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Reviews

***The Masks of M. I.* - Gabriel Liiceanu in dialogue with Mircea Ivănescu / *Măștile lui M. I.* - Gabriel Liiceanu în dialog cu Mircea Ivănescu, Editura Humanitas, București, 2012**

A confrontation between Liiceanu and Mircea Ivănescu, even in the tender form of a dialogue, seems not only unthinkable (supposing it has been performed), but truly unacceptable. The reason for this lies in the disproportion of forces and discordance of *ethos* between the two, to the point where they seem to exclude any chance of cohabitation in / through dialogue. Needless to say, a collaboration of any kind seems just as impossible. As a matter of fact, Gabriel Liiceanu himself realized he was dealing with something almost impossible, since he sets as a premise (in the foreword) the fact that they were living “on extremely distant cultural continents” (p. 5). And still, it is not the cultural “distance” (that might have not been as large as Mircea Ivănescu was simulating) that generates this (yet!) exorcised “impossibility”, but the structural and attitudinal antagonism of the two; on one side, you have this “dogmatic” of the inflexible principles and of “hard” morality, while on the other there is a relativist who dissolves everything in doubt and insignificance (and first of all dissolves himself). What confrontation might result between an individual that is certain of himself and of the correctness of his own gestures and

one that is shy and never certain that he even exists, not to mention unable to support an idea or to build an attitude? Between a “fundamentalist” of rigor and a relativist who is only vaguely more consistent than an absence?! Obviously, though, the dialogue is not exactly a fight, especially since this one (*“Măștile lui M. I. Gabriel Liiceanu în dialog cu Mircea Ivănescu”*, Editura Humanitas, București, 2012) is performed under the conventions of an interview and therefore Gabriel Liiceanu is interested to get as much as possible out of M. Ivănescu, having to prove enough strategic flexibility as well as attitudinal slenderness. But regardless of the concessions imposed by the genre and goal of the dialogue, the positions remain clearly outbalanced. Even if M. Ivănescu would have been in the greatest shape of his best day (if something like that had ever existed) of his life, the confrontation with Gabriel Liiceanu would still have resembled the one between a ferocious hawk and a poor mouse. Not to mention that, in fact, M. Ivănescu was on his deathbed and living his last days of agony. Obviously, I wasn’t imagining that Gabriel Liiceanu would take him by the throat (exactly then) in order to pull out the secret of the existence, to force him into becoming a „confessor” (Liiceanu is still human, in spite of the fame others try to make around him), but his questions couldn’t have been petting or purely sparing. However, someone who comes with questions and with the hope to get out of the interlocutor as much as possible from

his mystery remains an aggressor. And, anyway, Mircea Ivanescu, even if not aggressed by anything, was still a victim (his poetry is also the diary of heroless victimity). To be honest, I felt sorry for poor Ivanescu from the beginning, picturing him being followed through all the corners by Liiceanu's fierce and imperative questions, by his radical summons. The scenario of this confrontation could only have been irremediably and eminently unfair: on one side Liiceanu's trenchant spirit, on the other – Mircea Ivanescu's continuous evanescence; on one side, Liiceanu's ultimate breakageness, on the other – M. Ivanescu with his shadowy consistence; Liiceanu's rigor and abrupt directness raiding over Ivanescu's fragile nuances and his perpetual refuge from a nuance into the other. The poet had, obviously, no chance: no other than that of the leaf of grass standing in front of a tank.

However, if I think better, what other "opponent" would be more suitable for Gabriel Liiceanu than Mircea Ivanescu?! Where would his ultimate fusillades prove to be more useless than in this confrontation with a shadow protected by an armour made of wool? And not of a layer of wool, but of shadows of wool? No matter how many arrows and how pathetic Liiceanu fired, they would all fly in the abyss, failing to hit the master of dodging that the poet was. If, at the end, somebody was to experience a feeling of futility, of the uselessness of the assault, it would certainly be the philosopher and not the poet. Basically, Liiceanu was chasing a shadow and hunting a chimera. Therefore

the virtual feeling of compassion would have to be equally shared by the two.

The fact that they poet is going to also apply to the dialogue the parenthetical tactic and dodging strategy from his poetry, continuously deviating from the course, is immediately obvious, from the first clash / question, however innocent it might appear to be (but Liiceanu was not aware that he would touch the most profound and incurable of the poet's wounds). Asked to develop his first memories, the poet makes a quick dodge and initiates a comment on Stalin's death, taking as a pretext one of Stelian Tanase's TV shows (p. 28 sqs.). When it comes to this type of things, that only regard him partially, he discusses as much as possible with the sensuousness – and art – by which he also dismantles into baroque arabesques the states, in his poetry, escaping from one pretext to the other and from one undefinition to the next. So that Gabriel Liiceanu, if he truly wants to get to something, must prove extreme tenacity and catch him from where he runs in order to bring him in front of the lost or suspended question. It's true that Liiceanu actually stimulates his "deviationism", being so certain of his own tenacity and patience. This running away from the question, the detour through all kinds of stuff, the tolerated or even encouraged twists and turns and then the return of the question assure the authenticity of the dialogue but also the playful script in which Liiceanu pretends to lose the poet's trail (or to follow him on the intentionally complicated paths) only to wait for him on the first corner (and Liiceanu himself speaks of this

playful convention of the dialogue in the foreword). There is a certain game in this dialogue, but it has a dramatic background (it's also a gesture of delicacy from Liiceanu to accept, even temporarily, this game of hide and seek and confusion). Anyway, if Liiceanu ever imagined that he would easily get a final confession and then give the absolution, he was wrong: the poet is vigorous enough in his dodging and highly inventive in deviating pretexts. I also think that he wasn't fond of the intrinsic pathos of the topos itself: he wouldn't accept the dialogue as a cathartic, saving, confession. Although he was dying, he rejected the specific rhetoric of the *extrema in morte*. And, of course, if he had escaped, he would continue to blather in all the five rounds of the dialogue about the weather (since he was, as a poet, an academic of the meteorological nuances). But Liiceanu obviously doesn't get carried away by these shifts of modesty and humility and often, in order to end them, has to use the pincers and show himself more unrelenting in directness than he actually was (there are some stimulatingly played "angers" that are offered as satisfaction to the poet who, of course, was looking exactly for this). Since there is no other Romanian poet more skillful in crumbling any seed of pathos, it is no wonder that M. Ivanescu refuses the pathetic aspect of the situation he was in. This is a consistency of Poetics that is kept until death. As well as a full concordance between the ethos of the existence and that of poetry.

But one shouldn't exclude the hypothesis that the poet actually wanted

to be forced to confess and that all his strategies of refuge and refusal were no more than a test of the honest interest for his own confession. It might be (is it really?!) why he simulates from time to time his surprise in front of the development of the confession ("But I see that I end up speaking of myself...", p. 42) and he tests the tenacity and intensity of the interest in it ("... and, how should I put it, it is a thing that I neither like nor believe to be interesting"). If this is the case (and nothing is certain if we consider the perverse subtlety of M. Ivanescu's poetry), then Liiceanu has clearly managed to pass all the tests of honesty and implication in the dialogue. Anyway, the dialogue achieves some revelations that are fully equal to the spirit of Ivanescu's poetry but, above all, emphasize the tragic layer it is extracted from (and I am not referring, obviously, to the "late revelation" brought shockingly by the subtitle: "I was an undercover officer"; this is one of the self-humiliation and self-impeachment games of M. Ivanescu in which Gabriel Liiceanu allows him to stay for too long). I refer to the truly painful part of the confession, the one where he talks about his sister's death (that had taken place a year before the poet was born) and about his brother's suicide; but especially of his existential feeling of being a substitute, a simulacrum. "A appeared in the world – says M. Ivanescu – to fill a gap, as a compensation" (p. 32) and he lived "under the strange feeling" that he was doing it "somehow on behalf of the dead brothers" (p. 48). He had, therefore, a destiny of mourning ("all my life I had to

burry something”, p. 49), that he tried to dissimulate (“it seems that I am a funny guy that laughs a lot”, p. 48). This profound existential causality justifies the litany rhythmicity of his poetry, the monody of absence that lies in the core of his Poetics. Maybe even his condition of an absent from history (“In a way I have lived, almost all the time, like I were absent from the world”, p. 65), of an irrelevant and insignificant witness. The childhood traumas relativize any other dramatic feeling and Liiceanu tries in vain to make him admit that he was wrong by joining a “party stained with blood”: “What does the formal adhesion to a party mean when you experience during childhood what I tried to recount to you?” (p. 77). The eventual “moral” drama Liiceanu is looking for could by no means amplify the “existential” and destinal drama of the poet. A confrontation between rigor and relativism develops quite largely from this point forward, but at the same time it undermines the entire dialogue. Fortunately, Liiceanu does not turn the dialogue into a symposium (their positions where, anyway, irreconcilable and, according to M. Ivanescu, negotiations are pointless since “each one perceives the world from the angle he is in”, p. 65) and thus the debate moves into the underground of the memory narratives, with enough anecdotic features and delicious fragments.

Of course, Liiceanu’s “theme” was not mainly “the poet”, but his confession as a man who had crossed an entire history. But “the poet” cannot be marginalized in the dialogue, at least for

the fact that M. Ivanescu was only a “poet”, and one that “(I) was never convinced of the fact that I was a poet” (p. 149). He belonged, therefore, to a very rare, if not unique, species. One might hardly imagine more self-inconsideration than the one showed by M. Ivanescu to the poet that he was. First he boasts about having writing his texts in response to the orders or bets made with Ion Draganoiu (p. 88) and then he declares himself a simple versifier (“I am no more than a versifier”, p. 150). And, to emphasize the self-pejoration, he declines and creative feeling: “Be serious, sir! I only had the awareness of duty, induced by the bet I had made” (p. 154). This insistence to maintain childish declarations drives Liiceanu crazy; but Liiceanu also manages to grate on Ivanescu’s nerves and obtains some fundamental phrases regarding his Poetics: “my principle in poetry was not to lie”, “not to say anything that I couldn’t assume” (p. 155), breaking the wire of what he calls “the Stylistics of self-persiflage” (p. 157). Of all the trenches dug by Mircea Ivanescu around his intimacy, the ones surrounding his poetry are the most impenetrable. He would under no circumstances accept a more serious perspective upon his own poetry. I would dare say that such a grimly attitude translate a hidden – a too-well hidden – feeling of sacrality that mustn’t be violated, of religiosity that mustn’t be displayed. Maybe there is only one moment when the voice of an outrageously pent pride is heard when, brought back by Liiceanu to the theme of poetry, he says: “I never accepted to write

poetry where to narrate trifles or lies” (p. 215). It is a sentence that makes the sacrifice of all the twists and wanderings that lead to it worthwhile. Because, at least apparently, Mircea Ivanescu’s poetry seems to “narrate” exactly that kind of stuff, drawing a strategy of gossip in which “the truth /... / related to my life” is encrypted (p. 216). This is a key-sentence, which may stand on the basis of a new perspective of interpretation. Eventually, the poet did not manage to escape from Liiceanu and maybe this had always been his secret wish: not to be overlooked: ”I hope, nevertheless, that you will not get out of your hand, like the ribbon from Henric’s sleeve”, (p. 224.) An extremely vivid Ivanescu in a deeply pleasant and genuinely empathetic book (because it assumes its antagonies), this is what Gabriel Liiceanu has achieved through this revelatory dialogue.

AI. CISTELECAN

George Banu, *The Trilogy of the Removal: The Rest, the Night, the Oblivion / Trilogia îndepărtării. Odihna, noaptea, uitarea*, Cartea Românească, 2010

The most known Romanian theatre writer of the moment, George Banu is the supporter of the type of writing where the print of the essayistic style is prevailing. George Banu’s recent publication, *The trilogy of the removal: the rest, the night, the oblivion* (Romanian Book

Publishing House Ed, 2010) folds itself on such a stylistic dominant, the author reuniting quotations, impressions, confessions, with a diverse theme, which is generally put under the sign of the *removal*. *The rest*, the first part of the book, is constructed on the principles of the lexical structuring, being marked by the formulas of the firm definitions, by the correlations and the association of terms, notions and semantic nuances, sometimes of the paradox kind („The rest calls for the courage to assume the absence from within the people; the courage of being forgotten by the others“). The semantic field of the rest has its stake both on the beneficial resources and the negative ones of the term (the courage of the rest, the tradition of the rest, interval, as a rest in the denouement of the theatrical spectacle, etc.). George Banu also insists on the functions of the rest, ranging from the recovery ones, the holiday or the remedy to those of social sanction, of intellectual comfort or of secured space marked by a feeling of peace, of interior peace or of a temporary anaesthesia in the tumult of a disorganised reality, even if, it attracts the attention of the essayist, within the commerce of the intellect with its own resources and limits, a certain communicational difficulty can intervene („on a long term, the rest «by Himself » proves to be practically impossible: his own companionship is difficult to bear!“). The rest is, as the author mentions it, an antidote to the incontinence waste, of the entropic dissolution in fortuitous forms and

multiple activities, capable of abolishing the identity dynamic of the self. On one hand, the remoteness, the detachment from the daily spectacle represent a way to find again the self, to adjust the personal feelings to the requirements of the moment, to adequate the gestures and the attitudes to revelations, assumed by their own identity structures. What is also beneficial, in the economy of George Banu's book, is represented by the references to the plastic arts (Caravaggio, Delacroix, Van Gogh, Magritte, etc), to the different literary works, especially to the theatre, with its potential of significances and symbols.

On the other hand, one must notice that the reflexions of the essayist regarding the rest are not situated only in a theoretical or philosophical horizon. On the contrary, they are legitimated also by the confessional nature that the sentences acquire, by the emotional load the words imply, by the evocative reverberations of the phrase: „When I want to take a rest I have to sacrifice the theatre. Then I manage, for some time, to fulfil the dream of an unknown Shakespearian character: exasperated by the multitude of roles he was obliged to act, the man only wanted to get rid of them. [...] As this seems difficult to achieve for the rest of his life, I have at least those rare moments where I *rest* from the theatre. Even if you love the theatre it is good to take some distance from it, every now and then; both from the social one and from the artistic one.”

The second part of the book, *The night*, is configured through the appeal to the principle of comparison with

dialectical resorts, the nocturnal regime of the being has a healing, completing and regenerating role, but, on the other hand, being associated to some avatars of the clandestineness or of the occult, where abuses, murders and conspiracies can be deciphered. Talking about the nocturnal metamorphoses of the theatre, George Banu underlines the fascination that the nocturnal exerts over the theatre („In the theatre, the night is mostly Shakespearian. From *Macbeth* to the *Dream...* and to *Hamlet*, it gives a feeling of restlessness and anxiety; it never remains neutral, peaceful and serene. Regardless the context, Shakespeare's night does not allow people to sleep”; „The universal dramaturgy does not lack «nights». (...). «The nights» of the theatre are numerous, confusing and different. We see them again and again and relive them regularly. They are our nights, the nights of the show within us.” The night is also an essential element of the scenery belonging to Wagner's drama. The essayist's trips in diverse cultural areas (theatre, philosophy, painting, poetry) are made through a fascinating writing of analogies and correspondences, a writing that combines the allusion and the paradox, the digression and the analytical verve, in an available and mobile style, which also takes advantage of the expressive iridescence of the words, but also of the feelings' relief, of the ephemeral accidents of the affects.

The oblivion, the third part of George Banu's book benefits of a leading built after all the laws of the narration. The circumstances and the instances of the oblivion are inventoried both in the

medical register and in the spiritual one. Even if oblivion blurs or, sometimes, annihilates the past feelings, the past of the human being, it cannot abolish the being's joy of plenary ceasing the moment. Otherwise, between oblivion and departure, commune semantic inflexions and accents can be identified („In a way, forgetting means leaving, without a destination and without an explicit reason; a traveller without luggage and without landmarks”. The phrase requires, not in a few occasions, the rigid and deep reverberations of the sayings: „We build the memory; we endure the oblivion” or „The lovely holiday of the self (Mallarmé), the oblivion detaches the man from himself”. If the memory validates an ontic identity, it gives the contour of an affective vibration or the relief of a smile, both the oblivion and the distance have the gift of making a gap, of isolating the human being.

The themes juxtaposed by George Banu's fluid writing in *The Trilogy of the removal: the rest, the night, the oblivion* alternate in a fragmentary, elliptical and supple speech, to philosophical speculation, the aphorism, the quotation, the theoretical commentary or the anecdote, legitimating a superior way of understanding the world and its own existential adventure. George Banu's writing, fragmentary and allusive, stakes, first and foremost, on the fluidity of the reverie in love with the shapes of the world and of the past's alluviums, of the memory' reflexes and the inter-textual iridescence of the fundamental approached theme: *the removal*. Besides, in

an interview, the essayist resized the role and the place of the imagination in the structure of the human personality, stating that “through imagination we do not forget the world, but we find it modified according to our own projections. Our imagination allows us to find the world in this way, as it protects us in order to live it and to know it beyond appearances.” George Banu's meditations suggest, beyond their ideat scale, a subtle dialectic of the closeness and distancing, with indisputable ontologic and gnosiological significances. The self placed within the subtle interval of the contraries lucidly assumes its own condition, fairly considering that “to rest means to go on a date with you”, and “finding the authentic, legitimate and deep essence”.

Iulian BOLDEA

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Vasile Bahnaru, *The Rise in Decline of the Romanian Language in Basarabia/ Ascensiunea în descensiunea a limbii române în Basarabia*, Princeps Edit, Iași, 2011

In 2011 the book written by Vasile Bahnaru (the Director of the A.Ș.M. Philological Institute of Chișinău) entitled “Ascensiunea în descensiunea a limbii române în Basarabia” (ISBN: 978-606-523-155-9) was published in Iași in 2011, dedicated to the memory of the Academician Silviu Berejan. The four compartments (Bahnaru, V. Preface) of the volume are: I. Linguistic issues; II. Etymological notes; III. From the history of linguistics; IV. Sociolinguistic issues - polemics, have as a common denominator the study of the Romanian language. The whole volume is an explication, a definition of its own conception, just as we read in the debate of the Preface: “Since 1990 we had a certain apprehension, though not always acknowledged, that what I have written regarding the linguistic problems could contain some diversions from the truth, some interpretations being conformist or conjuncturist. On a second reading of articles and studies written in different times I reached the happy conclusion that all of these do not bear the fingerprint of the dominant ideology of these times and as a result this fact has determined me to put together older and more recent studies in a separate volume.” The studies included in the chapter entitled “Linguistic issues” make reference to lexical, semantic, stylistic and grammatical aspects of the vocabulary of the

Romanian language. The predilect concept of the study of the chapter is represented by the class of “occasionisms”: “the occasional antonymy”, “lexical occasionisms” (The Bucovinian lexical occasionisms are created by the author with different purposes - p.25): “neptunizăm, interplanetoplan, lucrurism, lucruristă” (lexical forms excerpted from Em. Bucov’s work) etc. The linguist reports the class of occasional lexemes to the different registers of the Romanian language - the stylistic-semantic level, the report of these linguistic facts with the literary language etc. remarking that “in the artistical work the deviation from the existing norms results as a consequence occasional words with certain goals, following aesthetical and well determined communicative goals, and that is why it is totally justified.” The orthographical fluctuations existing in the Romanian language over the river Prut imposes the foundation of a new concept in the domain, and this is the opinion of the linguist continuing the tradition of innovation proposed by Silviu Berejan in the 80s. The correlation between morphology and lexicology, between transitivity and voice, the semantics of certain lexical units, actual issues regarding the lexicography in the Republic of Moldova are valuable studies encompassed in chapter I. The second compartment entitled Etymological notes incorporated 14 microstudies not of the etymology of certain words but of identifying the semantics of the original etymon with the aim to explicitate and concretize the meaning of these words on

the level of evolution of the Romanian language (Bahnaru V. p.8.). The study methodology is varied, the linguist using with the same scientific rigour the comparative method, the comparative-historical method, the contrastive method for words such as: nebun, negoț, a scăpăta, rost, a abandona, aberant (mad, trade, to come down in the world, backlash, to abandon, aberrant) etc. The third compartment, From the history of linguistics includes three articles linked to Romanistics in the Republic of Moldova up to 1990. A special place in constituting Romanian and European linguistics was offered by Vasile Bahnaru to the work of Bogdan Petriceicu Hașdeu, in two of his studies: “B.P.Hașdeu în contextul lingvistic european” (B.P.Hașdeu in the European linguistic context) and “B.Petriceicu Hașdeu și problemele dezvoltării lingvisticii moldovenești” (B.Petriceicu Hașdeu and the problems of linguistic development in Moldova). The linguist from Chișinău makes ample references to the encyclopedic preoccupations of the Romanian scholar, to his philological preoccupations on Slavic and Indo-European languages in the domain of etymology and lexicology, sustaining its European value: “Hașdeu was the direct forerunner of the great Swiss linguist, F. de Saussure in several respects: he distinguishes the language in abstracto and the language in concreto, and realizes the diachronic-synchronic distinction etc.” (p. 259). The theory of uninterrupted continuity of dialects, the theory regarding the circulation of linguistic elements, the theory of dialectal discontinuity are other elements in which

B.P. Hașdeu imposes himself in European linguistics - based on professor Bahnaru's opinion. The fourth compartment of the volume is entitled Sociolinguistic issues and includes especially studies published in magazines. The attention of the author is drawn upon problems of culture of the Romanian language spoken in Basarabia under the fata influence of “harmonious bilingualism” on the Romanian language from Basarabia. Issues of wooden language, their propagation in the post-totalitarian language use are discussed. In this point the linguist Vasile Bahnaru becomes the authoritative voice, he criticizes the “alleged heroes” of the research of the Romanian language, who in the totalitarian period were “either not known, or managed with prudence their comfortable existence” (p.8.). The polemic spirit is strongly accentuated in the problem of the “Moldavian language”. “Who needs Moldavian language” is the question very much rhetorical, also the subtitle of the article “Between fiction and reality” (320). The author criticizes vehemently the linguistic insertions foreign from the spirit of the Romanian language which gradually make their way in the Romanian language spoken within Basarabia. The lexical patterns, the unspecific linguistic calques, the cumbersome syntactical constructions are all dangerous. The fundamental concept of the book is that of the “Romanian language in the Republic of Moldova” and it rejects the idea of the “Moldavian language”.

Doina BUTIURCĂ

Daniela Gîfu, *Symbolic Violence in Electoral Speech /* *Violența simbolică în discursul electoral*, Editura Casa Cărții de Știință, Cluj Napoca, 2011

From the start, let us notice that the entire content from the volume *Symbolic Violence in Electoral Discourse* by Daniela Gifu (Editura Casa Cărții de Știință, Cluj Napoca, 2011) is built by an interdisciplinary approach, where the effort and the spirit of synthesis is used to build up a skeleton of new theoretical constructions, employing concepts and knowledge from a vast circle of Humanities such as: Politics, Sociology, Philosophy, Rhetoric, Theory of communications, Semiotics, Linguistics, etc. It is a modern approach of this phenomenon of communications, putting together, techniques and strategy of discursiveness used throughout history, starting from ancient Greeks up to present, when schools and models of American communication, like The School from Paolo Alto and the new inventions on European Rhetoric within The School of Brussels and the μ Group are recognized.

Explaining the expression *symbolic violence* on a social background, and especially on the electoral background, the author uses the writings of Pierre de Bourdieu, from which she tries to use the definition of this as "imposing form", then she stops on hermeneutic essays of philosopher Paul Ricoeur, on which the meaning of this expression is that of "manipulating action" and eventually she dwells on this complex hue.

In the first part of the book, the author is making clear the basic notions of discursive manifestation. Able to see that written press is like a mirror for society, the author considers that today's society is a live factor of changes, using for this a quote of Hyppolyte Taine, which considered it as a "corridor in which the wind of history is passing". From this perspective, an analysis of the entire discourse is performed, putting the accent on text structure and on journalistic style, suggesting that both have a degree of subjectivism. Next, political discourse is analyzed, also through the lenses of Political science, Rhetorics and symbolic configuration, the last one used when the political discourse is becoming a discourse of power. A vivid description of written press is made, highlighting its features and making a description of its typology.

Discussing the specific problems of modern discourse, the author finds out that everything is discourse an discursiveness, starting from private life and up to the academic speech: science became an rigorous discourse; art – a figurative and pathetic discourse; Philosophy – an analysis of discourse. Most of the people only give attention to what they say, but they neglect the form they are using to express what they want to say. These forms of communication are explained in relation to the ideal communication situation which German philosopher Jürgen Habermas used. In this particular section are summarized some forms of discursive translation, when the postmodern society uses more and more Semiotics and Linguistics, the author referring to Ferdinand de Saussure's

theory of signs and to the Logics of language imposed by Ludwig Wittgenstein. With these the politician may gain legitimacy, authority and prestige. Daniela Grifu states that the political life is structured in language facts – political discourses, political ideas, symbols - all of these being meant to persuade, to start passions, to convince someone into doing something. An entire form of language is being sketched with the precision of one who is a specialist in communication. In the final part the author shows a series of examples of political discourse, proven to be *active presence* in the pages of written press, or as slogan or figure of speech, the latter coming from the sphere of Rhetorics.

The second part of the book tries to highlight the discursive strategies used in Politics and the author also highlights a phenomenon which is part of the Romanian politics: the use of too many American terms in the discourse and also that the fact that Politics has become a public practice, when actually it should be subordinated to the public space. The model of persuasion specific to Aristotle's *Rhetorics* and to the *New Rhetorics* is used, the last one discovered by Chaïm Perelman and his assistant Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca. Daniela Grifu lists three types of logical methods: positive, negative and neutral. Another series of arguments is formed by those based on *acts, examples, authority* and *various analogies*. The use of sophisms, of sentences with aporetic content with good examples is treated with maximum of exigency, as the author analyzes numerous lines of paralogisms, lines which I would risk calling "a negative Decalogue".

In the third part the main keys of information in Politics are presented, and the mechanisms through which act upon human sensibility are explained– the social is seen from a psychological perspective, especially when modalities and techniques that are not so plausible are employed, like gossip or disinformation. But we are warned that everything becomes more dangerous when the events are opened up to a psychological key and the politic event "evolves" from dark to darker, the social scene being brought face to face with numerous manipulation methods used by the politic scene: from false surveys and the creation of a better image for a politician to a cunning change of public interest through festive vote

The fourth part of the book is strictly technical, built upon the way in which a discourse should be constructed, the author referring to ancient lessons of about Oratory, on the heritage left to humanity by Aristotle, Cicero and Quintilian, in which their work scheme is very functional and easy: *introduction*, continuing with the *discourse* (narration of the acts, their confirmation or (neglection) and in the end the *peroration* (a summary of the acts, pathetic presentation of them and conclusion). The changes that occur in modern political discourse eventually highlight the pragmatic side of their development and the need for more persuasion, as in the case of the Ancients, aiming to make the political discourse a symbolic manifestation of power, building an entire "route" to persuade the public, with an energy well organized in "three-strokes" of action or in three facets, as the

author calls them, the descriptive, evolutive and the prescriptive.

In the fifth part, the author performs an analysis of the content of written press, by using the American methods of Harold D. Lasswell and Paul F. Lazarsfeld, who initiated their work during the war at Princeton University, beginning from the panic that was installed among more than a million citizens, who after hearing on the radio *The War of the Worlds* by science-fiction author H. G. Wells, on the 30th October 1938, in which martians invaded the Earth, thought that the invasion is real, so they ran from their houses and cities. Although not thoroughly described, elements used to impress the public, like the *bandwagon effect*, are described - according to Lazarsfeld those who vote are always tempted to be on the side of the winner; *the theory of the silence spiral* (Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann): those who share the dominant point of view, are not reluctant in sharing, but those who have different points of view keep the silence just because they are frightened by those with the dominant point of view, and the *magic bullet theory* (Lasswell) according to which humans are conducted by instincts so every human being acts in the same way.

Finally, the author performs a strict analysis of the 2009 presidential elections from Romania, based on data collected from the press and with a graphical representation generated with LIWC-2007 software, which lead to a final resolution: the description of the way in which these discursive methods are used in the sphere of Politics in order to determine the final

results, and these results may affect intention, opinions and even feelings.

On the whole, although it appears to be too dense, Daniela Grifu's book keeps the original track, giving numerous informations, some of them new even to those who are familiar with the theme of communication and public space – a field that has not been well researched yet.

Eugeniu NISTOR

Ștefan Borbély, *The Diaphanous Existence / Existența diafană*, Editura Ideea Europeană, 2011

In Ștefan Borbély's books (*Thomas, the magister's garden, Xenogrames, The dream of the wolf from the steppe, Constructive oppositions, From Heracles to Eulenspiegel, The heroic in the literature, Mircea Eliade's fantastic prose. The Gnostic complex, The circle of grace, Matei Călinescu – monographic, Thomas Mann and other essays, A book a week, Starting from Nietzsche*) there is, despite the thematic diversity of the comparative excursions, a set of affinities, of relationships and of analogies which are meant to express the individuality of the writer. Either it analyses the relationship between Freud and Jung, the topos of the insulated in Thomas Mann, *The wolf from the steppe* belonging to H. Hesse, perceived from the angle of initiated scenarios, the germinate forces from Rilke's *Elegies*, or they approach some concepts of an ample intellectual opening (the idea of Mitteleuropa, ecumenism, New-Age, etc.) or the theme of the heroic, the author manages to delimit and radiography the

major significances of the topos and of the literary forms, through the capitalization of an impressive bibliography. Ștefan Borbély's collections of literary chronicles are both supple, as a critical diction, subtle as a hermeneutical speech, explanatory and interpretative, as a way of work and the constructive enthusiasm, as well as the empathic resort, represent the two resources for Ștefan Borbély's writing, that his books emphasize. An applied and methodical spirit, the author betrays, in his serial pages, also the scholarship, an uninstructed scholarship, lacking boldness.

The diaphanous existence (The European Idea Publishing House, 2011) can be regarded as radiography of an entire literary decade (2000-2010), through commenting some of the most important publishing appearances from this period. Here can be found critical texts consecrated to reference names of Romanian contemporary literature (Marin Sorescu, Mircea Zăciu, Nicolae Breban, Marin Mincu, Livius Ciocârlie, Adrian Marino, Horia-Roman Patapievici, Mircea Cărtărescu, Paul Cornea, Dan C. Mihăilescu), but also comments of books belonging to becoming authors (Adrian Dohotaru, Cătălin și Roxana Ghiță, Adriana Teodorescu, Florina Codreanu, Ioana Macrea-Toma, Constantina Raveca Buleu). We can also state the fact that the author has a visible predilection for those books which enlist in the sphere of history and syntax of the mentalities or in the perimeter of the cultural studies. Ștefan Borbély's interpretations from this volume are characterised by analytical

firmness, through conceptual opening and precision of the nuance, qualities which allow the author to circumscribe ideas and literary forms, to reveal artistic structures or to fixate the cultural symptoms. What are revealing for the critic's analytical availabilities are, for example, the texts dedicated to Adrian Marino's journal (*The life of a lonely man*), those dedicated to Marin Mincu's experimental attitude or of the Romanian literary modernity in Paul Cornea's vision.

In the preamble of his book, Ștefan Borbély offers several clarifying explanations regarding the title: „the diaphanous existence represents both a personal program and a finality, and an exorcism: of reaching, through the serial, continuous writing, above the filth we are leaving in, beyond the promiscuous present the majority of the books we have to read, needs to conquer”. A considerate observer of the literary mundane, with a sure aesthetic sense, but also with a playful spirit which transpires beyond the procedural gravity, Ștefan Borbély records, within the Romanian editorial perimeter the existence of two tendencies: an ideology one, either explicit or implicit, „decanted from the imperative of the confrontation with a reality – that of the post-war Romania – which torments us even when we want to turn our back on it” and another one materialised in the existence of „a feeling of the existential «late» of the ending, as well as the fatigue of the 20 years after December 1989, these would gather in a collective suicidal thrill, thematically related to the dominant apocalypse from other spaces of culture”. It is not a chance that the author

considers the actual stage of the Romanian literature characterises itself by a state of „resented, anti-vital tiredness, consonant with the social and political lethargy around”. The fact that his own book enlists in this conceptual sphere of the „tiredness” (being considered by the author himself „the indirect form of a participating melancholy”) is not by chance at all. Being significantly argued upon, articulated by an assumed rigour of interdisciplinary and of an ample conceptual horizon, the critic discourse is as unostentatious as firm in options and judgments.

The books commented upon in this volume (*The origins of the Romanian romanticism*, Paul Cornea’s book reprinted in 2008, *The Romanian literary balcanism*, by Mircea Muthu, *The secret history of the Romanian literature*, by Cornel Ungureanu, *The Romanian literature in post-ceausism*, by Dan C. Mihăilescu, *About ideas and blockages*, by de H.-R. Patapievici, *The illusions of Romanian literature*, by Eugen Negrici, *The betrayal of criticism*, by Nicolae Breban, *Matein investigations*, by Ion Vianu) are valued both by emphasising their theoretical characteristics and by extracting subterranean significances of the text, or through the excursion inside the historical context. Equally exciting are the chronicles of several books of authors belonging to the cultural space from Cluj, like Ion Pop, Ion Vartic, Irina Petraş, Aurel Sasu, Mircea Petean, Radu Mareş, Mihai Dragolea, Cornel Robu, etc. In a register of the admiring affinities are written the critical texts consecrated to Paul Cornea, Marin Mincu, Adrian Marino or Mircea Horia Simionescu. Still,

we have to state the fact that it is about an admiration from where the fastidious pose does not miss, the attention to detail or the tonality of the analysed texts. Characterised by a „critical, loose and substantial freedom”, and through „an energetic, clear and cursive style, of an experienced swordsman’s elegance” (Adrian Marino), Ştefan Borbély is, as it was stated by the same hermeneut of the literary ideas, a follower of the idea’s critic, way which is found not only within his comparative studies, but also in the literary chronicle, of a distinct conceptual pose, where, starting from several cases or concrete literary forms, the author accedes to the idea tic layer of the book as a whole, proving extreme caution in the nuances of the text and making, in the same time, the necessary connections, between the works, the literary époques or the creation styles, in a way which refuses any constraint, any interpretative abuse, any axiological relaxation, still without avoiding a vague, playful sense, a certain premeditated posture, a certain sense, inconspicuous, of the paradox.

Iulian BOLDEA

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Cornel Ungureanu, *The Secret History of Romanian Literature / Istoria secretă a literaturii române*, Editura Aula, Braşov, 2007

One of Cornel Ungureanu's experimental books is written on a mysterious Poetics of criticism and secret cultural code, presumably able to open doors through unseen fields of cultural history. *Istoria secretă a literaturii române / The Secret History of Romanian Literature* is a direct application that sets in practice the matrix-concept of his critical system, while at the same time remaining faithful to his logics of revision, revisitation or upgrade of some hypothesis, methods and previous results. A sort of upgrade which also works autoreferentially – since the book becomes a hypertext of some previous texts, in which the demonstration makes direct or indirect reference to texts written before. This kind of recontextualization has high implications on the text used for *Istoria secreta...* and on the book itself, which becomes the last version of the concept used for the first time. Actually, the analogy used between the geography of literature and a secret history was previewed some five years earlier, in the first volume of Cornel Ungureanu's *Geografia literară / The Literary Geography*.

In an article that has some interesting suggestions concerning Cornel Ungureanu's book, Bianca Burţa-Cernat notices that *Istoria secretă a literaturii române* works as a 'preface' to a 'propedeutic' for a larger project of the author. It is interesting that although it is

the last from the series, at the moment when the article was written (2008, March), the *Istoria secretă...* is perceived as an introduction. Furthermore, it is seen as a Propedeutics of some previous books which are upgraded.

Beyond the 'disclosures' intended to be made - most of them inciting - *Istoria secretă...* manages to bring into a central position writers which were marginalized or their works have never been officially recorded (like the avant-garde writer Ionathan X. Uranus, Vasile Lovinescu or Mircea Streinul). These are writers who can win an identity quest that attempts to rebuild a plausible literary history, starting from regaining the original contexts of these works. A regaining which turns, with every book written by Cornel Ungureanu, into a larger range of methods used but also into a larger range of cultural information.

The great achievement of this book lies in its ability to perceive the history of Romanian literature in a new way, attempting to fit into a Postmodernist concept. The same Bianca-Burţa Cernat says that with Manolescu's *Istoria critică...* / *The Critical History...* a concept of making literary history ends and this book is a new way to make literary history, a way that will eventually become the only one correct. Partially, the change of concepts is authentic: from that of a history built upon a canonical modernity, of an immutable system of value judgments, with official verdicts dictated by a Critic; however, Cornel Ungureanu suggests an alternative, if not the contrary: a history

of revealing cutout, a subjective approach. For an enclosure to the esthetic canon all that is necessary is the absolute opening to alternative and plurality provided by literary geography, the main concept in the new cultural history.

And the goal of this open project of Cornel Ungureanu may be seen in the very structure of his book. The demonstrations skim over long circular hikes, painting orbits around some productive hypotheses; finally there is an irradiative center of the entire work of the writer, a set of theses on a sort of philosophy of culture and identity, understood as a network of influences of multiple identities, and the book perpetually remakes this centre, as in a nostalgic trance, a reincarnation of original ideas in a utopian search of their best versions. The result is an unfinished series of explorations on a historical site seen as an ensemble which makes a matrix assimilable to a grand hypertext.

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