

THE THEME OF RECOGNITION IN T. S. ELIOT'S POEMS 'ANIMULA' AND 'MARINA'

Anca Popescu

Assist., PhD, University of Bucharest

Abstract: "Animula" and "Marina" develop poetical expressions of the soul's true identity and personal recognition in relationship to God and the world. The awareness of one's image and achievement or loss of likeness are fundamental elements of identity. The poems draw inspiration from classical literature (Emperor Hadrian's "Historia Augusta" and Shakespeare's play "Pericles, King of Tyre", respectively) which sets the question of identity in a certain universal axiological and ontological context.

Keywords: Logos, image, reversed perspective technique, "reversed" time, recognition

"Animula" and "Marina" belong to the series of the five Ariel Poems written after T. S. Eliot's conversion in 1927. These five poems of the series are centered upon the Incarnation of the Logos and its consequences at an individual and universal level.

"Animula", offers the reader an exquisite analysis of the human soul and its changes caused by time. Its source of inspiration is a certain poem, possibly written by Emperor Hadrian, according to the *Historia Augusta*, immediately before his death, in which he was addressing his soul: "*Animula, vagula, blandula*". It is a guest of the body, bare and colourless, bound to give up the old distractions.

Eliot is looking for the soul's true identity beyond the artificial layers of social habits and age that obscure its genuineness. With his refined style we are already used to, he presents the antithetic condition of man's progress into maturity. *Animula*, in Latin, or 'small soul', implies two meanings in Eliot's poem. On the one hand, it is the child's soul advancing into maturity, and on the other hand it refers to what it becomes in time. Unfortunately, the result of time formation does not make it great.

The first line challenges the reader with the wish to know what is the "simple soul" issued from God's hand and how should it be kept untarnished by its passage through this life. We can only notice what happens to it. Eliot's artistic description touches its most important moments. At the moment of its creation, the pure soul is thrown into this world, a flat world of contradiction and antithesis. The antonyms *light // dark, chilly // warm, dry // damp*, suggest all the other antonyms in the dictionary that belong to it, and all the verses we have read in Eliot's book of poetry. What happens to this innocent soul at the beginning of its contact with this world will remain constant in every occurrence, but with an increasing effect: moving *between*, again, as in "Ash-Wednesday." The basic vocabulary of childhood changes into metonymy.

Unfortunately, it is not a matter of preserved innocence, but of immature interminable clinging to superfluous things. The toys of a child are his world, but later, the world becomes others' toy. The verbs *rise* and *fall* suffer the same transformation, from basic to figurative meaning at once, evincing their polysemy. The child rejoices permanently in the mixture of the real with the imaginary, which Eliot calls confusion in the adult world. Inoffensive in childhood, as it is provisional, and stimulating imagination and creativity, this confusion becomes dangerous at maturity, a permanent manner of life producing empty forms of the mind and a false refuge into an unreal world. Advancing in knowledge implies a permanent contact with reality. As Eliot puts it (lines 17, 18), the individual takes refuge in the impersonal, erases any trace of genuine identity and hurts his fellow creature with this falsity. The repetition of the verbs 'perplexes' and 'offends' rewritten in the reverse order in the next line demonstrates the growing estrangement of the soul from someone alike and from himself. Thus, to create an illusion or an uncertainty for the others, in other words, to deceive, represents an existential offence and a diminishment of personhood. The modal verb 'may' has the meaning of possibility or probability in this context, not of permission. To control according to one's desires reduces the self-centered soul to a life ending with an implosion, like that in "The Hollow Men." This self-centeredness dries up the soul of her reason, and misshapes it to indecisiveness, infirmity, meanness, narrowness, weakness and stagnancy (lines 25 -26).

The poet does not deny the ego, he rejects egotism, which is the result of overwhelming passions, mainly that of the wish to detain the power over the Other, as well as control. His theory, a Christian *theoria*, or the Greek sense of contemplation, as the source and the result of a justified life, is that if man cleanses his soul and controls his passions, he will be capable of right action and will develop as a rational person. The individual needs to become a person, and the person is sacrificial.

The aesthetic text, or poetry, grows out of the beauty of the mind and the clarity of human comprehension. Any lie is an exit into the dry land of illusion. This rejection of reality maintains self-consciousness in a state of dullness. The human being does not want to leave aside personal pastimes and routine that help minimize the real problems of existence. Man moves in a circle of duplicity and deception. He endows tea parties or playing cards, or other social activities with an absolute satisfaction which none of them could produce as an equivalent to the capacity of the soul to grow in knowledge and illumination for which it was structurally conceived.

The soul was created for endless comprehension, here and eternally. Man, made in the image of God, was created eternal from the beginning. He was not created to die. His soul was meant to feed on the gifts of the Holy Spirit and his body on the spiritual gifts of his eternal soul. In this inseparable unity, soul and body were immortal. This was man's structural capacity and according to its initial existential definition he was made to look upwards and progress infinitely in God's communion. This was, in Eliot's terms, "the soul issued from the hand of God." After the break that occurred between man and God, initiated by man's distrust in the Word of his Creator, the soul did no longer feed on God, but turned toward his body. The body did not feed on the spiritual gifts of the soul any more, but turned towards the earth, and there he found death, because the illimitable, immortal soul cannot feed on the limited. This is the Fall, and in short, the general meaning of the poem, particularly in lines 20 to 30. And this is how passions appeared in man's being. Every passion is a parasite of a virtue, with a changed sense. Love is turned into debauchery, thirst for knowledge into greed for earthly things, the need to control oneself in the desire to control others, freedom and power of the will to tend and look up for the

spiritual things into the weakness of looking for any immediate satisfaction. All these consume and tire the soul and drain the mind beyond recognition. As Eliot puts it, man becomes a shadow and a specter of his own illusions and dimness, and his words, written or spoken, reflect his state. The papers left in disorder in a “dusty room” are reminiscent of a similar remark in an earlier poem, “The Waste Land,” where men were associated with “bits of paper” linked with the conjunction ‘and’. Actually, this conjunction implied a deeper sense of equivalence. And the “dusty room” in this poem may be interpreted as a metonymy of his body. The paradoxical state of man is that though he turns towards the exterior to look for satisfaction, he becomes even more self-centered. Structurally, he cannot find satisfaction in himself, nor can he be filled with the empty forms of his egocentricity. Everything that is not real can neither feed, nor fill him. Therefore, having lost his centre, he turns inescapably round his empty forms produced by an empty ego.

He is not autonomous, though free, therefore God came to find him. The Lord came down on earth to feed him with His own Body and Blood, and whoever understands and accepts His offered Gift will be filled and receive the real centre of his/her existence and thus will be recovered, or redeemed, as Eliot says. So, man cannot find the capacity to be saved within himself. He is forever wandering towards the exterior in this fallen state, because his structure has always been connected to God. And, as a wanderer in a scattered world of false concerns, he is afraid to turn to his Creator. He is still hiding himself like Adam in Paradise after his distrust in the living God, his Maker. Man chooses to go astray on and on up to the end of his temporal limit, and at the end of it, as the poet says, he lives for the first time after the last Communion, in the silence of God, after the noise he has made a whole life, unwilling to hear the Voice that called him constantly to reality, (line 31). The state of humanity is resumed in the last six lines of the poem as finding itself at the last moment, in the imminent danger of death, ready to be killed by its own passions, if it has not already fallen to pieces. Metonymical proper names transfer the general situation of mankind to particular individuals.

The poem describes not only the growth of a child into maturity in this world, but also the history of humanity from its first coming to existence, according to the Scriptural conception, up to the present time, the world itself. The Gift of the Communion offered and avoided (lines 27, 29), accepted by some in the end (line 31), reestablishes the former structural order in the human being, making possible the way back from death to life. In “The Journey of the Magi” the wise men traveled back, but not to their former homes. The one who tells his story says that they returned to “these Kingdoms,” not to *their* Kingdoms. There was no way back for those who followed the star and saw the Light of salvation. It was the way back to their right order of existence, God-centered, a death into life. Thus, this poem, “Animula”, as a final echo of “Ash-Wednesday,” ends with the invocation of the Holy Lady to intercede to God to save the man at the end of this life.

Some commentators (see G. Smith, *T.S. Eliot's Poetry and Plays: A Study in Sources and Meaning*) perceive “Animula” as one of the most pessimistic poems in the series. In the light of our approach above, we consider it not as pessimistic, but rather as one of the most realistic analyses of the human soul from an anthropological point of view.

Once again we find the theme of recognition, or the effect of the opposite, in the next poem in the Ariel series, “Marina.” The subject is inspired by Shakespeare’s play *Pericles, King of Tyre*. Pericles lost his daughter when she was a little child and found her again after a long time and many misfortunes (V. 1). Seneca’s Latin motto from *Hercules Furens*, “*What is this place, this country, this part of the world*” (1138), offers the background of Eliot’s poetic

development. However, the protagonist of the poem has not reached the land. He is still cut adrift on the sea in his timber ship and has no sight of solid land, only signs of approaching.

The details of the Shakespearean story enhance their significance though the poem could be read on their own, as well. There are two levels of significance, as we are already accustomed to while reading Eliot's poetry. We shall trace the first meaning founded on the moral of the play and its interesting particulars, and then try to discern the interwoven pattern of the second.

Several symbolic elements gathered together in the first three lines recall contexts and messages from other poems they carry up with them, which are now connected in one sentence, interrogative or exclamatory. It lacks the graphic question or exclamation mark at the end of it, yet not the tone. They may be both at once. The first line makes up a syntactic parallelism with the motto, which ends in a question mark; therefore we may tend to consider it a question in virtue of the reflection between the two sentences, one in Latin, the other in English, and of our inclination for harmony and rhythm. We tend to believe that the first sentence of the poem, much more developed than the motto, is a question mark. Nevertheless, the discreet absence of the punctuation mark suggests a second reading and another possibility of interpretation. In the case of a question, the poetic traveler is taken by surprise by the unknown landscape and the unlimited horizon of the seas and may feel lost in space. A sense of indefinite fear and uncertainty accompany the question, and most of all, a lack of answer. It may as well be the reason for the absence of the question mark. The traveler does not want to hear his lonely voice taken by the wind. On the other hand, the tone may be that of an exclamation, which implies the recognition of familiar images, and a second voyage. This voyage recalls another, which is not identical with this one. It only bears a resemblance. Its images recollect other mirroring images. They return with heavy significance. Thus Eliot's symbols come back, the sea and the shore from the end of "The Waste Land", this time in the plural, the grey rocks which were blue in the desert garden of "Ash-Wednesday," the water, lacking in the previously mentioned poem, and issuing like a stream among the rocks in the desert of the soul in the latter. This time it surrounds the voyager as the only reality, the way of the sailor. Its limitless horizon and depth point allusively to the death of the Phoenician sailor in "The Waste Land." Yet, the reason for this travel is different. The pine scent brings to mind the yew trees on the graves yet, we know, they bear the significance of perpetual life beyond death. Both the pine and the song of the wood-thrush signal life and the proximity of the land, or the promise of their memory.

There follows a long sentence made up of four sentences, like four apophthegms, grouped together in the middle of the page, each line separated by one word, 'death', written with capital letter. This forms a line made up of one word, four times the same. As a result, these so-called apophthegms are written at a certain distance from one another, and thus they are well emphasized, both graphically and semantically. They give expression to universal truths and they can be easily understood as such. Nevertheless, they have a source of inspiration in Shakespeare's play, and we shall read them one by one in light of that.

The first one (5), containing a strong metaphor of those who instigate to revenge and murder, throws a backward reflection to a polysemantic line in "The Waste Land." A certain Stetson recognized by the speaker of the poem in the multitude of dying people crossing London Bridge, was warned about the corpse he had buried in his garden, or in his conscience, that the Dog might dig it out. The corpse could be of someone whom Stetson killed physically or morally and his deed could not stay hidden for long, for either it would resurrect or was to be dug out by the Dog. That corpse could be Stetson's, as well, and actually, he was already dead when he was noticed. Any kind of crime, including murder that someone commits against his fellow

creature, means the perpetrator's and the instigator's own death. This is the first sentence in our poem. Pericles and his daughter, Marina, were in danger of being killed, both physically and morally. Pericles was forced to travel a long time on the seas in order to flee away from king Antioch's revenge. This one died in a fire sent upon him from heaven. The same happened with King Cleon and his wife Dionyza, who decided Marina's death. They were killed by fire by their own people. Shakespeare wrote a moral play founded on Christian principles which suits and sustains Eliot's conception of the poem. The second sentence envisages the death of those in search for earthly glory. The reason for which queen Dionyza wanted to kill Marina was an apparent loss of admiration on behalf of her people for her own daughter. Marina drew everybody's attention in the most natural way and her daughter lived in her shadow. Pride, envy, vain glory meant the queen's death before her actual death. The self-contentment of the third "maxim" characterizes all the negative characters in Shakespeare's play, after they have inflicted their revengeful thoughts upon Marina and her father. They were pleased with the outcome of their crimes and the only fear they had was only that of not being discovered. They had not the slightest awakening of conscience which could make them capable of regret and have the chance of forgiveness. Again, this self-contentment means death before death. The fourth "maxim" hints to the incestuous relationship between king Antioch and his daughter, who was punished by the heavenly justice by fire. The sentence extends to all those who let themselves driven by animal passions.

All these four apophthegms are sentences, both in the archaic sense of the word, as sayings, poetical axioms, and in that of judgment or condemnation to death. The real crisis of the human being, a self-condemnation to death by avenge or carnal passions, devoid the human being of its life substance and reduce it to an empty shell. It is consumed by an inner fire, yet not the purifying one, which illumines and saves. It is the fire that endlessly burns inside the mortal body and the immortal soul in the hell of passions. These are the main consuming passions that mortals "suffer," as Eliot says, considering them as a sickness of soul and body and a death while still alive. This "suffering" is also met in Dante's *Inferno*, in Augustine's *Confessions* and many of the writings of the Holy Fathers of the Church. Eliot's spiritual conception as a newly convert is not yet new in his poems. He had always been aware of the devastating effects of spiritual illness and of the draught it causes inside oneself, and outside, against the other. "Gerontion" and "The Waste Land" are the most significant among them in this respect. Unsubstantial human beings, like papers blown by the wind in "The Waste Land," inconsistent, consumed by sin, wrath, revenge or debauchery, these four (or eight) lines of the poem allusive of Shakespeare's characters present man's fallen nature, a man who does not want to rise again. His sentences are rather warnings, and all the rest of the grammatical sentence contains an analysis of death's consequences suffered by people still slogging through existence until the final moment of their becoming dust or cinders of their own fire. "Unsubstantial" means "unreal", another of Eliot's favourite words for death. The mechanism of death manifests as a decomposition of human integrity. It has no substance of its own. While life is substantial, the absence of it leaves behind bare forms of death. "Illusions" is another name for them, often used or suggested by Eliot. Unsubstantial death creeps in man's bones by his deeds, and though unsubstantial, it is devastating all the more. It is important for the understanding of Eliot's conception of death and life to make a few remarks on such matters. Divine substance is a characteristic of God, different from the human substance, or that of all creation. As God is One according to His eternal divine substance, and three in Hypostases, or Persons, so man was made of human, created substance, different from God's, in two human creatures. And these humans shared one essence or nature or

substance, which was not divided as it is now. As God is One, so man was one. As the biblical text tells us, God made *the man*, a man and a woman (not androgynous). Division in man's nature was the consequence of death after the Fall. It is hard to understand and impossible to imagine what was this unity of substance like. In the same way it is hard to comprehend by our limited reason today the paradox of One God in three Persons. It belongs to the super-reason of God and was revealed by the Incarnation of the Logos in as much as we can receive it. I say receive, not understand. This deep mystery can only be revealed and experienced. The mystery of eternal life, for us mortals today, can only be revealed and experienced.

Therefore, the diminishing in substance, which man experience by death, means actually a diminishment of life. Death is as foreign to life as it was for the nature of man before the Fall. The first man did not understand death while he lived in Paradise. He had only to trust God when He told him not to eat from the fruit of the mixture of good and evil, the fruit of confusion, for he would die. Yet, the man, full of the eternal energies of life, did not understand death by his own mind. He had to obey. Now, we have the experience of death every day, we can see it in others and in ourselves. We witness how "naturally" biological life dissolves. This dissolution of life and of its substance means death. We can now have the experience of eternal life by grace and trust in God, Who gives us His own Body and Blood to feed and save our dying selves. This is the word in Eliot's poem, too: dissolution. The dying man experiences it and becomes unsubstantial. The poet refers mostly to those four categories of people mentioned above, who refuse truth and life and relationship to the other and choose their own passions up to the end in total darkness of the spirit. They are reduced to utmost insubstantiality by the wind, or the metaphoric breath of life of the symbolic pine, or by the song of the wood-thrush in the fog. These are signs of life which cannot be seen, but heard, smelt, felt. They may not be discerned in the mist of the mind, yet the grace that makes them heard and felt in the wind dissolves instantly, those who made themselves shelters of death. This line may have two readings, and they are simultaneous, due to the absence of a comma after the noun 'fog' (15). The grace dissolves the fog, too.

First, this dissolution alters their face. The fog is here thicker, there diminished; it spreads away and may come again, as the blurred thoughts that come and go. The song of the bird, unmistakable, clear, unfading, the conquering sound of life penetrates through haze and confusion.

a. The "reversed perspective" technique

Face and arm, vision and action, contemplation and achievement, are characterized by opposing degrees of comparison, not just the positive adjective. They suggest the continuous change of obscurity into clarity, along with the apparition and dissolution of the fog that lets images be seen worse or better. We can notice that the degrees are increasing in both successive lines, from inferiority to superiority (17, 18). As a metaphor, the mist of the mind obscures the sight of the eyes and its dissipation illumines it. Thus, in our eyes, the image of a person may be dimmer or clearer (*ibid.*) The synecdoche appears frequently in these lines and the subsequent, followed by metaphor.

The face is the most important part of the body in painting, mostly in iconography. Poetry refers to it as to a human presence; it makes the difference between man and other symbolic or metaphoric objects. A face represents individuality, a character. In this poetry it comes out of the mist. We can easily recognize the face, though barely mentioned here: it is Marina, the Shakespearean character that gives the title of the poem. The 'aphorisms' were about people mentioned with the pronoun 'those', marking a spiritual distance. Their faces could not be seen

through the fog of their passions, and actually they were dead. A face belongs to someone alive. “Those” were unrecognizable, lost in the mass, at an immeasurable spiritual distance either from the speaker and from God, and also from themselves. The face comes closer and clearer. It is a spiritual approach, too. In Byzantine iconography icon painters use a special technique called the reverse perspective. Unlike any other picture which respects the rule of representing objects in the distance smaller than those in the foreground, a Byzantine icon is painted the other way round. The perspective lines run towards us, they meet in front of the viewer. Perspective is here, not in the distance.

Eliot may or may not have been interested in Byzantine iconography, or in its rules of painting, yet he does the same in poetry. It is possible that he found this technique by intuition, due to his Christian thinking, out of which this painting method issued. The perspective comes close to the reader, in space and time, in front of our eyes. He discovered and used, among his inventions of modernist poetry, a Christian spiritual rule, the conception set at the basis of Byzantine iconography, that of the *reversed perspective*. The painted figures come towards us and tend to get out of the frame of the icon. The image encounters the viewer here, in our space and time, not there, not then. Here and now are Eliot’s meeting points, too. The past and the future are solved in the real present. The *reversed perspective* is the Christian perspective. All the cultural hints of the past are also brought together, reshaped and remoulded, re-deemed in the present modernist artistic creation; all the symbols which he used in his previous poems are met again in the new one. They are perpetual.

A face means recognition. The face receives a name and the poet leaves his readers to name it. We, too, “recognize” it. The lines of the character, dim at first, become clearer and closer to us, surrounded by all the metaphors and suggestions. Marina comes back alive into this new modernist poem, with a very important role. This time she plays not only the role of a positive exemplary character, as in Shakespeare’s play. She is here a symbolic image (Gr. *ikon*), the face of life, the expression of a presence which represents the human being in its fullness, and therefore recognizable as a human being. In icon painting, the representation of a full face meant that the person depicted was fully accomplished in relationship to God and had nothing inside to hide from the face of God or of the viewer. This is the restored person. They usually look right into the eyes of the viewer. In the Renaissance style of the West, this technique does not exist. It uses the natural perspective. Therefore, the reversed perspective brings the restored man to full view, full face, right in front of the viewer or the reader’s eyes, in our case. This is the metonymy of the face in Eliot’s poetry.¹

b. The reversed time

The reversed perspective may also be applied in Eliot’s conception of time, that is, the redeeming time, which saves the past. We may call it the *reversed time*, which, in Eliot’s Christian conception, undoes the wrong and recovers the lost past.

Right deeds restore the power of the arm (line 18). They issue from a redeemed mind. This change consists in a restored relationship with God in which man receives life again and the power to act rightly. This means the pulse in Eliot’s poem, the *energya*, the power of life lent to man’s arm. God gives man His uncreated energies which flow throughout man’s relationship with God like a river of eternal life or like the Lord’s Blood in our veins. This is why the poet asks what this pulse in man’s arm is, which becomes stronger and stronger. It is not natural to man; it does not lie in his power, or in the natural diminishing force of his arm. It is lent or given.

¹ Of course, Eliot does not tell us if he introduces a face frontally or in profile. It is our psychological experience of the noun ‘face’ that is represented mentally in its complete form. Metonymy is based on it

And *this face*, too, was given to man. According to the history of the poem, we have identified “this face” with Marina’s. Yet, we have seen that Marina represents here more than a play character. She is the symbol of a regained person, much looked for and found; a daughter restored to her father. It could be also *my face*. Eliot’s first question in the poem is about *this face*. The first, cultural answer, Marina’s, is doubled by the second one. The paradigm of a father looking for his daughter and finding her after many hardships and much sacrifice is the same with the Christian paradigmatic reality of the Father looking for His sons and daughters and finding them after much sacrifice. Therefore, it is *my face*, as well, recognized by the heavenly Father and recovered. It is this Paradigm that brought forth Marina and her king-father’s, not the other way round. This is the reason for which Eliot’s allusive “secondary” background is so powerful. It comes forth by the *reversed perspective* technique laid in the structure of this poem.

This face is given by the heavenly father. The man is created in the image of God, as we have already seen in the Genesis, and on the fundamental gift of this reflection the Lord recognizes His face (*ikon*) in the man he created. But the man is called to attain God’s likeness, by free will and the grace of God which sustains his arm and clears his face. Therefore, the Last Judgment consists in God’s recognition of His reflection in man, His charity, mainly. This is the meaning of His words addressed to those who did not help their fellows in need: “I do not know you”, which means: I do not recognize myself in you. God’s sons and daughters resemble Him and He is looking for them, and rejoices at their “finding”. Thus, this poem, Marina, like Shakespeare’s play, is a parable of a good daughter who kept her virtue unaltered, in spite of all misfortunes and found her father at last and her father found her. Therefore, *this face* is also God’s image, less clear in man at first, and clearer the more one attains His likeness. The pulse of eternal life in man’s arm and God’s likeness (the likeness of His image) are at once “more distant than stars” (line 19), for He is beyond the created *cosmos*, and “nearer than the eye”, for He descended into the world and took our flesh, while we bear His image. Like a father who knows his children He knows us. The joy of their recognition and coming together again signifies God and man’s joy of restoring their unity. It is God that starts the journey towards the man on the seas of our world to find us. The next line expresses this joy and mystery in whispers and laughter, the descent of our Lord in our mortal condition “between leaves”, in our hurried course towards the sleep of death. Nevertheless, here He arrived to meet us. The perfect rhyme, *feet, meet, heat*, and the imperfect rhyme *sleep*, suggest the harmony and the lasting character of a relationship, while the sleep, an improper and temporal interruption of it. Eliot’s and Shakespeare’s symbolic sleep is that of which Christ awakened the humanity. In one of the most beautiful Christian chants, we address to Christ saying that He slept a little while and gave life to the dead, and raised again those who had slept for ages. He raised them from “under” sleep, as Eliot writes, where the waters of life descended and met. The human body cracked with heat and frost, that is, with the sequence of seasons and the passing of time, is referred to under the metaphoric image of a sailing vessel. The man confesses that he made it weak, rotten and leaking. Then, once again, Eliot turns to ‘form’, ‘face’ and ‘life’, all three preceded by the adjective ‘this’, in order to direct our attention to a relevant face, life and form, the meaningful and complete ones. Though we have grown accustomed to the death creeping progressively in our bones, this is not our life or our true destination. The unnatural became falsely natural. The restoration means regaining our true, incorruptible nature, therefore, what is called “my” life is not my *true* life. The speaker wishes to resign it for “this” life, the definite, clear life, distinguishable through the fog over the seas. He equally wishes to change “his” face for ‘this’ face, the clear, true, undisguised, complete one, the *ikon*, the image of God inside him. And the

speech that corresponds to the restored life and his true face will be renewed as well, from the well of the unspoken one. We already identified it. The unspoken speech belongs to the unspoken Word, the Logos incarnate whose speech is still unheard and unspoken. It reminds us of the silence of Christ before Pilate. In recognition, one need not speak. The identity is clear, one's identity or another's, the truth is evident. The Logos remains hidden because it is "not looked for," as Eliot says somewhere else.

Thus, the speaker of the poem would 'resign' his life for 'this' 'awakened' one, his speech for the sight that needs no words, for the eyes that can see, for the hope in the Resurrection which Eliot never "speaks" about, but leads to it constantly; for the "new ships," the restored bodies, the resurrected, incorruptible body of all people.

The moment of recognition represents the moment of the illumination of the eyes that can see clearly. This is the fundament of human relationship, intermediated by the image of God present and common in all of us. The subject of recognition presupposes that of relationship. The last three lines of the poem resume the first one at the beginning, with a slight change and, actually, they resume and echo the motto. We would change the metonymic nouns in lines 1 and 33-34 into their symbolic synonyms to make their significance explicit: What waters, and lands, and islands one can see coming towards our bodies-vessels made of timber?

We can see now that the waters may be those that meet, the ways of the sailor, the waters of the restored life, of restored relationships, of a regained condition of unfailing faith. The land and the islands in the middle of the waters, in the middle of the ways of life, represent the stability of granite rocks for each one, and, as we know, the Rock is Christ. So, He comes towards our timber boat. Now, we recognize the *ways*, the *land* and the *sound* of the Voice of the Bird singing in the first line of the poem as a call through the fog over the dangerous seas of the world. And while recognizing the spiritual landscape of our restored life, we can recognize the sound of the voice of our Father calling our soul "My daughter".

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Eliot. T., S., *The Complete Poems and Plays*, Faber and Faber, London, 1999
Eliot, T. S. *The Sacred Wood, Essays on Poetry and Criticism*, London, 1920
Berkeley, George, *Philosophical Works*, Cambridge University Press, 2009
D'Aquino, Toma, *Summa theologica*, Coyote Canyon Press, 2010
Derrida, Jaques, *Writing and Difference*, Routledge, London, 2001
Heidegger, Martin, *Originea operei de artă*, Humanitas, București, 1995
Ouspensky, L.; Lossky, V., *The Meaning of Icons*, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, New York, 1999
Wittgenstein, Ludvig, *Cercetări filozofice*, Humanitas, București, 2004