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Editorial

The third volume of *Swedish Journal of Romanian Studies* encompasses a wide range of subjects related to Romanian literature, theatre, film, translation studies, and culture. Academics from famed universities situated in Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Bulgaria, and Romania, treat a variety of issues in English, Romanian, French and Spanish. In consequence, the collection of papers provided by this volume includes fourteen articles, a translation and two book reviews.

The *Literature* section is delved into by authors associated with The University of Bucharest, The "A. Philippide" Institute of Romanian Philology, Iași, "St. Kliment Ohridski" University of Sofia, "1 Decembrie 1918" University of Alba Iulia and Lund University. In the present edition of the journal, there are introduced six articles meant to advance astute perceptions about cultural and linguistic values of particular literary works. Monica Manolachi approaches the concept of revolution in the prose of Romanian women writers, explored either as a change of direction (a moment in time) or as a cyclical process (a flowing gyre). Maricica Munteanu captures the conversation of the cenacle "Viața românească" from various angles. At first, as a phenomenon of loss, focusing on the voice of the writers and oral speech as signs of extreme fragility, further on, as the content of the "profitable" conversation (Glinoer, Laisney), and in the end, as the detachment from writing centring on the functions of laughter inside the literary community. The paper by Dinu Moscal examines the epithets "pale" / "pallid" in Eminescu's lyrics by interpreting their metaphorical meaning, which belongs to the extra-existential world, differing from any concept of overcoming the antagonism being–non-being, highly represented in Eminescu's poetry. The subject of Balkanism in Romanian contemporary poetry is investigated by Carmen Darabus. The highlighted features show a full sequence of themes and aesthetic formulae, from tragic to comic, often switching rapidly from one edge to the other, taking into account the old Thracian solemn part, then the proud Byzantium and its absorption in Constantinople – all rolling in a series of formal expressions reflected in themes and vocabulary. The article by Gabriela Chiciudean enters into the study of the novel "The Deadline" by Horia Liman. The history of an authentic world is depicted as governed by unwritten laws belonging to the morality of the common man, especially to the honour code, where the knapsack and the knife are held in high esteem; the atmosphere of the novel, its characters and their features, the difficult life and the unwritten laws are gradually unveiled through significant events. Eventually, this section is enclosed by Felix Nicolau's paper on the impending need of an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary super-arch-canon. This necessity is due

to problematic canonizations which are prevalent in the former communist countries wherein arts and culture in general may still function as propaganda weaponry at the hands of the sponsoring state.

The *Theatre* section serves as the background for advancing descriptive and analytical studies covering theatrical composition. In this regard, Nicoleta Popa Blanariu, an academic at "Vasile Alecsandri" University, Bacau, presents a paper dealing with a view on the way in which Matéi Visniec draws attention to how some of A. P. Chekhov's plays also manifest a self-referential and metadramatic/ metadramaturgical component of implicit theatrical po(i)etics, beyond their psychological realism and questionable symbolism. Matéi Visniec exploits this in his own creation in close connection with the postmodern preference for intertextual and self-referential writing.

In *Film studies,* Carmen Dominte, from National University of Music Bucharest, aims to take into discussion the manner in which light and shadow may be employed as instruments of creating literary as well as visual metaphors. At the same time, it analyses the transposition of a metaphor generated by light and shadow from literature to cinematography and theatre, as in Liviu Rebreanu's "The Forest of the Hanged".

Translation studies is a segment that aims to present the in-depth examinations of three academics from The University of Groningen, "1 Decembrie 1918" University of Alba Iulia, and Leipzig University, respectively. Raluca Andreia Tanasescu opens the section with an article that submits to a close scrutiny the corpus of contemporary American and Canadian poetry translated into Romanian in stand-alone volumes, between 1990 and 2017. The paper argues that translators had a deciding impact on the selection of authors, as well as on the configuration of the overall translation network; translators were paramount in establishing positive relationships with U.S. and Canadian poetic approaches and in energizing the local literary scene. Further on, Andra Iulia Ursa provides an investigation on how Mircea Ivănescu's Romanian translation deals with collocations, especially with those that typically represent Joyce's authorial style, conceptualized in the ninth chapter of "Ulysses". The article is committed to a further exposition of the similarities and distinctions between the source language text and the target language translation. Finally, Diana V. Burlacu provides a glimpse on a series of short Romanian translations based on the German version of Adam Fletcher's book entitled "How to be German in 50 new steps/ Wie man Deutscher wird. In 50 neuen Schritten". Such translations strive to retain all the meanings, be they literal or expressive, or evoked, or those generated by idioms, fixed set-phrases and non-equivalences in the original text, as much as possible freed from any traces of

"translationese" and suitable for any authentic contemporary sample of Romanian language.

Marina Cristiana Rotaru, affiliated with The Technical University of Civil Engineering Bucharest, focuses on an investigation devoted to *Cultural studies*. From a socio-semiotic perspective, it is presented the manner in which the political regimes installed after the forced abdication of King Mihai I (on 30 December 1947) used the Throne Hall in the former royal palace in Bucharest to meet their own needs, and how this relates to Jean Baudrillard's concept of consumerism, characterized by the rule of sign value as a status symbol. In addition, Jan Blommaert's and Barbara Johnstone's taxonomies advance the argument that the Throne Hall is not a mere space, but a place, its function having been perverted by both ideological manipulation and aggressive consumerism. Sorin Ciutacu, from West University of Timisoara, proposes an intellectual history study which evaluates the family resemblances of *auctoritas* of three polymaths: Francis Bacon, Jan Baptist Van Helmont and Demetrius Cantemir along the cultural corridors of knowledge, arguing that Demetrius Cantemir was an able disseminator of philosophy in South Eastern Europe and a creative synthetic spirit bridging the Divan ideas of Western and Eastern minds caught up in the busy exchange of ideas of the Republic of Letters. The final paper of this section, conceptualized by Gorun Manolescu from The Research Institute for Artificial Intelligence "Mihai Drăgănescu", concentrates on some of the problems started by Husserl's phenomenology. Romanian Academy reveals how the Romanian scholar Mihai Drăgănescu proposed an ontological model with strong phenomenological character in which information and material principles are at the same level, aiming to integrate Husserl's Phenomenology, with inherent problems identified.

In the *Translations* section, Catalin Pavel, representing Ovidius University of Constanța aims to offer Anglophone researchers a selection of translated quotes from Mihai Eminescu's non-literary oeuvre, relevant to the philosophy of history of the most complex Romanian author of the nineteenth century. It should thus become possible to reconsider Eminescu's position within the concert of European philosophers of history, aiding scholars in establishing more precisely what Eminescu's views on history owe to Schopenhauer's metaphysics and what to the proper philosophy of history he could find in Hegel, also helping to bring to the fore the complex interplay between Hegelian theodicy and Kantian teleology in Eminescu's historical thought.

The *Book reviews* section provides two retrospective examinations. Mona Arhire, from Transilvania University of Brasov, sheds light on a recently published book authored by Cătălina Iliescu Gheorghiu, a study that falls under the scope of Descriptive Translation Studies implying the

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polysystemic model posited by Lambert and Van Gorp for the comparative analysis of drama; the corpus under scrutiny is made up of fragments extracted from the play *A treia țeapă* (The Third Stake) by Marin Sorescu and the corresponding utterances from two of its translations into English. In turn, Ioana Alexandrescu, an academic at The Autonomous University of Barcelona examines the Spanish version of the novel *The Summer when my Mother had Green Eyes* by Moldovan writer Tatiana Țîbuleac, which was published in 2019 by Madrid-based publishing house Impedimenta and has reached its fifth edition in less than a year. It tells about the design of this novel, which alternates short chapters and micro chapters consisting of a sole phrase, as well as sarcastic and poetic tonalities, and reconstructs the narrator's relationship with his dying mother during the last summer they spend together in a French village close to the ocean.

The articles assembled in this collection represent an innovative coverage of Romanian studies and are dedicated to facilitating the exchange of knowledge between theoreticians and practitioners within the field. *Swedish Journal of Romanian Studies* is published in collaboration with "1 Decembrie 1918" University of Alba Iulia, Romania and Romanian Language Institute, Bucharest, and welcomes contributions from scholars all over the world.

Introduction for contributors to
Swedish Journal of Romanian Studies

Focus and Scope

Swedish Journal of Romanian Studies (Centre for Languages and Literature, Lund University, Sweden / Centre for the Research of the Imaginary "Speculum", "1 Decembrie 1918" University, Alba Iulia, Romania / Romanian Language Institute, Bucharest) publishes studies about Romanian language, literature, theatre and film, cultural studies, translation studies, as well as reviews of works within these fields. It welcomes articles that focus on case studies, as well as methodological and/or theoretical issues.

Swedish Journal of Romanian Studies is a new forum for scholars of Romanian language, literature and film that sets and requires international high quality standards. The journal accepts papers written in Romanian or English, as well as in French, Italian, and Spanish.

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SJRS has a two stage reviewing process. In the first stage, the articles and studies submitted for publication need to pass the scrutiny of the members of the editorial committee. The studies accepted in this stage are then undergoing a double blind review procedure. The editorial committee removes all information concerning the author and invites external scholars (whose comments are paramount for the decision of accepting for publication or not) to act as anonymous reviewers of the material. Neither the identity of the author, nor that of the reviewer is disclosed. The comments and recommendations of the anonymous reviewers are transmitted to the authors.

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Literature

DECEMBER 1989 AND THE CONCEPT OF REVOLUTION IN THE PROSE OF ROMANIAN WOMEN WRITERS

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Abstract: *Whenever the topic of revolution is at stake nowadays, Romanian people from different walks of life usually think of December 1989. The tragic events that led to the regime change have left a permanent mark on many people's lives. Many contemporary writers and critics have written about it, but there is still a long way until the individual and the cultural trauma is healed. Since little has been published in English about the literary work of contemporary Romanian women writers, this paper aims to culturally translate the subject and to provide insights into their perspectives. From a theoretical point of view, it explores the perceptions of the concept of revolution seen either as a change of direction (a moment in time) or as a cyclical process (a flowing gyre). The selected corpus includes: a poetic novel, The Fox Was Ever the Hunter by Herta Müller; a diary, The Witnessing Wall by Florenţa Albu; a novel made of individual stories, One Sky Above Them by Ruxandra Cesereanu; a family chronicle, The Immigrant from Biggin Hill by Lăcrămioara Stoenescu; and a first-person retrospective novel, Fontana di Trevi by Gabriela Adameşteanu. Each of them tackles the idea of revolution in a distinct manner, which suggests the existence of a literary corpus by women writers that resonates in various ways with the original conflict and contributes significantly to its cultural memory.*
Keywords: contemporary Romanian prose; 1989 Revolution; women's writing; conceptual history; cultural memory;

When Romanian critics try to explain why Romanian writers have avoided the theme of the 1989 Revolution, they often refer to the rapport between ethical and aesthetic motivations: in front of collective death, intellectuals remain silent. Writers are overcome by history, detest old-style politics and ideology, cannot keep up with the rhythm of socio-political change, they fear the subject might lead to low quality literature and fiction may not be the best approach. To express such a major shift adequately, a new language must be invented. How to be authentic when the audio-visual

means of communication have already produced an overwhelming mix of reality and fiction? Fortunately, there have been exceptions: writers who may have not radically rethought the literary canon, but who have stuck to writing anyway and constantly searched for a suitable language based on both traditional and modern sources.

Many historians hesitate to define the 1989 events as revolution. The best approach is to be critical, they say. For example, in *Key Concepts of Romanian History*, editors Victor Neumann and Armin Heinen (2013) suggest that out of over five hundred history books, only a few can be called true stories. They warn these books deal more with retrospective anti-communist debates, with people's loyalty to the regime, with external factors that favoured totalitarianism, but they do not question the persistence of conservative and anti-modernist ideologies, they do not really explain the social, economic and political causes of people's discontent, the post-1989 lack of civic spirit, people's dependence on power structures and the general absence of individual ideals, the reasons why people cooperated with totalitarian regimes or the disconnection between the elites and the masses. In their view, very few of these studies tried to approach key-concepts anew, very few reinterpreted the concept of revolution, for example. Neumann and Heinen draw on the perspective of Reinhart Koselleck (2002) on the concept of revolution, to highlight that the twentieth-century theory of history developed tools which can better explain modern historiography. They demonstrate the Romanian concept of revolution has had its own avatars and mere conceptual approximations are not enough to explain Romanian historiography. They suggest there should be a revolution within the very theory, methodology and concepts used by historians. More precisely, their proposal is to depart from former Romantic views and endorse contemporary, more pragmatic Western methodological norms.

According to Koselleck (2002), the concept of revolution in its modern sense has acquired several meanings over the past five centuries. Originally used by astronomers such as Nicolaus Copernicus to describe orbital or axial motion, the concept was adopted as a metaphor to describe socio-political changes and phenomena, especially beginning with 1789, ever since it has become vulnerable to ideologies. At first, it meant a short turbulent event that could lead to the overthrow of one form of government and its replacement with another, a meaning which echoes its premodern manifestations. Later, it was viewed as a long-term structural change, understood either as a reform or as an evolution. Koselleck considers it a metahistorical concept which combines both singularity and echo, both synchrony and diachrony, both cognition and performativity, both progress and return. Its implicit theoretical premises are duration, reiteration, evolution and innovation, but their proportions differ from one context to another.

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In *December 1989: the Deconstruction of a Revolution*, Ruxandra Cesereanu (2004) proposes a synthesis of theories: the theory of pure revolution, the theory of conspiration, and a hybrid theory that conflates the ideas of revolution and coup d'état. In the introduction, we find an inventory of the adjectives attached to it in the publications of the time:

> "usurped, hijacked, aborted, stolen, robbed, confiscated, manipulated, recycled, failed, betrayed, desecrated, cheated, made-up, sanitized, polluted, shadowed, radio-controlled, staged, tainted, shot down in flames, charged, murdered, assassinated, fired, arranged, seized, abandoned, unfinished, incomplete, altered, dubious, ambiguous, tangled etc." (Cesereanu, 2004: 7).

This list of epithets (which in Romanian have feminine desinences) strikingly proves the revolution has been compared with nouns such as: a state, an object, a feminine subject, an idea, a space, a substance or an activity (mainly a show). This obvious reification of a moment in history, correlated with a long record of negative meanings, functions as a symptom of collective trauma. To place the concept of revolution in perspective, Cesereanu's book provides a genealogy of the working class revolts in the 1970s and the 1980s and a review of the historiography that deals with the trial and the execution of the presidential couple, the issue of the so-called terrorists, and the role of the army in the events.

A decade later, however, considerations such as that "literature in times of revolution almost never translates in a literary revolution" (Manolescu, 2015: 3) echo French historian Albert Thibaudet, whose point of view may be true when the idea of revolution is seen as a violent political change. Who can write literature in times of bloodshed? Nonetheless, if conceived as a gradual structural change, a revolution could be accompanied by valuable literature.

In *Literature and Revolution: the December 1989 Revolution in the Romanian Novel*, writer and journalist Iulian Cătălui (2016) proposes an in-depth survey on the relationship between novels and revolution. Without referring to Kosselleck, he offers a genealogy of the concept of revolution from Platon to Romanian French philosopher Emil Cioran and American sociologist and political scientist Theda Skocpol. Relying on multiple sources, he proposes a larger understanding of the concept, which is close to Kosselleck's perspective:

> „Any revolution, more or less violent, bloody or radical, must or should represent first a revolution understood as hope and spiritual, cultural, philosophical, intellectual, religious and moral evolution, and then as a political, social and economic one. […] The *revolution-*

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> *metamorphosis* […] presupposes profound qualitative changes that involve a country, a nation, a system or a political regime, starting from the very original, astronomic meaning of the term, 'change of direction'" (Cătălui, 2016: 15).

Although a formula such as "revolution as soul's elevation" (17) may sound compelling, when it comes to its relationship with literature, Cătălui's brief analysis of the post-1989 Romanian novel dwells on previous analyses to maintain the decade of the 1990s was not favourable to quality literature. Moreover, he explains why publishing houses and the public were mainly interested in formerly censored works, memoirs, diaries, books of history and interviews that describe life in the communist prisons and in deportation camps. His conclusion that the 1989 events are a "generous subject" raises serious ethical questions and partially undermines the purpose of the study itself, because instead of showing how literature deals with the collective trauma that paralyzed the society, the critic is more preoccupied to defend the thesis that what happened was a revolution, "'a rite of passage' to an open, free and democratic society" (439). Although he agrees with other critics that writers may not have found the best language yet and that there may be a gap between what authors write and what readers need, he eventually hopes to see better works. By and large, however, women's writing does not play a significant role, even though the critic mentions in passing a number of contemporary women novelists, whereas women diarists or memorialists are simply left out.

This disproportional gender ratio appears in other works. For example, *1989 Revolution Street* is a commemorative collection of essays coordinated by writers Dan Lungu and Lucian Dan Teodorovici (2009). Out of twenty contributors, only four are women: poet Magda Cârneci, actress Maia Morgenstern, journalist Cristina Popescu and French translator Laure Hinckel. The problem is not women writers have nothing to say, but that the idea of proportional contribution from a gender point of view is neither an aim nor a criterion.

In her article entitled "The Image of Revolution in Romanian literature", critic Sanda Cordoș (2019) surveys some of the works in which significant writers from Dimitrie Cantemir and Ioan Budai Deleanu to contemporary novelists tackle the subject. She demonstrates the existence of a literary tradition in which the image of the revolution as a socio-political reality appears like a red thread. The literary milestones of this tradition are related to three main historical sources: the national revolution from 1848, the social revolution that bridges the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, and the popular revolution of the 1989. On the one hand, the first and the last are considered as moments in time reflected in literature per se, as historical

turning points, with the difference that whereas the revolutionaries from 1848 played an active conspiring part, those from 1989 were rather manipulated by invisible hands. On the other hand, the long progression of the social revolution is presented as a source for a variety of approaches. The article begins with examples of class-conscious works by authors such as Nicolae Filimon and Dimitrie Bolintineanu. It then touches interwar literature that shows the increasing gap between the rich and the poor. It goes on with covering communist literature in which the representation of the revolutionary spirit used to be a duty, up to becoming a cliché. And it also offers glimpses into works that present the social revolution from alternative perspectives that question its ideals and the figures of its representatives. However, one drawback of this study is that it refers to works predominantly by male writers (more than 80%), which may suggest that, in general, the topic has not been actually relevant to Romanian women writers.

Taking into consideration such views, this article argues that contemporary Romanian women writers who have covered the subject in question to a certain extent have not been exceptions, but are part of a significant group of authors who care about both personal and collective memory. The authors and titles included in the study represent a series of possible narrative directions: *The Fox Was Ever the Hunter* (1992) by Herta Müller, a poetic chronicle of the last months of 1989; *The Witnessing Wall* (1994) by Florența Albu, a diary with a last section of first-hand impressions about December 1989; *One Sky Above Them* (2013) by Ruxandra Cesereanu, a novel based on extensive historical research; *The Immigrant from Biggin Hill* (2016) by Lăcrămioara Stoenescu, a novel in which the reference to the regime change plays a relevant role; and *Fontana di Trevi* (2018) by Gabriela Adameșteanu, a novel about many characters, some of whom took part in the events.

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The novel *The Fox Was Ever the Hunter* (1992) by Herta Müller, initially published in German and available in Romanian since 2009 and in English since 2016, tells the story of several young men and women caught in the totalitarian machinery over the last months of the Cold War, illustrating the 1989 socio-political change at the level of the common man. Although the city is not mentioned from the beginning, the account is set in Timișoara, a place where the Nobel Prize winner lived in her youth.

Adina, a schoolteacher, and Clara, an engineer in a wire factory, are friends. Adina's former lover, Paul, is a doctor and a musician involved in composing songs, including songs against the regime, whereas Clara's lover, Pavel, is a secret agent, a married man, who infiltrates and reports on the

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group. The two women fall out when Adina has enough reasons to suspect Pavel is the one who has been visiting her apartment and cutting off the limbs of a fox fur rug she keeps in her bedroom. It is a sign she is being tracked, because she is friends with the members of a music band that have composed and performed a song entitled "Face Without Face." Its lyrics are a far cry from the propaganda songs that praise the party, the leader and the nation: "Face without face/Forehead of sand/Voice without voice/Nothing is left except for time/Time without time/What can you change…" (Müller, 2016: e-book) When the secret agents hear it on the stage, they order the evacuation of the theater, since their job is to eliminate any form of culture that represents a threat to the establishment. Whereas men are taken to the secret police office to be interrogated, women are terrorized in their own apartments. Cutting off the fox's limbs, one at a time, when Adina is not at home shows the psychotic tactics employed by the representatives of the secret police to keep people under control.

The novel begins as a Kafkaesque puzzle of surreal events, apparently disconnected from each other, in which the human spirit is softened and absurd paranoia is projected on witnessing objects, fauna and flora. The author often uses sophisticated poetic techniques to paint various instances of everyday life in the late 1980s dictatorship in a provincial city, which used to be part of the former Austro-Hungary until 1918. Primary school children do volunteer work harvesting tomatoes, factory workers struggle to survive the failed national industrialization project, intellectuals attempt to find creative ways out of the corrupt and suffocating atmosphere. The second part of the novel sets in contrast these literary illustrations and the figure of the dictator, Nicolae Ceaușescu, in power from 1965 to 1989, whose propagandistic portrait spreads through each and every corner of private life.

The role of Müller's specific metaphoric language was described as "a shared weapon of oppression and resistance", "much more than a stylistic device", it was pointed out that her "poetic vision is an essential component of dissidence" and four types of metaphoric approach against the unjust force of totalitarianism were identified, "shifts and reversals, particulation, colouration and linkages" (Eddy, 2013: 88-89). These language devices were probably meant, firstly, to create a psychological individual survival kit against fear and, secondly, to raise consciousness on the effects of an aging political regime, ruled by an aging dictator, supported by an aging oppressive apparatus. All these struggles at textual level mirror an accumulated tension and a gradual increase in awareness regarding the rotting rapport between individuals and the state.

The metaphor of the fox functions as a literary instrument used to deconstruct particular layers of power structure. Known for its opportunistic hunting style, the fox is also a hunted animal in Müller's novel. Alive or

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dead, it represents now the oppressors, now the oppressed, now the powerful, now the powerless. When she was a child, Adina was taken to a man who sold fox furs. His physical description suggests his identification with the animal: "The man's hair and beard and hairs on his hands were as red as the fox. His cheeks too. Even back then, fox and hunter were one and the same." (Müller, 2016: e-book) However, nobody asks foxes if they want to be hunted, there are no historians to tell their point of view. As an owner of the fox fur, Adina shares the statute of a hunter too, whereas later she is hunted by the state secret police. Her friend Clara too is hunted by Pavel, they have a love affair, but she is also a hunter, because she accepts him, she becomes pregnant in the hope of benefiting from a better social status. The secret service officer Pavel hunts people who threaten the regime, but he is also a victim of it, especially when the regime is overthrown, and he decides to leave the country. The dictator himself practised hunting during his life, and he was hunted to death over the last days of his life. The name choice for the two most important male characters, Paul and Pavel, hints at the possibility of someone turning from a prey into a hunter and vice versa.

Although it is not mentioned straightforwardly, the last eight chapters refer to the 1989 Revolution started in Timișoara. The episodes include only hints about it: the opera house, the cathedral, the police and their dogs, the morgue, sealed coffins, soldiers etc. Adina seems rather detached, afraid, but able to picture the military actions taking place in the city, while she and Paul are hiding in the countryside: "And she imagines the dictator has seen the spreading city from high in the air, and that he's ordered the army to surround it. And that the soldiers are shoveling away, cutting off the spreading city, building a moat without a single bridge." (Müller, 2016: e-book)

Instead of focusing on the absolute full *grande histoire* and on frontline heroes, Müller preferred the antiheroes and their incomplete *petites histoires*, lived by most people. Instead of depicting the main events from the days of the revolution, her option was to expose a growing range of absurd situations and everyday incidents that caused the mass revolt which led to the removal of the regime, by employing the power of storytelling and innovative poetic energies based on surrealist literature and art.

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In 1970, poet and journalist Florența Albu started what would later be published as *The Witnessing Wall* (1994), after she had undergone a heart surgery. At the age of 36, she wrote the first lines of what is now one of the diaries that describe the everyday life over the last two decades of communism: dreams; writers and their works; the meaning of writing in

times of censorship; family relationships and friendships; the exploration of feelings; encounters with different people, including representatives of the secret police; urban versus rural life; letter extracts; criticism and self-criticism; references to TV and radio programmes; journeys in the country or abroad; the 1977 earthquake; the events of 1989-1990 etc. The tone is elegiac and sad, her attitude pessimistic, reserved or apocalyptic, sometimes enthusiastic, but rarely humorous, whereas the constant present tense keeps the flame of her consciousness alive. A solitary woman, she considers her diary a daily capriccio, an imaginary site where she can exercise personal freedom and aesthetic virtuosity.

Of particular interest are its last tens of pages, in which the general obsession with the end of the regime takes over her remarks. For example, in July 1989, she has a premonitory dream: Ceaușescu and his projection on the wall of a hall, both crumbling in front of the audience. Listeners are at first happy and then, all of a sudden, terrified by the resurrection of both real politician and his image, who continues his discourse, unaware of what has just happened. Later on, in November, she protests in her diary against the simplistic rhyming poems she reads in the literary magazines she is proofreading: they still praise the regime. She also makes notes about the political changes from other Eastern European countries and soliloquizes about the stale socio-political atmosphere, in which many people feel desperate and depressed. Food exists only in the groceries from the city centre and gas is provided mainly in the central areas where foreigners are accommodated. In rest, cold and hunger.

On December 20, she makes a relevant observation to what is about to come: "The insane is delivering a speech again. He has just returned from Tehran. He's ranting and raving. I turn off the radio." (Albu, 1994: 431) The moment when the ruling pair flies away in their private helicopter and the ensuing violent events determine her to start a new section in her diary:

"I am in front of the first clean white page – *Anno Domini 1989, December 21.*

After Timișoara, Bucharest and the rest of the country have risen and the First Year of another history has started. I begin to say *History* again, without the fury, the shame and the despair that have dominated me over the past years, without the sarcasm, the bitterness and, again, the shame that have been crushing me lately, when thinking of this bloody time we *have been given*.

In the morning of another day, towards the end of December, I think we lived the most terrible rebirth of our times: a few days that assuage our guilt, that wash away our cowardice and partial revolts.

We have lived *the revolution*, this 'crusade of the youth and the children', as it has been called; their flame has consumed me, I have

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burnt and resurrected through their sacrifice. I think I may die now: I have received the grace of their sacrifice." (435).

The descriptive vocabulary – "circle", "rebirth", "revolt", "revolution", "crusade" – indicates she perceives more than socio-political aspects. The universality of "circle" and "rebirth", the premodernity of "revolt" and the religious resonance of "crusade" suggest an emotional radiography of the moment, which expresses both materiality and immateriality, both reality and illusion, her attempt to go beyond everyday facts.

One critic has mentioned Albu's subsequent disenchantment, labelling her book as "a symptom of disillusion experienced first hand" and "a convincing example about the deceiving nature of words" (Goldiș 2016: 16). Indeed, she is upset with the violence and the chaos from the city centre. Even though she is in the street, she does not identify with the crowd. Instead, she notices how people have destroyed one of the pine-trees from the Revolution Square. Another horrifying aspect for her is the film of the mock trial and the execution of the two communist leaders on the Christmas day. As some of her entries clearly suggest, she was a religious person and could not have accepted the idea of staged murder.

One month later, she equates the revolution with a mere revolt, denouncing the false pathos that followed. Whereas in the years before 1989 she witnesses what she calls an empty time, afterwards she feels the end of history has arrived. She is content she has lived to see the end of three obsessive decades, but she believes the miracle has not defeated the evil and the throes will continue. At the age of 55 she is tired to continue the fight, but hopes the new generations will build a more respectable future, wash away the shame and, most important, not forget. In May, just before the first free general elections, she notes: "This history is a chronotope of quicksand: it swallows everything and one must always start all over again. God, let it be different from now on!" (Albu, 1994: 457) The Mineriad that follows after the unsuccessful elections is described in postcolonial terms: "The miners have invaded the city. They were called by Iliescu, to defend the government and 'the revolutionary achievements'. An army of Calibans, one dirtier than the other, some 'dressed-up' as miners, to be more authentic." (466) Since she lives close to the University Square, she provides first-hand impressions of the atmosphere from the city centre as she becomes aware of her estrangement reaching collective proportions: "No, such setting ourselves on ourselves has never happened before!" (467)

What brings her joy and peace of mind is a stroll with one of her exiled friends on the streets of Bucharest. A former rural doctor, her friend tells her about an Oltenian countryside woman, who once gave birth to a child after a day of work, was too tired to expel the placenta and soon fell asleep.

Consequently, the doctor had to take it out without the mother's help. Albu compares the revolution with a baby born by a peasant mother who is too tired and risks an infection or even death if her inert body is not attended to with great care.

In the course of 1990, she is concerned with how the heroes are commemorated. For instance, in the summer, she believes "to remember them today, to still say 'revolution' in this *calm chaos* – a blasphemy!", whereas in the winter, although she is disappointed that not many people come to commemorate the dead, she insists on the exceptional character of the brief but intense moment of freedom, "I don't think I will ever live a day of purification like 21 December 1989 again." (472)

In general, her diary presents revolution not only as the violent replacement of one political regime with another. Her enthusiasm is not that of the revolutionaries who died in the street or of those who agreed on the dictatorial couple's execution, but of someone who hopes in a better world, inhabited by people who do not destroy trees, who can travel abroad and enjoy freedom of speech. Twenty years of alienation make her compare the events with the 1977 earthquake. When she depicts the nocturnal atmosphere from the University Square, where one could hear the bullets and the church bells, she is rather detached. Moreover, the reference to the 1989 events constitute only about a tenth of her diary, which suggests the socio-political circumstances of the day were rather the background of an inner reality – her poetry and her writing in general – more important than anything else, as some of her entries imply. This is supported by the choice of the title: *The Witnessing Wall* is a metaphor of the book understood as a stone on which the writer carves a text and a metaphor of someone who intermediates between incompatible worlds.

<div align="center">*</div>

The novel *One Sky Above Them* (2013) by Ruxandra Cesereanu is a collection of portraits of both victims and oppressors, young and old, followers, rebels or outcasts of the communist regime, including a wide range of individual accounts occurred between 1945 and 1991 and based on documents, memoirs, interviews, history books, secret service files, oral history, newspapers etc. The days of December 1989 are devoted to representative figures that echo the author's historiographic research: the death of two young men, the execution of the presidential couple and the chief of the secret police's role in the events. Whereas the two young men have good chances to be considered martyrs in a conflict they did not want, the chief of the secret police and the presidential couple are monstrous caricatures.

On the one hand, the two young men fall victims of their own enthusiasm, unaware of the mortal dangers they are exposed to. Călin, a 19-

year-old student from Bucharest who participates in the events behind the barricade, has a dream one day: "He was climbing a ladder made of knives, he was simply climbing a ladder made of knives, when he was awoken from his whirlpool dream that morning with no snow, although winter had already arrived or it should have arrived." (Cesereanu, 2013: 170) The day in question is December 21, and he happens to be in the city centre, where people have gathered from all over the capital. Lost in thought, he witnesses how the world suddenly turns upside down: "Romania is a fictional country, Călin mused, when a sudden thump, followed by the stampede and the cries of the passers-by, shook him out of his lethargy." (173) The student hears the first news about the change from a female demonstrator: "The revolution has started, shouted a woman wearing crumpled clothes. It is then when Călin woke up, as if he had heard those words for the first time. Finally, he knew what to do in this world." (174) When the author mentions Călin joins the people who have built one of the barricades, she compares the coat of arms of the Romanian flag with a woman's belly: "The hacked and beaten belly of our country. Its womb torn to ribbons because of so many abortions." (174) When bullets reach Călin's body, the description of the tragic moment is three-fold. Firstly, the physical sensation of excruciating pain is compared with the bite of a piranha. Secondly, he is compared with a bullfighter in an arena, where the red of life and the black of death are meant to color the tense atmosphere and to evoke a premodern approach to conflict. Thirdly, he is associated with Saint George fighting against the dragon, trying to reach the sky, but eventually defeated because there is no rope or ladder leading upwards. All images represent confrontations between human values and animal instincts and the social element is equated with a single brutal and ruthless body. The story suggests social body, the same as any body, is made of members, organs, parts. Failing to care about and nurture any of them may lead to dysfunctions and collapse.

Iasmin, a 25-year-old friendly womanizer from Bucharest, who calls himself El Campeón, grew up in a poor working-class family, watching video-taped movies featuring actors such as Arnold Schwarzenegger and Tom Cruise, which makes him dream of "great battles, heroic scenes, war camaraderie and mysterious adventures" (190). Although scared by the death toll of the first days of the armed conflict, he takes to the streets and heads to the building of the state TV station, the only one at the time, to defend it against the so-called foreign terrorists. Inspired by historical heroes such as Alexander the Great or Napoleon or by movie characters such as El Zorro or D'Artagnan, he assumes his time has come to demonstrate his own courage: he prepares Molotov cocktails, but he does not know for whom. Surrounded by increasing rumours about supposed terrorists, he receives a gun to defend the entrance to the institution. Two days later, his shoulder is slightly

wounded, and he is transported to a hospital, where he begins to rant and babble under the effects of medicine. The social and political psychosis is so great and the confusion so widespread that one of the nurses believes he is a foreign terrorist and denounces him. A few days later, he suddenly dies of a heart attack, not before someone unknown has written on his chest: TERRORIST. In principle, the story of Iasmin illustrates how mass media can be a double-edged sword, especially when a closed society ruled by questionable propaganda for many decades lays itself open to a world in which mass media are free. Watching historical or adventure movies about superheroes fighting battles that they usually win may be one of the ways to learn about manhood and bravery, to boost your morale and self-esteem. In contrast, watching breaking news about strong men in flesh and blood who fight real battles and eventually joining those battles in your city is a way to learn about and sometimes prepare yourself to make the supreme sacrifice.

On the other hand, Cesereanu spares no effort in satirizing the political leaders in brief slashing chapters. Those about the rise and fall of Coana Leana (the popular nickname of Elena Ceaușescu) and about the bad stammer of Șoșescu or Mosio Lio Prezido (the Romanian transliteration of the French pronunciation of Ceaușescu and Monsieur le Président) are meant to demystify their huge symbolic power, gradually accumulated over more than two decades of state propaganda. But probably the most caustic chapter is that about the leader of the secret police from 1989, General Iulian Vlad. The figure of Iunian, his grotesque caricature, aims at condemning the oppressive role of the institution, not only during the days of the revolution, but also throughout the communist decades. Having heard Ceaușescu and his consort have died, he elaborates a list of absurd fictitious excuses that may stand as public explanations for the tragedies which have just happened and which he cannot control anymore. His part includes an inventory of eight preposterous hypotheses about the provenance of the terrorists. When he is considering which one to choose to present to the public, he appreciates that "it was not necessary for the terrorists to have an identity or to exist in flesh and blood, it was enough to unleash a psychosis" (186). He is depicted as the moronic initiator of this socio-political psychosis, because he phones several garrisons from the capital and sets them against each other, which eventually leads to bloodshed. The story of Iunian is a trenchant critique directed at a specific type of leadership during communism, which proves its imperfections and weaknesses and reminds us of "The Emperor's New Clothes" by Hans Christian Andersen. No matter how invisible secret services pretend to be, the effects of their activities are visible and there will always be a child to cry out: "But the Emperor has no clothes!"

The general impression of *One Sky Above Them* is that the revolution as a traumatic social event came after more than four decades of incomplete

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social revolution, in which individual freedom mattered much less than the liberties of the ruling class, hence the most relevant slogan of the time: *Freedom!* Since the December 1989 political crisis ended in carnage, this author too interprets the Romanian Revolution as a kind of abortion in "a country where pregnancies had to be terminated and babies killed if they were not desired and loved" (111), which conceptually dislocates the issue again, moving it from the macro level of the socio-political sphere to the micro level of personal and family issues, with few representations of the meso level that was actually confiscated by the central power before 1989. The author's final remarks—"the stories were lying in me, collected for many years, waiting to macerate, like the grapes for cognac" (233)—convey that it takes time and patience to understand the meaning of collective death and to dare to approach such a sensitive subject.

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For the protagonist of the novel *The Immigrant from Biggin Hill* (2016) by Lăcrămioara Stoenescu, December 1989 constitutes a rather distant milestone. Nonetheless, the idea of revolution as a change of direction at personal level pervades the whole narrative. On the whole, the author's main concern is to show the apparently invisible connections between an individual's revolt and a socio-political upheaval, and how these links influence family relationships. The book also presents the possibility to compare and contrast the pre-1989 and the post-1989 regimes and lifestyles, to discover how individual sensitivity reverberates to oppression, revolution and freedom.

Victoria Negru, a young engineer who works in a Romanian factory in the mid-1980s, makes the decision to leave the country and join her husband Gabriel, who has already found a decent well-paid job in the United Kingdom. She has a toddler and is full of hope. However, the local agents of the secret police attempt to prevent her from departing, intoxicating her with provocative remarks about her husband. Unfortunately, they are right as Gabriel does not love her anymore when they reunite in London two years after his departure. The summer of 1989 is when their divorce is officially pronounced, somewhere in the Dominican Republic, where Gabriel knows the taxes are low. Victoria begins to see his true colours when he abruptly announces her he is marrying the daughter of a wealthy businessman, and they are moving to the United States.

Later on, Victoria makes friends with some English people from Biggin Hill, an area of South East London where she continues to live with her son. Mary, one of her neighbours, volunteers to take care of her little boy when she is at work. When Victoria feels obliged to reciprocate her generosity, Mary reassures her: "You too will help others as soon as you become able to." (Stoenescu, 2016: 272) In the same summer of 1989, Victoria decides to

visit her family in Romania, and she invites Mary and two other English friends to join her. Victoria's temporary return to Romania is an occasion for the author to briefly refer to those months when "everyone hoped for the polenta to explode, for the Romanian people to become free too, for communism to fall" (277). The succinct presentation of the regime change and its aftermath resembles a page in a history book for secondary school, with no mention of the fatalities:

> "In the last part of the year 1989, people witnessed those long-awaited historical events that reconfigured the continent and changed the existence of both Western and Eastern Europeans. For Romania, the end of 1989 meant the beginning of freedom. Major transformations followed and the most important was that communism was replaced with capitalism, which eventually proved to be savage. Ever since then, people have been going through a long and never-ending period of transition. For decades now, the population has hardly been able to live in the conditions of this new epoch." (277).

Nevertheless, what is relevant to the novelist is that the political news about the 1989 and 1990 events spreads quickly in the Western Europe and foreign journalists begin to transmit reports about the level of poverty in provincial hospitals, orphanages and slums, which eventually makes many charities send humanitarian relief. In 1990, Victoria learns about two such charities existing in Biggin Hill, cooperates with them as an interpreter and travels to her home country, to the towns of Comănești and Dărmănești, Bacău county. Her volunteering and enthusiasm are not short-lived as she becomes a regular participant in the activities of the two charities that have continued to operate up until the present day. After she makes friends with Patrick Whelan, an Englishman of Irish origin, they join forces and travel to Romania together. Patrick learns Romanian and obtains a driving licence that allows him to transport tons of relief supplies to the children in need from Bacău county over the following years. The poor children's joy and positive energy make her realize that volunteering is like a therapy for her and eventually grasp the meaning of Mary's ecclesiastical advice: "Do good to others and expect nothing in return." (325). The only drink Victoria and Patrick manage to find in a local small shop gains sentimental value: one of his deepest wishes is to drink that particular type of rose champagne at their own wedding.

In contrast with her ex-husband Gabriel, who only in a few years becomes the administrator of his father-in-law's commercial estates in Connecticut, United States, Patrick supports Victoria's wish to alleviate the life of the sick and the destitute from her country of origin. In her case, the

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concept of revolution seen as a gradual change of direction means that the social work she does on a voluntary basis transforms the concept of *the social* itself. The socialist propaganda and the top-down communist strategies pursued to combat difficult social community problems is being replaced with a British approach to social work, rooted in post-war decades of grassroots initiatives, applied modern social theory and a favourable political climate for the sustainable development of charities. Moreover, *the social* is not only nationally circumscribed; it becomes international through the motivation of individuals who care about people in need from elsewhere, within a common legal framework that allows citizens from one country to help citizens from another country.

Another representation of revolution is based on the concept of nation, which is integrated and repositioned in an international context. In parallel with Victoria's journeys from Romania to the United Kingdom and back, Stoenescu defends the importance of knowing one's family tree. Although the protagonist is born and bred in Bucharest, the reader finds that her family tree is actually transnational. The author evokes a hussar named Simion in the personal army of Emperor Franz Joseph, who falls in love with Gisela, a girl who lives in a monastery from Sighetu Marmației. The presentation of the nine children they have, born in different places of the Austro-Hungarian empire, depending on where the hussar's military post was (Prague, Vienna, Chernivtsi, Kosice and Selyatyn), is an occasion for the novelist to weave together personal histories and the great History of the first half of the twentieth century, in order to prove the existence of Victoria's European lineage before the European Union was constituted as a political body. Although not born abroad, she is drawn to travel across the border from an early age. In 1972, when she is twelve, her mother applies for a visa to visit her brother in Germany. Victoria hopes to join her mother, but she is refused a visa, after she has sent three letters to her uncle, which decades later she is appalled to discover in her secret service file. It is only after Victoria becomes a student in the early 1980s that she can travel with her friends to several countries from the Eastern Bloc. Therefore, from an early age, the West becomes "the forbidden fruit in her imagination" (25), which later motivates her to follow her first husband in the United Kingdom in spite of all obstacles and to survive the nervous breakdown caused by their divorce. With this complementary plot, the novel advocates for healthy international relationships in which relatives, especially families with children, can travel freely, without risking estrangement, divorce or other types of loss.

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In *Fontana di Trevi* (2018), Gabriela Adameșteanu puts forward the views of an elderly woman on some of the causes and the effects of the December 1989 events. Letiția Branea is also the protagonist of two previous novels, *The Equal Way of Every Day* (1975) and *Wasted Morning* (1983), which allows the author to reestablish links with the provisional past and to review the rapport between history and private life. Whereas the setting in the first two parts of the trilogy is in Romania, in the third part we find a post-1989 Letiția living in a French village as an émigré, visiting her lifelong friends from Bucharest from time to time. However, the novel "is not a book of postcommunist Romania, but a book of memory […] about the reconciliation with the past, not about exile" (Crețu 2018: online). The daughter of a postwar political convict, Letiția has relatives who lost their wealth during communism, and she is now trying to recuperate parts of it. Her portrait as a kinetotherapist and wannabe writer is the result of self-reflection and insights about the others, which makes the truth about the past rather tentative, multifaceted. One such circumstance is December 1989, but the idea of revolution is represented not only as a regime change, but also as a systematic return on different levels: personal, social, political, economic, cultural etc.

Although the younger characters play less prominent roles in comparison with the more experienced ones, Claudia Morar, who is the daughter of Letiția's hosts in Bucharest and her goddaughter, is found in the middle of the street during the revolutionary turmoil. On December 21, when she and her boyfriend Șerban decide to go to the cinema, they come across the soldiers brought by the authorities in the city centre. The boy is thrilled – "Cool! More exciting than in *Star Wars*!" "It's started! See? It's started! I've told you!" (Adameșteanu 2018: 35) – and proves to be naïve as he joins the group of protesters. The girl is naïve too at first, thinking being allowed to chant *Freedom!* and other slogans against the regime equals a sort of festivity, but she soon separates from him and immediately discovers what she sees is "a terrible dream she had to get out of" (38). After the boy is killed in an ambush, she feels guilty and weak.

The author recreates the post-December 1989 atmosphere from multiple contrasting perspectives. The traumatized adolescent Claudia and her family visit Rome in the spring. Her parents Sultana and Aurelian suddenly become supporters of the anti-communist regime. Her godmother Letiția doubts the revolutionary character of the events. Her godfather Petru tells Claudia's father: "We shouldn't spit on our life spent during communism, because all those who are opening their eyes now will come one day and spit us in the face!" (47) Harry Fischer, a revolutionary, declares: "There are teenagers in all revolutions, their brain hasn't yet developed a spirit of conservation." (48) Petru's former wife turns back to Bucharest to

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recuperate her grandparents' fortune, whereas Claudia finds Șerban's mother bereaved in the Revolution Heroes Cemetery.

On the one hand, Adameșteanu's focus is predominantly on Claudia's parents and their generation. Some still live in the country, some live abroad, and their constant smouldering conflict is a source for quite a few chapters that weld national and diaspora issues together. Letiția witnesses how Sultana and Aurelian take part in the neocommunism-free zone, a place in the University Square where people deliver speeches: "'Is it normal to deliver speeches about the death of someone dear?' I asked Aurelian. 'What else can one do?' he replied confused." (43). In private, Sultana explodes: "You, who live abroad, don't think there is anything good here, because you would not have reasons to motivate your departure! You don't recognize the Revolution either, because you missed it." (25). From abroad too, Petru Arcan, Letiția's husband, represents the academic voice: "The revolution masquerade exhumed the Old Guard of the Stalinist old guys, baptized them as dissidents and thus nobody has seen the blood on their hands!" (24). He also comments with cynicism that a political revolution without bloodshed is no revolution. In a conversation with her French psychotherapist, Letiția herself admits she is extremely interested in the agony caused by such harrowing events: "'Since you love it, you can't go over your trauma,' Aurélie used to tell me. 'I love it because it offered me a subject for a novel,' I told her one day, laughing bitterly." (71).

On the other hand, Claudia grows up among adults who long to live a free life, but who cannot relinquish their guilt-laden past. Her life abroad emerges from Eastern Europe to Italy and then to the United States as a monstrous extension of their wishes. Their politically-conditioned and dwarfed intimacy during communism is transferred to her young spirit, almost confiscating it. Claudia is portrayed as merely a pretext to exhibit many anxieties of Letiția's generation. The narrator does not invest much in Claudia's private life. Her parents call her Grumpy to explain her lack of communication. The reader is not given any clue about why the teenager feels burdened immediately after Șerban dies. When she meets Șerban's mother in the cemetery, Claudia does not shed any tear, does not try to console her in any way. It is curious that, although she seems to have a successful academic career, she is denied any inner life from start to finish. She is only the subject of mere gossip among her parents and family friends, as if she did not have her own will. She is given no chance of understanding her own guilt complex and recovering from her own trauma. Perhaps this is Adameșteanu's means of throwing down the glove to younger generations of novelists who might approach the subject.

Nonetheless, what Adameșteanu produces with "political clarity" (Mironescu, 2018: online) is a chronicle of small individual failed

revolutions. The collage of fragments about a variety of characters reveals the depth of cynicism, the lack of empathy and cold pragmatic views. The book closes with the news that the trial of the 1989 Revolution reopens, which operates as an invitation to reconsider the past individually. How to do it is another question and depends on each and everyone. The title *Fontana di Trevi* may be an answer, as it is a symbol of returning to Rome, which for Romanians means returning to their Latin origins, and a metaphor of emigration at large. Perhaps revolution as return, considered in as many ways as possible, is the main idea of the novel. The author implies that confronting one's past periodically, individually and collectively, no matter how terrible it was, often is a condition for a healthier life.

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The violence and the mass unrest that wounded the socio-political body at many levels in December 1989 have produced an imaginary universe and a higher level of awareness, which Romanian literature and the arts have been gradually absorbing and interpreting. With these five works that address the topic of the 1989 regime change, we have seen that the rapport between historical truth and private life has been extremely important for Romanian women writers. In addition, the works discussed differ in terms of voice, genre and perspective as the five authors expressed their sensitivity to collective trauma in distinct ways.

In summary, Herta Müller used the power of surrealist poetry to create vigorous prose as a form of resistance and struggle against a totalitarian regime. Rich in various figures of speech, orchestrated by a highly omniscient narrator and based on the symbol of the fox, seen as both prey and hunter, her poetic novel illustrates revolution mainly as a constantly inquisitive and intensely imaginative mental process.

A sample of what was called drawer literature, Florența Albu's diary offers an inward-looking and sometimes lyrical detailed account of life during communism. Her periodic temperate return to the white page is counterbalanced by the drastic political change from December 1989, which sets private and public life in sharp contrast.

In her research-based novel, Ruxandra Cesereanu made an exercise of empathy by portraying both victims and oppressors, to produce a fresco of factually relevant Romanian histories from the second half of the twentieth century. The concept of revolution as a political shift is illustrated through the poignant portrayals of the secret police leader and two young men, victims of the upheaval.

Lăcrămioara Stoenescu's chronicle delineates the effects of several historical turning points on the members of a family and their close-knit transnational relationships. Although the 1989 Revolution as a political

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change is only briefly represented, the book emphasizes revolution through social innovation and the restoration of humanistic values.

The unreliable narrator from Gabriela Adameșteanu's first-person retrospective novel offers a down-to-earth outlook of an elderly émigré on the so-called 1989 Revolution. Based on the technique of literary collage, it stages both some of the violent events from Bucharest and various recurrent responses to a range of personal and collective traumas, with a frankness and a vigour that invites younger generations to reflect on the subject as well.

All things considered, this essay is part of the much larger process in which the History and a variety of small histories are combined, in which various individual histories are brought together through the philosophy of history, and in which the range of individual contingent histories may contribute to the ways in which history is conceptualized. In this context, literary history as a form of cultural memory plays a significant function.

To leave aside women writers' role in this process is to obliterate half of it and to forget about revolution as a cyclical process or as *panta rhei*. In this context, the study of the relationship between revolution and literature by men *and* women allows a fairer practice of aesthetic reflection, the identification of the moral roles of history in people's everyday life, and the possibility to construct hypotheses and test what is conceived and endorsed as reality.

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A COMMUNITY OF SPOKEN WORDS: FORMS AND PRACTICES OF THE CONVERSATION AT *VIAȚA ROMÂNEASCĂ* CENACLE

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Abstract: *The present article analyses the conversation of the cenacle* Viața românească *by exploring three directions of research. In the first place, the study concentrates on the conversation as a phenomenon of loss, focussing on the voice of the writers and oral speech as signs of extreme fragility. On the one hand, the reflection on the absence of the spoken word articulates an imaginary of evanescence that functions as a collective representation of the community. On the other hand, it reconsiders the relation between the oral and the written word by favouring the conversation against the literary work. In the second place, the article investigates the forms of the conversation specific to the cenacle as they appear in the memoirs of some members. Representing the cenacle as a democratic society where each member has equal rights, the memoirs of the cenacle depict, at the same time, some regulations that limit the speech such as the anti-rhetoric, the delicacy, and the admiration. Finally, the last issue to be approached is the content of the conversation. On the one hand, the cenacle represents itself as an elevated group that discusses the issues of literature, investing in the "profitable" conversation (Glinoer, Laisney) at the expense of the agreeable interaction. On the other hand, the cenacle values the forms of entertainment as a way of detachment from writing, the study focussing, in the last part, on the functions of laughter inside the literary community.*
Keywords: conversation; cenacle; phenomena of loss; laughter; *Viața românească*;

From the start, the conversation of the writers is a difficult subject to be approached as this practice, analysed in the present article rather in its performative than discursive dimension, is an unfixed domain, subject to temporal erosion. Due to its duality, oral and written at the same time[1], the

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[1] Vincent Laisney shows that the conversation is a hybrid material as it is difficult to be classified being at the same time oral as it is linked to speech and written as it is also transferred on the paper. Furthermore, the authorship of the conversation is a problematic fact as it is disputed between the speaker and the one who writes it down (Laisney, 2003, available on https://www.cairn.info/revue-d-histoire-litteraire-de-la-france-2003-3-page-643.htm#, seen on the 3rd of February 2020).

conversation is showing a tangential interest for the Romanian literary history, a positivist and document-centred discipline, being classified as an incidental and anecdotal practice of the literary mediums and not so much as a literary phenomenon that is capable to point out some interesting facts about literature. However, the recent literary history[2] aims to develop new instruments of investigation, opening towards cultural studies, anthropology, or sociology, and shifting its purpose from the restitution of the documents to the reconsideration of the absent places that focus on the dynamics of literature and the interactions between the literary and the social and cultural phenomena. The traditional approach of literature as an accumulation of canonized literary works and canonized authors is being re-evaluated by the investigation of literature as a social experience, in which case the creativity itself becomes a matter of plurality and collectiveness. In this context, the literary studies reconsider the "spoken word" not so much as an anecdotal charge or "atmosphere" of the great works but as essential for the creative process[3]. The rising interest for the literary sociability addresses the issue of conversation in its various aspects, but the focus of the present paper is on the conversation of the cenacle that presents several particularities. Anthony Glinoer and Vincent Laisney (2013) assert that the conversation of the cenacle derives as an opposition to the institutionalized conversation of the French salons[4], carrying the image of a democratic society, unbound to rhetorical rules and free of hierarchies. This reluctance to the salons brings an important transformation in the imagery of the conversation: *la causerie* for the mere pleasure of the word is replaced by the new form of literary interaction in a "profitable" conversation, in this case, for the profit of literature. Nevertheless, as Glinoer and Laisney show, this image of the utilitarian word is completed with (and competed by) the practice of the cenacle, that is not strange from the agreeable conversation. *Viaţa românească* cenacle[5] is a good example for this oscillation between the high

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[2]See, for example, José-Lui Diaz, *Quelle histoire littéraire?*, in *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France*, 2003, available on https://www.cairn.info/revue-d-histoire-litteraire-de-la-france-2003-3-page-515.htm, seen on the 3rd of February 2020.

[3]See the thematic inquiry entitled *Paroles vives* (Blaise, Triaire, Vaillant, 2009: https://books.openedition.org/pulm/829?format=toc).

[4] Marc Fumaroli considers that the conversation is an institution in France along with the Academy and the genius of language (Fumaroli, 1994).

[5] When speaking about *Viaţa românească* cenacle I refer to the group of writers organized around the magazine of the same name that activated in Iași between 1906 and 1930. Even though the magazine continues to appear after 1930 at Bucharest, I take into consideration only this time frame as the forms of sociability disappear once the magazine is relocated. One of the most read publications of this particular period, *Viaţa românsească* presents an alternative to the modernism and the theory of synchronicity proposed by E. Lovinescu by arguing the importance of traditions and national specificity in the modernization of literature.

and fruitful conversation and the small talk. In the Romanian cultural space, the study of the literary forms of sociability is quite deficient, one of the notable studies being Ligia Tudurachi's pioneer work *Grup sburător. Scrisul și trăitul împreună în cenaclul lui E. Lovinescu* (2019). The researcher reinterprets the conversation as literature (the domain where the writing has the capital importance) because the writers of "Sburătorul" perceive the spoken word as their personal property, subject to the "theft" of the companions. The choice for *Viața românească* cenacle has a twofold argument. On the one hand, the Romanian literary studies focus either on the ideology of *Viața românească* group in such studies as *Poporanismul/ The Poporanism* (1972) by Z. Ornea that analyses the concept of "poporanism" in relationship to sociological, political, and cultural aspects, and Liviu Leonte's *Continuitate și înnoire ("Viața româneacă"* în perioada interbelică)/ *Continuity and innovation ("Viața româneacă" in the interwar period)* (1998) that evaluates the dynamics of the concept in the interwar period. The present article is centred on the social interactions, and the intimate practices, bringing a new perspective on the mechanism and functionality of the literary groups. On the other hand, the conversation has a central place in the constitution of the collective imagery, even superseding the reading[6], a central practice in other cenacles.[7]

In the following analysis on *Viața românească* cenacle, I plan on delimiting several areas of issues. In the first place, the investigation on conversation opens up the discussion about the phenomena of loss such as the voice, the tonalities, the gestures, and the spoken words of the writer, aspects that are registered in the memoirs of the cenacle as perishable and irrecoverable. In the second place, another aspect to be addressed is the relation between the cenacle and the spoken word, namely the ideas, the representations, and the imagery built up around the conversation. In this respect, does the "democratic" image provided by the memoirs coincide with the practice; is the cenacle really free of hierarchies? Finally, the focus stays on the content of the conversation: is it the high-end conversation, and the literary affairs, or the anecdotes that animate the cenacle?

Although the memoirs of *Viața românească* cenacle contain information on the issue of conversation, it is difficult to resume the actual discussions taken place in the space of the editorial office. In my opinion,

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[6] Public reading is an incidental activity at *Viața românească*; its purpose is to please the audience and not to evaluate the writings, in which case just few writers read their works (Mihail Sadoveanu, G. Topîrceanu, Constantin Stere, Ioan Al. Brătescu-Voineşti). This "silence" may be explained in relation with Ibrăileanu's philosophy on reading that employs such terms as "pleasure" or "mystery" of literature.

[7] For comparison, see the reading practice at "Sburătorul" as analysed by Ligia Tudurachi (2019: 93–114).

there are two explanations for this: on the one hand, the temporal gap between the speech and the registration on the paper[8] leads to the selection of facts due to the memory process and transforms them into images of the past. On the other hand, the conversation itself is a fragile phenomenon as it is, first of all, oral (also implying non-verbal and para-verbal elements) and temporary. However, the memoirs also carry an advantage: they reflect on this phenomenon of loss and on the impossibility of recovering, this registered absence functioning as collective representation. The writers of memoirs are sensitive to all sorts of discursive elements, but I will focus in the following paragraphs on the voice and the oral speech as forms of absolute friability, retaining the invariable aspects processed by the memory and transformed into images as well as the transient and occasional experiences registered as absence and impossibility. To exemplify, I will quote further some samples regarding the voices of the writers from "Viața românească" cenacle: "When Sadoveanu voiced the strong words of a harsh character in a severe circumstance, his voice sounded choked, as a strangled waterfall somewhere."[9] (Sevastos, 2015: 177). Another example about N. Quinezu: "He talked slowly in a Moldavian language full of picturesque, with a whispering and moderate voice, bursting out unexpectedly into laughs that, by contrast, had something diabolical, after a joke or as an anticipation of a humorous word." (117). Or about I.I. Mironescu: "He recited with a cunning naivety, gesticulating like the characters, and moulding his voice in the logic of the dialogue." (168). And finally, the voice of G. Topîrceanu: "He talked in a Wallachian accent, striking in the Moldavia of «hey» and «a bit»"[10].

According to the quoted fragments, the memoirs register different aspects of the voice: some fragments illustrate the accent[11] or the timbre, other grasp the performance, and other instances characterize it by the means of metaphor and comparison. The memory is able to keep only some subtle features, nuances, and late images of the voice that are even harder to grasp than other elements of the conversation such as gestures, attitudes, behaviour

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[8] "Viața românecă" cenacle meets between 1906 and 1930 (when the revue moves to Bucharest), while the memoirs are published much later: Ionel Teodoreanu's *Masa umbrelor* is published in 1947, Mihail Sevastos's *Amintiri de la "Viața românecă"* in 1956 (and rewritten in 1966), and Demostene Botez's *Memorii* in 1970.

[9] All translations from Romanian into English are completed by the author of this paper.

[10] For a direct auditory experience I recommend some samples from the archive of Radio România Cultural: Sadoveanu's voice on https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dwko_QNEU2E, and Al. O. Teodoreanu's voice on https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RngPqRncal4.

[11] Several writers of "Viața românească" speak with a Moldavian accent. The fact is worth to be noticed as *Viața românească* develops a cultural paradigm specific to the region generating spatial representations and cultural institutions. The fact is also noticeable in the choice of orthography in the literary works that preserves several regional elements.

etc. becoming disparate fragments in the writers' portraits. Nevertheless, the absence is compensated in the memoirs by the reflection on the phenomena of loss configuring an imagery of evanescence: there are several passages that point to such momentary experiences, results of the presence of the speaker, but also of the public, implying a mutual and lively participation. Ionel Teodoreanu writes down the impression Stere makes on his audience: "He spoke slowly and ruggedly, as the sculpture of Rodin, giving the same impression of hirsute condensation, constructed hallucination, and built-in storm. The silence of his literature does not define him as the vibration of his voice. Whoever didn't hear him, missed him out: that one, the volcano resembling Rodin, the mythological Stere." (Teodoreanu, 1947: 27). It is an interesting choice of words in Teodoreanu's portrayal of Constantin Stere: the use of the metaphor "the sculpture of Rodin" to describe the writer's voice as a way to grasp something that is out of reach, the priority of the voice over the written work, and the use of the word "mythological" that inverses the relation between oral and written. The mythology of the writer, developed by the Romantic 19th century, is linked to the professionalization of writing and the image of the man of genius, solitary and isolated in the silence of his room, making of writing his vocation[12]. For Teodoreanu, the image of Stere as performer in front of an audience has clearly a deeper and complex relation with the writer Stere than his literature does: the verbalization, the dynamic of the discourse, the very presence of the writer, and his voice implying "vibration", hence an emotional mark, become the features of the writer, whereas his literature is seen as "silence", therefore in a state of numbness. Demostene Botez realizes a similar portrayal when talking about Ibrăileanu, only, in this case, is not so much the performance that counts, but the discourse itself:

> "If I don't know how, secretly, so he didn't know, a stenograph or a secret magneto phone registered everything he said every day, from 1906 to 1930, while he was always present at the office, it would have gathered a monumental work of great interest and originality that would have exceeded his written work in which, due to a sort of shyness, he didn't put in all his thoughts." (Botez 1970: 360).

Botez employs such words as "monumental", and "original" in order to define the oral discourse, attributes that usually characterized the written work. In addition, the writing is seen as a process of selection due to an

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[12] In Romania, the mythology of the man of genius must be linked to the idea of national community. While the first Romantic writers, the 1848 generation, are voices of the nation, the Junimist writers distance themselves from the community, representing the writing as a solitary vocation. (*cf.* Mironescu, 2016).

emotional impulse ("shyness") and not rational, in which case it diminishes the work of the writer, the final product – the written work – being the result of the personal restrictions. The investigation of the conversation as a phenomenon of loss opens up the discussion on such issues as literary canon, or cultural memory. Jan Assmann (2015) uses these terms to describe "connective structures" between the present and the past, referring to institutionalized and artificial ways of preserving society's memory. The conversation consumes itself in the space of the cenacle; the performance, the passion, the participation are only possible as presence, wherefrom their extreme fragility, soliciting only the short-term memory of the participants. Nevertheless, the spoken word is perceived as part of the writer's work, and sometimes even more valuable than the written one. In this case, I believe the "loss" is thought to belong not only to the affective community that is the cenacle, but to the history of literature as well.

The next issue to be approached is the forms of the conversation, the ideas the cenacles has about the conversation, and the self-image it configures. At the cenacle, the conversation takes the form of the shared discussion (as a contrast to the salons, where there is a delimitation between the actor of conversation and the public), following the pattern of a democratic society (Glinoer, Laisney, 2013). Each member has the right to intervene anytime in the conversation, each opinion is taken into consideration, and the aim is to debate, and therefore to enrich, every idea that comes along. This democracy of the word is not only a common feature of the cenacle, but a conscious adoption of a conversational model. *Viața românească* is a group of intellectuals that hold important positions in the social hierarchy: some of them are high school teachers, professors, doctors, or even politicians, but at the same time the cenacle is opened to young writers, former students, debutants. Every member of the cenacle, regardless their social statute, contributes to the "maintenance" of the magazine[13], and the leaders of the group refuse the sophisticated titles (Ibrăileanu and Topîrceanu are editorial secretaries just as Mihail Sevastos, a marginal writer). This democratic image becomes visible even in the arrangement of the cenacle's space: a long table in the middle of the room, surrounded by chairs, permitting the members to face each other all the time, and to occupy equal positions (the top of the table is occupied by Sevastos while Ibrăileanu seats on his left, at the long side of the table). The intellectuals of *Viața românească* promote a democratic ideology that advocates the equality

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[13] See Demostene Botez's testimony: "*Viața românească* revue was literarily the revue of a group of intellectuals who published it by doing absolutely all the editing and administrative tasks required. Professors and teachers, often men of a certain age, considered that is the same thing to write today a short story for the magazine, or to keep the evidence of the subscribers, to stick the addresses, and to do the expedition tomorrow." (Botez, 1966).

between social classes. In my opinion, though the intimate practices of the cenacle such as the conversation escape the ideological-based interpretation as they depend on collaborative and affective relations, the "poporanism"[14] promoted by the cenacle shapes a collective attitude (Ibrăileanu himself defines the concept of "poporanism" as behaviour in writing) that influences the forms of the conversation. Therefore, *Viața românească* group avoids strict regulations, cultivating a form of casual intimacy that escapes the emphasis, and a form of participation that denies hierarchies. However, the conversation is not at all chaotic as it might seem, the democracy of the word has its restrictions and limitations, and even its freedom is often thoroughly constructed according to the image of some personalities of the cenacle. All the memoires of the cenacle testify about the powerful attraction Ibrăileanu has among the members of the cenacle, and his personality, but also his ideas, are invested as a model for the conversation. One of the features of this conversational model is the anti-rhetoric: "Nobody dared to be eloquent next to Ibrăileanu who could express anything with all the nuances, in a manner of speaking that is the equivalency of the urgent telegram" (Teodoreanu, 1947: 34). The cenacle itself, as Glinoer and Laisney demonstrate, seeks to transform the conversation of the salon that focusses rather on the execution than on the content and makes use of eloquence, into a spontaneous discussion lacking rhetorical performance. In the case of "Viața românească" group, the anti-rhetoric has a different causality, namely the philosophy of style developed by G. Ibrăileanu.

In writing, Ibrăileanu seems to preserve the traces of the speech, and the dynamics of the discourse as marks of the intelligence caught in the act, although the fact is not at all so sympathetically interpreted by his contemporaries. The lack of style in Ibrăileanu's writings is often the ground for the attack coming from his opponents: Nicolae Iorga, Ovid Densusianu, Mihail Dragomirescu Simion Mehendiți use it in their debates with "Viața românească" revue. The "roughness" of the literary critique's style does not even escape the observations of his circle of friends: Sevastos writes down in his memoirs that Stere characterizes it as an unnatural manner to start the sentence with "because" (Sevastos, 2015), Izabela Sadoveanu (1930) qualifies it as "rugged", but in the same time appreciates the absence of the rhetorical effects and the fact that "style is incorporated in the idea", Tudor Vianu (1927) thinks the style adapts to the necessities of thinking, Mihai Carp (1936) speaks about a "telegraphic" style that is consistent to the

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[14] "Poporanism" is the ideology promoted by "Viața românească" magazine and theorized by G. Ibrăileanu. On the one hand, it has a social and political meaning by promoting the need to elevate the Romanian peasant through political rights and economic power. On the other hand, "poporanism" has a cultural significance by arguing the importance of tradition (oral as well as written) for the consolidation of the Romanian literature.

concentration of the ideas. In a letter addressed to Ioan Al. Brătescu-Voineşti, Ibrăileanu himself admits the deficiency of style in his writing, result of his lack of ambition, and cynical ignorance of the public:

> "Careless, almost cynical as I am, I quickly write what I have to write and I never torture myself to stylize, to come to the best form I am capable of. (…) I go in public without my tie, because I don't think to the public's reaction. (…) I have seen one of Taine's facsimile. There was a struggle to make the sentence beautiful, corrections, and erasures with no connection to the idea, but only to the expression – this thing is, of course, explicable by the (artistic) love for *beautifulness*, but also to the ambition – noble indeed – to make a great impression". (Ibrăileanu, 1978: 310-311).

For Ibrăileanu, writing has to incorporate the experience of life, therefore the impression of blanks and pauses, the tone of familiarity and spontaneity, the incoherence and roughness of his style that almost seek to imitate the process of thinking, or even the speech that, as suggested by Botez (1970), exceeds the written. This compatibility between the form and the content is only apparently the result of the spontaneity. Ibrăileanu permanently works on his articles and reviews, and sometimes he intervenes when the text is already printed and ready for publication by adding and eliminating sentences, but the modifications occur only to clarify or to enrich the idea of the text, and never to embellish the style. Therefore, the "rugged" style or the lack of style is not at all mere negligence as Ibrăileanu suggests in the quoted letter, but a conscious choice of form. The beautiful expression has a double meaning for Ibrăileanu: it is "artistic love for *beautifulness*" or in other words lack of finality and gratuitousness of the artistic act, but also a manner to perform and make impression on the audience, meaning its goal is to seduce. On the contrary, the anti-rhetoric, ignoring the presence of the public, is the manifestation of the writer's attitude and thinking, or, in Ibrăileanu's terms, the writer's "tendency". Antonio Patraş (2007) considers that the so-called lack of style is connected to the theory of personality developed by Ibrăileanu: understanding the literary text as a discourse expressing the writer's conception on the world (in which case, literature is always realistic), Ibrăileanu dismisses the talent as a form of falsity that embellishes the sterility of the ideas, whereas the deficiency in style is the result of a strong and original personality with a complex conception on life, and who concentrates rather on the content than on the execution. This interpretation of style brings a new perspective on the forms of the conversation the cenacle embraces: the anti-rhetoric stated by Ibrăileanu's spontaneity represents a form of individuation as each writer who speaks is encouraged to express his personality instead to make an impression on the

audience. It is relevant that Ionel Teodoreanu describes the discussions of the cenacle as a series of conversational styles that function as portraits of the writers:

> "In the real discussions, don Mihai remained (eloquently) silent, Ralea was subtle (and sometimes lawyer); Ibrăileanu equally subtle (but always arbitrator); Topîrceanu was logical and sometimes unexpected, surprising; Stere, imposing, impetuous, and soliloquizing, immune to the dialogue; doctor Cazacu, vituperative, accusatory, with bulging eyes and strong fists; Mironescu, concise; Costică Botez, vertiginous and expressive; Iancu Botez, violent and authoritarian[…];Demostene Botez, gentle; Păstorel, caustic, and Ionel, metaphorical…" (Teodoreanu, 1947: 34–35).

Teodoreanu's description depicts a polyphonic configuration of voices, tonalities, gestures, and behaviours, some of them relaxed or tensioned, argumentative or detached, communicative or reserved, all of them occurring spontaneously beyond any rules of conversation as manifestations of the writers' personality.

Another form of the conversation is the delicacy, seen as a feminine manner of expression. *Viața românească* is mostly a group of men, the presence of the female writers is rarely registered in the common space (Otilia Cazimir remembers her participation at the cenacle as a sporadic event), and the memoirs of the group does not recall any feminine presence (Demostene Botez even laments about the women's avoidance of the cenacle). However, the masculine exclusivity does not shape a virile ambiance that would allow obscene jokes and innuendoes, the anecdotes remaining between the limits of complaisance. The model for this feminine manner is again Ibrăileanu, the leader of the group:

> "Mister Ibrăileanu's delicacy seems to me as an exotic phenomenon. […] Rarely there are men who when alone, among themselves, do not hustle with confidences and embarrassingly juicy anecdotes. Rarely there are men who do not have a few expressions in their private vocabulary similar to swear words or vulgarism […]. But mister Ibrăileanu is delicate, without effort and hypocrisy. Intelligent, lucid, intuitive with the human mechanism, but still gentle". (Teodoreanu, 1947: 37).

The choice of the word "delicacy" in order to characterize the leader of *Viața românească* group is justifiable when looking to Ibrăileanu's thinking. In *Privind viața/Regarding Life*, Ibrăileanu himself defines delicacy as a *qualité maîtresse* that encompasses all the noble virtues, possible only as

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unity, the absence of one part affecting the whole: "The delicacy is the supreme and most rare quality of the human soul. It implies all the others: intelligence, kindness, altruism, generosity, discretion, nobility etc. A man lacking a single quality of the soul has the delicacy incomplete. Then it has voids and shadows" (Ibrăileanu, 2010: 707). The delicacy functions, in Ibrăileanu's conception, as a social and ethical conduit in life, and becomes a matter of dosage according to the circumstances and the social interactions (*cf.* Patraș, 2007): "In society never stand against any error, so you don't commit unknowingly an indelicacy." (Ibrăileanu, 2010: 703). In his lectures held at Collège de France, entitled *Comment Vivre Ensemble* (2002), Roland Barthes defines delicacy as the most suitable conduit in a community. For Barthes, the living-together is the result of a physics and ethics of the distance that allow to preserve the solitude inside the community without eliminating the issue of affection, in which case delicacy becomes a form of "distance and respect" that escapes the manipulation and the imposition of the self-image on the others (Barthes, 2002: 179-180). In the portrayal made by Teodoreanu, the delicacy is seen as a feminine quality that is able to influence the men around and to elevate them from the biological state ("a sensation of escape from the heavy clay into a vivid light"), and again the idea is borrowed from Ibrăileanu. The delicacy is seen by the literary critique as an organic form of intelligence specific to women that makes opposition to the intellectualism, sensed as an excess and simulacrum of intelligence. In literature, the superiority of the female writers consists in the "delicate attitude towards the subject" (Ibrăileanu, 2010: 624), rather a moral than aesthetical quality which refers to the compassion for the fragile being, and to the capacity of understanding the human soul (or the "human mechanism" in Teodoreanu's words). At the cenacle, Ibrăileanu assimilates this feminine attitude and while the deficiency in style calls the exhibition of the inner personality (that is always a masculine affair), the delicacy demands moderation and discretion as forms of social interaction.

The last issue to be analysed regarding the forms of the conversation is the admiration for certain writers of the cenacle. As stated before in this paper, the idea of the democratic community where each member is free to intervene and express his opinion shapes the conversation of the cenacle. However, the literary admiration replaces the lack of hierachies: at the cenacle, there are dominant figures that direct and animate the atmosphere, or even monopolize the discussion. All the memoirs testify about the attraction for Ibrăileanu's speech that modulates and directs the discussion, but he is not the only actor of the conversation. Demostene Botez registers the admiration for Mihail Sadoveanu that changes the flow of the discussion:

> "There was in him, in his being, the amazing power of prestige. When he entered, in Iași, at the office of that magazine, even Ibrăileanu's facial expression changed. You could read on it both shyness and admiration. All of us, young and old, would stand up and from that moment the flow of the discussion changed in tonality, denoting more cautiousness in mind and speech" (Botez 1961: 11).

Sadoveanu's entrance at the editorial office triggers a series of reactions from the members of the cenacle: they change their position by standing up, clearly a mark of respect and admiration, and the leader himself exposes his admiration through non-verbal signs as facial expression. In addition to this, the conversation changes its course, its "tonality", and the members become more cautious with the words they use. Therefore, the admiration functions as a hierarchical mark that shapes the rhythm of the conversation and limits the spontaneous speech. Sometimes the discussion becomes monologue, and there are voices inside the cenacle that become actors of the conversation, and transform the democratic atmosphere into a theatrical space redistributing the roles between the speaker and the audience. Ionel Teodoreanu remembers one of Stere's visits at the editorial office of *Însemnări literare*, housed by Demostene Botez's domicile:

> "He retold Siberian memories, evoking in a hallucinatory manner a multitude of people, and not in the talkative way of the Moldavian storytellers, but absolutely different, resembling the symphonic winds that awakes the organs of the great cathedrals. I was listening open-mouthed, crushed with admiration." (Tedoreanu, 1947: 73-74).

This is Teodoreanu's first encounter with C. Stere, and the writer's performance in the cenacle induces a sort of a catatonic state to the young debutant. The admiration has as a consequence the abandonment of the writing and the isolation from the cenacle for a period of time, followed by a new phase in the creativity process: "The Stere storm, after crushing me by confronting me with another dimension of creativity – the fluvial one – fertilized my will to create by fighting. I started writing in secret the *Medeleni*." (74). The admiration is directly related to the writer's vocation, marking his sterile and creative phases, and influencing the future work of art. At the cenacle, the forms of the conversation are rather expressed as a set of social conduits meant to shape the intimate discussion than as discursive manners to deliver a speech: the anti-rhetoric as a form of spontaneity of the writer's personality, the delicacy as a code of social interaction, and the admiration as literary hierarchy imply an affective and ethical vocabulary regarding the forms.

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The democracy of the conversation, the lack of rules and social codes, and the rejection of the rhetoric shape not only the forms but also the content of the conversation. At the cenacle, the writers talk about a wide variety of subjects, from literature, philosophy, and politics, to anecdotes, memories, confidences, daily news, or social events. The writers sense the conversation as a way to disconnect from the everyday problems; at the cenacle, they come undoubtedly to enjoy themselves, but the reason for their cohabitation lies in the desire to share ideas, and to discuss literature in a suitable space, dedicated to intellectual life. For Ionel Teodoreanu, the ideal image of the cenacle is the intimate discussion on essential problems that elevates the human being above the routine, favouring the appearance of a society of intellectual friends, isolated from the rest of the world, and whose main goal is literature: "The discussion started naturally from the worries of each of us, or the daily public events, but quickly they were abandoned elevating towards books, ideas, and ideals (the small talk became suspicious, but there was no small talk there). The tone was intimate and passionate." (34). Hence, the "small talk is suspicious" which means the gratuitous discussion is felt as wastage, the cenacle remaining the place of elevate conversation that escapes the loquacity of the everyday. On the contrary, Sevastos seems to remember a different direction of the conversation that begins with the high-tone discussion, and moves to the ordinary talk, the transition being usually solicited by Ibrăileanu who had a taste for gossip: "[Ibrăileanu] would cry out, impatiently running one hand through his dishevelled hair: «Give me a break from literature. Better tell me a simple fact that directly reflects life»" (Sevastos, 2015: 276). The members of the cenacle sometimes perceive the specialized conversation as an excess that fossilizes the dynamic of the group and isolates the writer from life. On this account, the conversation of the cenacle is always in connection with the daily events; it is contaminated by anecdotes and laughter, and the work is often quitted for the mere pleasure of the conversation. Which image presented in the memoirs is closer to reality? Is the cenacle an elitist space where literature is the main subject or the place of anecdotes and delight? On the one hand, the cenacle meets to discuss the future of literature, and it is, indeed, the "profitable" conversation, as Glinoer and Laisney show, that explains its existence, differentiating the cenacle from other forms of sociability such as the salon or the literary café. On the other hand, the taste for small talk always interferes with the high-end discussion; the writers of the cenacle enjoy talking about incidental events, about their daily routine, or the public events, making jokes and laughing together.

Several discussions of the cenacle have as a starting point the articles received for the publication in the magazine, having the practical goal to smooth the style, to clarify the arguments, or to eliminate the irrelevant paragraphs. Sevastos writes about the discussions around the problems of

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style that are debated several hours in the cenacle, involving as actors the so-called "stylists" of the magazine, namely Ibrăileanu, Mihai Carp, Sadoveanu, Topîrceanu, Ion Botez, Constantin Botez, and Octav Botez. The ideas discussed are the origin of a collective stylistic canon which Sevastos carefully delineates in his memoirs:

> "The stylists of *Viaţa românească* never used two inter-connected subjunctives except in the dialogue, and mainly when the redundant expression was articulated by a peasant [...]. It was forbidden to write a sentence using multiple genitives. There were allowed two or three at most and not of same gender and number [...]" (Sevastos, 2015: 67).

Therefore, the members of the cenacle make use of the shared conversation in order to define a collective idiom: they come to imitate and influence reciprocally, they educate their personal style according to the rules they debate together, and the collective work – *Viaţa românească* magazine – benefits from this collective effort. The cenacle also works as the laboratory for the future writings as the ideas are first exposed, verified, and filtered by the collective opinion before being transposed into writing and being published. Demostene Botez remarks in his memoirs that Ibrăileanu's articles are preceded by the presentation and the probation of the ideas in front of the group: "It appears to me now that those discussions were for him a lively laboratory for his future literary reviews. Testing his ideas through the opinions of the friends was a method to strengthen his beliefs and to put them in writing." (Botez, 1970: 360).

In the cenacle, the "profitable" discussion meets the agreeable conversation. *Viaţa românească* memoirs seem to privilege the image of the cenacle as *societé vivante* that values the free time and the small talk against the elitist image of the circle of intellectuals. The preference for this imaginary has a twofold explanation. In first place, the representation of the cenacle as a joyful society of writers has a precedent in the cenacle's imaginary, namely the *Junimea* group. It is a fact that the first Romanian cenacle valued the good time, and even had a famous saying stating that "at *Junimea* first come the anecdote": the writers used to organize parties, anniversaries, feasts, pornographic readings, pillow fights etc. The model is not fully imitated by *Viaţa românească* cenacle that, as shown before, relates to a form of delicacy and femininity instituted by Ibrăileanu's personality, but the image of the convivial society is clearly engaged by the "progessionist" writers of *Viaţa românească*. In the second place, the agreeable conversation contributes directly to the configuration of the collective memory: the anecdotes, the incidental events, the confidences constitute a specific identity of the group that differentiates it from other communities; they become

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symbols of the living-together that compensates the absence of the community.

Viața românească cenacle dismisses the formal rituals of the classical conversation, and the eloquence, as I demonstrated, becomes suspicious, favouring the discussion with no rule, irregular, and chaotic. The meetings have no fixed timetable, the working hours and the free time always interfere, and the agreeable conversation often dominates the atmosphere. Glinoer and Laisney show that the anecdote functions inside the cenacle as a "collective disinhibition" as it is accompanied by laughter that has a cathartic effect upon the group. Daniel Sibony considers that collective laughter has a symbolical and social meaning that transcends the individual amusement. On the symbolical level, the laughter manifests as a collective force that transforms the personal anxieties, the vanities, and the deficiencies into strong points of the group: "Laughter demands *more* in a symbolical sense; it means to be strong; strong enough to appear weak" (Sibony, 2010: 112). The laughter implies a risk taken in front of the others: on the one hand, it is the reinvestment of the incapacity as intensified force, and, on the other hand, it is the collective capacity to react to the stimuli coming from each participant. At the social level, the laughter manifests as social vanity as it suspends the personal narcissism, and celebrates the existence of the group itself beyond any reason. From this perspective, the laughter has a subversive as well as a conservative role: on the one hand, it makes use of the weaknesses in order to fracture the personal vanities, but on the other hand, it becomes force by celebrating the living-together without demanding external causes.

Further on, I will analyse some examples of agreeable conversation that is meant to produce laughter among the writers of the cenacle. Most of the stories presented at *Viața românească* refer to personal adventures, introduced with such phrases as "wait to see what happened to me" or with temporal adverbs such as "once" or "one day". In order to seduce the public and produce the laughter, the anecdotes require that the discourse were efficient (accommodation with the expectations of the others, anticipation of the reactions), privileging the performance of the speech. For example, Sevastos reproduces an anecdote narrated at the cenacle by Stere, focussing on the storyteller's interpretation in front of the audience: "and Stere demonstrated how he had hidden behind the dancers and had squinted with the tail of the eye at the menacing witch whom he imitated for the laughter of the listeners." (Sevastos, 2015: 88). The cenacle also takes pleasure from the gossip and the scandals coming from the high-class society: "Let me tell you what kind of roguery pulled once don Ghiță, the former police marshal, whom you all know – political head whatever…, a smart and pleasant man, all the same, but a big merrymaker." (88). The intellectual atmosphere of the cenacle is not immune to the sensational stories of the high life, but they call

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an intimate and shared pleasure with friends who have a similar intellectual background, and not a direct participation. The collective laughter also indicates the possibility to make jokes on the others. In spite of the fact that the friendly derision isolates the subject of the joke, it also function as a symbol of validation on the part of the group as the joke is only possible among close friends, in the proximity of the affront but remaining between the limits of the complaisance. At *Viaţa românească* cenacle the jokes refer to the oddities, habits, phobias, aiming the weaknesses of the other. For example, Ibrăileanu is teased on the account of his exaggerated fear of germs and the prophylactic measures he takes with no reason, and Topîrceanu is targeted on the account of his love affairs or his idleness in writing.

The democracy of the word articulates a new conception about the free time. In "the genealogy of the social usage of time" (Corbin, 1995: 16), the spent time at the cenacle is perceived by its members as "time for oneself" (the French defines it best with the term *loisir*), the private space and the collective space becoming unseparated. The writers come to the cenacle "to do their job", to bring manuscripts and articles, to read and make corrections, or to work at the magazine, but also they come here to spend their free time with the people of same background, to profit from the conversation and to relax by a particular form of amusement of the group. Roland Barthes shows that the communities of *vivre ensemble* type lack the militant goal that usually marks other social groups, their aim (*Télos*) being the pure pleasure for sociability without further objectives (Barthes, 2002: 83–84). The majority of the writers from *Viaţa românească* have other professions such as lawyer, professor, banker, teacher, professions that they practice along with the writing. The working hours are divided between the job and the writing, therefore the time shared with the friends at the cenacle is an agreeable manner of time usage. From this perspective, the free time is time *shared with*: with other writers, with people that have the same interests and the same ideals.

The analysis of the conversation that takes place in the cenacle opens up new perspectives in the field of literary studies. Valuing the intimacy over ideology, and the process over the finality of the literature, the present investigation questions such concepts as cultural memory, literary canon, writing, discursive forms, or literary community in order to address the issue of small communities that imply fragility and loss, ethical forms of discourse such as spontaneity, delicacy, and admiration, or the pleasure for being together. The research on the conversation of *Viaţa românească* cenacle allows extending the analysis beyond the ideology of "poporanism" promoted by the group, a strong concept that is engaged in the debates of some searing issues of Romanian culture (national specificity, local

tradition), to the functionality of a community of writers, the mechanisms and the collective education they employ in order to live together.

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„PAL/ PALID" CA EPITET METAFORIC ÎN POEZIA LUI EMINESCU*

„PALE/ PALLID" AS METAFORICAL EPITHET IN EMINESCU'S POETRY

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Abstract: *The epithets* pal *"pale" and* palid *"pallid" could have been linked here by a conjunction. Instead, they are placed at the same level (*pal/ palid*) because of their semantic identity in Eminescu's lyrics. Their importance has been already highlighted by several critics, and especially by I. Negoițescu, who referred to the epithets of pallor as a symbol, and systematically returned to them. By simply identifying these epithets with death or the myth of death, with the angelic purity, but also with the purity of the demon, within expressions such as* androginie difuză a morții *"diffuse androgyny of death" and* demonul palorii *"the demon of pallor", there is no poetic symbol, but only a vague image. Associating these adjectives with characters such as the Poet, the Monarch, the Sleep and the Demiurge, usually at an intuitive level, does not reveal the intended meaning. These epithets appear in Eminescu's poetry with non-metaphorical meaning as well, that is with denotative or connotative meaning. Instead, the metaphorical meaning belongs to the extra-existential world. The strong occurrence of these adjectives in* Mortua est! *and the debates around them within this poem since its first publication focused the attention not only to the final version of the text but also to its variants.* Pal/ palid *does not have a unique meaning in this poem, but we may assume that the connotative meaning is not transcended in any of its versions, including the last one. As a metaphorical epithet,* pal/ palid *is associated with the lyrical creation as act and as purpose, as well as with the pure ideal which is situated outside the dichotomy of life–death (being–non-being), either as a reality of the poetic thought or as a mythical reality. The poems in which* pal/ palid *carries this metaphorical meaning are:* Venere și Madonă/ Venus and Madonna, Epigonii/ The Epigons, Luceafărul/ The evening star, Povestea magului călător în stele/ The story of the magician who travels to the stars, Mureșanu. Tablou dramatic/ Mureșanu. Dramatic tableau *and* Memento mori. *The metaphorical 'extra-existential' meaning differs from any*

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concept of overcoming the antagonism being–non-being which is highly represented in Eminescu's poetry. It supposes placement outside this antagonism.
Keywords: Eminescu's poetry; pale; pallid; metaphorical epithet; extra-existential;

1. Observații preliminare

Termenii din titlu, *pal* și *palid*, ar fi putut fi redați și legați prin conjuncție, însă am ales punerea lor în același plan în virtutea semnificației, în principiu aceeași, chiar și la nivel de limbă, nu doar la Eminescu. Cele două forme se explică prin intrarea lor în limba română prin filiere diferite (fr. *pâle*, respectiv lat. *pallidus*/ it. *pallido*). Sensul general al celor două cuvinte este „lipsit de culoare", în special despre față, sau, prin extensie, cu referire la culoare, „lipsit de intensitate", dar termenii pot funcționa și ca termeni cromatici, ca sinonimi ai lui *galben*. La nivel contextual sau, mai exact, cotextual, acest sens poate fi actualizat întocmai, ca sens denotativ, ca asociere a unei idei legate de denotație („lipsit de viață"), dar poate fi actualizat și ca sens metaforic, deși mai rar sau poate chiar în mod excepțional în lirica eminesciană. Recurența sensului metaforic poate conduce chiar la identificarea unui simbol poetic. Astfel de sensuri interne sunt întotdeauna și repere pe drumul înspre universul unei creații artistice. O exegeză care nu se bazează pe sensurile interne, al căror conținut provine din interiorul creației artistice, devine o contribuție excentrică, indiferent de cauzele tropismului ei (autor, surse, epocă etc.) și oricât de savantă ar fi aceasta. Lipsa unei astfel de ancorări o plasează în sfera criticii externe, care poate fi de multe ori și o mărturie a inexistenței unei comunicări pe căile esteticii cu universul operei artistice. Textul de față se limitează la identificarea unui astfel de sens intern, fără a continua printr-o critică externă.

2. Niveluri ale „sensului intern"

Referindu-se la „legăturile de cuvinte", Tudor Vianu afirmă că:

> „există fără îndoială reveniri de contexte aidoma sau asemănătoare, care sunt ca niște focare în care se adună razele convergente ale poesiei. A le găsi pe acestea și a le cuprinde în toată întinderea înțelesului lor, înseamnă a încerca să te faci stăpân peste nucleul în care se găsesc condensate virtualitățile mai de seamă ale unei creații" (Vianu, 1937: 67-68).

„Legăturile de cuvinte" sau „împecherile de cuvinte" urmărite de Vianu în poezia lui Eminescu sunt cele pentru conceptul de 'voluptate a durerii'. Desigur, aceste „focare în care se adună razele convergente ale poeziei" nu se limitează la sintagme. Este cunoscută importanța unor termeni precum *lună*, *izvor*/ *a izvorî*, *tei*, *codru*, *mare*, sau distincția între *gând* și *gândire*. Mulți

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termeni din dicționarul coordonat de Irimia (2005; 2007) au, fără îndoială, statut de „focar”, fie că este vorba despre o pregnanță mai mare sau mai mică a acestora în fațetele universului liric eminescian. Se poate remarca preponderența substantivului în astfel de poziții, la care se adaugă verbul, ceea ce nu trebuie să mire, având în vedere caracterul designativ al acestora. Însă, chiar dacă mai rar, și calificativele lor, adjectivul, respectiv adverbul, pot ajunge la acest statut. Dar nici aceasta nu este o limitare, pentru că se poate urmări, spre exemplu, valoarea gerunziului ca semn al reveriei sau al visării mitice în lirica eminesciană, dând atenție inclusiv evoluției unor creații până la varianta ultimă. De exemplu, în ultima strofă a variantei a treia a poeziei *Dorința* apare participiul *adormiți* – „*Adormiți* mai de plăcere”, la fel și în a patra și în a cincea – „*Adormiți* de armonie”, dar „*Adormind* de armonia” în varianta finală. Un caz similar poate fi observat și în evoluția variantelor poeziei *Povestea codrului*, unde se schimbă și verbul: „Și *se-nchină* zi și noapte” – „Și *trăiesc* cu toți din mila” – „Toate *înflorind* din mila/ Codrului, Măriei-sale...”. La un alt nivel, adică în afara statutului de „focar”, poate fi avută în vedere funcția prepoziției, atât la nivelul semantic lexical („Alunece luna/ *Prin* vârfuri lungi de brad” *Mai am un singur dor*, „Lună, treci *prin* vârfuri de copaci” *Mureșanu*, 1876; vezi Irimia 2014: 453), cât și al implicațiilor gramaticale la nivel de caz (schimbarea acuzativului cu valoare de locativ din prima variantă a *Rugăciunii unui dac*, „Dând pulberea-mi țărânii și inima-mi *în* vânt”, cu dativul prepozițional în varianta finală, ceea ce implică apartenența la lumea stihiilor, reprezentată aici prin vânt: „Dând pulberea-mi țărânii și inima-mi *la* vânt”; vezi Moscal, 2018: 239) sau al funcției numărului („Și eu trec de-a lung de mal*uri*” *Lacul*; vezi Irimia, 1998: 142-143). Fie că este vorba despre o prezență mai mult sau una mai puțin ridicată în poezia lui Eminescu, importanța fiecărui element din arhitectura poetică eminesciană nu poate fi ierarhizată în plan calitativ sau, în cazuri și mai nefericite, subestimată prin aprecieri generale, prin apelul la diverse clișee (pesimismul eminescian, influențe de diferite tipuri) sau prin limitarea la analize de ordin estetic (plasticitatea imaginii, ritm, rimă etc.). În acest sens, este suficient să redăm cuvintele lui Eminescu din ciorna de scrisoare referitoare la cele patru poezii publicate la 1 martie 1878: „În orice caz, eu n-am vrut să le dau formă ridiculă, și dacă sunt greșeli, eu din parte-mi am cântărit orice cuvânt” (Eminescu, 1943: 2).

3. *Pal/ palid* în lirica eminesciană

Termenii *pal/ palid* apar la Eminescu și cu sens denotativ: „Fața pală-n raze blonde, chip de înger, dar femeie” (*Venere și Madonă*), „Palidă și mohorâtă maica Domnului se vede” (*Înger și demon*), „Pe malurile Senei, în faeton de gală,/ Cezarul trece palid, în gânduri adâncit” (*Împărat și proletar*), „Iară luna argintie, ca un palid dulce soare”, „Vinuri dulci, mirositoare și

femei cu chipul pal" (*Memento mori*), sau cu sens conotativ: „Eu făcut-am zeitate dintr-o palidă femeie" (*Venere și Madonă*), „De-aceea nu voi ca eu să fiu:/ Pală idee-a Dumnezeirei" (*Phylosophia copilei*). Într-o sintagmă metaforică precum „al nopții palid domn" (*Strigoii*), sensul denotativ participă la sensul metaforei (pentru „lună"). Pe de altă parte, în lanțul metaforic „Înger palid cu priviri curate,/ Voluptos joc cu icoane și cu glasuri tremurate,/ Strai de purpură și aur peste țărâna cea grea" (*Epigonii*), epitetul *palid* nu participă nici cu un sens denotativ, nici cu unul conotativ.

   Palid este adesea un epitet pentru *înger*. Cu excepția versurilor din finalul poemului *Memento mori*, „În catapeteasma lumii soarele să-ngălbenească,/ Ai peirii palizi îngeri dintre flacăre să crească/ Și să rupă pânz-albastră pe-a cerimei întins cort", unde sensul conotativ este ușor de identificat, în această sintagmă, care în restul situațiilor apare doar la singular („înger palid"), sensul nu pare a fi nici denotativ, nici conotativ. Această observație este valabilă nu numai în cazul acestei sintagme, ci și în ceea ce am putea numi – folosind un concept impus de Negoițescu (1980) – „zona plutonică" a creației eminesciene. Negoițescu chiar insistă asupra caracterului de simbol al palorii. Referindu-se la lanțul metaforic din *Epigonii*, citat mai sus, acesta afirmă:

> „E adevărat că, atunci când vrea să definească numai prin sugestie, Eminescu vede în poezie un înger al palorii, o voluptate de glasuri tremurate [...], simboluri care deschid totuși alte zări, de îndată ce sunt puse în relație cu viziunile zonei plutonice, pe care le vom analiza la timpul lor, și asupra cărora se poate anticipa: «îngerul palid cu priviri curate» este mìtosul morții și demonia purității ei" (Negoițescu, 1980:15).

Deși revine constant asupra „simbolului" palorii, se poate spune că acesta capătă cel mult o imagine prolixă din toate revenirile pe parcursul lucrării: „Eminescu [...] este un adevărat voluptuos al funerarului, al palididății cadaverice", „aerul de moarte revine în diverse rânduri, chiar în idealizarea tinereții, care e o idealizare funebră: voievodul «dureros de pal», «fața cea pală» a demonului Somnului, îngerul «ca marmura de pal», o adevărată androginie difuză a morții" (42), „Poetul, Călugărul și Monarchul [...] – paloarea și tristețea lor au un înțeles mai adânc: în inima lor se deschide misterul lumii, și acest mister îi umple de voluptatea durerii" (46), „Somnul e plângere uranică, dezlănțuire fantasmagorică a dorului blând și palid", „O atmosferă liturgic-cosmică, de crepuscul arzând în nori de tămâie, ce amețește și împalidează: «Și capete de geniu, când ard, când se inspiră,/ Arderea lor arată, la lumea ce-i admiră,/ Că ziua e aproape... Și palizii poeți/ Profeți-s plini de vise ai albei dimineți» (*Mureșanu. Tablou dramatic*, 1869)" (52), „geniul Luminii, care cutremură și împalidează [...]. Monarchul e

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androginul misterios, cu fața ninsă de paloare, sublunar, înger-demon, iradiind magica sa tristețe sau puterea sa astrală" (56), „Demiurgul [...] poate fi socotit ipostaza divină a monarchului-androgin, a ascetului ce soarbe apa mării sau se îmbată de contemplativitate, a poetului-înger, a geniului Somnului și a demonului palorii" (57), „luna învăluie formele, redându-le elementaritatea, plenitudinea dintâi scufundată în sine, aici paloarea, nemărginirea integratoare, a morții, plânsul haosului: «Decebal (palid ca murul văruit în nopți cu lună)» [*Memento mori*]" (68) etc. Negoițescu evidențiază asocierile specifice ale palorii în lirica eminesciană, dar nu ajunge la o interpretare care să ne apropie mai mult de universul său liric. El nu ajunge la conturarea unui sens al palorii, dar indică asocierile generice cu îngerul, cu Poetul, cu Monarchul (fără a menționa și versul: „Un monarc cu fața pală", *Cine-i?*) și, oarecum la nivel intuitiv, cu Somnul și cu Demiurgul. Dând atenție celor câtorva exemple citate aici, pare destul de evident că sensul palorii în afara denotației și a conotației nu se află în raport cu sfera condiției existențiale a umanului, ci cu sfera extra-existențialului.

3.1. Pal/ palid în Mortua est!

În poezia antumă este cunoscută prezența pregnantă a epitetelor *pală* și *palid* în *Mortua est!*, criticată de Maiorescu (în *Direcția nouă în poezia și proza română*) într-un acces de încredere în percepția sa estetică: „Dar și aici, ca în celelalte, sunt greșeli ce trebuiesc neapărat îndreptate. Abuz de cuvântul *pală*, care poate n-ar trebui uzat deloc" (Maiorescu, 1966: 93). Epitetul este fixat imaginii din prima parte, așa cum bine observă Rodica Marian în studiul privind „crezul ambiguu" în *Mortua est!*:

> „Paloarea figurii însuflețite (care *trece*) printre castelele din ceruri corespunde cu cea a îngerului de fată înainte de moarte și nu cu lutul rămas... Așadar, acea *sfântă regină* menită să treacă printre castelele miraculoase din cer este descrierea dezvoltată a sufletului care *trece* prin spațiu" (Marian, 2008: 182).

Nu trebuie însă trecută cu vederea și continuarea comentariilor la acest poem de început al lui Eminescu, probabil primul care ar putea fi asociat zonei „plutonice": „În *Mortua est!* neantul este o moarte eternă, în mod cert, însă ceva din principiul renăscător pornit din moarte străbate deja în ideatica eminesciană, deși nu accentuată în prim plan semantic" (184). Pe de altă parte, nu poate fi omis faptul că în același context, urmând comentariile Rosei Del Conte, Rodica Marian asociază paloarea și cu idealul frumuseții:

> „Oricum am interpreta sensul poetic al adjectivului *palid*, nu-l putem asocia cu noțiunea unei ciudățenii, ci numai cu atributul idealului frumuseții romantice, fiindcă în text *palid suflet* apărea încă în strofa

3-a și apoi în *înger cu fața cea pală* din strofa a 6-a. În legătură cu epitetul *palid*, Rosa Del Conte ([1990]: 50) consideră revelatorie înlocuirea lui *vânătă* din variante cu *palid* din textul definitiv, în sensul că «ajută la pătrunderea în intimul atitudinii spirituale a poetului, [...] [și] surprinde efortul prin care își impune să adere la un ideal estetic mai perfect» (Ibidem: 308)" (Marian 2008: 189).

În interpretarea Rosei Del Conte, sensul de 'ideal estetic' al lui *palid* este dublat de acela de 'non-sens', „pentru că aspirația ființei apare întoarsă și deviată" (Del Conte, 1990: 50). Această interpretare trebuie pusă în legătură cu finalul poemului, unde variantele arată o preocupare vizibilă pentru epitetul *palid* – ca opțiune pentru *vânăt* – dar și pentru locul acestuia în penultimul vers (cu variantele suprascrise redate ca atare): „De e scop într-asta, e pallid ș-ateu/ Pe vânăta-ți față nu e Dumnezeu" [*Elena (meditațiune)*, în Eminescu 1939: 302], „De e scop ^sens^ în asta, e palid ^vânăt^, ateu.../ Pe vânăta-ți față nu-i scris Dumnezeu" (ms. 2259, sub-ms. Marta, în Eminescu 1939: 469). Oscilarea între *vânăt* și *palid* și interschimbabilitatea lor în aceste ultime două versuri lasă să se vadă același sens în acest loc, în cazul variantelor poemului. De altfel, în varianta penultimă, când în penultimul vers apare deja adjectivul *întors*, în ultimul vers apare *vânăt* (310), pentru ca în versiunea finală să apară *palid* (40). Într-adevăr, adjectivul *întors* din varianta finală adaugă o nuanță de împotrivire și chiar revoltă, însă înlocuirea epitetului *vânăt* prin *palid* în penultimul vers nu pare a fi un argument pentru interpretarea ca atenuare a „blasfemiei finale", așa cum afirmă Del Conte:

„Dar chiar această frunte neatinsă de fecioară, pe care moartea a făcut-o de marmură, fără să îndrăznească s-o profaneze, este cea care provoacă încheierea descurajată și blasfemă. Atenuarea epitetului *palid*, care ia locul lui *vânăt*, țintește tocmai la acest scop" (Del Conte, 1990: 50).

Prima parte a afirmației Rodicăi Marian, redată în întregime mai sus, și anume că „în *Mortua est!* neantul este o moarte eternă, în mod cert" (Marian, 2008: 184), este întru totul incontestabilă dacă textul de referință este varianta ultimă. Lăsând la o parte interpretarea prin raportare la varianta *vânăt* a valorii epitetului *palid* din penultimul vers, care rămâne o problemă de nuanță, paloarea ca imagine a idealului frumuseții (Del Conte, 1990: 308) – în definitiv doar a idealului – este valabilă în toate variantele, inclusiv în cea finală. Însă primele variante ale poemului sunt străbătute de o altă percepție a morții, mai apropiată de intrarea în eternitatea însăși decât în „moartea eternă": „Când zboară la soare o rază de soare/ Când zboară pe nouri un angel ce moare/ Eu nu plâng că raza c-un zâmbet d-amor/ O trase la sine eternu-i izvor." [*Elena (meditațiune)*; *Mortua est!* (variantă), în

Eminescu 1939: 301, 306]. Epitetul *palid/ vânăt* din penultimul vers al variantelor, ca determinant pentru *scop/ sens*, face ca întregul final să se așeze sub semnul negării detașate: „De e scop [sens] în asta, e palid [vânăt], ateu.../ Pe vânăta-ți față nu-i scris Dumnezeu" (ms. 2259, sub-ms. Marta, în Eminescu 1939: 469). În evoluția poemului către varianta ultimă această viziune este eliminată prin înlăturarea versurilor citate și prin intervenția din versurile finale. Atitudinea este de revoltă în fața neantizării până și a idealului celui mai înalt.

În *Mortua est!*, epitetul *pal/ palid* (inclusiv varianta *vânăt*) nu apare cu sensul metaforic al extra-existențialului. Cea de-a doua parte a afirmației Rodicăi Marian – „însă ceva din principiul renăscător pornit din moarte străbate deja în ideatica eminesciană, deși nu accentuată în prim plan semantic" (Marian 2008: 184) – își are argumentul în primele variante, nu și în ultimele două. Urmărind evoluția variantelor poemului *Mortua est!*, se poate observa că aici direcția este inversă față de evoluția variantelor poemului *Luceafărul*, unde imprecația din finalul variantelor este înlocuită prin reconștientizarea apartenenței la extra-existențial.

3.2. Pal/ palid *ca epitet metaforic în poezia antumă*

În poezia antumă, adjectivul *palid* ca epitet metaforic cu sensul de 'extra-existențial' poate fi remarcat în *Venere și Madonă*, unde este asociat creației poetice ca act și ca finalitate: „Ți-am dat palidele raze ce-nconjoară cu magie/ Fruntea îngerului-geniu, îngerului ideal". În *Înger de pază* este asociat idealului, însă aici este un context diferit, cel al identității dintre viață și moarte și trecerea în neființă ca eliberare de condiția existenței umane, astfel că sensul este apropiat de cel din variantele poemului *Mortua est!*: „Dar cum te văzui într-o palidă haină,/ Copilă cuprinsă de dor și de taină,/ Fugi acel înger de ochiu-ți învins [...]/ Ori poate!... O-nchide lungi genele tale/ Să pot recunoaște trăsurile-ți pale –/ Căci tu – *tu ești el*" (*Înger de pază*). *Palid* apare cu sensul de 'extra-existențial' și în interiorul lanțului metaforic din *Epigonii* („înger palid cu priviri curate"), precum și în imaginea Luceafărului („El vine trist și gânditor/ Și palid e la față"). În aceste texte, epitetul *pal/ palid* este asociat unor realități aflate în afara existenței (umane): „palidele raze" trimit la razele lunii (luna este interpretată ca „intelectul ultim" de către Negoițescu 1980: 25), asociate geniului creator. „Înger palid cu priviri curate" din lanțul metaforic cunoscut este interpretat de D. Irimia ca „apartenență a poeziei la lumea transcendentului" (Irimia, 2017: 103). Se poate adăuga că există o relație între epitetul *palid*, în care se identifică sensul metaforic al desprinderii de viu, de imanent, adică, mai explicit, de sfera antagonismului viață–moarte, noțiuni care se implică reciproc, și epitetul *curate* din „priviri curate", care califică cunoașterea eliberată de imanent, de uman, cu sensul de condiție existențială. Aceeași valoare, adică epitet

metaforic al ne-vieții, precum și al ne-morții, o are *palid* și în *Luceafărul*: „palid e la față". Însemnele morții și desemnarea ca atare sunt de fapt indicii ale ne-vieții, ale non-neptunicului (pentru conceptul de 'neptunic', vezi Negoițescu 1980: 10): „Un vânăt giulgi se-ncheie nod/ Pe umerele goale", dar „Un giulgiu albastru" în variante (Marian & Șerban, 2007: 296), „Un mort frumos cu ochii vii", „Căci eu sînt vie, tu ești mort". Legat de această situare a Luceafărului în spațiul ne-vieții și al ne-morții, care se află în opoziție cu cel al vieții și al morții, interpretarea lui Negoițescu nu atinge sensul cererii Luceafărului în afirmația: „Când Luceafărul cere de la Demiurg moartea, se exprimă în fond un paradox, căci în ultimă analiză el pretinde «viața», ca preț în schimbul eternității morții" (Negoițescu, 1980: 46). Aprecierea lui Negoițescu este aici aperceptivă, deoarece privește din perspectiva viziunii duale comune, ca opoziție viață–moarte. Luceafărul se află în afara vieții și, implicit, a morții, iar cererea sa vizează intrarea în viață și, implicit, în moarte, într-o realitate care nu mai poate primi epitetul metaforic al palorii.

3.3. Pal/ palid *ca epitet metaforic în poezia postumă*

Din poezia postumă se remarcă corespondența dintre lumina pală a lunii și fruntea pală a poetului în *Când...*, poezie din 1866: „Când luna aruncă o pală lumină" – „Și fruntea mea pală pe pieptu-ți așezi" (Eminescu, 1952: 18). De asemenea, „Un monarc cu fața pală" din *Cine-i?* nu poate fi situat decât în extra-existențial. Umbra copilei din *Povestea magului* – „un înger c-ochi verzi cu trăsurile pale", „Înger cu aripi albe, ca marmura de pal", „Să zboare unde partea-i cea jună, dulce, pală/ Plutește printre stele", „Și fața cea pală i-o mângâie-n dor!" – se situează în aceeași zonă a ne-vieții și a ne-morții. Intrată în timpul mitic, ea are un statut existențial egal cu cel al magului, pe care „al vremilor curs vecinic nu-l poate turbura". În sfera timpului mitic, *palid* se actualizează întotdeauna ca epitet metaforic cu sensul de 'extra-existențial': „Un înger-rege palid, cu fruntea-n diademă" (*Povestea*). Același sens se actualizează și în asociere cu poetul sau cu gândirea poetică, demiurgică: „Când somnul frate-al morții pe lume falnic zace/ Cu genele-i închise, cu visele-i de pace,/ Când palida gândire prin țara morții trece/ Și moaiă-n visuri de-aur aripa ei cea rece,/ Și cu acea aiasmă a lumei frunte-atinge/ Și-n creeri fantasie și-n suflet vis încinge", „Și capete de geniu, când ard, când se inspiră,/ Arderea lor arată, la lumea ce-i admiră,/ Că ziua e aproape... Și palizii poeți/ Profeți-s plini de vise ai albei dimineți", „A tale cânturi, palide bard/ Cu fruntea-n laur,/ Sînt stele-eterne ce-n ceruri ard/ Cu raze de aur" (*Mureșanu. Tablou dramatic*, 1869); „Par gânduri palide din visuri dalbe" (*Eco*).

Palid este actualizat ca epitet metaforic cu sensul de 'extra-existențial' în determinarea realităților ce se situează în timpul mitic: „Decebal se-arată

palid în fereasta naltă-ngustă", „Decebal (palid ca murul văruit în nopți cu lună)", „Palid, adâncit ca moartea, ca o umbră stă în lună" (*Memento mori*). În *Povestea magului*, în afară de asocierea cu timpul mitic, avută în vedere mai sus, se adaugă asocierile cu universul creației poetice, care primește același atribut al extra-existențialului: „Magul: // Și cânt... [...]// La mijlocul de aer, în sfera de lumină,/ Din frunte-mi se retrage raza cea de cristal,/ Ea prinde chip și formă, o formă diafanină,/ Înger cu aripi albe, ca marmura de pal.// Și se coboară palid pe drumul razei sale/ Și se coboară – alene, cu cântecu-mi l'invoc/ Și haine argintie coprind membrele sale,/ Prin păru-i flori albastre, pe frunte-o stea de foc".

4. Precizări asupra sensului 'extra-existențial'

Sensul metaforic 'extra-existențial' al epitetului *pal/ palid* în lirica eminesciană ar fi putut fi glosat și prin „trans-existențial", însă prefixul *trans-* ar putea fi asociat cu interpretări ale morții sau ale neființei ca „eliberare de existență", și nu ca o „situare în afara existenței". Extra-existențialul nu concordă cu conceptul depășirii existenței prin moarte, concept dominant în lirica eminesciană, însă frecvent raportat la „sensuri externe" în critica eminesciană, printre care sentimentul „mioritic", blagianismul sau diverse perspective filozofice (vezi Marian, 2003). De asemenea, se diferențiază de conceptul identității între viață și moarte: „Pe căi bătute-adesea vrea gândul să mă poarte/ S-asamăn între-olaltă vieață și cu moarte" (*Se bate miezul nopții...*) (vezi Barbu, 1991: 78-79, Oancea & Tasmovski de Ryck 2003: 417). Extra-existențialul nu presupune depășire, înălțare, intrare sau ieșire (prin raportare la dualitatea ființă–neființă, așa cum este cazul în *Mortua est!*), ci situarea în altă dimensiune, în afara dualității ființă–neființă. Conceptul se disociază de interpretări precum: „moartea nu este în gândirea lui Eminescu sfârșitul definitiv al existenței" (Marian, 2008: 180) sau „moartea este astfel înălțarea spre o lume vrăjită, mirifică [...], o lume din care esența angoasantă a sfârșitului a dispărut" (Oancea & Tasmovski de Ryck, 2003: 417). Acest sens se diferențiază de orice concept privind depășirea acestei dualități antagonice prin identitate (între ființă și neființă) sau prin includere (ființă în neființă). Într-un scurt articol publicat în 1943, Cioran afirmă că Eminescu n-ar fi avut decât viziunea duală:

> „Eminesco a vécu dans l'invocation du non-être. Et cette invocation se déploie entre une sensation matérielle, qui est le *froid* de la vie, et une sorte de prière, qui en est l'aboutissement. La *Prière d'une Dace* […] est un hymne à l'anéantissement. Il y demande la grâce de l'éternel repos […]. Dans *Mortua est!* il se demande «Le tout n'est-il pas folie?» […]. Eminesco n'a pas trouvé le subterfuge sublime de l'extase. Il s'élève de l'*intérieur de la mort* au-dessus de la vie" (Cioran, 2001: 13).

Perspectiva sa, printre puținele care prezintă calitatea de a fi neatinse de biografism sau psihologism, ar trebui reconsiderată prin identificarea unui „extaz extra-existențial", asimilat adesea creației poetice, identificat aici prin epitetul metaforic *pal/ palid*. O asemenea stare a gândirii poate fi recunoscută cu ușurință în versurile mai puțin „încifrate" dintr-un poem de tinerețe (1870-1872): „Dar de asupra-astei mulțimi pestrițe/ De gânduri trecătoare, vezi departe/ Munții de vecinici gânduri ridicând/ A lor trufașă frunte către cer:/ Cu nepăsare ei privesc la toate/ Efemeridele ce trec în vale" (*O, te-nsenină întuneric rece*). Sensul epitetului metaforic *pal/ palid* nu intră sub incidența afirmației lui Noica, și anume că „s-a vorbit prea mult despre neființă la Eminescu" (Noica, 1992: 213), pentru că nu se află în sfera dualității ființă–neființă. În același timp, se poate spune că reprezintă o deschidere către universul poetic eminescian prin „simbolele și hieroglifele" încifrate în însăși creația poetică, și nu în artificiile criticii externe: „poezia nu are să descifreze, ci din contra, are să încifreze o idee poetică în simbolele și hieroglifele imaginilor sensibile" (Eminescu, 1980: 453).

5. Concluzii

Culorile constituie adesea obiectul criticii eminesciene, însă fără conturarea unei simbolistici a acestora. Astfel, nu lipsesc aprecieri de ordin general, exprimate stilizat, dar fără o identificare a valorii lor

> („De la gradația culorilor sau mai bine zis a valorilor, alb, argint, aur, raze, stele, foc, ca și de la simbolurile turturicăi albe, simbol ornitologic [sic!], la acela al copilului înger și al mamei intercesoare, la acela al mesei din mijlocul raiului, percepem însă o anumită linie directoare în imaginația artistului, exprimată într-o ascendență dinamică ascendentă a imaginilor, într-o metamorfoză neîncetată a lor pe măsura înaintării spre înălțime", Dumitrescu-Bușulenga, 1989: 211),

alteori cu indicarea unei valori simbolice, dar fără o conturare a acesteia în cadrul creației eminesciene, așa cum apare în aprecierile dimensiunii acromatice lumină–umbră/întuneric la Ioana Em. Petrescu („Simbolistica luminii devine însă cu adevărat eminesciană în câteva pasaje ce depășesc nivelul alegoric al imaginii și ating stratul unor intuiții poetice originare – ca în monologul Geniului Luminii dezvăluind structura luminiscentă a unui cosmos solar", Petrescu, 2002: 42) sau la Del Conte, care reiterează valori artistice generale

> („Două sunt aspirațiile ce se vădesc încă de la începuturile uceniciei sale artistice. Una este tendința de a exprima în termeni cromatici

concepte de valoare [s.a.]. '*Dalbe*', adică luminoase și albe, îi
străluceau în amintire speranțele tinereții [...]. Un rol particular este
jucat, în scrierile sale de tinerețe, , în proză și în versuri, de alb, spre a
exprima acel gust al «virginalului», care este un semn distinctiv și
aproape obsesiv pentru o atât de mare parte din erotismul romantic
[...]. De la simbolismul albului și al albastrului, pe care arta l-a
consacrat în reprezentarea acelei «Virgo virginum», poetul se înalță la
un prețiozism cromatic de un gust aproape fabulos [...]. În această
direcție îi este maestră tradiția picturală bizantină", Del Conte, 1990:
239-240).

Lirica și proza eminesciană permit identificarea unor valori specifice ale
culorilor, așa cum bine a intuit Negoițescu în privința palorii. Simbolismului
acesteia i se asimilează și termenul *vânăt*, conform exemplelor citate mai sus.
În cazul termenului *sur* se poate vorbi de o valoare a ante-existențialității:
„De atunci și până astăzi colonii de lumi pierdute/Vin din sure văi de chaos
pe cărări necunoscute" (*Scrisoarea I*), „Precum o floare ar ieși din surii/ Și
morții munți, din piatra lor uscată", „Cuvânt curat ce-ai existat, Eone,/ Când
Universul era ceață sură...?" (*Fata-n grădina de aur*), „Într-o lume de neguri/
Trăiește luminoasa umbră/ Mai întâi scăldată/ În ceți eterne și sure" (*Într-o
lume de neguri...*). În versurile ultimului poem citat Eminescu indică aproape
explicit valori pentru *alb* (asociat existenței) și *albastru* (asociat cunoașterii
geniului).

Sunt cunoscute și acceptate cuvintele lui Maiorescu (în *Eminescu și
poeziile lui*) privind destinul de geniu înnăscut al lui Eminescu, și anume că,
indiferent de contextul existenței sale, „Eminescu rămânea acelaș, soarta lui
nu s-ar fi schimbat" (Maiorescu, 1966: 460), însă, dacă s-ar vorbi despre
soarta operei sale, aceasta ar putea fi în continuare schimbată, multe dintre
„simbolele și hieroglifele" ei așteptând încă să fie descifrate.

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BIZANȚUL ÎN FILTRUL BALCANIC - POEZIE ROMÂNĂ DIN A DOUA JUMĂTATE A SECOLULUI XX

BYZANTIUM IN BALKANIC FILTER – ROMANIAN POETRY IN THE SECOND PART OF TWENTIETH CENTURY

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Abstract: *Talking about Balkanism in Romanian contemporary poetry means to betray, to a certain extent required by degradation or alteration, some literary themes and motifs. Finding ourselves in a geographical area of cultural contaminations, the influence of other peoples in Balkans comes naturally: the nostalgia of Byzantium perfection, continuous reporting at an ideal time, abstraction of the chronology. Balkan themes and motives in poetry are identifiable from the early writings of Romanian literature, including the folklore, with Anton Pann, the Vacarescu and Conachi poets – and their ludic descriptivism – , to Ion Barbu, who strikes a metaphysical note in the Balkan motifs, and later, in the second part of twentieth century, with the species of parody. The Romanian native receptivity allowed continuous assimilations without creating an unpleasant heterogeneous feeling. This openness has contributed decisively in a formative way to bring Byzantium on a new soil in a perfect and saturated array; the perfectibility is not possible anymore, so the failure was natural, in a degraded status – Constantinople. Oriental-Byzantine gravity becomes in Oriental-Balkan tragedy or comedy, balance slid to one extreme, sometime becoming ridiculous. Contemporary poetry does not express any more a true lament, but a kind of parody (in ludic poetry) or sheer contempt (in the solemn poetry). The Balkan intelligence is not critical, but creative, with the risk of perpetuating monstrous forms, beyond good and evil. Byzantium established itself through a double filter – for the East and for the West – influencing and being influenced, in turn. Romanian poetry has the full sequence of themes and aesthetic formulae, from tragic to comic, often switching rapidly from one edge to the other, taking into account the old Thracian solemn part, then the proud Byzantium and its absorption in Constantinople – all rolling in a series of formal expressions reflected in themes and vocabulary.*
Keywords: Romanian Poetry; Balkanism; Ludic; Byzantium/Constantinople;

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Influențele balcanice în literatura română s-au manifestat cu o previzibilă consecvență; dacă romantismul, realismul, naturalismul și alte curente literare cu coduri estetice definite în toate spațiile cultural-lingvistice europene, fie și cu decalaje, au avut momente relativ limitate de manifestare în cadrul istoriei literare, temele și motivele balcanice datează de la primele pretenții de literatură ale scrierilor românești: „*balcanitatea* este chenarul necesar în interiorul căruia s-a desfășurat procesul, istoric și el, de supraviețuire și răscumpărare prin artă – *balcanismul* literar și artistic" (Muthu, 1999: 86). Realitatea prinsă de cronicari în paginile lor, fără eforturi ori intenții de finalitate artistică, reflectă un context ce resimțea puternic influența turcă (la cei molodoveni, și influența polonă), dar și cea slavă, încurajată, mai apoi, de dominația fanariotă a aceleiași alternanțe de fast și mizerie, de elanuri nobile nematerializate și de corupție. Eclectismul etnic al compozițiilor imperiale alcătuiesc forme noi prin aculturația specială generată de contaminări culturale – iar această nouă *forma mentis* ivită se comunică și la nivel de structuri artistice.

Dacă la poeții Văcărești și Conachi ori la Anton Pann maniera folclorică nu putea să nu se resimtă uneori până la imitație (lipsa unei tradiții de literatură artistică scrisă, în raport cu cea orală), Ion Barbu reușește să-i găsească o notă metafizică. Această influență s-a grefat pe structura românească până la a face parte din ea. Noțiunea de „balcanism" este, încă, supusă dezbaterii, astfel că e firească manifestarea diversă și în literatura artistică: „În anumite studii de specialitate există neclarități privind folosirea termenilor balcanic, Orient, Bizanț, ceea ce duce la cercetarea diverselor forme de manifestare a balcanismului, ajungându-se la teorii care formulează într-o măsură imaginea Balcanilor, în care balcanic se suprapune peste oriental, având caracteristici negative, cum ar fi cruzime și bădărănie, instabilitate și imprevizibilitate" (Popovic, 2015: 138). Amestecul de argou, neolgisme, arhaisme este un dat păstrat în toate momentele desfășurării literaturii de influență balcanică. Spațiul românesc s-a manifestat ca un filtru constructiv în plecarea spre Apus a grecilor, turcilor, albanezilor și a slavilor de sud. Nativa receptivitate românească n-a putut rezista unei astfel de tentații, reflex al unui Bizanț labil, în sensul bun al cuvântului, el permițând continue asimilări, fără a crea o neplăcută senzație de eterogen. Această receptivitate a contribuit hotărâtor formativ la aducerea Bizanțului într-o matrice perfectă, saturându-l; perfectibilitatea neamifiind posibilă, era firesc eșecul, statutul degradat care va fi Constantinopolul, trecând prin faza alexandrină.

Mitologia greacă, rațiunea romană, generosul ortodoxism și debordanta fantezie orientală – toate acestea au creat un spațiu complex, sofisticat intelectual și artistic. La noi a existat o o permanentă interferență între Orientul clasic, al reflexivității, și cel romantic, al reacției hipertrofiate.

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Gravitatea oriental-bizantinului devine, la oriental-balcanic, tragedie ori comedie, echilibrul lunecă la una dintre extreme, uneori în derizoriu. Filonul liric, chiar dacă uneori diluează, umanizează scrierile, de la Anton Pann la *Cânticele ţigăneşti* ale lui Miron Radu Paraschivescu, la ludicul lui Emil Brumaru și Leonid Dimov – alături de o senzualitate luxuriantă. Totuși, tragismul autentic al lui Teohar Mihadaș ocolește oriental-balcanismul, venind din substratul trac, Bizanțul grec, neslavizat, neturcizat, din cultura greco-romană clasică. De aici poate veni raportul religios-laic la Ioan Alexandru, ortodoxismul dogmatic chiar dacă se refuză rațiunii Renașterii, el conservă spiritul național al popoarelor din Balcani; sub creștinuismul manifest se ascunde drumul până la el – accente păgâne care amplifică magia. Abia târziu se poate face distincția între cele două ipostaze ale Marelui Oraș: Bizanțul încorporat în Constantinopol. Odată trăită etapa alexandrină, este momentul de început al sfârșitului. Acum poetul poate să-și creeze spațiul dorit, Isarlâkul eliberat de patimi violente, un Isarlâk al echilibrului, un fel de Bizanț la scară redusă, fără fastul acestuia, oarecum pestriț, dar neînvins de către derivatul constantinopolitan. Poezia contemporană nu mai cunoaște adevărata lamentație, ci parodierea ei (în poezia ludică) ori disprețul pentru ea (în poezia gravă). Unii critici, precum Constantin Ciopraga, cred că temele și motivele literare balcanice sunt de natură formală, aproape o imitație, ceea ce este greu de crezut, pentru că dincolo de „balcanismul folcloric, balcanismul anxios (al baladelor), balcanismul jovial (de limbaj) și balcanismul concretizat în forme exterioare" (Ciopraga, 1973: 27) există o profundă consubstanțialitate. De la visul solar al limpezimii mediteraneene, la abulicul, perfidul Levant, reflectat în forma oarecum degradată (el însuși o treaptă decăzută a Bizanțului) în peisajul heteroclit de la nord și sud de Dunăre, cu o certă vocație a parodiei ființând prin ceea ce ironizează, creând artă prin refuzul ei. Dar tragismul nu este unul formal, cu toate că se dorește astfel, pentru că lumea, incapabilă de redresare oricât ar dori să-și ironizeze neputința, este tragică atunci când conștiința ar vrea să recepteze adevărul.

Bizanțul s-a constituit într-un dublu filtru – pentru Orient și pentru Occident -, nu doar influențând, dar și lăsându-se influențat, la rându-i. Poezia românească cunoaște întreaga succesiune de teme și formule estetice, de la tragic la comic, adesea unul la marginea celuilalt, considerând fondul tracic grav, vechi, apoi orgoliosul Bizanț și absorbția lui în Constantinopol – rostogolindu-se într-o suită de formule alexandrine, în lexic și tematică.

A vorbi despre balcanism în poezia contemporană înseamnă a trăda, într-o oarecare măsură, termenul, prin degradarea ori modificarea suferită de temele și motivele ce-l reprezintă. Aflându-ne într-o zonă geografică a contaminărilor culturale, este firească infuzia de influențe ale celorlalte popoare din Balcani, începând cu fundamentul atitudinilor artistice ale tuturor

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– nostalgia perfecțiunii Bizanțului, raportarea permanentă la un timp ideal, abstras cronologicului. Leonid Dimov pare a-și aminti de puritatea vechii Grecii, când lumina mediteraneeană nu-și începuse dezechilibrul indeciselor umbre din Orient: „Suntem cu toții prinși în lanț,/ Pe străzi absurde, în Bizanț:/ Pe caldarâm pășesc în poante/ Arhimadriți și elegante/ Trecând la rând să se așeze/ lângă leproși/ lîngă obeze/ Cu prune galbene, culese/ Pentru prelungi împărătese/ Deasupră-le, în loc de soare,/ Stă semnul crucii. E răcoare”.

Este Bizanțul nepăgânizat, mitic în același timp, cronotop al eleganței și al armoniei, al împlinirii. Același Bizanț îndepărtat ademenește poeții în sclipiri de pietre prețioase, lăsându-se numai întrevăzut, niciodată epuizat prin cunoaștere. Generos, el oferă fiecăruia lumea pe care vrea să și-o închipuie: „Zorii/ reîncep prin grația umidității,/ lumina/ se înfige în vârfurile platanilor,/ și drumul către Constantinopole sângerează poeme” (Dan Mutașcu). Uneori există doar reflexul formal, de icoană bizantină, statică, deci perfectă: „Valeria martiră din Bizanț/ Lăsatu-ți-a un nume pe măsură/ Cu ochi căprii și mari încercănați/ și-un grai blajin în cuvioasa gură” (Ioan Alexandru). Viața cotidiană n-are nimic inefabil în sine, este lipsită de temperatura stărilor abisale. Mit este doar Bizanțul, în rest totul este istorie, trecere. Grația gesticulației lingvistice vrea să salveze ceva din acest inefabil, emblemă a perfecțiunii. Lumea bizantină și emanațiile ei peninsulare se degradează. Conștiința ce presimte decăderea dezechilibrează – de unde turnurile sublim-grotești ale atitudinii balcanice, pendulând între entuziasm și pesimism, neputincios în fața ficțiunii ce refuză să devină realitate. Suficient sieși, Bizanțul moare în impurul Constantinopol: „Peste Constantinopol ninge uriaș/ ca la-nceputul lumii/ și fiecare fulg e un urs alb/ care, vai, nu poate fi vândut în bazare!/ Nompeia, Corint, Patras, Atena, Negropont/ Durazzo, Avalona, Corfu;/ pierdute sunt de o vreme lungă cât o remușcare/ veștile de un galben-canard al acestor cetăți” (Dan Mutașcu). Suflul epopeic nu mai apare în textele contemporane; de vechea speranță de revitalizare nimeni nu mai ține cont, lamentația devine ironie și autoironie. Bizanțul rămâne un teritoriu compensativ: „O, exotism al anilor dintâi,/ Când, ca un fum ne strangula Hymera,/ Când mai visam migdali, măslini, lămâi,/ Și-o insulă din basme;/ O, Cytera” (Tudor George). Cerul Levantului nu provoacă metafizice fiori cosmice, ci intră firesc în decor, este manevrat de personajele ce-l populează. „Au coborât în lunci de soc/ Sineli din cerul strâns ghioc/ De-un cavaler și-o monahină/ Pe marea râpă levantină” (Tudor George). Plasticitatea acestui tip de poezie aduce elemente parnasiene, simboliste și ludice în același timp. Uneori ritmul folcloric ia locul adresării ceremonioase, demitizare ostentativă: „De unde știi, vasilisă,/ cântecul cu gura-nchisă,/ cine te-a-nvățat dogoarea/ și jocul de-a răpitoarea;/ o scufie, trei scufii,/ dumneata să nu mai fii” (Cezar Baltag). Ludicul, demitizant prin excelență, aduce

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lumea exotică aproape prin familiaritate; Ion Gheorghe vorbește despre basilisă ca despre o cumătră oarecare, alternând cu descrierea fastuoasă: „Basilisă/ Athenaisa/ În brațe cu fii-sa/ îmbrăcată în mantie de porfiră/ făcând ape de lumină când respiră/ și multă fulguială de lumină în preajmă/ când tușeste scuturată de astmă/ pe la cute se vede luciul întunecat/ al căptușelii acelui rece brocart/ [...]/ pe când doi îngeri potrivesc solemn și nezorit/ coroana Sfântului Imperiu de la Răsărit" (Ion Gheorghe). Păstoasa frenezie, unde mișcă haotic mizeria și eleganța, este resimțită și la nivelul limbajului. Proiectele de viitor sunt făcute doar pentru plăcerea pălăvrăgelii, pentru că fantezia poate lucra în voie; cât despre îndeplinirea lor, nimeni nu ia acest lucru în serios.

Verva de cafenea orientală stimulează imaginația, dar tot ceea ce înseamnă temeinicie rămâne departe. Setea de taină și de mister nu este una metafizică, ci una facilă. Indolența și aroganța coexistă în fiecare mască ce populează aceste ținuturi de interferență de o receptivitate ce-i poate fi fatală prin îndepărtarea de ideea de *consecvență*. Romantismul acestei lumi nu lipsește, este unul decadent și languros. Alături șade grotescul carnavalesc al oricărei manifestări publice căreia îi lipsește somptuozitatea. Poetul se scufundă în pitorescul unei epoci, sedus de umbre exotice, șerpuitoare, defilând din trecut ori din depărtări. Emil Brumaru brodează filigranat întoarcerea într-un timp, într-un Bizanț deconspirat, desacralizat – copilăria, impregnată de forme și sonorități balcanice. Există o contemplație a amintirii, o muzicalitate suavă, fără decorurile somptuoase, dar cu o aglomerare de lucruri la îndemâna noastră, refuzând pervertirea lumii prin livresc: „Noi nu vrem să fim geniali/ ci veșnic să spunem: Miorlau!/ Dormind fericiți sub cearșaf/ și fără să scriem vreun rând". Este o adevărată estetică rococo a lenevirii, care nu caută miracolul, ci ochiul face apel la miracolul nativ care se află în noi.

În căderea Bizanțului spre Constantinopol și Levant, în locul mitului perfecțiunii se instituie mitologia plasticității lucrurilor; aici discursul poetic devine speculația sernsurilor lui. Și, ca tot ceea ce se află sub semnul balcanicului, este echivoc. Existând și o dramă a cuvintelor, nu doar a faptelor, în Constantinopolul epuizat totul se contaminează cu ratare. Așa cum observa Mircea Muthu, tragedia lumii balcanice, drama decăderii Bizanțului devine „parodia acestei drame". Vremea curge lent, alternând fastul cu mizeria, într-o risipă pictural-cromatică cu ecouri parnasiene. Există un drum spre sine ca o tentativă a cunoașterii, dar imaginația poetică ocolește rațiunea în desfășurări de un baroc fermecător, care nu descifrează realul, ci îl completează. Vapoarele, trenurile, automobilul sunt adesea invocate, dar ele bântuie doar imaginația, traiectoria artistică spre ținuturi exotice. Dacă realitatea nu este suficient de generoasă, fabulația poate oferi o risipă orgiastică a plasticității. Aici, implicarea socială, prin artă ori prin comuna

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existență, nu-și are rostul. Inteligența balcanică este creativă, nu critică, existând riscul perpetuării unor forme monstruoase, dincolo de bine și de rău. Levantinul face haz de conceptul de *istorie*, pentru că îl știe fără importanță în planul eternității, veșnic sfârșind în declin. Neputința nu este doar umană, ci și una a istoriei stagnante, incapabilă de-a găsi noi formule de existență, refractară acțiunii, sofisticând totul în mod deliberat (existența interioară și exterioară) pentru a-i servi mai târziu drept motivație a neputinței. Individul, lumea și arta își corespund, ataraxia ucigând cu eleganță praxisul. Lucrurile banale sunt idolatrizate într-o abundență de levănțică, zulufi, catifele, dulcețuri, mătăsuri, brocarturi, zaharicale și luxuriață vegetală. Poezia foșnește, nu se tânguie tragic-patetic: „Dacă ne doare că nu știm ce-i viața/ Când cântă cocoșii la patru dimineața/ Ne putem înveșmânta într-un halat/ Cusut cu fir de aur și brocart/ Ori putem privi pe fereastră/ La lumina cea albastră" (Leonid Dimov). De-a lungul vremii, *patternurile*-stereotip care au apărut privitor la Balcani sunt mai ales negative:

„Limbajul comun și, mai nou, istoria mentalităților acceptă *balcanismul* mai mult cu funcție atributivă, de epitet caracterizant și, în plus, cu o conotație accentuat peiorativă. Este, de fapt, efectul contaminării cu termenul de *bizantinism*, văzut și acesta doar pe linia subtilităților excesive (id est=gratuite) sau, mai rău, pe aceea a comportamentului duplicitar, incriminant etic" (Muthu, 1999: 86);

arta intervine, salvator, eludând socialul ori sublimându-l.

Fără pretenția de a corija realul, poeții stilului balcanic se descătușează de contingent (prin vis, prin călătorie – adesea imaginară –, prin narcoza parfumurilor și a culorilor tari), coborând imagini mărețe ori doar fermecătoare peste o realitate meschină: „Tipologicul, atitudinalul și dinamisul concură la amplificarea conținuitistică, precum și la consolidarea estetică a *balcanismului literar*" (96). Parodierea nu este una înverșunată, ci de o infinită tandrețe, fără dispreț, cu înțelegere.

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SCADENȚA DE HORIA LIMAN – OBICEIURI ANCESTRALE ÎNTR-UN SPAȚIU IZOLAT

"THE DEADLINE" BY HORIA LIMAN – ANCESTRAL CUSTOMS IN AN ISOLATED SPACE

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Abstract: *In his novel, "The Deadline", Horia Liman depicts the history of an authentic world governed by unwritten laws belonging to the morality of the common man, especially to the honour code. In a poor isolated community from Oaş, placed on a rocky hill, where only the nettles grow, the knapsack and the knife are held in high esteem. The atmosphere of the novel, its characters and their features, the difficult life and the unwritten laws are gradually unveiled through significant events.*

Keywords: Horia Liman; deadline; isolated space; ancestral; Țara Oașului; Maiden Fair on Mount Găina;

Introducere

Romanele lui Horia Liman[1], *La foire aux jeunes filles/* The fair for young girls - apărut în cea de-a doua ediție cu titlul *L'échéance/ Deadline* - și *Les bottes/ Boots*, au fost scrise în limba franceză, și, mulțumită muncii și efortului traducătoarei Rodica Gabriela Chira, prin *Scadența*, putem cunoaște un scriitor de talent, un romancier înzestrat, a cărui pană ne-a lăsat pagini memoriabile despre o lume ancestrală, o lume uitată și aproape necunoscută noilor generații de cititori, în pofida faptului că acțiunea este plasat în

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[1] Horia Liman, evreu născut la Brăila în 12 septembrie 1912, a rămas cunoscut pentru activitatea sa de jurnalist, pentru unele din revistele la a căror fondare a participat, sau unele la care a colaborat intens ca secretar de redacție sau redactor-șef. Să amintim doar „Vremea", „Discobolul" (scos împreună cu Dan Petrașincu și Ieronim Șerbu, între septembrie 1932 - martie 1933, în șapte numere lunare), „Scînteia", „Contemporanul" etc. Persecutat și înlăturat din presă, după „refuzul" de a semnala „reablitarea politică" a lui Tudor Arghezi, Horia Liman va fi corespondent Agerpres la Praga și Geneva, iar în 1970 va cere azil politic în Elveția, unde va publica articole, proză scurtă, nuvele în gazete francofone, pînă la stingerea sa din viață, la 22 august 2002.

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perioada interbelică. Prin romanl *Scadența*, Horia Liman ne propune istoria unei lumi autentice, condusă după legi nescrise ce țin de morala omului simplu și mai ales de onoare. Într-un cătun sărac de oșeni, situat pe o coastă pietroasă, în care cresc doar mărăcini, la cea mai mare cinste se află straița și cuțitul.

Spațiul din cadrul romanului

Atmosfera romanului, ca și caracterul oșenilor, viața grea și legile nescrise după care se conduc acești oameni ni se dezvăluie treptat, de-a lungul romanului, prin întîmplări semnificative. Oșanul e pregătit de mic să învețe și să se supună acestor legi:

> „De îndată ce vine pe lume, staița se pune în leagărul noului-născut. Cînd ajunge în raclă, nu se uită straița, pentru ca ea să-l însoțească pe oșan și în lunga călătorie de dincolo, din viața viitoare printre îngeri sau demoni de tot soiul. «Maică, dă-mi straița să mă-mbrac!». Fără ea, oșeanul e dezbrăcat. Straița îi bate coapsele din clipa în care coconul începe să meargă. În straiță, o brișcă. Ca să-și încerce mîna pînă la vemea cuțitului. Căci cuțitul e semn de cutezanță" (Liman, 2019: 21).

Izolați într-un teritoriu vitregit, parcă izolați și în timp, asemenea moților la care se face adesea referire, oșenii se conduc după legi păstrate din moși-stămoși și mai ales după „scadență", legea cuțitului. Scenele în care personajele își desfășoară energiile pînă la epuizare ni se prezintă în tușe groase ce evidențiază în primul rînd uscăciunea pămîntului, sărăcia locului, cătunul vizitat sporadic de trecători și în care doar jandarmii care apar din cînd în cînd, cu destulă întîrziere, amintesc de apartenența la o lume reală, amintesc de „drepturile" grofilor, stăpînitorii pămîntului. Doar prin forță se pot impune aceștia din urmă în fața celor obișnuiți cu lipsurile, cu munca grea, cu uscăciunea dealurilor, cu amărăciunea și mai ales cu nedreptățile de tot felul de care se apărau cum știau ei mai bine, adică cu nelipsitul cuțit al oșanului care a generat destule legende și povești de-a lungul timpului.

Spațiul în care se desfășoară acțiunea romanului poartă o marcă culturală puternică, este chiar un marcator al identității. Societățile își produc și își delimitează în timp un spațiu propriu, în concordanță cu cultura maselor. Satul este mic și foarte sărac, situat într-o zonă friguroasă unde recoltele se coc mai tîrziu, mult spre sfîrșitul toamnei. Numără cam patruzeci de bordeie, cocoțate „pe dealuri, împrăștiate printre vîrfurile de piatră ce țîșneau ici și colo asemeni colților de rinoceri" (8). „Cocioabele" oșenilor nu aveau împrejmuiri, pe jos aveau pămînt bătătorit, paturile erau din paie, iar în odaia aceea locuiau de-a valma femei, bărbați și copii, alături de pisici, de cîine, de găini și, uneori, de capră. Geamurile fie lipseau, fie erau foate mici, „o gaură mică în loc de fereastră abia de lăsa lumina să pătrundă" (8).

Descrierea locuințelor este una tipică pentru satele ardelenești din perioada interbelică, exemple grăitoare avînd în scrierile oferite de George Coșbuc (vezi Coșbuc, 1953) pentru casele din Bistrița, sau în cele despre casele moțești din Munții Apuseni (vezi Apolzan, f.a.).

În disonanță cu bordeiele, în mijlocul satului se aflau trei-patru case mai arătoase, dispuse într-o „aglomerare haotică", datorită reliefului neprietenos ce nu permitea o altfel de aranjare a locuințelor. Aceste case erau mai mari, „văruite în alb, cu acoperișuri de țiglă ori chiar de tablă" (Liman, 2019: 8), erau bine împrejmuite, și aveau în jur pomi fructiferi. Hotarele erau bine stabilite prin pietre și respectate cu mare strictețe. Mutarea vreunei pietre și cu cîțiva centimetri ducea la bătaia cu cuțitele. Casele sînt așezate în funcție de relief și nu în funcție de un centru anume. Dacă, în general, așezările umane sînt strîns legate de o istorie și o cultură în care restructurările sînt livrate eșecului (vezi Sauquet și Vielajus, 2014: 105), în cazul nostru avem un centru fals, fiind vorba de doar cîteva case grupate și devenite centru deoarece le oferă sătenilor hrană, apă sau băutură.

Sărăcia bordeielor este în ton cu uscăciunea peisajului, care vine să accentueze șocul inițial. Verdeața lipsea aproape cu desăvîrșire, locurile erau sterpe și, mai ales, din cătun lipsea apa. Rîul Năpraznic era departe de sat, fîntîni nu erau, căci nu se găsea apă nici în partea de jos a satului, „sol pietros, pământ tare, pământ fără suflet, suflet sterp" (Liman, 2019: 9) – iată cuvintele ce descriu cel mai bine locul în care își joacă rolul cele cîteva personaje ale romanului *Scadența*.

Așezarea caselor în peisajul specific al acestui spațiu geografic maramureșean este mai mult decît grăitoare, aflîndu-se în ton cu starea sufletească și comportamentul specific al locuitorilor acestor case. „De departe ai fi zis că e vorba de separare voită – ne spune naratorul –, ca și cum viața de pe aceste meleaguri ar fi fost dintotdeauna însoțită de ură (s.n., G.C.)" (8). Ura este cea care însoțește destinul personajelor de la un capăt la celălalt al romanului.

Locuiau acolo din moși-strămoși și nimeni nu s-ar fi gîndit să plece în altă parte, în alte locuri mai prietenoase. Nu știau nici cum au ajuns strămoșii lor să întemeieze satul, bănuiau doar că fugeau „de turci, de unguri, de tătari, de boieri" (10), și viața lor încă era o „fugă".

Pe de altă parte, Cavnicul[2], cum se numea cătunul în roman, se constituie ca un spațiu secundar unui alt centru, este un teritoriu izolat în care

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[2] Horia Liman alege, în cîteva locuri, să numească satul în care se petrece acțiunea Cavnic. Etnograful Remus Vârnav din Negrești-Oaș spune că e vorba, în realitate, de satul Moișeni, de lîngă Certeze, și nu de Cavnicul situat lîngă Baia Mare, cum am fi tentați să credem. Fiind vorba de ficțiune, nu considerăm că ar fi o scăpare a autorului, mai ales că în vremea în care Horia Liman cunoaște personal realitățile acelor locuri Raionul Oaș făcea parte din regiunea Maramureș.

comportamentele sînt asemănătoare cu cele de la periferia orașului, secundară, prin definiție, centrului. Din punct de vedere valoric, periferia este văzută ca „un centru deficitar: obligată mereu să vină *după*, ea nu este exterioară centrului decît în măsura în care nu poate accede la valorile lui, mai exact la actul creaţiei lor, rămînînd dependentă de «altercreaţia» centrifugă şi centripetă" (Mihali, 2005). Comportamentelor generate de un alt centru, de exemplu, în cazul nostru, de Negrești sau de Baia Mare, locuri cu care oșenii vor intra la un moment dat în conflict, periferia

> „îi răspunde cu dinamica sa, în primul rînd cu dinamica sa negativă: ea este nevoită să reacţioneze, să fie contraputere la puterea generatoare, dominatoare, chiar asupritoare a centrului. De aceea, centrul este locul Puterii, în timp ce periferia este locul fără de loc anume al contraputerilor. Primul este unic. Puterea e mereu una şi (voindu-se) totală, acoperind sau dorind să acopere complet teritoriul, să-l supravegheze, să-l controleze, să-i preîntîmpine sau să-i reprime rebeliunile. Periferia este multiformă, ba chiar amorfă, imprevizibilă, generînd mereu evenimente şi surprize, revoltîndu-se mereu prin producţia de microputeri, de forţe alternative, practicînd opoziţia şi rebeliunea" (Mihali, 2005).

Construcția personajelor și rolul lor în cadrul comunității de oșeni

În satul de pe deal fiecare își știa bine locul, își știa meseria, nimeni nu se amesteca în treburile celuilalt fără a-și asuma consecințele, căci orice nedreptate se cerea răzbunată, era urmată de scadență, după seceriș. Era o comunitate foarte unită, mai ales cînd era vorba de scadențe, chiar dacă pedepsele pentru oșeni erau mult mai mici decît pentru restul oamenilor. De exemplu, un omor dovedit era pedepsit doar cu șase ani de închisoare, altfel riscul ar fi fost ca în zonă să nu mai rămînă brațe de muncă nici pentru familiile numeroase, nici pentru proprietarii pămînturilor.

Bologa era cel care aducea apa cu sacaua trasă de un catîr. Sacagiul era sensibil și dacă oamenii îndrăzneau să facă vreo remarcă nevinovată referitoare la apa lui se supăra și refuza să mai aducă apă. Oamenii plăteau pentru găleata și ulciorul cu apă, însă, întotdeauna, „Cana săracilor o umplea pe gratis" (Liman, 2019: 11).

Învățătorul Moga este un personaj aparte, „cu pipa în colțul gurii, cu ochi mici și ageri de drăcușor /.../. Potrivit de înalt, svelt, cu o mustață neagră ca o linie desenată deasupra buzelor subțiri, fără vîrstă" (12). Școala era la Scăieni, la 4 km de cătunul în care stătea în gazdă la sacagiu, drum pe care îl făcea zilnic, pe jos, simțindu-se mai în siguranță aici,între acești oameni cu tradiții și obiceiuri barbare la care țineau cu sfințenie.

Mara, fiica sacagiului Bologa, personajul principal al romanului, ne este prezentată treptat. Deși trecută de vîrsta copilăriei, era încă răsfățată de

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sacagiu, iubirea acestuia fiind „un sentiment cu atât mai complet cu cât reprezenta o compensație. Nevasta și-o detesta" (13). Vanda, soția acestuia, a fost multă vreme inabordabilă și după prima lor întâlnire, Grigor, fratele ei, un cuțitar bețiv, rău și de temut, l-a silit pe Bologa să o ia de nevastă. „«Mi-a făcut-o lelișoara», afurisi el. De-atunci nu și-au mai vorbit. Doi străini sub același acoperiș" (14). Mara era deosebită față de celelalte personaje, parcă nepotrivită nici cu peisajul sterp al locului, fiind de o frumusețe și o gingășie ieșite din comun. Chipul ei avea trăsături fine iar pielea catifelată, iar gîtul suplu o făcea să pară „neobișnuită în acest ținut de oameni aspri, înnegriți de soare și vânt" (53). Moga și sacagiul Bologa au parte de multe discuții, în serile lungi de vară, pe prispa casei. Ei povestesc urmăriți pe ascuns de Mara și într-o astfel de seară Moga amintește de Târgul de fete de pe Muntele Găina, un spațiu legendar cu o poveste fascinantă care o va urmări de acum pe fata Vandei pînă la obsesie. Moga s-a născut și a copilărit pe Valea Săsarului, lîngă Baia Mare, printre mineri, cunoscînd de mic realitățile aspre în care trăiau aceștia, morții din mine, viața grea a copiilor și a femeilor și, mai ales, acolo învățase despre greaua răzbunare a oșenilor care „își vând scump pielea". Auzise destule întîmplări despre care se spunea, de fiecare dată, ca un laitmotiv, „A băut o stacană de țuică și a aruncat totul în aer" (17). Asta va face și tatăl său, lăsîndu-l orfan și pe drumuri. Mama sa murise la puțin timp după ce l-a născut, iar tatăl l-a crescut cu promisiunea că va cumpăra o fată de la Tîrgul de pe Găina ca să aibă și el o mamă, lucru îngozitor pentru el, și care a căpătat în imaginația sa o „dimensiune dincolo de orice măsură" (18). Simțise întotdeauna o repulsie față de gîndul tatălui său de a-și cumpăra o fată de pe lîngă Rîul Roșu, care să le aducă noroc și împreună cu care să se mute la Roșia Montană unde s-ar găsi mai mult aur. Aceasta se datora faptului că își închipuia că fetele din Munții Apuseni erau atît de sărace încît se lăsau cumpărate pentru o bucată de pîine. În realitate, oricît de grea ar fi fost viața moților, pe Muntele Găina nu se vindeau fete ci obiecte și lucruri meșteșugărite, ca la orice tîrg. Tîrgul se ține acolo din vremuri vechi, în prima duminică după sărbătoarea Sfîntului Ilie pentru a sărbători o victore a moților contra curuților și a lobonților, iar practica barbară de a vinde fete nu au recunoscut-o niciodată. Ce se poate afirma este faptul că, așa ca la orice tîrg, tinerii se întîlnesc și dacă se plac se pot pune la cale căsătoriile.

Rămas orfan, Moga ajunge la București la un unchi aspru, un colonel care îl crește ca la cazarmă, între ordine și pedepse. Acesta alege să se facă învățător, iar cînd va fi arestat pentru refuzul de a face armata, „din convingeri filosofice și condamnat la 14 luni de închisoare" (20) va intra în dizgrația unchiului. Așa se va retrage în cătunul izolat, într-o toamnă secetoasă, iar în momentul în care drumul îl scoate într-un punct de unde se puteau vedea „castanii din Baia Mare, podișul Someșului, munții și imensa

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învălmășeală de pietre a Muntelui Găina" (21), va trăi senzația că „se dizolvă în vastul univers, puțin înghețat, puțin delirant al copilăriei sale"(21). Amintirea tatălui și a spațiilor care i-au marcat copilăria îl vor însoți și îi vor marca noul drum pînă la epuizare. „...îndoit sub greutatea valizei", Moga ajunge în casa lui Bologa. În cătun mai trăiau Teodor Cuha, brutalul satului, împreună cu soția Eva, pricepută la vrăji și descîntece de tot felul și fiul lor, Bene, neputincios, bîlbîit și gelos, de vîrsta Marei; Lazăr Buga, cărușul lui Cuha, Bădica Șonțu, Bordac, lăutarul care locuia la marginea pădurii; precum și o serie de personaje nedidferențiate, lucrători ai pămîntului care căutau de lucru cu ziua în diferite zone ale țării, mai mult sau mai puțin îndepărtate, tăietori de lemne, mineri care plecau la lucru luni noaptea și se întorceau sîmbăta seara, sau copiii care mergeau din cînd în cînd la școală la Scăeni. Deși aveau spațiile foarte bine delimitate și limitele de proprietate bine stabilite, oamenii se comportau ca niște insulari – căci unii dintre ei nu au depășit niciodată limitele satului. În privința muncitorilor putem vorbi de „oameni mobili", căci aceștia, cum am văzut, se deplasau oriunde găseau de lucru. Era un soi de transhumanță în funcție de anotimpuri și de muncile specifice fiecărui anotimp, săpatul, coasa, prășitul, culesul etc. Însă nu își schimbau niciodată locuința, se întorceau mereu acasă unde îi aștepta familia.

Pămînturile erau ale baronului ungur pe care nu l-a văzut nimeni niciodată deoarece trăia din arendă la Budapesta, Viena sau Berlin, iar arendașii, atîția cîți au fost ei pe acolo, aveau statutul de păzitori fără personalitate, și trăiau singuri cu cîinii – „mari cît vițeii și fioroși ca animalele sălbatice" (11) – și cu pietrele, „pe un domeniu în paragină" (12). Spațiul este și un marcator al puterii, generînd conflicte între lucrătorii pămîntului și deținătorii lui, așa cum vom vedea, căci identitatea și puterea sînt două caracteristici importante în înțelegerea noțiunii de spațiu (Sauquet, Vielajus, 2014: 102). Atîta vreme cît baronul, stăpînul de drept al pămînturilor și al pădurii, ignoră oșenii, se poate vorbi de un autism al centrului, prin ignorarea sau disprețuirea manifestată prin izolare și prin detașare (vezi Iancu, 2016: 153). Doar că atitudinea ostilă se manifestă în ambele sensuri, căci, oșenii, asociați de baron cu imaginea străinului amenințător, adoptă o recluziune orgolioasă în raport cu centrul, cu stăpînul de drept al pămînturilor, considerînd, așa cum vom vedea, că pădurea, lăsată în paragină, deși e a baronului, nu îi e necesară acestuia, și cu atît mai puțin luminișurile, pe care, în această situație, oamenii locului nu greșesc să le folosească în interes personal.

Bordac, nomadul prin excelență, după moartea soției rămîne în sat, însă nu își părăsește căruța și preferă să rămînă la marginea satului, lîngă pădurea în care toate cărările îi erau familiare.

Și cum fiecare își cunoștea bine locul în stat, doar un venetic, care nu cunoaște îndeajuns înțelegerile sătenilor, își putea permite să încalce

rînduiala, să schimbe rosturile oamenilor, și în final să schimbe destine. Asta face noul cîrciumar, Iacob Gyula, care cumpără fosta temniță a satului de la baronul Dolgosy și o transformă în cîrciuma numită „Broscoiul vesel", pe care o conduce împreună cu fiul său, Ioan. Situația de criză apare în momentul în care Gyula găsește un izvor între stîncile de pe proprietatea sa și strică rostul satului: „Aproape de vie, între două pietre mari de granit, un izvor de apă proapătă izbucnise într-o țâșnire de fântână arteziană" (31). Femeile vor prefera să cumpere de acum apă de la Gyula nu pentru că ar fi mai ieftină ci pentru că e mai limpede, tot timpul proaspătă și mai la îndemînă. Sacagiului îi rămîn, totuși, cei care plătesc pe datorie și săracii pe care nu îi poate abandona.

Găsirea izvorului perturbă, cum spuneam, ordinea firească a lucrurilor din cătun, find o lovitură grea pentru Bologa. Cum în acea perioadă a anului nu se putea răzbuna, deoarece scadențele erau doar în vremea secerișului, a „recoltei, a belșugului, a comuniunii cu natura" (45), și cum sacagiul nu își putea măsura forțele cu puternicul Ioan, cel care dădea singur afară din cîrciumă cheflii și bețivii, și mai ales că, dacă s-ar fi răzbunat, cunoscîndu-se clar conflictul apei, nu ar fi putut să nege sau să se ascundă de lege, Bologa alege să ia calea Americii și pleacă fără să spună nimănui nimic. Sătenii îl vor indrăgi tot mai puțin pe Gyula după acest eveniment, însă îl respectă pe Ioan care avea „o fire independentă /.../. Trup tare. /.../ un fecior vînjos" (Liman, 2019: 65) care „ține ordine în crâșmă" (66). Caracterizarea acestuia se nuanțează cînd luptă pentru dragostea Marei, și nesocotește voința tatălui său. În aceste momente Bordac îl vede „prea îndrăgostit pentu a avea nevoie de sfătuitori, prea îndărătnic pentru a fi îmblânzit" (65). Mara vede în el un bărbat adevărat, cu „sprâncene groase, buze cărnoase, privire dură" (67), însă lacom și nerăbdător și chiar gelos pe Moga.

Caracterul Marei iese în evidență mai ales în discuțiile ei avute cu învățătorul, în grija căruia rămîne după dispariția lui Bologa. Moga vrea s-o educe, s-o modeleze, dar surprinde un caracter brut și mai ales ura din cuvintele ei cînd vorbea despre ouăle găinii de aur. Crescută fără griji, dar învățată cu treburile unei femei în casă, Mara se arată interesată și de învățăturile măicuței Eva, și de ale învățătorului, și după ce rămîne doar cu Vanda, mama pe care nu o înțelege, pregătește în ascuns o răzbunare. Moga îi intuește gîndurile pline de cruzime care, uneori, îl sperie: „tonul aproape crud al Marei, stăpânirea de care da dovadă în exprimarea acestor gânduri îl intimida, îi crea senzația neplăcută a unui rău necunoscut, imposibil de stăpânit. Hotărât lucru, caracterul Marei era încă un material brut ce trebuia modelat" (49).

Pe lîngă trăsăturile dominante ale oșenilor, amintite pînă acum, mai iese în evidență și unitatea, căci oșenii nu se trădau niciodată între ei. În lupta cu cuțitele, întotdeauna învinsul „a murit de moarte bună", negăsindu-se nici

un vinovat. „A trăda înseamnă a cădea sub lovitura inevitabilei legi a pedepsei, a scadenței" (24). Și Mara știe acest lucru foate bine, atunci cînd urzește un plan de răzbunare. Aceasta își dezvăluie prima oară planuile pe malul rîului, în vreme ce discuta cu Moga pe teme de istorie. Amintindu-și de pietrele văruite ale lui Gyula, care îi marcau proprietatea, „cu un aer din ce în ce mai întunecat" (53), și cu un ton „amenințător, de o duritate atît de neașteptată", Mara îi mărturisește lui Moga, „cu ascuțimea unei siguranțe de nezdruncinat" că vrea să-l omoare pe Ioan „pentru că pe el îl iubește Gyula cel mai mult pe lumea asta" (53).

Mara îl ațîță pe Ioan un an de zile, acceptînd treptat tovărășia lui pe malul rîului, loc în care fata se crede protejată de zîna rîului, și amîndoi continuă să se tachineze, cum o făceau în sat, pînă la amenințări deschise. „Vara e secetoasă anul acesta, pământul e gata să crape /.../. O să fie furtuni" (69), îi spune Mara. „O să te omor" (72), îi spune Ioan. „Ba nu!, eu o să te omor" (72), răspunde Mara.

Apariția lui Grigor, fratele Vandei, schimbă oarecum situația, oferindu-i Marei alte deschideri pentru planul ei de răzbunare. E prima oară cînd își privește mama cu adevărat, cînd îi simte dragostea, constatînd că o apără „asemeni păsărilor mari ce-și biciuie dușmanul cu aripile larg deschise ca să-și protejeze puii" (80). De acum îi va spune lui Ioan că nu îi permite fratele mamei ei să se mărite cu el, știindu-l pe Grigor un cuțitar de temut în ținutul oșenilor.

Mirajul Tîrgului de fete de pe Muntele Găina

Poveștile despre Tîrgul de fete de pe Muntele Găina sînt prinse în roman în puncte cheie și marchează destinul Marei. De exemplu, stînd pe prispa casei, fata aude femeile ce stăteau la poarta lui Gyula să cumpere apă, vorbind despre fetele aduse la casa arendașului pentru petreceri desfrînate. Se bănuia că erau cumpărate din tîrg și se credea despre ele că „ascund câteodată ouăle de aur. Mai ales în râuri, ba chiar și în izvoare" (31). Tot de la ele află Mara povestea găinii de aur care își depunea ouăle pe vîrful Găina, pe vremea cînd minele din Biharia erau funcționale. Cînd moții din Vidra au vrut să prindă găina, aceasta a zburat cu ouă cu tot la Roșia Montană. Unele femei credeau că ouăle ar fi rămas ascunse în zona împădurită a muntelui și fetele care se lasă vîndute la tîrg „știu câte ceva" (32), iar apele Arieșului sînt roșii deoarece poartă aur. Și cum printre ele se afla și Eva Cuha, altele spuneau, mai cu sfială, că izvorul lui Gyula ar fi apărut prin magia vreunei vrăjitoare sau a unei fete care cunoștea ascunzătoarea găinii.

„Povestea găinii de aur și a târgului de pe Muntele Găina exercitau asupra ei o fascinație irezistibilă" (37), ne spune naratorul, în veme ce apar, treptat, o serie de povești pe care Mara și le va aminti în propria sa călătorie spre Tîrgul de pe Muntele Găina, unde își închipuia că își va găsi scăparea

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după ce îl va ucide pe Ioan. Cum nimeni dintre cunoscuții ei nu a ajuns la tîrg, și cum Moga insista că e un tîrg ca oricare altul unde cumperi diferite mărfuri – „se cumpără oale și fluiere, greble și furci ori cercei, basmale, mărgele de sticlă. E un târg de meșteșugari" (58) – și nicidecum fete, Mara își închipuia cu încăpățînare cum s-ar desfășura tîrguiala pentru o fată frumoasă și cu avere. Numai că „tătuca a plecat, mămuca... parcă n-ar exista iar unchiul Grigor e un desfrânat. Sunt singură și nu reușesc să înțeleg cum pot fi cumpărate fetele sărace și fără părinți ori rude" (53).

Am ținut să prezentăm amănunțit personajele și spațiul în care are loc acțiunea romanului, deoarece, odată stabilit locul și rolul acestora în peisaj, în larga scenă a satului, acestea își consumă energiile pînă la epuizare, pînă la ieșirea lor din scenă, ce echivalează cu părăsirea satului, într-un fel sau altul. Odată imprimată imaginea lor în mintea cititorului, acesta își poate închipui cu ușurință, mai departe, acțiunile și trăirile personajelor în planurile romanului cu o intrigă relativ simplă, complicată doar de trăirile complexe și dramatice ale eroilor care lasă, fără îndoială, o amprentă bogată aupra receptorilor de literatură.

Credințe, obiceiuri și practici ancestrale

În mentalul oamenilor din acest sătuc magia ocupa un loc aparte. Acceptată de unii, practicată de alții, blamată sau ocolită, nu era, însă, niciodată ignorată căci în lipsa sau alături de credință, magia, vrăjile sau descîntecele erau singurele leacuri sau protecții ce le aveau la îndemînă împotriva bolilor, a molimelor, sau pentru a îmbuna destinul, pentru a atrage sortitul sau fecunditatea. Existau o serie de practici, descîntece sau spuse aflate la îndemîna oricui, pe care le foloseau noaptea sau dimineața foarte devreme împotriva creaturilor pădurii, a „broscoilor" a „molimelor" sau a vîrcolacilor, ori le rosteau împotriva farmecelor sau a duhurilor rele ce schimbau nou-născuții sau stricau mințile tinerilor, în acest sens, romanul dovedindu-se un important document folcloric. Femeile gravide știau să descînte de moimă, nu lucrau lunea, marțea și vinerea, nu loveau pisicile și cîinii, nu priveau la orbi și șchiopi pentru a proteja copilul; mamele știau descîntece pentru somnul pruncilor și după botez își treceau coconii pe fereastră și îi așezau pe masă între două pîini.

Eva Cuha, soția brutarului, deși poreclită „Vrăjitoarea", nu avea nasul lung și „nu pregătea licori de moarte ori de dragoste, nici de acelea care să înțepenească brațele ori picioarele bărbaților ori ale femeilor din răzbunare" (83). Ea culegea ierburi din care făcea leacuri, descînta copiilor de deochi, vindeca durerea de burtă cu apă minerală de la Bicsad, „ori reușea câteodată să lege ploaia" (83). Cînd, totuși, împreună cu Mara, pregătește o licoare de moarte, în sat se iscă un potop mare. Cînd Bene o aude pe Mara murmurînd alături de mama lui „blestemul cîntat, o spaimă paralizantă îl cuprinse,

înțepenindu-l în fața ușii închise. În descântecul fetei răsuna ecoul morții" (84). Deși femeile au invocat soarele, au urmat șase zile de ploaie torențială, cu fulgere, apa cărînd „vite și păsări de curte, copaci tineri și crucile din cimitir, chiar și cîteva colibe înghițite cît ai clipi într-o îngrămădire de bîrne, de șindrile și de cadavre umflate, de pietre și mîl" (86). Oamenii rămîn fără apă potabilă și fără mîncare, fiind acum expuși molimelor, iar Mara agonizează, plină de remușcare și spaimă.

Mara crede în magie, fiind inițiată de Eva Cuha în tainele acsteia, dar, în același timp, învățătorul Moga, mentorul ei încearcă din răsputeri să o atragă din lumea periculoasă a umbrelor și a răzbunărilor spre lumea reală prin educație, prin insuflarea cunoștințelor științifice ce pot explica fenomenele lumii înconjurătoare. Tot Moga este cel care mobilizează oamenii în putere, decolmatează împreună cu Ioan izvorul și îl convinge pe Gyula să vîndă sătenilor alimente pe datorie. E momentul în care Mara cedează, acceptă căsătoria cu Ioan dacă acesta îl va învinge pe Grigor în lupta cu cuțitele. „Zarurile sunt aruncate. Potrivit obiceiului, fata e cea care trebuie să-i pună cuțitul în mînă. O rânduială ancestrală" (91).

Bătaia are loc, ca de obicei, pe malul Rîului Năpraznic, și participă toți oșenii satului, îmbrăcați în straie de sărbătoare, „Bărbații cu cojocul de pănură – guba – și cu gacii lor /.../. straițele în culori vii și clopurile" (95). Crestăturile pe care le au tinerii pe față, pe brațe, pe corp sînt semne ale bărbăției. „Nu e oșean cel care refuză moartea. A fugi din fața sfârșitului sfârșiturilor e dovadă de slăbiciune" (100). Acolo „se afla un fag, singur pe o imensă fâșie de nisip și pietriș /.../ cu scoarța cenușie, brăzdat de o mulțime de incizii comemorative" (95), vechi de sute de ani. Copacul ar fi fost sădit acolo chiar de zîna apei, are trunchiul albicios iar păsările dintre ramuri purtau sufletele morților „prin spații fără margini, într-o lentă purificare. E nevoie doar să dai dovadă de curaj și putere. Vinovatul trebuie să se tîrască de la locul pedepsei până la fag, să se sprijine de trunchi. Dacă nu, e condamnat să rămână pradă borsocoilor" (96).

Pagini memorabile descriu scadența, un moment foarte important în viața satului, și care este „Dura lege a sângelui, nemiloasă și de necontestat, care face de secole ca oșeanul să fie un împărțitor de dreptate" (98). „Jocul cuțitelor" începe cu un țipăt iscat din piepturile tuturor: „Ai țura!", care nu este un țipăt de bucurie ci un îndemn la luptă, un țipăt „care ațîță, care incită" (98). Mai întîi, pe malul răului se pornea hora, în cîntecul țiganului Bordac, pînă ce pasiunea jucătorilor se transforma în mînie. Dansul oșenesc nu este o horă ca oricare alta, este o roată în care pămîntul este călcat aprig în picioare, este tropotit, iar cîntecul nu e cîntec, în Oaș sînt „doar țipurituri – strigături improvizate de bucurie sau de ură" (99). Treptat, dansul feciorilor se iuțește, totul într-o „avalanșă ce împrăștie în fierberea sa bucăți de lemn, pietre, pietriș, transformat în praf. Cercul incandescent agită fulgerarea cuțitelor

încrucișate, strigătele anunță scadența" (102). Cînd Bardac dă semnalul, Mara ia cuțitul din straița lui Ioan și i-l dă rostind: „Secera cere sînge". Ioan și Grigor intră singuri în pădure, iar satul intră în așteptare, în ton cu „vântul, aerul, râul. Până și timpul se oprise. Oamenii simțeau că se sufocă sub un imens glob gol" (103). Ioan iese din pădure cu obrazul tăiat, cu cuțitul șiroind de sînge, în admirația mulțimii, își curăță cuțitul în apele rîului, după obicei, în vreme ce „cerul se împodobise în culorile cele mai vii, de la galbenul auriu la roșul însângerat" (103). Rănitul își petrece noaptea singur în pădure, pentru a încerca să ajungă la stejar. Dacă este considerat demn, zîna îl ajută, altfel moare singur.

În timp ce Grigor este pregătit de femei pentru priveghi, în ușa bordeiului apare capul lui Bologa, „poznaș ca o glumă a sorții" (105). Momentul schimbă radical situația. Acesta vine din America cu destui bani, cu care își cumpără doi cai și o căruță, și împăcat cu situația creată în trecut de Gyula, căci acolo a înțeles mersul economiei de piață și a învățat să nu mai urască. Nu o mai urăște nici pe Vanda, pe care o acceptă, în sfîrșit, de soție, constatînd că s-a descurcat ca o adevărată nevastă de oșean, și, treptat, acceptînd căsătoria Marei cu Ioan, se va îndepărta sufletește de fiica lui. Descrierea nunții cu obiceiurile specifice zonei – logodna, pețitul, alaiul feciorilor, al druștelor și al mulțimii, împletirea părului cu panglici, mărgele și bănuți lucitori – alături de celelalte obiceiuri oșenești prinse cu măiestrie în paginile romanului, se constituie în adevărate pagini de istorie și folclor autentic. Ioan construiește o casă pentru el și Mara, însă noua familie nu pare a fi deloc fericită. Ioan îi reproșează furios că pîntecele ei e „sărac precum pământul locului", iar Mara îi cunoaște cu spaimă latura animalică. Soțul ei devine treptat morocănos, furios, bădăran, pînă la brutalitate. Tînăra soție nu va pute uita imaginea lui Ioan din noaptea nunții, cînd s-a năpustit asupra ei transpirat, amețit de vin, cu dinții îngălbeniți de la țigări, momente în care gîndul îi zboară automat la Moga și la jurămîntul ei de a-l ucide pe Ioan.

După o iarnă grea, în care lupii au ajuns pînă la casele din marginea satului, Ioan, tot mai gelos pe Moga, pregătește o cameră pentru musafiri, cu gîndul de-a o da pe Mara acestuia, conform obiceiului căruia oșeanul își împarte cea mai mare avere, soția, cu musafirul pe care îl găzduiește.

Într-o seară, cînd Ioan era beat, ca de obicei, Mara îi aude acestuia dorința de a cumpăra „luminișurile", niște poieni din pădure dobîndite de oșeni ilegal „în urma unui act de răzvrătire" (145). Mara preia ideea lui Ioan și îi hrănește acestuia orgoliul, știind că un astfel de gest ar avea urmări deosebit de grave, că și-ar ridica tot satul împotrivă. Cînd se află de intenția lui Ioan, Eva vine la Mara aproape speriată: „- Își scoală în cap tot satul. Asta-i nebunie curată. Sărmanul! O să-l omoare" (162).

Ioan nu se teme de scadență, îi spune soției sale că dacă va muri îi lasă toți banii ei și învățătorului, iar dacă scapă își va cumpăra o fată din Tîrgul de

pe Găina ca să-i dăruiască un fecior. „Cînd provocarea se adresează întregului sat, scadența are loc fără martori" (164). De data aceasta la scadență nu a mai participat tot satul ci doar bărbații, Ioan alegînd trei dintre ei, la întîmplare, cu care să lupte. Spre seară, Cuha și învățătorul au adus trupul lui Ioan acasă, unde Mara îi aștepta „cu chipul înăsprit, închisă într-o muțenie de neclintit" (165).

De acum, jurămîntul ei era împlinit, Ioan este mort, dar ea, gîndindu-se la situația sa de femeie oșeancă, constată că a rămas singură, fără prietene, abandonată și de tatăl ce o considera acum o povară, obsedat de cîștig, singurul gînd ce-i mai rămîne Marei fiind acela de a pleca spre Tîrgul de fete unde spera că va fi cumpărată de un boieraș de țară, să poată, în sfîrșit, să înceapă și ea să își trăiască viața.

Încurajați de Moga, care le-a arătat că în pădure nu există blesteme, oamenii continuă să cultive acele pămînturi, însă, în următoarea primăvară, vine o somație de la proprietarul pădurii, baronul Dolgosy. Nedumeriți de dorințele autorităților și ale jandarmilor ce s-au deplasat înarmați în sat, oșenii s-au înșirat pe marginea pădurii, cu cuțitele în dinți, conform obiceiului lor de cînd lumea, singurele lor legi fiind onoarea și cuțitul. Cătunul era considerat de oșeni „centrul lumii", oamenii socotindu-se oșeni, aparținători ai Țării Oașului și nu înțelegeau să se supună puterilor locale.

Așa cum arătam în prima parte a lucrării noastre, Cavnicul din roman, deși este contruit, din punctul de vedere al spațialității, ca un centru, și deși izolat din punct de vedere geografic, cătunul este și se comportă ca o periferie pentru alte centre. Iar

> „raportul între centru și periferie nu este doar unul de supraveghere reciprocă (pentru că și periferia ține sub observație centrul, îl pîndește mai degrabă decît îl supraveghează), ci este și un raport de producere neîncetată a unui termen de către celălalt, a unuia prin celălalt. Centrul, consolidîndu-se, impunîndu-se ca atare, este în lumea modernă locul principal de producere a periferiei. Astfel, ar fi naiv să credem că o modernitate împlinită este aceea în care periferia ar putea fi nivelată, domesticită; dimpotrivă, succesul și deopotrivă eșecul ei constă în producția neîncetată, în proliferarea nelimitată a periferiei" (Mihali, 2005).

Cum învățătorul Moga nu îi deschide mintea doar Marei, ci și sătenilor, învățîndu-i despre drepturile lor, și ale stăpînilor, va fi acuzat și întemnițat. Acesta este declarat „provocator periculos" și „într-o noapte fără lună, când tot satul dormea, cineva bătu la ușă. Erau cinci, cu puștile la curea..." (Liman, 2019: 167). Bologa a dat alarma în sat, dar a fost prea tîrziu. Moga a fost arestat. Condiția lui Moga este una specifică pentru spațiul izolat al satului în care se petrece acțiunea, căci,

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„Atîta vreme cît centrul, de pildă, rămîne redus la funcţia lui de manifestare şi de exercitare a puterii politice, în dimensiunea ei faraonică, dominatoare, periferia, la rîndul ei, nu va fi decît locul de refugiu al tuturor celor care, fără a fi «dizidenţi», rebeli sau duşmani ai puterii, vor încerca să reziste prin eschivă, prin tăcere, prin ascundere" (Mihali, 2005).

După arestarea învăţătorului, zeci de infanterişti au invadat satul şi s-au aşezat în luminişurile din pădure. „La calici", cum numaeu localnicii locurile, le oferea oamenilor hrana necesară subzistenţei. Salvarea sătenilor a venit o dată cu ploaia, urmată de grindină şi apoi de un soare pustiitor. Recoltele au fost compromise. Oşenii erau conştienţi că le va fi greu fără mîncare, fără apă, fără Moga care să îi îndrume, predispuşi la boli şi epidemii, însă aveau satisfacţia că jandarmii au fost înfrînţi de forţele naturii şi de „sabotajul" pus la cale de Bologa. Sacagiul, prin faptul că a trăit o vreme în alt spaţiu geografic, a dobîndit o mentalitate a cîştigului. El face pace cu toţi şi îşi oferă serviciile, se îndepărtează de Mara pe care o simte ca pe o povară, importanţi pentru el devenind doar banii. Însă atunci cînd e nevoie de salvarea comunităţii el ştie să îşi ofere cunoştinţele pentru că doar uniţi, folosindu-se de strategia lui Bologa, oşenii au reuşit să scape de soldaţii care s-au retras spre Negreşti tîrîindu-se flămînzi, cu chipurile „noroioase", învinşi.

Călătoria şi evadarea din spaţiu existenţial

De sărbătoarea Sfîntului Ioan, cînd oamenii celebrează „sosirea soarelui la zenit, în punctul cel mai înalt al cerului, acolo unde promite cel mai mult, căci lumina sa încălzeşte rodul muncii", Mara, hrănită din plin de vise, poveşti şi închipuiri despre tîrgul de fete, îşi începe călătoria mult dorită.

Oşenii erau obşnuiţi cu traiul lor, cei ce munceau pămîntul cu braţele erau obişnuiţi cu drumurile şi depărtările, dar femeile nu îşi prea părăseau vatra. „Pe aici, pe la noi – spune cineva – suntem deja obişnuiţi să îndurăm foamea, setea, frigul, durerea; dar tot ce depăşeşte cu un cap acoperişurile caselor noastre e necunoscut. De necunoscut ne temem noi" (177). Mara mai priveşte o dată dansul tinerilor care era „la fel de vechi precum drumurile" (139) şi cu o bocceluţă în spate, cu „chipul destins", îmbrăcată în negru, se îndepărtează încet în noapte, la început pe poteci cunoscute, apoi pe poteci amintite de Moga în poveştile lui, temătoare noaptea şi bucurîndu-se ziua de fumuseţea „munţilor de foc", a Rîului Roşu, a podişurilor verzi sau de limpezimea cerului. Pentru ea noţiuni ca aproape sau departe sînt relative, căci nu a mai părăsit niciodată satul, aceste distanţe putînd fi apreciate doar de către cei ce caută de lucru dincolo de munte sau în satele vecine.

Bătrînului Jurj, care îi oferă hrană şi găzduire peste noapte, îi spune că a „lăsat moartea în urmă" (183) şi merge să caute viaţa. Se miră de

șteampurile întîlnite pe Rîul Roșu, la fel cum fetele întîlnite în cale se miră de poveștile ce și le închipuie Mara despre acele locuri pe care le credea binecuvîntate, istorii total diferite de realitățile crude în care trăiau și acolo oamenii, neamintind nimic de riscurile la care se supuneau căutătorii de aur și despre moartea care nu îi ocolea dar pe care o acceptau de dragul aurului.

Ultimul popas al Marei înainte de a urca pe Vîrful Găinii, îl face la Vidra, într-o crâșmă, unde un cioban o protejează de frig, îi oferă hrană și îi propune să îi fie soț. Mara îl refuză căci are un vis de urmat, trebuie să își urmeze visele și să creadă în ele, „visul m-a împins" (192), spune ea. Deși ciobanul îi spune cu mirare că e un tîrg unde se vînd produse meșteșugărești și nu fete, un loc în care se vînd „fuste țărănești, cearșafuri și prosoape /.../ chiar și ulcele și animale mari" (193), și că acolo se mai întîlnesc tinerii și dacă soarta le e hărăzitămse pot căsători, oșeanca insistă: „Oare au fost cumpărate fete azi? N-am văzut", și pleacă pe drumul ei. „Trebuie să-l caut pe omul meu. O să-l caut peste tot. Și mereu... el... Poate..." (198).

Concluzii

Iată că, pe lîngă povestea frumoasă pe care o dezvoltă gradat, alături de evoluția personajelor, prin acumulare, romanul *Scadența* este de la un capăt la altul o mărturie bogată despre obiceiurile oșenilor, despre cedințele lor, despre felul în care înțeleg ei lumea, timpul și spațiul în care viețuiesc, informații ce se dezvăluie, cum spuneam treptat, pas cu pas, fără a se epuiza pînă la final, lucru ce deschide apetitul pentru lectură. Dincolo de evenimentele bogate prin care trec eroii, dincolo de trăirile lor sufletești și relațiile pe care le întrețin cu celelalte personaje, romanul *Scadența* este important în întregul său, este o mărturie care merită transmisă generațiilor viitoare.

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FOR THE SAKE OF A LIBERALIZED ROMANIAN CULTURE! WHAT ABOUT AN INTERDISCIPLINARY AND TRANSDISCIPLINARY CANON INSTEAD OF ISOLATED MONOPOLIES WITH A SUBSCRIPTION TO THE STATE BUDGET?

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Abstract. *Fake canonizations are prevalent in the former communist countries wherein arts and culture in general may still function as propaganda weaponry at the hands of the sponsoring state. The public is almost eliminated from the process of canonization, as the publishing houses, art galleries, and cultural industries seldom survive and flourish from sales to a real public. As a rule, their rarefied public is summoned from a flimsy contingent, from the less promoted artists who try thus to conjure the benevolence of the critics and famed authors/artists, and from those who are ready to attend cultural events as long as they are financially covered by the state. For instance, a sizable percent of the funds directed towards literature from the state budget in Romania has been constantly invested in the promotion of Mircea Cărtărescu in the vain hope (so far) the Romanian literature will be awarded the Nobel Prize for literature and will cure thus a profusely nourished complex of inferiority. Maybe in the new future. Meanwhile, many more modern and impactful writers simply vanish into the abyss of anonymity as the bookshops are interested in promoting only those writers coming from publishing houses with a subscription to the state budget. This would be one explanation for the constant decrease in the public paying for literary and artistic works. The result of an haphazard process of canonization and of the lack of a free cultural market (at least 50% of investments coming from private sources) are obvious. Wherefrom the impending need of an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary super-arch-canon.*
Keywords: canon; canonicity; interdisciplinarity; transdisciplinarity; posthumanism; Romanian literature;

"Without suggesting an exhaustion of the symbolic resources of the figurative model of the mirror, we find it significant to stop at Narcissus, the first famous man fascinated by the mirroring of his own face, because his myth is the subject of a particularly long-living symbolism, but not less processual. Promoted in antiquity as quite a tragic, the young man punished by Nemesis for the pride of being self-sufficient and to have refused love, so

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the relationship, in time, will become, successively, a figure of self-reflexivity and, finally, of the amended ostentation." (Mihaela Ursa. *The Eighties and the Promises of Postmodernism,* 1999: 39 – Translations are mine, unless stated otherwise)[1].

The purpose of this article is to discuss the downsides of the literary canon in an ex-communist country. In broad lines, I shall resort to a consecrated binary description of canon-making procedures: aesthetic versus ethic, international versus Romanian, the '80s generation versus the millennials. At the same time, I will touch upon the problematic of the didactic canon, but also upon Romanian research in the field of posthumanism, transhumanism, and anateism. The article does not envisage the exhaustive analysis of the Romanian literary canon and its detailed coordinates. The aim is to trace the faults of the present process of canonization especially in those countries still haunted by the ghost of the communist centralized economy. By suggesting the implementation of an inter- and trans-disciplinary canon, I figure a way out of the labyrinth of a propagandistic and possibly distorted culture. Such a pattern is recognizable in every country where the state lavishly sponsors the mainstream culture and where a cultural free-market is impossible because the lack of a genuine competition among authors/artists.

I argue that the old type of canon, relying heavily on the best-promoted works and authors in a certain field – with the literary canon in the limelight – should be replaced with a super-arch-canon. The new canon would assume from the old one the canonization using axiological assessments and the canonicity, but otherwise it would be interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary, diminishing thus those biased valuations and promotions specific to the cultural and scientific fields when these are funded as isolated realms. In the post-industrial and technologized society, the need for a canon that could list assets from various scientific and artistic fields in parallel is manifest and stimulating. This all-encompassing chart of excellency will not cancel the specialized canons. It is similar to a certain degree to what comparative literature enacts by extracting local creations and by placing them into a larger hermeneutic context.

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[1] "Fără să ne propunem o epuizare a resurselor simbolice ale modelului figurat al oglinzii, ni se pare semnificativă oprirea la Narcis, primul celebru fascinat de oglindirea propriului chip, deoarece mitul său face obiectul unei simbolistici deosebit de longevive, însă nu mai puțin procesuale. Fundamentat de antichitate mai degrabă sub specia figurilor tragice, tînărul pedepsit de Nemesis pentru trufia de a-și fi suficient și de a fi refuzat dragostea, deci relația, va deveni în timp, succesiv, o figură a autoreflexivității și, în cele din urmă a ostentației amendate". (Mihaela Ursa. *Optzecismul și promisiunile postmodernismului*, 1999: 39)

The quarrel of the aesthetics' supporters with the ethics-and-cultural-studies' supporters

Broadly speaking, the most representative theorists oscillated between two extremes with rare situations of equilibrium and authentic interest in the selection of values. Ideologized approaches have always permeated canonicity showing that the aesthetic approach can also be biased. Even those who explicitly accuse canonization of biases do not seem to be interested in identifying firm axiological criteria, but to stigmatize the concept of the canon itself. John Guillory, for instance, considers that every canon is "infested" with ideologies and socio-cultural determinants (Guillory, 1993: 85). In Harold Bloom's view, every canon, even the counter-canon, is a form of elite gathering (Bloom, 1994: 37). However, this fact induces an agentive dominance that accompanies the processes of selection. Adjacently, imagining a canon of authors, not of contributions, implies a further form of competition. However, authors are not constant generators of masterpieces.

In spite of the risk, many international approaches to canon considered only the literary phenomenon. Thus, Damrosh (2003: 14) identified a central hypercanon and many counter-canons around it. Sell spoke about "many different canons and many different readerships" (2011: 1) and when he referred to postmodernism he viewed it as the most democratic approach checked by the cultural reality too. The democratic canon would be also a product of the dynamics of an economic system. Obviously, this is a Marxian implementation, taken further to a party-bound level by Lenin and Lukács. In fact, it is true that in those countries wherein the official culture is profusely financed by the state, the canon reflects the tastes and preferences of those cultural actors with accrued financial power. In addition, this is quite the contrary to Theodor Adorno's more elevated theory on art as a *negative apperception of the world*, a later reflection of Keats's romantic *negative capability*.

More radical is Franco Moretti who, in "The Slaughterhouse of Literature" (2000: 209), backed up the Reader-Response Criticism and diminished the role of professors in configuring canons. In his view, "distant reading" should dethrone classical hermeneutics of *close reading*, because non-academic readers are more perspicacious than their counterpart is. Examples in point are Conan Doyle, "*socially* super-canonical right away, but *academically* canonical only a hundred years later. And the same happened to Cervantes, Defoe, Austen, Balzac, Tolstoy…" (209).

One example that the discussion of canons is far from being a literati's job is that even Nicholas Sarkozy, while running for presidency, questioned the utility of studying the classics for the future workers in industry and administration. This is indicative of the risk of fencing the process of selecting values and containing it inside the circle of isolated groups of

specialists. That is why E. Dean Kolbas's recommendation of creating instruments able to regulate the process of canonicity should be still in place: "any critique or analysis of the canon must also include a metacritique of the claims that are made about it, an assessment of the social and material conditions of their own possibility" (Kolbas: 140).

The canon as a club with secret access code

Disregarding the constant checking of the conditions influencing the production of the canon can simply transform it into a coercive and corrupting enterprise. Of course, literary canons will remain *as if*, as V. Nemoianu put it (V. Nemoianu and Royal, 1991: 217), but this *als ob* must regard only the guiding purpose of the canon, not its substance. This would mainly coincide with Charles Altieri's bi-functionality of the canon: the "curatorial" function and the "normative" one (in van Halberg, 1984: 41-57). Nevertheless, Altieri also underlined the dark side of the canonizers who use the canons as "ideological banners for social groups" (53-54). Consequently, Altieri took position under the flag of those theoreticians who saw canons as weapons to use against institutional mechanisms and interests, not at all a buttress to authoritarianism, as the title of Frank Kermode's essay, "The Institutional Control of Interpretation", ominously suggests. In his turn, Stanley Fish had no illusions when it came to working in a team with the purpose of selecting values: "it is interpretive communities, rather than either the text or the reader, that produce meanings and are responsible for the emergence of formal features" (Fish, 1980: 14). One essential characteristic of canonicity would be in Frank Kermode's view the debate-open nature of those works included in the canon. They should stir constant interpretation (Kermode, 1988: 127). Jan Gorak synthesized Kermode's requirements for a canonizable work: "it is hospitable to interpretation; it has sufficient depth to support the multitude of interpretations it attracts; and […] it becomes charged with mystery as time passes" (Gorak, 1991: 153).

Contrary to these requisites came *The School of Knowingness*, as Richard Rorty baptized Harold Bloom's *School of Resentment*. "Knowingness" in this case would be a concept that aims at replacing aesthetic credentials with blunt theorizations from the realm of social sciences. Marxian thinkers have always striven to counterbalance the importance of form in aesthetics with a hyperbolized content. Nevertheless, many of them admitted (because honest enough) that art relies mainly on form – if it is to remain art and not a blunt instrument of propaganda (in Rorty, 1997: 125-140).

The median stage of the canonical debate was largely aesthetic, whereas the beginning was "cacofonic" (nobody being in the mood to listen to others) (Takaki, 2002: 137) and the present is a Postcanonical one, in

which only classical writers accumulate more canonical capital (Damrosch in Saussy, 2006: 44-46). In an aesthetic vein, Damrosch suggested the replacement of the old canonical dyad (major authors – minor authors) with a triadic hierarchy: the *hypercanon* (the classics), the *countercanon* (the "subaltern" or contesting voices), and the "canon in the shadow" (old "minor" writers unsuccessfully shortlisted for canonization by various deconstructivist orientations). Damrosch eventually came with an integrative perspective, according to which hypercanonical and countercanonical works should be grouped together for the students' benefit.

François Cusset perceived some similarities between syllabus classicization and religious proselytism: "the canonization of works brings us back both to the historical role of cultural legitimation belonging to educational institutions and, in a more proselytizing sense, to the evangelizing mission that this role of consecration implies […] Composing the canon is a practice of exclusion, a way to shut out ideas and unfamiliar forms considered as threats to the established order, and it has been that way since the second century BC, when the Romans officially, though unsuccessfully, prohibited Greek works and ideas in Roman schools" (Cusset, 2008: 167-168).

Braving the same connection with the Holy Scriptures, Mike Fleming underlined that the curricular canon revives the original meanings of the concept of *canon*: ""rule", "norm", "law" (in Sâmihăian, 2010: 11).

The Big Canon – as the container of the best-promoted works and authors - becomes a verdict, a commandment protracted by curriculum legislators. The most often invoked criterion is the representativeness of a certain writer, which can very well translate in terms of the social visibility of that literary actor. Grapes of adaptive torsion?

Canonicity in the Romanian culture

In the Romanian culture, there were three main contexts of canonization, three literary and cultural groupings: the pro-German and pro-classicist *Junimea*, the modernist *Sburătorul*, and the postmodernist *Cenaclul de Luni*. The last one benefited from a plurality of theorizations owing to the fact that many of its members graduated from the Faculty of Philology in Bucharest.

Canonicity re-emerged as a stimulating debate in Romanian culture soon after the fall of the communist regime. By *culture* I mean especially *literature*, as this cultural practice has traditionally been the most appealing to the Romanian intellectual environment.

Concerns regarding interdisciplinarity and cross-disciplinarity are of a lesser importance to the Romanian canonizing paradigm. As Mircea Martin

remarked, the canon can *coagulate* (integrating the exception), but it can also *differentiate* (promoting the exception) (in Parpală, 2008: 10).

On the Romanian cultural battlefield, there has always been the confrontation between "revisionist pluralism" and "conservative autonomism", that is, the ethic-defenders accused the aesthetic-defenders of immorality or amorality, whereas the latter suspected the former of narrow-mindedness and sheer lack of talent. On the other hand, this is the profound reality in all countries deprived of/uninterested in a genuine cultural market, or lacking in the vital communication between creators and public; namely, the canonical war is waged with budgetary funds. The best-promoted Romanian authors sell poorly in comparison to the funds invested in their public image (Țupa, 2019). When state or supra-state budgets take the forehand, critics who are obviously interested parts in the game foreground values. This seems to verify Alexandru Mușina's view on Romanian postmodernism as one "at the gates of the Orient" (Mușina, 2011: 115), or as a "socialist postmodernism" (110).

Within the frame of the aesthetic canon, there are two arch-theories: one supporting the idea of serial canonizations-decanonizations-recanonizations, the other one stating that only one canon can *subsist* in each interval. Parpală-Afana shares a Hegelian view upon projecting the canon, in three steps: canonization, de-canonization or re-canonization (2008: 181). All these are coordinated by meta-canonic reflections.

In Romania, we can identify only one canonizing circle, the aesthetic-literary one. It contains other concentric circles, but only the mainstream one will get lavish stipends from the state, so the competing canons are doomed. That is why so many writers who will never have access to those prizes which could make their works canonizable, irrespective of their value, tend to worship the Adonises of the system. They succumb to the condition of worshippers as a legitimizing consolation. The same names have been rotated to all the festivals and prizes, even if the creativity of the writers in discussion has dwindled and their public would be close to very small digits unless their books are promoted with budgetary funds. Other maneuver is to insert some writers in the school syllabus and co-interest the headmasters and teachers to acquire the specific titles for the school library or to recommend them firmly to their students. Very interesting writers like Sorina Delaskela, Diana Iepure, Valentin Nicolau, Chris Tănăsescu, Nicolae Dan Fruntelată, for instance, are hardly visible, not to say promoted by the Romanian cultural institutions.

The complex relationship between *canonicity* and *canonization*, as theorized by E. Dean Kolbas (2001, 134), is opulently show-roomed in the Romanian culture. An intellectual faction supports the aesthetic flag (without any ethic involvements), another one marches under the colors of ethicism.

The quarrel cools down when somebody resorts to the intuition to put under the microscope some intellectuals' resistance to communism. All of a sudden, both parties agree that such approach would not be relevant. Apart from Paul Goma and a few other writers belonging to *Aktionsgruppe* Banat, very few writers manifested an authentic dissidence to the communist party. In this respect, Paul Cernat glosses on "a moral-ideological Procrustean approach" (Cernat, 2010)

Two literary generations in pole positions: the 80s and the Millennials

One of the most lucid minds of the 80s generation was Alexandru Muşina. He took the liberty to quench the self-admiration of his peers. He remarked that the self-praised Romanian postmodernism was no more than a "socialist postmodernism" (Muşina, 2001: 110) and that irrespective of the local enthusiasm it was about "the postmodernism at the gates of the Orient" (115). That is why he undermined the generational canon from the inside by proposing an "existential" project, namely "noul anthropocentrism" (*the new anthropocentrism*).

Alexandru Muşina was a self-exiled of the same '80s generation. In 1996, he published *Paradigma poeziei moderne (The Paradigm of Modern Poetry)* and in 1997 *Eseu asupra poeziei moderne (Essay on Modern Poetry)*, where he accused the coryphaei of the '80s generation of communism and of Balkanism in concocting a generational network very effective in praising each other and in hunting key positions in the cultural Establishment (Muşina, 2001: 126-127).

Contemporary with these debates, the millennial writers in Romania made their debut with an obdurate contestation of the postmodern canon in Romania as the communist authorities had also adopted it. Their reaction to canonicity was a healthy one. In *The Second Tiuk Manifesto. KLU Literature (Al doilea manifest Tiuk. Literatura KLU)*, Alexandru Vakulovski, pleaded for a de-structuration of the canonical texts "monumentalized" in schoolbooks: "In order to save literature, the urgent, total disappearance of mandatory literary texts from institutions is needed. […] We have to react in the right way to the aggression of programs and official literary canon: to recognize true literature wherever it may be" (Vakulovski, 2002, in Parpală, 2008: 181).

Meanwhile, Harold Bloom's seminal study, *The Western Canon: the Books and School of Ages*, was translated into Romanian in 1998. Five years later, a bilingual anthology on this topic was published (Marin Mincu, Ion Bălu, and Leo Butnaru - *Canon şi canonizare/ Canon and Canon-Making, transl.mine,* Pontica Press). Their stances are quite related.Before these, in an article from 1997, "For a speedy ending of the aesthetic canon", Sorin

Alexandrescu highlighted the "methodological retardation of Romanian criticism" (in Parpală, 2008: 183).

The meta-literary component is salient in Mircea Cărtărescu's doctoral thesis, *The Romanian Postmodernism (Postmodernismul românesc)*, 1999. Not only did the best-promoted Romanian writer come with a monolithic and authoritative view on the canon, but he also fetishized his own poetics, to the disgrace of some of his own generation peers (Muşina, Andriescu). When theorization upon canonicity is the achievement of the active actors in the game, results can be slippery. For instance, Cărtărescu believed that the counter-canon of the 80s defended "realists" and "biographic realism", whereas Muşina hailed "the poetry of everyday life" (184). Both were in favor of sincerity, hedonism, simplified stylistics and colloquialism. Being under the same hat, Ioan Buduca proclaimed a "revolution of the subject" in the essay "Banda lui Möbius" ("Möbius's Tape"), 1984. This hailed the replacement of the impersonality of modernist poetry. The strip is a "symbolic metaphor designating indeterminacy, continuity, and interference" (Parpală, 2008: 184) and indeed it indicates the intricacies of communist postmodernism. Confessional poetry, the ethos of a real biography, and an authentic communion with the readers had already been claimed by the American poetry of the 50s and 60s and by the Beat generation. The titles of some of the Romanian postmodernists are encouraging: Cărtărescu, *Totul* (*Everything*), 1985, Romulus Bucur, *Literatură, viaţă (Literature, Life)*, 1989, Bogdan Ghiu, the poem *"Relaţia dintre noi" ("The relationship between us"*), 1989. Actually, their poems are more about "textistence" (*texistenţă*); they are artificial and coded, as Cărtărescu defined his own concept:

> *The standard-poem of the eighties tends to be long, narrative, agglutinated, with an orality well marked by special rhetorical effects, aggressive (features specific to the Beat generation); but also ironical and self-ironical, imaginative to the point of onirism, playful, displaying an uncommon prosodic dexterity, finally impregnated with scholarly cultural allusions inserted by metatextual and self-referential devices* (Cărtărescu, 1999: 154 - translation by Emilia Parpală).

The *transitive* poetry of the 80s, as Gheorghe Crăciun saw it (Crăciun, 2002: 254) was closer to the "semiotic" than to the "real". Only Muşina strove to check the concept of *transitivity* by demanding a transfer from "their stylistic intensity to the intensity of communication" (Muşina, 1999: 170). The assumed models for the Romanian poetic postmodernism were Allen Ginsberg, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Gregory Corso, the confessional poetry of Robert Lowell, and Frank O'Hara's *Personism*.

It is interesting that the pinnacle of this generation, Mircea Cărtărescu, rejected the "great literature", "too big, suffocating in its own fat" (in Parpală, 2008: 188), but he has been practicing it for so many years now:

"and poetry? I feel like the last Mohican
Ridiculous like Denver the dinosaur
The best poetry is the bearable poetry
Nothing else: just bearable
We made good poetry for ten years
Without knowing what bad poetry we were making.
We made grand literature, and now we understand
That it cannot go through the door, precisely because it's big,
Too big, suffocated in its own fat
This poem is not really a poem either
For only what is not poetry
Can endure as poetry
Only what is not poetry"[2]
(Cărtărescu, *Occidentul/The West*, 2007. Translated by Cristina Hanganu-Bresch, in Parpală, 2008: 188).

Another coryphaeus of the '80s generation, Gheorghe Crăciun, in his much-acclaimed book *Aisbergul poeziei moderne (The Iceberg of Modern Poetry)* (2002: 114-115), took distance from Hugo Friedrich and praised the transitive poetry, extracting its sap from everyday life, banality, commonalities, and objective existence. This is what the poets of this generation would have liked to achieve, but they hit the target only theoretically. Otherwise, they did not get too far away from the paradigm inflected by Friedrich (reflexivity, metaphisics, visionarism, purism, and dehumanization). Actually, the arrow aimed at neomodernists hit their own generation, as the *distance* between their theorizations and their creations is blatant. The much-claimed embrace of reality was rather wishful thinking than sheer fact. Consequently, their art changed formulae but remained elitist and permeated by cultural references. The dream of being communicative, of relying on the phatic function of language did not become reality and their discourse further needed literary initiation. Twenty years later, Adrian Urmanov wrote the manifesto of "Utilitarism" (*Utilitarianism*) and pasted it on street posts in Bucharest.

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[2] "iar poezia? Mã simt ca ultimul mohican/ ridicol asemenei dinozaurului Denver./ poezia cea mai bunã e poezia suportabilã,/ nimic altceva: doar suportabilã./ noi am fãcut zece ani poezie bunã/ fãrã sã ştim ce poezie proastã am fãcut./ am fãcut literaturã mare, şi acum înţelegem/ cã ea nu poate trece de prag, tocmai fiindcã e mare,/ prea mare, sufocatã de grãsimea ei./ nici poemu-ãsta nu-i poezie/ cãci doar ce nu e poezie/ mai poate rezista ca poezie/ doar ce nu poate fi poezie"

Actually, G. Bacovia, a subtle and intelligent writer, had landed the prosaic poeticity on the Romanian soil. His artistic means were drastically essentialized so that many critics were deceived and described his manner as monochord or simplistic. Later on, Mircea Ivănescu resumed Bacovia's approach and mixed it with American poetic strategies after WWII, but the force of suggestion did not reach the Bacovian level. Marin Sorescu also strove for the "vitalism" of poetry in the cycle "La Lilieci" using a peasant-like discursivity. Both Ivănescu and Sorescu belonged to one generation before the 80s, whereas Bacovia's creative period spanned five decades (1910-1950).

In *Valoare şi canon sau despre sinuciderea din grădina estetică a literaturii române* (*Value and Canon or about the Suicide in the Aesthetic Garden of Romanian Literature,* transl. mine, 2001), Gheorghe Crăciun ventured the term "canon-tabular" (*tabular-canon*). He tried with this to play down the prevalence of aestheticism in configuring the canon, but he did not envisage an arch-canon. Instead, he summoned north-American ideas about the de-structuring of hierarchies, the uplifting of social, contextual and ideological implications, the reception expectations and so on. Again, many aspects relate to sociology and the new political correctness. In this respect, Crăciun was the regular EU-values defender and surfed the trendiest wave. At most, his vision of the canon remained a warlike one, not in the least collaborative and improvable: "canonul e o hidră cu multe capete, unele adormite, altele (niciodată acelaşi) aflate în acţiune" ("the canon is a many-headed hydra, some heads slumbering, others (never the same) very active", transl. mine)

Romanian writers strove to stay synchronized with the European canonical paradigm and they "translated" French poststructuralism into Romanian textualism by moving the world into texts and not vice versa. As the poet and book-reviewer Romulus Bucur remarked, the postmodernism of the eighties practiced the "self-canonization" (2000: 198). In fact, the generation was heterogeneous and only its intimate core members were accommodated into the canon. However, two of the best promoted writers of the 80s generation spoke about the pluri-centrality of Romanian postmodernism and described two canonical blueprints. Mircea Cărtărescu (1999: 99, 145, 372) identified a bidirectional poetics, a two-cell nucleus (a "realist"/ "biographical" poetics of contingency, and a "textualist" poetics) and other two *marginal* directions ("minimalism and neo-expressionism"). Ioan B. Lefter (*apud* Parpală, 2008: 189) listed three sub-canons: the *prosaics*, the *conceptualists*, and the *moralists*. As we notice, these groupings are not so much selective as they are distributive, with didactic applications. Describing these categorizations, Parpală Afana considers that the "biographic prosaism" would imply the emergence of the referential and

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phatic function of poetry (189). "The 'real' of the '80s is not the reality as such but a semiotized referent, hostile or indifferent to human acts. Meta-transitivity is often accompanied by a rhetoric of referentiality" (23-24).

The poets of the Millennium drastically cut down on the quantity of aestheticism from their new type of authenticity: "while the textualists of the eighties based their semiotic discourse on dialogism and polyphony, the young post-postmodern poets bring forth the corporeality, the contingency and the communication with the reader" (Parpală, 2008: 192). If postmodernists condescended to kitsch, post-communist literati felt entitled to take the experiment further and to catch up with the censured slangy and erotic language of the vanguardist currents of the first half of the 20th century. "The isomorphism between poetry and media discourse" (*ibidem*) was a step further from the aesthetic canon and benefited a literature that had gravitated tiresomely around excessive stylistics and literary narcissism for almost five decades of communism.

Parpală Afana also describes a post-postmodern counter-canon populated by the generation of the Millennium: "a poetry of crisis, assertive in avant-garde style, isomorphous with the socio-cultural paradigm and paradoxically centred on the thesis of poetry as a communication act" (190). I would not rely so much on the synchronization of the whole production of this generation with the post-postmodern paradigm. Actually, millennials contested the entextualization of the '80s and '90s generations and plunged deeply into the outskirts of cities and into their own cenesthesia. These had been spaces unexplored programmatically until then in Romanian poetry, so it was an impending inner synchronization. This "nihilistic radicalism" (190) asked indeed for a new type of authenticity in which the way of living should get closer to the manner of writing. The "exorcising of obscenity, the visceralising of autobiography" (190) were only an ingredient in a heterogeneous mixture. Elena Vlădăreanu, a representative poet of the Millennium generation, emphasized also the rhetoric of otherness, which meant a gap between poetic generations, but her arguments betrayed a generational rhetoric (Vlădăreanu, 2004: 327). It is not about an *open* otherness, but about a limited shared one, the otherness of a club accessible only to writers with a common *Weltanschauung*. History repeats, generations strive for the power to canonize their own production.

The evolution of these two generations has been tortuous and revelatory in the end: many representatives of the postmodernist generation of the '80s who complained that the communist regime deprived them of a surrounding postmodernity plunged into the cultural social after the 1989 Revolution. Millennials started by accusing the '80s generation of lack of authenticity and by promoting a synergy of life and literature, but ended up themselves as solid pillars of the Establishment and quite attached to a

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cultural vision upon the canon, in trend with whatever new criteria of representativeness may shore up.

Aesthetics or cultural political correctness?

Without denying the significance of the canon, Adrian Dinu Rachieru contested however the utility of a "canonical" literary history in a culture obsessed with lists" (Rachieru, 2009: 10). The arrow targets a certain aesthetic forgery incumbent to a literary world irrigated by funds sourcing from state treasury and not from a viable market. As it were, Romanian literature persists in a communist-like system, which is very suspicious of liberalization.

There were voices who changed the angle and said the canon is a "fraudulent import" in this culture which has been oscillating between Occident and Orient for three centuries. Such an approach inevitably leads to the replacement of the national canon with a generational one.

Again, defending the aesthetic stance, Rachieru enunciated three invariables in the construction of the canon: 1). the canon should be a collective accomplishment, not the dictate of a certain literary critic; 2). the canon has national varieties; 3). the fundament of the canon is aesthetic (11). As we can see, this understanding of the canon is restrictive and looks like an inheritor of Harold Bloom's vision (frequently quoted). On the other hand, Rachieru conceded that a culture might benefit of the myths surrounding it. This means that the canon can be used, as any other form of art, to promote an imagological kit. It would be hard to deny the marketable efficiency of the canon, but it would be also hard to take an oath on the honesty and lucidity of the canon-makers.

One of the most academic-established books to defend the aesthetic canon in Romanian culture was Adrian Marino's *Hermeneutica ideii de literatură* (*The Hermeneutics of the Idea of Literature,* my translation) from 1987. Right at the start, Marino offered *Indications for the Method*, in a Cartesian spirit. In his view, there exists a *correct* method for interpreting and understanding literary texts, an *Auslegungkunst* (11). However, unaccustomed to the multi-party system as Romania was - because the communist regime dissolved other parties, the competition as it were -, the cultural atmosphere after the Revolution was imbued with ideological bias, almost like there existed a leftist and a rightist approach to the canon. The leftists contest the aestheticism in isolation alongside the Marxist considerations, whereas the rightists support the aesthetic criteria by themselves. Among these two groupings are the moderate leftists who plead in favor of a canon of the minorities; they are also called the *pluricanonicals* (Nicolae, 2006: 100).

After the anti-communist revolution from 1989, intellectuals split into two camps: on the one hand, the ones who defended the New Criticism stance – isolation from the political and social context; on the other hand, the ones who shared the New Historicist approach, namely the canon could not get back its authenticity without exposing the political and historical compromises or the agenda of many writers during communism and even post-communism. Virgil Nemoianu ardently pleaded for the theoretical synchronization of the Romanian cultural context. This may have sounded optimistic, but it was not more than the reiterative obsession of many Romanian theoreticians of getting rid of Mihai Eminescu, their national poet (the article "Despărţirea de Eminescu"/ "Goodbye Eminescu"). The new reasons for this expurgation were not aesthetic, but social and ideological (conservatism, past-oriented views, political incorrectness).

In the 1990s, there blew a wind of pluralism and deconstructionist rhetoric, but the means of analysis were the classical aesthetic-modernist ones. In this conservative way, many ideological exaggerations were avoided, at least. Even the collective efforts of some young writers to dismember the myth of the Romanian national poet (M. Eminescu) ended up in a sort of self-mythologizing complaint.

The intellectuals gathered around the progressive cultural journal *Observator cultural* contested the aesthetic canon but only to replace it with a canon founded this time on the categories of the political correctness in vogue after 1990s. In their opinion, the literary canon should be a reflection of such issues: gender equality, positive discrimination, minorities' rights and so on and so forth. The retarded Romanian postmodernist canon had not had the slightest idea about a cultural canon with another center than literature. Theirs was a paradoxical stance: literature should remain in the limelight, but its appraisal should be done with new instruments, not with authentic literary (read *aesthetic*) tools.

On the other hand, it came just normal to the former Soviet-and-Sovietized area to hold in high esteem the aesthetic autonomy after so many decades of blunt and gross scientific materialism and of stultifying ideological imprint. It must be admitted, nonetheless, that because of the successive waves of Stalinism – the latter-day ones being also nationalist – many intellectuals emerged from communist regimes with an unquenched desire to be absorbed into an Occidental empire (already politically correct) as a guarantee to their freedom.

What about a nice and clean didactic canon?

A canonizing ideology tends to boost the *didactic canon* against the aesthetic canon. This new canon would impersonate capitalist traits: communicability, efficiency, pragmatism, shallowness. Such would be the

contemporaneous counter-canon. The didactic canon would necessitate refurbished teachers, imbibed with courses of pedagogy to the detriment of their own specialties.

The *didactic canon* absorbs samples of literary writings in relation to the diversity of their discourse, not necessarily to their aesthetic qualities. On October 31, 2000, "Observator cultural" sheltered a debate on the post-communist curriculum ("Programe deschise, elastice" – "Open, flexible syllabi", transl. mine) stressing the importance of training competences and abilities, not contents, while studying literary texts in high school. The new keyword was "discourse", replacing the old king "masterpiece". The abilities to communicate and to come with personal points of view popped up in vogue.

In *La décanonisation et les manuels (alternatifs) de littérature roumaine*, Elisabeta Roşca remarked that between 1990 and 1993 the historical study of literature was given up in favor of a multiplied approach, from cultural to axiological (Roşca, 1998: 288). The new perspective was less aesthetic-obsessed and capable of looking around to the adjacent mentalities and social tastes wherefrom the works of art sprang. Fictional and aesthetic literature was finally placed in the same entourage with frontier-texts: para-literary and non-fictional. The vertical approach to literature was replaced by a horizontal one. This quasi-democratization made many texts within the canon more palatable, as what mattered was not their aesthetic backbone any longer. the Cultural Establishment - those in power and those in opposition together -, convened upon a series of unbeatable authors, while others may be in favor or in disfavor of one of the parties. Inescapably, the core of the literary canon is gilded and praised. Meanwhile, there have been uninterrupted quarrels between those who supported alternative school books, varying in content, and those who defended an official hardline of truth to teach in schools. Postmodernists/ globalists/ relativists against high modernists/ localists/ essentialists. Irrespective of the "alternativity" of schoolbooks, almost everybody concedes to the idea that some truths are more valid than others are.

Posthumanism, anateism, and transhumanism in Romanian theorizations

The futility of both approaches discussed above is proved by the latest developments in literary and cultural experiments, debated upon in Romania almost concomitantly with the debates abroad. Aesthetics and science come along nicely in the healthy environment of people sincerely preoccupied with knowledge, not with rankings.

Robert Cincu (in *Vatra*, no. 3-4/2017, pp. 82-86) contended that posthumanism did not open a completely new paradigm; it only marked a

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chronological stage after the demise of postmodernism and postmodernity. He sagaciously underlined that posthumanism is not identical with the anti-humanism, transhumanism, or cyberpunk. Nevertheless, he embraced the views of Luca Valera ("Posthumanism. Beyond Humanism?", in *Cuadrenos de Bioetica*, XXV, 2014/, pp. 481-491) and Rosi Braidotti (*The Posthuman*, 2013) regarding the separation of transhumanism (which exalts the technological enhancement of humanity) from posthumanism (which deplores the alienation provoked by technology). Many researchers perceive transhumanism as the dystopian side of posthumanism, circumscribing it to an all-encompassing paradigm. However, Cincu himself produced a remark that absorbs him into the larger theorizing contingent; namely, he admitted that the transhumanist utopia is the posthumanist dystopia. In the end, the supporters of the two smaller and opposed trends arrived at the conclusion that posthumanism is in fact a neo-humanism.

Another category subsumed to posthumanism would be the *anateism*, an –*ism* that heralded the revival of the human and of God, after Nietzsche and Foucault had announced their respective deaths. A further split distinguishes between a soft and a hardcore posthumanism. Robert Cincu exemplifies the former with the analysis made by Slavoj Žižek (in How to Read Lacan) on comedy series. Here, the phenomenon of canned laughter indicates the fact that machines not only did subvert human labour (in modernity), but they finally replaced human feelings. This is a type of subtle robotization. The hardcore perspective has as points of reference movies as Terminator (where a cyborg longs to become human – which is a posthuman hint), and Star Wars (where transhumanism and anateism are synthesized in Darth Vader, a character who is both cyborg and devotee of an ancient religion, worshipping the Force).

Vasile Mihalache took side with the super-paradigm that would include more Posthumanisms. He was able to identify the roots of the new philosophy in the theorizing of the "masters of suspicion" (Nietzsche, Freud, and Marx), as Paul Ricoeur calls them in De l'Interprétation: Essai sur Freud.

Posthumanism would be indebted to the negative criticism practised by anti-humanism. However, posthumanism is descriptive and affirmative, as it aims at establishing a new series of concepts and a new ethics, appropriate for the contemporary world (see Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto", or McKenzie Wark, "Information wants to be free (but is everywhere in chains)"

Curiously enough, Vasile Mihalache told posthumanism from transhumanism when he contended that the latter remained, paradoxically, encapsulated in the humanist ideology. That means that the Cartesian duality mind/body persists in the technology-obsessed world and is corroborated with the idea that human consciousness could be transferred to a machine.

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Continuing to mix theoretical stances, Vasile Mihalache described cyborgs/gamers/hackers as heroes of posthumanism, heroes without a stable ontology. The posthuman identity stays fluid and multiple (Haraway, The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others, 1992; Hayles, How We Became Posthuman). For posthumans, consciousness would be only an entity that was granted exaggerated powers by the linguistic turn.

Conclusions: what if they are siblings?

In a country wherein official culture is profusely sponsored by the state even after the fall of communism, we cannot shy away from the possibility that institutionalized culture dictates the canon without negotiation. Only those who are willing to conjure the goodwill of critics and officials have a good chance to be brought up to light. In this way, the mainstream canon mirrors not only the aesthetic or heteronomic realities, but also all the inequities of a society at a given moment.

Across this article, I pinpointed the contingency of the piecing together the canon as various researchers expressed it. The translation is: you are on friendly terms with the gallerists, your work will be exhibited and the public will visualize it; otherwise, irrespective of its intrinsic qualities, it will vanish. This is the reason for which I turned myself towards a more comprehensive and less socially empowered canon. The super-arch-canon, by putting in parallel values selected from various fields, becomes a second selection in itself, a bird's eye view canon that reveals weird non-synchronicities and disparities. An overall quality measurement is possible as everything is a form of creation. It is simply futile to overprize the literary canon.

We should study the problems of canonization and of canonicity from a specific angle in the ex-communist countries. One may find in this area inferiority complexes and a hysteric volition of synchronicity with the West translated into prize hunting. Especially in the case of Romania, there is a huge frustration because of not having secured a Nobel Prize for literature until now. The implied risk is to get into a situation of all hat and no cattle, idiomatically speaking. This is the reason for the smooth cooperation between those who defend an aesthetic-founded canon and those who reclaim ethic clarifications or a canon built in accordance with the standards propounded by cultural studies and the correspondent political correctness; or the final agreement between the '80s generation and the millennials, after initial accusations of inauthenticity on the part of the latter. Convulsions have been registered on the configuration of the didactic canon, as schoolbooks are preeminent in consecrating representative writers. In this state-budgeted, monopolized and quite provincial cultural context, the only dynamic debates around canonicity are those revolving around posthumanism, transhumanism,

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and anateism. An interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary super-arch-canon, paralleled by a liberalized cultural market are the only democratic solutions for transforming the Romanian culture into a less parochial one.

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Theatre

INTERTEXTE ET MÉTATHÉÂTRE DANS LES PIÈCES D'INSPIRATION TCHÉKHOVIENNE DE MATÉI VISNIEC

INTERTEXT AND METATHEATRE IN MATÉI VISNIEC'S PLAYS INSPIRED BY A.P. CHEKHOV'S DRAMATIC WORKS

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Abstract: *Beyond their psychological realism and questionable symbolism, some of A.P. Chekhov's plays also manifest a self-referential and metadramatic/ metadramaturgical component of implicit theatrical po(i)etics. This is an aspect rather ignored by Chekhov's critics and linked to the crisis which, according to Peter Szondi, occurs in European drama around 1880. Matéi Visniec draws attention to it and exploits it in his own creation, in plays such as "La machine Tchékhov" [The Chekhov Machine], "Nina ou De la fragilité des mouettes empaillées" [Nina or About the Fragility of Stuffed Seagulls], in close connection with the postmodern preference for intertextual and self-referential writing.*
Keywords: intertextual; poetics; metatheatre; Visniec; Chekhov;

En dehors du réalisme dit psychologique et de leur symbolisme discutable, certaines pièces d'Anton Pavlovitch Tchékhov renferment aussi la composante autoréférentielle et métadramat(urg)ique d'une po(ï)étique théâtrale implicite. Presque ignorée par l'exégèse tchékhovienne, cette modalité de la réflexion sur le phénomène théâtral va de pair avec ce que Peter Szondi, dans sa *Théorie du drame moderne* (1983)*,* désignait par la « crise du drame » européen après 1880. Matéi Visniec attire l'attention là-dessus et développe tout cela dans sa propre création théâtrale, en liaison directe avec la préférence des postmodernes pour l'écriture intertextuelle et autoréférentielle. Toujours dans une perspective inter- et métathéâtrale, Visniec entame aussi un dialogue avec Beckett, dans son *Dernier Godot*. Le lecteur ou le spectateur récent, qui ne commence à lire ou voir du théâtre ni avec Shakespeare, ni avec Tchékhov, ni

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avec Beckett *et comp.* peut les découvrir pourtant par l'intermédiaire de Visniec et peut ensuite les approfondir à son propre compte. Visniec devient ainsi un allié astucieux du professeur de littérature comparée. Chez lui, les classiques acquièrent un *look* frais.

Une lettre à (propos de) Tchékhov: avant-goût du théâtre de l'absurde

Anton Pavlovitch Tchékhov et Matéi Visniec semblent avoir en commun plus qu'une simple coïncidence biographique, le même jour de naissance. Visniec lui-même ne cache pas cette liaison. La preuve en est la *Lettre à Tchékhov* qui préface une de ses pièces, *Nina ou De la fragilité des mouettes empaillées* (2011). « Le maître » russe s'est laissé un certain temps disputer entre « un grand médecin » et « un grand malade », jusqu'à ce qu'il eût donné gain de cause au dernier et se fût retiré de la scène. Après un siècle d'absence, Visniec le réinvite sur la scène et mélange ses paroles et ses silences avec les répliques des personnages. Visniec ouvre les frontières de la dramaturgie de son confrère, et les personnages de ce dernier passent en toute liberté d'une pièce à l'autre, surpris d'habiter le même texte, *La machine Tchékhov*, fabriqué par Visniec des matériaux empruntés à son devancier russe. Un texte où les créatures fictionnelles de Tchékhov se retrouvent face à face avec celui-ci et annotent à l'improviste sa biographie. Méticuleux ou simplement familiers, ils n'hésitent pas à établir son emploi du temps : « vous avez encore quelques jours à vivre et vous quittez votre lit dès que je m'endors » se lamente d'un air réprobateur auprès d'Anton Pavlovitch la vielle bonne Anfisa, déplacée temporairement, dans l'intérêt de la littérature, de la tchékhovienne *Trois sœurs* dans *La machine...* de Visniec (2005). Celle-ci est une sorte de *Rubik's cube* fait de fragments de théâtre tchékhovien, remis dans un nouveau contexte qui est celui des phantasmes dramaturgiques de Visniec. Chez ce dernier, Tchékhov laisse ses personnages vaquer à leurs affaires et tourne avec tact et délicatesse parmi eux, jusqu'au dernier sifflement du train qui le fait de nouveau sortir de scène.

Explicitées d'une certaine manière dans la *Lettre* qui commence par la formule affectueuse « Cher Anton Pavlovitch », les pièces *La machine Tchékhov et Nina ou De la fragilité des mouettes empaillées* sortent du « chapeau » et du « manteau » que Bobik tend au « Maître » dans la scène de la séparation sur le quai, à la fin de la première pièce. Il ne s'agit pas du *Manteau* de Gogol, dont naîtraient, selon Dostoïevski, les grands prosateurs russes du XIXe siècle. Noble ruiné, et, autant que Visniec le sache, ancien concierge dans un hôtel de luxe à Nice, après la révolution bolchévique, Bobik n'aurait pas pu les confondre. Le « manteau » de Tchékhov flotte au gré du vent derrière lui – dans la *Lettre*, Visniec fournit des arguments convaincants dans ce sens –, au-dessus des expérimentations de l'avant-garde du théâtre européen du milieu du XXe siècle,

au-dessus de Ionesco, de Beckett, de tous les pères fondateurs et des humbles épigones du « théâtre de l'absurde ».

Les arguments de Visniec, dans sa *Lettre à Tchékhov* (2011) – la fragilisation du personnage, de l'action, de la conversation, le tout dans une atmosphère de routine et de crépuscule – on les retrouve aussi chez les exégètes de Tchékhov et du théâtre moderne. Dans le théâtre de Tchékhov, le drame des héros ne réside plus « dans l'action, mais dans leur incapacité d'agir », remarquait Sophie Laffitte (2000: 745-753). Leurs dialogues « ratés » ressemblent plutôt à des « monologues réussis », (Solomon, 1967).

De Tchékhov à Pirandello, puis à Ionesco et à Beckett, « la machine » du théâtre perd son aplomb héroïque de l'époque classique et l'allure de la « pièce bien faite ». En échange, l'homme fantoche, l'attente *sine die* à la place de l'action et, finalement, le dialogue des sourds ou le rabâchage sur rien, l'apathie assourdissante s'y installent. Souvent, les personnages tchékhoviens laissent l'impression de s'enfoncer chacun dans son propre monde, sans réussir de combler par la conversation le vide qui existe entre eux. Le vieux Firs n'entend plus bien et répond à tort et à travers aux questions de Liubova Andreevna qui le remercie : « Lioubov : […] *Je te remercie, Phyrse, merci, mon cher vieux. Je suis si heureuse de te trouver encore en vie !/ Phyrse: Avant-hier…/ Gaïev: Il a l'oreille un peu dure* » (Tchékhov, 1922: 32). Enfant du cirque, issue d'une famille de comédiens qui lui ont appris dès sa tendre enfance à faire des sauts de la mort, la gouvernante Charlotte Ivanovna passe par la dérive typique du personnage tchékhovien : le tâtonnement à travers sa propre vie, l'incertitude sur sa propre identité et l'incapacité de se retrouver par la liaison avec les autres :

> « *d'où suis-je, qui suis-je ? Je l'ignore… Quels étaient mes parents? Il se peut qu'ils n'aient jamais été mariés… qu'en sais-je ?* ». « *Je n'en sais rien. […] Je n'ai personne, moi. […] Tous ces gens sensés sont si stupides, et je n'ai personne à qui me confier… Seule, toujours seule… Et… et qui suis-je ? Pourquoi suis-je ? Je l'ignore* » (55).

Epikhodov anticipe Vladimir et Estragon, incertains aux confins de l'existence: «*Dois-je vivre ou tout simplement me brûler la cervelle? Néanmoins, j'ai toujours un revolver sur moi ; le voici* » (55). Ania (pres)sent l'angoisse des personnages du « théâtre de l'absurde » : « *Des quatre nuits de voyage, je n'ai pu dormir… je suis transie* » (23).

Dans la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle, ce sont donc justement les pylônes du théâtre réaliste européen, en tout premier lieu Tchékhov, qui préfigurent sa transformation en autre chose. Cette transformation conduira aux expérimentations du milieu du XXe siècle, et notamment au soi-disant « théâtre de l'absurde ». (La réserve contre cette dénomination a été exprimée

aussi par ceux qui ont imposé la nouvelle structure dramatique, Ionesco et Beckett).

Nina ou De la fragilité des mouettes empaillées

Théâtre sur le théâtre – Visniec sur Tchékhov –, les pièces méta- et intertextuelles du premier trouvent un précédent chez le second, dans *La Mouette*, par exemple. Ainsi, *Nina* de Visniec sort de *La Mouette* tchékhovienne. À un certain moment, des enfants accompagnés de leurs parents et professeurs tombent par hasard, dans *Nina*, sur le trio sentimental de *La Mouette*, trio transféré par Visniec aux temps de la Révolution bolchévique. Les enfants ouvrent de grands yeux, comme devant un jeu de fantômes au musée de la littérature. La vie est passée dans la fiction, et les personnages – écho imaginaire de la vie –, sont passés dans l'histoire littéraire; la vie est devenue texte, et le texte, de la poussière d'archive. Des êtres vivants pour toujours dans leurs biographies imaginaires, les personnages de Visniec (empruntés à Tchékhov) restent illusoirement immobiles, comme devant une caméra, dans la vitrine du musée de la littérature, devenu une sorte de capsule du temps.

Mircea Ghiţulescu (2010) considérait que de cette manière « Visniec nous conduit vers l'au-delà, où l'on retrouve Tchékhov et ses personnages », « les morts amoureux (Kostia, Nina, Trigorine) » ; bien plus, les deux premiers « veulent quitter cette maison hantée et changer le monde ». Interprétation séduisante, mais peut-être que « l'au-delà » n'est pas le pays des revenants ranimés, mais le pays de la fiction dont les personnages s'évaderaient pour sauver le monde contre l'amnésie, et eux-mêmes contre l'inanité. Le syndrome est ancien, Alonso Quijano, qui s'est (ré)inventé en tant que personnage sous le nom de Don Quichotte, prêt à sauver le monde par la force de l'illusion, en souffrait lui aussi. Avec la rentrée de Nina et avec le sifflement froid de la Révolution, Visniec chasse l'air de résignation de la maison de Treplev. *The wind of change* s'empare de Nina qui a hâte de jouer de nouveau, de vivre sur la scène, car le théâtre semble avoir la même nature que la vie dont il ne se sépare que par la concentration.

> « Il y a des gens qui entrent dans la maison. Mais ils n'ont pas de mauvaises intentions. Ils entrent ici comme dans un musée. Et nous trois, nous sommes trois statues de cire... Et ils viennent nous voir. […] Oui, pour eux nous sommes des êtres d'un autre temps... des êtres un peu bizarres, avec nos vêtements et nos attitudes... Tout ce que nous avons pensé, ressenti, aimé est devenu pour eux si superflu, si amusant même... Kostya, nous sommes des pantins dans un musée du passé. Il faut partir d'ici, vite. Il faut s'arracher à ce lieu. Partons à Saint-Petersbourg ; il y a des gens qui y meurent dans les rues, il y a des gens qui y croient en quelque chose de nouveau : la révolution.

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> Allons nous joindre à eux pour rester vivants, Kostya. [...] J'ai envie
> de jouer à nouveau devant tous ces gens paumés, humiliés, affamés
> qui font la révolution » (Visniec, 2011: 46-47).

L'enthousiasme révolutionnaire de Nina est contagieux, Treplev en devient aussitôt la victime : « Oui, Nina, demain on va partir pour faire la révolution ». (La scène rappelle en quelque sorte, mais dans un registre plus grave, les discussions sur le même thème d'Efimita avec Conu Leonida, chez I. L. Caragiale). Plus conservateur, Trigorine reconnaît qu'il n'a jamais été « fasciné par l'idée de révolution ». « *Les révolutions n'ont jamais abouti à rien. La seule révolution que l'humanité aurait dû faire, c'est de rendre les gens plus humains* » (38). Il aime plutôt son rôle de spectateur de l'histoire dont il connaît déjà le scénario : « notre monde » – (pré)voit-il – « s'écroule » frappé par « quelque chose qui arrive », par « une nouvelle forme de folie historique », une folie « qui va peut-être nous balayer tous » (48).

Chez Tchékhov, on le sait, le temps est un « supra-personnage ». Le présent tchékhovien reste occulté par la perspective du passé – celle des souvenirs –, ou bien par la perspective d'un futur incertain, où les attentes se projettent comme une compensation pour les frustrations quotidiennes. Nina de Visniec est dans un conflit perpétuel avec tout ce que les traces du temps lui restituent – tout d'abord, avec le miroir et le tic-tac affolant de la montre. Quand l'encre gèle, et la plume se fige dans le cube noir, Treplev renonce à écrire. « C'est un signe que le monde n'a plus besoin de paroles », que « tout a été dit », que Dieu « a gelé » les mots et il est prêt à les congédier. Bref, « c'est fini ». C'est juste alors que Nina se met à écrire. Elle a beau écrire, car « les mots écrits avec de l'encre gelée s'effacent presque tout de suite » (57-60). Pourtant elle écrit imperturbablement à Kostea, en répondant à ses lettres reçues quinze ans auparavant. C'est sa manière à elle d'apprivoiser le temps. Elle le pare un peu à la manière de Proust, cherchant à refaire le passé des miettes, à imaginer même un futur dans le passé.

La frénésie avec laquelle elle approuve la révolution, en projetant hâtivement d'y prendre part, n'est qu'une cure de présent, un supplément vital, un remède contre l'angoisse du temps, un temps trop en arrière, moins en avant. Il y a des choses que Nina ne se rappelle plus parce qu'elle ne le veut pas; ces choses font partie d'un passé embarrassant. Par exemple, la mouette fusillée des années auparavant par Kostea, offerte comme une terrifiante promesse. Nina, « la Mouette » tchékhovienne, tremble maintenant comme un hibou qui fait le mort. Tout comme le personnage balzacien, elle voit *la peau de chagrin* se rétrécir : « *les hiboux, lorsqu'ils sont en danger, lorsqu'ils sont chassés par un prédateur, font brusquement les morts pour ne pas être croqués par leurs méchants ennemis* ». « *Je suis un hibou* », « *je suis venue ici pour faire le mort, pour que l'ogre qui me poursuit depuis quinze*

ans ne me voie pas », partage Nina à Kostea ses peurs et ses trucs de survivante (26-27). Finalement, l'attente partagée par les deux rivaux, Treplev et Trigorine, semble être une réplique à l'attente beckettienne. Et tout comme celle-ci, c'est l'une à n'en plus finir.

La machine Tchékhov

La machine Tchékhov est une rétrospective tchékhovienne, étalée dans une sorte de pièce-wagon – un enchaînement de plusieurs moments dramaturgiques, chacun inspiré d'une pièce ou l'autre de l'écrivain russe et de sa biographie. La liaison entre elles est assurée par deux personnages, Tchékhov et le Passant. Pris de *La cerisaie,* le dernier est toujours à la recherche de la Gare Nicola. Les deux passent par chaque scène et de l'une à l'autre, comme des voyageurs qui traversent le train d'un bout à l'autre. Le Passant est ici le confident de Lopakhine, là l'interlocuteur météorique de Tuzenbach et de Solionîi qui trompent le temps en fumant ensemble (non pas la pipe de la paix), dans l'attente de leur fameux duel. Discret, le Passant fait à peine remarquer sa présence dans la scène où les trois médecins de l'organigramme de Tchékhov (Astrov, Cebutîkin et Lvov) se réunissent pour constater son décès. (Une marotte de la théorie littéraire de souche barthésienne – « la mort de l'auteur » – dans la traduction libre de Visniec). Enfin, le Passant engage une conversation avec les trois sœurs, qui avant de partir pour Moscou, viennent saluer le dramaturge le jour même de sa mort, le 2 juillet. Tour à tour, Tchékhov change le pansement de Treplev, qui enveloppe la plaie faite après sa première tentative de suicide; il assiste au duel des rivaux des *Trois sœurs*; il rend visite à Firs – le vieux valet que personne n'a vu dès le départ de tous à la gare et qu'on a oublié enfermé dans la maison, près de la cerisaie d'autrefois.

Toujours dans *La machine...,* on revoit Ana Petrovna d'*Ivanov* tchékhovien. Le cœur gros et souffrant de tuberculose, elle apprend au dramaturge russe à mourir. Appelés à constater son décès, les trois médecins se lancent en jugements pleins d'humour noir, sur les mérites littéraires du défunt : « *pour résumer, le cadavre de Tchékhov fait quand même partie de la série des grands...* » ; « *le roi de l'âme slave est mort. Vive le roi !* », Astrov ne cesse-t-il pas de parler dans une note de festivisme comique et macabre (Visniec, 2005: 39-41). Tout d'un coup, Tchékhov sort de son rôle de mort, « enlève le drap et se redresse sur son lit », et se confesse pas du tout humblement, presque à la manière de Cioran : « Je hais Dieu, en fait, parce qu'il n'existe pas… » (41). Dans la dernière scène, Tchékhov revient *post-mortem* revoir sa maison de Yalta qu'il aime « tellement », comme il le fait « tous les cinq, six ans ». « Discrètement, silencieusement », « mêlé aux touristes qui viennent visiter la villa », nous dévoile Bobik, qui passe par un

cumul de fonctions et par la bienveillance de Visniec, au poste de « gardien-jardinier » (54-55).

Treplev de Tchékhov perçoit sa propre condition d'écrivain comme un apprentissage décourageant, sans aucun sens et aucune perspective. Il devient chez Visniec le disciple par excellence. C'est pour lui que Trigorine de *Nina* et Tchékhov de *La Machine* soutiennent une sorte d'atelier de *creative writing*. Les deux l'initient aux fondements de la poétique tchékhovienne : la concision, le naturel, la « simplicité » et la « vérité » qui « va émouvoir tout le monde ». C'est la vérité de la vie, une mêlée inextricable du tragique et du ridicule, de la noblesse et de la mesquinerie. Dans le plus pur style tchékhovien, tout cela vient s'ajouter à « l'objectivité absolue » du « témoin impartial », comme disait le dramaturge russe. Selon Tchékhov, l'objectivité n'exclut pas la solidarisation empathique, « la tendresse » selon ses propres dires, envers les humains et les personnages dans lesquels ils se reflètent. Des effluves de tendresse lient le Tchékhov de Visniec à ses personnages, dont il peut constater la frêle réalité sur le vif, en dehors de leurs corps livresques, faits de lettres et d'encre : « *avec une certaine grâce même* », il « *commence à défaire le pansement qui entoure la poitrine de Treplev* » et lave la plaie qu'il s'est faite lors de sa première tentative de suicide (17). Avant de lui confier Treplev, Arkadina « dépose un tendre baiser sur le front de Tchékhov » (16-17). Chez Visniec, l'écrivain et médecin russe remplace avec succès son collègue du corps médical, vainement attendu vers la fin de *La Mouette*, pour des soins semblables.

La Mouette tchékhovienne, une poétique (méta)théâtrale

Comme déjà dit plus haut, les pièces mêmes de Tchékhov comprennent la composante d'une po(ï)étique théâtrale implicite. Treplev de *La Mouette* est la figure de l'alternative théâtrale que Tchékhov laisse entrevoir, en réponse à sa propre poétique réaliste. Le spectacle mis en scène par le fils d'Arkadina dans le parc du manoir est un exemple de théâtre dans le théâtre. Ce motif ancien, qui remonte à Shakespeare et aux baroques, est ingénieusement récupéré par Tchékhov. En réponse à ce qui se passe sur la scène, le monde du manoir offre un spectacle des observateurs. Leurs opinions sont plutôt divergentes en ce qui concerne le texte, sa mise en scène, le théâtre en général, les « anciennes » et les « nouvelles » formes dramatiques, ces dernières étant reçues tant avec intérêt, tant avec réticence. L'actrice débutante n'est pas d'accord avec le dramaturge, celui-ci n'est pas d'accord avec une autre actrice, déjà une diva, sa propre mère, qu'il irrite cérémonieusement avec des répliques de *Hamlet*. Entre Treplev et Dorn, plus *open-minded* qu'il ne paraît, il y a une surprenante affinité quant à l'écriture et au spectacle. Dorn est plus ouvert, plus intuitif, il a un goût plus certain sur l'avant-garde que les artistes eux-mêmes. Entre les rivaux, Treplev et

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Trigorine, un accord sur l'innovation littéraire est encore possible. Les deux l'apprécient, mais seul le premier la met en pratique. L'autre, écrivain de *mainstream*, l'évite dans un souci de confort que lui confèrent le succès, l'habitude et les lieux communs. Trigorine a – ce qui ne lui fait plus plaisir, mais ce qui lui convient – l'*Establishment* derrière lui, le théâtre en tant qu'institution dont l'inertie s'allie à la résistance au changement du public et des acteurs eux-mêmes, des plus fameux encore, telle qu'Arkadina.

La Mouette est l'histoire des choix faits par les personnages – Nina, Treplev, Trigorine – et, en ce qui concerne la poétique théâtrale, des choix faits par Tchékhov lui-même. Le dernier est à la recherche d'une position esthétiquement juste par rapport à « la vérité » de la vie, entre les extrêmes qui séduisent ses contemporains russes et occidentaux : le positivisme des naturalistes, d'une part, l'enthousiasme mystico-messianique des symbolistes qui tentent de capter la respiration d'une « âme cosmique », d'autre part. En empruntant par moments le masque de Treplev, Tchékhov laisse entrevoir une alternative à la poétique réaliste qu'il a consacrée à côté d'Henrik Ibsen et d'August Strindberg. Sous une figure contradictoire, le double T de l'écrivain de *La Mouette* – Treplev et Trigorine – on entrevoit la possibilité d'une double option, entre la poétique réaliste déjà rodée et la tentation d'une expérimentation (« décadente », éclate Arkadina) pour laquelle le théâtre signifie la cartographie d'un monde hypothétique, au-delà du vraisemblable d'une imitation *terre-à-terre*. « Faites que nous rêvions de ce qui arrivera dans deux cent mille ans ! » est l'invitation qui ouvre la pièce dans la pièce de Treplev, invitation découragée par des esprits éveillés du public : « Dans deux cent mille ans il n'y aura rien du tout » (Sorine); « Nous dormons » (Arkadina) (Tchékhov, 2005: 7).

Le conflit entre le réalisme et la « stylisation non réaliste » (Gassner, 1972 : 25) est symptomatique du drame moderne et de sa conscience critique, à partir de la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle. Il me semble qu'aujourd'hui encore, certaines répliques de *La Mouette* tchékhovienne (1896) gardent l'écho qu'elles avaient à l'époque, dans le contexte des nouvelles orientations esthétiques et idéologiques, artistiques et littéraires. Sous l'influence des « décadents » européens, surgissent, après 1892, les premières cristallisations poétiques et théoriques du symbolisme russe: Dmitri Merejkovski avec les *Symboles* (1892) et *Sur les causes de la décadence et sur les nouveaux courants dans la littérature russe contemporaine* (1893), puis Valéri Brioussov avec les *Symbolistes russes* (1894-1895), et selon le modèle de Baudelaire et Maeterlinck, une série de poèmes signés par Nikolaï Minski, Alexandr Dobroliubov, Vladimir Hippius entre 1893 et 1894. Merejkovski s'érige en promoteur des innovateurs au détriment du positivisme zoliste qui, « étouffant et mort », « pèse comme un rocher sur les âmes » de la nouvelle génération de poètes séduits non pas par une autre frivole « manifestation de

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la mode parisienne », mais par l'idée de récupérer certaines « valeurs anciennes, éternelles, impérissables de l'art » (Merejkovski cité par László-Kuţiuc, 1983: 104).

Toutes ces productions paraissent juste avant 1896, année de la parution de *La Mouette*. La pièce de Tchékhov fit donc son apparition dans un climat de profonds changements esthétiques et idéologiques, qu'elle absorbe et reflète aux différents paliers de sa construction dramatique. Il est à remarquer, par exemple, le commentaire de Medvedenko en faveur de l'inspiration réaliste : « *On ferait mieux, tenez, de décrire et de représenter au théâtre la vie des instituteurs. Notre sort est dur, très dur !* » ..." (Tchékhov, 2005: 9).

Malgré l'impression d'inertie, d'action piétinant dans un endroit où rien n'arrive, presque tous les personnages doivent faire un effort d'adaptation. Le tourbillon de l'avenir menace de les écraser. Pressentant l'inévitable, Trigorine se voit obligé de laisser le pas à d'autres. Arkadina se montre défiante, mais elle est pratiquement incapable de saisir l'esprit du temps. Elle s'avère réfractaire à toute innovation qui menace de changer la manière de pratiquer son art, d'aller plus loin dans son métier. Ses désaccords avec Treplev en sont révélateurs. Les leitmotivs du « décadentisme » et de l'« étouffement » de l'inspiration authentique ne sont pas seulement les leitmotivs du conflit familial entre la mère et son fils, mais aussi ceux de toute une époque. Tchékhov surprend avec subtilité le vent du changement – qui perturbe tout un monde – dans la respiration silencieuse et parfois explosive des relations familiales.

Dans l'article *Mots essentiels sur la poésie symboliste* (1901), Konstantin Balmont remarquait que la littérature du XIXe siècle est parfaitement polarisée entre positivistes et réalistes d'une part, symbolistes et esthétisants de l'autre : Dickens ou Poe, Balzac ou Baudelaire, Tolstoï ou Ibsen (Balmont *apud* László – Kuţiuc 1983 : 104). La frontière assez fluide entre ces orientations permet l'inscription d'Ibsen dans la seconde catégorie, parmi les écrivains symbolisateurs, sinon tout simplement – à la manière de Maeterlinck – parmi les symbolistes (Gassner, 1972: 118).

Les exégètes ont été enclins à rattacher Tchékhov au symbolisme, à côté d'Ibsen. En 1914, dix années après la mort du dramaturge russe, Hiram Moderwell remettait en discussion quelques arguments en faveur de cela. Les pièces de Tchékhov – disait-il – sont « presque complètement statiques », tout comme *L'asile de nuit* de Gorki. Elles sont dépourvues d'intrigue, « l'action est présente uniquement lorsque l'auteur en a besoin pour déterminer une transformation du personnage ». En bref, « les pièces sont dépourvues de mouvement » et elles « ne semblent non plus être situées quelque part que ce soit » (Moderwell cité par Gassner, 1972: 118-119). Bien que la conclusion du rattachement de Tchékhov au symbolisme soit discutable, les observations de Moderwell qui fondent cette conclusion sont pourtant justes. C'est sur de tels propos que repose la thèse d'une préfiguration de l'avant-garde théâtrale du

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milieu du XXe siècle, notamment du « théâtre de l'absurde », par Tchékhov. Une idée largement partagée de nos jours, y compris par Visniec, dans la *Lettre* citée.

Tout aussi vulnérable s'avère être l'autre interprétation extrême : « Tchékhov exprime assez clairement dans *La Mouette* son refus de l'art symboliste en général » (Gassner, 1972: 119). La preuve en est le fait que « Tchékhov parodie les écrits symbolistes dans "la pièce dans la pièce" écrite par le jeune Konstantin » (119). Quels sont les arguments de Gassner à l'appui de son opinion qui ne s'avère pourtant pas infaillible? Il s'agit de deux affirmations sorties en quelque sorte du contexte: une remarque du médecin Dorn, l'autre de Treplev lui-même. Les voilà. La pensée de Treplev « s'exprime en images », dit le premier ; « ses contes sont colorés et vifs ». « Dommage seulement » que le jeune écrivain ne fasse que de « susciter un climat et c'est tout ; ce n'est pas suffisant » (Tchékhov, 2005: 38). À son tour, Treplev se confessera à Nina, juste avant d'être encore une fois abandonné, avant de déchirer ses manuscrits et de répéter sa tentative de suicide : « Je flotte encore dans un chaos de rêves et d'images ». Or, ces mots représentent plutôt le témoignage d'une crise personnelle – d'une impasse de la création que le personnage traverse ; il n'y a pas assez d'arguments pour y voir Tchékhov condamner définitivement les formules de création « non-réaliste », particulièrement le symbolisme.

Quant au premier commentaire, celui de Dorn, le « personnage-*raisonneur* de Tchékhov » (Gassner, 1972: 119), la vérité est que ce médecin affirme plusieurs choses sur Kostea Treplev, et la plupart de ces choses sont favorables au jeune écrivain et à ses options artistiques. Ainsi, Dorn l'encourage à se développer avec discernement et avec constance dans la direction même qu'il a déjà illustrée : « *Vous avez choisi votre sujet dans le domaine des idées abstraites, et vous avez bien fait ; une œuvre d'art doit partir d'une grande idée. N'est beau que ce qui est grave* ». « *Mais vous ne devez peindre que l'important, l'éternel* », recommande-t-il à Kostea (Tchékhov, 2005: 11-12). La pièce de celui-ci a «de la fraîcheur et de la naïveté », pense Dorn, elle est « un peu *étrange* », mais elle lui « a énormément plu », de sorte que ses « mains ont tremblé d'émotion ». Treplev – le médecin n'en doute pas – a vraiment « du talent », il a « quelque chose », « sa pensée s'exprime en images » (11-12). Pour l'instant, il lui manque la concision de la trame, la transparence de la construction : « Dommage seulement qu'il n'ait pas de but bien défini » (38). Le « personnage-*raisonneur* de Tchékhov », selon Gassner, Dorn n'est pourtant pas un adepte du réalisme pur et dur, d'autant moins des excès positivistes ; au contraire, il adhère ouvertement à un *excelsior* de l'art et de l'idéal (12).

Il y a peut-être un certain schématisme, une légère maladresse dans la pièce de Treplev, autant qu'on la connaît, et certains personnages ne cachent pas leur mécontentement ou leur réserve à ce sujet. Les particularités de

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construction non-réaliste – non-psychologisante, non-mimétique et non-vraisemblable – de la pièce sont remarquées dès le début par Nina, puis par Trigorine : « *Il est difficile de jouer dans votre pièce. Il n'y a pas de personnages vivants* », « *Votre pièce manque d'action ; on ne fait que réciter* », réclame Nina (5). Trigorine voit dans la création de Treplev « des choses étranges, mal définies, parfois cela tourne au délire » (éventuellement au « vague » poétique des symbolistes). Ce qui est pire, c'est qu'il n'y a « pas un seul personnage vivant », reprend Trigorine l'observation faite par Nina (38). Tous ces éléments ne sont pourtant pas des preuves suffisantes pour en conclure l'incompatibilité de Tchékhov avec les modalités dramatiques non-réalistes. On arrive plutôt à la conclusion qu'Anton Pavlovitch « était un réaliste très malléable », selon les affirmations plus nuancées de Gassner (1972: 119). Par rapport à cela, Tchékhov ne se dédit pas, il reste constamment « impartial » et n'opère point de choix entre le réalisme et le « non-réalisme », évitant leur opposition nette et leur exclusion réciproque.

En guise de conclusion

Dans le drame tchékhovien interfèrent symbolisme et réalisme, positivisme et stylisation, *mimesis* et vision poétique, référence et autoréférence, théâtre et métathéâtre. Précurseur du « théâtre de l'absurde », comme le laisse entendre Matéi Visniec dans sa *Lettre à Tchékhov*, le dramaturge russe annonce discrètement une formule (méta)théâtrale à laquelle les postmodernes feront souvent appel. Matéi Visniec attire l'attention là-dessus et la développe dans sa propre création, plus particulièrement dans ses pièces qui ressuscitent, annotent et remettent en question la dramaturgie de Tchékhov.

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Film

LIGHT AND SHADOW AS INSTRUMENTS OF LITERARY AND VISUAL METAPHOR IN LIVIU REBREANU'S *THE FOREST OF THE HANGED*

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Abstract: *Starting from their basic role as elements of literary, cinematographic and theatrical description, light and shadow develop a close relation in all these three arts. They exceed their primary purpose and become involved in the process of narrating the events and setting the mise-en-scène. Even more, they are also engaged in changing the atmosphere, visualizing the images, modifying the reader's or viewer's attention, increasing or diminishing the dramatic intensity, conferring dynamic effect, accumulating meaning and revealing symbolic, philosophical, psychological and metaphysical significance to literary, cinematographic and theatrical artworks. Transferred from literature to cinematography and theatre, light and shadow have to adjust their means of expression so that to correspond to the specificity of each art. Taking after the techniques in the art of drawing, naming the tree-dimension perspective and chiaroscuro, light and shadow bring new aesthetic values to theatre and cinematography. Regarded as instruments of creating literary and visual metaphors, light and shadow highly influence the perception of the images outlined by them. The study aims to take into discussion the manner in which light and shadow may be employed as instruments of creating literary as well as visual metaphors. At the same time, it analyses the transposition of a metaphor generated by light and shadow from literature to cinematography and theatre as in Liviu Rebreanu's "The Forest of the Hanged".*
Keywords: light and shadow; metaphor; literature; cinematography; theatre;

General Reflections upon the Relation between Light and Shadow in Literature, Cinematography and Theatre

The employment of light as well as of shadow as dramatic elements emerges from the subjective and objective effects that may be identified not only in a literary but also in a cinematographic and theatrical works of art. Generally speaking, the objective effects consist of the changes that reshape the physical appearance of an object providing new connotations. The subjective effects aim to modify the receiver's perception upon the object in

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question, making him or her aware of all these changes. Pointing to the meaning or function(s) of light in a literary text, film or stage performance also triggers the necessity to tackle the relation established between light and shadow or darkness. In a narrative text, the description of light is usually included in passages that set the scene or accompany the action. It functions as an external element. Sometimes it is also used in characters' introspections, highlighting their particular thoughts or the flow of their consciousness and, this time, its function turns into an internal one. Transposed into a cinematographic representation or a theatrical performance light as well as shadow becomes a more dynamic element.

From Plato's allegory of the cave to Christian typology and further on to the techniques of literary outstripping and foreshadowing, light and/ or shadow have played an important part in directing reader's interest towards future narrative development[1]. Most of times, the employment of light or shadow in a literary text aims to double, to distort or, at least, to provide new dimensions to places, objects, scenery, characters they spot on. Each time a literary text includes references to light and/ or shadow it sets a visual *mise-en-scène* of that particular descriptive tableau which makes it similar to paintings[2]. In other words, the literary light and/ or shadow set one of the basic structures of narrative imagery, the fictional space. The reader needs to depict the images that the literary text is providing following the author's selection of words and phrases in order to reproduce the whole tableau. These images[3] become visible during the act of reading. (Blanchot, 2007: 34)

The relation between light and shadow in a literary text functions both poetically and narratologically aiming to reveal dynamic effects as well as dramatic intensity that particular literary images consist of. Far from being just descriptive, the light or the shadow or both, most of times, cast the emotional and the psychological states of the characters, sometimes interfering in the narrative suggesting actions, events that may come or possible flows of characters' wishes, thoughts or dreams. Sometimes light and/ or shadow may play the part of one or several characters as in Mircea Eliade's *Domnișoara Christina/ Miss Christina* or in Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. Other times, they may suggest the mere presence of this

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[1] The traditional connotations of light and shadow are those of good and evil, life and death, imagination and reality leading to further associations in terms of morality, knowledge, science, progress and so on.

[2] In this line of thinking, John Ruskin, referring to modern painting, argues that shadows are in reality the most conspicuous thing in a landscape next to the highest lights. Thanks to the use of light and shadow in a painting, all forms could be not only understood but also explained by their agency. (Ruskin, 2005: 173-175)

[3] According to Maurice Blanchot the contact between the reader and the author is based on these images, either poetic or narrative, contained by the literary text and meant to fascinate the reader. (Balnchot, 2007: 35)

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type of characters as in Ion Luca Caragiale's *La Hanul lui Mânjoală/ At Mânjoală's Inn*: "There was some light in madam Mânjoală's room, and shadows move lively on the curtain". (Caragiale, 1981: 201) The same employment of shadow can be identified also in "Edgar Allan Poe's *William Wilson*: "Death approaches and the shadow which foreruns him has thrown a softening influence over my spirit." (Poe, 1951: 351) There are also situations when light and/ or shadow may even impersonate these characters as if having substance, but, at the same time, leaving behind a huge uncertainty over the real or unreal and fantastic or imaginary nature of these protagonists as in Liviu Rebreanu's *Adam și Eva/ Adam and Eve:* „Late, when gazing at the misterious reflections of the water's shining, he seems to recognize, raising from the waves, the real Isit, white and smiling." (Rebreanu, 1989: 69) This kind of narrative texts usually invites the reader to extend his or her literary approach to a more philosophical or religious dimension which reveals new other aspects to the basic narrative one as in Virginia Woolf's *Jacob's Room*: "In any case life is but a procession of shadows, and God knows why it is that we embrace them so eagerly, and see them depart with such anguish, being shadows." (Woolf , 1971: 70).

The literary texts that employ light and/ or shadow imagery accumulate meaning if not symbolic or metaphoric, at least visual or narrative. Moreover, placing a descriptive passage containing references to light or/ and shadow within a literary text not only intensifies the tension of the narrative but also extends the area of interpretations concerning all the other elements belonging to the very passage. In doing so, the employment of light usually in close relation to shadow facilitates the outline of literary metaphors. Depicted from a narrative text they become visual in the reader's eyes. It is the first step towards the act of *visualizing* literary images[4]. It is also the core element that connects literature with other visual arts such as cinematography or theatre. Whatever the art is, the visual metaphors exceed the basic denotative meaning and permit the accumulation of other inherent significations that may lead to a better understanding of the artwork.

Although in literature light and shadow usually play a secondary role, in cinematography they become very important elements of cinematic or theatrical narration. Especially light is considered a major factor that can radically change the entire image, frame by frame. Besides the fact that light makes any object, person or setting visible, it also provides new dimensions to the image which thus receives new dramatic values. Moreover, it controls the effect so that it may be reflected to the stage or screen in the most

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[4] Further on, new connotations could be added to the basic image enriching it with symbolic, philosophical psychological, spiritual, religious meanings.

efficient manner[5]. In fact, cinema and even theatre makes use of the lighting techniques taken from painting art but adapting them to the new environment so that they could function as specific instruments.

First it was the three-dimensionality determined by light and evaluated by Masaccio as the major technique of generating visual perspective. Then light became useful for supporting the effect of depth mainly in Tintoretto's paintings such as *The Final Supper* where it focuses on the persons placed around the table and effuses out from the window generating a dramatic effect. The employment of light-shadow relationship was also preferred by Caravaggio for creating sharp contrasts[6] aiming to increase the importance of a character or an object by taking out the figure from the dark shadows and illuminating it with intense light. (Krausse, 2005: 36) Using the relation between light and shadow in such a way became a technique, called *tenebrism*[7], from the Italian term *tenebroso*, and it was meant to help creating a very dramatic effect by using violent contrasts of light and shadow in a pronounced dark environment. Although the technique is preferred mainly by the seventeenth century painters, Georges de la Tour, Artemisia Gentileschi Francisco Ribalta, Jusepe de Ribera, Rembrandt and others, it was also used before by painters among whom there could be mentioned Tintoretto or El Greco (Buser, 2006: 88-90). Taking from Caravaggio, Georges de la Tour, for example, increased the mysterious atmosphere by employing only the light of a single candle as it may be observe in his painting *The Birth*. The very technique was further developed by Rembrandt who preferred to emphasize the emotional effect as well as the depth of the image mainly through creating transparent dark effects, which are specific for his paintings[8] (Krausse, 2005: 42). When employed by other arts, such as cinematography and theatre, three-dimensionality as well as *tenebrism* becomes useful for creating an environment to tell a story. Light and shadow may determine specific areas of interest in a cinematic frame or on stage leading the viewer's attention towards what is intended to be noticed or, on the contrary, to be

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[5] The perception of an image depends on the environment it contains, on the modifications towards light and shadow. A bright light or a diminished one highly influences human emotions. It is the relations rather than the individual elements of a painting that are significant to the human eye. (Gombrich, 2000:49)

[6] Considered a particular type of *chiaroscuro,* Caravaggio's sharp contrasts between light and shadow is also known as *the style of the basement*. (Krausse, 2005: 35)

[7] A seventeenth century painting technique, *tenebrism* was used for emphasizing the contrast of light and shadow so strong that the objects placed in a completely dark environment may seem closer and bigger because of the abruptly illuminating effect on them. (Buser, 2006: 87-88)

[8] Opposed to the light employed by Caravaggio, Rembrandt's light is not meant to reveal the details of the figures but to spring out of them. As a poor enlightenment this type of light seems to be emitted by the figures.

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hidden. An insignificant detail may modify the whole perception of an image only because it was so intensely enlightened as to provide more dramatic tension to the scene.

Similar to literature, in both cases, of cinematography and of theatre, light and shadow give meaning to any image. In the realm of expressionistic staging, based on directional light[9], shadow is as important as light. For the theatre pioneers, Adolphe Appia and David Blasco, the manipulation of light and shadow represented a true means of expressing ideas. (Brown, 2008: 16). The effects[10] determined by the use of light and shadow as dramatic elements are meant to activate the space as well as the time. Taking after painting techniques, the use of light and shadow in cinematography and theatre aims to provide depth to the composition. At the same time and taking after literary techniques, light and shadow are employed as instruments of narration. Thus, from a spatial perspective, the light coming from the front sharpens the features of the object or person it spots on while the light at the back generates a silhouette. The light coming from bottom, top or sides generate particular emotional occasions through creating different shadow forms[11] (Butler, 2005: 33-35). Likewise, from the perspective of time, the density of light increases or decreases for providing natural effects which, on their turn, generate dynamism to the life on stage or in film. Most of times, these effects are in close connection to specific psychological moments revealing unexpected aspects of the evolution of certain characters. Furthermore, they are meant to support the intrinsic meaning of each scene. The whole *mise-en-scène*, either in film or in theatre, is always in close relation with the basic six elements involved in any type of staging: set, lighting, costumes, hair, makeup and action. At this point, lighting may be regarded as both a narration and metaphorical instrument. Viewed as an instrument capable to shape the stage, lighting makes use not only of three-dimension perspective but also of *chiaroscuro* as basic techniques in order to represent appearances. Based on the constancy of light's behaviour on stage, the space is in constant modification as the light's edges are slicing the stage,

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[9] Directional light, as it is called in the aforementioned fields, dates back to the French chemist Lavoisier who, in 1781, introduced movable reflectors to be added to oil lantern on stage. After using gaslight and limelight, the lighting control was based on plano-convex lenses and spherical reflectors. The forerunner of most of the modern lighting was the incandescent spotlight invented by the electrician Louis Hartmann. (Brown, 2008: 17)

[10] These effects may be either objective, when the appearance of the object or person is changed, but there are no important modifications in the viewer's perception of the image, or subjective, when the level of light highly influences the viewer's perception.

[11] The artificial lighting is mainly employed to better reflect the whole environment, but it may also focus on certain areas, most of times containing objects or characters, aiming to guide the viewer's attention towards particular details that emphasize the essence of the image. (Krausse, 2005: 87-88)

the sight-lines are varying predictably generating different shadow shapes. Thus perspective allows the staging of the so-called geometry of light. Nonetheless, *chiaroscuro* and *tenebrism* also model the figures in light and shade is a manner similar to painting (Herrstrom, 2017: 82).

Regarded as basic *mise-en-scène* elements, light and shadow become instruments of narration not only in literature but also in cinematography and theatre. Besides their main narrative function they also exert the function of creating metaphors either literary or cinematographic and theatrical. Taking the literary text as a starting point, the employment of light as well as of shadow is always adjusting its means of expression according to the art it belongs to. Each time, either in a literary environment or in a cinematographic or theatrical one, light and/ or shadow always affect the narration of events by accumulating new meanings. Moreover, they confer visibility to hidden details or emphasize others in order to guide the reader's and the viewer's attention towards the important points of interest, aiming for a more expressive atmosphere and a better understanding of a particular scene or of the whole artwork. By their literary, cinematographic and theatrical focalization, light and shadow may predict or change the perspective upon a character, an event, an atmosphere and so on. As instruments of creating literary and visual metaphor, light in relation with shadow exceeds its narrative and descriptive purpose towards symbolic, metaphysical, philosophical, psychological and other significations.

The Metaphor: from Literary to Visual

In a literary environment, light and/ or shadow may play primary or secondary roles. Their functions usually pass from mere descriptive to narrative. They may also become engaged in accumulating meaning, in conferring symbolic, metaphysical, psychological or philosophical significations and, sometimes, in predicting or changing the perspective over an image. Setting the *mise-en-scène* of a literary scene, the use of light and/ shadow permits the outline of certain metaphors that could add new literary nuances as in Liviu Rebreanu's *Pădurea spânzuraților*/ *The Forest of the Hanged*. In fact, the novel may be regarded as being dominated by light and shadow as the two major poles that delimitates the external fictional space as well as the main character's, Apostol Bologa, inner psychological struggle. During the whole novel light reflects the moments of crisis[12]. From the very beginning light and shadow are related to the image of war and trauma as perceived by human consciousness, predicting the future events. According to the protagonist's words, darkness best represents the gloomy atmosphere

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[12] According to George Călinescu, the novel should be regarded as the analysis of the psychological crisis that is experienced by an ordinary human soul engaged in a personal fight with a dramatic life. (Călinescu, 1985: 733)

that covers everything: "Such darkness, God, such darkness came over Earth." (Rebreanu, 1966: 23).

Either it is natural or artificial light is always in sharp contrast with shadow symbolically suggesting a psychological confrontation between the main character's feelings, emotions or thoughts. A good example in this sense is the presence of the spotlight. Focusing on certain areas, it reveals particular details about the soldiers' positions. Based on this fact, it is decided to be destroyed[13]. Regarded from a symbolic perspective, the intensive light is focusing on the protagonist's consciousness unveiling his psychological struggle between his belief in duty and his belief in a new world which he desperately tries to reject. (Lăzărescu, 1983: 148-149). That explains the paradox between the main character's decision to eliminate the spotlight and his reaction on his own deed. Apostol Bologa questions himself as if questioning someone else and ends up in blaming himself for what he has done. The light murdered in a violent act ceases to be a concrete, real light and becomes the tormenting light that haunts the protagonist's thoughts. From this moment on light is more and more replaced by darkness. Its presence seems to diminish as in the opening of the second part of the novel where it is "a small, foggy and troubled spot of light" (Rebreanu, 1966: 113). Even more, right when Apostol Bologa is detained by the army, light starts to fade and, in the end, it disappears into the flood of darkness. The fourth part of the narrative is dominated by darkness leading the protagonist towards death but, as the final moment approaches, light comes again to illuminate his soul. As he is taken to the place of execution, Apostol Bologa raises his eye to the starless sky and gazes at the light of the rising sun. From this point of view, the protagonist's death marks not only the end of his psychological struggle but also his exit from darkness into the divine light.

In general, the visual feature of the metaphors allows their employment as elements of literary, cinematographic or theatrical *mise-en-scène*. At the same time, the same feature makes possible the transposition of these metaphors from one art to another adjusting the material of artistic representation. From the literary text to the cinematographic frames or theatrical performances, these visual metaphors have been constantly modified according to the technical possibilities of each particular art for a better representation. In this respect, light and/ or shadow have adapted their means of expression from literary to visual[14]. In the process of adaptation of a

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[13] Based on its further psychological implications, the whole event is highly amplified and, thus, an act of war is transposed into a metaphysical symbol that stands for the extinction of light itself. (Protopopescu, 1978: 84)

[14] There is a visual characteristic that could be usually identified in any literary image or metaphor but, opposed to the literary environment where such images or metaphors are

literary text into a film or a staged performance, the employment of light and shadow as instruments of creating metaphors has been negotiated in order to transpose each metaphorical item from one artistic environment to another but, at the same time, to generate new opportunities of expression.

As previously analysed the employment of light and shadow in a literary text is meant to set an adequate environment for the events to come, in this case the war, or to focus on the moments of crises, when the background necessarily corresponds to the characters' psychological states for emphasizing their inner struggles or, on the contrary, it contrasts with the heroes' emotions in order to make them more evident. Having the same purposes, the use of light and shadow either in a cinematographic or theatrical environment is involved in drawing the pictures that illustrate a specific background as well as a specific detail that may contribute to the dramatic representation of the scenes. These pictures have engaged light and/ or shadow on the basis of the following two main painting techniques, the three-dimension perspective and chiaroscuro[15]. Making use of these techniques, the cinematographic and theatrical representations employed light and/ or shadow differently.

The first example is the homonymous film adaptation directed by Liviu Ciulei. Filmed in 1964 and released in 1965, this adaptation is in white and black thus emphasising even more the dramatic effect of each frame. In order to create not only a dark image of the war but also to anticipate the future tragic events, the general perspective is supported by low density lighting and light-shadow juxtaposition. Besides the pessimist and suffocating atmosphere that was

FIGURE 1 PERSPECTIVE

generated through soft lighting which dominates the whole general plan, the shadows of the huge group of people are dense in the front and fades away in the distance as it may be noticed in the Figure 1. Here the sharp line of the horizon is intersected by the thick line of people that becomes thinner till it disappears in the distance.

The same type of lightening can be identified in an interior shot as observed in the Figure 2. Here the effect of depth is supported by the light

revealed by imagination in a cinematographic or theatrical environment it mainly defines the means of artistic expression.

[15] These two techniques are not the only ones usually employed in film or stage productions.

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FIGURE 2 PERSPECTIVE

that focuses on the table as well as on the protagonist standing near the table. The lighting is clearing out in the background. The main character is enlightened through a soft light coming from the right side and a front light but with lower density. There is another light that comes from the back right through the door and also focuses on the protagonist[16]. Such a focalisation is meant to contour the hero and to separate him from the background mainly through the use of light that provides depth to the character. By separating the subject from the whole environment it is intended to draw more attention on the main character. The importance of the protagonist is highlighted by his standing posture, occupying the entire left extreme of the picture but mainly by the place he is positioned: forefront left[17].

Both these examples exemplify the manner in which the human figures placed within a picture, either in an exterior or interior frame shot, can gain three-dimension perspective through the use of soft light adjustment.

FIGURE 3 CHIAROSCURO

Light is also engaged in creating the well-known *chiaroscuro.* The sharp contrast between intense light and intense shadow sets a new way of interpreting the importance of the figures and their detachment from the background as in the following examples belonging to another film adaptation of the same novel but entitled *Apostolul Bologa/ The Apostle Bologa*, directed by Dominic Dembinski and released in 2018. In this case, light is involved in creating the volume through light and shadow contrasts provided by the enlightenment coming from the back or/ and sides. The intense light coming from the back as well from the right side is in high contrast with the figures placed in the middle separating them from the whole picture and thus dramatizing the atmosphere, as it may be seen in Figure 3. As opposed to the previous case,

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[16] The scene analyzed in Figure 2 represents a good example for the manner in which the display of the three directional type lighting may employ light for depth effects.

[17] Such a position of the extreme importance since the reading of a picture starts from here.

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the one shown in Figure 2, when the light focalizes on the protagonist leaving the background in the shadow, this time, light covers the background and leaves the two characters in the shadow so that their features become difficult to be distinguished.

The dramatic effects turn to be more intense when the light source is diminished. Thus the light of one or two candles or a lamp could create a mysterious atmosphere, as in Figure 4 or in Figure 5. Both cases make use of *practical lighting*[18] provided by the lamp as well as by the candles in order to give off subtle lighting for the characters in the scenes.

FIGURE 4 CHIAROSCURO

Although there are extra source of lighting, the lamp and the Figure 3 - *Chiaroscuro* candles represent the *key light*, meaning the main source of light registered most prominently in the frame, with low density for both frames. The light provided by the lamp contours the arms, the faces and the hair of the two subjects. On the other hand, candles have a different function.

Because of their forefront position as well as of their enlarged size they become the main subjects, attracting all the attention, as in the paintings of Caravaggio or Georges de la Tour. The candles' lights highly contrast with the other areas which are completely dark except the secondary plan which contains the two characters whose dance is obstructed by the position of the candles, as if being of less importance. The side light that fills in the frame also contours a

FIGURE 5 CHIAROSCURO

silhouette that Figure 6 – *Perspective/ Chiaroscuro* fades away in the background.

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[18] In the art of cinematography a proper lighting technique is essential. Usually, in filmmaking a single technique is composed of several other lighting techniques. It is the case of *practical lighting* too. Since the light coming from a single lamp or few candles is not strong enough to light up a small area or a subject/ object, a hidden, supplementary source of light is used. Sometimes there are inserted dimmers in the lamps so the light intensity may be adjusted appropriately.

FIGURE 6 PERSPECTIVE/ CHIAROSCURO

Light and shadow may be employed for increasing a dramatic effect of a scene not only in cinematography but also in theatre. Combing perspective with *chiaroscuro,* the stage effects accentuate their dramatic intensity as in the homonymous play directed by Radu Afrim[19]. The literary fragment illustrating the scene of shooting and murdering the spotlight was staged by making use of the powerful effects that light in association with shadow may provide as it can be observed in Figure 6. Most of the subjects are placed in complete shadow so that their silhouettes to highly contrast with the environment. It is impossible to distinguish any other features except the human bodies and the rifles, the key elements of scene. At the same time they occupy the forefront left position which is the most important area in a picture or painting. Perspective is suggested

FIGURE 7 PERSPECTIVE/ CHIAROSCURO

by the path that narrows in the distance, by the building whose dimension was reduced, by the small human figure in the back and by the foggy light that diffuses from the back to the front of stage. What strikes here is the very sharp contrast of *chiaroscuro* based on the general light. In order to increase even more the dramatic effects of the same scene, the general light is concentrated in the spotted light placed in the most significant position as seen in Figure 7. The same elements create perspective but the contrast is softer.

Combing all the elements that provided perspective as well as *chiaroscuro* and insisting on the sharp contrast based on the employment of light and shadow it may become possible to generate a great impact on the whole picture of the same scene. As noticed in Figure 8, two types of light intersect. Light that comes from above focuses on the subjects while the shadow increases the dramatic effect by contrast. Light that comes from the

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[19] The first performance of the play was in 2018 on the stage of the National Theatre in Bucharest.

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FIGURE 8 PERSPECTIVE/ CHIAROSCURO

back is soft, foggy and of low intensity. Thus, by combing the intense light of the spot with soft light from the back there could be created the transparent-dark effect[20] that covers few of the subjects and creates depth of the picture which thus accumulates emotional effects. The intensity of the light fades from the spot to the sides, leaving the human figures in the dark.

Besides the purpose of making the object and subject visible, light in connection with shadow dominates the place. It is no longer the light employed for perspective as in Figure 1, neither the light used for generating contrasting effect based on *chiaroscuro* meant to attract attention or to contour the subjects and the objects as in Figure 4 and Figure 5 it is a combination of lights in relations with shadows. Similar to film, such combination of lights is meant not only to increase the dramatic effect of a scene but also create visual metaphors. Avoiding general lighting, the dramatic effects obtained through such combination of lights carry the dramatic tension to a climax. The visibility of the objects as well as the features of the subjects comes on secondary level of importance.

The meaning created by lighting as a *mise-en-scène* may reveal not only the dramatic or the tragic and gloomy aspects of a specific place but also the metaphysical aspects meant to illuminate a place of uncertain conditions. On the psychological level, the meaning unveiled by visual metaphors is to give an insight into the protagonist's mind and to make visible his inner struggle between duty and desire as well as his perception of a world filled with war. The use of light-shadow relations is meant to reveal the spiritual and metaphysical rather than the material and real dimension, increasing the emotional effect.

Exceeding their basic narrative purpose, whenever employed as instruments of creating literary and visual metaphors, light and/ or shadow become capable of a much more impact on the reader and viewer[21]. At the same time a metaphor is more suggestive that a narrative, allowing the reader

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[20] The transparent-dark effect was masterly created by Rembrandt in his paintings. The employment of light was meant to create a poor enlightenment of the scene and thus emphasizing the depth. Such light softly concentrates on the subjects and falls into dark shades that surround the image. It could also be easily recognized as the phosphorescence light that occurs around the faces of the subjects adding new connotations to the painting.

[21] As expected, the visual impact is always stronger than the impact generated by a literary text, in spite of the gloomy and horror passages included in descriptions or narratives.

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or the viewer to identify additional meanings and aspects to the basic ones. In all these cases, the extra dark in combination with the extra light tones and nuances, since there are other colours involved, contributes to the specific atmosphere that brings the *mise-en-scène* into the foreground and confers poetic qualifications to the world it has created.

Final Remarks

Starting from a literary manner of producing metaphors through the use of light and shadow, the cinematographic and the theatrical manner proved to be as creative as the former. The visual feature of such metaphors represents the core element of all these three arts that makes possible the transfer of the aesthetic connotations of the literary metaphor into a cinematic and theatrical environment adding further aspects. Taking after the use of light and shadow within the art of drawing, the employment of light in relation with shadow has extended its possibilities in other visual arts. Thus the light effects are basically meant to consolidate the stage as well as the scene through creative solutions but they also may set a specific atmosphere, change the appearance of the objects and the subjects they spot on, modify the appearance not only of the items they focalize, but also the action and the events, accumulating meaning and providing dramatic intensity and revealing symbolic, metaphysical, philosophical and psychological significance. The contribution of light and shadow relationship that started with Caravaggio and culminated with Rembrandt has been hired, adapted and developed by other visual arts. According to the means of artistic representation specific to each art, in this case, literature, cinematography and theatre, light and/ or shadow can be employed as instruments used for creating the *mise-en-scène* that further may function as a basis for setting the scenes, narrating the events and creating powerful literary as well as visual metaphors.

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Online Resources:

Figure 1 and Figure 2:
http://www.google.com/search?q=padurea+spanzuratilor+imagini&tbm=isch&source= univ&sa

Figure 3, Figure 4 and Figure 5:
http://www.google.com/search?q=filmul+apostol+bologa&tbm=isch&source=univ &sc= X&ved

Figure 6, Figure 7 and Figure 8:
http://www.google.com/search?q=padurea%20spanzuratilor%20imagini&tbm=isch &tbs =rimg

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Translation studies

A MICRO-CENTRIC NETWORK: POST-COMMUNIST ROMANIAN MAINSTREAM AND INDIE PUBLISHERS OF U.S. AND CANADIAN CONTEMPORARY POETRY IN TRANSLATION

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Abstract: *This essay examines the corpus of contemporary American and Canadian poetry translated into Romanian in stand-alone volumes between 1990 and 2017 and argues that translators had a deciding impact on the selection of authors, as well as on the configuration of the overall translation network. Romanian poet-translators engaged in an outward cultural movement that galvanized both their own writing and the national literature in general. In doing so, they developed various types of agency covering a wide range of translating patters, from no agency at all to full self-reliance, and a poetics of fecundity that testifies to their engagement with global events and with the microcosm of local literature. Engendered by an assumed material precariousness and by an overt desire for permanent change and synchronous alignment with world literature, these practices should be seen from a micro-centric perspective, that is, paramount in establishing positive relationships with U.S. and Canadian poetries and energizing the local literary scene, rather than simply reflective of a 'minor' mode of existence in the global and geopolitical arenas.*
Keywords: poetry translation; literary translation; network analysis; micro-centrism; sociology of translation;

Introduction: Mainstream vs. Indie

There is a fine line between established and indie publishing in Romania. Generally associated with high levels of intermediation and with rigidity in terms of expected financial performance, mainstream publishers are not the typical venue for poetry translation unless the authors are iconic figures in their home literatures. One cannot measure how established a publisher is in terms of published translations by the number of reviews discussing these works either because reviewing translations is not a common practice. Such evaluations are rarely made in literary periodicals and, when they are, what triggers them is rather the stature of the author or the translator

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and the network of the latter's literary acquaintances, not necessarily the publisher or the quality of the translation. This essay is an overview of contemporary American and Canadian poetry translations in stand-alone volumes published in Romania between 1990 and 2017 and an analysis of the network in which the nodes are the publishers and the authors and the edges are the translators. Our research departs from the conjecture that the landscape of such contemporary poetry translations is not homogenous, but rather composite, a disconnected network of micro-programs fueled by translators' connections and literary affinities.

The corpus (hereafter presented bibliographically as footnotes)—only very little researched to this day, traditionally from the point of view of individual authors (e.g. Bîrsanu, 2014), typically in literary journals, and never as a corpus *per se*—shows us that mainstream publishers started to manifest a somewhat constant interest towards contemporary North American poetry in English just before the country joined the European Union on January 1, 2007. It took a little over fifteen years for post-1989 Romanian publishing to go over "western soft-porn and blockbuster crime novels" (Bassnett, 1998: 57) and return to the overt interest in poetry shown during Communist years. However, only Humanitas and Polirom were noticeably interested in translation—the two mainstream publishing houses that dominate the industry, with Polirom more interested in promoting Romanian fiction writers abroad and Humanitas bringing foreign authors to the local market. Their roster was a short but high-profile list of established authors that promised to sell well. It is safe to say that Humanitas included T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound[1] in their publishing plans because they are canonized authors, whose literary value is undeniable and who also align with the requirements of a globalized, capitalist market. The same goes for their choice of Bob Dylan's lyrics or for Polirom's interest in Leonard Cohen, whose international fame was certainly in line with the sales policy of the publisher.

By contrast, indie publishing in the Romanian context is associated with self-publication, disintermediation, and almost complete control over the published product on the part of the translator. However, even this type of publishing is intermediated by presses that cannot be catalogued as fully mainstream or fully indie. Unlike in other contexts, where an author can publish their work under their own auspices, indie publishing in Romania means that an author, or a translator, in our case, uses a private company that has the legal right to operate as a publisher. Private individuals are not allowed to; therefore, they need to collaborate with a publishing house that supplies the much-needed ISBN. While most indie publishers typically issue the ISBN and serve as intermediaries in the printing process, there are independent publishers who also

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[1] I have not included this translation (by Radu Vancu) in my corpus because Volume 1, the only one released until the end of 2017, contains only poems published in original between 1908 and 1920.

get involved in the design and promotion of the book, which typically results in no further financial gains for the translator(s). Royalties in poetry translation are not common and the amounts earned by such publishing houses by selling these books merely allow them to survive.

Since it is very difficult to delineate mainstream from indie publishers and since oftentimes such delineation is based on very subjective criteria or departs from financial assumptions that are irrelevant to poetry translation, we will measure the influence of the nodes by means of graph theory. Graphs (or networks) formalize relationships between entities (nodes) by linking them via edges. For instance, Polirom and Leonard Cohen will be nodes related by the act of translation or by the translator, formalized represented visually as a link, or edge. Such relationships between nodes are scalable, in that we can measure the importance of nodes in the whole network. The three types of centrality indices we use in this paper are: betweenness centrality (bc)—measuring the influence of a node in the flow between any two other nodes—, closeness centrality (cc)— a measure of the nodes that spread the information most effectively in the network—, and the EigenVector—a measure of the overall influence of a node in the network. They are not meant to rank the nodes, but to indicate which of these nodes have been most effective in the publishing flows. This kind of analysis is doubled by a process of close reading that concerns texts and paratexts, as well as any outside material associated with the publication of a translation (interviews, occasional reviews, opinion pieces, etc.).

Publishing Micro-Centers
The precariousness in means displayed by most Romanian publishers has beneficial effects in terms of productivity and the variety of authors translated (Figure 1). Translated poetry publishing in Romania appears as a disconnected graph[2] with 28 author nodes (for 33 books) and 18 publisher nodes—divided in fourteen components (G0 to G13), zero clustering and density close to zero (0.0309). Clustering refers to the level of interconnection in a network, which in our case is non-existent and indicates a highly fragmented publishing program, but one that is divided in fourteen micro-centers—publishers with very varied interests in terms of authors. Density refers to the number of connections a node (publisher or author) has, in our case to the small number of translations in stand-alone volumes that a publisher is associated with.

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[2] Translators are the edges that connect the publisher and author nodes; hence they have no role in the economy of this particular graph.
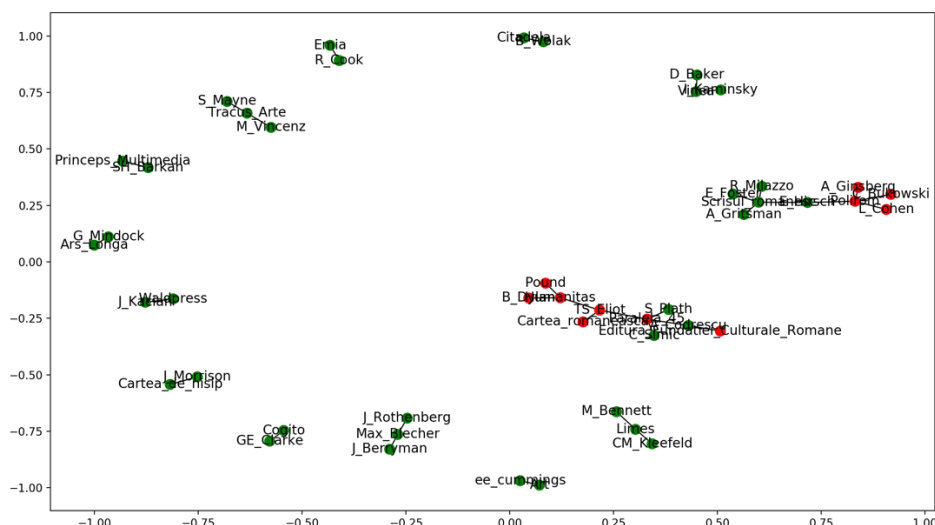
**Figure 1. Contemporary English-language U.S. and Canadian
poetry collections translated after 1989**
Legend: red = mainstream; green = indie.

The fine line between mainstream and indie publishers is given by a
third category, such as Paralela 45 (Figure 2), the most central node in the
network because of the number of authors published and the association with
three more presses that published other books by the same authors (Cartea
Românească, Humanitas, and Editura Fundației Culturale Române).
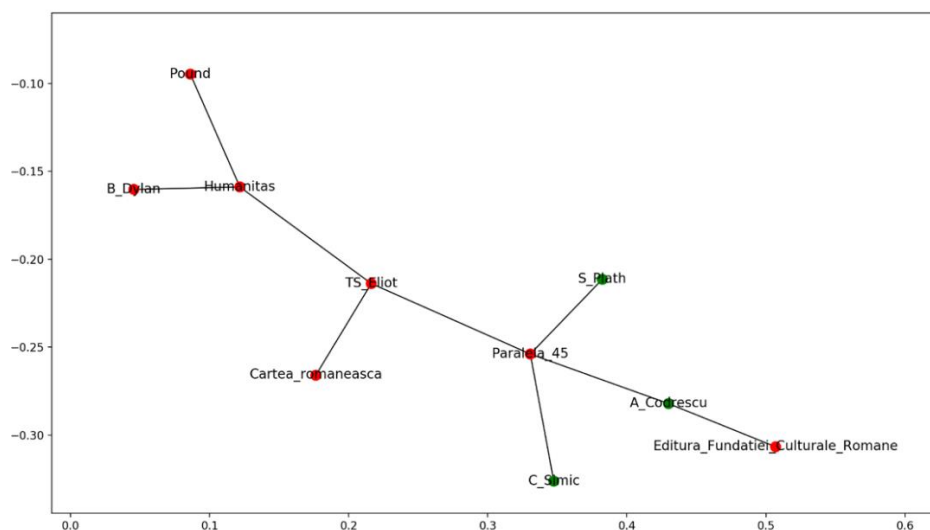
**Figure 2. Main component (G0) - translation projects associated with mainstream
Paralela 45, Humanitas, Cartea românească,
and Editura fundației culturale române**
(Legend: red = mainstream; green = indie)

Their market presence and history point to a mainstream status, but the type of poetry titles they have hosted after the revolution actually show an openness to books that appear to be their translators' projects. I would contend that this openness has been the result of the network of people around the late Gheorghe Crăciun (editorial consultant and then editor-in-chief), a poetry theorist who built his most reputed book, *The Iceberg of Modern Poetry* (Crăciun, 2009), on the works of poets like Walt Whitman or Frank O'Hara. This press ranks first in all types of centrality in G (bc = 0.0212; cc = 0.1094; EigenVector = 0.6005) and is best placed and most influential in G0 (the main component), followed in betweenness and closeness centrality not by a mainstream publisher, but by an independent one, Scrisul Românesc—the press which built its portfolio due to transatlantic connections.

Paralela 45 starts its series of translations from U.S. contemporary poetry with a bilingual volume of selected poems by Andrei Codrescu[3], an established Romanian-born American author translated by Ioana Ieronim. The translator confesses in her foreword that in 2000 she actually resumed her translations of Codrescu's poetry, one that had started five years before (Ieronim, 2000: 18-19), and that Paralela 45 decided to make Codrescu even more popular in Romania after his first volume[4] of translated poems, *Candoare străină*, published only three years before by another press, sold out. The first volume was translated by the same Ieronim and published by a different press, so we may assume both translations from Codrescu's poetic work were Ieronim's projects. The situation is actually not very different from the publication of his translated novels. All eleven novels and non-fiction books were translated by the same Ioana Avădani. Avădani is not simply a translator appointed by the publisher to work on Codrescu's texts. Her relationship with the Romanian-born writer dates back to the late 1990s, when she started to translate his work with the novel *Mesi@*[5] and the articles published by Codrescu in reputed cultural journal *Dilema Veche* under the moniker *Scrisori din New Orleans* (Letters from New Orleans). Translation is simply a pastime for Avădani—as she confesses in many interviews and bio notes—and a reflection of her long-time friendship and literary affinity with Codrescu: "I am not a professional translator, I don't earn a living by doing this, so I can afford my own rhythm and *choose what I want to translate*. I

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[3] Codrescu, Andrei. 2000. *Selected Poetry. Poezii alese* (Ioana Ieronim, Trans.). Pitești: Editura Paralela 45.

[4] Codrescu, Andrei. 1997. *Candoare străină: Poeme alese, 1970-1996/ Alien Candor: Selected Poems, 1970-1996* (Ioana Ieronim, Trans.). Editura Fundației Culturale Române.

[5] Codrescu, Andrei. 2000. *Mesi@ (Ioana Avădani, Trans.). Cluj:* Editura Fundației Culturale Române.

revel in word hunting." (Vasilescu, 2011 , emphasis mine)[6]. She is otherwise known as the director of the Centre for Independent Journalism and has been for years a prominent figure in Romanian media, a position which may have allowed her to successfully propose translation projects to visible publishers. Her first translation, *Mesi@*, was published by Editura Fundației Culturale Române, founded by the Romanian Writers' Union, where Ieronim published her first poetry translation. When the press was shut down, the two translators took their projects to other publishers: Ieronim to Paralela 45, and Avădani to Polirom, who published six of Codrescu's titles[7]. But the rhythm in which the prolific translator worked on her friend's books required a second publisher, this time Curtea Veche Publishing, and a dedicated series bearing the name of the author[8]. While his prose was the result of his sole translator's effort, the translation of his poetry is tributary to a second translator-poet, Carmen Firan, who took Codrescu's first and only book written in his native Romanian, *Intrumentul negru*[9], and published it in 2005 at Scrisul Românesc press. My former research (Tanasescu, 2018) revealed that Firan also translated selections of Codrescu's poems and published them in the literary journal affiliated with the press. All these collaborations are part of a process of poetic reinstatement carried out by a network of various Romanian writer-translators that met Codrescu in the United States.

The next volume of American contemporary poetry published at Paralela 45 is the translation of Charles Simic's *The Book of Gods and Demons*[10] in 2002. There is no clear indication that this was a translator initiative; however, the volume differs in terms of design and is not bilingual, unlike Codrescu's *Selected* in the Gemini series. Cărtărescu's translation is preceded by a translator's note, in which he places the volume in the wider context of Simic's poetry and where the presence of the translator is only visible in a comment related to his favorite poem in the volume, which also appears on the back cover. If we take into account the rhythm in which Cărtărescu translates, the fact that the following American poetry books with

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[6] All translations from Romanian into English are mine, unless stated otherwise.

[7] *Contesa sângeroasă/ The Bloody Countess* (2010), *Noi n-avem bun-gust, noi sîntem artişti/ We Don't Have Good Taste, We Are Artists* (2008), *Wakefield* (2006), *Mesi@* (2006), *Scrisori din New Orleans/ Letters from New Orleans* (2006), *Casanova în Boemia/ Casanova in Bohemia* (2005).

[8] *Prof pe drum/ Prof on the Road* (2008), *Gaura din steag/ The Hole in the Flag* (2008), *Ghid dada pentru postumani - Tzara şi Lenin joacă şah/ A Dada Guide for Post-Humans— Tzara and Lenin Playing Chess* (2009), *Ay, Cuba! O călătorie socio-erotică/ Ay, Cuba! Socio-Erotic Travel* (2012), *Lecţia de poezie/ The Poetry lesson* (2014).

[9] Codrescu, Andrei. 2005. *Instrumentul negru. Poezii, 1965-1968/ The Black Tool. Poems, 1965-1968.* Craiova: Scrisul românesc.

[10] Charles Simic. 2002. *Cartea zeilor şi a demonilor/ Books of Gods and Demons* (Mircea Cărtărescu, Trans.). Pitești: Paralela 45.

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the same publisher appear in the Gemini series and in bilingual format, whereas Cărtărescu never publishes translations alongside the originals, one may be right to assume this was the translator's project. At Paralela 45 the translation of Simic was followed by that of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*[11] in 2004 by young translator Alex Moldovan—"[a] free-lance translator and a self-declared agnostic, [who] included on his list of translated works titles from philosophy, theology, as well as some poetry signed by authors such as Charles Taylor, Joseph Ratzinger or William Blake." (Bîrsanu, 2014: 246). As noted by Bîrsanu, "the publication of this version registered no echo whatsoever on the Romanian literary scene," (247) probably because of the personal nature of a project by a young translator that was not a published author at the time. Finally, the last poetry book with Paralela 45 in our corpus is Sylvia Plath's *Selected Poems*[12] translated and introduced by Elena Ciobanu in 2012. Plath's rendition and publication into Romanian appear to be Ciobanu's own endeavor, a classic example of collaboration with an established publisher that sits on the boundary between mainstream and indie publishing. The translator had defended her Ph.D. thesis on Plath's poetry in 2008 and the influence of her scholarly interest reflects heavily on the book. The poems are preceded by a lengthy academic preface both in English and Romanian, in which no reference is made to the translation process and which is followed by a list of works cited, a detailed bibliography, a short bio note, and a list of Plath's published books. Ciobanu's bio mentions her interest in the Anglophone world and her role as a curator of a rubric dedicated to Anglophone literatures in the literary magazine *Ateneu*, things that all suggest a personal project.

Alex Moldovan's ignored rendition of Eliot's *The Waste Land* might have been a direct competitor of the republication[13] by mainstream Cartea Românească, run by the Romanian Writers' Union. This bilingual book, coordinated by reputed British literature professor Lidia Vianu, contains two versions previously offered by Ion Pillat (1930) and Aurel Covaci (1973), and appears to observe the guidelines of mainstream publishing: established authors, established translators, and established endorsers. The same guidelines are observed by Humanitas in their volume of T.S. Eliot's *Selected Poems*[14] published in 2011. Humanitas collaborates with Ștefan Stoenescu— a reputed Anglophone literature specialist—for the preface and with

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[11] Eliot, T.S. 2004. *The Waste Land* (Alex Moldovan, Trans.). Pitești: Paralela 45.
[12] Plath, Sylvia. 2012. *Poeme alese/ Selected Poems.* (Elena Ciobanu, Trans.) Pitești: Paralela 45.
[13] T.S. Eliot. 2000. *The Waste Land/ Țara pustie* (Ion Pillat, Aurel Covaci, Trans.). București: Editura Cartea Românească.
[14] Eliot, T. S. 2011. *Opere poetice. 1909-1962/ Selected Poems (1909-1962)* (Mircea Ivănescu et. al., Trans.). București: Humanitas Fiction.

Professor Ioana Zirra for the chronology. This volume reunites old versions by Mircea Ivănescu and new translations by Sorin Mărculescu—translator of Cervantes—, Șerban Foarță—also seasoned translator of French poetry—, and Adriana Carmen Racoviță—a lecturer of English and experienced translator herself—, all qualified as excellent by the numerous reviews after publications (Grigore, 2012a, Grigore, 2012b, Dima 2012). The interest of all these presses in T.S. Eliot ranks him first in node centrality in G and G0 and places Humanitas second after Paralela 45 in Eigen centrality, thus second in the general network in terms of influence.

In our analysis, Humanitas does not owe its position to a large portfolio, but to their strategic rendition of Eliot, an author translated by other important nodes. In the absence of such translation, Humanitas would have been one of the many small players that make up translated poetry publishing in Romania. Unlike the Eliot translation, not much endorsement except for the translator's name was needed for Bob Dylan's *Blowing in the Wind*[15], published by Humanitas in 2012. Praised by a single reviewer before Dylan was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, as we have seen in the previous subchapter, Cărtărescu's translation is not an exquisite rendition, but probably helped boost sales figures for a series that reportedly undersells (Diniţoiu, 2017). Although the policy underlining the poetry series at Humanitas Fiction is for the Romanian renditions to be done by "important poet-translators," (Diniţoiu, 2017) no other book has the name of the translator in the very title ("100 poems translated by Mircea Cărtărescu", cf. note 15). The project most likely stemmed both from the translator's interest in Dylan's poetry and from Comănescu's affinity for the American artist's music, one of the many she was introduced to by Cornel Chiriac's acclaimed radio show in the early 1970s. Asked in a recent interview about the books and music that shaped her destiny, Comănescu admits to having been ostensibly influenced by American hippie counterculture:

"We used to like all important Anglo-American artists. Especially those dubbed the flower-power generation. When I was in high-school and Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin died, we wore mourning lapel bands. Profs would ask us what happened and we would answer that a relative of ours had died. We were in mourning for a month after Jimi and Janis died. Even the American poetry we read towards the end of the highschool years was influenced by their music". (Mincan, 2014)

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[15] Dylan, Bob. 2012. *Suflare în vânt. 100 de poeme traduse de Mircea Cărtărescu/ Blowing in the Wind. 100 Poems Translated by Mircea Cărtărescu*) (Mircea Cărtărescu, Trad.). București: Humanitas Fiction.

This hypothesis is not far-fetched, as further translations[16] from Dylan's work and biography have been published to date in the very series that bears her own first name, "Raftul Denisei" (Denisa's bookshelf), even if Dylan's *Selected* reportedly didn't sell as expected (Diniţoiu, 2017). Still, four years after publication, Humanitas was still looking for ways to promote the book and commissioned *Adevărul*, one of the best-selling daily journals, to feature a presentation of the volume, accompanied by two translated poems and videos of Bob Dylan's songs on the occasion of Dylan's being awarded the Nobel for literature. The feature reveals that it has been Cărtărescu who had picked the one hundred poems for the anthology (Ghioca, 2016). Another article in 2016, this time an opinion piece by Mihaela Ursa, sees the Humanitas translation as an ideological repossession: "The ideological confiscation of Bob Dylan by the Communist dogma through Adrian Păunescu and his 'Flacăra' literary circle has only been rectified with Cărtărescu's version." (Ursa, 2016). In her view, although these versions cannot be put to music, they are an excellent poetic rewriting and where "Păunescu used Dylan as a songwriter Cărtărescu reinvented a poet." (Ursa, 2016). The critical bias thus becomes obvious, as Dylan is both a songwriter and a poet, one that needs not be reinvented the way I have described in previous research (Tanasescu, 2019).

Cărtărescu's preference for the translation of lyrics has been manifest since 2005, when he translated thirty-two poems for the monograph[17] dedicated to Leonard Cohen by Romanian literary critic and academic Mircea Mihăieș, a long-time self-declared fan of the Canadian poet and singer. The translation rights for the poems in *Let Us Compare Mythologies* (1956) and *The Spice-Box of Earth* (1961) had been granted by the late poet himself, whom Mihăieș personally had met at a certain point. The Romanian version of the poems, published by Polirom (Figure 3), produce a mixed reaction:

> "Mircea Cărtărescu's translation of Leonard Cohen's poems is accurate and is an event in itself. Cărtărescu is one of the most important Romanian poets, one of the reasons why this translation cannot go unnoticed. But we have to say that it does not produce a big revelation about the quality of Cohen as a poet. Those who are familiar with Cohen's interpretation of songs like "The Future" or "Everybody Knows" will certainly find it strange to read only the lyrics, let alone the lyrics Romanian. In the absence of music and of

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[16] Dylan, Bob. 2015. *Cronica vieții mele/ The Chronicle of My Life* (vol. I, Dan Silviu Boerescu, Trans.). Bucharest: Humanitas Fiction; Dylan, Bob. 2016. *Tarantula* (Sorin Gherguț, Trans.). Bucharest: Humanitas Fiction.

[17] Mihăieș, Mircea. 2005/ 2016. *Viața, patimile și cântecele lui Leonard Cohen. Cu 32 de poeme traduse de Mircea Cărtărescu/ The Life, Passions, and Songs of Leonard Cohen. With 32 Poems Translated by Mircea Cărtărescu.* Iași: Polirom.

the sound of the English, these lyrics sound strange, although Mircea Cărtărescu renders the original accurately". (Urian, 2006: 5)

The association between Cărtărescu and Mihăieș was fed by their common interest in Cohen and is a clear indication of a deeply personal project. Another indication is the fact that the only translation selection ever published by Cărtărescu in a periodical is one of Cohen's poems in 2003[18], two years before they were featured in a larger selection in Mihăieș's book, and under a similar title formula to his translation of Dylan with Humanitas—[...] *în traducerea lui Mircea Cărtărescu*—an acknowledgment of the translator's prominent literary persona.

Polirom had been the first to translate Cohen's *Beautiful Losers* and *The Favorite Game* in 2003 and their continued interest in Cohen resulted in 2006 in a translation of his poetry volume *Book of Longing*[19]. This time, Polirom commissioned Șerban Foarță and Cristina Chevereșan. Foarță, considered by many a language genius and untranslatable as a poet, offers an excellent version that focuses on the musical quality of the originals and observes the prosody.
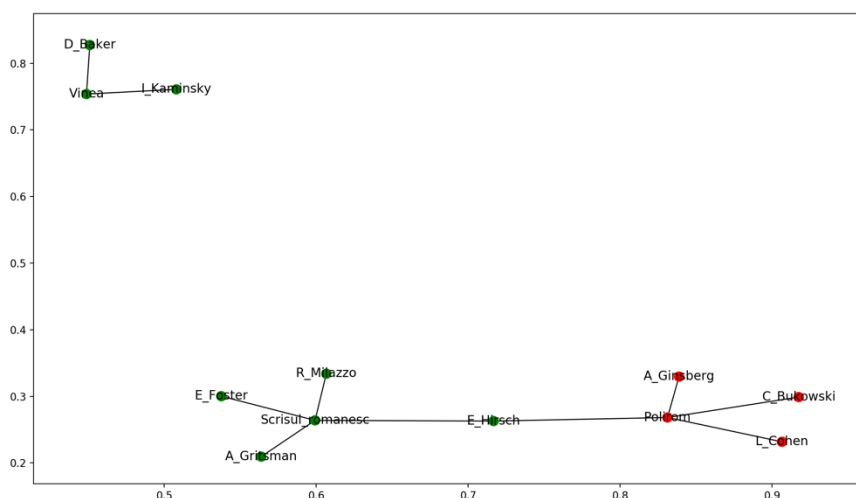
Figure 3. Translation projects associated with mainstream Polirom and indie Scrisul românesc. Legend: red = mainstream; green = indie.

The Cohen translation was the first in a Polirom series which continued in 2007 with Bukowski's *Love is A Dog from Hell. 61 Erotic Poems*[20],

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[18] Cohen, Leonard. 2003. "Leonard Cohen în traducerea lui Mircea Cărtărescu/ Leonard Cohen translated by Mircea Cărtărescu." In *România literară* 28.

[19] Cohen, Leonard. 2006. *Cartea aleanului/ Book of Longing* (Cristina Chevereșan and Șerban Foarță, Trad.). Iași: Polirom.

[20] Bukowski, Charles. 2007. *Dragostea e un cîine venit din iad. 61 de poeme erotice/ Love is A Dog from Hell. 61 Erotic Poems* (Dan Sociu, Trad.; Gorzo, Il.). Iași: Polirom.

translated by young poet Dan Sociu. The volume was met with contradictory reviews: while Iulia Popovici praised Sociu for transferring the sound and direct language of his own poetry in his version of Bukowski and saw this as a rare advantage in poetry translation into Romanian (Popovici, 2007), Paul Gabriel Sandu equated Sociu's treatment of the original poems with a bull in a china shop (Sandu, 2012). Two years after the translation of Bukowski poems Polirom published Sociu's translation of Irish poet Seamus Heaney, an anthology put together by the poet-translator himself. However, the publishing house might not have been interested in e. e. cummings, as in 2011 the translator takes this new translation project[21] to a different publisher, Art Press. The hypothesis according to which the translator's tastes and decision to translate cummings played a significant role in the publication of the book is also grounded in the fact that cummings's volume is the only foreign poetry title in the publisher's catalogue before 2018. Moreover, unlike the more substantial translations published with Polirom, this published version of cummings has only 80 pages, including illustrations. As far as the illustrations are concerned, they bind all three translations by Sociu like a red thread, irrespective of the publisher, which may be indicative of a certain vision on the translator's part.

Polirom expanded their series of translations from U.S. contemporary poetry with Allen Ginsberg[22] in 2010 and Edward Hirsch[23] in 2017. The format and design of these two new books differ considerably from the volumes translated by Sociu, and they are not accompanied by any illustrations or paratexts, except for brief author biographies on the inside covers and blurbs by established American authors or literary publications on the back covers. Although awarded a translation prize, the only extensive review of it to date does not address the Romanian version in any way and only comments on Ginsberg's literary magnitude (Pîrvan-Jenaru, 2011). The "elegant and precise" (Iovănel, 2017) translation of Hirsch's poems was published alongside a translation of his acclaimed *How to Read a Poem and Fall in Love with Poetry* appropriately curated by Alexandru Ioan Cuza University Press in the same city. It was Hirsch's translator, Bogdan Alexandru Stănescu, the coordinator of Polirom's world literature series, who said that in poetry translation the competition is fierce and everything boils down to money. In this context, the association of the two titles in a

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[21] e. e. cummings. 2011. *Poeme erotice/ Erotic Poems* (Dan Sociu, Trans.; Tudor Jebeleanu, Il.): București: Editura Art.

[22] Ginsberg, Allen. 2010. *Howl și alte poeme/ Howl and Other Poems* (Domnica Drumea and Petru Ilieșu, Trans.). Iași: Polirom.

[23] Hirsch, Edward. 2017. *Focul viu. Poeme vechi și noi. 1975-2010/ The Living Fire: New And Selected Poems* (Al. B. Stănescu, Trans.). Iași: Polirom.

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simultaneous launch appears as a combo meant to work against poetry's hard sell.

Polirom appears in the main component (G0) of the graph due to an infusion of nodes brought along by Scrisul românesc, otherwise each of these publishers would have belonged in different smaller components and would not have been so visible in the network. It was this small press in Craiova that published Hirsch for the first time, via Carmen Firan's transnational network, in a bilingual volume,[24] three years before Polirom did; and it was due to this network that Hirsch visited Romania and took part in the Literature and Translation International Festival in Iași in 2014, where Stănescu, Bădulescu and Andriescu, his future translators, met him. Besides his participation in this festival, the small press facilitated a book launch in the popular Bastilia bookstore in Bucharest and organized a round table together with the prestigious literary journal *Observatorul cultural*, thus checking all the promotion boxes normally associated with mainstream publishing.

Both small presses and individual translators appear to follow the same strategies to promote a book, sometimes with more success than mainstream publishers; for example, the 2014 translation[25] of John Berryman's *Dream Songs* by Radu Vancu, published with independent Max Blecher Press. This volume has benefited from the largest number of reviews of all contemporary U.S. poetry translations. While some of them insist on the differences between his version and the version published by Mircea Ivănescu in his 1986 anthology (Nedelea, 2014; Chivu, 2014), most of them are praising and salute the critical apparatus that accompanies the translation and situates Berryman in a literary context meant to guide the readers that are not familiar with his poetry (Coande, 2014; Diniţoiu, 2014). Although numerous and generally positive, the reviews never truly address the quality of translations and mostly analyze Berryman's motifs and the similarity between his work and the work of Romanian Mircea Ivănescu, his first poet-translator and Vancu's own mentor. Even if the translator is well aware of Berryman's sophistication in terms of poetic technique and even explains in detail in his postface the prosodic structure of the 50 poems he chose, he does not seem to render the structure in Romanian and focuses instead on rendering Berryman's "verbal jungle"—the colloquial vocabulary and intentional language mistakes. However, more of a publishing event than a felicitous translation, Berryman's *Dream Songs* remain their translator's project and the translator's gift to Romanian literature. Vancu entrusts the book to long-time friend Claudiu Komartin and his Max Blecher Press, but the back cover

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[24] Hirsch, Edward. 2014. *Foc nocturn/ Nocturnal Fire* (Răzvan Hotăranu, Trans.). Craiova: Scrisul românesc.
[25] Berryman, John. 2013. *Cântece vis/ Dream Songs* (Radu Vancu, Trans.). Bistrița: Casa de editură Max Blecher.

features a second publisher, Armanis, based in Vancu's hometown Sibiu. This is perhaps an indication that the translation might have been possible due to the financial support of the latter press, as this is the only title in Max Blecher's portfolio that has ever been co-published.

That year Max Blecher Press published another poetry volume, this time by Jerome Rothenberg[26], co-translated by Raluca and Chris Tanasescu. To our knowledge, only one review has been published to date, one that praises both the selection and the translation:

> "Varied and surprisingly representative for the work of a poet of such caliber, the anthology put together by Raluca & Chris Tanasescu—which is not to quote selectively, but looked at, read and uttered in a loud voice—is a *tour de force* for which the two translators cannot be complimented enough". (Chivu, 2014).

However ignored by reviewers, like many other translations, the launch was actually a series of events meant to have Rothenberg meet in person as many Romanian writers and poetry readers as possible: besides taking care of the translation, the translators applied for funding with the United States Embassy in Bucharest so that Rothenberg could attend the book launch in Bucharest and receive a fee; they also received the support of the local Jewish Community to cover daily incidentals; they copy-edited the manuscript and organized three book launches—at the book fair, in a posh literary lounge, as well as at the Jewish Theatre, and took the poet and his spouse on a flash-trip to the Romanian mountains. The press took care of the professional design and printing of the book. In addition, Claudiu Komartin and graphic designer Ana Toma, the two founders of the press, took part actively in most of the events organized and hosted the poet and the translators during one of their poetry reading circles, Institutul Blecher[27].

The same modus operandi was observed four years before, when C. Tanasescu successfully applied for funding with the U.S. Embassy in Bucharest to bring poet David Baker to Romania for the launch of his translated book—*The Alchemical Man*[28]. The book was presented to Romanian audiences in a series of various happenings, from book launches at that year's book fair in Bucharest to readings at the U.S. Embassy and a lecture at the University of Bucharest's Department of American Studies.

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[26] Rothenberg, Jerome. 2013. *Mistici, hoți și nebuni/ Mystics, Thieves, and Madmen* (Raluca & Chris Tanasescu (MARGENTO), Trans.). Bistrița: Casa de editură Max Blecher.
[27] The Blecher poetry workshops (*Institutul Blecher*) have been organized by Komartin for the past 9 years (168 editions as of March 3, 2018) without any financial support (Crăciun 2017).
[28] Baker, David. 2009. *Omul alchemic/ Alchemical Man. Selected Poems*. (Chris Tanasescu, Trans.). București: Editura Vinea.

The first and last translated books related to the two Tanasescus were handled differently. In 2007, C. Tanasescu entrusted Vinea Press, run by poet Nicolae Tzone and focused exclusively on poetry and avantgarde literature, with the production and printing of Ilya Kaminsky's *Dancing in Odessa*[29]*,* for which he paid a certain amount. The publisher presented the book at the 2007 Gaudeamus bookfair and distributed it in several bookstores, as well as through direct orders he personally mailed. However precarious the financial state of Vinea[30], Tzone is the only Romanian independent publisher that regularly presents his titles at the *Salon du livre* in Paris in spectacular formats and on luxury paper (Andrei, 2017). Relying heavily on his network of friends[31] and on his own creative stubbornness, as well as on a totally flexible in-home printing scheme, Tzone manages to offer every year fresh copies of all the books he has published since 1990 and will probably never say that a certain title sold out.

A somewhat different type of collaboration was established with Tracus Arte regarding the translation of Canadian Seymour Mayne's word sonnets[32]: the two co-translators submitted the title for consideration with the publisher and upon acceptance delivered the text of the translation and provided the book designer with a series of corrections and edits, thus fully taking care of the text editing and proofreading process. The total printing cost was supported by the publisher and the translators received approximately a fifth of the print run. The same process was probably followed by translator Marius Surleac for his translation of Marc Vincenz's *Propaganda Factory*[33] in 2015 with the same publisher. However financially supportive the latter, the two translations hosted by Tracus Arte completely lack reviews and promotion events. It is worth mentioning at this point that Seymour Mayne's participation in the book launch in Bucharest in 2014 was self-funded and the only support received by the two translators from the local Embassy of

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[29] Kaminsky, Ilya. 2007. *Dansând în Odessa/ Dancing in Odessa*. (Chris Tanasescu, Trans.). București: Editura Vinea.

[30] Although in very evasive terms, Tzone does admit to the financial instability of his press: "Somehow hazard helps too… I have never been able to work with planned budgets, at least not in Romania. First, I would make the books then I would manage to cover the expenses from sales or *from other sources*. There's a whole apparatus behind this." (Andrei 2017 , emphasis mine)

[31] Asked how he managed to have Romanian authors translated into French and presented at the *Salon du livre,* Nicolae Tzone replies: "It's very difficult, but I have very good friends, genuine professionals, that help me. I set up a kind of branch office in Paris for Vinea together with Miron Kiropol, Claudiu Soare... We are five or six people, collaborators included." (Andrei *ibid.*)

[32] Mayne, Seymour. 2014. *Caligrafomanție/ Augural Calligraphies*. (Raluca & Chris Tanasescu (MARGENTO), Trans.). București: Tracus Arte.

[33] Vincenz, Marc. 2015. *Fabrica de propagandă sau apropo de copaci/ Propaganda Factory or Speaking about Trees* (Marius Surleac, Trans.). București: Tracus Arte.

Canada was the hosting of a poetry reading and cocktail at the embassy's headquarters. Finally, Mayne's reading and lecture at the University of Bucharest's Department of Canadian Studies was made possible because of translator C. Tanasescu's long-time network in the institution.

Private initiative has also been salient in projects like Cosma's translation of George Elliott Clarke and Gloria Mindock. Now a Canadian citizen based in Toronto and a patron of the arts running a literary residence in Val David (Quebec), Cosma translated acclaimed Parliamentary Poet Laureate George Elliott Clarke's *Selected Poems*[34] in 2006, followed by selections from the work of Gloria Mindock[35] (Poet Laureate of Sommerville, Massachusetts), Dae-Tong Huh (Korea-born Canadian poet)[36], and Jim Heavily (poet and poetry editor of Los Angeles-based online literary journal www.hinchasdepoesia.com)[37]. It might be that these eclectic projects were fueled both by her personal literary taste and by her various collaborations with the poets she translates: Mindock is, for instance, the founding editor of Cervena Barva, the press that published two of Cosma's poetry volumes[38] and for which Cosma is, according to her own website, an international editor; Jim Heavily turns out to be the editor who published one of Cosma's poems[39] in the Romanian original and in Spanish translation the very year when a selection of his own poems appear in Romania); finally, her literary barter with poet Dae-Tong Huh becomes apparent in the publication of one of her books of children's literature[40] with Korean-Canadian Literary Forum-21 Press. Even her translation of Clarke's work—which marked her debut as a translator—appears to be, according to one of the very few reviews done in Romania, the result of literary gratitude that adds to a not so apparent, yet plausible, degree of literary kinship:

> "This [translation] cannot be only an elegant gesture out of her gratitude for the enthusiastic forewords he wrote to her own poetry

[34] Clarke, George Elliott. 2006. *Poeme incendiare/ Illuminated Poems* (Flavia Cosma, Trans.). Oradea: Cogito.

[35] Mindock, Gloria. 2010. *La portile raiului/ At Heaven's Gates* (Flavia Cosma, Trans.). Iași: Ars Longa Press.

[36] Cosma, Flavia. 2007. "Murmurs of Voices/ Murmure des voix/ Murmurul Vocilor." (Flavia Cosma, Trans.) Oradea: Cogito.

[37] Heavily, Jim. 2012. "Au trecut cinci ani deja...; El Pais (Ţara); Strada morţilor; etc./ It's been five years already… The Country; Dead men's street" (Flavia Cosma, Trans.). In *Vatra veche* 4 (6): 69.

[38] Cosma, Flavia. 2008. *The Season of Love*. Somerville, MA: Cervena Barva Press, 89 pages; Cosma Flavia. 2007. *Gothic Calligraphy*. Somerville, MA: Cervena Barva Press.

[39] Cosma, Flavia. 2012. "Man's Iron Hand; La mano de hierro del hombre." (Luis Raúl Calvo, Trans.) In *Hinchas de Poesia* 7/ 2012. Web: http:// bit.ly/ 2A9LsUM.

[40] Cosma, Flavia. 2007. *The Adventures of Tommy Teddy Bear and Alex Little Bunny*. Toronto: Korean-Canadian Literary Forum-21 Press.

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books. I would feel inclined to think this is a reading experience that touched the poet's receptiveness, hardened by her harsh destiny and her own sense of displacement. This is the source of her openness to acute existential problems, her understanding and compassion. We get a glimpse [in this translation] of a Flavia Cosma that speaks about Human Rights to Canadian students, the TV producer that documented homelessness in Toronto or the orphans in her home country [...]. In all these, she resonates with George Elliott's Clarke's militant social activism". (Oloș, 2007).

Just like the poets she translates (with the notable exception of Clarke), her translation projects stay very regional: the books are published with very small, provincial presses, either in her home town, Oradea, or in Iași, and the poetry selections generally appear in literary journals that are very regional (e.g., *Vatra Veche* from Târgu Mureș, *Citadela* from Satu Mare, both cities in north-western Romania).

What seems to connect these publishers and journals, though, is the "Lucian Blaga" International Festival in Sebeș, another small city in Transylvania, where Cosma was awarded in 2009 the "Title of Excellence for Outstanding Contribution to the Promotion and Enrichment of the Romanian Culture within the European Region and throughout the World.". From one of the two reviews of her translation of Clarke to date it is clear that the Canadian poet had visited Romania prior to the launch of his 2006 book, on the occasion of another literary happening in Satu Mare, *Zilele Poesis* (Pop, 2007). After his return in 2006 for the launch of his translated poem collection, various further selections by other translators appear in a number of literary magazines: two translations by Canadian Studies specialist Ana Oloș[41], who also favorably reviewed Cosma's rendition and dedicated a more in-depth academic study to Clarke's work (Oloș, 2012). While Oloș's 2008 translation followed Clarke's 2006 lecture at the Nord University, her home institution, and an award he received from the local literary journal, *Poesis*, her 2013 translation the very same year may be a reflection of Clarke's appointment as the Toronto Poet Laureate at the beginning of 2012. It may also be a natural development of a series of encounters between Cosma and Clarke. This small network also prompts a substantial interview in the *Transilvania* literary journal (Oloș, 2012) by Oloș and Crina Bud, lecturer at the Romanian Lectorate with York University, in Toronto.

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[41] Clarke, George Elliott. 2008. "Biserica baptistă africană din Cherrzbrook; Eclesiastul; Sonet alb: etc./ The African Baptist Church in Cherrzbrook; The Ecclesiast; White Sonnet; etc." (Ana Olos, Trans.) In *Poesis* 3-5: 98; Clarke, George Elliott. 2013. "Către guvernul din Nova Scoția; Viață de albină; etc./ To the Nova Scotia Government; A Bee's Life; etc." (Ana Oloș, Trans.) In *Nord literar* 7-8: 122-123.

Private initiative also appears to have prompted most of Olimpia Iacob's author-volumes and anthologies. Iacob, the most prolific translator of U.S. and Canadian poetry selections in print periodicals, appears in this network in G2, thus immediately after big players like Humanitas Fiction or Paralela 45. She has been publishing stand-alone collections for some of the authors in her network (such Carolyn M. Kleefeld[42]), but most of her translated books are either duos[43] by English-language poets coming from different cultures (such as the poetic dialogue[44] between American Vince Clemente and Welsh writer Peter Tabith-Jones), or duos by a Romanian and an American writer[45], or anthologies in which she pairs Romanian and English-language writers[46]. Her work increases significantly the number of anthologies published after 1989. The first such work was George Ciorănescu's *Spicuiri din lirica americană contemporană*,[47] published in 1993, followed three years later by Vasile Nicolescu's *Liricǎ universală*

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[42] Kleefeld. Carolyn Mary. 2013. *Zori hoinari/ Vagabond Dawns* (Al. Zotta, Foreword; Olimpia Iacob, Trans.). Cluj: Editura Limes; Kleefeld. Carolyn Mary. 2014. *Sărut divin/ The Divine Kiss*. Nistor, Ioan. *În flăcările păpădiilor/ In the Flames of Dandelions* (Olimpia Iacob, Trans.). Cluj: Editura Limes, 2014.

[43] Although the translator refers to such books featuring a Romanian poet and an American poet as anthologies, I consider them author-collections.

[44] Clemente Vince and Jones, Peter Thabit.2008. *Şoapte ale sufletului/ Whispers of the Soul* (Olimpia Iacob, Trans.) Iași: Editura Fundaţiei Culturale Poezia.

[45] Wolak, Bill. 2015. *Răsăriturile nopţii/ Deep into the Erasures of Night* (Olimpia Iacob, Trans.). Oyster Bay, NY: The Feral Press; Nistor, Ioan and Wolak, Bill. 2016. *Seminţe căutătoare de vânt/ Wind-Seeking Seeds* (Olimpia Iacob, Trans. from the English; Olimpia Iacob & Bill Wolak, Trans. from the Romanian). Satu-Mare: Editura Citadela;

[46] Novăcescu, Constantin and Kacian, Jim. 2016. *O linişte stranie/ Strange silence* (Olimpia Iacob & Jim Kacian, Trans.) Timișoara: Waldpress; Kacian, Jim and Petean, Mircea. 2016. *Haiku & Monoku* (Jim Kacian); *Haiku şi poeme taoiste/ Haiku & Taoist Poems* (Mircea Petean) (Olimpia Iacob and Jim Kacian, Trans.) Cluj: Editura Limes, 2016; Kacian, Jim, Popin, Eugen D. 2017. *Prins/ No Way Out* (Jim Kacian); *Trupul ţărânei/ The Body of Dust* (Eugen D. Popin). (Olimpia Iacob and Jim Kacian, Trans.) Timișoara: David Press Print; Cicio, Ana and Joussen, Frank. 2013. *Feţele iubirii/ The Faces of Love* (Ana Cicio); *Nuanţele iubirii/ Shades of Love* (Frank Joussen). (Olimpia Iacob and Jim Kacian, Trans.) Cluj: Editura Limes; ***. 2013. Stare la Ora Amiezii/ Mood at Noon (Lidia Charelli. Maria Bennett. Rebecca Cook. Mia Barkan Clarke. Cassian Maria Spiridon.) (Olimpia Iacob and Jim Kacian, Trans.) Iași: Editura Timpul; Christi, Aura and Jones, Peter Thabit. 2014. *Lăsaţi fluturii să zboare/ Let the Butterflies Go* (Olimpia Iacob and Jim Kacian, Trans.). Iași: Editura Timpul, ***. 2014. *Lumina care cântă/ The Light Singing* (Olimpia Iacob and Jim Kacian, Trans.). Deva: Editura Emia; Barkan, Stanley H. and Corbu, Daniel. *Maşina de inventat idealuri/ The Machine for Inventing Ideal*s (Olimpia Iacob and Jim Kacian, Trans.) Iași: Editura Princeps Multimedia.

[47] I was unable to consult the table of contents of this anthology. However, one of the very few reviews of the anthologist's works mentions the following contemporary poets: e. e. cummings, Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, A. Ginsberg.

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(Universal Poetry)[48], only partially dwelling on contemporary American poets—such as Sylvia Plath or W.H. Auden. The next anthology dedicated to contemporary American poetry[49] was published ten years later, in 2006, by Cartea românească. *Locul nimănui* is the editors' manifest against poetry taught in U.S. academia rather than a selection to reflect local taste or topics and writing techniques that could have interested a Romanian audience. In 2012, the 'jam session book', *Nomadosophia*, similar to Marin Sorescu's *Inspiration Treatise*, only without the interviews and blending translations[50] with original works, brings together contemporary poets that were popular in anthologies before 1989, such as Elizabeth Bishop and Gwendolyn Brooks, with authors whose work had never been translated into Romanian before, like Rae Armantrout or Frank Zappa. Finally, the anthology put together by the Zona Nouă poets, *Everything in its Right Place*, gathered the work of fourteen young American writers[51] and emphasized the fact that these writers were being translated into Romanian for the first time.

Going back full-circle to publishing projects related by famous musicians, one needs to mention the first translation of rock lyrics in book form in post-communist Romania: Jim Morrison's *An American Prayer and Other Writings*[52]. The book was the project of rock music enthusiast Dănuț Ivănescu, editor of the Romanian *Heavy Metal Magazin*. The first bilingual edition was published in 1995 at Quo Vadis? Press in Chișinău. Printing books with presses and printing houses in the Republic of Moldova was a common practice during those years, as prices were lower than in Romania and local publishers welcomed the idea of facilitating projects in Romanian. The first print run probably sold out very quickly, as two more editions were published in 1997, this time with Romanian publishers—Cartea de nisip and

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[48] ***. 1996. *Lirică universală/ Universal Poetry* (Vasile Nicolescu, Trans.). București: Eminescu.

[49] (in alphabetical order) Will Alexander, Anselm Berrigan, Ted Berrigan, Jim Carroll, Andrei Codrescu, Clark Coolidge, Joseph Donahue, Edward Foster, Jorie Graham, Fanny Howe, Lisa Jarnot, Ronald Johnson, Robert Kelly, Laura Moriarty, Nathaniel Mackey, Harry Mathews, Eileen Myles, Murat Nemet-Nejat, Alice Notley, Geoffrey O'Brien, Michael Palmer, Simon Pettet, Ed Roberson, Leslie Scalapino, Leonard Schwartz, David Shapiro, Aaron Shurin, Eleni Sikelianos, Arthur Sze, John Taggart, Nathaniel Tarn, Tod Thilleman.

[50] (in alphabetical order) Rae Armantrout, David Baker, Elizabeth Bishop, Gwendolyn Brooks, Albert Goldbarth, Fady Joudah, Philip Levine, Cate Marvin, Seymour Mayne, J.D. McClutchy, Ken McCullough, Robert Pinsky, Jerome Rothenberg, Charles Simic, Charles Wright, Frank Zappa.

[51] Daniel Bailey, Gabby Bess, Mike Bushnell, Ana Carrete, Noah Cicero, Juliet Escoria, Mira Gonzalez, Sarah Jean Alexander, Tao Lin, Scott McClanahan, Ashley Opheim, Sam Pink, Michael J. Seidlinger, and Lucy K. Shaw.

[52] Morrison, Jim. 1995/ 1997. *O rugă americană şi alte scrieri/ An American Prayer and Other Writings* (Virgilia and Mara Popa, Trad.). Chișinău: Quo Vadis? Press/ Cartea de nisip/ Karmat Press.

Karmat Press. The books produced by these publishers reveal a very eclectic selection—a hodgepodge of cheap literature, poetry, translations, memoirs, most of them being rather reflections of their authors' personal agendas than a coherent publication portfolio. The translation of Morrison's poems and lyrics is the perfect example of such projects born from someone's passion for a certain kind of music. Its publication was an act of open admiration towards the poet and musician, as all paratexts and subsequent reviews of the translation to Morrison's life and music only. There are no translation excerpts online, nor are there any in other media.

The only reference to the two translators appears on a blog run by the artist who designed the cover of the book, Ionuț Bănuță[53]. This is how we find out that Virgilia and Mara Popa are siblings. Ana Virgilia Popa is in fact a researcher in veterinary medicine, whose other translations to date have nothing to do with poetry, but with science fiction and with specialized texts pertaining to the field of biology. Such an eclectic profile is an indication of how Virgilia Popa came to translate this poetry collection: most probably because she was personally acquainted with the publisher. Details from Ana Virgilia Popa's online CV confirm the fact that the first edition was published in 1995 at Quo vadis? Press (in Chișinău, Republic of Moldova), while the other three were published between 1996 and 1998 by Karmat Press and Cartea de Nisip Publishers (which all had the same owner, Dănuț Ivănescu). The translation was popular among Morrison's fans (e.g., one of the poems in translation, *Cine te-a speriat* (Who Scared You)), was included on the Romanian band Blue Spirit's 1999 album titled *Cei mai frumoși ani!* (The Most Beautiful Years!), but was always sung alongside the original. The 51-poem selection follows an ample foreword from the publisher, Dănuț Ivănescu, titled "'Cel frumos și blestemat' sau 'La porțile percepției'" (The Handsome and Cursed or At the Doors of Perception), which addresses the rock star's troubled biography. The Romanian versions follow the original quite accurately and sometimes manage to preserve the rhyme, but the prosody is not a concern for the two translators. A similar preoccupation for the meaning of Morrison's lyrics appears in Tudor Crețu's essays on narcopoetics, a series of three pieces published in *Observatorul cultural* in 2016 on his drug addiction as part of the artistic process[54].

Conclusion

The analyzed corpus is undergirded by a focus on novelty, passion, and dialogue with contemporary Romanian writing rather than on established

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[53] The cover designer reveals that he designed the cover out of his "deep admiration" for Morrison's band, *The Doors*. http:// bit.ly/ MorrisonBanuta.

[54] Crețu, Tudor. 2012. "Jim Morrison, narcopoetica (1-3)/ Jim Morisson, the narcopoetics (1-3)." In *Observator cultural* 811, 812, 814. Web: http:// bit.ly/ narcopoetica.

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American writing dictating the rules of the game. It also emphasizes a translating agenda fashioned by the translators' networks and by a sort of resistance to the mainstream. The poetry translators' wish to mirror the ever-morphing contemporary world literature in its diversity, not only the "peaks" that have populated the national literature-building program of translations before 1989 (Ursa, 2018), resulted in author-translator networks being built and, if such networks existed, in interpersonal relationships being fruitfully exploited. The 14 components—ranging from established publishers to re-publications of one single title—, corresponding to a range of 14 micro-programs, as Ursa calls them, reflect the self-regulation of a literary translation structure with profound ramifications in the larger literary system and justify the use of a network model that emphasizes heterogeneity. The self-regulation of such a structure has been the direct expression of a permanent interaction with other cultures and agents, as well as of the mission many of the poet-translators embarked on in order to synchronize Romanian literature with the rest of the world and overcome the European bias. I will conclude this essay by saying that the transnational logic of the post-Cold War era meant not only an economic reconfiguration of the book market, but a refashioning of poetry translators' agency, who took upon themselves more than ever before the task of refreshing literary practices and their own writing through translation.

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COLLOCATION AND CONNOTATION IN CHAPTER "SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS" OF JAMES JOYCE'S *ULYSSES.* AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE ROMANIAN TRANSLATION

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Abstract: *The present article was written as part of the PhD dissertation entitled "An analysis regarding the evolution of James Joyce's writing style in 'Dubliners', 'A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man' and 'Ulysses' and the strategies of translating it into Romanian". The research starts from the hypothesis that a perfect rendition in a different language of a literary text of this type is nothing more than a utopia. However, a translator should always intend to achieve an equilibrium between the author's intentions, the form, the content and the target culture. In "Ulysses", James Joyce experiments with language, abandoning the definition of sense and revolutionises the art of expressing thoughts through words. The current work will concentrate on the thorough analysis of adjectival and adverbial collocations conceptualized in the ninth chapter of "Ulysses". Our purpose is to investigate how Mircea Ivănescu's Romanian translation deals with collocations and especially with those that typically represent Joyce's authorial style. Mircea Ivănescu (1931-2011) is a Romanian poet and the sole translator who accomplished the difficult task of translating the entire novel, although there had been various attempts at translating only chapters of it. It is an approved work of translation, having received both praise and critical appreciation. After more than three decades from this chapter's translation, our research aims for a further exposition of the similarities and distinctions between the source language text and the target language translation.*
Keywords: Interpretive act; Uncommon collocations; Adjectival collocations; Adverbial collocations; Strategies of translation;

1 Introduction

Ulysses by James Joyce is a modern novel seeking to envisage that, during the early decades of the twentieth century, the ancient myth of military heroism could be replaced with the modern myth of the flawed human condition. The allusions to classical mythology are represented by expressiveness and symbolical actions rather than by similar behaviours or the manner the plot unfolds. Homer's epic poem of Odysseus's ten years of

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meandering is recreated to happen during a single day of June 16th 1904. According to the aesthetic values of classicism, the text comprises three main parts: *Telemachus*, *Odyssey* and *Nostos*, summating eighteen episodes, each having been allocated a specific art, colour, symbol, technique and organ of the body. After seven years of intense work and struggles to perfect the technique of literary experimentalism, James Joyce's novel was first published in 1922. As the author himself states in the letters to his patron, the nearly 20.000 hours spent in writing *Ulysses* conducted to the use of various methods, changing from one hour to another and from episode to episode, pointing out a number of conflicting views.

> "The task I set myself technically in writing a book from eighteen different points of view and in as many styles, all apparently unknown or undiscovered by my fellow tradesmen, that and the nature of the legend chosen would be enough to upset anyone's mental balance" (Ellman, 1975: 284).

Episode 9 in *Ulysses*, "Scylla and Charybdis", corresponds to Odysseus's trial-by-sea in which he must sail between two mythical monsters. Scylla, the six-headed sea monster was situated on a rock, on the Calabrian side of the strait, while Charybdis was a deadly whirlpool which could swallow an entire ship. In this episode the two monsters are not physical menaces, but oratorical ones. James Joyce allocates to this episode the art of literature and the brain as the organ. The technique used concentrates on the dialectical interaction between opposing point of views, which means that reality is described through various exchanges of logical arguments. The scene happens sometimes around 2:00 p.m., at the National Library of Ireland, and concentrates on a literary debate between Stephen Dedalus and some of Dublin's most eminent and widely known literati. There are constant interruptions and divagations, and Stephen often employs thoughts or words of others from earlier in the day. He speaks with fervour about father motifs in Shakespeare. But this is simply a virtuoso performance, as the young man plays his part in front of a crowd that does not accept him as one of their own. He formulates theories for the academics, but he arrogantly dismisses their very opinions, distancing himself even more from the others and the world itself.

After making his statements, he is asked if he believed in his own theories and he promptly answers: "No" (Joyce, 1992: 290). According to Blamires (1996: 73), this statement is significant in metaphorically suggesting the detachment from

> "the Catholic view of man's situation and his destiny, something which he (Stephen-Joyce) cannot believe: but then it is something

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which believers themselves believe only against the ever-present pressure of unbelief".

The author warns his readers against a too great deference to the opinion of those who hold the authority. Thus, the image of Scylla functions as a parallel to Stephen, whose innate strength and potential force can only manifest itself oratorically. The "real" artist, with whom Joyce identifies, shares the logical Aristotelian rhetoric. In contrast, the mystical, whirling Platonic dialectic of the gathered academics promotes the generalised opinions vehiculating among the artists of Joyce's time: "Art has to reveal to us ideas, formless spiritual essences" (Joyce, 1992: 237).

"Whirlpool images occur several times, associated with the swirling deeps of Platonist metaphysics in which Russell and the librarians are whirled. By contrast rapiered Stephen, weaponed with logic on his Aristotelian rock (Kinch, the knife-blade), continually sticks his neck out to snatch bitingly at the statements of the others, taking on allcomers at once" (Blamires, 1996: 62).

Poet and translator Mircea Ivănescu stand as a prominent figure when it comes to introducing *Ulysses* to Romania. So far, he has been the only Romanian man of letters who succeeded in translating the entire novel. After a scrupulous work that extended over a period of twelve years, the Romanian *Ulise* was published in 1984. Over the years, the critical reception pointed out the exceptional character of the translation. Of course, taking into account the intricacies of James Joyce's personal style, imprecisions or unsolved linguistic ambiguities are inevitable in translation. But, regarded as a whole and including the personal annotations, "what Ivănescu has managed is a cultural translation, rather than a mere linguistic conversion" (Oțoiu, 2004: 203). The chapter "Scylla and Charybdis" is richly supplied with annotations, as Mircea Ivănescu himself states when introducing the episode, which makes for a better and more accurate understanding of the translator's interpretation:

"It seemed that for this chapter the translation should be accompanied by a relatively more abundant number of annotations as to a large extend the answers, thoughts, psychological evolutions of characters, Stephen's improper erudition and his sarcastic collocutors illustrate the eloquent irony and the careful meticulosity which Joyce employed in imagining and constructing the novel."[1] (Joyce, 1992: 427 – our translation).

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[1] "Ni s-a părut că aici traducerea ar putea fi însoțită de note relativ mai abundente deoarece într-o foarte mare măsură replicile, gîn-durile, evoluțiile psihologice ale personajelor,

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This research on translation is conducted consistently by comparing corpora of source language and target language collocations in the aforementioned chapter. Translation is a process marked by several phenomena, such as linguistic, cultural or ideological. This enabled investigation and classification of diverse strategies of translation over time. Some of the strategies were structured in a simplistic manner, such as Vinay and Darbelnet's taxonomy (1995), which referred mainly to two types of translation: direct/literal translation and oblique translation, the latter including seven subcategories. Other theorists referred to means of contending with certain difficulties of translating. From Mona Baker's (1992/2018) point of view, there are a series of strategies used by professional translators when dealing with different types of non-equivalence. However, for this study we settled on the elaborate taxonomy conceived by Chesterman (1997). According to the author, this systematic grouping of strategies is a heuristic one, which can be easily applied in practice, "it seems to differentiate enough, but does not get bogged down in "unportable" detail; and it is flexible and open-ended. It comprises three primary groups of strategy: mainly syntactic/grammatical (coded as G), mainly semantic (S) and mainly pragmatic (Pr)" (Chesterman, 1997: 93).

However, when coping with an act of literal translation, it is insufficient to reduce the analysis to strategies of translation. The systematic study of translation theories has led to the emergence of other types of realities as well. In the book *Contra Instrumentalism: A Translation Polemic,* Lawrence Venuti, an eminent figure when it comes to visions of translation, sets forth the idea of how translation is simply an act of interpretation. Consequently, according to his opinion, there are no errors in translation and the concept of untranslatability does not exist.

> "Translating operates by building an interpretive context in a language and culture that differ from those that constitute the source text. When translated, therefore, the source text becomes the site of multiple and conflicting interpretations—even when the translator consults a dictionary on every word (indeed, dictionaries can proliferate the possibilities)" (Venuti, 2019: 67).

Therefore, with Venuti's vision as a landmark and using Chesterman's framework, this study proceeds into analysing the Romanian translation as a concept of interpretation, determining similarities or differences in meaning

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eruditia deplasată a lui Stephen ca şi ironiile interlocutorilor săi, ilustrează ironia elocventă şi meticulozitatea atentă cu care, aici, ca pretutindeni în restul cărţii, Joyce şi-a gîndit şi construit romanul".

at the level of some adjectival and adverbial collocations that mark the personal style of James Joyce.

2. What is collocation and why is it important?

J.R. Firth, one of the leading figures in linguistics during the middle of the twentieth century, drew attention to the fact that meaning is not restricted to single lexical units and that "you shall know a word by the company it keeps" (Firth, 1957: 179). The word "collocation" was borrowed into English from the Latin *collocare* around the sixteenth century, as part "of the flood of words pouring into English from Latin in response to pressures created, among other things, by the huge amount of translation from classical texts during the period" (Barnbrook et al., 2013: 6). With the passing of time, from the very first existing texts containing the word to the current dictionaries, there have been slight variations in the description of the use of the word "collocation". However, generally speaking, as suggested by its Latin roots *cum-*, meaning "with" and *-locus*, meaning "place", collocation refers to the way words co-occur or are placed together in a sentence. Moreover, these juxtapositions are set to happen in order to obtain productive speech.

> "Collocation is the way words combine in a language to produce natural-sounding speech and writing. For example, in English you say 'strong wind' but 'heavy rain'. It would not be normal to say *'heavy wind' or *'strong rain'. And whilst all four of these words would be recognized by a learner at pre- intermediate or even elementary level, it takes a greater degree of competence with the language to combine them correctly in productive use." (*Oxford collocations dictionary for students of English*, 2002: vii)

Words alone can seldom express an entire meaning, that is why word combinations provide a context from which it gets easier to understand what exactly is conveyed. According to Manning and Schütze, collocations have a feature of *limited compositionality*. "We call a natural language expression compositional if the meaning of the expression can be predicted from the meaning of the parts" (Manning & Schütze, 1999: 151). When it comes to the idea of *non-compositionality,* idioms own the most extreme feature, as it can be seen in the examples "let the cat out of the bag" or "break a leg", which have an indirect relationship with the original meanings of the words in the expressions. A cat is not actually let out of a bag and no one breaks any legs, so the words aren't perceived according to their literal meanings. As stated by Phillip (2011: 24), there is a similarity between collocations and idioms, since both are "recurrent combinations of words, making them institutionalised lexical items or, at the very least, institutional word combinations". In general, most collocations show a milder characteristic of

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non-compositionality. In the example "the march of progress" or "the march of time", a new meaning is added to the original one, suggesting a steady forward movement or progression and it can only be used in a composition that expresses the course of an action. It would be incorrect to say "the march of money". However, the main difference between idioms and collocations rests in the relationship each constitutive word has with its original meaning. "An idiom expresses an idea which cannot normally be inferred from the meanings of its constituents, while a collocation expresses an idea which can be inferred to some extent without the contribution of contextual cues" (24-25).

According to the BBI Dictionary, collocations are divided in two major groups: *grammatical collocations* and *lexical collocations*. The former group contains eight major types of combinations, while the latter consists of seven types. "A grammatical collocation is a phrase consisting of a dominant word (noun, adjective, verb) and a preposition or grammatical structure such as an infinitive or clause" (BBI, 2010: xix). In contrast, lexical collocations contain nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs and do not consist of prepositions, infinitives or clauses.

The importance of collocations lies in the frequency with which they are used when trying to convey a message. "No piece of written or spoken English is free of collocations" (*Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Students of English*, 2002: vii). Moreover, when employing collocations, speeches tend to be more precise. This happens because most single words hold a wide range of meanings, some of them distinct and others related. The exact meaning is dictated by a specific context, more precisely, by other words that surround and combine with the central word, i.e. by collocations. As Singleton states, "we need to know about collocational patterns in order to function smoothly in lexical terms in either our mother tongue or any other language we may know" (Singleton, 2000: 56). Whenever we use fixed expressions and established form of words, the speeches that we produce tend to become more fluent, as we are spared the trouble of building up from scratch every construction we want to use.

For the translator, for whom the collocation is an important contextual element, which can usefully or unfavourably affect the translation, it is a challenge to narrow down the possibilities to find the best translation option. The struggle often ends with sacrificing the author's originality in attempting to convey the meaning of a structure. It takes knowledge and ability on the part of the translator to be creative and imaginative in this decision-making process. Many of Joyce's lexical innovations are used in a way which affects and disrupts the ordinary and basic meaning of words. This experimental writing style makes use of neologisms, unconventional word spellings, lexical ambiguities and "personal collocations", as Firth (1957: 195) calls

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these collocations that result from a writer's established use of language. When it comes to literary translation, such personal collocations of an author are invested with stylistic features and become objects of interest in conveying the stylistic effect.

3. Collocation and connotation

The issue of connotation is particularly relevant to the linguistic studies. Connotation is understood as an adjacent meaning added to the basic one, voluntarily evoked. This secondary meaning is mostly generated by emotions through a set of images, experiences or values. In a literary text, a translator has to give precedence to its connotations, since, "if it is any good, it is an allegory, a comment on society, at the time and now, as well as on its strict setting" (Newmark, 2001: 16). The connotation of a linguistic structure is clearly different from its explicit or primary meaning and it holds a cultural baggage specific to a certain community. For instance, the connotations of the English "jailbird" (Joyce, 1992: 266) and its Romanian translation *ocnaș* (Joyce 1992: 249) are very different: a "jailbird" is a criminal who has been repeatedly in jail, while *ocnaș* is an ex-convict condemned to work daily on a mine site. Connotation is therefore involved with ideas of specific use, experiences and beliefs.

4. An analysis of the Romanian translation

James Joyce's style is known for extending the connotations of a single word, "across a 'chain' of similar sounding words" (Wales, 1992: 109). The thoughts of the characters are intermingled in the process. For instance, when Buck Mulligan mocks Stephen's theory, a cluster of words sharing similar sounds appear: "—Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Cuck Mulligan clucked lewdly" (Joyce, 1992: 263). The foolish imitation of the bird hints at the insanity of Stephen's idea. The narrator, represented by his alter-ego, Stephen Dedalus, mocks Mulligan's name, using a slang word which denotes a man subservient to women and continues with the derogatory collocation hinting at the characteristic sound made by a hen and implying his disgust toward the main antagonist of the novel. As English and Romanian don't share the same flexibility related to the connotative feature of words, when conveyed, using a literal translation, although the original meaning is rendered, inevitably the sound effect is lost: "— Cucu! Cucu! clămpăni Cuck Mulligan libidinos" (254).

When it comes to collocations consisting of a dominant noun and of one or several adjectives, the general rule in English is to place the adjectives before the noun, while in Romanian the order is reversed. That is why "hesitating soul" (235) is transposed to "suflet ezitant" (219) and "unoffending face" (241) is translated with "chip neamenințător" (223).

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However, when in Romanian the adjective is placed before the noun, the dominant word receives an appreciative connotation, as in the collocation "great poet" (235), which is translated as "mare poet" (219).

James Joyce begins the episode with adjective + noun collocations, depicting not only the aspect of the characters engaged in the conversation, but their attitudes as well. The collocation "quaker librarian" (235) refers to Thomas William Lyster, the librarian of the National Library of Ireland between 1895 and 1920. According to the *Online American Heritage Dictionary*, a "quaker" is a member of the Religious Society of Friends, a Christian sect founded by George Fox around 1650, whose central belief is the doctrine of the Inner Light. These members reject sacraments, ritual, and formal ministry. In English, the construction has a pejorative connotation. As stated by the *Online American Heritage Dictionary*, during the seventeenth century, it was used as a derogatory nickname "the Friends have never called themselves Quakers". The corresponding Romanian collocation is extended and has a disparaging connotation as well "bibliotecarul, quaker notoriu" (219), (lit. "the librarian, a notorious quaker"). According to Chesterman's taxonomy (1997: 108-109), this is a strategy of translation of "explicitness change", in which translators add elements in the target language translation, in order to make explicit which is only implicit in the source text. As stated by Gifford and Seidman (1989: 192), "during his tenure as librarian the oddity of his religious faith made him the object of suspicion and considerable mockery". Thus, the additional adjective is used by the translator in order to highlight the librarian's infamous position. Romanian collocations formed with the adjective *notoriu* receive a pejorative meaning, implying a behaviour exceeding the normal or permitted limits. Although Joyce employs in this first paragraph a series of adjective + noun collocations meant to set the scene in a calm and friendly environment, suitable for a pleasant conversation, and at the same time hinting at the peaceful attitude of the librarian, Ivănescu perceives the contemptuous disposition of the men of letters. While reading the Romanian translation, Joyce's construction "quaker librarian", repeated twelve times throughout the episode, is at times replaced with the modulated *bibliotecar puritan* (lit. "puritan librarian"). Even though the translator annotates the origin of quakers, he does not offer further explanations regarding the differences between the two denominations. Perhaps the translator employed this strategy of adaptation or "cultural filtering", as Chesterman names it (1997: 108), for the purpose of readability, to bring the text closer to its readers, as Romanians are more familiar with the term "puritan". Both Quakers and Puritans came to existence as keen Protestants, when they grew discontent with the Church of England, they are considered distinct groups and there are a series of differences between them. On the one hand, Puritans spent hours in prayer and Bible reading, believing

that their duty was to be obedient to the will of the Creator. "The popular image of Puritans is of earnest, narrow-minded people, disparagers of normal human pleasures" (Rosman, 1992: 61). Quakers or the Religious Society of Friends, on the other hand, believed in Jesus, rejected formal rituals and got actively involved in helping others. Moreover, they held a different status from other Protestant sects in the eyes of Irishmen. From their arrival in Ireland in 1654, "Quaker responses to the condition of Ireland were positive and always distinctive. Both Irish and English Friends were actively concerned with the welfare of the island, much of which seemed sunk in eternal poverty" (Hatton, 1993: 4). Through benevolence, active implication to eradicate Irish misery, intense labour and charitable giving especially during the Great Famine of 1846-1849, they increased their reputation and "made a significant contribution to the development of modern relief policies" (14). However, by the twentieth century, despite their good intentions, Ireland's economic needs could no longer be satisfied by the methods that the Quakers had taken until then. Moreover, there was something about their unyielding convictions that made for uneasiness and incited hostility from others.

John Eglinton, who according to Gifford and Seidman (1989: 194) is the pseudonym of the Irish essayist and literary critic, William Kirkpatrick Magee, is described using the collocations "glitter eyed" and "rufous skull" (Joyce, 1992: 236). These collocations are rather uncommon, suggesting the stiff and judgemental nature of the character. In Romanian, the first construction is rendered literally. However, when it comes to the second collocation, by using the strategy of "information change" (Chesterman, 1997: 109), the idea of the reddish, brownish colour of Eglinton's hair is no longer conveyed. Instead, the translator uses the adjective "stufos" (Joyce, 1992: 220), (lit. "thick haired"), hinting at the idea that his dishevelled hair and bony head represent altogether intelligence but also a rudimentary way of thinking. Furthermore, the rather uncommon collocation "spare body" (239), as the adjective is commonly used in collocations referring to extra money or time, refers to the character's modest constitution and unintimidating aspect. In Romanian, Ivănescu employs a common collocation, "trupul slab" (225), (lit. "thin body"), as its equivalent. The translator engages into using the semantic strategy of "synonymy" (Chasterman, 1997: 102), picking the closest synonym for the adjective. Its literal meaning refers to someone whose body lacks excess flesh, but it could also imply lack of strength or firmness. In front of Stephen's theory for ever-changing forms, Elington shows mockery with his "carping voice" (Joyce, 1992: 241), another personal collocation that Joyce employs in order to highlight the persistent and unjustified criticism of the essayist. In Romanian, the collocation is rendered literally, implying the same attitude: "vocea cîrcotaşă" (226).

Poet A.E, which stands as a pseudonym for the famous poet of the Irish Literary Revival George Russell, is described by Joyce with the collocations "face, bearded", "an ollav, holly eyed" (236). These images suggest wisdom, as "the ollaves were pre-Christian Irish masters of learning and poetry" (Gifford & Seidman, 1989: 194), but also mysticism and a trait of higher spirituality, A.E being perceived by others as someone who is worthy of reverence. Mircea Ivănescu translates the structure literally: "un ollav cu ochi sfințiți" (Joyce, 1992: 220), which does not necessarily hint at something complimentary. In Romanian, apart from the primary meaning of the adjective *sfințiți* (lit. "blessed/holy"), another meaning of the word refers to someone tipsy or mentally confused, especially in the construction "cu ochi sfințiți" (lit. "blessed/holy eyed"). The first meaning of the adjective is generally used in collocations showing that a certain object has been cleansed of evil spirits such as *apă sfințită* (lit. "holly water").

Mr. Best, another enthusiastic and agreeable librarian, is described by Joyce using collocations that show approbation and steadiness "unoffending face" (238), "quiet voice" (242). Although his own contributions to the Hamlet conversation are merely points of received wisdom, his role is to maintain the discussion into equilibrium. In Romanian, the translator uses synonymy and literal translation strategy. The choice of adjectives implies a similar reaction to the character: "chip neamenințător" (223 – lit.: "unthreatening face") and "glasul liniștit" (229 – lit.: "quiet voice"). However, an "offence" provokes a feeling of displeasure or annoyance, while "threat" holds a more pejorative connotation, implying the risk of inflicting pain or harm.

Later in the episode, Stephen's main antagonist joins the discussion. Buck Mulligan's appearance in the scene is marked by the collocation "ribald face" (248), reflecting Joyce's and implicitly Stephen's tormented feelings at the sight of this irreverent who has a habit of showing up and making Stephen look foolish. The Romanian translator renders the collocation employing the strategy of "abstraction change" (Chesterman, 1997: 103): "chip nerușinat" (Joyce, 1992: 236), (lit. "shameless/impudent face"). In this way, the adjective "ribald", referring to "coarse, obscene, or licentious, usually in a humorous or mocking way" (*Collins English Dictionary Online*: 2014), becomes less abstract when translated. In English, the collocation refers to Buck's humorous, mocking behaviour towards Stephen. Its Romanian equivalent hints at the character's bold, mischievous and disrespectful behaviour, traits that also dictate lack of shame and a sort of satisfaction every time Stephen is ridiculed.

The chapter consists of two distinct parts of the dialogue between Stephen Dedalus and the academics. While it is linguistically established so that the characters should be able to prove their literary knowledge, the

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emotional association that the words carry sets the readers into Stephen's own world of ideas and mental meanderings. We find that Joyce employs different adverbs with the past tense of the verb "said", which is mentioned 79 times in the chapter, according to each character's inner emotions. Stephen enters the philosophical fray, defending Aristotle: "The schoolmen were schoolboys first, Stephen said superpolitely. Aristotle was once Plato's schoolboy" (Joyce, 1992: 236). The word root implies respect for Dublin's literary elite and a desire to be accepted among these men of letters. In Romanian, the collocation is rendered as "spuse Stephen mai-mult-decît-politicos" (Joyce 1992: 221), (lit. "Stephen said more-than-politely"), the translator using the synonymy strategy. As an answer to Eglinton's mockery of his youth, the meaning of this construction implies that Stephen is deliberately eager to continue with his aspirations to grandeur, despite the general opinion that his behaviour is delusional. The choice of the translator to use a comparative degree of comparison points out how deeply involved the young professor is when it comes to art theories.

John Eglinton replies to Stephen's remark: "And has remained so, one should hope, John Eglinton sedately said" (236). As if he had been administered a sedative in order to neuter his own feelings and emotions, the essayist rests calm and composed, untouched in his platonic beliefs. In Romanian, the author's critical tone towards Eglinton's attitude is not as harsh: "zise aşezat" (221), (lit. "calmly/composedly said"). This translation of the adverb, by using a synonym for the source language word, shows an emotional refrainment and a speech without intensity, highlighting that the academic is certain of his indisputable theory. As the episode continues and Stephen shows off his theory of a dynamical form of art, he becomes high-spirited: "Stephen said with tingling energy" (239). In English, the adjective suggests a crescendo of sensations, an arousing excitement that keeps the character's monologue up and going. In Romanian, the adjective has no equivalent, hence the "paraphrasing strategy" (Chesterman, 1997: 104). The Romanian translation "spuse Stephen vibrînd de energie reţinută" (Joyce, 1992: 224), (lit. "Stephen said vibrating with restrained energy") suggests self-restraint and an intentionally held-down energy.

As the conversation continues and Eglinton states the opinion of some biographer who condemns Shakespeare's early marriage to Ann Hathaway as a mistake, Stephen gets angry: "Bosh! Stephen said rudely. A man of genius makes no mistakes. His errors are volitional and are the portals of discovery" (241). The adverb of this collocation conveys the impolite manner of the reaction. In Romanian, the collocation becomes "spuse Stephen aspru" (227), (lit. "Stephen said harshly"). The translator employs a synonym for the source text adverb that expresses hostility and also hints at the tone with which these words are pronounced.

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Eglinton's reaction is depicted by means of an alliterative collocation: "A shrew, John Eglinton said shrewdly, is not a useful portal of discovery, one should imagine." (241). According to *Collins Online Dictionary*, the noun "shrew" has a double meaning. It can either refer to a type of small mouse, or to "a bad-tempered or mean-spirited woman". In Romanian, the translator uses the "trope change" strategy, which applies in the situation of rhetorical tropes, i.e. expressions used in a figurative sense (Chesterman, 1997: 109). Therefore, Mircea Ivănescu tries to render the metaphor in a similar wordplay, but it results in a distortion of the original form: "O scorpie, spuse veninos ca un scorpion John Eglinton" (Joyce, 1992: 227) – (lit. "A shrew, said poisonously as a scorpion John Eglinton").

As the peaceful librarian comes back into the room, he tries to make the conversation calm with his composed presence. "Mr Best's quiet voice said forgetfully" (242). The groups of collocations evoke Joyce's intention to blur the real conversation and to set the focus on a different topic. The same effect is produced by the Romanian translator who paraphrases the adverb, resulting in an adjective phrase: "spuse glasul liniştit, aducător de uitare al domnului Best" (228) – (lit. "Mr. Best's quiet, forgetful voice said"). As the quaker librarian came from "the leavetakers", he expressed admiration for Stephen's point of view: "and, covered by the noise of outgoing, said low" (244). This is an unusual collocation, as the adverb owns commonly the function of an adjective and it is placed near the noun "voice". However, in this situation, it may refer not only to the librarian's soft way of speaking, but also to his position. The translation strategy of paraphrasing results in employing a common Romanian collocation: "spuse cu glas scăzut" (231) - (lit. "he said in a low voice").

A great number of unusual collocations are employed by James Joyce when describing Mr. Best's contributions to the conversation. Most of these collocations are created using adverbs obtained through the process of derivation, as in the example "Mr Best said youngly. I feel Hamlet quite young" (246), which is translated literally into Romanian, maintaining both the form and the meaning of the source language collocation: "spuse domnul Best tinereşte. Eu îl simt pe Hamlet tînăr de tot" (233). However, when it comes to the translation of the unusual collocation placed next to a wordplay, "Mr Secondbest Best said finely" (254), it is impossible for the Romanian translation to render the pun, as the proper name cannot be translated: "spuse cel de al doilea bun domn Best" (244) – (lit. "the second good Mr Best said"). It is interesting how for this structure Mircea Ivănescu combined literal translation with "level shift" strategy, hence the substitution of the superlative degree of comparison "best" with the positive "good". In the case of the collocation "gentle Mr Best said gently" (256), the translator omits the adverb: "spuse blîndul domn Best" (247) – (lit. "gentle Mr Best said").

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James Joyce is well known for using repetitions which produce "in communicative terms, an excess of meaning, a new kind of textual redundancy" (Wales, 1992: 149). In this episode, these lexical repetitions produce clusters of collocations: "<u>swiftly rectly</u> <u>creaking rectly</u> rectly he was <u>rectly gone</u>" (Joyce, 1992: 379) describing the moment the "quaker librarian" was called by the attendant to go and he started moving with haste. Through literal translation, the structure's fluidity is partly rendered in Romanian and the adverb "directly" is not compressed every time it is used: "Grăbit, pe dată scîrțîind, 'ndată-'ndată se ndduse" (253) - (lit. "swiftly, directly creaking, rectly rectly, he was rectgone").

Another example of collocational cluster is: "a rugged rough rugheaded kern" (374). According to the annotations of Gifford and Seidman (1989: 240), this construction makes allusion to Shakespeare: "Richard II in Shakespeare's *The tragedy of King Richard II* callously turns from the news of John of Gaunt's death: 'Now for our Irish wars:/ We must supplant those rough rugheaded [shaggy-haired] kerns [Irish foot-soldiers].'" When envisaged in Romanian, the image of the kern with a strong unrefined constitution, is represented with clothes torn into shreds and with skin seriously injured: "un vajnic pedestraș irlandez, zdrențuit, zdrelit, cu părul zburlit" (Joyce, 1992: 248 – lit.: "a ragged skinned rough shaggy-haired kern"). A number of translation strategies have been used for this structure. The noun "kern" was explicated, as there is no equivalent in Romanian, the adjective "rough" was rendered using the literal translation strategy, while for "rugheaded" a semantic strategy of synonymy was employed. However, the choice of translation in the case of the adjective "rugged" is unsettled. Using a semantic strategy, it was replaced with its homonym "ragged", perhaps in an attempt to render the rhythmic and alliterative aspect of language, as an extra adjective was also added by the translator: *zdrențuit- zdrelit- zburlit*.

5 Conclusion

James Joyce was fascinated by the ambiguity of language and he was inclined to employ lexical constructions either to condense or to displace ideas. Such is the case of unusual collocations, that convey distorted meanings. Analysing this type of collocations in context provides access to deeper layers of meaning. The value of novelty stands in Joyce's stylistic artistry that creates a playful language in which secondary meanings are voluntarily evoked. This creative exploitation of lexical constructions leads to the production of puns which constitute a challenge for every translator. As man of letters Adrian Oțoiu concludes, "so far Ivănescu's exemplary work has remained an unmatched achievement. Undoubtedly, there are oversights, missed allusions, unsolved puns or covered-up innuendo" (Oțoiu, 2004: 203). However, the eminence of the accomplishment yields a skilful choice of

words and mastery in producing constructions that, to some extent, bring style and meaning into harmony.

The selected chapter comprises a series of philosophical inquiries and statements about Shakespeare's life and work. Through verbal prowess, young Stephen Dedalus expresses a fantasist interpretation of *Hamlet* which is perceived with resistance by the platonic literary men gathered at the National Library. He is still the lone young man alienated from society, concerned with his own place in the universe, his own reality and identity. Stephen betrays disdain towards the men of letters and their traditional literary views, but also a desire for acceptance, as he feels bitterly disappointed at not being considered for Russell's collection of "young Irish bards". Therefore, the episode is portrayed in an eloquent but scornful and mocking manner.

This study observes how Joyce's creativity is represented in Mircea Ivănescu's Romanian translation. The parallel between the two texts means to draw comparisons between some of the personal collocations employed by James Joyce in this chapter and the way they were perceived and rendered into Romanian by the translator. The selection of adjective + noun and verb + adverb collocations was dictated by Stephen's and implicitly by the narrator's attitude and feelings during the lively conversation. The pejorative connotations attributed to the unusual word combinations reveal feelings of bitter contempt toward the intellectuals. Even though Mircea Ivănescu's translation is well documented and the historical and cultural allusions are accompanied by annotations, the choice of words betrays at times imprecisions. The strategies used in order to mimic Joyce's style mostly succeed into rendering the correct meaning of words, forming collocations with the same trait of negative connotations, but do not provide the same vocal patterns. Mainly because of the conformity to the norms of the target language Joyce's authorial collocations are at times rendered using common arrangements and the alliterative collocations become stiff constructions when translated. The choice of strategies is, of course, for the most part dictated by the differences between the two languages and at times by the cultural barriers. Most utterances are conveyed literally, but for others more elaborate strategies are applied, in an attempt to provide explicitness. Finding synonyms to substitute for ambiguous source text adjectives or adverbs provides correct and easy to understand structures, but makes the language stiff and rigorous. By paraphrasing adverbs that in English express abstract sensations, the translator makes the language flat and full of clichés, linguistic trait that James Joyce vehemently contended for. All in all, to a great extent, the target text results in more clear sentences, free of ambiguities and of abstruse words, making it friendlier with its readers. At times, Joyce's vision intermingles with the translator's way of perceiving

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characters and their demeanours, leaving nothing implied and creating a language rigid and dignified.

However, as mentioned in the introduction, this study is purely analytical, as we did not discuss errors in translation, but simple acts of interpretation: "To identify an error in a translation, the source text and its contents must be fixed so as to exhibit a departure, and that fixing is an interpretive act" (Venuti, 2019: 56). Moreover, as Venuti continues to set forth, when analysing a work of translation, the text is taken out of its historical context and cultural environment that determine the process of interpretation. The translated text is then inserted "in a timeless, universal realm where judgments of correctness or error are summoned to advance, through an analytical sleight of hand, a competing interpretation" (59).

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IN OTHER … ROMANIAN *WORDS.*
PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON TRANSLATING

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Abstract: *The present article evolved from a series of short Romanian translations based on the German version of Adam Fletcher's book entitled "How to be German in 50 new steps/ Wie man Deutscher wird. In 50 neuen Schritten" (2016). Spanning more than three months, the outcomes of the translating process were rendered concrete with the collective contribution of five Erasmus students[1] at Leipzig University, Germany, all of whom (their teacher included) are native speakers of the Romanian language. Frequently employing a combination of free and formal translation-styles, the team of translators-to-be strove to retain all the meanings, be they propositional or expressive, presupposed or evoked, or those generated by idioms, fixed expressions and non-equivalence in the original text. They provided alternative translations, mostly differing on the levels of lexis, grammar and register, but eventually negotiated the best one, which naturally became the final translated text, as much as possible freed from any traces of "translationese" and suitable for any authentic contemporary sample of Romanian language.*
Keywords: German; language; meaning; stereotype; translation;

Placed in the range of academic Cinderellas, the field of translation studies has been associated with the inauthentic secondary or, even worse, second-hand activity of a copyist, since the authorship has already been granted to the primary source text. Criticism is far from being completed: a mistletoe-like text growing parasitically on other texts may hardly be looked upon in credibility or earnestness. Simultaneously, the translator would commonly share either the status of an imitator (when their translation mirrors the original, thus triggering the accusation of *translationese*) or that

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[1] I am grateful to Patricia Gheorghe and Ramona Băcănaru (Technical University of Civil Engineering of Bucharest), Andreea Tufeanu (University of Bucharest), Denisa Urs and Paula Heredea (University of Oradea), for their major role throughout the whole process of translation and for all their pertinent observations on the source and target texts.

of a traitor, summed up punningly by the famous Italian phrase *Traduttore, traditore* (when the translated text differs too much from the source text).

Hence the dichotomic nature of translating: on the one hand, the robot-like mechanical representation of a source-language (SL) text into a target-language (TL) text, and on the other hand, the artist-like creative production echoing a remote original text.

Bluntly described, the present study is "a get-your-hands-dirty, wrestle-with-reality type" (Landers, 2001: ix), aiming to draw attention to the practical, applied aspects of the translating process. The primary literature is represented by five informal narrative texts in German, excerpted from Adam Fletcher's bilingual guide *How to be German in 50 new steps/ Wie man Deutscher wird. In 50 neuen Schritten*, written in English and published in 2016. The diachronical considerations on Translation Studies at the beginning are meant to highlight the essence of literary translations: as opposed to technical or specialized translation, where lexical meanings are of utmost importance, the literary rendering from one language into another highly counts on the semantic and pragmatic meanings, rather than on the accuracy of distinct lexemes. The underlying principles of our approach have closely followed the directions suggested by Clifford E. Landers, in his practical guide entitled *Literary Translation* (2001):

✓   *fluency and transparency*, the success of a translated text depending "on the degree to which it 'doesn't read like a translation' " (49);

✓   the *author-translator-reader triangle*, the translator being a mediator between languages and cultures. Taking sides with the so-called 'targeteers', as opposed to 'sourcerers' (Newmark, in Landers, 2001: 51), we have striven to provide natural texts in the target language, Romanian, although we were faced, several times, with the "'resistance' of the SL culture and SL language" (Landers, 2001: 52);

✓   *thought by thought*, rather than word by word;

✓   preservation of the SL *register and tone*, the latter referring to "the overall feeling conveyed by an utterance, a passage, or an entire work, including both conscious and unconscious resonance" (68);

✓   *'straight' translation*, rather than adaptation (out of pedagogical reasons), yet obeying the principle: "provide only as much information as can be conveyed without resort to artificiality" (80).

Chesterman's so-called 'translation supermemes[2]' (2016: 3): *source-target* (hence the directionality of translation), *equivalence* (4), *untranslatability* (6), *free-vs-literal* (8), as well as the semiotic *all-writing-is-*

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[2] Defined as "a unit of cultural transmission" (Dawkins, in Chesterman 2016: 1), the meme is a concept originating in sociobiology and coined by Richard Dawkins, in *The Selfish Gene* (1976, 1989).

translating (9), roughly mention the same ideas, yet from a rather philosophical perspective.

The study continues with a short description of Fletcher's book and some basic information on the translator into German, Ingo Herzke. Prior to the five translations into Romanian, several semantic problems, cultural concepts and lexical variants resulting from the incongruities between the source language, German, and the target language, Romanian, are debated and clarified, thus ensuring a better comprehension of the translating progress. In order to facilitate the textual access of readers who cannot understand this Romance language, every translation is followed by the respective German version (*Annex 1.1*, *Annex 2.1*, *Annex 4.1* and *Annex 5.1*) and the English original (*Annex 1.2*, *Annex 2.2*, *Annex 3.1*, *Annex 4.2* and *Annex 5.2*).

In a plain wide-ranging definition, "translation is an art which requires aptitude, practice, and general knowledge" (in Baker, 1992: 3), yet

> "[*…*] *translators will need something other than the current mixture of intuition and practice to enable them to reflect on what they do and how they do it. They will need, above all, to acquire a sound knowledge of the raw material with which they work: to understand what language is and how it comes to function for its users*" (Baker, 1992: 4).

Sadly, due to a lack of some or all of these assets, there have recently emerged on the market numerous human translators and machine translation services and programs of shallow and unprofessional nature, too quickly and too easily providing various texts labelled as *translationese*:

> "*Translation scholars* […] *speak of the language of translation as a separate 'dialect' within a language, which they call* **third code** *… or* **translationese** *… Translationese has been originally described … as the set of "fingerprints" that one language leaves on another when a text is translated between the two*" (Baroni and Bernardini, in Korzen and Gylling, 2012: 29).

Since translating may be as old as the Tower of Babel – a moment in the history of humankind accounting for the emergence of different languages, as narrated in the Book of Genesis, one would have expected a natural improvement in the act of translating, not a regress, as is often the case.

Already in the 1st century BC, Cicero was fully aware of the fact that his translations should, at all times, be adequate to the target language, by

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preserving merely the ideas, not the wording in the source language: "I translate thoughts, their forms or, in other words, their representations, yet in a language suitable to our own usage" (*my translation* – Cicero, in Stolze, 1994: 15).

Later on, Hieronymus (348-420) would also advocate for free or 'dynamic' translation (Nida, in Jakobsen 1994: 35), as opposed to the so-called faithful, formal or literal translation: "I do not translate word for word, but meaning for meaning" (*m.t.* – Cicero, in Stolze 1994: 15). More than one thousand years later, Martin Luther (1483-1546) resumed the same declaration: "understand the idea, then the words will follow naturally" (15).

Such a theoretical background has actually supported the present article, which gathers the latest translations realized at Leipzig University, Germany, in the period November 2019 - January 2020, within the *German-Romanian Translation Course*, B2-C1 levels, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Stemmed from the collective work of five Erasmus students and their teacher, all native speakers of the Romanian language, these translations into Romanian have been continually worked upon during the course, as well as after it, in several attempts to provide the 'best' version of the original texts. Closely following the above-mentioned general guidelines, we have tried not to omit or distort the overt or covert meanings, neither to forget the particularities of the target language, as well as the basic rules of writing texts in Romanian.

The primary material was extracted from Adam Fletcher's bilingual work, *Wie man Deutscher wird. In 50 neuen Schritten/ How to be German in 50 new steps* (2016), published in Munich, by C.H. Beck Publishing House, a sequel to *Wie man Deutscher wird. In 50 einfachen Schritten/ How to be German in 50 easy steps* (2013). The German version actually represents a translation from English by Ingo Herzke[3], a German literary translator, renowned for his translations into German from contemporary authors, among others A.L. Kennedy, Aravind Adiga, Alan Bennett, John Griesemer, Nick Hornby or Rick Moody. Thus, the Romanian texts are re-translations from German. No matter how inspiring the losses or gains by this re-translation method may seem, such a research topic exceeds the scope of the present study, but it will certainly be the subject matter of a further article.

Due to the large array of topics, Fletcher's practical guide may, to a certain extent (or at least, at a first view), be sensed as chaotic; yet it actually illustrates the idea of diversity in unity – the miscellaneous traits or stereotypes of a so-called *Germanness*. Out of the fifty topics, many of them read as delicate, such as:

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[3] For further reading, see Janine Albrecht's article on Herzke and his translating experiences, "Sprache ist wichtiger als Handlung" [Language is more important than the plot], available at https://www.dw.com/de/sprache-ist-wichtiger-als-handlung/a-6060129 (30.09.2010).

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✓ the Third Reich Fever (*Topic 4*[4]);

✓ the keen nostalgia after the GDR (*Topic 5*);

✓ the "hate/indifference triangle" (*Topic 15*) – Germany, Switzerland and Austria;

✓ the poker face as representative for the German nation (*Topic 1*)

✓ pessimism ("Germany is very much a glass half empty nation" - *Topic 29*),

politics, patriotism, bureaucracy or the Scandinavian superiority (*Topic 33*), to which some further German obsessions may be added: the microwave, cash, mould or wood fixations.

At the same time, rather *safer* issues (yet many of them sprinkled with ironic comments) are approached, for example: Christmas and Christmas fairs, Oktoberfest, flirting, the first day of school, weather, coffee and cake, mustard, pharmacies, renting and moving, contracts, grammatical gender ("the giant banana skin upon which everyone keeps slipping" – *Topic 41*) and word-origins, which Germans deeply respect (*Topic 42*).

The five translations rendered below discuss upon eclectic topics, such as the facial expressions of the Germans, their fondness for brevity, cash and Christmastime, as well as their constant failure in flirting. An English expat in Berlin, the author voices, in a witty manner, several stereotypes associated with the German people. Using the first-person narrative and permanently addressing an imaginary 'dear foreigner' or 'little *Ausländer*', representative of all expats in Germany, Fletcher succeeds in describing a rather thorny reality with a lot of humour and understanding.

The translation process *per se* went rather smoothly, yet it was frequently discontinued by the alternative versions of the translators. No wonder, since "[t]ranslation is a partly objective and partly subjective (and unconscious) process involving a series of decisions relating to the structure of dimensions in texts" (Jakobsen 1994: 40). When a rather dialectal word was chosen (half of the team was familiar with the southern/ Bucharest dialect, the other half with the Transylvanian one), it would be eventually replaced by a neutral, standard-language word:

e.g. Rom. *Mare lucru.* [Big thing/ deal.]/ *Mare scofală**. (informal) [Big deal.]/ *Mare brânză**. (slang) [Big cheese/ deal.]/ *Nimic nou.* [Nothing new.]/ Germ. *Große Sache.*/ Engl. *Big deal*[5]. (*Topic 2*)

Rom. *După ce un an întreg* [After … the whole year]

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[4] Being a bilingual guide (thus always two pages as one reference), I thought it would be more accurate to mention the number of the topic rather than the pages.

[5] All the variants in italics explaining the examples in the book are taken as such from Fletcher's English original version. The English translations in square brackets represent a word-for-word/ literal rendering of their Romanian counterparts.

te-ai strǎduit [you have striven]/

ţi-ai dat silinţa [you have done your best]/

te-ai strofocat* (informal/ dialectal) [you have laid yourself out]/

te-ai trudit* (slightly informal, mostly ironical) [you have worked tooth and nail]/

te-ai frǎmântat* (partially accurate/ understated) [you have fretted yourself]/

te-ai zbǎtut* (overstated) [you have ripped along] *sǎ te integrezi* [to integrate yourself]…/

Germ. *Nachdem du dich ein ganzes hartes Jahr mit Integrieren abgemüht hast*/ Engl. *After a hard year spent trying to fit in …* (*Topic 16*)

In order to retain cohesion, sentence/ textual homogeneity, stylistic beauty and the very essence of Romanianness, we have also appealed to various strategies, among others:

✓ tense/ verb correspondence: *Oare cum **am putea** sǎ punem în aceeaşi oalǎ 80 de milioane de oameni? Chiar **n-am putea**!* [How could we ever place 80 million people in the same pot? We could never!], instead of *Chiar nu merge aşa!* [It doesn't work like that!]/ Germ. *Wie kann man achtzig Millionen Menschen so über einen Kamm scheren? Geht gar nicht!*/ Engl. *To typecast eighty million people like that? Never*. (*Topic 1*);

✓ avoidance of the double Genitive (present only in the German version, not in the English one), sensed as too pretentious for this informal type of text: *la fel ca viaţa/ cea **a celorlalţi** locuitori **ai acestei planete*** [like the life of all the other inhabitants of this planet], stylistically changed into *… **de pe aceastǎ planetǎ*** [on this planet]/ Germ. *wie das aller anderen Bewohner dieses Planeten*/ Engl. *as anyone else on the planet* (*Topic 1*);

✓ avoidance of redundant expressions, alliterations and repetitions:

▪ *sǎ-şi exprime mai puţin **propriile emoţii*** [to express less their own emotions] was changed into the non-pleonastic *sǎ-şi exprime mai puţin trǎirile* [to express less their emotions]/ Germ. *es sich ins Gesicht zu schreiben*/ Engl. *to show it via their faces* (*Topic 1*), besides avoiding the reiterance, in two consecutive lines, of *emoţii* [emotions] and *emotional* [emotional];

▪ instead of the alliterative *la fel **ca cea** a c**e**lorlalţi* [like that of all the other inhabitants], *la fel ca viaţa celorlalţi* [like the life of all the other inhabitants]/ Germ. *wie das aller anderen Bewohner*/ Engl. *as anyone else* (*Topic 1*); *nu doar **d**espre expre**siile** faciale* [not just about facial expressions] was eventually replaced with *nu doar despre mimicǎ*/ Germ. *nicht nur ums Mienenspiel*/ Engl. *not just about the face* (*Topic 2*);

▪ in order to avoid the repetition of the verb *a începe* (to begin): *Sǎ **începem**. În Germania, Crǎciunul **începe** la 1 decembrie.*/ Germ. *Los geht's*

… Die deutsche Weihnacht beginnt am 1. Dezember./ Engl. *Let's begin. German Christmas starts on December 1ˢᵗ.* (*Topic 16*), the following variant was selected: *Să-i dăm drumul atunci* [Let's get going then].

✓   preservation of English terms, only when necessary (due to a double presence in the text), as an illustration of the actual trend in the contemporary everyday Romanian language: *un telefon de ultimă generație* [a latest-generation telephone] is closely followed in the translation by *un smartphone*, or *cash*, as a lexical alternative to the much employed Romanian term, *numerar* (*Topic 21*);

✓   insertion of connectors: ***Pentru că** nemții sunt ca bomboanele Smarties* [**Because** Germans are like the Smarties candies]/ Germ. *Deutsche sind wie Smarties*/ Engl. *To be German is to be an M&M* (*Topic 1*); *nu e doar familie + capitalism, **ci** înseamnă ritualuri* [not just family + capitalism, **but** it also implies rituals]/ Germ. *Es ist nicht bloß … . Es gibt Rituale*/ Engl. *not just family + capitalism. There are rituals* (*Topic 16*); ***De pildă**, prietena mea, Annett* [**For example**, my girlfriend…]/ Germ. *Meine Freundin …*/ Engl. *My girlfriend, Annett* (*Topic 16*). Although German and English prefer the short, clear-cut sentences, the cohesion being internally achieved, at the level of ideas, rather than by means of linking words, the Romanian language is characterized by rather long sentences, as well as by intrasentential and extrasentential connectors;

✓   ulterior completions in order to achieve Romanianness, by means of intensifiers: *exact*/ *chiar*/ *tocmai* (exactly), *tot*/ *mai* (still);

✓   divergent/ free translations:

▪instead of *Vai de mine!*/ *Vai*(*-vai!*) [Alas!]/ Germ. *Oh je.*/ Engl. *Oh dear.* (*Topic 16*) was preferred the neutral *O, nu!* [Oh, no!]:

▪*Abia ajunge.* [It's hardly enough.]/ *Asta chiar nu-i de ajuns!* [This is far from being enough.]/ *Abia este suficient.* [It's hardly sufficient.]/ *Momentan nu ești la nivelul așteptat.* [You haven't reached the expected level yet.]/ Germ. *Das wird kaum reichen.*/ Engl. *That's not going to cut it.* (*Topic 16*) were replaced by a more natural variant, *Te faci de râs!* [You'll be everyone's laughingstock!]

▪*ar zâmbi … în stânga și-n dreapta* [smiling to the left and to the right] turned to be the best alternative for Germ. *einfach Gratislächeln verteilen würden*/ Engl. *giving smiles out* (*Topic 1*). Thus, the word-for-word translations have been substituted with the respective expressive meanings, since the first variants were merely unhappy choices in the given context.

▪the coins described as filthy/ grimy (*schmuddelig*) in the German text, parallelled by the Romanian pejorative term *soios*/ *slinos* (hence too much emotionally laden), were eventually translated by the 'milder' *extrem de murdare* [extremely dirty]. Although in the superlative, it represents a more

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suitable adjective for a written text in Romanian, as well as a compromise between the German and the English versions (*dirty*, *Topic 21*).

At the same time, fixed expressions and idioms were naturally adapted to the target language (Romanian):

e.g. Germ. *über einen Kamm scheren* [to have one's hair cut by the same comb]/ Rom. *a pune în aceeași oală* [to place someone in the same pot as somebody else]/ *to typecast* (*Topic 1*).

Germ. *In der Kürze liegt die Würze* [rhyming idiom: brevity is the soul of wit]/ Rom. *Vorba multă, sărăcia omului* [idiom: too much speaking leads to poverty]/ *Find the beauty in brevity* (*Topic 2*).

Furthermore, *Topic 16* challenged us with two cultural concepts: one absent from the Romanian background, namely McGeiz; the other one, still present, yet posing difficulties in being neutrally translated - *your old pal St. Nick*. The first dilemma was solved by keeping the original name McGeiz in the translation, explained by a footnote as a German non-food discounter. In this particular case, largely compelled by the circumstances, we adhered to the so-called 'abusive fidelity':

"[*T*]*he translator seeks to reproduce those very features of the foreign text that 'abuse' or resist the prevailing forms and values in the receiving culture, thereby allowing the translator to be faithful to aspects of the source text, but still participate in effecting cultural change in the target language*" (Venuti in Gentzler, 2001: 39).

In other terms, there occurs a clash between the devotion to the original text and the commitment to genuine communication in the target language:

"*A translation also aims at the naturalness of expression, at comprehensibility and at avoiding translationese, but it is obvious that sometimes such considerations conflict with the aim of commensurateness with the original*" (Jakobsen, 1994: 40).

At the same time, the international confectionery brand Smarties, already present in the Romanian mentality, did not need any further explanations, even if it was retained as such in the Romanian text. Interestingly enough, the German text employs the British name Smarties, whereas the original version uses the American M&M brand. Although an Englishman himself, Fletcher favours the American over the British term, probably out of a personal taste for such candies or a strategy to address a wider audience worldwide. In addition, Fletcher's sprinkling his texts with italicized German words, even if such words do exist in English, may read as

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a humorous device, a lexical attempt to integrate himself (since integration is the leitmotif of his guide) in the German culture as well.

The second problem arose by the very name of St. Nicholas, reading in Romanian as the neutral *Moş Nicolae* [Old Nicholas] or the religious *Sfântul Nicolae* [Saint Nicholas]. We eventually agreed to retain the neutral meaning. Yet, *your old pal St. Nick* would translate, literally and informally, as *prietenul/ tovarăşul tău vechi/ de demult, Sfântul Nicu* (the variant of *Miculaş*, influenced by the Hungarian language and suggested by one of the students, was a dialectal word, thus not suitable for our translation). Keeping such original wording in the Romanian text would automatically trigger, in the Romanians' collective consciousness, the embodiment of Nicolae Ceauşescu and his much loathed communist regime. The juxtaposition of *tovarăş* (meaning pal, but also comrade) and *Nicu* (the short form of Nicolae) or even the shorter, yet worsely connoted term *Nea Nicu'* [old Nick], actually used for Ceauşescu within family-circles, mostly in their illicit jokes, would have become a serious error, a proper stance of translationese, ignoring the Romanian national and social context. In the end, in order to avoid the repetition of *dragul* [dear] as well, in *Moşu', dragul de el* [dear Old Man], a better first variant, I changed it to the final *Moşu' cel sfânt* [saint Old Man].

Topic 1[6]: **Pokerface/ Poker Face**
Poker face (pp. 8-10)

N-aş fi crezut vreodată că nemţii sunt mai puţin expresivi, în comparaţie cu alte naţionalităţi. Oare cum am putea să punem în aceeaşi oală 80 de milioane de oameni? Chiar n-am putea. Nu-nu, niciodată! Exclus! Şi totuşi ... staţi o clipă, să termin ... pe cât de dramatică, nemaipomenită şi diversă este viaţa emoţională a germanilor (la urma urmei, la fel ca viaţa celorlalţi locuitori de pe această planetă), pe atât constat că aceştia tind să-şi exprime mai puţin trăirile. Dacă ar exista o expresie facială tipic nemţească, aceasta ar fi *poker face* – o mină reţinută, care trădează cât mai puţin posibil. Dacă ochii sunt într-adevăr oglinda sufletului, atunci oglinzile nemţilor ar fi acoperite de la bun început.

Nu e ca şi când nemţii nu ar zâmbi sau nu ar gesticula chiar deloc, atunci când e absolută nevoie să dea o explicaţie sau să îşi exprime vreun sentiment. Dar şi aceste forme de exprimare nonverbală ar trebui să aibă un efect, atunci când sunt produse spontan. Dacă toţi oamenii ar zâmbi pur şi simplu, în stânga şi-n dreapta, doar pentru faptul că au găsit un euro pe jos, mai sunt doar două zile până la weekend sau se gândesc la o persoană dragă

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[6] *Topic 1* approaches the poker face, an expressionless face, viewed as the main trait of Germanness. The German text is also accompanied by eight identical faces representing the ideas of happiness, sadness, indifference, disappointment, concern, joy, surprise and scorn, in contrast to the one different face, desperately illustrating the phrase: *Kein Bier da./ No beer.*

lor, atunci întregul sistem de emoții s-ar destabiliza la nivel național! Dacă am începe să zâmbim de la prima ocazie, toți ceilalți s-ar simți obligați să ne întoarcă zâmbetul, iar lucrul acesta ar putea declanșa o hiperinflație emoțională. De altfel, am avut parte de destulă hiperinflație în țara asta, mulțumim! Am putea ajunge să ne asemănăm într-o oarecare măsură cu Italia, unde trebuie să faci pantomimă un sfert de oră, ca să îți câștigi pâinea. Nu, așa nu merge. Pentru că nemții sunt ca bomboanele Smarties – tari pe dinafară, moi pe dinăuntru.

Pentru tine, dragul meu străin, care provii dintr-un mediu migrațional, aceasta ar putea fi, cu siguranță, o problemă. Vino-ți în fire, amice! Bineînțeles, viața este extraordinară aici, asta ai și vrea să ne arăți, ridicându-ți puțin colțul gurii sau făcând ochii mari, în încercarea de a afișa expresia, unanim recunoscută, de bucurie, entuziasm și fericire! Dar lasă, mai bine *poker face*!

Annex 1.1
GE

Ich würde niemals behaupten, dass Deutsche weniger emotional sind als andere Nationalitäten. Wie kann man achtzig Millionen Menschen so über einen Kamm scheren? Geht gar nicht! Niemals. Absolut verboten. Allerdings … nein, Augenblick, lasst mich doch ausreden … das Gefühlsleben der Deutschen ist zwar ebenso dramatisch, fantastisch und abwechslungsreich wie das aller anderen Bewohner dieses Planeten, doch ich würde sagen, sie neigen weniger dazu, es sich ins Gesicht zu schreiben. Gäbe es ein deutsches Nationalgesicht, es wäre ein Pokerface – eine zurückhaltende Miene, die so wenig wie möglich verrät. Wenn die Augen tatsächlich das Fenster zur Seele sind, so wurden die deutschen Fenster von Anfang an mit Rollos ausgestattet.

Es ist nicht so, als würden die Deutschen überhaupt nicht lächeln oder gestikulieren, wenn sie vom Erklärungsbedürfnis oder einem Gefühl mitgerissen werden. Aber diese körperlichen Ausdrucksformen sollen, wenn sie denn mal aus dem Sack gelassen werden, auch Wirkung entfalten. Wenn alle Leute einfach Gratislächeln verteilen würden, nur weil sie einen Euro auf dem Boden gefunden haben oder es bloß noch zwei Tage bis zum Wochenende sind oder sie an einen geliebten Menschen denken – das könnte die ganze emotionale Volkswirtschaft schwächen! Womöglich fangen die Leute dann bei erstbester Gelegenheit an zu lächeln, und alle würden sich verpflichtet fühlen mitzumachen, und das könnte eine emotionale Hyperinflation auslösen. In diesem Land hat es wahrlich genug Hyperinflation gegeben, vielen Dank auch. Wir könnten zu einer Art Italien werden, wo man eine fünfzehnminütige Pantomime aufführen muss, um einen Laib Brot zu erwerben. Nein, so geht es nicht. Deutsche sind wie Smarties – außen hart glasiert, innen süß schmelzend.

Für dich mit deinem Migrationshintergrund, lieber foreigner, könnte das natürlich ein Problem darstellen. Reiß dich zusammen, Kumpel! Sicher, das Leben hier ist so toll und du würdest das gern zeigen, indem du die Mundwinkel ein bisschen nach oben

ziehst oder die Augen aufreißt als allgemein anerkannter Ausdruck von Freude, Begeisterung und Glück, aber: Lass es, Pokerface.

Annex 1.2
EN

I would never say that Germans are less emotional than other nations. To typecast eighty million people like that? Never. Absolute no-go. However… now, wait, hear me out… while Germans have emotional lives just as dramatic, fantastic, and varied as anyone else on the planet, I would say that they're much less inclined to show it via their faces. The German *Nationalgesicht*, if there were such a thing, would be a poker face – a restrained expression that gives away as little as possible. If the eyes really are the windows to the soul, the German window comes equipped with *Rollos*.

It's not that Germans don't smile, or gesticulate with their hands when lost in explanation or emotion. They just want those physical expressions – when they do bring them out of the bag – to have an impact. If everyone just went around giving smiles out *total kostenlos* because they've found a euro on the ground, or it's only two days until the weekend, or they are thinking about a loved one – well, that could weaken the whole emotional economy! People might begin smiling at even the smallest provocation and everyone else would, in turn, be forced to keep up, and that could trigger Hyper Emotion Inflation. There's been more than enough hyper-inflation in this country already, thank you very much. We might become Italy, where buying a loaf of bread requires a fifteen-minute-long mime performance. No, that won't do. To be German is to be an M&M – hard on the outside, soft in the middle.

Of course, all this might be a problem for you, what with your *Migrationshintergrund*. Rein it in, buddy! Because living here is awesome, you might be tempted to show that by turning your mouth up at the edges, or widening your eyes in a commonly accepted display of joy, wonder, and happiness. Don't, *Poker Face*.

Topic 2[7]: **In der Kürze liegt die Würze/ Find the beauty in brevity**
Vorba multă, sărăcia omului (p. 10)

Nu e vorba, în cazul de față, doar despre mimică. Dacă în unele culturi se obișnuiește ca fiecare propoziție și fiecare moment de liniște să fie urmate de vorbe goale, oamenii locului, adică nemții, și-au dat seama că în concizie se ascunde o anumită noblețe.

Doar pentru că ești într-un restaurant cu soțul sau soția, nu înseamnă că trebuie să vorbiți neapărat unul cu celălalt. Ce mai aveți să vă spuneți și nu v-ați spus deja? Tocmai. Nimic. Doar pentru că simți ceva anume, nu trebuie să și împărtășești imediat acest lucru. Toată lumea simte. Mare lucru! Vezi un cunoscut prin curte? Nu începe vreo discuție banală despre vreme. Un simplu *Bună ziua* și atât. Dar este vorba chiar despre vecinul tău – și ce? Nu aveți destule ocazii să tot vorbiți?

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[7] Topic 2 *briefly* discusses terseness, as a further main characteristic of the Germans.

Deoarece cuvintele sunt prețioase, nu ar trebui să le devalorizăm prin fraze interminabile. Vorba dulce, scurt și la obiect, mult aduce! Când nu-ți ajunge timpul, atunci mai bine numai scurt și la obiect. În egală măsură, merg și vorbele tăioase, în caz că tocmai te întrebai. Încă ți-aș mai putea spune câte ceva, dar la ce bun? Mai bine să le păstrăm pentru noi și să ne bucurăm de frumusețea conciziei. Punct.

Annex 2.1
GE

Dabei geht es nicht nur ums Mienenspiel. Während man in manchen Kulturen immerzu jeden Satz und jede Stille mit fadem Geschnatter füllt, haben die Menschen hier erkannt, dass in der Kürze eine gewisse edle Schönheit liegt. Bloß weil du mit deinem Ehepartner im Restaurant sitzt, müsst ihr ja nicht miteinander reden. Was habt ihr schon zu sagen, was noch nicht gesagt wurde? Eben. Nichts. Bloß weil du ein Gefühl hast, musst du es ja nicht unbedingt gleich teilen. Gefühle hat jeder. Große Sache. Du siehst im Innenhof jemanden, den du kennst? Fang kein unbeholfenes Gespräch über das Wetter an. Einfach «Guten Tag», und weiter geht's. Dann ist es eben dein Wohnungsnachbar – ja und? Da hast du ja noch reichlich Gelegenheit für Gespräche, oder?

Weil Worte kostbar sind, sollte man sie nicht mit Satz-Moltofill entwerten. Kurz und süß ist wunderbar. Wenn die Zeit dafür nicht reicht, dann eben nur kurz. Kurz und sauer geht meistens auch, falls du das fragen wolltest. Ich könnte dir noch viel mehr erzählen, aber warum eigentlich? Halten wir inne und genießen gemeinsam die Schönheit der Kürze. Ende der Diskussion.

Annex 2.2
EN

Brevity is not just about the face. While some cultures might rush to fill their sentences and silences with inane chatter, here, people have realised that there is a certain noble beauty to brevity. Just because you're out with your *Ehepartner* in a restaurant doesn't mean you have to talk to each other. What have you to say that you've not already said? Exactly. Nothing. Just because you have had a feeling, it doesn't mean you should automatically feel a need to share it. Everyone has feelings. Big deal. See someone you know in the *Hof*? Don't have an awkward conversation about the weather. Just "*Guten Tag*" them and get on with your day. So what if they're your next-door neighbour? There will be plenty of other chances to talk to them then, won't there? You might have heard the English expression "loose lips sink ships." Here, it's more like "loose lips sink *friend*ships."

Because words are precious, don't cheapen them with poly-sentence-filla. Short and sweet is fine. If there's not enough time for that, just go with short. Short and sour usually also works, in case you're wondering. I could say more, but really, why? Let's stop here and both enjoy the beauty of brevity. *Ende der Diskussion.*

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Topic 16[8]: Die deutsche Weihnacht/ The German Christmas
Crăciunul german (pp. 35-38)

După ce un an întreg ți-ai dat silința să te integrezi, probabil că ai nevoie de o pauză, nu-i așa? Perfect. Am exact ceea ce îți trebuie, și anume *Crăciunul german*. Poate că ai avut deja mai multe experiențe de *Crăciun internațional*, care, în mare parte, presupune aceleași ingrediente de bază – cadouri, Iisus, certuri în familie. Nu te entuziasma prea repede, dragul meu străin! Versiunea germană nu e mereu aceeași. Aici Crăciunul se ia în serios: nu e doar familie + capitalism, ci înseamnă ritualuri, obligații, tradiții și târguri anuale, printre care trebuie să te descurci cum poți. Și apropo, sunt o mulțime de târguri! Ești pregătit? Să-i dăm drumul atunci.

În Germania, Crăciunul începe la 1 decembrie. Mai exact, atunci ai voie să deschizi prima ușiță a calendarului tău de Advent. STAI! Ce ai, acolo, în mână? Un calendar obișnuit din comerț, cumpărat dintr-un McGeiz*[9] cu 2 euro? O, nu! Cu așa ceva te faci de râs! Ca să obții nota maximă pentru originalitate, ar fi indicat să-ți confecționezi singur calendarul de Advent – unul cu totul special, așa cum ți-au făcut și părinții tăi, când aveai vreo 4 ani. De pildă, prietena mea, Annett, are un astfel de calendar, pe care i-l dă mamei ei înapoi în fiecare an în ianuarie, așa încât ea să i-l poată reumple și retrimite la sfârșitul lui noiembrie. Ce drăguț, nu?

În prima duminică de Advent poți și să aprinzi - cu mare fast, deci poate n-ar strica să împrumuți de undeva și o trompetă - prima lumânare din coronița de Advent. Pe această coroniță se găsesc ori patru lumânări, ori una singură cu patru secțiuni. Lumânarea este aprinsă în fiecare săptămână și este lăsată să ardă până se topește și ajunge în dreptul marcajului corespunzător săptămânii. În cazul unor astfel de lumânări simple, este esențial să te lași distras de prima dată, preparând salata de cartofi sau verificând ultimele știri de pe *Spiegel Online*. Așa că uiți de lumânare, care arde de tot, și cu ea, întregul Advent, chiar pe 1 decembrie. Aceasta este o tradiție la fel de importantă precum lumânarea în sine.

Următorul eveniment palpitant al sezonului german de Crăciun are loc pe 6 decembrie – Moș Nicolae. În această zi îți poți lăsa liniștit pantofii în fața ușii. Știu că asta și faci, de fapt, în fiecare noapte, și nu se întâmplă nimic, dar azi este diferit. Dacă ai fost cuminte, dragul meu străin, Moșu' cel sfânt o să-ți pună în pantofi o grămadă de dulciuri. Cât de tare poate fi asta?! Dar dacă nu te-ai integrat așa cum se cuvine – dacă, de exemplu, nu ți-ai repetat verbele neregulate sau ai uitat care sunt verbele cu particulă separabilă, atunci primești niște nuielușe sau un cărbune. Așa-s regulile, amice!

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[8] The rather long text was chosen as a perfect match to the Christmas atmosphere in Germany, the real spatiotemporal framework of its translation.
[9] McGeiz – the name of the German non-food discounter (*Geiz* meaning stinginess) is retained as such in the translation, but it is literally explained by a footnote into Romanian as 'lanț german de magazine cu prețuri foarte mici'.

În continuare, presupunând că între timp ai vizitat deja cel puțin trei târguri de Crăciun diferite (mai multe în cele ce urmează) și ai făcut cel puțin o porție de fursecuri, chiar poți să începi să te bucuri de primul tău Ajun german autentic! Te-ai entuziasmat deja? Așa și trebuie. De ce? Fiindcă acum îți poți deschide cadourile de Crăciun. Cu o zi întreagă mai devreme ca peste tot în lume. Acum există o mică problemă de logistică, deoarece Moș Crăciun nu are nicio noapte la dispoziție pentru a împărți cadourile când toată lumea doarme. De aceea, în Ajun familia se adună mai devreme pentru a face o plimbare. Acest timp scurt îi permite Moșului să intre pe neașteptate și să pună toate cadourile sub brad. Nu o grămadă de cadouri, cum se face în țări megacapitaliste. Ci un număr rezonabil de cadouri alese cu grijă, în mod ideal, realizate din lemn.

Deschiderea cadourilor îți va provoca desigur, foame. Ce vei mânca în această zi de sărbatoare, cea mai sfântă dintre toate? Ce întrebare stupidă! Cu siguranță, salată de cartofi! Mâncarea cu adevărat tradițională. De ce mănâncă nemții în Ajun salată de cartofi? Există două posibilități. Teoria germană spune că acesta este un ritual din vremuri străvechi: ziua de dinainte de Crăciun, adică seara de Ajun, reprezenta o zi normală de muncă. Astfel, se pregătea un fel simplu de mâncare, ce se putea servi rapid seara. Conform celeilalte teorii – să o numim „Teoria Mea" – nemții mănâncă salată de cartofi, pentru că le place la nebunie!

După cum poate ați observat deja, încă nu l-am pomenit pe Grinch. Stați liniștiți, există și aici. Și nu fură numai cadourile sau toată sărbătoarea, ci, de multe ori, și zilele libere. Când prima sau a doua zi de Crăciun cad în weekend, nu primești nicio zi liberă în plus, deci luni trebuie să lucrezi din nou, de parcă ar fi fost un weekend perfect normal. Ce prostie! Nimic nu e normal la Crăciunul german. Dacă îi întrebi pe nemți, majoritatea ți-ar spune probabil că este cea mai frumoasă perioadă din an. Iar pentru asta, firește că există un alt motiv, despre care va trebui să vorbim acum – *târgurile de Crăciun ...*

Annex 3.1[10]
EN
After a hard year spent trying to fit in, you probably need a break, right? Great. I've got just the thing. It's called *German Christmas*. You may already be experienced with *International Christmas*, which shares many basic commonalities – gifts, Jesus, family arguments. But do not relax, foreigner. For not everything in the German variety is the same. Here, Christmas is serious: not just family + capitalism. There are rituals, obligations, traditions, and markets to be navigated. Lots of markets. Ready? Let's begin …

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[10] The German version has been intentionally left out, its size exceeding the accepted length of the article.

German Christmas starts on December 1st. Then you get to open the first door of your advent calendar. STOP. What's that in your hand? Is it a mass-produced advent calendar that you bought from *McGeiz* for €2? Oh dear. That's not going to cut it. For maximum authenticity points, your advent calendar should also be a DIY affair – a special family advent calendar that your parents made for you when you were four. My girlfriend, Annett, has such a calendar and returns it every January to her mum, who refills it and sends it back again at the end of November. It's adorable. The first Sunday in December also allows – with great ceremonial pomp (perhaps consider borrowing a trumpet) – the lighting of the first candle on your *Adventskranz* (wreath). These wreaths either hold four candles, or just one demarcated into four parts. You light it each week, and let it burn down the required amount. If you're going to have such a single candle, it's essential that you get distracted preparing *Kartoffelsalat* or browsing the latest news stories on *Spiegel Online*, and forget to blow it out, burning the whole advent on December 1st. It's as much a tradition as the candle itself.

The next exciting event in your German Christmas occurs on December 6th – *St. Nikolaus Day*. On this day, you get to leave your shoes out. I know you leave your shoes out every night and you get nothing for that. Well, tonight, that changes. If you've been a good little *Ausländer*, your old pal St. Nick is going to fill that footwear with chocolate! How cool is that?! If you've been a bad integrator, however – not practicing your irregular verbs, or forgetting which are *trennbar* - you'll wake to twigs or coal. Them's the rules.

Next up – assuming you've attended at least three different *Weihnachtsmärkte* (more on those in the next step) and baked at least one round of *Plätzchen* (German Christmas cookies) – you can proceed to your first German Christmas Eve! Are you excited? You should be. Why? Well, firstly, you get to open your presents on Christmas Eve already. A full day before patient lands. This does present a slight logistical challenge, however, because there is no night for Santa to spend delivering everyone's presents while they sleep. Therefore, on Christmas Eve, in the early evening, get the family together and go for a walk. This short window of time is used skilfully by Santa to nip in and set all your gifts up under the tree. Not lots of gifts, like they would do in hypercapitalist countries. Just a small number of thoughtful presents, ideally made of wood.

Of course, opening all those presents is going to make you quite hungry. What will you eat on this holiest of holy days? Silly question: *Kartoffelsalat*, of course! The true national dish. Why do Germans eat potato salad on Christmas Eve? There are two theories. Their theory is that this ritual harks back to Christmas Eve being a day of work, so you prepare food in advance that you can eat quickly that evening. The alternate theory – let's call it "My Theory" – is that they eat potato salad because they love potato salad.

No mention of the Grinch, you might have noticed. Worry not, he is alive and well in the stingy holiday allocation you receive. If *der Erste* and *der Zweite Weihnachtsfeiertag* fall on a weekend, you get no extra days off and have to go back to work on the Monday, as if it had been just another *stinknormales* weekend. Bah, humbug. Because there's nothing normal about a German Christmas. In fact, if you asked people, most would probably say it's the best time of the whole year. There's

another reason for this, of course, a reason we have to talk about now –
Weihnachtsmärkte…

Topic 21: König Bargeld/ Cash is King
Regele Numerar (pp. 46-47)

Reţinerea germanilor, când vine vorba de plastic, nu se opreşte la jucării. Aceasta se referă şi la cardurile (plastifiate) din portofel. După cum probabil ai constatat deja, aici domneşte numerarul, iar tronul său este făcut din bancnote mototolite şi monede extrem de murdare. În ciuda tuturor încercărilor, este puţin probabil ca Regele Numerar să fie detronat şi decapitat în urma unei revoluţii a cardurilor de credit.

Teama de aceste carduri şi de datele conţinute de ele este atât de mare aici, încât 80% din tranzacţiile de zi cu zi se fac în bani cash. Aceasta are, fireşte, de-a face cu istoria aparte a Germaniei. În trecut, statul şi-a dovedit abilităţile remarcabile în ceea ce priveşte controlul cetăţenilor. Dacă oricum ai într-un buzunar mărunţiş, iar în celălalt, un telefon de ultimă generaţie, nu prea are sens să îţi faci griji dacă eşti supravegheat sau nu: smartphone-ul este dispozitivul perfect de supraveghere, inventat vreodată. Este ca un agent de securitate, mai este jurnal, cel mai bun prieten şi, totodată, detector portabil de minciuni. Însă e mai mult decât atât, nu-i aşa?

I-am întrebat pe prietenii mei germani care e motivul pentru care mai toţi nemţii sunt obsedaţi de cash; mi-au răspuns că nu e vorba de a fi supravegheat, ci de *a te auto-supraveghea*. Unul dintre ei s-a exprimat în felul următor:

- Vreau să-mi monitorizez fiecare cheltuială în parte. În cazul cardurilor de credit, e ca şi cum ai avea bani de jucărie, înţelegi? Nu te afectează când îi cheltui, pentru că nu sunt reali. Atunci când pentru un espresso şi un covrig plătesc efectiv 6.20 euro, asta ar trebui să mă afecteze.

Deci iată şi răspunsul! Nu e vorba că te controlează altcineva, e mai degrabă despre autocontrol şi despre masochism fiscal.

Annex 4.1
GE

Die Scheu der Deutschen vor Plastik endet nicht beim Spielzeug. Sie betrifft auch die Plastikkarten in ihren Brieftaschen. Wie du wahrscheinlich schon bemerkt hast, regiert hier das Bargeld, und sein Thron ist aus zerknitterten Scheinen und schmuddeligen Metallmünzen gebaut. Trotz allen Absichtserklärungen ist auch nicht so bald damit zu rechnen, dass König Bargeld von einer Kreditkartenrevolution gestürzt und enthauptet wird.

Die Angst vor diesen Karten und ihren Daten sitzt hier so tief, dass 80% der alltäglichen Geldgeschäfte in bar abgewickelt werden. Das hat natürlich ein bisschen mit Deutschlands einzigartiger Geschichte zu tun. Der Staat hat in der Vergangenheit herausragende Fähigkeiten in Bürgerkontrolle bewiesen. Wenn man allerdings in der einen Hosentasche Kleingeld, in der anderen ein Smartphone

stecken hat, ist es relativ sinnlos, sich Sorgen wegen Überwachung zu machen: Das Smartphone ist das vollkommenste Überwachungsgerät, das je ersonnen wurde. Es ist Stasi, Tagebuch, bester Freund und tragbarer Lügendetektor in einem. Es muss also noch etwas anderes dahinter stecken, richtig?

Ich habe deutsche Freunde nach der landestypischen Bargeldbesessenheit befragt, und sie haben mir verraten, dass es nicht nur darum geht, sich nicht überwachen zu lassen, sondern auch darum, *sich selbst zu überwachen*. Einer von ihnen formulierte es so: «Ich möchte jede Ausgabe spüren. Bei Kreditkarten ist es irgendwie bloß Spielgeld, verstehst du? Es tut nicht weh, weil es nicht echt ist. Wenn ich für einen Espresso und einen Bagel 6 Euro 20 bezahle, dann soll es wehtun, das Geld wegzugeben.» Da haben wir also die Antwort. Es geht nicht um Fremd-, sondern um Selbstkontrolle – und um fiskalischen Masochismus.

Annex 4.2
EN

The German distrust of plastic doesn't stop at toys. It also concerns the plastic in their wallets. As you've probably noticed by now, cash is king here, and it sits proudly atop a throne of paper bills and dirty metal coins. It's a king not likely to be beheaded any time soon in an Amex- or Visa-led revolution.

Such is the fear of cards that fully 80% of all the country's daily transactions are in cash. Of course, this has a little bit to do with Germany's unique history. It has demonstrated, historically, an aptitude for citizen *Überwachung* (surveillance). However, when the other pocket of your jeans holds a smartphone, it's pointless to worry about being tracked. Smartphones are the most perfect surveillance device ever designed. They're the Stasi, your diary, your best friend, and a portable lie detector, all in one. So there must be something else going on here as well, right?

I've asked German friends about the national cash obsession and they tell me it's not just about not being tracked but also about them *tracking themselves*. As one said, "I want to feel every transaction. With cards, it's all just funny money, you know? It doesn't hurt because it's not real. When I by an espresso and a bagel for €6.20, it should hurt to hand that money over." So, there we have the answer. It's about tracking, not being tracked – and fiscal masochism.

Topic 37: Beim Flirten versagen/ Fail at Flirting
Când flirtul eşuează (p. 72-73)

Sper că aveai deja o relaţie când te-ai mutat în Germania, căci să începi una aici poate fi o adevărată provocare – în primul rând, deşi cetăţenii acestei frumoase ţări sunt, într-adevăr, competenţi în multe domenii, la flirt nu se pricep mai deloc. Ce-i drept, ei ştiu de unde provine acest lucru – este ceva asemănător cu obiceiul câinilor în parc, atunci când se adulmecă unul pe altul, doar că mai subtil şi folosindu-se de cuvinte, poate puţin şi de limbajul corpului, pentru a merge la sigur. Dar în ce constau aceste cuvinte şi acest limbaj al corpului?

NU EXISTĂ NICIO REGULĂ! Tocmai aici e problema.

În ceea ce priveşte flirtul, subtextul este cel puţin la fel de important ca şi comunicarea în sine. Din moment ce în societatea germană se evită

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folosirea subtextului în 99% din cazuri, în restul de 1%, când este, totuși, permis – situațiile romantice –, lipsa de experiență își spune cuvântul. Până când cei din cadrul Institutului German de Standardizare vor elabora, în sfârșit, un tabel de flirt, cu metodele de abordare recomandate, tot vor mai exista confuzii, eșecuri sau situații jenante.

Bărbații se tem să facă ei primul pas, crescuți fiind de generații de nemțoaice puternice și independente, iar acum nu vor să le răpească independența și autonomia femeilor de care sunt interesați. Acestea din urmă compensează prin faptul că sunt, adeseori, șocant de directe. Paul, un prieten irlandez, mi-a povestit cum și-a adunat odată tot curajul, pentru a aborda, într-un final, o nemțoaică blondă și frumoasă, care stătea la bar. S-a apropiat emoționat de ea și tocmai voia să își facă intrarea cu o replică amuzantă, pe care o repetase în drum spre ea.

- *Îmi pare rău, dar ești prea scund*, i-a spus ea, înainte ca el să apuce să termine jumătate din propoziție.

Și i-a întors spatele. Asta a fost tot.

Măcar s-a scuzat.

Annex 5.1
GE

Ich hoffe, du hast schon in einer Beziehung gelebt, als du nach Deutschland gezogen bist, denn hier eine anzufangen, kann eine echte Herausforderung sein – vor allem, weil die Bürger dieses schönen Landes zwar in vielen Bereichen kompetent, beim Flirten jedoch eher unbedarft sind. Sie wissen zwar, worum es grundsätzlich geht – es ist so ähnlich wie das, was Hunde im Park machen, wenn sie einander am Hinterteil schnüffeln, nur subtiler und mit Worten, vielleicht auch noch mit ein bisschen Körpersprache, um sicherzugehen. Aber was für Worte und welche Körpersprache?

ES GIBT KEINE REGELN! Darin liegt das Problem.

Beim Flirten ist der Subtext mindestens ebenso wichtig wie der gesprochene Text. Aber da in der deutschen Gesellschaft zu 99% der Zeit jeder Subtext vermieden wird, fehlt es beim entscheidenden Prozent – also bei der Romantik – komplett an Erfahrung damit. Bis die Leute vom DIN endlich eine Flirttabelle mit empfohlenen Vorgehensweisen erstellen, wird es noch eine Menge Verwirrung, Missgeschicke und Plumpheiten geben.

Männer fürchten sich davor, den ersten Schritt zu machen, weil sie von Generationen starker, unabhängiger deutscher Frauen erzogen wurden und die Frau ihres Interesses nun nicht ihrer Unabhängigkeit und Autonomie berauben wollen. Frauen überkompensieren das, indem sie oftmals erschreckend direkt sind. Paul, ein irischer Freund von mir, hat mir erzählt, wie er einmal allen Mut zusammennahm, um endlich eine schöne blonde Deutsche anzusprechen, die an der Bar stand. Nervös ging er auf sie zu und setzte zu einem witzigen Eröffnungsspruch an, den er auf dem Weg zu ihr geübt hatte. «Entschuldige, aber du bist zu klein», sagte sie, noch bevor er halb durch war mit seinem Satz. Dann drehte sie sich zur Theke um. Ende der Diskussion.

Immerhin hat sie sich entschuldigt.

Annex 5.2
EN
Hopefully you were already in a relationship before you moved to Germany, because finding one here can have its challenges – the biggest challenge being that the citizens of this fine land, while competent in many areas, tend to be rather unskilled at flirting. They get the basic premise – it's like what dogs do in the park to each other's behinds, only more subtle and with words, or maybe a bit of body language thrown in for good measure. But which words and what body language?

THERE ARE NO RULES! Therein lies the problem.

Flirting is as much about sub-text as actual text. But since German society shuns sub-text 99% of the time, in the 1% where it is allowed – romance – no one has any experience using it. Until the DIN people create a best-practice *Flirttabelle*, there are going to be a lot of accidents, confusion, and heavy handedness.

Men are afraid to make the first move, since they've been raised by generations of strong, independent German women and so don't want to rob the girl of her independence and autonomy. Women overcompensate for that and are, sometimes, scarily direct. An Irish friend, Paul, tells a story about finally plucking up the courage to approach a beautiful blonde German woman standing at the bar. Nervously, he approached and began delivering the funny opening line he'd been rehearsing on the walk over. "I'm sorry, you're too short," she said before he'd gotten halfway through it. Then she turned back to the bar. *Ende der Diskussion*.

Still, at least she said sorry.

As a final remark, the Romanian texts provided in the present article represent translations, an outcome that usually raises eyebrows and questions about the originality of such writings and the authorship of the translators. Nevertheless, one should bear in mind that an ideal translation needs to approach the source-text anew, in terms of the target-language lexis and grammar, semantics and pragmatics. In Jakobsen's words,

> "*Though translation always involves producing a target text that will uniquely match only one other text interlingually, the information processing that this involves in expert human translation takes place at the same cognitive level as ordinary text production. Therefore, translation is as complicated and as multifaceted as text production*"
> (Jakobsen, 1994: 48).

In addition, according to Lawrence Venuti, an American translation studies scholar,

> "[E]*very act of translation* [is] *transformative and creative, seldom transparent, invariably interpretive. Translations are complex texts full of multiple intertextual connotations and allusions, containing*

multiple discourses and linguistic materials, giving translators various choices to support or resist predominant literary and ideological views" (in Gentzler, 2001: 38).

Whether or not have the present translations into Romanian managed to be creative and authentic, freed of translationese fingerprints, still remains an open question, as well as a future goal; in fact, any text is prone to further alterations, observations and improvements. The main objective of the current study has actually been to demonstrate the various difficulties, be they on lexical, semantic or cultural levels, one encounters throughout any process of translating, mostly in reference to literary translations. On the other hand, from the translators' perspective, it has certainly been a pleasure to work with some of the satirical excerpts in *How to be German*. Not only due to the topics Fletcher's guide approaches in a candid manner, as if analyzing the series of frustrations foreigners typically experience in Germany (the author included), but mainly due to all the various linguistic challenges we faced on the border between a Romance and a Germanic language.

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Cultural studies

USES OF THE THRONE HALL IN THE FORMER ROYAL PALACE IN BUCHAREST FROM 1947 TO 2019: A SOCIAL SEMIOTIC PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract: *The purpose of this paper is to investigate, from a socio-semiotic perspective, the manner in which the political regimes installed after the forced abdication of King Mihai I (on 30 December 1947) used the Throne Hall in the former royal palace in Bucharest to meet their own needs. In December 1947, Romania was illegally turned from a constitutional monarchy into a popular republic, with the help of the Red Army. Then, the popular republic was transformed into a socialist republic, in fact, a communist dictatorship. In December 1989, the communist regime collapsed and was replaced by a post-communist one, a regime which did not seem willing to leave behind the communist ideological legacy, manifest, in the 1990s, in the brutal repression of anti-government protesters in University Square in Bucharest, or in the Romanian Mineriads of 1990 and 1991. The political regimes that succeeded to power after 1947 deprived the Throne Hall of its monarchic symbolism and used it in ways incongruent with its inherent function, albeit for official purposes. The manner in which the communist regime made use of this particular place is indicative of its intent and success in reinventing traditions or adapting older traditions to its ideological goals, in order to alienate Romanians from their recent past, in disrespect for the nation's heritage. Although the former royal palace was completely transformed into a national museum of art after 1990, a cultural institution meant, by its very purpose, to save at least part of the nation's memory, political decision makers ignored the symbolism of a national museum such as the National Museum of Art of Romania, known to many Romanians as the former royal palace. In bewildering, yet not unprecedented fashion, the Throne Hall has been recently used, by the Romanian government, as a dining hall in a series of events that preceded the takeover of the presidency of the EU Council by Romania in January 2019. We claim that the government's decision can be circumscribed to Jean Baudrillard's concept of consumerism, characterized by the rule of sign value as a status symbol. In addition, Jan Blommaert's and Barbara Johnstone's taxonomies further the argument that the Throne Hall is not a mere space, but a place, its function having been perverted by both ideological manipulation and aggressive consumerism.*

Keywords: space; place; story; consumerism; Throne Hall;

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Introduction

By definition, a throne hall is a particular area in a royal residence used for State occasions in a country whose form of State is constitutional monarchy. In countries that are no longer constitutional monarchies, but have managed to preserve former royal residences as part of their built heritage, throne halls are usually transformed into places of memory, usually parts of museums. Today, museums are no longer just institutions that collect and preserve artifacts, they can play a paramount role in shaping the identity of a community by keeping the *story* of the place alive. The *story*, told time and time again, connects generations and helps build both community cohesion and cohesion across generations. Through the *story*, the past is no longer something far away, lost in the mists of time, but something still palpable that can be made known, understood and appropriated. However, what happens if the *story* of the place is more or less obliquely undermined by irreverent attitudes towards a nation's past?

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the manner in which the Throne Hall in the former royal palace in Bucharest has been used by State representatives for various purposes from 1947 to 2019, a span of time in which the country was abruptly transformed from a constitutional monarchy into a communist republic, and then a post-communist republic which later acceded to the European Union. Furthermore, the investigation tries to shed light on various interpretations attached to this particular place and on their change from one political regime to another. The year 1947 is the year that King Mihai I was illegally dethroned by the Soviet-supported communists and the monarchic constitutional regime was removed from power under Soviet pressure, the country being illegally proclaimed a popular republic without the people's consent. The year 2019 is the year that Romania celebrated thirty years since the fall of the communist regime and also the year it took over, for the first time since its accession to the European Union, the rotating presidency of the EU Council.

Immediately after the abdication of King Mihai I, monarchic symbols were removed from public places, including the Throne Hall, in an effort to erase the monarchic past of the country from people's collective memory. During the communist regime, the Throne Hall, deprived of its royal symbols, was given new names and was used for various official events: receptions of State leaders and other official guests, official conferences such as the reunion of the leaders of the Warsaw Pact, award ceremonies for various members of the Romanian Communist Party. In spite of this abusive appropriation of the Throne Hall by the communist regime, which will be explained in detail hereafter, the communist leaders of the country preserved

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the ceremonial function of the hall. During the anti-communist revolution of 1989, the entire building was severely damaged, having been attacked with projectiles and burned. The former Throne Hall was almost completely destroyed.

After 1990, the former royal palace, partly transformed under the communist regime into the National Museum of Art of Romania, underwent renovation and refurbishment works. Within the new capitalist economic system which Romania committed to, and according to the logic of commodification, the Throne Hall was turned into a moneymaking machine and came to be used in ways which not even the communists had dared to think of: as a wedding venue, a site for corporate parties, luxury product launches and fashion shows. Then, in November 2018, the Romanian government turned the Throne Hall into a dining hall, hosting a series of working lunches on the occasion of the visit of a delegation of the European Parliament, prior to Romania's taking over the presidency of the EU Council. The government's decision was received with massive disapproval by the general public, and the central press severely criticized the government's decision.

The radical change in the function of the Throne Hall, triggered by the brash consumerist ethos of Romanian society after 1990, can be investigated by applying Jean Baudrillard's concept of sign value to the attitude of various individuals who rented the hall for diverse purposes. Incapable of or unwilling to understand the symbolism of the Throne Hall in the life of the country, but somehow aware of the value of the hall (a place in a former royal palace), those consumers were mainly attracted by the prestige of the place, which they used as a status symbol. For the newly rich, the Throne Hall endowed their event with the panache they sought. The reduction of the Throne Hall to a commodity has also been made possible by the fact that many Romanians, educated during the communist regime, had been alienated from the monarchic past of their country, oblivious to the story, to use Barbara Johnstone's taxonomy (Johnstone, 1990: 90), to which the royal palace and the Throne Hall are circumscribed. Jan Blommaert, drawing on Barbara Johnstone, helps illustrate that for these people, the Throne Hall is just a *space*, a mere location whose remarkable story they are unaware of, not a *place*. *Space*, if endowed with "social, cultural, epistemic and affective attributes" can become *place* – "a particular space on which senses of belonging, property rights and authority can be projected" (Blommaert, 2005: 222).

The *story* of a place, which plays a role in shaping one's identity, tallies with Winston Churchill's motto: "we shape our buildings and afterwards they shape us" (Architecture of the Palace n.d.). The motto expresses Churchill's position towards the reconstruction of the Commons Chamber after it had

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been destroyed by bombs during the Blitz. The British Prime Minister advocated the traditional "adversarial rectangular pattern" of the Chamber, "a confrontational design [that] helps to keep debates lively and robust, but also intimate" and opposed the newly proposed "semi-circular or horse-shoe design". He stressed the fact that the traditional pattern of the Commons Chamber "was responsible for the two-party system which is the essence of British parliamentary democracy" (Architecture of the Palace n.d.). The values, beliefs and aspirations that people hold are embodied in the buildings they erect, and they later come to shape people's relationship with the place, making it part of their *story*, of who they are.

The Throne Hall during the Reigns of the Romanian Kings (1881-1947)

The old Throne Hall, still used in 1881 when the country became a kingdom, was initially furnished in the ornate Napoleon III style (Badea-Păun, 2017: 16) – probably a political statement indicating both Prince Carol of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen's[1] acknowledgment of Emperor Napoleon III's support for his candidacy for the Romanian throne and the prince's commitment to gear Romania's policy towards the West of Europe where, at that time, this particular style (manifest mainly in architecture, urbanism and interior design) was seen as a mark of modernity and progress.

After 1881, the year that Prince Carol was crowned, thus becoming King Carol I, the monarch decided to rebuild the old royal palace in Bucharest in order to make the edifice reflect the new political status of Romania – a country that had freed itself from the Ottoman suzerainty and had started the process of Westernization on its path towards modernization. The entire royal palace and the Throne Hall were refurbished in order to mirror the Principalities' transformation into an independent kingdom. In fact, the modernization of the country, which had started before the arrival of Prince Carol in the Romanian Principalities, was further marked by the adoption of Romania's first constitution, the Constitution of 1866, fashioned after the Belgian Constitution of 1831, an illustration of Romania's integration into modern Europe, whose values the country started to commit to. This new European identity embraced by Romania would soon be reflected in architecture and the arts, recognized as "instruments and vehicles

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[1] Prince Carol of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen was elected Prince of the Romanian Principalities of Wallachia and Moldova in 1866, with the political backing of the French Emperor, Napoleon III, with whom the prince's family was related. Carol bore the title "Prince" from 1866 until 1881, when he was crowned king (after having won the independence of the Romanian Principalities from the Ottoman Porte in 1877-1878, on the battlefield).

of a certain identity, bringing together the past ages and the present one"[2] (28). The modernized royal palace and the Throne Hall and, on a larger scale, the new architectural development of the Romanian capital illustrate how the country made its way through history, freeing itself from Ottoman rule and gaining its independence, turning into a modern European constitutional monarchy.

After the proclamation of the Romanian kingdom in 1881, the Throne Hall was refurbished and received two new thrones (which replaced the old ones used by Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza and his wife, Princess Elena). The new thrones, which were used between 1885 and 1947, were made of gilded wood and had a neo-Byzantine design, which symbolically illustrated both the cultural heritage and the modern Romanian ethos. They were situated on a dais, and behind them, hanging on an arcade with the coat of arms of the kingdom, a purple velvet curtain with the two royal cyphers embroidered in gold thread hung. Above these, there was a canopy made of scarlet velvet, also embroidered in gold thread and adorned with gold tassels (38, 43).

In 1926, during the reign of King Ferdinand I, King Carol I's successor, the royal palace was seriously damaged by fire. The Throne Hall made no exception. Reconstruction works began the following year and were continued into the 1930s by King Ferdinand I's son, King Carol II, who got deeply involved in the reconstruction of the palace, which was redesigned and redecorated in the monumental style that it still bears today. The two thrones inherited from King Carol I had been saved, and one of them was placed on a dais, under a new crowned canopy which was supported by four columns with capitals decorated with eagles. On either side of the throne, there were two columns with a winged Victory on top, holding crowns of laurels in her hands. Behind the throne there was a scarlet curtain with the heraldic insignia of the old Medieval Romanian provinces and their voivodes, and the coat of arms of the House of Hohenzollern, all embroidered in gold thread. The entire structure was placed under a semi-dome, the basis of which was decorated with a frieze with the same armorial bearings of the Romanian provinces and their princes. On the ceiling, in front of the semi-dome, there was a fresco painted by Cecilia Cuţescu-Storck, entitled *The Apotheosis of the Arts and Sciences under King Carol II* (98-99) – a tribute to the king for his major contribution to the development of the arts and sciences during his reign.

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[2] My translation (instrumente şi vehicule ale unei anumite identităţi, reunind epocile trecute cu cea prezentă.)
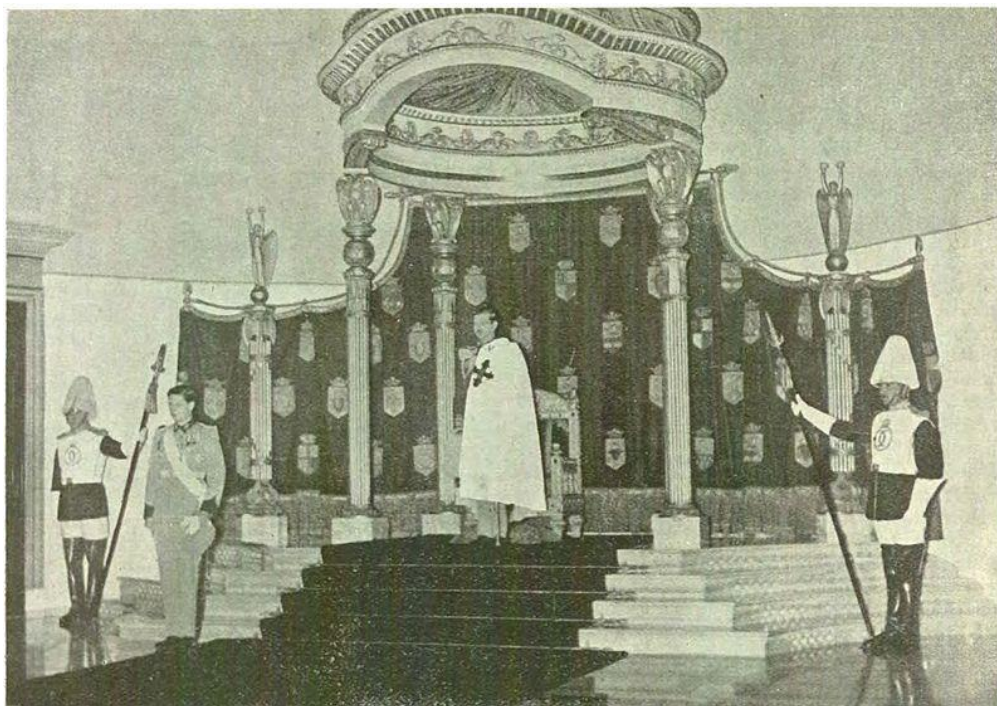
Figure 1. The apse with the royal throne and the canopy in the Throne Hall, after the 1937 renovations. King Carol II stands in front of the throne, and Crown Prince Mihai is at the basis of the stairs. Source: The Encyclopedia of Romania, 1938, volume 1, page 1080.

Throughtout the reigns of the four Romanian kings and in spite of various works of reconstruction and refurbishment, three essential elements of the Throne Hall, each with its own distinct symbolism, were always there: the throne, the dais and the canopy – coherently linked together. The throne represents the royal authority invested in the monarch and its celestial origin (Chevalier and Gheerbrandt ,2009: 961). As a symbol of royal power conferred by God upon the king, thus setting the monarch apart from his subjects, the throne is always placed on a dais, a few steps higher than the level of the room. It thus follows the Biblical tradition illustrated by King Solomon's throne (961). On a more secular note, the dais may be interpreted as a symbol of the sovereign's constitutional role as arbiter of the political life, which requires him to be above politics. Either situated at the other end of the Throne Hall, opposite the entrance, or on the lateral side of the Throne Hall, the throne, elevated on the dais (Badea-Păun, 2017: 38), is the symbolic pivot of the entire hall, commanding reverence for the authority it represents. The canopy which often overarches the throne symbolizes the celestial arch, the origin of the authority received by the monarch when crowned king (38). It is also a symbol of the divine protection which the sovereign receives when invested with royal power (Chevalier and Gheerbrandt, 2009: 123).

The three royal symbols explained above, the throne, the dais and the canopy, markedly underline the ceremonial function of the Throne Hall in the former royal palace – a place where sovereigns were crowned, princes were baptized and deceased kings and queens lay in state. The Throne Hall, now invested with the symbol of an independent State (the closed royal crown) becomes more than just a majestic place. It becomes the center of Romanian sovereignty – the emblematic embodiment of statehood. That is why the ceremonies that could take place there were ceremonies that affirmed and reaffirmed Romanian statehood. King Mihai I was baptized there not necessarily because he was born in the royal family, but because of his position in the line of succession and his future prospects: he was the second in line to the throne, destined to reign at some point and to assume the duties and responsibilities of sovereignty. Similarly, when he lay in state in the Throne Hall in December 2017, he did so not as an ex-king (thus styled by the neo-communist power in the 1990s), but as King Mihai I of Romania – a former head of State.

Replete with the attributes of authority (the throne) and sovereignty (the crown), and with other social and cultural atributes, the Throne Hall turns from *space* into *place* (Blommaert, 2005: 222). Transfigured into a highly symbolic *place* which tells a *story*, the Throne Hall provides us with "information about ourselves" (204). Transformed into a semiotic reality through the *story*, the Throne Hall thus performs an act of identity (204).

The armorial bearings of the Romanian provinces and voivodes (at the basis of the semi-dome) reunited around the throne coherently underline the natural continuation of the Romanian *story* with the independence won in 1878 on the battlefield, the declaration of the kingdom in 1881, under King Carol I, and the union of Transylvania with Romania in 1918, under King Ferdinand I. It is the *story* of a former principality becoming a modern State. As far as narrative coherence is concerned, Barbara Johnstone clearly names its coordinates: "In order to make sense, stories have to be situated, most often explicitly, in time and space, and hearers need to know who the characters are and what they are engaged in doing" (Johnstone, 1990: 90-91). Between 1866 and 1947, the characters were familiar to the audience, as were the spatial and temporal setting of the story. This shared discourse helped build a sense of belonging, a spiritual proximity between the dynasty and the people, which was instrumental in consolidating the identity of the nation. Eighty-one years after the modern *story* started to unfold, it was abruptly brought to a halt in 1947 and changed considerably.

The Throne Hall during the Communist Regime (1948-1989)
What happened to the former royal palace and the Throne Hall after the communists forcedly dethroned King Mihai I and illegally proclaimed the

popular republic, on 30 December 1947, mirrors what happened, on a larger scale, to the entire country. The process of de-Westernization and concurrent Easternization (whereby Romania was forced, against its traditions, to adopt the Soviet model in all its domains), which began in August 1944, when the Red Army entered into Romanian territory, was accelerated after the king's forced abdication. The most urgent measures taken by the Soviet-supported communists, illustrative of this process of de-Westernization, were both political and educational. The political measures, apart from the abdication of the king and the proclamation of the republic, included the purge of the Romanian Army and of the country's intellectual elite and the erasure of representations of the Romanian monarchy and of its kings from the people's memory. Closely linked to these political measures, and partly overlapping with them, educational actions were taken, meant to re-educate the young generations. These included the manipulation of Romanian history books and of Romanian history textbooks used in schools. The new Soviet-dependent Romanian historiography, under the command of Mihai Roller, a leading communist activist, propagandist and ideologist, removed the Romanian monarchic past and the contribution of the royal family to the progress of the country from history textbooks used in schools. According to Lucian Boia, these steps are part of the anti-national phase of the process of communization, a phase characterized by brutal and radical measures on direct orders from Moscow (Boia, 2001: 70). They were ruthlessly and promptly implemented in order to throw the population into a state of shock and disbelief which would make it impossible for the people to oppose them.

On the very night of the abdication, the statue of King Carol I, a masterpiece of the Croatian sculptor Ivan Meštrović, was destroyed by bulldozers and later melted. The Throne Hall in the royal palace would soon have a similar fate. In accordance with the decision of the Council of Ministers of 19 June 1948, the central wing of the palace, containing the former royal ceremony halls (the Royal Dining Room, the Throne Hall and the Voivodes' Stairs) started to be used for various ceremonial purposes by the State Council of the republic (Badea-Păun, 2017, 126), which was a political body performing the functions of a head of State (having replaced the Presidium of the Great National Assembly as the supreme organ of State power of the republic).

As a result of the change of regime, all the monarchic elements in the Throne Hall were either removed and scattered throughout the country, some as part of stage props for various theatres and film studios, or destroyed. As physical elements of the *story* of the Romanian constitutional monarchy, they were thus dispersed so that they could not be put back together and thus tell the *story* again. The two neo-Byzantine thrones used from the proclamation of the kingdom until 1947 were separated and sent to the Golești Museum of

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Viticulture and Pomiculture (Argeş County) and the National History Museum of Romania in Bucharest, respectively (38). The scarlet velvet curtain behind the thrones, embroidered with the armorial bearings of the Romanian provinces and voivodes and the coat of arms of the Hohenzollern family became part of the stage props of Buftea Film Studios. Part of it survived and has been recently returned to the royal family, who has displayed it in the Kings' Hall in Elisabeta Palace, their official residence in Bucharest (99, 129). The canopy above the throne, the four supporting pillars ending in eagle-shaped capitals, the two pillars with the winged Victories and the steps of the dais were all destroyed and removed from the room. Instead, the socialist emblem of the republic appeared on the wall where the armorial curtain once hung. The coat of arms of the Romanian kingdom, placed above the main entrance of the Throne Hall, as well as the portraits of King Carol I and King Ferdinand I placed on either side of the royal coat of arms were removed and replaced with a white empty oval-shaped medallion and simply decorated rectangles, respectively. What has survived the communist destruction were the frieze with the armorial bearings of the voivodes at the basis of the semi-dome and the fresco on the ceiling, *The Apotheosis of the Arts and Sciences*. Their survival was not unintended, as aspect that will be enlarged upon hereafter.

Once the interior of the palace changed and the old royal symbols were eliminated, the palace changed its name and its residents. It was first called *Palatul Congreselor* (The Congress Palace), and the communist party used to hold its congresses there. Once the political leadership had a new congress hall built, erected next to the former palace, its name was changed once more, into *Palatul* Republicii, i.e. The Palace of the Republic (Fototeca Online a Comunismului Românesc n.d.). The communist power was thus trying to change the identity of the former palace in the manner in which people change their identity by taking on new names.

The manner in which the communist power changed the name of the royal palace and took possession of it is illustrative of its double discourse. On the one hand, they denigrated the Romanian kings in history books and textbooks used in schools, depicting the sovereigns and the royal family as representatives of the exploiting class. On the other hand, they took possession of the former royal residences. Some of them would house important political institutions of the communist State, such as the State Council. Other former royal residences (most of them properties of the Crown Estates) would be turned into holiday houses for the newly emerged party nomenclature.

However, the former Throne Hall and Royal Dining Room would continue to be used as ceremony areas for State occasions such as receptions of foreign guests, important meetings of the members of the Romanian

Communist Party, investiture ceremonies (Fototeca Online a Comunismului Românesc n.d.). For example, in April 1966, a meeting between Josip Broz Tito, the President of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and Nicolae Ceauşescu, Secretary General of the Romanian Communist Party, took place in the former Throne Hall.

Figure 2. The former Throne Hall. The signing ceremony of the common declaration regarding the visit to Romania of Josip Broz Tito, the President of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. One can see the emblem of the socialist republic in the place where once the canopy overarched the throne, and the two surviving ceiling decorations (the frieze with armorial bearings and the fresco).
Source: Fototeca Online a Comunismului Românesc (The Online Photo Collection of the Romanian Communism) Pressmark: 21/1966

Then, in July of the same year, the meeting of the Political Advisory Committee of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty was also held there. The official breakfast in honor of the guests was held on 4 July 1966 in the former Royal Dining Room (thus complying with the initial function of the room). However, ten years later, in 1976, another official breakfast for the Political Advisory Committee of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty was no longer held in the former Royal Dining Room, but in the former Throne Hall, which is surprising given the existence and the previous use of the former Royal Dining Room for such occasions.

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Figure 3. The meeting of the Council of the Political Consultative Committee of the states participating in the Warsaw Treaty. The official breakfast held in the former Royal Hall, 25-26 November 1976. Notice that King Ferdinand I's portrait, formerly hanging on the wall on the left side of the photo, was removed.
Source: Fototeca Online a Comunismului Românesc (The Online Photo Collection of the Romanian Communism) Pressmark: 332/1976

These details are worth mentioning because they not only explain what happened to a symbolic Romanian building, part of our built heritage, but, on a deeper level, they help us understand what happened to the country and its people during the communist regime. The disappearance and destruction of royal furniture and decorations that once embellished the Throne Hall are not tragic because they involved royal objects *per se*; they are tragic because they imply the falsification and loss of a *story* – the story of how modern Romania came of age.

As stated above, stories need to contain all the necessary data that make them coherent accounts of events. Narrative coherence is thus achieved by providing "detail about place, time, character, and activity" which "serves as orientation in stories" (Johnstone 1990: 91). Drawing on Wallace Chafe, who tackles the structure of stories from a cognitive perspective, and on his concepts of "need for background" and "orientation" (Chafe, 1980: 41-42), Barbara Johnstone advocates the fact that background information – "information about location in space and time, about the social context, and about background activity" – is indispensable for "'the self' so as not to feel disoriented or uncomfortable" (Johnstone 1990: 91). Hence, these background details (or "background orientation") help people position themselves in a given context in the same manner in which "people regaining

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consciousness typically ask where they are, what time it is, and what is going on" (91). In order to manipulate the population and infuse people's consciousness with Soviet ideology, communist ideologists and propagandists distorted the *story* of the Throne Hall by deleting details that could serve as background orientation: they altered the spatial setting of the narrative (by destroying and/or removing artifacts – the thrones, the canopy, the curtain, the dais, the royal coat of arms). They also deleted the main characters in the story (by replacing the portraits of King Carol I and King Ferdinand I in the Throne Hall with blank or trivially decorated panels). Therefore, the original *story*, linked to landmark events in the country's history, was lost and replaced with a forged one in which the main roles were attributed not to individualized characters, but to a different type of character, a collective character – the people, the leading character in the ideologically infused Soviet historiography of the Romanian past. The Throne Hall and its narrative were vanishing. Concurrently, history textbooks were being rewritten to serve the new ideology.

The old story was replaced with a new story, a fake story, but one carefully penned in order to make sense and be believed. Like language, symbols too can be invested ideologically, frequently with a manipulative aim. Ideological infusion can prove extremely effective when it acquires "the status of common sense" (Fairclough, 1992: 87). The fact that the frieze with the armorial bearings of the Romanian voivodes, situated at the base of the semi-dome that once overhung the entire structure of the throne, was not destroyed is not accidental. It can be considered a manifestation of a patriotic discourse developed in the 1960s whereby the communist power legitimized itself through "direct recourse to predecessors" (Bochmann, 2010: 123). By saving these symbols, the communist leaders presented themselves as the legitimate successors of a long line of brave voivodes, part of the Romanians' shared narrative. Thus, the communists wormed their way *into* the *story* and appropriated part of it in a manner that seemed logical, hence difficult to reject (see Figure 2). They provided the newly brainwashed generations of Romanians with a different background orientation which made the young adopt ideological positions without being aware that they had been manipulated because the *story* made sense.

The Throne Hall after 1990: Consumerism at Its Worst

During the events of December 1989, which led to the fall of the communist regime, the former royal palace was severely damaged by fire and projectiles. After 1990, the entire building came to house the National Museum of Art of Romania and was therefore subjected to extensive restoration and redevelopment. In 2009, the central wing (including the former Royal Dining Room, the Throne Hall and the Voivodes' Stairs) were

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completely renovated and restored almost entirely to their original form (Muzeul Naţional de Artă al României, n.d.). The portraits of the first two constitutional monarchs were returned to their original places in the Throne Hall and so were the coat of arms of the Romanian kingdom and the dais of the throne. However, the two neo-Byzantine thrones, the canopy and the pillars that supported it and flanked the thrones were not. Their place has been taken by an almost larger than life photograph of the ensemble, a genuine, yet painful reminder of an almost forgotten dignity.

Since the reopening of the whole museum to the public, the former royal palace, like many other museums, has been struggling to survive in an age of ruthless capitalism. Consequently, several measures have been taken in order to turn it into a profitable institution. One of these actions was renting out certain areas of the museum, including the royal areas, for various cultural purposes. According to point 12 of the Annex to the Order no. 2172 of 25 March 2013 of the Minister of Culture regarding the approval of tariffs for the services provided by the National Museum of Art of Romania, the Throne Hall can be rented for forty-five thousand lei per day for the organization of cultural events. Therefore, access is allowed to anyone who can afford spending almost a thousand Euros a day, on condition that the organized event be of a cultural nature.

The royal family of Romania is, probably, the only private entity that rents the Throne Hall for the organization of two types of events which harmonize with the initial state-related purpose of the Throne Hall: the annual meeting of the diplomatic corps in Bucharest and royal investments. One should not forget two other State occasions for which the Throne Hall was the obvious setting: Queen Ana's lying-in-state ceremony in August 2016 and King Mihai I's lying-in-state in December 2017.

Other renters have a more comprehensive understanding of the concept of "cultural events". In 2005, one of the shareholders of a Bucharest football club organized his wedding in the Throne Hall (Dragoş Săvulescu, 2010). In 2008, the Throne Hall was the launch event venue for a luxury brand of whisky (Sala Tronului din Palatul Regal 2008) and for an exclusive phone produced by a British cell phone company (Vertu, 2008). Photographs from the mobile phone launch party show the Throne Hall transformed into a stage. The list of similar events may continue with other product launch events, corporate events and even fashion shows (Maria Marinescu, 2008).

Although there are other ample and elegant spaces to rent in the former Royal Palace according to the Order no. 2172 of 25 March 2013 of the Minister of Culture (e.g. the former Royal Dining Room, The Hall of Mirrors or the Auditorium Hall), the Throne Hall seems to be at the top of the list of preferences. The consumers' choice for this specific room can be circumscribed to a particular consumerist behavior.

In the analysis of present-day consumer society, Jean Baudrillard underlines that consumption is no longer understood in terms of use-value and exchange-value of products. Consumption has developed a new dimension which leads to its use as language (Baudrillard, 1998: 61). Just like language, consumption has turned into a means of communication. It has also turned into "a process of classification and social differentiation" (Baudrillard, 1998: 61) within which the use-value of a commodity is replaced by its sign-value. Therefore, commodities are no longer consumed for their use-value (for their capacity to satisfy a need), but for the social prestige that they lend to their owners. Thus, commodities have turned into status symbols (61-62).

Subject to the generalized commodification ethos that pervades Romanian society, the Throne Hall and other similar areas in the former royal palace have turned into mere objects. The museum no longer rents out rooms, because their use-value has become irrelevant. It rents out status symbols, the sign-value of which is in high demand in today's competitive world where "image" reigns supreme. Little or only partially aware of the *story* of the Throne Hall, renters who transform this place into a stage regard it as an incomplete mosaic which they cannot make sense of. Unacquainted with all the background information of the *story*, they lack the orientation which would help them understand where they are in historical terms.

In December 2018, just a few weeks before Romania took on the presidency of the EU Council, the Romanian government hosted a working lunch in the Throne Hall for a delegation from the European Parliament. In the Hall of Honor, which provides access to the Throne Hall, the government organized an exhibition of local food and fruit. Tables neatly arranged among classical marble columns were filled with fruits, nuts, various sorts of bread, sponge cakes, cheeses, smoked foods, sausages, jars with jams and other local produce. It all looked like a copious field party held in the wrong place. On 20 January 2019, the Throne Hall was used again as a dining room on the occasion of the meeting of the COSAC[3] chairpersons.

It is difficult to believe that the Romanian Prime Minister was unaware of the symbolism of the Throne Hall and of the fact that just below it there is the former Royal Dining Room, built especially for State banquets and official lunches and dinners. Naturally, any host is keen to impress their guests and make them feel special. The decision of the Romanian government was viewed as an exaggeration which, for some, was baffling. It was also a political *faux pas* in terms of the image of the party in power, the Social Democrat Party, the continuator of the National Salvation Front (after

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[3] COSAC (or Conferinţa Organizaţiilor Specializate în Afaceri Comunitare şi Europene) is the Romanian acronym for the Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs.

the fall of the communist regime, one of the first political parties whose members included numerous former members of the communist party nomenclature). One could easily draw a parallel between the decision of the present-day Romanian government to use the former Throne Hall as a venue for a working lunch and the decision of the Romanian Communist Party to host an official breakfast in the same Throne Hall in 1976 for the representatives of the Warsaw Treaty member states who convened in Bucharest (see Figure 3).

However, the logic of consumerism may provide an explanation. Baudrillard maintains that "the consumption of a surplus", a feature of societies since time immemorial, makes people "feel not merely that they exist, but that they are alive" (43). This "superfluity" irresistibly excites the senses and makes the individual crave for more. Severely criticized for being a political puppet, the Prime Minister was eager to show that she was what she aspired to be: a true leader. Choosing the Throne Hall for its value as a status symbol, the Prime Minister wanted to set herself apart, to individualize herself and to do more than simply be the Prime Minister, but to feel alive *as* Prime Minister as well. The exercise of power, and the perks that come with it, can (apparently) make one feel alive.

In spite of the full-size photograph of the throne and the crowned canopy, reminiscences of the real *story* of the Throne Hall and perpetual symbols of Romania's sovereignty, its presence in the Throne Hall today is not fully understood. As stated before, these symbols are part of the background information of the *story* and help provide orientation to those who enter the hall. They also perform an act of identity – making Romanians aware of who they are as a nation. This is the reason for the existence of the photograph: to provide orientation to those who want to discover and understand what the Throne Hall really stands for. However, years of communist and post-communist manipulation and indoctrination have taken their toll. Unable to understand the intrinsic symbolism of the Throne Hall, numerous people will continue to consider it anachronistic, hence, useless, or, at best, a beautiful decorative background for an official lunch.

Conclusions

The government's decision to use the Throne Hall as a venue for a working lunch when there were numerous other viable alternatives received massive criticism both in the central press and on social media. This may be explained by a rising awareness of the general public regarding various national symbols, the Throne Hall in particular. The passing away of Queen Ana and King Mihai I and their lying-in-state ceremonies, broadcast live, became media events which connected people not only with the two monarchs, but also with each other. The two royal funerals revived the

people's interest in the Throne Hall and the former royal palace, since these events showed people a coherent use of such places, in a setting that makes sense. The Throne Hall, even if only temporarily restored to its initial State function by the two sad events, continued to perform an act of identity, strengthening the audience's sense of who they are as a nation and adding new chapters to its *story* – a *story* that helps map their identity and that is worth discovering.

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Fototeca Online a Comunismului Românesc. (n.d.). Figura 2. Aspect de la semnarea Comunicatului comun cu privire la vizita oficială în țara noastră a președintelui Republicii Socialiste Federative Iugoslavia – Iosip Broz Tito. București, 23 aprilie 1966. Cota: 21/1966/ Figure 2. A Snapshot from the Signing of the Mutual Communiqué Regarding the Official Visit in Our Country of the President of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia – Josip Broz Tito, Bucharest, April 23, 1966. Pressmark: 21/1966. Retrieved July 27, 2019, from https://fototeca.iiccr.ro/picdetails.php?picid=30792X31X5687

Fototeca Online a Comunismului Românesc. (n.d.). Figura 3. Consfătuirea de la București a Comitetului Politic Consultativ al țărilor participante la Tratatul de la Varșovia. În timpul dejunului oficial. (25-26 noiembrie 1976). Cota: 332/1976/ Figure 3. The Meeting of the Council of the Political Consultative Committee of the States Participating in the Warsaw Treaty. The official breakfast held in the former Royal Hall, 25-26 November 1976. Pressmark: 332/1979. Retrieved July 27, 2019, from https://fototeca.iiccr.ro/picdetails.php?picid=41492X811X1289

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FRANCIS BACON, JAN BAPTIST VAN HELMONT AND DEMETRIUS CANTEMIR. FAMILY RESEMBLANCES OF AUCTORITAS IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

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Abstract: *The present paper stakes out the destiny of certain ideas on scientific methods and epistemic and ontological representations that spread in 17th century Europe like a cultural epidemiology of representations against a deist, theosophical, empiricist and occult maze-like background. Our intellectual history study evaluates the family resemblances of auctoritas of three polymaths: Francis Bacon, Jan Baptist Van Helmont and Demetrius Cantemir along the cultural corridors of knowledge. If Francis Bacon was a theoretical founder of doctrines and Jan Baptist Van Helmont was a complex experimenting spirit, Demetrius Cantemir was an able disseminator of philosophy in South Eastern Europe and a creative synthetic spirit bridging the Divan ideas of Western and Eastern minds caught up in the busy exchange of ideas of the Republic of Letters.*
Keywords: Francis Bacon; Jan Baptist Van Helmont; Demetrius Cantemir; cultural epidemiology of representations; auctoritas; family resemblances; Early Modern Europe; polymaths; corridors of knowledge; Republic of Letters;

1.   Introduction

The 17th century stood for a transition period between an ontological outlook of vitalism that typified Renaissance thinking through to the early modern outlook of Francis Bacon, the founder of the scientific method to the mechanistic thinking put forward by Descartes and Newton. The present paper stakes out the destiny of certain ideas on scientific methods and epistemic and ontological representations that spread in 17th century Europe like a *cultural epidemiology of representations* against a deist, theosophical, empiricist and occult maze-like background (see also Sperber, 1996).

Our intellectual history study evaluates the fuzzy family resemblances of three polymaths: Francis Bacon (1561-1626), the early modern philosopher, a holder of a breakthrough type of auctoritas in the history of science, Jan Baptist Van Helmont (1579-1644), a Flemish scientist, a contemporary polymath of Francis Bacon who develops Bacon's ideas on experiments and a Romanian prince and polymath, Demetrius Cantemir (1673-1723), who disseminates and reinterprets Van Helmont's ideas at the end of the 17th century and at the beginning of the 18th century. Our focus

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will be on Cantemir's role as a disseminator of *auctoritas* in *Joannis Baptistae van Helmont Physices Universalis Doctrina* and as a creative and re-evaluative philosopher in "*Sacrosanctae Scientiae Indepingibilis Imago*".

By *auctoritas* I understand the kind of authorship that grants a scholar prestige and influence of ideas over other scholars and the possibility for the ideas to be further expanded by those influenced.

The study sets out to ascertain some ideas in *family resemblances* clusters that represent the mainstay auctoritas in Francis Bacon's Novum Organum (1620), in Jan Baptist Van Helmont's paradigmatic doctrine from Ortus Medicinae (1648/ 1664 (the English translation)/1682/1683) and their transfer under the guise of fragmentation, reordering and re-interpretation into Cantemir's works from South-Eastern Europe.

By family resemblance I understand something close to what Ludwig Wittgenstein suggests in his *Philosophical Investigations* and namely the presence of a fuzzy degree of resemblance between the sets of overlapping ideas (seen as fibres of a thread) of the scholars in question and the absence of full similarity of the ideas expounded by them. „Something (that) runs through the whole thread (of ideas (*our addition*)– namely the continuous overlapping of those fibres" (Wittgenstein, 1953).

2.   Francis Bacon
It was Sir Francis Bacon who laid the foundations of the scientific method. He expounded his ideas in *Novum Organum* (1620), or 'New Method', and was a reaction to Aristotle's method from *Organon*. (Hannam, 2017: 35). In Novum Organon, Francis threw out the frequently used Aristotelian view on science during the Middle Ages. His scientific method would be put to good use during the early years of the Royal Society founded in 1660.

Francis Bacon's theories worked against the predecessors' doctrines like Aristotle's and Plato's and he also levelled criticism at Paracelsus' findings, although he embraced many of Paracelsus tenets throughout his writings. Bacon brings the array of Renaissance alchemists under fire as their methods hinge on occasional observations, and methodologically fall short of the experimental reproducibility of the researched natural effects.

In return, Bacon relished the findings of the Greek atomists and especially of Democritus. In building his ontology and theory of knowledge, Bacon chose Democritus' natural philosophy over Aristotelian teachings as they were recast into a scholastic mould.

Bacon found fault with Aristotle's theory of sundry sciences that missed out on building an overarching "meta-science" (*philosophia prima*) that should find its use in all the scientific pursuits. He does not entirely throw out Aristotle's works. Bacon dislikes the humanistic spin granted to his

works because this spin brings syllogism and dialectics to the fore and resents the metaphysical tackling of natural philosophy as Bacon believes its forms to be framed as a pyramid making up *ordo naturae* itself.

Speaking of Aristotelian philosophers that could be a source to Bacon's thinking, we might bring up the case of Padua university professors and namely, the case of Jacopo Zabarella. This route may have acted as a corridor of knowledge feeding Bacon's speculative system drawing upon sundry sources which nourished his intellectual becoming: Democritus's atomism, Zabarella's Aristotelianism, Paracelsus, but also from contemporary scientists.

He rehashes Aristotle's outlook of science as knowledge of necessary causes. Bacon also dismisses Aristotle's logic on account of its metaphysical underpinning, and disproves the theory according to which the experience that reaches humans through their senses faithfully represents things as they are. Bacon also criticises Aristotle for imposing general and abstract concepts, which are unsuitable and unable to pinpoint things as they are. In exchange for the indicated shortcomings, Bacon sets up *philosophia prima* as a methodological meta-science for all scientific pursuits.

Bacon's corpuscular ontology finds *semina rerum* as a grounding principle that makes for the possibility of motion and reproduction of forms. These *semina rerum* have the solidity of fine particles which, in conjunction with air and fire, yield the animate or inanimate chains of being.

Speaking of the seminal scientific method, one can say it is an instance of inductive reasoning. Bacon's approach sets out the requirements for recording the accurate, systematic observations one needs in order to assert quality facts. Bacon recommends that one should fall back on induction, which he defines as one's ability to jump from a set of facts to one or more general theorems or axioms. He warns us about the limits beyond which the facts fall short of what they actually truly demonstrate.

Next Bacon recommends that one should proceed to collecting additional data or one should employ the extant data and the new theorems or axioms so that one can go on and formulate additional theorems or axioms. Bacon mentions negative and exceptional cases and data issued forth by experiments. The whole process should be resumed algorithmically so that one can lay down the sound foundations of knowledge, where this knowledge is buttressed by empirical data.

Bacon shows his cautionary wisdom in the *Novum Organum* by reminding us that one can come by this genuine and sound knowledge only by following the steps included in this method. He delineates himself from the old methods which were not rooted in facts but they hinged on erroneous deductions and metaphysical conjecture. If the old methods did still proceed

from facts, they suffered from hasty generalisations from insufficient empirical data.

It is worth noticing that although Francis Bacon stood up for a highly rigorous, empirical, observational scientific method that ousted the old metaphysical conjecture method, Bacon remained a deeply religious man, who believed in God's creation. Deist Bacon underlines the fact that if man as a researcher comes to understand the essence of his work, he will succeed in comprehending the miracle of God's work and that he will be able to earn back the rightful knowledge man forfeited on the occasion of the original sin and will reach his God-given full potential.

To conclude the section on Francis Bacon we may define his leaning towards speculation as Bacon's awareness that his approach was an intermediate stepping stone in the scientific progress as if awaiting the later more sophisticated research hypotheses to prove or disprove the empirical theories set forth by him. Francis Bacon remains a man of his times as a trailblazer and also man ahead of his times through his cautionary and lucid insights.

3.   Jan Van Helmont

The Flemish scholar Jan Baptist Van Helmont like his mentor, Paracelsus, illustrates this gradual progress from vitalism to mechanicism mingled with insights into corpuscularianism, physicalism and naturalism much like Francis Bacon uses the *auctoritas* of Paracelsus. Van Helmont shares the interest in experiments and empirical data collection with Francis Bacon and follows his principles in broad lines. He is an alchemist, philosopher, natural scientist and physician and his main works are included in *Ortus Medicinae*.

Van Helmont was much under the spell of the *auctoritas* of Paracelsus as Francis Bacon was as he looked upon the universe "as an organism in which matter was configured by a development of forces". Even though Van Helmont endorsed Paracelsus' theory, he still stopped short of taking over the 3 fundamental elements of Paracelsian matter: *tria prima* (mercury, salt and sulphur) (see also Ducheyne, 2006).

In exchange, Van Helmont's ontology posits water as a primordial omnipresent element in each natural combination. The Flemish scientist busied himself with pyrothechnia and is credited with having coined the word *gas* derived from Greek *chaos*.

On the one hand Van Helmont is eulogised for various discoveries and for his interest in empirical observation and experimentation in general. On the other hand, Van Helmont is often described as an alchemist swayed by mysticism, who levelled criticism at human reason (*mens rationalis*), Mathematics, and syllogistic reasoning. He claimed, for example, that we

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should not have a rational mind, but rather an intellectual one. According to Van Helmont, almost like with Bacon, only the soul could provide a deeper understanding of nature. Animal reason (*mens sensitiva*) can only come to reach the external appearance of things: *the signatum*, but not the essence hidden within it (*de zegelaer*). Insight works by means of forms, figures, and examples (*gedaenten, figueren, en voorbeelden*) rather than by means of deductive reasoning. (see also Ducheyne, 2006)

Dreams were equally important to Van Helmont. In the introduction to Ortus Medicinae (1648), Van Helmont spoke of a fervently mystic dream he had: he found himself in an empty bubble the diameter of which reached from the centre of the earth to the heavens above. From this allegorically religious dream, Van Helmont understands that in Jesus Christ we live, move, and guide our being. Van Helmont also criticises the restrictiveness of Mathematics: Mathematics studies only the quantitative aspects of things, not their inner qualities (Ducheyne, 2006).

Proper science deals not only with the quantity of things, but also with their quality. Mathematics places entities under *the praedicamentum quantitatis*: it does not succeed in thrusting to the essence of things (*wesentheyt*) (see also Ducheyne, 2006).Van Helmont criticises the Aristotelians saying that they disregarded the inner principles, the *semina*, of things and brought down things to the level of an artefact, much like Bacon does. According to Van Helmont, Nature does not busy itself with external signs, but only with causes.

Van Helmont sets up an ontological principle called the *archeus*. He defines *archeus* as "aura vitalis seminum, vitae directrix", "the conjoyning of the vitall air, as of the matter, with the seminal likeness, which is the more inward spiritual kernel, containing the fruitfulness of the Seed; but the visible Seed is only the husk of this."(Van Helmont,1664). We find the same *semina* concept drawing on the Greek atomists as with Bacon.

Van Helmont posits the sensitive soul above the *archeus* and defines it as the husk or shell of the immortal mind. Van Helmont claims that before the Fall the *archeus* hearkened to the immortal mind and was directly steered by it, but at the Fall men also were gifted with the sensitive soul, but with it they forfeited their immortality, as when it dies, the immortal mind can no longer abide in the body.

In addition to the *archeus*, van Helmont believed in other agentive entities that could be likened to the *archeus*, but these entities were not always clearly set off from the archeus. Having these in mind, Van Helmont coined the term *blas* (motion), defined as the „vis motus tam alterivi quam localis" („twofold motion, to wit, locall, and alterative"), that is, natural motion and motion that can be altered or voluntary motion. The concept

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of *blas* was of various types: e.g. *blas humanum* (blas of humans), *blas of stars* and *blas meteoron* (blas of meteors); of meteors he claims that „constare gas materiâ et blas efficiente" („Meteors do consist of their matter Gas, and their efficient cause Blas, as well the Motive, as the altering", see Van Helmont, 1664 apud Ducheyne, 2006).

In Van Helmont's works we find experiments classified as follows (Ducheyne, 2006):

1) *experimentum*: technical or medical procedures that are rationally not fully warranted and for which there is no other evidence of their worth except for the results they yield;

2) *mechanica probatio* ("hands-on demonstration"): evidence thrown up by the lab work; and,

3) *quaerere per ignem* ("questioning by fire"): Paracelsian methods of chemical fire analysis.

According to Halleaux (1983), Van Helmont demonstrates his experimental tenets by delving into the mechanisms of four experiments: the thermoscope experiment, the transmutation experiment (as an alchemist), the ice experiment and the willow-tree experiment.

Jan Baptist Van Helmont is an obvious supporter of experimental research exactly like Bacon. He anticipated the rise of present-day procedures such as: quantification, control, theory-guided practice, practice informed theory, replication and reproducibility. (see also Ducheyne, 2006)

As a physicist, Van Helmont believed in the weight conservation law (pondus) by claiming that water as an indestructible element rarefied or condensed by the semina (see this concept with Bacon) is omnipresent (see Ducheyne, 2006). As a chemist, the Flemish scientist claims that chemical reactions do not affect the weight of the substances involved. Philosophically, he throws in an ontological conclusion that everything desires to remain itself as long as possible.

4.   Demetrius Cantemir

The Romanian Prince, a *Reichsfuerst* of the Holy Roman Empire, Demetrius Cantemir was a scholar of the Republic of Letters (Boucher, 2006: 8) of the Early Enlightenment (1680-1730). Demetrius Cantemir proved himself a truly European polymath encapsulating the highest expression of Western and Eastern lore, a member of the Prussian Academy and a pen friend of G.W. Leibniz. Cantemir came to learn of the posthumous writings of Jan Baptist Van Helmont through different corridors of knowledge.

The main *corridors of knowledge* envisage the tide of scholars from Constatinople, who returned home to the Greek Academy after studying at

the University of Padua. Thus Padua, also visited by Jan Baptist Van Helmont, and Constantinople, where Cantemir spent several years, stand out as important and long-lasting hubs of knowledge. It is at Padua that one of Bacon's Aristotelian source of inspiration, Jacopo Zabarella lived and taught in the 16th century. These *hubs of knowledge* connected by *corridors of knowledge* are materialised through an active exchange of books, manuscripts and ideas debated by scholars in close contact or who maintain a fertile correspondence on scientific matters.

It is also in Constantinople at this Greek Academy of the Patriarchate that Cantemir came in touch with different philosophical ideas and natural sciences discourses that make for a well thought through kind of paradigmatic *auctoritas* that witnesses the fragmentation, and reordering of the springs of knowledge typical of early modern Europe. In Constantinople, Cantemir attended the Academy of the Ecumenical Patriarchate from Fener, a district of the city, where he was taught by scholars like Meletios de Arta and Jacobos Manos (see Lemny, 2010).These corridors of knowledge are also corridors of *auctoritas transfer and exchange* and typify the network concept of the *Republic of Letters*.

Cantemir writes a book while in Constantinople (in 1700-1702) praising and directly making Van Helmont's *auctoritas* known through his work on *Joannis Baptistae van Helmont Physices Universalis Doctrina* (see also Cantemir, 1872 and 2015). Debus (2002: 311-312) mentions the fact that Demetrius Cantemir wrote a biography of Van Helmont and paraphrased his work in *Joannis Baptistae Van Helmont physices universalis doctrinae et christianae fidei congrua et necessaria philosophia*. Debus adds the remark that the work of Cantemir includes only a selection of „Ortus Medicinae", but he admits that Demetrius Cantemir has the merit of disseminating the *auctoritas* of Van Helmont throughout Eastern Europe.

Cantemir jotted down his comments while he perused Jan Baptist Van Helmont's Opera Omnia published by Frans Mercurius Van Helmont in Frankfurt am Main in 1682 and in Amsterdam in 1693, as we mentioned earlier in the study. As a consequence of his enthusiasm regarding Van Helmont's scientific and philosophical achievement, Cantemir utters his praise for Van Helmont's physics of creation and iatrochemistry.

Demetrius Cantemir was so gripped by Van Helmont's ideas that he copied out the entire 820 page manuscript of the treatise on doctrina universalis. Cantemir wrote the above mentioned text in Latin and Romanian called *Praise to the author and to the virtue of his scholarship* and a foreword in Latin *Lectori amico*. Both were meant to be published. The edition features the portraits of Van Helmont father & son drawn in fine ink by Cantemir himself after the 1682 engravings (see also Lemny, 2010).

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This option for Van Helmont's *auctoritas* evinced by Cantemir might have been made under the influence of Cantemir's professor in Jassy, Jeremiah Kakavelas (who was a disciple of Teophilos Corydaleos, a scholar who studied at the Padua University) and of his above mentioned professors in Istanbul: Iacobos Manos and Meletios de Arta, who had strong connections with the Padua University. Cantemir was not fully conversant with all the Early Modern European philosophy in full swing at the end of the 17th century and he chose Van Helmont's system recommended by his professors as a key meant to help him unlock the riddles of his philosophical queries.

Cantemir also leans on Van Helmont's teachings in books like: *The Divan* (1698), which possibly draws on Van Helmont's *Venatio Scientiarum* and in *Sacrosanctae Scientiae Indepingibilis Imago* (1700) (see Alexandrescu, 2013) which reinterprets Van Helmont's cosmogonic ideas on the genesis from the Bible. Bădărău (1964) suggests another source for *The Divan* and namely *Dioptra* (The Mirror) by Philippus Solitarius (Monotropos), a work written in the 11th century.

In *Historia Incrementorum atque Decrementorum Aulae Othomanicae* (1714-1716) and in *Monarchiarum Physica Examinatio* Cantemir employs the cyclical "law" of history within a biologist framework and deems human societies to be like living beings subject to the universal law of wax and wane as history is tantamount to continuous becoming. Cantemir however discards the use of "*archeus*" in his sociological discourse unlike Van Helmont. (see Bădărau, 1964, 394-410).

My conjecture says that one possible *corridor of knowledge*, albeit a later secondary one, takes shape through the action of G.W. Leibniz, who is also a friend of Jan Baptist Van Helmont's son, Franciscus Mercurius Van Helmont, who, an alchemist himself, publishes his father's complete works in Amsterdam, in 1683 after the republishing of OPERA OMNIA in Frankfurt am Main, in 1682. But this corridor of knowledge, Amsterdam-Berlin-St Petersburg, chronologically can only come up for discussion as a reinforcing source for a later period, after Cantemir becomes Peter the Great's advisor, that is after 1711.

Both scholars see God as the world's maker and admit that truth is afforded to man directly through divine enlightenment. Cantemir manages to strike a compromise reconciling reason with revelation. Van Helmont's doctrine represents his utter split with the medieval, scholastic thought by upholding the Christian doctrine against heathen Aristotelianism. Bacon, too, remains an upholder of the laws of Divinity.

Van Helmont believes that this divine enlightenment runs counter to reason and its logic. So does Cantemir, who also suggests that man is left with logic and reason after the loss of the sacred science. Logic and reason

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can steer man towards the path of knowledge. Therefore this split is not successful with Cantemir as he still preserves the double truth theory and, consequently, the idea of a holy science, which he previously rejects.

We agree with Bădărau (1964) that Van Helmont's dialectics held a precarious status whereas Cantemir deemed it essential for the comprehension of logic, history of philosophy and causation theory.

Demetrius Cantemir pens" "*Sacrosanctae Scientiae Indepingibilis Imago* by falling back on a host of vivid metaphors to make his philosophical outlook as expressive and appealing to readers as possible (Lemny, 2010).

The book sets out to counter Aristotelian thinking and Scholastics. Cantemir employs philosophy to justify the Christian lore by adducing arguments from the philosophy of nature, also bringing in moral, religious and epistemic issues.

The book "*Sacrosanctae Scientiae Indepingibilis Imago*", which appeared at the watershed of centuries (1700), has the ambition to embed Physics within a deist framework, exactly as Francis Bacon had done before, finding the common ground between science and religion, by bridging the gap between science-based determinism and medieval metaphysics. Being a polymath, Demetrius Cantemir craved to know the esoteric underpinnings of sciences.

The structure of this work includes six books. Book one unfolds a didactic meditation on the relation between Philosophy and Theology under the guise of a dialogue aimed at revealing some occult lore to a young disciple. Book two, which has 33 chapters, shows forth the influence of Van Helmont's occult doctrine regarding the Biblical Genesis as Cantemir spells out a theory of cosmogony using Van Helmont's physical principles. Book three provides explanations of natural phenomena like rainbows, earthquakes, volcanoes, etc. Book four resumes the motif of the meditation on the lapse of time in an allegorical way. Book five affords us an insight into the philosophy of universal life. Book six is a philosophical plea for the free will and it sketches out a theodicy somewhat in a Leibniz-like manner.

Thus in "*Sacrosanctae Scientiae Indepingibilis Imago*" Cantemir imagines himself as a painter when the author sets about mooting the knowledge issue and of its representation in the craft of painting. The allusion to Horace's creed: "ut pictura poesis" is obvious here trying to drive the idea home that a comparison between the painters' freedom and the poets' freedom is possible wherein both sides feel free to attempt at crafting objects according to their imagination.

The allegory of Truth includes the scene where Truth as an object to be represented is bidden to sit for the painter as a model. The sitter as Truth is described as an elderly wise man: the Father of Time. The painter tries hard

to be painstakingly accurate when drawing Truth's portrait, which tract of descriptive discourse allows the painter to ponder over the limits of his art.

Another esoteric and epistemic metaphor stands out in the recounting of the scene where the painter, after he completes his work, hands a mirror to the Father of Time for him to behold his own countenance and compare it to the painting. This enigmatic mirror spells out the meditation on man's powers and limits to know Truth and to represent it.

Here, Cantemir dismisses the ancient philosophers' tenet that claims that one can come by knowledge through reason, but here Cantemir is also at odds with Bacon and the host of English empiricists to follow in the 18th century, who claim that knowledge is first mediated by senses, however faithfully this might come about.

Following Van Helmont and like Bacon, under the guise of a *family resemblance* Cantemir sees the foundations of creation as being made up of elements, ferments and archei, and therefore he rejects the *primum movens* idea of Aristotle, which sets everything else in motion, while God resides not only in nature, but also above nature, setting everything in motion in a praeternatural and free manner. Cantemir's Physics posits the existence of a cosmic matter that was in continuous fermentation, preserved life, admitted of *divina revelatio*. The Romanian polymath believed in divine enlightenment and in hidden meanings to be wrestled from nature. This ties in well with Cantemir's attempt at squaring science based-determinism with deism like Bacon and Newton did. In another work, in *Compendiolum*, Cantemir wavers and there he changes his attitude towards Aristotle and accepts his tenets.

The process of creation goes on unimpeded after the act of divine creation is finished, whereby Cantemir means that God's intervention occurred in the first phase of creation as an immediate and praeternatural force and regarding the ensuing natural phenomena of the order of nature God withdraws and becomes a sort of *Deus otiosus* and thus saving only the praeternatural phenomena for himself. Another *family resemblance* is apparent when Cantemir follows Van Helmont directly and Bacon (indirectly) as he claims that nature is God's order through which a thing is what it is and does what it has been ordered to do (see Cantemir, 2015).

The order of nature is an original concept of Cantemir's, which does not draw on Van Helmont's system, whereby Cantemir tries to feature a deterministic link between God and nature in a systematic way although *the order of nature* (*ordo naturae*) is a concept that shows up with Bacon bespeaking its Aristotelian aftermath and might constitute another *family resemblance*.

Sacrosancta scientiae indepingibilis imago has the virtue of being the first philosophical book ever written by a Romanian author and is an attempt

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at including ontology, cosmogony, logic and morality by drawing upon the theosophical system of Jan Baptist Van Helmont in order to counter scholastic and Aristotelian thinking. It is the creative and re-evaluative work of an ambitious polymath trying to square scientific *ratio* with religious *revelatio*.

5.   Conclusions

Cantemir's works stand on their own merits but also on the shoulders of other giants of the 17th century, the deist and theosophical empiricists from Early Modern Europe. All the three polymaths, Bacon, Van Helmont and Cantemir developed their theories by taking a stance against Aristotle's teachings and their works grew out of their conscious break with the medieval, scholastic thinking resting on Aristotelian tenets. They all admitted to God's existence and attempted at reconciling *ratio et revelatio* to different degrees and under different epistemic circumstances. They all busied themselves with ontology, logic, cosmogony and the empirical theory of knowledge and in doing so they yielded *family resemblances of auctoritas* among their seminal ideas for us to pick out.

If Francis Bacon was a theoretical founder of empirical doctrines and a philosopher (even if he was not quite an alchemist) and Jan Baptist Van Helmont was a iatrochemist, alchemist and a complex experimenting spirit, Demetrius Cantemir was an able disseminator of philosophy in South Eastern Europe and a creative synthetic spirit bridging the Divan ideas of Western and Eastern minds caught up in the busy *cultural epidemiology of representations* of *the Republic of Letters* of Early Modern Europe.

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PROBLEME DESCHISE DE FENOMENOLOGIA LUI HUSSERL PRIN PRISMA INTEGRĂRII SALE ÎN MODELUL ONTOLOGIC INFORMAŢIONAL PROPUS DE MIHAI DRĂGĂNESCU

PROBLEMS STARTED BY HUSSERL'S PHENOMENOLOGY IN TERMS OF ITS INTEGRATION INTO ONTOLOGICAL INFORMATIONAL MODEL PROPOSED BY MIHAI DRĂGĂNESCU

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Abstract: *May another reality exist so as to generate our physical world? Both Mihai Drăgănescu and Edmund Husserl said yes. But there is a main difference between those two approaches. So, Romanian scholar Mihai Drăgănescu proposed an ontological model with strong phenomenological character in which information and material principles are at the same level. Instead Husserl proposed an idealist (transcendental) solution. In this respect Drăgănescu's model seems to be more general and consistent. Also Mihai Drăgănescu says that Husserl's Phenomenology can be integrated in his model. But for this some problems appeared. Our present work is dedicated to identifying such problems. In subsequent material we will analyze how these problems can be solved by Mihai Drăgănescu.*
Keywords: lived experience; intentionality; noema; consciousness; constitution; reelle; realität; wirklichkeit;

(i) Introducere

Mihai Drăgănescu a fost preşedintele Academiei Române (1990-1994). Tot dânsul a înfiinţat, în 1992, Secţia IT a acestei Academii şi a condus-o până în 2010 când a plecat dintre noi.

Dedicate *Modelului Ontologic Informaţional* pe care Mihai Drăgănescu l-a propus, şi care are la bază, ca principiu, *informaţia,* la egalitate cu cel al *materiei,* am publicat o serie de lucrări (Manolescu, 2014, 2015, 2017).

Constantin Noica (Surdu1995: 190) afirmă: „Despre Modelul drăgănescian, autorul său poate rosti, ca filosof întemeiat pe ştiinţe, această

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admirabilă vorbă, pe care numai un Hegel cuteza să o spună despre sistemul său, din perspectiva speculaţiei «Toate filosofiile au o raţiune în lumina acestui model»" . Numai că această „raţiune" trebuie să le integreze, adică să le adapteze pentru a le integra fără a le contrazice în spiritul lor. Iar printre aceste filozofii se regăseşte cea aristotelică, cea kantiană şi nu mai puţin important, Fenomenologia husserliană. Şi aceasta deoarece demersul drăgănescian are, de asemenea, şi o puternică tentă fenomenologică.

Textul de faţă se referă la această fenomenologie deoarece ea ridică o serie de probleme pentru care Mihai Drăgănescu a trebuit să găsească soluţii. Interesant este că, în timp ce lui Aristotel şi Kant autorul le dedică un număr important de pagini, în schimb când este vorba de Husserl el se limitează doar la câteva paragrafe din glosarul de termeni anexat uneia dintre cărţile sale fundamentale, *Ortofizica* (Drăgănescu, 1985).

În cadrul unei convorbiri particulare, din toamna anului 2018, cu Doamna Nora Rebreanu, soţia Profesorului, am aflat că, de fapt, cunoaşterii şi aprofundării lui Husserl, lui Mihai Drăgănescu i-a fost necesar un interval de timp considerabil. Iar rezultatele se vor vedea. Nu în acest text care are ca obiect identificarea problemelor puse în faţa Profesorului de către Fenomenologia husserliană, ci într-un material ulterior în care Mihai Drăgănescu încearcă să le rezolve.

Potrivit scopului urmărit, acest text nu va fi un studiu sau o exegeză a demersului husserlian în ansamblu, ci va încerca o distanţare selectivă faţă de concepţia acestuia, fără ca ea să fie deformată. Prin urmare, o serie de aspecte ale abordării husserliene, cum ar fi: dificultăţile observării de sine, posibilitatea unei descrieri (eidetice) a trăirilor, reflecţia şi reducţia fenomenologică ca metode, empatia şi intersubiectivitatea, logica transcendentală husserliană şi gramatica formelor pure, timpul subiectiv, ş.a.m.d., nu au fost avute în vedere.

Se cuvine ca autorul să-şi exprime gratitudinea faţă de A. Bruzan (cadru asociat la Université De Rouen unde predă cursuri de introducere în fenomenologie, fiind doctorand sub îndrumarea lui Natalie Depraz, cunoscută specialistă în Husserl, traducătoare din Fink) care a avut amabilitatea să parcurgă o primă versiune a lucrării noastre şi să ne ofere o serie de sugestii extrem de pertinente în legătură cu păstrarea spiritului husserlian.

Având însă în vedere chiar afirmaţia lui Husserl că datorită „unei fenomenologii aflată încă la începuturi, este posibil ca termenii şi conceptele propuse să prezinte o fluiditate" (Husserl, 2011: 314), am fost obligaţi ca, în anumite situaţii, să încercăm o precizare a lor ţinând seama chiar de sugestiile existente în textele autorului. Dar, în acord cu scopurile textului de faţă, a fost imposibil să nu emitem şi unele interpretări, care s-ar putea să pară neortodoxe pentru un husserlian pur. În astfel de cazuri, conform uneia dintre conotaţiile „deconstrucţiei" lui Derrida, chiar „interpretarea unui text este

doar un alt text care nu este el însuşi o interpretare privilegiată şi care deci, la rândul său, se cere a fi interpretat" (Graham, 2002: §14.7).

(ii) Premize şi definiţii de bază ale abordării husserliene
Husserl arată (Husserl, 2011: 206-207):

„[…] trebuie să înţelegem că trăirii empirice i se opune, drept *condiţie a sensului ei*, trăirea absolută a *Fiinţei absolute* şi că aceasta din urmă <u>nu este o simplă construcţie metafizică</u> [s.n. G.M], ci ea poate fi atestată în caracterul ei absolut fără nici o urmă de îndoială prin intermediul unei schimbări corespunzătoare de atitudine, <u>putând astfel să fie dată în cadrul unei intuiţii directe</u>" [s.n. G.M].

În acest sens, pentru a ajunge la primatul Fiinţei, complementară Conştiinţei pure (absolute), Husserl procedează în felul următor.

În primul rând, el pleacă de la un platonism reformulat. Astfel introduce o delimitare între *idee* şi *esenţă*.

„La o [delimitare] terminologică în acest sens mă împinge […] nevoia de a păstra extrem de importantul *concept kantian de idee,* în aşa fel încât să fie distins în chip limpede de conceptul general de esenţă […]. Voi folosi de aceea [pentru esenţă G. M.] neologismul *eidos*" (36).

Dar la ce „concept kantian de idee" se referă Husserl? La faptul că ideile - printre altele şi cea de Divinitate sau de Absolut - sunt, după Kant, noţiuni cu care operează raţiunea, şi a căror semnificaţie nu poate fi dată în nici o intuiţie şi experienţă posibile (Kant, 1969: 652). Iar dacă totuşi căutăm să obţinem o cunoaştere a unor asemenea entităţi, nu ne alegem, din punctul de vedere kantian (a se vedea logica sa transcendentală), decât cu paralogisme sau cădem în antinomii (307-461). În schimb, spune Husserl, esenţa (*eidos*) poate fi obiect de cunoaştere, prin intuiţie directă (Husserl, 2011: §5).

Particularizând, se va putea spune că Absolutul în chip de *idee* nu poate fi cunoscut. În schimb, ca *esenţă* a creativităţii sale care se va concretiza în *doctrina constituirii*, de care vom vorbi la timpul potrivit, el poate fi intuit direct ca *Fiinţă absolută/ Conştiinţă pură*.

Prin urmare, ne mai având, în continuare, nevoie de Absolut sau Divinitate, Husserl le va scoate din joc aplicând o reducţie fenomenologică (§3), metodă husserliană cunoscută, de punere între paranteze a unui anumit lucru, fără a-i nega existenţa. În acest fel Husserl rămâne faţă în faţă doar cu Fiinţa absolută.

Mai departe, Husserl introduce un alt postulat referitor la ceea ce va numi „realitate". Şi anume, va structura această realitate pe două niveluri: (i)

Transcendentalul şi (ii) Naturalul, ambele fiind *reale*. Reale în sensul că sunt accesibile cunoaşterii umane, însă diferite ca modalităţi de accesare.

Transcendentalul este un topos al lui „nici unde" şi „nici când", deoarece Husserl nu specifică nimic în legătură cu spaţialitatea şi temporalitatea acestuia şi nici dacă este sau nu „material".

În Transcendental se află Fiinţa absolută şi/ sau ceea ce Husserl va numi, în general, „Conştiinţă".

Transcendentalul, conţinutul acestuia, este accesibil cunoaşterii umane prin intuiţie directă.

Realitatea sa va fi desemnată prin *reelle* (Husserl, 2012. Cercetarea a cincea, §2,219 de exemplu), termen pe care îl vom utiliza şi noi, cu semnificaţia de aici.

Naturalul (Fizicul) este un alt topos în care lucrurile conţinute au întindere spaţială în trei dimensiuni şi durată temporală, iar aceste lucruri sunt de natură materială.

Conţinutul Naturalului este condiţionat de Transcendental prin Fiinţa absolută sau Conştiinţă.

Conţinutul Naturalului este accesibil cunoaşterii umane prin intermediul unei percepţii empirice care nu se reduce doar la una externă, prin cele cinci simţuri, ci va funcţiona şi intern vizând apercepţii (corporalitate şi trăiri primare cum le numeşte Husserl (Husserl 211: 317), amintiri ale unor percepţii, gânduri, judecăţi (Locke 1961: 82), etc.).

Realitatea Naturalului va fi desemnată de Husserl prin *realität* termen pe care, de asemenea, îl vom utiliza şi noi, cu această semnificaţie (citat de Bauman 1998: 87).

În fine, plecând de la faptul că atât în *realität* cât şi în *reelle* pot apărea lucruri iluzorii, discursul husserlian va face distincţiile: *a fi real în act - Wirklichkeit*, *a fi real potenţial - Quasi-Wirklichkeit* şi *a nu fi real,* deci *iluzoriu - Non-Wirklichkeit"* (Husserl, 1994b: §2) . În aceste cazuri şi noi ne vom folosi husserlienele *wirklichkeit, quasi-wirklichkeit* şi *non-wirklichkeit.*

Cuvintele: *realität, reelle, wirklichkeit, quasi-wirklichkeit* şi *non-wirklichkeit* sunt cuvinte-cheie şi va trebui să fie ţinute minte deoarece vor fi curent utilizate în expunerea noastră.

Mai trebuie adăugat că Husserl denumeşte „*obiect*", într-un sens foarte larg, tot ce se află în Transcendental şi Natural. Astfel se va înţelege sub această denumire chiar şi ceva de gen „justiţie", „figura 2", „cerc" ca figură geometrică, „principiul terţului exclus" sau, pur şi simplu, „o stare de fapt" cum ar fi „stiloul se află pe birou împreună cu nişte cărţi", inclusiv întreaga *realität* sau *reelle*.

De asemenea, Husserl va denumi „*fenomen*" modul în care ne apare nouă un obiect, manifestarea „obiectului însuşi în carne şi oase", dar nu şi a lucrului-în-sine kantian. Astfel „fenomenul, este atunci totalitatea a ceea ce se

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află în plină lumină a zilei sau care poate fi adus la lumină, fiind scos din ascundere" (Heidegger, 2003: &7,38); însă a fi adus la lumină poate însemna, pentru Husserl, şi a aplica reducţii fenomenologice succesive până la *esenţa* unui obiect, aceasta devenind „ascunderea" cea mai profundă.

Comentariul 1: *Aici apare prima problemă. Şi anume că în legătură cu Transcendentalul Husserl nu ne spune nimic despre toposul în care se află. Dar nu acelaşi lucru îl face orice doctrină idealistă? De exemplu, cea a lui Platon când se referă la „Lumea ideilor? Da, dar Platon e consecvent: el nu ne spune nimic în acest sens nici când se referă la „Peşteră". În schimb Husserl nu dă dovadă de o asemenea consecvenţă în legătură cu Naturalul şi de aceea se spune că el se înscrie pe linia unui idealism parţial, i.e. unul „transcendental". Discuţia aici se poate prelungi indefinit odată ce, în filozofie a fost admis idealismul. Asta nu înseamnă că problema idealismului, în general şi a celui particular la Husserl, nu există.*

Comentariul 2: A doua problemă. *Modul în care Husserl vede „realitatea" nu înseamnă nimic altceva decât introducerea, pe uşa din dos, a metafizicului, adică a acelui „ceva" din afara omului; plecând de la premiza că acest ceva, chiar şi redus la „Fiinţa absolută" poate fi perceput de om printr-o „intuiţie directă".*

(iii) Conştiinţa în genere, trăire şi act.
Conform lui Husserl, „conştiinţa" în sensul cel mai larg posibil, poate fi considerată drept totalitatea reală (*reelle*) a „trăirilor" fiinţei umane şi inter-ţeserea acestor trăiri de orice fel în unitatea fluxului lor (Husserl, 2012: 218). Ea se află în Transcendental şi este similară, dar nu identică cu cea a altor animale. Ceea ce diferenţiază o conştiinţă de tip uman de una a altor animale este că ea poate fi auto-percepută prin reflecţie, aceasta devenind una dintre caracteristicele principale ale acestui fel de conştiinţă.
Dar ce ar putea să însemne o „trăire" şi, separat, un „act" de conştiinţă?
O *trăire,* după Husserl, este ceva ce se oferă ea însăşi percepţiei, cu o evidenţă de necontestat (*esse est percipi*) (Dermot, 2012), pe când, în schimb, referindu-se la *actele de conştiinţă* Husserl foloseşte termenul «*Erlebnis*» [*trăire*] (Dermot, 2012) pentru a semnifica starea de conştiinţă drept o trăire personală ca o experienţă a persoanei a treia. Astfel credem că putem înlătura acum această neclaritate.
Prima dată, fenomenologul, *pe post de persoana întâi*, experimentează conţinutul conştiinţei ca fiind alcătuit din propriile *trăiri*; dar simultan, ca *persoană a treia*, experimentează conţinutul conştiinţei ca fiind alcătuit din trăiri pe care nu le-a produs el (persoana a treia) ci persoana întâi şi pe care le

va numi, de această dată, „*acte de conştiinţă*”; iar pe acestea le poate privi detaşat, le poate descrie şi analiza.

Comentariul 3. *Putem acum să facem observaţia că această duplicitate apare pentru că una şi aceiaşi „realitate” este văzută şi numită diferit în funcţie de punctul de vedere al observatorului, ceea ce reprezintă un fel de „complementaritate” avant la letter. Iar o astfel de complementaritate introdusă implicit de Husserl va constitui una dintre caracteristicile „reducţiei fenomenologice” ca metodă. Ceea ce, după câte cunoaştem, nu a fost până acum pus în evidenţă.*

Cam atât, deocamdată, despre trăiri şi acte de conştiinţă asupra cărora vom reveni. De asemenea, menţionăm că Husserl utilizează şi alte nuanţe ale noţiunii de „act de conştiinţă” şi, în acest sens, se pot consulta cele două dicţionare aparţinând lui Drummond (2007) şi, respectiv, Dermot (2012).

(iv) Ontologie formală şi ontologie materială

În paragraful al doilea al acestui text s-a redus fenomenologic Absolutul şi am rămas faţă în faţă cu Fiinţă absolută. A fost o reducţie de sus în jos (*top down*). De fapt Husserl a plecat şi invers, de jos în sus (*bottom up*) pentru a pune mai clar în evidenţă aceiaşi Fiinţă absolută. Şi anume a plecat de la punerea între paranteze a modului în care ştiinţele numite de el „eidetice pure” - logica şi matematica - privesc lucrurile şi apoi a trecut la scoaterea din joc şi a aşa numitei „atitudini naturale” proprie ştiinţelor naturii.

În continuare discursul nostru va lua în considerare două noţiuni husserliene, *ontologia formală* proprie logicii şi matematicii ambele pure şi *ontologie materială* proprie ştiinţelor naturii.

Ontologia formală este introdusă de Husserl în filozofie drept o descriere a unor obiecte de tip „formă” (Henning, 2006). În afară de sensul care atribuie „esenţei” denumirea de „*eidos*”, Husserl mai utilizează şi altă semnificaţie a acestuia şi anume de „formă esenţială” (fără materie) (Husserl, 2011: §10). Prin urmare, aici este vorba de o distincţie între formă şi materie.

Astfel, când vorbim despre „formal”, înţelegem că, în acest caz, percepţiile şi judecăţile au ca obiect entităţi de tip „formă”.

Logica şi matematica, ca discipline, sunt într-adevăr formale când „formele vide”, cum spune Husserl, nu sunt „umplute” cu materie. Acest mod de a vedea lucrurile aminteşte de intuiţionismul matematic, considerat a fi de natura unui platonism în care ideile, ca existenţă, sunt înlocuite cu obiectele matematicii.

Comentariul 4: *Despre modul de exprimare, în acest caz, se poate spune precum Heyting: „Limbajul în care matematica se exprimă, fie acela*

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obişnuit, fie acela formalizat, nu serveşte decât la comunicarea rezultatelor şi oferă numai o imagine - bild - a matematicii, dar matematica nu este această imagine şi cu atât mai puţin limbajul în care o exprimăm" (Heyting, 1934, citat de Dumitriu, 1969: 797).

Mai trebuie spus că în cadrul ontologiei formale, procesul mental care are ca obiect „adevărul" se bazează pe de o parte, pe o gândire conceptuală care se desfăşoară deductiv, plecând de la genul maxim (categorie) şi avansând, prin descompuneri, pe niveluri succesive de detaliere, până la anumite elemente terminale (obiecte nedecompozabile) şi, pe de alta, pe cele trei principii logice formale şi ideale: identitate, necontradicţie şi terţ exclus. În acest fel, la nivelul genului maxim se află premizele, ca axiome reprezentând adevărul existenţial *reelle* apodictic, cel mai general. Iar odată cu detalierea pe diverse niveluri, prin emiterea de consecinţe care nu contrazic axiomele, adevărul axiomelor se prezervă (moşteneşte) fiindu-i adăugate noi precizări. Prin urmare, de sus până jos, adevărul nu se modifică ci doar se rafinează.

Comentariul 5: *În legătură cu o ontologie formală apar două întrebări: (a) în ce fel de topos există ea? şi (b) în ce mod are omul acces la o obiectele unei asemenea ontologii? Husserl răspunde doar la a doua întrebare şi anume că accesul omului este realizat printr-o intuiţie directă ca şi în cazul obiectelor care se află în Transcendental. Aceasta ar putea să subînţeleagă faptul că şi această ontologie s-ar afla tot în Transcendental. Dar despre aceasta Husserl nu afirmă nimic. Am semnalat totuşi neclaritatea respectivă doar pentru ca ea să nu fie atribuită discursului nostru. De fapt, în demersul husserlian, ea nu impietează în mod deosebit, dar am considerat că este bine ca ea să fie menţionată.*

Şi acum să trecem la *ontologia materială* proprie unei „atitudinii naturale". Această atitudine pleacă de la modul în care ştiinţele naturii privesc lucrurile atunci când formele vide capătă un conţinut material.

Ştiinţele naturii, după Husserl, sunt considerate că se ocupă de domeniul Naturalului (Fizicului) care se află în spaţio-temporalitatea cu întindere în trei dimensiuni şi durată în timp şi este susţinut „material" fiind o realitate de tip *realität*.

Astfel (Husserl, 1994a) spune că în interogarea ştiinţifică naturală se pleacă de la ce este dat ca obiecte din lumea noastră fizică („Este suficient să ne amintim de naivitatea [că] ştiinţa naturii acceptă natura ca dat", (18)). Prin urmare aceste obiecte nu trebuie niciodată să fie interogate ci trebuie luate ca fiind fundamentul de la care investigaţia ştiinţifică trebuie să plece. Cu alte cuvinte oamenii de ştiinţă „naturală" consideră că lumea fizică trebuie să

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constituie propria axiomă. Pentru această rațiune Husserl arată că în măsura în care dorim să avem acces la această lume noi trebuie, conform empirismului pozitivist al interogării de sorginte științifică, să o considerăm, într-un fel, drept *lucru însuşi [Sache selbst]* şi nu *lucrul în sine* kantian.

Autorul începe critica sa a științelor naturale notând anumite absurdități care devin evidente când un asemenea empirism este adoptat (12).

Urmându-l pe (Cogan, 2006), care face apel la Husserl, vom spune cele ce urmează.

Ştiinţele naturale sunt ştiinţe evident empirice şi astfel ele au de-a face cu fapte empirice. Prin urmare atunci când principiile logic-formale ideale, aparținând ontologiei formale (identitate, necontradicţie, terţ exclus), sunt subsumate legilor Naturii ca legi ale gândirii , aceasta conduce la considerarea lor ca unele dintre multele legi ale naturii. Dacă am proceda în acest fel, ar trebui să ţinem seama că modul în care o lege naturală poate fi stabilită şi justificată este, prin inducţie, din fapte singulare ale experienţei.

Inducţia însă nu stabileşte certitudinea legii ci numai o mai mare sau mai mică probabilitate a acesteia. Aceasta ar înseamnă că legile gândirii trebuie, în acest caz să posede un anumit grad de probabilitate. Contradicţia este evidentă. Absurditatea în practică devine efectivă când notăm că naturalistul este dominat de scopul de a considera cunoaşterea ştiinţifică (epistemologia) întotdeauna ca fiind în măsură să producă un adevăr autentic absolut, i.e. cel mai general, apodictic existenţial, utilizând principiile ideale amintite ale gândirii.

Mai clar, în acest caz, prin inducţie se pleacă de jos în sus, de la obiecte fizice, materiale, considerate a fi elemente terminale şi se determină ceea ce le este comun. Se constituie astfel un prim şi singur nivel sintetic al „adevărului" şi procesul se opreşte. Prin urmare, nimeni nu va putea decela adevărul general al axiomelor deoarece nu se ajunge la ele. Şi, de asemenea, nu se va putea spune dacă el există fiind „moştenit", sau nu, în cadrul acestui prim şi ultim nivel de sinteză. În concluzie, se poate afirma fără dubii că prin inducţie nu se poate obţine decât un adevăr posibil (relativ) şi nu unul autentic[1].

Să revenim la „atitudinea naturală".

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[1] Lucru consemnat de explozia apărută în cadrul logicii pentru ca aceasta să poată face faţă descrierilor unor domenii specific ale realităţii materiale: apariţia, mai întâi, a logicilor polivalente (Moisil), apoi a logicilor fuzzy (Zadeh, Negoiţă) ca, în prezent, să se pună un accent deosebit pe logica modală (iniţierea acestei tendinţe aparţinând lui Lukasievici) ale cărui principii şi valori de adevăr fuseseră, de fapt, puse în evidenţă chiar de Aristotel în cap. 2 (Despre interpretare) din Organon în cadrul căruia, în contrast cu cele trei principii ale unei logici ideale puse în evidenţă în capitolul 1 al cărţii, el utilizează "terţul inclus" acceptând "posibilitatea" şi mai mult chiar, admite încă o nouă valoare de adevăr, de-a dreptul subversivă, cea a "viitorului contingent". Despre Dialetheism şi logicile paraconsistente nu mai vorbesc.

Husserl caracterizează această atitudine în felul care urmează (Husserl, 2011: §27-§30).

În calitate de oameni ai vieţii naturale avem reprezentări, judecări, simţiri, voinţe într-o „*atitudine naturală*". Percepem şi devenim conştienţi, adică avem o serie de „trăiri" sau „experienţe vii", că:

- Lumea se întinde şi se schimbă la nesfârşit în spaţiu şi timp;
- Lucrurile corporale, inclusiv fiinţe animale şi oameni, sunt, pur şi simplu, prezente;
- În raport cu aceste lucruri (obiecte) noi avem sentimente pe care, de asemenea, le percepem;
- Cele de mai sus sunt independente de o ordine pe care însă o percepem ca pe una statică la un moment dat, dar care se schimbă instantaneu, în continuu;
- O asemenea ordine pe care o sesizăm (percepem), şi o judecăm numind această judecată „*cogito*", se referă la realitatea (*realität wirklichkeit*) care mă înconjoară efectiv, dar ea se poate referi uneori şi la altă realitate *reelle wirklichkeit* cum at fi numerele pure şi legile lor, formaţiuni complexe de astfel de numere, figurile geometrice şi legile lor, principiile logice şi ceea ce numim gândire conceptuală, etc., numai că lumea *realität wirklichkei*t rămâne în continuu prezentă pentru mine, chiar dacă „umbrită", iar noi continuăm să ne aflăm astfel în atitudinea naturală.

(v) Prima revenire la trăiri

Suntem acum în măsură să revenim cu detalii în privinţa „trăirilor".

În primul rând vom observa că Husserl, atât când ce referă la o atitudine naturală cât şi la una care vizează formalul, în afara percepţiei unor obiecte externe ale celor două ontologii el merge pe ideea că tot obiecte sunt şi unele interne, supuse apercepţiei, cum ar fi *cogitaţiile*, *sentimentele*, precum şi *amintirile*. Prin urmare, în toate aceste cazuri, va fi vorba de un *proces de percepţie a unor obiecte nu numai materiale* ci şi abstracte (i.e. „cogitaţii") sau greu de definit (i.e. sentimente). Evident că obiectele luate în considerare vor fi de tipuri diferite. În schimb conţinutul procesului de percepţie/ apercepţie va fi esenţial identic. Ori tocmai o asemenea identitate a esenţei conţinutului va conduce la apariţia unei „trăiri" („experienţe vii"), respectiv, „act de conştiinţă".

Toate cele de mai sus vor permite, deocamdată, să partajăm actele de conştiinţă în: (i) *formale* şi (ii) ale *atitudinii naturale*. O asemenea partajare conduce la alta similară privind conţinutul unei conştiinţe, în sens cel mai general posibil.

Anticipând vom spune că în afara tipurilor de acte „formale" şi ale „atitudinii naturale", într-o conştiinţă, în general, vor mai exista şi acte de al treilea tip: „pure", despre care vom discuta imediat.

(vi) Punerea între paranteze a ştiinţelor eidetice pure (ontologiei formale) şi a ştiinţelor naturii (ontologia materială)

Ce mai rămâne dacă scoatem din joc (reducem fenomenologic) tot ce ţine de formal şi atitudinea naturală? Este întrebarea pe care şi-o pune Husserl. De fapt, această reducere se referă la punerea între paranteze, în cadrul conştiinţei, a trăirilor „atitudinii naturale" şi pe cele „formale", iar Husserl va afirma că, prin această scoatere din joc va mai rămâne ceva şi anume un „rest fenomenologic". Acest rest este „conştiinţa pură în absoluta ei fiinţă proprie", identificabilă, în termeni husserlieni, printr-o *intuiţie directă*:

„De asemenea, trebuie să înţelegem că trăirii empirice i se opune, drept *condiţie a sensului ei,* trăirea absolută şi că aceasta din urmă nu este o simplă construcţie metafizică, ci ea poate fi atestată în caracterul ei absolut fără nici o urmă de îndoială prin intermediul unei schimbări corespunzătoare de atitudine, putând astfel să fie dată în cadrul unei intuiţii directe" (Husserl 2011: 206-207).

Iată modul în care se ajunge la ea:

„[…] în loc să *efectuăm* în mod naiv actele proprii conştiinţei în legătură cu natura, [şi formalul, G.M.], odată cu tezele lor transcendente [transcendente în raport cu „restul" fenomenologic G.M.], […] noi „scoatem", dimpotrivă , „din funcţiune" toate aceste teze, aşadar nu le mai dăm girul, îndreptându-ne privirea asupra *conştiinţei pure în absoluta ei fiinţă proprie,* pentru a o sesiza şi a o cerceta în chip teoretic. Iată, prin urmare, ce anume rămâne în urmă, în calitate de „reziduu fenomenologic", atunci când scoatem din circuit întreaga lume [inclusiv formalul G.M], odată cu toate lucrurile, vieţuitoarele şi oamenii din cuprinsul ei, inclusiv pe noi înşine (187).

Şi, mai adaugă: „De fapt, nu am pierdut nimic prin aceasta, ci, dimpotrivă am câştigat întreaga fiinţă absolută care, înţeleasă corect, ascunde în sine toate transcendenţele lumii, în măsura în care le «constituie» în sine".

Acest citat rezumă sugestiv *doctrina constituirii* care va face obiectul paragrafului următor.

Până atunci vom mai arăta că trăirile naturale şi cele formale din Transcendental, care au fost scoase din joc, vor putea reprezenta obiectul unor fenomenologii diferire de cea *pură*, căci:

„[…] în ciuda scoaterii din circuit a naturii fizice, există nu numai o fenomenologie a conştiinţei proprii ştiinţelor naturii [având ca obiect trăirile naturale G.M.] […]. În mod similar, există, în ciuda faptului că

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psihologia şi ştiinţele spiritului sunt lovite la rândul lor de scoaterea din circuit, o fenomenologie a omului; […] în fine, există o fenomenologie a spiritului social, a configuraţiilor sociale, a realizărilor culturale ş.a.m.d. În măsură în care ajunge să fie dată pentru conştiinţă [sub formă de trăire G.M.], orice transcendenţă [inclusiv una formală G.M.] face obiectul unei cercetări fenomenologice […]" (268).

De toate aceste fenomenologii ar trebui să se ocupe continuatorii, Husserl rezervându-şi dreptul de a se focaliza asupra *fenomenologiei pure;* a se vedea, în acest sens, şi titlul operei sale capitale: *Idei privitoare la o fenomenologie pură*….

(vii) Doctrina constituirii

Să observăm, mai întâi, că respectiva *Conştiinţă pură (în absoluta ei fiinţă proprie)* este *apriorică,* deoarece ea este „*o conştiinţă donatoare de sens,* care este la rândul ei absolută şi nu există în virtutea unei noi donaţii de sens" (§ 55, 207). În schimb, ea poate „dona sens".

Ce reprezintă această „donare de sens" a Conştiinţei pure? Ea reprezintă, de fapt *intrarea în Existenţă.* A cui? A „tuturor (sub)regiunilor de fiinţă", pentru că: „ Prin intermediul reducţiei fenomenologice a rezultat pentru noi ţinutul conştiinţei absolute, pure, înţeles într-un sens foarte precis, ca ţinut al fiinţei „absolute". <u>Aceasta reprezintă categoria originară a fiinţei în genere […] în care îşi au rădăcinile toate celelalte (sub)regiuni de fiinţă</u> [s.n. G.M.]" (§76, 267).

Comentariul 6: *Celelalte (sub)regiuni de fiinţă reprezintă, de fapt, pe de o parte, „fiinţa" Formalului şi, pe de alta, cea a Naturalului cu toate obiectele pe care acestea le conţin. Dacă ne vom referi la obiectele fizice din Natural: inanimate şi animate, important este că, de fapt, lor nu li se acordă „viaţă" cum greşit s-ar putea înţelege la o primă vedere, ci, doar, „existenţă", ca şi celorlalte obiecte din Formal. Iar în acest caz, daţi-ne voie să folosim termenul de „fiinţare", introdus ulterior de Heidegger, dar nu în sensul propus de acesta (a se vedea (Ciocan 2007)), ci, în sens de „existenţă".*

Devine acum evident ce va însemna „umplerea cu sens" realizată de Fiinţa pură absolută şi anume, repetăm, conferirea de existenţă pentru toate obiectele din atitudinea naturală şi din formal. Ceea ce, în ultimă instanţă, înseamnă că o parte din Transcendental, prin intermediul Fiinţei pure absolute, „constituie" Formalul şi Naturalul. Şi, de asemenea, va rezulta şi semnificaţia sintagmei husserliene şi anume că „orice realitate [*realität* sau *reelle* G.M.] există doar prin «donaţie de sens» " (titlul §55).

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(viii) A doua revenire la trăiri

Apare acum în „conştiinţa pură absolută" un nou tip de trăiri şi anume „*trăirile pure*". Şi dacă celelalte tipuri apăreau în urma unor percepţii şi apercepţii corespunzătoare obiectelor aferente atitudinii naturale şi formalului, atunci „trăirile pure" se vor datora în primul rând, unor procese perceptive de obiecte *pure,* adică de tipul unor „fiinţări". Iar astfel de fiinţări vor fi, întotdeauna externe subiectului, ca şi obiectele fizice şi cele formale, şi nu mentale (interne). Prin urmare, ele sunt „obiective" fiind datorate unei „umpleri cu sens" de către Fiinţa pură absolută a obiectelor fizice naturale şi a celor formale.

În acest caz apar cel puţin două întrebări: (i) ce diferenţă este între perceperea proprietăţilor (atributelor) unui obiect fizic sau formal şi perceperea unei „fiinţări"? şi, (ii) cum este posibilă perceperea unei „fiinţări"?

La prima întrebare vom încerca să răspundem imediat. La a doua, în paragraful imediat următor.

Pentru prima întrebare vom apela la răspunsul dat de Schmitz, răspuns care sintetizează extrem de clar diversele susţineri aparţinând lui Husserl, în diferite contexte.

> „O *existenţă* nu este un atribut a ceva, adică nu este ceva esenţial pentru identitatea unui lucru, ceva care să contribuie direct la determinarea unui lucru, drept acest lucru. Fiecărui lucru îi aparţin în mod necesar atributele sale, căci un lucru este în mod esenţial identic cu sine, acest lucru şi nu un altul. Niciun lucru nu poate fi determinat de alte atribuite decât de cele care îi revin, de facto, lui însuşi. Dacă existenţa ar fi atributul unui lucru, acesta ar trebui, prin urmare, să existe. Se poate arăta însă cu uşurinţă că nimic nu există cu necesitate. […] De aici rezultă că existenţa nu este un atribut şi că nici o inducţie a existenţei [*Existenz-Inductivum*] nu poate fi considerată un atribut" (Schmitz forthcoming: 39-40).

Prin urmare, o *trăire* este o percepţie de cu totul altă natură decât cea a uneia prin care se poate stabili, cu ajutorul unor atribute, *identitatea unică* a unui obiect *realität* sau *reelle,* indiferent dacă el ni se prezintă direct („în carne şi oase") sau indirect, printr-un „semn" sau o „imagine" (Zahavi, 2017: 49) . Semnificaţia perceperii unei *trăiri* este că ea reprezintă perceperea unei „unităţi de sens" asociată, în acest caz, unui obiect *realität/ reelle* de către Conştiinţa pură (§55). De aici rezultă că o asemenea unitate de sens poate să existe *în act* (*wirklichkeit*) sau *potenţial* (*quasi-wirklichkeit*), deci nu *iluzoriu* (*non-wirklichkeit*). Despre aceste posibilităţi de existenţă ale unei unităţi de sens vom discuta în paragraful următor.

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Până atunci, vom observa, numai în treacăt, deoarece nu vom dezvolta acest subiect, că o trăire care a provenit din percepere unei alte trăiri nu poate avea întotdeauna drept obiect numai o singură altă trăire. Aici este vorba de „*reflecţie*" drept o *a doua metodă* a fenomenologiei husserliene, prima fiind „*reducţia fenomenologică*". Astfel, ne spune Husserl că, prin reflecţie, putem avea o *trăire* asupra, de exemplu, a obiectului „conştiinţă pură individuală", iar, mai departe, dacă reflectăm asupra *convingerii pe care o trăim că există conştiinţă pură individuală,* vom avea de-a face, în cazul reflecţiei, cu două trăiri cuprinse una în alta (143).

Comentariul 7: *Pot exista oare şi lanţuri de , incluziuni", cum le numeşte Husserl, care să cuprindă trăiri multiple în cazul cărora fiecare trăire superioară nu este autonomă ci fondată pe cea inferioară, până la infinit? Husserl nu ne spune nimic despre aceasta. În schimb, iată cum Wigner, laureat Nobel pentru fizică, tratează un asemenea caz, evitând regresia la infinit prin ajungerea la ceea ce Husserl numeşte „Conştiinţa pură absolută". În cele ce urmează ne vom permite să înlocuim celebra „pisică a lui Schrödinger" cu perceperea pură a existenţei (fiinţării), sau nu, a unui obiect fizic sau formal (Kaku, 2016: 549-595).*
În cazul perceperii (sau nu) a unei fiinţări asociate unui obiect din Natural sau Formal, nu vom putea şti dacă ea există sau nu decât în momentul în care se încearcă, de către un eu individual pur, realizarea unei asemenea percepţii. Deci este imposibil de a separa observatorul de obiectul observat. Şi în această situaţie observatorul [eu-ul pur individual G.M.] poate, la un moment dat să existe sau nu. Cine îl observă? Există o funcţie de undă (Schrödinger) care include atât observatorul cât şi obiectul. Ca să ne asigurăm că observatorul există, e nevoie de alt observator („prietenul lui Wigner") care să colapseze unda pentru a determina viabilitatea primului observator. Dar de unde ştim că al doilea observator este viu [fiinţează G.M.]? Este acum nevoie de un al treilea observator ş.a.m.d. Întrucât este nevoie de un număr infinit de observatori ca, prin colapsarea succesivă de unde, să fim siguri că ei există, avem nevoie de o „conştiinţă cosmică". Şi Wigner conchide: „Nu a fost posibil să formulăm legile (teoriei cuantice) într-o manieră pe deplin coerentă fără să facem apel la conştiinţă".
În acest mod, "Eu-ul" se extinde identificându-se cu o astfel de conştiinţă.

(ix) Intenţionalitatea
Prin „intenţionalitate" se concretizează pe deplin creativitatea Fiinţei absolute care a început cu „constituirea". Aceasta înseamnă că, în timp ce constituirea acorda „fiinţare", i.e. existenţă, oricărui obiect natural (fizic) sau formal, în schimb intenţionalitatea permite perceperea acestei fiinţări.

Textele husserliene fac nenumărate referiri la „intenţionalitate", mai ales asupra înţelesului pe care i l-a acordat Brentano şi a modului în care ea a fost reinterpretată de către Husserl. Pe noi nu ne va interesa diacronia respectivă a intenţionalităţii ci numai semnificaţia pe care Husserl i-a atribut-o.

Husserl consideră că a fi conştient, înseamnă a fi conştient de ceva. Aceasta înseamnă o orientare asupra acestui ‚ceva" care poate fi un obiect natural sau formal sau chiar din Conştiinţă, i.e. o trăire.

In sensul celor de mai sus, rezultă că însăşi această orientare, pe care Husserl o consideră a fi intenţionalitatea, este, ca şi reflecţia, o proprietate a Conştiinţei.

Concretizând, orice act al conştiinţei: percepţie, judecată/ raţionament, îndoială, aşteptare, amintire sau fantezie se caracterizează prin faptul că intenţionează un obiect de un anumit tip. Şi, de asemenea, mai rezultă că o intenţie nu încetează de a fi „intenţională" indiferent dacă obiectul există sau nu. Iar o asemenea intenţie face posibilă perceperea „fiinţării" obiectului sau, dacă aceasta nu există, fiind vorba de o iluzie, apare tendinţa subiectului de a-i acorda el însuşi fiinţare, tendinţă moştenită de la Fiinţa absolută.

Dacă în privinţa perceperii fiinţării, atunci când ea există, lucrurile sunt clare, în legătură cu tendinţa de acordare de fiinţare de către subiect atunci când ea lipseşte nu mai este aşa. Pentru explicaţii va fi nevoie de o parantză. Ea se va referi în special la jocul noematic pentru „surprinderea" (aprehendarea) unui obiect natural sau formal. Mai bine zis, nu atât la procesul în sine, i.e. la „noesis", cât la rezultatul acestuia, i.e. „noema". În diverse texte husserliene termenul „noema" apare cu înţelesuri diferite. Astfel, aşa cum arată Dermot (Dermot, 2012: Noema):

> „Noema înseamnă obiectul intenţional aşa cum e perceput, aşa cum e judecat, aşa cum e dorit, în general: aşa cum e intenţionat. În (Husserl, 2011: §95) el susţine că doctrina noemei este „de cea mai mare importanţă pentru fenomenologie". În altă parte el spune că luarea în considerare obiectul intenţional ca noemă aceasta este un „clu transcendental" pentru întreaga multiplicitate a experienţelor posibile sau cogitaţii (Husserl, 1994: §26). Analiza lui Husserl în ceea ce priveşte noesis şi noema este extrem de importantă pentru înţelegerea fenomenologiei sub reducţia fenomenologică. Noema este un element cheie în descrierea eidetică a conştiinţei ; ea este o „obiectivitate aparţinând conştiinţei într-un mod specific" (Husserl, 2011: §128). Noema este întotdeauna corelată cu un act noetic sau „noesis"; ea este obiectul aşa cum este perceput, gândit, imaginat. În noema Husserl înglobează într-o singură entitate complexă ceea ce Frege include sub termenul de „sens" mod de prezentare, şi funcţie referenţială a actului, i.e. obiectul intenţional al actului. Husserl scrie: „noema în ea însăşi

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are o relaţie obiectivă, mai particular în virtutea propriului sens" (§128) ş.a.m.d.

Şi, mai departe, tot Dermot adaugă:

„[…] Înţelesul exact şi statutul noemei la Husserl este controversat. El a dat loc unor multiple discuţii în legătură cu natura unei teorii fenomenologice a înţelesului şi naturii unui obiect intenţional. În acord cu o interpretare standard, propusă original de Gurwitsch, noemata sunt entităţi ideale - literar sensuri ideale abstracte - care permit unui act intenţional să se refere la obiectul său intenţional. Alţii, e.g. John Drummond şi Robert Sokolowski, argumentează că noema este pur şi simplu obiectul intenţionat. Conform acestei interpretări, noema este un termen tehnic pentru a se referi cineva la obiectul intenţionat ca o tematizare explicită în reducţia fenomenologică" (Dermot, 2012).

Însă tor Husserl afirmă la un moment dat că: „pomul real poate fi ars, distrus, dar niciodată noema 'copac' " (§89).

Comentariul 8. *Dacă vom lua în considerare această afirmaţie a lui Husserl şi o vom corobora cu alta care, de asemenea, îi aparţine, că ceea ce numim Conştiinţă pură absolută care, la rândul său, poate genera atât conştiinţe individuale cât şi obiectele lume naturală (în ansamblu) şi lume formală (tot în ansamblu) nu „ar fi nicidecum atinsă în existenţa sa proprie" dacă ar fi anihilate cele două lumi §49,183], atunci am putea avansa ipoteza că o fiinţare poate fi asociată oricărui obiect din cele două lumi în două feluri: în act, adică în mod realität/ reelle, wirklichkeit sau numai potenţial, quai- wirklichkeit, urmând ca apoi să poată deveni oricând wirklichkeit, i.e. ne-iluzoriu.*

Această ipoteză, în spiritul gândirii husserliene, ne oferă prilejul să afirmăm că, în cadrul „constituirii" celor două lumi, Conştiinţa pură absolută îşi ia Omul drept partener al creativităţii sale în sensul că atunci când intenţionalitatea vizează un obiect potenţial se va realiza o percepţie a „fiinţării" sale ca şi în cazul în care acesta ar exista în act (de facto). Nu acelaşi lucru se va întâmpla însă în cazul în care avem de-a face cu ceva iluzoriu.

(x) O incongruenţă şi un paradox
Husserl ne spune:

„Prin intermediul reducţie fenomenologice a rezultat pentru noi ţinutul conştiinţei pure, înţeles într-un sens foarte precis, ca ţinut al fiinţei

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„absolute". Aceasta reprezintă categoria originară a fiinţei în genere
[…] în care îşi au rădăcinile toate celelalte regiuni de fiinţă; ele se
raportează toate, prin însăşi esenţa lor, la ea şi depind astfel în chip
esenţial de ea. Teoria categoriilor trebuie neapărat să pornească de la
această diferenţă de fiinţă – cea mai radicală dintre toate – dintre *fiinţa
înţeleasă drept conştiinţă,* pe de o parte, şi *fiinţa înţeleasă drept
„transcendenţă", ce se „relevă" în conştiinţă,* pe de altă parte" (267).

Dacă lucrurile stau aşa, atunci apare „monadologia" lui Husserl. În
sensul că fiecare conştiinţă individuală constituie o instanţă (subcategorie) de
fiinţă. În cadrul „monadologiei" sale Husserl adoptă acest termen, precum şi
pe cel de „monadă", în special în scrierile sale târzii. „Monada" şi
„monadologia" sunt termeni preluaţi de la Leibnitz cărora Husserl le acordă
altă semnificaţie, mai ales în *Meditaţii Carteziene* (Husserl, 1994b: § 37).

Acum apare acea „incongruenţă" din titlu. Şi anume că, pe de o parte,
fiinţa (absolută) este *înţeleasă drept conştiinţă (pură, absolută)*, dar, din
paragraful al treilea al acestui text putem deduce că într-un sens general, dar
nu cel mai larg posibil, „ ’conştiinţa’ poate fi considerată şi drept totalitatea
reală (*reelle*) a ’trăirilor pure’ umane şi inter-ţeserea acestor trăiri de orice fel
în unitatea fluxului lor" (Husserl, 2012: 218). Deci se poate presupune că, în
cadrul *conştiinţei pure absolute,* din care derivă toate *conştiinţele individuale
pure,* ar trebui să se găsească, sub o anumită formă, această „totalitate a
trăirilor umane pure", inclusiv „inter-ţeserea lor". Însă despre aceasta Husserl
nu spune nimic. Incongruenţa ar putea să dispară dacă vom considera că în
„conştiinţa pură absolută" se află *potenţial* „totalitatea trăirilor pure umane"
şi etc., iar ele *intră în act*, ca părţi ale acestei totalităţi, în cadrul fiecărei
conştiinţe individuale.

Să ne referim acum la paradoxul menţionat în titlu. Lyotard propune o
altă interpretare a „constituirii" şi „intenţionalităţii" decât cea prezentată de
noi în paragrafele vii şi ix. Astfel, el constată un lucru extrem de interesant.
Raţionamentul său pleacă de la faptul că eu-ul pur individual este parte a eu-
ului pur absolut, *obiectiv*, respectiv al Conştiinţei pure absolute. Prin urmare
şi el capătă astfel un caracter „obiectiv", pentru că va participa la o
„constituire" deşi individuală (subiectivă) a lumii fizice în ansamblu, în
calitate de „obiect" [*realität* G.M.]. Evident, „subiectivitatea obiectivă" a
ego-ului pur individual va reprezenta, pentru Lyotard, şi nu numai, un
paradox. Iată citatul din Lyotard:

„în realitate, subiectul perceptiv este acelaşi care constituie lumea, în
care se afla, în acelaşi timp, prin percepţie. Când îl explorăm din
perspectiva împletirii sale cu lumea, pentru a-l deosebi de aceasta
lume, folosim criteriul de imanenţă; dar situaţia paradoxala provine
din faptul ca însuşi conţinutul acestei imanenţe nu este altceva decât

lumea ca ţintă, ca fenomen, cu toate ca aceasta lume este instituită ca existenţă reală şi transcendentă prin eu". (Lyotard, 1954: 27).

Comentariul 9. *Dacă luăm în considerare comentariul precedent (8), atunci paradoxul dispare. Astfel: (a) dacă lumea care îl auto-conţine (pe om) a fost constituită „în act" (de Conştiinţă pură) , atunci el o va percepe şi nu o va „constitui"; (b) dacă lumea care îl auto-conţine a fost constituită „potenţial", atunci el, omul, o va „pune în act" (o va constitui şi o va şi percepe) drept o lume paralelă sau intersectată cu cea existentă anterior - şi aici apare creativitatea (controlată) a omului pe care i-o conferă Conştiinţa pură; (c) dacă lumea care îl auto-conţine nu a fost constituită nici „potenţial" şi nici „în act", atunci omul va crea numai ceva iluzoriu.*

(xi) O nouă perspectivă: „apofatic-catafaticul"

O asemenea perspectivă asupra fenomenologiei lui Husserl, este extrem de utilă pentru a vedea ce se întâmplă atunci când această fenomenologie este pusă faţă în faţă cu modelul ontologic informaţional aparţinând lui Mihai Drăgănescu (Drăgănescu 1979, 1985, 2007). Este vorba de a privi lucrurile prin prisma a ceea ce se numeşte abordarea „apofatic-catafatică".

Dar ce înseamnă această abordare? În acest paragraf o vom prezenta pe scurt.

Trebuie făcută o distincţie netă între „apofa**n**ticul" aristotelic (greceşte: ἀποφαντικός; „declarator", de la ἀποφαίνειν *apophainein*, „a arăta, a face cunoscut") şi „apofaticul" cunoaşterii.

Apofaticul şi *Catafaticul* reprezintă două posibilităţi limită ale cunoaşterii umane înainte ca aceasta să întâlnească definitiv *Divinitatea/ Absolutul* despre care nu se mai poate spune chiar nimic (Manolescu, 2018).

Conform doctrinei „Apofatic-Catafatice", există o punere în evidenţă *afirmativă* (catafatică) a modului în care Absolutul (Divinitatea/ Dumnezeu) se manifestă la vedere în lumea noastră de toate zilele şi o punere în evidenţă *negativă* (apofatică), ascunsă, în care acţiunea acestui Absolut nu poate fi pusă în evidenţă în modul discursiv obişnuit.

Accesul uman la cele două modalităţi limită de cunoaştere se realizează printr-o *intuiţie directă* ca şi cea propusă de Husserl.

Deşi denumirea de „Apofatic-Catafatic" a apărut în dogmatica creştină din Evul Mediu, rădăcinile celor două modalităţi de cunoaştere se regăsesc în gândirea antică. Le putem identifica chiar la presocratici.

Vorbind de *Apofatic,* evident fără să-l numească astfel*,* Heraclit, spune: „Oamenii [obişnuiţi] se arată neputincioşi să pătrundă sensul cestui *logos* care există dintotdeauna" (Piatkovski & Banu, 1979: 350); sau „Cercetând hotarele sufletului/ [fiinţei], n-ai putea să le găseşti, oricare ar fi cărarea pe care vei merge. Atât de adânc *logos* are" (356).

În schimb, exemplu clar de *Catafatism* (*avant la letter*) ni-l oferă Parmenide (reluat ulterior de Heidegger) prin celebrele spuse:

„Ei bine, voi spune aşadar: tu ia însă aminte la cuvântul pe care-l auzi (despre aceasta):
Care sunt singurele căi ce pot fi luate în seamă pentru o interogare.
Una: cum este ea (ce este ea, fiinţa) şi cum imposibilă (este), de asemenea, nefiinţa.
Aceasta este cărarea încrederii întemeiate, căci ea urmează stării de neascundere.
Cealaltă însă: cum nu este şi totodată cât de nenecesară nefiinţa.
Aceasta deci, astfel vestesc, este o potecă ce nu trebuie urmată defel, căci nu poţi cultiva cunoaşterea nefiinţei, deoarece nu poate fi prinsă nicicum şi nici nu o poţi indica în cuvinte" (Heidegger, 1999: 233).

Trecând de presocratici ajungem la Aristotel în contextul în care, discutând într-un mod *apofatic,* invers de cel înţeles de obicei despre „potenţă" şi „act" (în care potenţa este premergătoare actului), el arată că în privinţa „logosului" heraclitean „aceleaşi lucruri au existat veşnic, fie periodic, fie altfel, pentru că aici actul este anterior potenţei" (Aristotel, 1996: 473); şi afirmă apoi că acest logos este susţinut de o substanţă imaterială, veşnică „în act"[2]. Iar despre o asemenea substanţă, care se revarsă fără încetare, el spune, tot în mod *apofatic,* că reprezintă Inteligenţa sau Gândirea Divină (486), dar aceasta nu se confundă cu „Mişcătorul Nemişcat" care o produce.

Mai departe, urmărind evoluţia *Catafaticului* şi *Apofaticului,* trecem prin Evul Mediu unde *Catafaticul* este reprezentat de influenţa arabă (Ibn Arabi, 2017) şi (Rumi, 2016), şi de Toma d'Aquino (*doctor angelicus*) împreună cu Meister Erckhart, iar pe linie *apofatică* de Pseudo-Dionisie Aeropagitul (având în spate o întreagă tradiţie patristică ortodoxă), ca să ajună în Europa, în ortodoxism, în anul 586 (a se vedea [Sfântul Dionisie (Pseudo Dionisie) Aeropagitul (1996)] şi apoi în vestul Europei, în catolicism. În continuare, perpetuându-se peste veacuri până în zilele noastre se ajunge la un *Apofatic* corelat cu *Catafaticul,* cu scopul final de a atinge *Apofaticul pur.* Şi acest lucru se întâmplă, în dogmatica ortodoxă, la Lossky (Lossky, 2010), Andre Scrima (Scrima, 2005) şi Dumitru Stăniloaie

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[2] Spre deosebire de receptacolul platonician întotdeauna „potenţial" din *Timaios* (Platon 1993: 165-166) unde referindu-se la acest „receptacol", el îl determină în mod *negativ (apofatic)* deoarece receptacolul nu este nici foc, nici aer, nici pământ, adică este diferit de orice alt element ce ar putea fi considerat primordial. Caracterul non-figurativ al receptacolului îl face incognoscibil în mod pozitiv. Ca în altă parte, în dialogul *Parmenide* (Platon 1989: 103), să spună: „Unul nu poate fi mai tânăr, mai vârstnic sau acelaşi în vârstă cu sine ori cu altul".

(Stăniloaie, 1996). Mai menţionăm că tot în zilele noastre, având la bază
varianta vestică a lucrării pseudo-dionisiace, apare o incitantă comparaţie a
apofaticului cu Zenul budist (Kendal, 1983). Această evoluţie care este
extrem de interesantă, ba chiar pasionantă, depăşeşte însă net cadrul discuţiei
noastre.

În finalul acestei scurte treceri în revistă a doctrinei *Apofatic-Catafatică*
din contextul nostru cultural şi reamintind scopul pe care l-am urmărit, adică
de a şti şi înţelege, *de ce* există lumea noastră „naturală" şi „fizică", vom
putea spune că doar Aristotel *in nuce* şi varianta dogmatică actuală a
creştinismului ortodox, *in extenso,* par a accepta că apofaticul este primordial
în ceea ce priveşte cunoaşterea umană. Şi aceasta deoarece *Logosul* (în sens
heraclitean şi aristotelic) este el însuşi primordial, mai adânc decât Fiinţa. Iar
a fi „primordial" în raport cu Fiinţa, din punct de vedere ontologic - există
aici o *implicaţie ontologică*[3] - presupune că aceasta este condiţionată de acest
„logos" nu ca apariţii succesiv în timp, timpul însemnând aici cu totul
altceva, ci ca primordialitate.

(xii) Este fenomenologia lui Husserl apofatică sau catafatică?

Din prezentarea fenomenologiei husserliene rezultă că abordarea sa
este eminamente de tip catafatic. Sugestiv, un asemenea tip este pus în
evidenţă, în Evul Mediu, de către Ibn Arabi, aşa cum s-a arătat, când afirmă
că Fiinţa este primordială, eludând Logosul heracliteano-aristotelic (Ibn
Arabi, 2017: 54): "Astfel este, de exemplu, relaţia care leagă cunoaşterea de
cel care cunoaşte sau viaţa de cel viu: cunoaşterea şi viaţa sunt realităţi,
distincte una de cealaltă; or noi afirmăm, vorbind despre Dumnezeu, că El
este cunoscător şi viu […] şi spunem tot aşa şi despre om."

(xiii) Cea mai importantă incongruenţă husserliană reală: ordinea din Natural.

Există o „Notă", plasată între paragrafele 51 şi 52 (Husserl, 2011: 191-
192), care ne atrage atenţia. În această notă Husserl observă că în Natural, în
factic, poate fi intuită o „ordine". O asemenea ordine ar presupune ceva de
natura unei *teleologii.* Adică a unei desfăşurări a lucrurilor în acord cu lanţul
cauzal aristotelic care urmăreşte atingerea unui scop (*telos*) care *ar trebui să
rămână neschimbat în esenţă*: (a) cauză formală (e.g. arhitectul/ artistul care

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[3] Nu trebuie confundată *implicaţia logică* cu *implicaţia cauzală* pentru că, deşi se citesc la
fel, cele două înseamnă lucruri foarte diferite. Implicaţia cauzală nu este o relaţie logica, ci
una ontologica, ea inseamna: "ori de cate ori se produce *P*, se produce *Q*" sau "daca are loc *P*
(cauza), are loc *Q* (efectul)". Implicatia logică este altceva, ea inseamna: "adevarul lui *P*
implica adevarul lui *Q*" sau "daca este adevarat *P*, atunci este adevarat *Q*". Am putea spune,
eventual, ca adevarul lui *P* este *cauza* pentru adevarul lui *Q*. În acest caz, implicatia logică
devine un caz particular al implicatiei cauzale.

propune proiectul unei case/ opere de artă), (b) cauză materială (e.g. materialul de construcţie), (c) cauză eficientă (e.g. constructorul/ realizatorul) şi (d) cauză finală (e.g. realizarea casei/ operei de artă)[4]. Ori o astfel de teleologie pune în evidenţă schimbările care se petrec la nivelul Naturalului. Întrebările care apar: Cine şi Unde fixează scopul? şi Care este scopul (în esenţă)?

Pentru a merge mai departe, este nevoie de o paranteză. Trebuie menţionat, în mod deosebit, ca Husserl nu are în vedere o cauzalitate de tip galileo-newtonian, cantitativă şi anume de relaţii între părţi ale realităţii *realität* de tip „cauză-efect" fără scop: „este evident că 'exercitarea' acestui principiu nu ar putea fi concepută în termeni cauzali, aşadar în sensul conceptului natural de cauzalitate". A se vedea, în acest sens (Patočka, 2017: 17): "În timp ce pentru Galilei mişcarea are un caracter de *quantum* […] care ţine de sfera *relaţiilor,* pentru Aristotel mişcarea este în mod principial necantitativă. […] Doar un nivel ontologic mai profund […] ne permite să înţelegem în mod fundamental mişcarea". Am închis paranteza.

Dacă scopul ar fi fixat la nivelul Naturalului de către o Divinitate mundană, atunci se ajunge la o circularitate. Căci aceasta ar însemna că o asemenea Divinitate s-ar afla, ea însăşi, în acest nivel. Ori în acest caz, la fiecare schimbare, s-ar produce şi schimbarea scopului deoarece chiar şi Divinitatea, care face parte din Natural, s-ar schimba. Şi Husserl ia în calcul aceasta.

Dacă scopul ar fi fixat la nivelul Transcendentalului de către Fiinţa absolută, nici acest lucru nu ar fi posibil deoarece această fiinţă are un scop bine definit. Şi anume, conform doctrinei „constituirii", de a oferi „existenţă" (fiinţare). S-ar putea obiecta că fiinţarea nu presupune „îngheţarea" scopului în cadrul schimbărilor care se petrec în Natural în cadrul chiar al „fiinţării". Dar atunci acesta nu ar mai *rămâne neschimbat în esenţă.*

Soluţia pe care o întrevede Husserl este ca fixarea scopului să se realizeze în Absolut: „principiul ordonator (scopul) […] trebuie găsit la nivelul absolutului însuşi, şi anume prin intermediul unor considerente pur absolute" (191). Însă, deoarece „imanenţa lui Dumnezeu în cadrul Conştiinţei absolute (pure) nu poate fi concepută [Dumnezeu/ Absolutul a fost redus fenomenologic din start G.M.]" atunci „ar trebui să se găsească diverse [alte] forme intuitive de relevare" (192). Lucru pe care Husserl nu îl face.

Comentariul 10.*Considerăm că în comparaţie cu perspectiva deschisă de „apofatic-catafatic", demersul husserlian apare drept unul reducţionist.*

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[4] Această teleologie este exploatată, din punct de vedere fenomenologic, de (Patočka 2017: 17-33).

Astfel, nu ne opreşte nimeni să considerăm că acest principiu/ scop nu se află în Absolutul pe care Husserl l-a redus fenomenologic, ci la nivelul „logosului heracliteano-aristotelic" de natură apofatică. În măsura în care s-ar depăşi această perspectivă reducţionistă, discursul fenomenologic ar putea căpăta o altă turnură aşa cum se va vedea în abordarea lui Mihai Drăgănescu, într-un text viitor.

(xiv) Concluzii

În acest text, aşa cum s-a specificat, s-a urmărit identificarea unor probleme pe care le deschide fenomenologia lui Husserl prin prisma integrării sale în Modelul ontologic informaţional propus de Mihai Drăgănescu. Iată care sunt, după noi, cele mai importante.

(i) Considerăm că Husserl ia în considerare numai aspectul *catafatic* al cunoaşterii şi acţiunii umane. (Comentariul 10).

(ii) Considerăm că principiul/ scopul ordinii din Natural se află la nivelul „logosului heracliteano-aristotelic" din cadrul demersului *apofatic*. (Comentariul 10).

(iii) S-a pus în evidenţă faptul că, în timp ce Naturalul este găzduit de un topos cu extindere în trei dimensiuni şi durată în timp, lucrurile de aici având un suport material, în schimb despre Transcendental Husserl nu afirmă nimic în legătură cu spaţialitatea, timpul şi „susţinerea" lucrurilor de aici. (Comentariul 1)

(iv) Extinderea intuiţiei dincolo de empirism şi postularea posibilităţii ca prin ea cunoaşterea umană să aibă acces la Transcendental precum şi declararea acestuia drept „real'" sunt, cel puţin discutabile, în măsura în care Transcendentalul este considerat ca fiind cantonat într-un areal al unui „niciunde" şi „nici când" fără susţinere de nici un fel. (Comentariul 2 şi Comentariul 3).

(v) În legătură cu Ontologia formală (propusă de Husserl) apare o întrebare la care nu se răspunde. Şi anume, dacă formalul se află în Transcendental sau nu? (Comentariul 5).

(vi) Pot exista şi lanţuri de „incluziuni". Cum le numeşte Husserl, care să cuprindă trăiri multiple, în cadrul cărora fiecare trăire superioară nu este autonomă ci fondată pe una inferioară, printr-o regresie la infinit? Husserl nu spune nimic despre aceasta (Comentariul 7).

(vii) Paradoxul lui Lyotard (Comentariul 9) poate fi înlăturat dacă se admite ipoteza noastră conform căreia Conştiinţa pură îşi ia drept partener omul la „constituirea" lumii naturale şi a celei formale (Comentariul 8).

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Translations

ON EMINESCU'S PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY: TOWARDS AN ENGLISH ANTHOLOGY OF RELEVANT TEXTS

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Abstract: *The present paper aims to offer Anglophone researchers a selection of translated quotes from Mihai Eminescu's non-literary oeuvre, relevant to the philosophy of history of the most complex Romanian author of the nineteenth century. It should thus become possible to reconsider Eminescu's position within the concert of European philosophers of history. The fragments gathered here stem mainly from his activity as a cultural and political journalist, throughout which he voiced, albeit unsystematically, his views on history. Although he did not ultimately articulate an academic philosophy of history per se, these fragments, now available in English for the first time, may give valuable insights into Eminescu's conception of history. Above all else, they meaningfully complement whatever can be gleaned from Eminescu's already translated poetry or literary prose. Hopefully the fragments presented here will aid scholars in establishing more precisely what Eminescu's views on history owe to Schopenhauer's metaphysics and what to the proper philosophy of history he could find in Hegel. This is a double allegiance scholars have also recognized in Maiorescu's work. By the same token, it would further be important to chart Eminescu's ambivalence towards Hegel, an ambivalence also visible in the works of Romanian philosopher Vasile Conta. Finally, the fragments below may help to bring to the fore the complex interplay between Hegelian theodicy and Kantian teleology in Eminescu's historical thought.*
Keywords: Mihai Eminescu; philosophy of history; traductology; Hegel;

The present paper aims to offer Anglophone researchers a selection of translated quotes from Mihai Eminescu's non-literary oeuvre, which is relevant to the philosophy of history of the most complex Romanian author of the nineteenth century. It should thus become possible to reconsider Eminescu's position within the concert of European philosophers of history. The fragments gathered here stem mainly from his activity as a cultural and political journalist, throughout which he voiced, albeit unsystematically, his

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views on history. Although he did not ultimately articulate an academic philosophy of history *per se*, these fragments, now available in English for the first time, may give valuable insights into Eminescu's conception of history. Above all else, they complement in a meaningful manner whatever can be gleaned from his poetry or literary prose as already translated (e.g. by Giurgea, Eminescu, 1995; see also an analysis of historical nooks and crannies in "Luceafărul" in Noica, 2009).

Only a handful of the non-literary fragments germane to this topic have been transposed into an international language so far. They are nonetheless scattered in various publications. Kanterian (2013: 52), for example, offers a translation of a passage from an 1871 letter to Dumitru Brătianu, wherein Eminescu wrote:

> "If a generation has any merit, it is that of being a faithful agent of history, to carry out the duties imposed with necessity by the place it occupies in the course of ages. The history of the world reasons as well – slowly, but with certainty and justice: the history of mankind is the development of the thought of God" (Kanterian, 2013: 52).

Similarly, C. Folschweiller (2010a: 245) translated (into French this time) the following passages: "Les peuples ne sont pas des produits de l'intelligence, mais de la nature" (Eminescu, 1999: 101)…

> "Nous croyons pouvoir établir une vérité générale: l'État n'est pas un produit de la raison mais de la nature. Il ira bien lorsqu'il se conformera à ses lois innées de développement, quand la raison jouera le rôle du médecin, qui ne fait que subvenir à l'action de la nature; il ira mal chaque fois que sa vie ne suivra pas un cours naturel, quand la raison, au lieu de s'accorder avec sa nature, en fera l'objet d'expériences irréfléchies» (Eminescu, 2000: 19).

It is to be hoped that the couple dozens new fragments translated below will create a sounder basis for evaluating the way in which Eminescu built on – and how he parted ways with – various European philosophers of history.

Eminescu and the German philosophy of history

Paramount for understanding the development of Eminescu's ideas on history were undoubtedly his years as a visiting student in Vienna and Berlin (1869-1874). There he was inevitably exposed to the German philosophy of history, and particularly to Herbart, Kant, Schopenhauer, and Hegel. According to Edward Kanterian's summary, such ideas were bound to be sparked while Eminescu attended Eduard Zeller's lectures on German philosophy since Leibniz and those of C.V. Althaus, entitled *Eine*

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Entwicklung und Kritik der Principien der Hegelschen Philosophie. Eminescu's vision of history must have been further refined while he worked on the translation of significant parts of Kant's *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, for which he had to coin a proper philosophical terminology in Romanian, and of a book by German theatre critic E.Th. Rötscher, *Die Kunst der dramatischen Darstellung*, itself imbued with Hegelian ideas (Kanterian, 2013: 51-52).

The passage from the 1871 letter to Brătianu, quoted above, can be correlated to Hegel's description of history as "the process of the Spirit of carrying forward the form of knowledge of itself […] a slow procession and succession of spiritual manifestations" (52). For Eminescu however, a different individual spiritual manifestation takes the stage: the people - almost completely determined by the past. In Kanterian's view, Eminescu's philosophy of history is more dualistic and deterministic than Hegel's, despite evolutionist elements, and can be summed up as "Hegel appropriated to local political purposes, quite intolerant ones" (52) The intolerance here, rooted in the spirit of the time, had to do with the fact that for Eminescu, when it came to the existence of a nation, and *pace* Hegel, not everything real was true, because, to quote Kanterian (52), "the co-existence with ethnicities alien to a nation's essence was possible but evil, created by human will". Since for Eminescu nations are a product of nature, rather than intelligence, it can be said that he aimed to replace the revolutionary ideology of 1848 (rationalist, universalist, and Republican) with a conservative view exalting adaptation to preexisting condition (Folschweiller. 2010a). The Romanian poet also endorsed, paradoxically, the social contract in a form of "social compensation", recast as the most rational solution to the natural conflict of selfish reasons (see Folschweiller 2010b on Rousseau and Follschweiller 2010a: 251 on Montesquieu). Another alleged departure from Hegel was detected by Folschweiller in Eminescu's naturalist-organicist sociology, and yet another one in Eminescu's less metaphysical views on the Constitution as the actual organism of the state (2010a: 257, 263).

It remains to be established – and hopefully the fragments below will aid scholars in that endeavor – what Eminescu's views on history owe to Schopenhauer's metaphysics and what to the proper philosophy of history he could find in Hegel. This is a double allegiance scholars have also recognized in Maiorescu's work (Ciomoș, 2006). By the same token, it would further be important to chart Eminescu's ambivalence towards Hegel, an ambivalence also visible in the works of Romanian philosopher Vasile Conta. Finally, it is to be hoped that the fragments below will help to bring to the fore the complex interplay between Hegelian theodicy and Kantian teleology in Eminescu's historical thought.

Note on the translation

In translating these fragments it was considered profitable to eschew archaisms and to maintain a neutral language. This entailed doing away with words that are too obviously localized in modernity, but also with any attempt to make Eminescu sound like either Dickens or, for that matter, the King James's Bible. I also refrained from artificially making Eminescu any more poetical than he genuinely is: where he says "when he himself must submit his own atom" (using the word, "atom", which was exceedingly rare at the time, in the sense of minimal contribution), I resisted the temptation to use in translation something like "modicum". If Eminescu refers to the "lost son" of the parable, rather than using, as he easily could have, the word "prodigal", then the translator will retain "lost" and discard "prodigal". One fragment is translated from German since Eminescu found it easy to revert to the language of his studies when he found himself meditating on historical matters. He had in fact further honed his German skills by translating (in 1879) the first volume of the historical treatise *Fragmente zur Geschichte der Rumänen*. Those who have only read Eminescu's literary works are bound to be astonished by both the modernity and pugnacity of his style, by his long-winded phrases always ready to take a quantum leap from a concrete detail to a universal theme, as well as by the furious restlessness fueling his discourse – none of which is, alas, all that easy to capture in translation. Since clarity was the translator's main objective, occasionally phrases have been split into shorter sentences.

From M. Eminescu, *Opere. Publicistică 1870 – 1877 Albina, Familia, Federaţiunea,*
Convorbiri Literare, Curierul de Iaşi, vol. IX, Ed. Academiei Române, Bucureşti, 1985.

IX, 171: Un mic bulgăr de omăt căzând din vârful unui munte se face din ce în ce mai mare, rupe cu el copacii codrilor, strică ogoarele, astupă un sat. Un mic sâmbure greşit în organizaţia societăţii, în viaţa economică creşte şi îngroapă o naţiune. [INFLUENŢA AUSTRIACĂ ASUPRA ROMÂNILOR DIN PRINCIPATE]	IX, 171: A tiny snowball rolling down from the top of a mountain will become larger and larger, uprooting the trees, destroying the crops, covering up a village. A tiny rotten kernel in the fabric of society will grow and bury a nation.
IX, 241-242 : În orice caz ni se pare ciudat cum noi, românii, care trăim lângă Dunăre, suntem cu totul	IX, 241-242 : In any case, we find it strange that we, Romanians, living along the Danube, should be utterly

cufundaţi în ideile Occidentului, pe când din toate părţile împrejuru-ne pulsează o viaţă istorică care în dispoziţia ei generală se deosebeşte atât de mult de istoria Occidentului . Câteodată ar trebui cel puţin să ni se pară că suntem o muche de despărţire între două lumi cu totul deosebite şi că este în interesul nostru de a cunoaşte amândouă lumile acestea. Occidentul îl cunoaştem îndestul. Misiunea sa în Orient este cucerirea economică, proletarizarea raselor orientale prin industria străină, prin robirea sub capitalul străin. Cealaltă parte a lumii o vedem din contra mişcată nu de un curent economic, ci de unul istoric şi religios, care nu poate lipsi de a exercita o mare atragere asupra popoarelor economiceşte puţin dezvoltate din Peninsula Balcanică, pentru cari credinţele bisericeşti şi idealele istorice sunt încă sfinte, nefiind pătate de materialismul modern. [29 octombrie 1896] [„NETĂGĂDUIT CĂ ISTORIA..."]

immersed in Western ideas, whereas all around us pullulate forms of historical life which, in their general disposition, are so divergent from the history of the West. Sometimes we ought to at least imagine ourselves as a boundary between two entirely different worlds, and consider that it is in our best interest to be acquainted with both these worlds. We have a thorough knowledge of the West. Its mission in the East is economic conquest, the pauperization of Oriental races through foreign industry, through enslavement to foreign capital. Conversely, we perceive the other part of the world as being animated not by an economic undertow, but by a historical and religious one, sure to greatly fascinate the economically underdeveloped peoples in the Balkan Peninsula, who still hold religious beliefs and historical ideals to be holy, because unscathed by modern materialism.

IX, 477: Popoarele mor de cele mai multe ori prin stingere fizică, mai arareori prin desnaţionalizare, iar acest din urmă caz e cu putinţă numai atunci când naţionalitatea 4 nu e conştie de sine, când desnaţionalizarea e privită ca un fel de înaintare. Astăzi însă nu există aproape nici o limbă în Europa, fie cît de izolată, care, călcată pe urmele culturei antice, limpezită prin formele culturei clasice să nu fie în stare de-a cuprinde şi reda întreaga cultură omenească, de la abstracţiunea cea mai naltă pînă la espresiile cele mai

IX, 477: Peoples generally die out by being physically extinguished and, more rarely, by being de-nationalized. The latter case is only possible when a nation has no self-awareness, when being de-nationalized is perceived as being some kind of progress. Today, however, there is almost no language in Europe, no matter how isolated, which, after having trodden in the footsteps of ancient civilization and having been purified by the forms of classical culture, should remain unable to encompass and reproduce

concrete. [„DEZLEGAREA CESTIUNEI ORIENTULUI..."]	the entire culture of humanity, from its highest abstraction to its most concrete expressions.
IX, 459: Progresul omenirei nu zace adesea în mulţimea geniilor săi — naţiuni cu 264 v genii străluciţi sunt adesea nefericite — ci în acele personagii mute ale istoriei care lucrează neobosit, fără altă răsplată decât conştiinţa datoriei împlinite, în fine progresul e în toţi, nu în unul or în unii. [„DOMNILOR, PROGRESUL OMENIREI..."] frg. 2259	IX, 459: Mankind's progress often lies not in the number of its geniuses — nations with brilliant geniuses are often unhappy — but in those voiceless figures of history, who toil ceaselessly, with no other reward than the sense of fulfilled duty. Indeed, progress is in all, not in one, or in some.

M. Eminescu, *Opere. Publicistică 1 noiembrie 1877 - 15 februarie 1880 „Timpul",* Vol. X, Ed Academiei Române, București, 1989.

X, 153: În realitate omul e tot aşa de puţin liber precum e picătura de ploaie ce cade sau unda ce curge la vale, iar nu la deal, aşadar despre o libertate absolută, în sens metafizic, nu poate fi nici vorba, prin urmare nici despre o libertate a omului supraordinată libertăţilor lui. Foarte cu greu ni s-ar putea da definiţia unei asemenea libertăţi abstracte şi absolute şi, chiar daca ni s-ar da, ea n-ar putea fi exactă, căci ar trata despre un obiect a cărui existenţă nu s-a putut dovedi pînă acuma. Libertatea omului e mai mult o noţiune istorică decît filozofică, o serie de acte de eliberare succesivă, un şir de libertăţi coordonate şi cîştigate în curgerea timpurilor şi în acest şir e cuprinsă şi libertatea tranzacţiunilor. ...[N]ici averea noastră, nici cultura generală nu ne-a făcut încă	X, 153: In point of fact, man is no freer than a falling raindrop, or water flowing downhill rather than uphill, thus there can be no question of absolute freedom in a metaphysical sense, nor, consequently, of a freedom of man which is superordinate to his liberties. It would be very difficult to put forward a definition for such an abstract and absolute freedom, and even if it were to be put forward, it could not be precise, since it would define an object whose existence is yet to be proven. Man's freedom is a historical notion rather than a philosophical one, a series of successive episodes of emancipation, an array of liberties coordinated and conquered over time (…). For all our wealth and our education, we are still not mature enough to fully exercise such freedom.

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maturi pentru exerciţiul deplin al acestei libertăţi. [5 decembrie 1878]	
X, 95: „Ca şi fiul pierdut din parabola evangheliei, noi ne-am pierdut din calea istoriei noastre adevărate, am cheltuit în mare parte moştenirea părintească pe formele goale ale unei civilizaţii străine pe care n-am avut nici timpul, nici mijloace îndeajuns spre a ne-o apropria X, 97 A face ce fac toţi, adecă a lua şi stăpîni cu baioneta, e lucru uşor; a păstra însă acest Orient în miniatură, cu tot amestecul său de popoară, a dovedi că sîntem destul de drepţi şi destul de cumpătareţi ca să ţinem în ecuilibru şi în bună pace elementele cele mai diverse este o artă, este adevărată politică pe lîngă care politica forţei brute e o jucărie. [ANEXAREA DOBROGEI]	X, 95: Like the lost son in the Gospel parable, we got lost along the path of our true history way, we squandered most of our parents' inheritance on the empty forms of a foreign civilization, lacking both the time and the means to make it our own. X, 97: Doing what everybody else does, that is, seizing and ruling by means of the bayonet, is easy. However, holding on to this miniature Orient, with all of its amalgamation of peoples, proving that we are equitable and even-tempered enough to maintain the balance and peace for its extremely diverse denizens - that is an art, it is true politics, as opposed to the politics of brute-force, which is a farce.
X, 59: „o vreme ca aceea a lui Rurik sau a lui Oleg, în care istoria e mit şi mitul istorie"	X, 59: times like those of Rurik and Oleg [of Novgorod], when history is myth and myth is history
X, 74: „În tendenţele de cucerire, în aşa-numitele misiuni istorice cari-şi caută marginile naturale nu e nimic dedesupt decît pur şi simplu neştiinţa şi gustul de spoliare. În zadar caută un popor în întinderi teritoriale, în cuceriri, în războaie ceea ce-i lipseşte în chiar sufletul lui; sub nici o zonă din lume nu va găsi ceea ce Dumnezeu i-a refuzat sau mai bine zicînd ceea ce Dumnezeu a voit ca să fie rezultatul muncii a multe generaţii dedate la lucru. Căci stă oare destoinicia unei naţii în vrun raport cu întinderea teritoriului pe care ea-1 ocupă?"	X, 74: Behind the propensity for conquest, behind those so-called historical missions, which test their natural limits, there is nothing but mere ignorance and a taste for plunder. In vain shall a people search, in the expanse of land, in conquests, in wars, for that which it lacks in its very soul. In no realm of the world will it find that which God denied it, or, better yet, that which God intended to be the result of the toil of many generations' daily grind. For is there any connection between the worthiness of a nation and the size of the land it inhabits?"

[TENDENȚE DE CUCERIRE] [7 apr. 1878]	
X, 110: „Ca la noi la nimenea: Proverbul acesta, moştenit dn moşi strămoşi, e rezultatul unui dureroase istorii, în cursul căreia poporul nostru, pierzând orice speranţă de îndreptare, ia lucrurile mai mult în bătaie de joc, ca şi cînd lui Dumnezeu i-ar fi plăcut să drapeze tragedia sorţii noastre cu foarte multe scene comice." [CA LA NOI LA NIMENI] [12 sept. 1989]	X, 110: "So it goes – nowhere else but here". This saying, passed down to us by our forefathers, is the outcome of a painful history, during which our people, having lost all hope for the better, tends to make a mockery of everything, as if God had reveled in silver-lining the tragedy of our destiny with plenty of comical scenes."

M. Eminescu, *Opere. Publicistică 17 februarie – 31 decembrie 1880 Timpul,* Vol. XI, Ed. Academiei, București 1984

XI, 22-23: În republică domneşte îndeosebi interesul individual, în genere interesul de partid. (…) Această stare de lucruri e în aceeaşi proporţie lipsită de pericole în care esistă în stat o clasă de mijloc economiceşte puternică şi cultă care să mănţină echilibrul între tendinţele prea înapoiate a simţului istoric a unui popor, reprezentat în genere prin formele existente ale unei civilizaţii trecute, şi între tendenţele zgomotoase ale trebuinţelor acute ale prezentului, reprezentate prin nevoile claselor de jos. Unde această clasă nu există decît în mod rudimentar sau unde ea este prea slabă pentru a se împotrivi tendenţelor estreme republica devine o jucărie a partizilor, o forma de care abuzează şi "unii şi alţii în detrimentul vădit al intereselor generale. Deie-ni-se voie a arăta că ideea statului, ideea armoniei intereselor există în realitate, că statul nu este	XI, 22-23: In a Republic the interest of the individual reigns supreme, and more generally the interest of the party. (…) This state of facts is free of danger only insofar as there is within the state a cultured and economically potent middle class, which can keep in check the balance between the backward tendencies of the people's sense of history, as generally represented by the enduring forms of a past civilization, and the boisterous tendencies of the urgent demands of the present, as represented by the needs of the lower classes. Where this class's existence is precarious, or where it is too weak to stave off extreme tendencies, the Republic becomes a mere toy for the parties, a form abused by both sides, to the obvious detriment of the public interest. (…) The state is not just a sum of individuals who coexist at a given moment, it represents the very possibility to correct the wrongs

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numai suma de indivizi ce coexistă într-un moment dat, că el reprezentă însăşi putinţa de îndreptare a unor rele ce rezultă din instinctele nesocotite ale actualităţii.

(…) Dar statul nu este nici suma indivizilor coexistenţi. Căci dacă luăm individ cu individ am vedea lesne că marea, incalculabil de marea majoritate a oamenilor s-ar sus-trage bucuros, numai de-ar putea, şi de la plata de bir şi de la prestaţiuni şi de la recrutare, încît, oricît de recunoscută ar fi necesitatea unui interes general de fiecare în parte, totuşi, cînd e vorba ca el să subvie cu atomul său individual acelei necesităţi, instinctul său intim şi primitiv este de a se sustrage. (…)

A pune dar acest instrument gingaş al statului, acest reprezentant atît al vieţii istorice cît şi al armoniei intereselor unei naţii, la discreţia absolută a unui singur partid este periculos, mai cu seamă cînd elementul ponderator al unei clase de mijloc culte şi avute e reprezentat numai într-un mod rudimentar. [„STUDII ASUPRA SITUATIEI"] [21 feb. 1880].

which ensue from the reckless instincts of contemporaneity.

(…) Indeed, if we were to focus on each individual, we would clearly see that the majority, the vast majority of people would gladly dodge – if only they could – their obligations such as taxes, public duties, or military service. Regardless of the extent to which a given individual acknowledges the preeminence of the general interest, when he himself must submit his own atom to that preeminent cause, his intimate and primitive instinct is to eschew paying his dues. (…) Therefore, placing the state, that delicate instrument, that representative of both historical life and a nation's harmony of interests, at the sole discretion of one party – is dangerous. It is particularly so when the arbitrator – a cultivated and well-to-do middle class – is only present in a very rudimentary form.

M. Eminescu, *Opere. Publicistică, 1 ianuarie-31 decembrie 1881 Timpul*, vol. XII, Ed. Academiei Române, București, 1985.

XII, 149 : Aristocraţia adevărată, după a noastră părere, are un mare şi esenţial rol în viaţa unui popor. Dar pentru a fi adevărată [î]i trebuie anume condiţii de existenţă, şi mai cu seamă trei, fără de cari ea cată a fi privită ca uzurpaţiune. Se cere să fie istorică, puţin numeroasă, în	XII, 149 : Genuine aristocracy, in our opinion, plays a great, indeed an essential role in the life of a people. However, in order for it to be genuine, certain conditions of its existence must obtain. Three such conditions are paramount in the sense that if they are not met, the

posesiune de mari bunuri imobiliare.

Sub ,,istorică" înțelegem că trebuie să fi răsărit din dreptul public propriu al unui popor și câștigată prin merite pentru el. E preferabil ca aceste merite să se datorească caracterului mai mult decât inteligenței. Căci un caracter drept, viteaz și generos se moștenește și e o mare calitate politică, pe când inteligența se poate recruta din tot ce produce mai bun o generație, ea e aliata naturală a acestor caractere, dar din nefericire nu se moștenește cu atâta siguranță. Apoi aristocrația trebuie să fie puțin numeroasă, pentru ca alături cu ea să aibă loc meritele personale din orice generație; în fine trebuie să fie în posesiune de mari bunuri imobiliare, pentru că asemenea bunuri nu sunt supuse pericolului pierderii, îl fac pe om neatârnat de jocul banului și-l pun în legătură cu brazda și cu populația istorică a țării. [26 aprilie 1881] [,,A DISCUTA CU IGNORANȚA ..."]

aristocracy will be regarded as usurpation. Thus, it must be historical, scarce in numbers, and in possession of significant estates.

By "historical" we mean that it ought to have emerged out of a people's own public law, and to have been deserved by service to the people. It is to be preferred that its merits stem from character, rather than intelligence. For an honest, brave, and generous character is inherited and represents a great political quality, whereas intelligence can be recruited from amongst the best a generation has to offer, it is the natural ally of such character, but unfortunately it is not as positively inheritable. Furthermore, aristocracy must be scarce in numbers, so that it leaves enough room beside it for people of valor of any generation; finally, the possession of significant estates is important, since such assets are not subject to loss and their owners are not contingent on the money game and, at the same time, do not lose touch with the furrow and with the country's historical population.

XII, 154: formațiunea demagogiei merge repede într-o țară a cărei continuitate de dezvoltare istorică a fost nimicită prin dominațiunea străină și care este ea însuși o creațiune politică proaspătă. Când într-o țară trecutul n-a distins pe omul de merit de cel de rând , când conștiința publică și împrejurările sunt turburi și departe încă de cristalizațiune , ajung, ca și la apa cea turburată, gunoiele deasupra. A striga

XII, 154: Demagogy spreads fast in a country whose continuity of historical development has been shattered by foreign domination and which is itself a recent political creation. In a country whose past has not sifted out the unworthy from the worthy man, and whose public conscience is as murky and uncrystallized as its circumstances, rubbish will find its way to the surface, as is the case with murky

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pe toate uliţele şi pe toate tonurile patrie, libertate, egalitate, fraternitate! nu e un merit nici la noi, nici în Bulgaria, nici undeva în lume. Dar cine nu are altul îşi creează din asemenea strigăte un titlu de recomandaţie.	waters. Shouting in the streets, in all tones of voice, "Motherland, Freedom, Equality, Fraternity!" is no merit, neither here, nor in Bulgaria nor indeed anywhere else in the world. However, he who has no other credentials will fabricate some out of such slogans.
XII, 374: naţionalitatea română ca oricare alta are dreptul înnăscut de a-şi apăra moştenirea ei istorică şi munca ei de orice alt element străin. Alegerea armelor şi mijloacelor atârnă de timp şi împrejurări, şi, dacă e vorba de păstrarea rasei române pe acest colţ de pământ şi de întărirea caracterului ei şi a felului ei de-a fi, nici o armă nu este rea întrebuinţată la timpul cuvenit. [20 octombrie 1881]	XII, 374: The Romanian nation, just like any other, has the innate right to defend its historical heritage and its achievements in the face of all foreign elements. The choice of weapons and means depends on time and circumstances, and, if the preservation of the Romanian race in this corner of the world, and the building of its character and way of life are at stake, then no weapon should be inappropriate if resorted to at the right moment.
XII, 162 : Statele moderne nu se mai dezvoltă, din nefericire, în linie dreaptă, ci prin cotituri, adesea prin concesii, renunţând la maniera lor de-a fi, la signatura existenţei lor. Sunt cristalizaţiuni imperfecte pe lângă câteva cristale perfecte pe cari le prezintă istoria. Asta e chiar deosebirea între naţii mici, fără simţ istoric , şi naţiile mari, c-un profund simţ istoric şi c-un mare viitor. [NU VOM DISCUTA CU ROMÂNUL PRINCIPII…]	XII,162: Unfortunately, modern states no longer develop in a straight line, but through twists and turns, often by way of compromises, relinquishing their way of life, the signature of their existence. They are imperfect crystallizations alongside the few perfect crystals that history evinces. This is the very difference between small nations, with no sense of history, and great nations, with an engrained sense of history and a great future.
XII, 159-160 Cu toate acestea oricine va voi să definească marele mister al existenţei va vedea că el consistă în împrospătarea continuă a fondului şi păstrarea formelor. Forme vechi, dar spirit pururea nou. Astfel vedem cum Anglia, care stă în toate celea în fruntea civilizaţiei, păstrează şi astăzi	XII, 159-160: Nonetheless, anyone endeavoring to define the great mystery of existence will realize that it resides in the constant renewal of content with the preservation of form. Ancient forms, but a perpetually new spirit. This is why we see England, which is on all

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vechile sale forme istorice , pururea reâmprospătate de spiritul modern, de munca modernă.	counts the spearhead of civilization, retain today its old historical forms, constantly rejuvenated by modern spirit, by modern toil.

vol. XIII: M. Eminescu, *Opere. Publicistică 1882-1883, 1888-1889, „Timpul", „România Liberă", „Fîntîna Blanduziei"*, Ed Academiei Române, București, 1985.

XIII, 89: Cercetările istorice, filologice şi de psicologie poporană n-ar prezinta un interes atât de viu dacă am avea o epocă de înaltă civilizaţie în urmă-ne, dacă fiinţa noastră naţională s-ar fi păstrat, în haina neîmbătrânirii, în scrierile unor cugetători anteriori. Dar civilizaţia noastră e falsă; străini şi semistrăini născuţi în Bucureşti ori în oraşele de pe Dunăre şi franţuziţi la Paris, aceştia au falsificat şi drept, şi viaţă publică, şi datini, au prefăcut Cuventele den bătrâni în limba păsărească a gazetelor şi a pledoariilor dinaintea tribunalelor, încât chiar dicţionarul limbei în circulaţiune trebuie trecut prin depănătoare şi ne vedem nevoiţi a face istoria fiecării vorbe pe care-o întrebuinţăm pentru a-i păstra înţelesul. Am putea zice că e luptă de toată ziua pentru toate bunurile naţionalităţii noastre. … Ceea ce se dezgroapă prin aceste documente istorice şi linguistice nu sunt dar numai materialuri de interes arheologic , ci e România însăşi, e geniul poporului românesc de pe care se înlăturează păturile superpuse de ruine şi de barbarie. Fiece pas înainte se face aci în înţelesul reconstruirii	XIII, 89: Historical, philological, and folk psychology research would not be of such keen interest had we superseded an era of consummate civilization, had our national spirit been preserved, cloaked in the garment of timelessness, in the writings of past thinkers. However, our civilization is phony; foreigners and half-foreigners born in Bucharest or in the cities on the Danube and Frenchified in Paris have falsified law, public life and traditions alike, have turned our forefathers' words into journalistic gobbledygook and court legalese (…). We might say that there's a daily battle for all of our nation's assets. (…) What is being unearthed with these historical and linguistic documents are not mere archaeological materials – it is Romania herself, the genius of the Romanian people, from which we peel superimposed layers of debris and backwardness. Each and every step forward is taken towards the reconstruction of the Romanian nationality and in order for the latter to acknowledge itself and come to its senses. The biblical curse, "in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread", was no curse at all, but a

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naţionalităţii române şi pentru ca ea însăşi să se recunoască pe sine, să-şi vie în fire. Blestemul din Biblie, „în sudoarea frunţii tale îţi vei câştiga hrana", n-a fost un blestem, ci o binecuvântare . „În sudoarea frunţii tale te vei cunoaşte pe tine însuţi" zicem cercetătorilor pe terenul istoriei şi a linguisticei bucuraţi de aceste rezultate ale unei munci naţionale, rezultate greu de câştigat în comparare cu deprinderea mecanică a formelor esterioare ale unei civilizaţii străine. [1 aprilie 1882]	blessing. "In the sweat of thy face thou shalt know thyself" – this is what we say to those conducting historical and linguistic research. Such a national enterprise delights us, and its results are much harder to harvest than it is to mechanically appropriate the outer forms of foreign civilization.
XIII, 190 : Absolutismul nu este pururea şi pretutindenea o nenorocire. Adeseori el e necesar şi mari creaţiuni istorice îi se datoresc. Dar.. . absolutismul sincer, întemeiat ca atare pe dreptul public al poporului, absolutismul care nu se ruşinează de sine însuşi şi care crede că, prin o biurocraţie energică, cu învăţătură de carte şi incoruptibilă, se poate produce mai mult bine decât prin discuţiile adese sterpe ale unor parlamente inculte. Dar a avea un absolutism bazat pe minciuna parlamentară însemnează a avea o companie de esploatare în capul ţării, care, păzind cu ipocrizie formele esterioare ale parlamentarismului, e despotică nu în folosul statului şi al populaţiunilor, ci în folosul [a] o mână de oameni lacomi de avere şi moraliceşte putrezi. [17 septembrie 1882] [„FRIGURI DE REFORME..."]	XIII, 190 : Absolutism is not always and everywhere a calamity. It is often necessary, and it has engendered great historical creations. A straightforward absolutism is meant here, one based on the people's public law, an absolutism which is not ashamed of itself and which upholds that, through an industrious bureaucracy, educated and incorruptible, more good can be achieved than through the oftentimes sterile debates of ignorant parliaments. However, an absolutist rule rooted in parliamentary deceit comes down to appointing as the head of the state an exploitation company, which, while hypocritically defending the outer forms of parliamentarism, rules tyrannically not for the benefit of the state and the populations, but for that of a handful of greedy and morally bankrupt people.
XIII, 85: Poate nu e o idee nouă dacă spunem că orice lucrare literară însemnată cuprinde, pe lângă actul	XIII, 85: It is perhaps not a novel idea that any major literary work contains, apart from the intellectual

intelectual al observaţiei şi conceperei , o lucrare de resumţiune a unor elemente preexistente din viaţa poporului. Sunt scriitori — şi numărul lor e legiune — cari sugându-şi condeiul în gură, scornesc fel de fel de cai verzi, creaţiuni ale fantaziei pure fără corelaţiune cu realitatea, creaţiuni ce, prin noutatea lor, atrag poate câtva timp publicul şi sunt la modă.

Credem că nici o literatură puternică şi sănătoasă, capabilă să determine spiritul unui popor, nu poate exista decât determinată ea însăşi la rândul ei de spiritul acelui popor, întemeiată adecă pe baza largă a geniului naţional. Aceasta nu e adevărat numai pentru literat, ci se aplică tot atât de bine la legiuitor, la istoric, la omul politic. Nu acel legiuitor va fi însemnat care va plagia legi străine traduse din codicile unor ţări depărtate ce au trăit şi trăiesc în alte împrejurări, ci cel care va şti să codifice datina ţării lui şi soluţiunea pe care poporul în adâncul convingerilor sale o dă problemelor în materie.

Nu acel om politic va fi însemnat, care va inventa şi va combina sisteme nouă, ci acel care va rezuma şi va pune în serviciul unei mari idei organice înclinările, trebuinţele şi aspiraţiunile preexistente ale poporului său.

Nu acel istoric va fi exact, carele în fraze pompoase va lăuda sau va batjocori întâmplările în trista şi searbăda lor conexiune cauzală, ci acela care va căuta raţiunea de-a fi a acelor întâmplări şi va descoperi-o în

endeavor of observation and conception, an attempt to epitomize pre-existing elements in the life of the people. There are writers – and their number is legion — who, while sucking on their quills, come up with all kinds of mumbo-jumbo, pure figments of imagination bearing no connection to reality, contrivances which, by dint of their novelty, may be fashionable and curry the favor of the public for a while. (…) We believe that no robust and healthy literature which is able to determine the spirit of a people, can exist in any other way than by being itself determined by the spirit of that people, in other words, founded on the broad basis of the national genius. This does not hold solely for the man of letters, but equally applies to the lawgiver, to the historian, to the statesman. An important lawgiver is not the one who plagiarizes foreign legislation, translated from the statutes of remote countries, which are and were subject to different circumstances - but the one who will fathom how to create a code of laws out of his country's traditions and the solutions given to such issues by the people, ensuing from its deep convictions.

An important statesman is not the one who invents and combines new systems, but the one who will epitomize his people's pre-existing proclivities, needs, and aspirations, and put them in the service of a grand, organic vision. A precise historian is not the one who, in bombastic phraseology, will extol or

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adâncimea geniului popular. Unul ca acesta ar descoperi că aceleaşi raţiuni cari au făcut pe români să crească i-au făcut să şi cază; aceleaşi calităţi cari au urcat pe osmani la înălţimea de stăpânitori a trei continente au fost rădăcinile pieirii lor; că orice calitate, orice energie, orice e mare şi puternic ca patimă are în consecuenţa cu sine însuşi rădăcinile fericirii şi nefericirii sale. Numai oamenii cari au tăria de-a fi credincioşi caracterului lor propriu fac impresie în adevăr estetică, ei numai au farmecul adevărului, reprezintarea lor zguduie adânc toate simţirile noastre şi numai aceasta e obiectul artei.
["NOVELE DIN POPOR DE IOAN SLAVICI"]

ridicule events in their sad and bland causality, but the one who looks for the rationale of those events and discovers it in the depths of the popular genius. Such a historian will discover that the very reasons which made Romanians rise, also made them fall; the same qualities that made the Ottomans become rulers of three continents were also the roots of their undoing; that any virtue, any energy, anything of great and intense passion necessarily carries with it the very roots of its happiness and unhappiness. Only people who have the stamina to be true to their own character can truly have an aesthetic impact, only they possess the charm of the truth. Their depiction deeply shakes our senses – and this alone can be the subject of art.

vol XV: M. Eminescu, *Fragmentarium, Addenda ediţiei*. Ed Academiei Române, București, 1993.

XV, 87: Cine va vrea să facă istoria unei epoce sau a unui mişcământ oarecare înainte de toate va trebui să facă a se simţi legea continuităţii acestui mişcământ. El va trebui să caute punctul de purcedere, de ajungere, şi apoi seria terminelor intermediare prin cari se află unite aceste două termine estreme. El va trebui încă să se silească a arăta duplul mecanism de repulsiune şi asimilaţiune pe care l-am indicat şi prin mijlocul căruia el s-a efectuat.

    Istoricul se va ataşa de-o idee şi această idee el o va urma de la originea sa până la ultimul termin al dezvoltării sale, cum s-ar zice prin

XV, 87: Whoever shall attempt to write the history of a time period or of a certain movement shall above all endeavor to bring to the fore the law of continuity of this movement. He shall have to seek out the departure and arrival points, and then the series of intermediary stages connecting these two extreme points. Moreover, he shall have to exert himself to emphasize the aforementioned double mechanism of rejection and assimilation, and through which the movement was effected.

    The historian shall focus on one idea and pursue this idea from its inception to the final phase of its

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mijlocul aventurelor ei celor mai diverse; ea va fi personagiul şi eroul cărţii. Sistemele la cari va fi fost baza şi fundamentul vor fi ca învelitorile esterioare, ca fazele diverse a dezvoltării sale; oamenii mari ce vor fi esprimat-o nu vor fi decât organe; personalitatea lor se va nimici în personalitatea ideei. Astfel vom avea într-adevăr istoria cutărui sau cutărui mişcământ, iar [nu] a cutărei sau cutărei fapte izolate, cari nu sunt decât pe-atâtea episoade.

Ş-apoi, dacă aceasta nu va fi numai cutare sau cutare idee, a cărei1 curs istoricul [î]l va cerceta în modul acesta, dacă asta va fi ideea în ea însăşi, se va putea vedea în germenele său, tot atât ca şi în succesiunea, în simultaneitatea, tot în vremea continuităţii sale, toată dezvoltarea istorică. Vom citi c-o singură aruncătură de ochi toată opera istoriei.

[O PROBLEMĂ A ISTORICULUI]

Principii generale, conducătoare, cari caracterizează epocele, nu sunt nimic mai puţin decât conducătoare, ele sunt monogramul în care se prezintă aspiraţiunile generaţiunei1 dintr-un popor; în sine luate [sunt] mişcarea acelor puteri2 vii în direcţia vieţii publice care rămân neocupate sau neocupabile3 de lucrarea economică a lui. [„PRINCIPII GENERALE...”] 2258

development, so to speak across its most diverse exploits; it is this idea that will be the character and protagonist of the book. The systems whose groundwork and foundation it will have formed will resemble external accoutrements, diverse stages of its development; great men who have expressed it will be mere instruments; their personality will dissolve into the personality of the idea. Only in this fashion will we genuinely produce the history of a certain movement, not that of isolated events, which are nothing but episodes.

Furthermore, if this will be not just a certain idea, whose avatars the historian will investigate in the aforementioned manner, if this indeed be rather the idea in itself, then one shall be able to see a whole historical development in its very inception, as well as in its progress, in its simultaneity, in its continuity. We shall read at a glance the workings of history as a whole.

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General moving principles, which characterize a time period, are nothing short of moving. They are the monogram which epitomizes the aspirations of a people's generation; they incorporate the dynamics of those living forces striving for public life, forces which remain unoccupied or unoccupiable by the people's economic endeavors.

XV, 88 Darum ist auch leicht erklärlich warum in Politik u[nd] Moralität ein[er] etwas lobt, ein anderer tadelt. Nicht der Intellekt thut	XV, 88: Therefore, it is not difficult to explain why, in politics and morals, what one praises, another castigates. It is not the intellect that

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es, sondern der Wille vermittels des Intellektes, — der Urtheil des reinen Intellekts ist immer gerecht. Die Logik der Geschichte ist Eristik u[nd] Sophisterei, die Leute beweisen nicht, weil es von selbst folgt, also aus reinem Interesse für die Wahrheit, sondern weil sie es beweisen wollen. [LOGICA ISTORIEI] 2287

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Cumcă oamenii știu istorie fără să-nveţe nimic de la ea e un semn că istoria este voinţă și nu teorie, că se poate învăţa și — alea non discitur. Inteligenţa este condamnată a juca rolul de salahor al voinţei, cum se vede aceasta în jurnale și în opinia publică în genere. Ea este într-adevăr l'avocat du diable, precând toată filozofia istoriei e concentrat[ă] în fraza latină : Stat pro ratione voluntas. De aceea în genere toată literatura politică, toată istoria optimistă, toată, toată filozofia, care rezumă în sine starea de bucurie sau neplăcere a unei epoce și e espresia, fizionomia ei, nu sunt decât tot atâtea pagine ale opului *l'avocat du diable*. De-aceea și este de un timp zisă, de altul dezisă, este vină în ele, este interes, este voinţă. Adevărat nemuritoare, inocente în felul lor sunt numai acele producte născute dintr-o mare superfluenţă a creierului, care a paralizat sau cel puţin s-a eliberat pe deplin de voinţă. În van vei spune că istoria învaţă, că războaie, ură, nedreptăţi, răutate nu duc decît la o esistenţă efemeră, va să zică la nimic, căci, într-un timp nemărginit, un secol e o clipă suspendată.

effects this, but the will, by means of the intellect. The judgement of the pure intellect is always just. The logic of history is heuristics and sophistry. People do not prove something because it is truly provable, that is, out of pure interest for the truth, but because they want to prove it.

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That people have a knowledge of history without learning anything from it is a sign that history is will, and not theory, that it can be learned and that – *alea non discitur* [the die cannot be learned]. Intelligence is doomed to play the role of a farmhand for the will, as can be witnessed in the newspapers and in the public opinion in general. It is indeed *l'avocat du diable*, whereas all philosophy of history is concentrated in the Latin adage: *Stat pro ratione voluntas* [The will stands in place of a reason]. That is why generally all political literature, all optimistic history, indeed all philosophy, which encapsulates the whole state of elation or discontent of an epoch and constitutes its expression, its physiognomy, are nothing but as many pages in an opus titled *l'avocat du diable*. (…) Truly immortal, innocent in their own way, are only those products born out of an overabundance of the brain, which has paralyzed the will or at least has freed itself from it. It is pointless to say that history is a teacher, that wars, hatred, injustice, wretchedness only engender a fleeting existence, boiling down to nothing, because,

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[„STAT PRO RATIONE VOLUNTAS"] 2287	within endless time, one century is merely a suspended moment.
XV, 97 : Istoria – un necrolog. [„ISTORIA…"] 2262	XV, 97 : History – an obituary.

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Book reviews

CĂTĂLINA ILIESCU-GHEORGHIU: A POLYSYSTEMIC MODEL FOR THE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF DRAMA FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF DESCRIPTIVE TRANSLATION STUDIES

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Abstract: *This review presents a recently published book authored by Cătălina Iliescu Gheorghiu, an academic actively involved in Romanian studies and a translator of Romanian literature. As the title suggests, it is a study that falls under the scope of Descriptive Translation Studies implying the polysystemic model posited by Lambert and Van Gorp for the comparative analysis of drama. The corpus under scrutiny is made up utterances extracted from the play* A treia țeapă (The Third Stake) *by Marin Sorescu and the corresponding utterances from two of its translations into English. The analytical part is backed up by a solid theoretical framework with its latter section lending the overall structure of the analysis. The categories subject to investigation are (i) preliminary data, (ii) the macro-level structures, (iii) the micro-level structures and (iv) the systemic context. The methodology experimented with drama translation and the findings deriving from it have proved their validity and are valuable input for other similar and possibly more comprising research that can use these findings as hypotheses to be tested further.*
Keywords: drama translation; Polysystem Theory; Descriptive Translation Studies;

The book titled *Un model polisistemic de analiză comparativă a textului dramatic din perspectiva traductologiei descriptive* (A Polysystemic Model for the Comparative Analysis of Drama from the Perspective of Descriptive Translation Studies), published by Editura Universității din București, Series ROMANICA 28, 2018 (127 p., ISBN 978-606-16-1011-2) mirrors a blending of some of the cultural and scientific interests that Cătălina Iliescu Gheorghiu, a professor of Translation and Interpreting Studies and of Romanian language and literature at the University of Alicante, has displayed over the past years. On the one hand, she is a promoter of the Romanian culture, substantially contributing to its visibility especially in the Spanish cultural area. Among the diverse activities

promoting the Romanian culture, Iliescu Gheorghiu's translating Romanian literature and studying it from a translational perspective occupy central positions (involving prose, drama and poetry by authors such as Mihai Eminescu, Ion Creangă, Petre Ispirescu, Marin Sorescu, but also Ana Blandiana, Mircea Cărtărescu, Ion Pop, Alexandru Mușina, Florin Iaru and many others). On the other hand, her scientific interest in drama translation has already been materialized in a book published by Institutul European in 2010, *Traducerea textului dramatic (The Translation of Drama).* Elaborating on these endeavours, the book reviewed herein is a valuable scientific work falling under the scope of Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS), addressing scholars in Translation Studies interested in the translation of drama and translators of the genre, both benefitting from new perspectives precious to be taken into account in their work.

Albeit the boost that DTS has determined in Translation Studies in its scientific and applied facets alike, not so much attention has been granted to the translation of drama from the vantage point of DTS, less so to the translation of Romanian drama. This very study not only contributes importantly to this area, but it also opens up new paths for translational investigation relative to drama and for drama translation itself. Therefore, its outreach touches upon both the descriptive and the applied areas of drama translation. In more precise terms, firstly, the book proposes a theoretical account of the polysystemic comparative approach to drama translation as posited by Jose Lambert and Hendrik Van Gorp and, secondly, it engages in applying this methodology to a Romanian dramatic text and two of its translations into English. This twofold objective generates a logical organization of the work in two parts, dedicated to the theoretical and to the analytical undertaking respectively, with the two of them in a relation of complementarity. The latter part is intended to test whether the Lambert-Van Gorp polysystemic model is applicable to drama translation and whether it is appropriate for the extraction of information on translation and translating that is otherwise concealed.

To narrow down further, the work is overall structured in five chapters, emerging with an introductory section announcing the objectives, stating the hypotheses and the research methodology and briefly describing the corpus under scrutiny. This is also where the author discusses the cultural context that might have influenced the two translations.

The theoretical part is dense, well-documented and relies on relevant scholarly work. It first offers a synthetic view of the conceptual evolution of Translation Studies and then focusses on its descriptive component as introduced by Holmes and Toury. Descriptive Translation, with its justified concern for empirical research, is then attached the polysystem theory advanced mainly by Even-Zohar (1978), therefrom deriving the Lambert and

Van Gorp model. In this context, the author states that "the researcher's duty is to establish a hierarchy of the relations within the communicative situation he/she examines, while taking account of the priorities imposed by the two key translational concepts: acceptability and adequacy" (p. 17, my translation).

This conceptual framework is systematically applied in the most substantial part of the work enclosed in Chapter 4, which presents the corpus analysis. The undertaking is grounded on a corpus consisting of a representative amount of utterances, the author implicitly acknowledging that an utterance is the "inherently dramatic unit (réplica) which is instrumental in describing and comparing drama texts, be they translated or not" (Merino, 2000: 357). The 400 utterances are extracted from the Romanian play *A treia țeapă* (*The Third Stake*) by Marin Sorescu and two of its translations into English. Among the aspects differentiating the two translations, the most important one stems from the directionality: the first translated version, by Andreea Gheorghițoiu, a professional translator in Romania, is translated out of the translator's mother tongue, whereas Dennis Deletant, a professor in London, translates the play into his mother tongue.

As is typical of DTS, the analysis entails an observant look shed on the translations. The comparative analysis is aligned to the conceptual and methodological stages pertaining to a polysystemic perspective, which is reasonably adapted here to the specificity of the dramatic text under the researcher's lens.

As Lambert (1995) claims, among several systemic models, the polysystem theory is not only the one to use translation as its starting point, but it has also essentially contributed to the establishment of (Descriptive) Translation Studies. Also, its operating across various media and disciplines makes it suitably integrated in the research into drama translation, which justifies the approach adopted in the study being reviewed.

In applying the Lambert-Van Gorp model of investigation, the practical part of the study involves the examination of (i) the preliminary data (title pages, metatexts and general strategies); (ii) the macro-level structures (extension, theatricality); (iii) the micro-level structures (stylistic shifts) and (iv) the systemic context (the relation between the macro-level and the micro-level).

The preliminary stage focusses on the description of both the source text and the target texts and the establishment of the contextual features that impacted their production. The subsequent stage concerns the analysis of the macro-structural level according to Lambert-Van Gorp's model, consisting of extension of utterances, metatext, theatricality, along with the subcategories of structure, *didascalia* and *dramatis personae*. This stage comprises the comparative study of the two translations in relation to the original.

The final section, which looks into the macro-structural level, includes a synthesis of the results with reference to the publication of the translations, the translators' contact with the author and their (lack) of acquaintance with the staged performances, whether the translations address the readability of the text or its playability. Additionally, questions relative to the dual polarity of the translations are raised based on Toury's (1980) adequacy and acceptability principles.

The analysis of the micro-level structures unfolds along four categories of translation options, namely (A) realization overlaps in the two translations when the second translator uses the corresponding utterance from both the source text and from the already existing target text; (B) false differences stemming from the second translator's desire to avoid resemblance between the target texts rather than from applying a translational principle; (C) perception differences determining (D) the differences in the translators' decision-making process due to idiosyncratic preferences or polysystemic ones, such as ideologies, diverse policies, etc. This last category is deemed by the author as the most representative one in terms of highlighting the translators' priorities and strategies, as well as the reasons lying behind them. This is why it is dealt with extensively in this study despite the typological problems it poses in establishing the subcategories. The differences in expression are best identified within this micro-structural category and are found to derive from textual and linguistic aspects, from contextual aspects (mainly cultural ones) and genre-related aspects, which occur due to the constraints set by the performability of a theatrical text in the target culture. Interesting is the finding that the target text that emerged second might have been influenced by the first chronologically speaking. Iliescu Gheorghiu considers that the existence of a previous translation might have determined translation choices in the second target language version meant to avoid resemblance with the first.

The last part of the analytical enterprise is dedicated to the systemic context, i.e. the intertextual relations between the target texts along with the norms governing the translation process into the polysystems of the target cultures as compared to the ones present in the source culture. This category also dwells on the relation between the macro-level and the micro-level of the translations. The results of this part of the analysis indicate that the two levels are convergent in that they share the finding that the second target text oftentimes follows manners of realization present in the first. Nevertheless, there are obvious textual and contextual differences between the two target texts, but also differences due to genre constraints. As Iliescu Gheorghiu asserts, the fourth category in the Lambert-Van Gorp model operates as a tool for the synthesis of the previously investigated categories.

The combined and complementary research methodology, of quantitative and qualitative nature applied in comparing the two translations, based on Lambert-Van Gorp's polysystemic model, enabled the observation of several tendencies relative to the translators' decisions, such as those leading to both translations being rather readability-oriented than playability-oriented. Besides, the conclusions indicate that both translations use more than one source text and that the target texts apply the adequacy principle and the acceptability principle in different ways: Gheorghițoiu's translation is mostly oriented towards adequacy to the source culture, whereas Deletant's translation is chiefly oriented towards the acceptability of the text in the receiving culture.

These findings and conclusions were supported by the good structure of the study, its coherent development, the extracted data displayed orderly and transparently in tables for a clear depiction of the components set under the qualitative lens of the investigation, the relevant examples examined in close detail. Four sets of appendices comprising a selection of the utterances making up the corpus accompany the study. These utterances are categorized by virtue of their potential to illustrate the classification embedded in the analysis presented in section 4.3, that of the micro-structural level of the translations.

As Iliescu Gheorghiu confesses, even though this study is not exhaustive and has no universal outreach, its value resides in offering an illustration of how the Lambert-Van Gorp analytical model can be applied on a translational corpus of utterances extracted from drama. It is an enterprise worth extending grounded on additional corpora, possibly more sizable ones, comprising several plays. Additionally, it would be interesting to relate the results obtained herein to others, generated by similar studies (also applying the Lambert-Van Gorp model) that have engaged other language pairs so as to complete the methodological and analytical picture. Also, the translation of this study into English would enhance its visibility and thereby the international dimension of such research.

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EL VERANO EN QUE MI MADRE TUVO LOS OJOS VERDES DE TATIANA ȚÎBULEAC: EL TRAUMA Y LA MIRADA

THE SUMMER WHEN MY MOTHER HAD GREEN EYES BY TATIANA ȚÎBULEAC: THE TRAUMA AND THE GAZE

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Abstract: *" The Summer when my Mother had Green Eyes" is Moldovan writer Tatiana Țîbuleac's first novel and it was praised by both readers and critics. We examine the Spanish version of this novel, which was published in 2019 by Madrid-based publishing house Impedimenta and has reached its fifth edition in less than a year. The design of this novel alternates short chapters and micro chapters consisting of a sole phrase, as well as sarcastic and poetic tonalities, and reconstructs the narrator's relationship with his dying mother during the last summer they spend together in a French village close to the ocean.*
Keywords: Tatiana Țîbuleac; Moldovan Writers; Family Relations; Trauma Narratives;

Vara în care mama a avut ochii verzi (*El verano en que mi madre tuvo los ojos verdes*) es la primera novela de la escritora moldava Tatiana Țîbuleac. Escrita en rumano y publicada en 2016 por la editorial Cartier de Chișinău, la novela conoció un éxito indiscutible que se replicó después con su versión española, traducida por Marian Ochoa de Eribe. La versión española, publicada en 2019 por la editorial Impedimenta de Madrid, ha sido acreedora de varios premios y se encuentra ya en su quinta edición.

El verano en que mi madre tuvo los ojos verdes es la narración retrospectiva de Aleksy, un pintor exitoso que ha sufrido la amputación de sus piernas a causa de un accidente. A sugerencia de su psiquiatra, decide escribir el recuerdo del último verano que pasó con su madre, catorce años atrás, para desbloquear su vena creativa y volver a pintar.

El libro comienza ubicándonos el día anterior al inicio de este verano remoto. Se trata del último día de clase del entonces adolescente Aleksy, un

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chico de origen polaco que vive en Inglaterra y que tiene, según sus propias palabras, una enfermedad con un "nombre de dieciséis letras" (Tîbuleac, 2016: 31) y ganas de pegar a la gente. En su último día de clase, se despide de la escuela en la que "no aguantaban ni las infecciones" (9), de los colegas "defectuosos" y de los profesores "psicóticos" con la intención de pasar parte de sus vacaciones en Ámsterdam. Pero en vez de hacerlo, Aleksy acabará pasando las vacaciones junto a su madre en Francia, en un pueblo cerca del océano. La razón por la cual decide acompañarla es la promesa que ella le hace de ayudarle a falsificar sus papeles para poder conducir. En cuanto a ella, diagnosticada con un cáncer agresivo, desea pasar en Francia sus últimos meses de vida.

Este último verano con su madre se convierte en la sustancia del libro y en el tiempo esencial de la vida de Aleksy, el corto lapso luminoso de una trayectoria marcada por el trauma: la muerte de su hermana Mika, quien se había perdido accidentalmente, su certeza de no ser amado por sus padres— "si hubieran existido mercadillos de personas, mi madre y mi padre me habrían cambiado por un pulverizador, o, simplemente, me habrían abandonado debajo de un tenderete y habrían salido corriendo" (135)—, la muerte de su madre, la pérdida de sus piernas, la relación perdida con su esposa. Entre un antes y un después repletos de traumas, este verano que, en palabras de Aleksy, no terminó jamás, permite "vivencias, olores y recuerdos que duran días enteros. Estos recuerdos son mi parte más valiosa, la perla deslumbrante nacida de una ostra hueca. El brote verde de la carroña humana que soy" (86).

La reconstrucción de la mirada es uno de los procedimientos más logrados de esta novela. Al principio, Aleksy, quien la "habría matado con medio pensamiento" (7), ve a su madre "bajita y gorda, tonta y fea", inútil, pordiosera, mal vestida, "una historia continua del fracaso". Pero a lo largo de las páginas, los atributos negativos, detestados y ridiculizados se convierten en su contrario. La mirada va reconstruyendo el cuerpo de la madre, atenta a sus mutaciones: "Mi madre había cambiado mucho. Ya no tenía una cara redonda rematada por una papada" (101). Esta transformación del cuerpo, y tenemos aquí un aspecto muy hábil de la construcción narrativa, se produce en el cruce de varios niveles, puesto que combina la transformación corporal causada por los estragos del cáncer—"Mi madre había adelgazado y parecía el badajo de una campana" (97)— con la sutileza del cambio ocasionado por el conocimiento, ya que la convivencia con su madre desplaza el punto de vista y la información recibida acaba transformando la mirada: "Ya no consideraba a mi madre una tonta como antes" (102). La transformación afecta también a la ropa y, en vez de las "feas camisetas con frases" (49) que llevaba toda la vida vistiendo, la madre empieza a estrenar vestidos de varios colores. "Seguía siendo fea [...] pero el

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vestido la hacía más delgada [...] En aquel momento sentí—de forma dolorosa y fulminante— que gracias a ese blanco no la odiaba ya tanto (50-51)", advierte Aleksy su propio cambio interior provocado por el mero cambio vestimentario. También, la transformación opera a veces a un nivel etéreo, simbólico y fantasmal: "Aquel día mi madre era blanca y larga como una sombra matinal y llevaba el cabello suelto". "Era siempre ágil y diáfana [...] Mi madre era alta [...] No quedaba nada de mi antigua madre." (72)

La transformación interior del hijo certifica la pérdida del rencor hacia su madre, cuyo retrato enseña cada vez más los surcos del trauma. La mirada de Aleksy reconstruye a la madre ya no como la causante de su dolor— cuando murió Mika, su madre no habló con él durante siete meses—, sino como víctima: mujer que pronto morirá, a la que el marido llamaba "vaca imbécil", que perdió a su hija pequeña y a su primer amor, un polaco que había venido a Inglaterra solo por ella y había muerto en un accidente de trabajo.

Ciertas posturas y construcciones espaciales que aparecen a lo largo de la novela consiguen acompañar este cambio interior de perspectiva y cobran función simbólica. Por ejemplo, sabemos que el hijo desprecia a su madre, que la ve "desde arriba" en muchas de las páginas; es interesante notar que la ve desde arriba también *de facto*, desde la ventana, "mientras ella esperaba junto a la puerta de la escuela como una pordiosera" (7) en la despiadada descripción del íncipit. Y tal como la irá enalteciendo, con una mirada cada vez más comprensiva y amable, también la alzará, enferma, cuando la lleve en brazos en su bicicleta.

El diseño de este libro verdaderamente excepcional alterna capítulos breves con microcapítulos de apenas una frase, marida sarcasmo y poesía y construye una historia triste y cautivadora. Las primeras palabras del último capítulo—"Aquella noche"—les hacen eco a las primeras palabras del primer capítulo –"Aquella mañana"—, continuándolas a través de la oposición y presagiando el cierre de la historia, a la vez que el número 77 del último capítulo y su última frase—"El verano en que mi madre tuvo los ojos verdes no terminó jamás" (247)— le añaden a este rumbo temporal la dimensión continua y siempre abierta.

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pragmatique de la *performance*» (*SIGNA: Revista de la Asociación Española de Semiótica,* 2017); "Transmedial Prometheus: from the Greek Myth to Contemporary Interpretations" (*Icono 14. Revista científica de Comunicación y Tecnologías emergentes,* 2017); "Paradigms of Communication in Performance and Dance Studies" (*CLCweb: Comparative Literature and Culture,* 2015)*;* "*Towards a Framework of a Semiotics of Dance*" (*CLCweb: Comparative Literature and Culture,* 2013).

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