

POLYMORPHISM AND THE POLYVALENCE OF LITERATURE DURING A PERIOD OF GLOBALIZATION. DIVERSITY, INTERCONNECTIONS AND PRAXIOLOGICAL PROJECTIONS

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Abstract

The awakening of the national consciousness at the end of the 1990s puts its deep seal on the beginning of an unprecedented antagonism in the space between the Prut and the Dniester, encompassing not only the social sphere, but strongly influencing even the contemporary literary process. What are the causes that have degenerated into such open confrontations, especially between older and younger writers, between the generations of the pre-revolutionary period and the one of recent times? What happened to those who raised the broad masses to the anti-colonial struggle with their word? Why do they find themselves today on different sides of the barricade and why are they fighting a fierce battle against each other? Why are both sides devoured by sickly ambitions and fetid discords that are difficult to understand? Is this behavioral change triggered by the fact that the revolution radically changed the meaning of life in these lands, imposing new expression forms regarding the existence and contradictions of the present-day individual? We therefore aim to provide some pertinent answers to these pressing questions (some people regard them as being rhetorical and, therefore, without dialectical answers and finalities through the present research).

Keywords: *literary paradigm, (post)modernism, mimesis, poetics, contrastive vein, fatalism, anguish, artistic reconsiderations, ethical-aesthetic integration, programmatic concept.*

Therefore, the awakening of the national consciousness has deeply put its seal on the beginning of an unprecedented antagonism in our country, but not only in the social spheres, but strongly influencing even the contemporary literary process. The literary circles that have been active for years without surprises, have now gone bankrupt. Venerable professors and apprentices, who until recently shared the same literary, ethical and aesthetic conceptions and ideas, have now become estranged from one another. Romanian literature in the Republic of Moldova looks as if it was shattered by an

important earthquake. The men of letters can no longer reconcile with each other, they blame each other and they consider their works sterile, almost null (Cimpoi, 1998; Bahtin, 2002).

What are the causes that have degenerated into such open confrontations, especially between older and younger writers, between the generations of the pre-revolutionary period and the one of recent times? What happened to those who raised the broad masses to the anti-colonial struggle with their word? Why do they find themselves today on different sides of the barricade and why are they fighting a fierce battle against each other? Why are both sides devoured by sickly ambitions and fetid discords that are difficult to understand? Is this behavioural change triggered by the fact that the revolution radically changed the meaning of life in these lands, imposing new expression forms regarding the existence and contradictions of the present-day individual?

Let us see what the pre-revolutionary era meant in the lives of the older generation, what was its ideal, what brought it to the impasse of not organically fitting into the new paradigm of modern literature? (Cimpoi, 1997)

It is well known that most of the writers of the older generation were the people of a concrete historical time, which was nevertheless characterized by tranquility and balance, thus allowing them to create their artistic works slowly, without being marked by particular conflicts. Their creation, although in many cases of some artistic value, was not cut off from the national literary process, the post-war period being a continuation of it. After all, this literature

was dominated by the “principles” and themes of socialist realism (Rotaru, 2000).

Like any distinct era, socialist realism manifested itself in the literature of the Republic of Moldova quite prolifically. The writers of this period did not know the problems and anguish of the great social upheavals. The feeling of fatality and destruction was almost absent to them. They merged with the time in which they lived, and their reconciliation with society and with themselves was a reconciliation with the world. They had no hesitation in appreciating that everything they created would bear the sign of durability, remaining the exponents of an era with all the inherent inconsistencies and tribulations, an era that rewarded them with many honors, both rightly and unjustly (Cornilescu, 1998).

Now let us see what the revolution meant for the younger generation? Historically, any period of decadence manifests itself through a cleavage from the old content of life, through the emergence of new contradictions and ideals of people. The dull, peaceful and quiet life of the past has now known dizzying currents and they have turned into a real cavalcade. The disagreement between conservatism and democracy and the process of national emancipation intensified to the limit. The antagonism between the old content of life and the new one has reached paroxysmal heights, destroying insignificance, insufficiency, while abolishing the barriers of the obsolete way of thinking.

If in the past the literary process proceeded quietly, slowly, now its meaning is simply dramatic. The generation of young writers can no longer tolerate the past time, but neither can the present one. It can no longer be satisfied by the western literary currents, nor by the ankylosing forms of expression. For them, older writers who gained notoriety became similar to outlaws. And the only way to assert oneself, to impose oneself, is to take power by force from their hands, to completely ignore the works of their predecessors (Heidegger, 1988; Manolescu, 2003).

Faced with the tempting alternative of creating a literature with a new fabric and with new forms of expression, nothing can stop them. They forgot that the post-war literature in Bessarabia did not

begin with the affirmation of the new generation of writers, that the vigorous sources come from further on, from the mountains of writing of the great literary personalities before them: Ion Druță, Grigore Vieru, Victor Teleucă, Gheorghe Vodă, Petru Cărare, Ion Vatamanu, Vasile Vasilache, Vladimir Beșleagă, Serafim Saka, Mihai Cimpoi, Nicolae Dabija, Vasile Romanciuc, Leonida Lari, Marcela Benea, Andrei Țurcanu, etc., that their works of a high value appeared during the dark time of the dictatorship. The new generation is convinced that the modern literature of Bessarabia began with them and they are, consequently, ruthless with everything that has been written up to them. Are we dealing with an injustice? Maybe.

Let us review just a few examples from the “polemic” of the Bessarabian writers regarding the decadence period: “Older writers can no longer be read today, they wrote street poems,” “Their creation represents a twilight of literature,” “The old generation of writers cannot integrate into Europe.” (Micu, 1997)

However, the accusations made against the young generation of writers are also relentless: “When the big water comes, it always rises to the surface a lot of garbage too,” “Young writers have a black mouth,” “The young generation slanders us because we overshadow their own glory.”

As we can see, the diatribes brought to one side by the other are equal in virulence and gravity. And agreeing with one or the other is not an easy task at all. But let us take them one at a time.

The revolution, like any other great social earthquake, determined the denial of the old way of life, of its rhythm, awakening the world from the drowsiness in which it had been living for many decades. Literature, which is nothing but a problematization of life, is also looking for new contents and forms of original expression. Therefore, the consecrated forms, the classical patterns in which the older generation wrote their works no longer correspond to the aspirations and visions of modern man, as they undoubtedly become obsolete. No matter how brilliant some hymns, eulogies or odes are written today, they will no longer have a grip on the reader. In order to capture the intimate

meaning of the new epoch or to reveal the current historical moment, we need forms appropriate to our time, forms capable of satisfying the spiritual demands of the beginning of the third millennium.

The younger generation of writers, more sensitive and receptive to the changes taking place, perceived more quickly the significance of the current historical moment and invented modern forms of expression. It did this without hesitation, realizing that only in this way can it assert itself. But since postmodernism did not have many traditions in our country, it did not exist as *a school, a historian* and a *programmatic concept*, the young writers began to borrow it clumsily from postmodern writers from various European countries and especially from Romania. And this current, in its embryonic state, is so timid, fragile and sometimes caricatured, that it is disavowed by the Bessarabian reader, educated for so many decades in the oppressed spirit of traditionalism.

So what is the way out of the impasse, what could reconcile the Bessarabian writers, what could lead them to give up the rebellious factions, what could lead them to fit into a new fruitful literary process, which would generate works of authentic value?

The answer can only be identified by appealing to the experience of the civilized countries of Europe. The period of decadence, the antinomy of classicism-postmodernism are not novel elements, specific exclusively to the process of Bessarabian literature. All modern literatures have been subjected to this "operation" without anesthesia.

The emergence of a postmodern literature in Bessarabia cannot take place without a harsh process of crumbling, of eliminating the literary ballast. The purpose of the new literature is to deepen, through problematization, the feelings and aspirations of man, to determine him to contemplate life under the sign of success and ontological becoming.

Always plunging into the unknown and ineffable, rejecting archetypes with corrosive acidity and vitriolically disillusioning, to the point of refusal, sapiential values, the literature of the beginning of the third millennium seems symptomatic of the times we live in or, rather,

that live by subjugating us, the bad times. Ironically disguised, ostentatiously camouflaged, *the literary part* seems today to take no guiding principle, no guiding thread, not to rely on the *positum*, to have no genealogy, not to derive transcendently and not to miraculously claim itself from the ontic vision of the World. Without proposing *essences*, without intuiting internally that literature represents a miraculous primordial fact, of sacral-psalmodic origin, the writers of the furious moment and of the moment of ephemeral grace quickly metamorphosed into *writers*, they degenerated intellectually, claiming that only under such conditions can they emancipate themselves, shake off ideological blame and prudishness, *corrosive* elements with which they have been constrained for decades. From here to the outbreak of the elements was only one step: black wanted to be white overnight, species and genera amalgamated to such an extent that they literally disappeared as a monadic identity and entity, in other words the breath succumbed, the balance, *the inner order of literature*, was dispersed in the four horizons. It is serious that even a significant part of literary criticism, of people of culture in general, has either capitulated definitively under the relentless tirades of the "new literary order," or, even worse, has sniffed out the pestilential smell of the gloomy spectacle on the fly. And now he frantically legitimizes the "masterful phenomenon" in question, dithyrambic elevating it to the rank of supreme intellectual good. Literary criticism did not have the right to slam, the slamming being equivalent, in these borderline situations, to abandonment, to betrayal and, implicitly, to the desecration of the quintessence. And if the lucidity of literary research, the critical eye of Argus, fell "into the sleep of death" or converted into heresy, then the slippage could no longer be avoided. The balance was broken, the divine soul at the heart of literature was subjected to sacrilege. And all sorts of inhibited writers flowed into one, ostentatiously repressing their dissatisfactions, impatiences and lustful obsessions directly on the immaculate sheet of paper, forgetting, or worse, being aware of the fact, that the white patch awaits artistic measles, solar spirit,

fragrant stubble and a flood of lightning love (Dolgan, 2003).

We do not intend to anathematize or unilaterally abolish, in our opinion, these "cataclysms" that claim to be authentic literary works, but only to combat, with the samples that have been at our disposal since ancient times, the evils of a bovarian mentality, sickly mentalities and prisoners of the crass lack of general culture, the lack of deep readings, both from a quantitative point of view, Above all, qualitatively, of course, to the lack of vocations and culant grace, to the lack of discernment and, ultimately, to the lack of the sacred mission assumed sine-qua-non.

We propose, in the place that has remained vacant, because we conclude that nothing is chosen from the current pseudo-literary samples, an *out-of-date research* (the phrase is used in the sense of Heidegger's meaning when referring to the works "On the Christianity of Theology" by Overbeck and to "Incurrent Considerations" by Nietzsche), not at all to the liking of the current literary models, of the oldest Romanian texts, precisely to demonstrate, live and from within, vertically and horizontally, that the origins of Romanian literature are vigorous, healthy, worthy of another path, of another continuity and, implicitly, of another destiny: a providential one. According to Heidegger, outdated writings "by uttering and asking, guide us to a configuring expectation in the face of what is inaccessible." Ancient literature is for me (us), I must admit, a *pretext*, but also a *subtext of reflexivity*, a gold mine, or rather an undulating vessel of living water, of purgatory crystalline water, which takes me back and takes back all those who have gone astray, to the springs of the beginning and who appear to me, and appear to all of us, like an immovable straight shield, changed in face, full of divine light, like the face of Moses when he descended from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the testimony in his hand. Those tablets represented the beginnings, the foundation on which the written word was to continue to rise. It says in Exodus (32:16): "The tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, carved into the tablets."

To investigate with the sleeping mind's eye and with a pure heart the biblical, historical, literary literature represents a recuperative

action that is not relentless in honor of the ancestors of the native writers who preceded them. Because in the course of our history, says Nicolae Dabija, the saints passed from the books of religion to the books of history (see the chronicles of Ureche, Neculce, etc.), and the martyrs from the history books to the calendars of the church (Stephen the Great, Constantin Brâncoveanu, etc.) (Beauchamp, 2001; La Coque & Ricoeur, 2002).

The re-reading and reinterpretation from new prisms, ontic and ontological, paradigmatic and eschatological, comparative, from the present to the immemorial, from the national to the universal, starting from the understanding of the new through the "grid" of the genesis of the world and literature, represents the purgatory test, supreme for the literary critic and historian of all times. It is the rejection of the ephemeral, of the everyday, of the dregs, of ballast, consecrating the long, neptunic, protective lingering in a wavy, original matrix space.

Romanian literature, like the written culture as a whole, of the beginning of the third millennium entered a degenerative collapse, in an agony determined by the denial of sapiential models, by the crisis of ideas, by the vacuum of artistry and by the vacuum of imagery fiction. The present-day writer no longer has the patience, nor the intellectual preparation, to read the literature of the national and extranational past, cataloging it, out of ignorance and arrogance, as obsolete, in form and substance. This writer, being rootless, rushes into the rush of the immediate event, sniffing like a thief the snares of the sickly present. He makes a golden calf, a kind of autochthonous postmodernism, accommodated ad-hoc and hijacked in his own way, totally different from the conception and philosophy of postmodernism accepted at the beginning of the twentieth century in Western Europe, a hybrid to which he worships bizmetibly. Just like it took place a long time ago when the people, who "saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, gathered themselves around Aaron and told him, 'Come! Create a god to go before us; because we don't know what Moses, that man who brought us out of the land of Egypt, did.'" (Exodus 32:2).

In order to counteract and correct by healing the madness of the "new literature," the old texts

are meant not only to be read and studied in detail, but must be reread and reinterpreted in a novel, revealing a dialectical key, precisely in order to highlight their splendor of perpetual actuality, beyond the past, and to irrevocably plead **pro domo**. In the 1980s, Romanian literature, including that of the Republic of Moldova, abandoned the mutilating form of the ideological, of the dogmatic, of spiritual slavery in short. Some extremely beneficial auspices were foreseen, but, once it got rid of the straps of this inset, it slipped, inexplicably, towards the golden calf, without continuing, in natural, free and favorable conditions this time, the efforts of the '60s-'70s generations, which carried the true cross of Romanian literature in dramatic, suffocating and full of vicissitudes times. Inexplicable only if we do not take into account the fact that most of those who claim to be in favour of "the eighties" fully relive the chilling destiny of the biblical people taken out of the land of Egypt that "was corrupted." "Very soon they turned aside from the path I ordered; And they made a molten bullock, bowed down to the ground before him, and offered sacrifices unto him, and said, "Israel! Behold your god, who brought you out of the land of Egypt! The Lord said to Moses, "I see that this people is a stubborn one." (**Exodus 32:7-9**) (From the teachings of the orthodox church, 1990)

Stubborn is also the "new literature," the "new culture" of nothingness, which does not realize the fact that the '60s-'70s generations had to fulfill Moses' mission, that of taking literature out of slavery, the 1980 generation having the fulfillment, the completion of this sacred mission, which it missed. Conscious or unconscious – that's another matter. The activity of the 1980 generation was to become a missionary, testamentary one, in the sense that 1300 years after the giving of the Law on Sinai, the Lord Jesus updated the validity of the principles contained in the 10 commandments, saying in the Sermon on the Mount: "Do not imagine that I have come to destroy the Law or the Prophets; I came not to spoil but to fulfill. For verily, I say unto you that as long as heaven and earth shall not pass away, not one fragment of the law shall pass away before all things have come to pass." (**Matthew 5:17-18**)

With the spiritual, ideological and political liberation from the communist space in the mid-late 1980s, which resulted in the succumb of the dictatorial regimes in Europe, the appearance in Romanian literature of a writing community saved by grace, capable of applying the Law of Love by perfecting the old one, was expected. It was not to be, so that, from the point of view of the proliferated infectious substance, the "eighties" totally overlapped those parts of the fiftieth generation that identified itself with the lie and blasphemy of the holy and true. The sin of the ancestors (with small exceptions), of the obedient fiftieth generation, sociologist-vulgar in the spirit of Marr, fell in this case on the lustful and sensual shoulders of the eighties grandchildren, who, wandering "on the roads of the desert," represented in Romanian literature the transition to a new generation. Symptomatic in this order of ideas is **the Book of Deuteronomy**, the biblical book of the transition, which attests to the intermediate path towards a new inheritance, the whole multitude of people brought out of Egypt and numbered at Sinai ruining themselves on the roads of the desert (Geoltrain, 2002). The sweet fruits of some bitter roots-existences, given in the spring of the '60s-'70s generations will be reaped by those who have not yet come, but who will honor the true name and reputation of Romanian literature. After the lull, pseudo-revolutions, disparate rebellions, syrupy palace blows, eccentric experiments, when literature descended into the street from its cathedral spire, the time has come for the old texts of the Romanian nation to carve out another destiny, to find their dream defenders and worthy successors. Not as a form, nor as an expression, nor as a logos, nor as a predilection, nor as a topos, but as a pure divine spirit, unanaemic from the cadaveric disease of cosmopolitanism, as a hierurgical experience of the **word born not made**, spoken with humility and coldness, written with piety and fear of God (Plămădeală, 1996; Vintilă, 1990).

God's love for people knows no bounds. God does not want the death of the sinner. Nor literature that of the writer who sinned in front of it, willingly or unwillingly.

Literature, though "old," like the earth, is never burdened with years and "burdened with

days" (**Job 42:17; 1 Para. 23:1**), for, like Moses of old age, it still has "enough strength and very good eyesight." (**Deut. 32:48-52**) But will Romanian literature have the unfortunate fate of Moses, who, although in the fullness of his physical and mental powers, dies at the age of 120 without seeing the promise fulfilled? Will the Romanian letters end up imploring God, like Moses: "Allow me to pass by and see the good land?" And they will hear the same answer from the Lord: "Enough! From now on, don't talk to me about it!" (**Deut. 3:25-26**).

Moses' boundless wrath follows God's wrath. "Moses was inflamed with anger, and threw the tablets out of his hand, and broke them by the foot of the mountain." (**Exodus 32:19**) Not because he had anything to do with the holy tablets "written on both sides, on one side and on the other," (Exodus 32:15) but because he was flooded with hatred for his fellow men who were not aware of the fact that they were the elect of the The One Above. The same thing occurs with the writers of the third millenium who forget that they, through the grace given to them, were anointed by God with the choicest gifts and virtues precisely in order to sing of beauty, goodness, peace of mind, triumph over passions, diseases and errors of all kinds.

The new literature will have to assume penance and follow *the path of reconciliation* with God. And with itself, of course. There is simply no other way than that of community reconciliation, of renouncing the sting of perdition. The new literature has the chance to repeatedly obtain the holy tablets and to renew the covenant, but, like Moses, this time making a major effort and only under certain initiatory conditions (Mihăilă, 1979).

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