

CONFLUENȚE
Texts & Contexts Reloaded
T.C.R.

Analele Universității din Oradea
Fascicula Limbi și literaturi moderne
Oradea, 2013



Editura Universității din Oradea
2013

Editor-in Chief: Ioana Cistelean

Secretary: Éva Székely

Executive Editors:

Anemona Alb
Veronica Buciuman
Florica Mateoc
Dan Negruț

Advisory Board:

José Antonio Álvarez (University of Alicante, Spain)
Tamás Bényei (University of Debrecen, Hungary)
Liviu Cotrău (Partium Christian University, Oradea)
Roger Craik (Kent State University, U.S.A.)
Sylvie Crinquand (University of Dijon, France)
Magda Danciu (University of Oradea)
Sean Darmody (Trinity College, Dublin)
Claire Despierres (University of Borgogne, France)
Erika Hammer (University of Pécs)
Stanislav Kolář (University of Ostrava, Czech Republic)
Teodor Mateoc (University of Oradea)
Mircea Morariu (University of Oradea)
Michaela Mudure (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj Napoca)
Petre Popescu (writer, U.S.A.)
Irena Ragaišiene (Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania)
Nóra Séllei (University of Debrecen, Hungary)
Angeles Sirvent Ramos (University of Alicante)
Marta Teixeira Anacleto (University of Coimbra)
Maria Trappen ("Lucian Blaga" University, Sibiu)
Elena Viorel (Partium Christian University, Oradea)

In 2012 the Ministry of Education and Research (Romania) ranked our journal category C.

e-ISSN 2344 – 6072
ISSN - L 1842 - 662x

Adresa redacției:
Facultatea de Litere
Universitatea din Oradea
Str. Universității, nr.1, Oradea, Bihor
Tel. 0259-408178
<http://www.deoradea.info/confluente/index.shtml>

Contents

Inhaltsverzeichnis

Tables des matieres

THE MAN OF THE HOUR. ROGER CRAIK. POEMS 5

Issue's Topic: **Modernism and Postmodernism**

LITERARY-ISMS: 21
LITERATURWISSENSCHAFTLICHE
STUDIEN
ÉTUDES LITTÉRAIRE

Argument: The Fortunes of the Novel in the Victorian Age 22
Adrian Radu

Dangling between Reality and Hyperreality in David Lewellyn's *Eleven* 29
Dan Negruț

The Self and the Labyrinth in Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass* and Jorge Luis Borges' *The House of Asterion* 35
Dana Sala

Shadowy Waters: a Symbolist Play 54
Éva Székely

Manques, objets, reconstructions de l'identité par l'écriture 76
Simona Șuta

Die Nostalgie des Nicht-Seins in Günter Grass *Die Blechtrommel* 84
Monica Bușoiu

CULTURAL-ISMS / KULTURWISSENSCHAFTLICHE STUDIEN/ ÉTUDES CULTURELLES

Argument: What Influences Irish Writers? From Yeats to Present 97
Sean Darmody

Post-industrial Offspring: Iconographies of Postmodern Motherhood and Child-Rearing in Chick Lit. A Perusal of Sophie Kinsella's *Shopaholic & Baby* 108
Anemona Alb

La lenteur- une philosophie à la mode 115
Teodora Cernău

Globalization and Localization: Experiments in Scottish Fiction Today	Magda Danciu	122
Moderne literarische Ikonen einer klassischen Schönheit. Grenzüberschreitungen oder die Wort-Bild- Koexistenz in Poesie und Malerei	Hajnalka Hegyesi	129
BOOK REVIEWS/ BUCHBESPRECHUNGEN/ REVUE DU LIVRE		142
Roger Craik Revealing and Delivering Poetry...	Ioana Cistelecan	143
Emil Cioran: De la France	Floare Mateoc	147
Mircea Mihăieș: Ce rămâne. William Faulkner și misterele ținutului Yoknapatawpha (<i>What Lingers. William Faulkner and the Mysteries of the Yoknapatawpha County</i>)	Teodor Mateoc	150
The Hieroglyphic History. Beyond Conventions. Bogdan Crețu	Marius Miheț	152

Section Code: C018

**THE MAN OF THE HOUR.
ROGER CRAIK. POEMS**



Roger Craik is Associate Professor of English at Kent State University, Ashtabula, U.S.A.

English by birth and educated at the universities of Reading and Southampton, he has tried his luck as a journalist, TV critic and chess columnist. Before coming to USA in 1991, he worked in Turkish universities and was awarded a Beineke Fellowship to Yale in 1990. He is widely traveled, having visited North Yemen, Egypt, Tibet, Nepal, Japan, Poland, and Bulgaria.

During the academic year 2013-2014 he is Fulbright Scholar in English at University of Oradea, Romania.

The following poems represent a selection and they actually belong to the author's next volume, *Down Stranger Roads*, about to be issued in 2014.

THANKSGIVING MORNING

On the day that all the world had died,
standing on my front door step
with coffee in the dark blue mug I'd bought
in Hartford, at some wordy conference,
I idly pressed my bell

and caught
in that ding-dong hackneyed chime
the sound that suddenly meant you,
the one you must each time have faintly heard through wood
before the hurtling urgency of me inside,
summoned by banality that I
alone can recognize
as blasphemously you, uniquely you, so
freshly newly you each time, bringing your immeasurable
gift
of yourself

which has me capering
while in my living room the samovar
waltzes my candlesticks dizzy,

and on the floor my Turkish carpet undulates
like some exotic deep-sea ray.

And there I'd be,
in one great sweep all fingers fumbling off your wedding ring
and smoothing with my palms
your long black coat away to hang it up among
the jingling uncooperative triangles of wire,
and kissing every nearest bit of you, no matter what,
and helter-skelter tumbling out
my questions, telling you
all the things that I presumed
of interest in my dreary day

until you came
and pressed the bell
and made me happy

then.

Alone, of course,
again and again

I press my bell

and every time, although it's not
—although my reason tells me that it's not—
it's you, it's you, it's always always you.

VIEW OF DELFT

Here, close to where four centuries ago
Johannes Vermeer stood, looked the other way,
I shiver on this iron bridge, watch Delft grow
dour, unpicturesque, its river edged
with tidy drab concerns: Gerritschippen,
Popinflas, Loew and Stein. Further on,
a smudge of ill-lit shops. In the distance,
cranes. There the harbor begins.

This is a prospect of the edge of things.
No guidebook, signpost, names the nondescript,
directs one's steps to places such as this,
unless by chance. But in this spot,
as daylight weakens and as shapes congeal,
the eye unjostled and the mind unforced
by beauty's spiring self-insistencies
are stilled. Nothing moves. Only the blue
darkening. A bridge. One man standing in subdued
exhilaration, sensing that to him alone
words might confide themselves, words not rubbed smooth
by numberless hands, but words made new, made real
by circumstance as fresh as paint,
that only colors, is unstaled by use.

Near silence. Solitude. The gradual
ebb and leakage into truth.

SELF-DISLIKE AT A POETRY READING

"This next one's a prose poem," he declares,
and I think what were all the others then,
and scan the audience a second time,
less hopefully, for girls. Meanwhile,
threatening interminability,
the preamble (indistinguishable, I presume,
from what's to come, if come it ever does)
anacondas round the staling room, between the rows
of institution chairs and regulars upon
the institution chairs, or some of them, and no one's

listening apparently; and once again
the churlish energetic loneliness
takes hold.

There's a bar just down the street.

There is indeed a bar just down the street
and I could be there, there expansively to contemplate
the art that is a pint of Guinness,
soupy, long and dark. Instead, I reason with myself
that I am here for poetry, to get a sense
of "what is going on around these parts."
I do not tell myself that I am here for love
nor admit how often my miss-hearings prove
the germs of poems of my own (no trace of debt)
which in my tidy Moleskine I secrete
for the hours when I am not on edge
upon a hardening chair
in one small room that's filling with my prayers.

But when he's finished, I applaud.
I applaud, I tell you, I applaud.

THE MODEL

Before the dullish mirror bolted firm
upon the pastel wall, she contemplates
the body wholly hers at last, undressed,
and scrutinizes one by one and then
together for their full effect her breasts
unmagnified by prying high-power zoom.
This week it's Tel Aviv: Manhattan next.

Fifteen floors below, the car horns blare.
Room service came and went. She sips a Kahlua,
surveys herself again. She doesn't sport
the cultivated sultry lip-curved sneer
that drives men wild, she's told, and made
her somewhat famous, so she hears. Instead
she eyes her father in the fullness of

that mouth, and in the stare that, slightly cruel,
reminds her of the office in Lahore,
pistachios in a copper bowl, the phone
that rang and rang upon his desk, ignored,
his fingers swarthy round the heavy glass,
the hawkers' cries outside, and then the hush
as dusk became ornate with minarets.

How stale it all became, so soon! How scattered,
dulled, she feels, how altered now from when
her school-friends envied her the jet-set whirl
of limousines and suites and cocktail bars
where drinks were always on the house. She hums
a line or two from Paul McCartney's song
"Another Day" and sees, twelve hours away

beyond the customs wall a pacing man
whose avoirdupois fingers will arrange
the sand next day to trickle crystalline
between her thighs so bronzed, so taut, so trim,
so un-alive. She sighs. She wonders if
at twenty-eight, when at the corners of
her glossy pout the lines begin to draw

the character that no one's ever thought
to get to know. . .And suddenly, as though
she'd walked out of a frowsty room into
a village street of sun-warmed twilight air
giving way to stone-strewn roads that led
through cornfields pricked with poppies, bursts the mood
for 1920's jazz, King Oliver,

the boisterous breaking-out, the push and pull
of notes so brassy-crisp, each one about
its busyness of joy. Her foot begins
to tap tap tap and soon she's capering,
her glass a-tilt, inventing scraps of lines
in nonsense random French, remembering
the curtains billowing like sails into

the downstairs cottage rooms and how the wind
those girlhood summers blew the sea inland,
resinous with pines. Again she longs,
fifteen floors above a noisy street,
for garlic singing in the pan, and knows
the loss of meals no waiter ever brought,
obsequious, but those she'd make herself:

the innocence of scrambled eggs; the toast
that jumped up merry from its silver box,
the coffee gurgling at its own concerns
of being made, one sunbeam slanting long. . .

She looks around the room. Still life. The phone
unringing by the tundra of her bed,
king-size, the two small lamps above, the phone. . .

The air conditioning begins to hum.

SOFIA AFTER THE FALL OF COMMUNISM

A city shattered of itself. SUVs
curve down its narrow streets at speed and on
the pavements' crazed octagonal flags.

From his slab in the squat headquarters
cypress-shrouded in the foothills' clearer air,
the jowly man, the peasant communist,
ruling decades with a heavy telephone
is gone, and with him gone is law.
Fewer now remember him.
Perhaps the old, or some of them,
in parks, on benches, doorsteps, or alone,
still do, and in thin ruefulness recall the day
when everything were as if
sighed away, and they were left
bewildered on familiar streets
with former names returned but strange.
Around a lily pad you see them sometimes trudge
an emptiness of afternoons, and stare upon
a world they cannot force to fit. To them
there were always the young, but not these young
bedecked in foreign characters. . . But thought exhausts.
They cannot think to think as down the car-fledged streets
to techno music's thudding heartless beat
the shady men, the brutish men in SUVs,
swerve a past to nothingness.

ULYSSES IN THE NEW WORLD

When I started teaching Homer here,
whose books I've known since I was eight,
or ten at most,
first in Penguin (E. V. Rieu), then Pope,
and finally in lines by Tennyson
that made me weep, and make me weep today,
I used to marvel, stunned, when I was told
how Ulysses would "goof," "screw up,"
and "kinda had to show he was the boss—
"a typical jock,"
as if he'd locked himself out of his car
or run out of gas
or spilt his popcorn on his girlfriend's jeans:
the jerk.

What impertinence it takes, I'd think, aghast,

to wrench from their true time and lands these gods and men!
Hours after such a class I'd chafe at home,
three Scotches down, unsoothed by Thomas Tallis'
Spem in Alium, pontificating to my frying pan
that to allow the false
erodes a man's capacity,
without his knowing it,
to form true views, and I'd be damned, yes damned. . .

If you think that I'm indulgent now,
another milk-and-water boy at tenured ease
who's long forgotten that he used to care, or read,
you're wrong.
In the Midlands town where I was born,
once known for boots and shoes,
Scamander was indeed the stream that ran
beside the graveyard wall, and yes,
in caves of undergrowth
there surely lurked (I even saw him once)
the one-eyed bellower, Poseidon's Cyclops son.
And yes again, for years I thought he roamed and roamed,
this Ulysses of mine, by birth a gentleman
well-turned in verse or Oxford English prose,

modulating truth with sophistry.

But now in later years I see
this urbane mariner, or jerk, or jock,
pretending only to be domiciled for us,
when all the while he knows,
beyond our deaths, through other centuries than ours,
he'll wander without end. There never was
an Ithaca or home, but just himself, alone,
shiftless, yet immortal as the stars.

FACEBOOK

. . .or the shawled
grandmother, and two children
on a railway platform;

or the runner
cresting his stride
into the golden straight;

or Richard
Feynman sitting down to write
the long letter to his dead wife

which will live in a drawer for years. . .

II

More and more the middle-aged man remembers walking with his grandfather at night on Ham Common at Kingston-upon-Thames, near the wall of Richmond Park. He could not have been more than ten years old. He wanted to see an owl, but they didn't see one, although he thought he heard one once. His grandfather had a torch so strong that it could touch the clouds, and he moved the beam from cloud to cloud; and then the boy did too, amazed by the beam but amazed more when there were no clouds. They heard rustlings all around, probably shrews or mice, perhaps a hedgehog. When they got back he told his grandmother all about it, then went to sleep in his narrow bedroom with the triangular window, and the vacuum cleaner in its box at his feet.

III

The small illuminated screen.

Your fingers at the keys. World
contracting into rectangles.

Pandora's lidless box.

The hell that is connectedness.
The hell that is addiction to the self.
The hell that's always someone else

unreal: the only face
in endless halls and endless corridors
where every face is yours.

AWAKE

Awake early in someone else's house,
you pick around the approximating kitchen,
establishing routine. Coffee
is achievement in the making: the dull red dot

charged into crimson when you thumbed the switch;
the gurgling, while a different gurgling, was nonetheless

proof of nothing wrong so far. From the door
of a fridgeful of unlikelinesses

you hoist a hollow-handled plastic jug
of low-fat milk up onto a counter, hear
and at your wrist and up your forearm's sinews feel
its shuddering just-controllable

glug and coursing at a mug you're yet to select
from a stalwartness of mugs ranged in the dark
of perhaps the third cabinet you'll hazard at,
telling yourself they must be somewhere, surely.

Later, on the dusty porch,
in a paint-flecked wicker chair you never would have thought
to buy yourself, amid the kitsch
of someone else's things, you're taking in

a scene unfastened to the hour:
a line of other-peopled houses on the other side.
Unaccountably, as if turned on by dimmer switch, the sun
comes slanting wide, igniting all the lawns

to starling-strutting self-importance, run-and-leaning
jab—and jab again.
Rapt in this bedazzling
wordlessness, gradually you realize
yourself as happy.

The sun is basking on your cheek.
From time to time the chair will creak,
but from upstairs there comes, can come, you plead,

no sound.

A car goes down the street.
A long while afterwards, a school bus passes,
leaving its impression on the air

of morning in an unknown district
of a different city. And nothing starts to happen

as it happens here, here with you
amazed within it, the dust not mattering, you

this morning woken to a sense
of circumstances swept and disentangled
somewhere else, no longer even your concern.

Silence. The birds.

Without your stir, your mind begins to roam
in a stranger's words down stranger roads.

INTERVIEW

His desk was expansive, an acreage
of maroon, one small pile of papers to his left,
one green stone. Throughout the interview
his olive hands, as a pianist's at rest,
were spread: they did not move. What he asked
was almost what I had expected, and I watched
him watching what I thought, or so I thought.
I kept my answers short and to the point.
I could not imagine him ever young.
I sensed his shoes were watching as I left.

FIRST JOURNEY

As inch by inch the train pulled out
with me inside alone,
I saw my mother in her Fifties skirt
and black-rimmed glasses and dark coat
watching still,
and then, as if to race the train,
my father running after me
not as an athlete would
or fathers of my friends at school,
but stroking, pressing down the air
with the heels of his hands and then with his palms
like some great cat with padded paws.

And all that afternoon through hours of fields
and towns whose names lodge with me still,
I saw him in my mind's eye running thus

beyond the platform's end and then beside the rails
on stony ground, on straggling grass,
outdistanced, and outdistanced further still.

ANTHOLOGIST

Names in majuscule, in bold.
In parenthesis, birth hyphen death.
Beneath, a paragraph, eleven lines at most.
Life's bare bones.

Then the poems
or one poem.

Thus from wedged imprinted centuries
these names he chose, and from them these or this
as representative, as best.

And the rest?

THE POEM

One evening when his father had gone out,
he sat down at the kitchen table, wrote
his best-known poem.

Outside, light thinned above the city
roofs and aerals,
the sluggish river at its own concerns, the distant port
and starboard lights

and on his soft black pencil moved.
The poem did not look over its shoulder,
nor he forward to the unimaginable

calendar-gridded
decades of offers, launches, electronic
mail to keep him anxious
hours early in departure lounges,
watching sometimes through a tinted slab
airplanes trundling like benign enormous toys

grounded from a grown-up childhood:

apprehended, lost. Also there'd be girls
who lingered afterwards, or
if out of vanity, or loneliness, or Scotch, or
happiness he encouraged them—

stayed on later still,
asking questions of another kind,
long hours from dawn.

Yes, he'd keep on writing poems, better to his mind
than the one they kept on printing,
expecting him to read, and asking him about.
And when they did, he'd smilingly of course oblige,
remembering the details, one by one,
but inwardly forgot
the yellow table in the tenement,
one slipper tapping the linoleum,
and in what ignorance he wrote,

then watched a little television, went to bed
and did not hear his father come back late.

ASHTABULA, OHIO

This town is raw.
The waitresses smoke and get
hard-faced young.

With the red tarpaulin of a tablecloth
ridging my legs above the knees,
I'm tracing Ginger Baker's part
in the muzak's "Badge"
(the one before was "Do It Again")
and pondering how small a grain
it takes of discontent to swell
into a hell of anywhere that's just itself,
as this town is: its brickish street with six old bars
(one used to be a chandler's, but it failed)
and factories drawn up nearby, purifying

chlorine through great sheets of mercury
and flaring in a dark that's darker still
beneath the stars far out above the lake
on which some dry-as-dust cartographer has inked
a staggered path, the unstaked-out frontier
where great America, her massive drape of land at last
exhausted,
slackens and expires.

I sense the starlings wheezing, squabbling
into yet another spring
as I sit waiting for the Irish former dean
who hired me twenty years ago when things
were desperate.

I do not forget.

I have lived here longer
and more happily than anywhere.

In my polished glass,
sunlight scintillates.

The waitress comes up, asks me if I taught her aunt
seven years ago, or was it eight.

Modernity & Postmodernity
LITERARY-ISMS

Modernität und Postmodernität
LITERATURWISSENSCHAFTLICHE
STUDIEN

Modernité et postmodernité
ÉTUDES LITTÉRAIRES



Argument to this issue's topic: Modernism and
Postmodernism

The Fortunes of the Novel in the Victorian Age

Adrian Radu¹

The nineteenth century was the age of the novel which prospered like never before during the Victorian period when, between 1837 and 1901, about 60,000 novels were published². As pointed out in Flint³, there are many reasons which led to this popularity; the few which follow are only the most significant ones. The Industrial Revolution led to the development of cities with concentrated markets; middle-classes rose in power and importance and the novel was the literary genre that best represented these classes; more and more people became educated and capable of reading; the costs of printing and distribution became lower due to productivity; the new system of advertising and promotion of books yielded good results. Then, public reading increased and the number of lending libraries grew in parallel with the modernisation and development of book publishing in the modern sense of the word. Another factor that increased the popularity of the novels was the practice of having fragments of them read aloud at home or in public in workplaces and concert halls, sometimes by their authors themselves. Charles Dickens was such a writer whose public appearances added a lot to his fame.

The public merely wished to be entertained with what was familiar, to pretend that what was found in books did really happen, that literature was journalism and fiction was history. The readers wanted to read about easily identifiable situations populated with ordinary people like themselves but liberated from

¹ Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca

² John Sutherland, *The Longman Companion to the Victorian Novel* (1999), qtd. in Louis James, *The Victorian Novel* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), p. 3.

³ Kate Flint, *The Victorian novel and its readers*, in Deirdre David's, *The Cambridge Companion to the Victorian Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 17-34.

the dullness of daily routine. In consequence, the literary trend that such expectations generated was realism, filtered though through the writer's critical eye and conceived as representation of truth – social, economic or individual – of the typical and familiar in real life, rather than an idealised, formalised or romantic interpretation of it.

The socio-economic conditions of the epoch, but also the development of sciences whose influence was ever increasing associated realism with the necessity to represent truth with as much accuracy as possible. This made great writers like Charles Dickens, Charlotte Brontë or Elizabeth Gaskell undertake rigorous documentation before starting to write their novels. Even in the cases when reality was fictionalised, the writers of the age knew how to create the illusion that what they spoke about was directly related to real life, that their books were a transcript of what really happened.

As James remarks⁴, the Victorian novel was not so formally delineated, it did not have a theory behind it, as it happens today. It was a mere work of fiction, a narrative written in prose, opposed to 'romance', whose main aim was to reflect everyday life realistically so as to fulfil thus the requirements of contemporary readers and their horizons of expectation.

When it came to publishing the Victorian novels in volume form, the form of the 'three-deckers' was adopted and soon became common practice, as found in James⁵. This implied publishing the novels in three volumes, especially in the case of new fiction, although some writers resented publishing in specific length and dividing the narrative into three parts. But the format had its advantages and proved to be commercially efficient for the writers and publishers. Although not any people could afford buying such books, it allowed print runs of 700 to 500 copies, the writers got their pay and the readers could borrow them from lending libraries.

The cheaper alternative to the 'three-deckers' was their serial publication, which soon became the affordable standard of the day – the novels were published initially in part-issue form and later in weekly papers. This became common practice with many great novelists such as Charles Dickens, W. M. Thackeray or George Eliot. The method of serialization affected the structure of the novel and

⁴ Louis James, *The Victorian Novel* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), p. 2.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 205-6.

had advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand it enhanced the role of the suspense from one episode to another to keep the readers' interest awake – the so-called 'cliff-hanger' technique commonly used in TV serials today⁶ – and provided closer contact between writer and his readership, which enabled the writer to test the readers' reaction to the narrated events. On the other hand, there were incongruities, inconsistencies in character treatment or damages to the unity and harmony of the whole novel.

The Victorian novel is essentially based on the chronological presentation of events where the hero emerges with the plot and the readers know him as the story unfolds or in which the writer gives his hero an initial descriptive portrait. The novel often makes the writer feel the necessity to teach a moral lesson, to improve the morals and manners of his readers, to make generalisations about human nature, or even to discuss the hero's actions with the readers in an attempt to please them or to attend to their desires⁷ – as it happens in the case of W. M. Thackeray.

If before many novels finished with happy-endings, this ceased to be common practice throughout the nineteenth century⁸ and even if there was a happy-ending, it was often contrived or suggested (as in Dickens's *Great Expectations*).

The narrative technique is also traditional. The most frequently used is the third person narration with the writer emerging as an omniscient author – this is the case of W. M. Thackeray, Charlotte Brontë (in *Shirley*) or George Eliot. Another perspective is that offered by the first person narration. In Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* it has pseudo-autobiographical overtones. Anne Brontë's novel *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* is a more complex combination of two first person narrations. An interesting case is found in *Bleak House* by Ch. Dickens where the subjective narration in the 1st person of a participant in the story is made to alternate with the authorial voice materialised in the more objective third person narration of a nameless onlooker and outsider. Noteworthy is also George Eliot's use of the narrating 'I', the authorial 'second

⁶ Denis Delaney, Ciaran Ward and Carla Rho Fiorina, *Fields of Vision: Literature in the English Language*, vol. 2 (Harlow, Essex: Pearson Education / Longman, 2003), p. 130.

⁷ Flint, 24.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 29.

self⁹ meant to signal the presence of an omniscient author, create a link between the past and present and propose the readers a sort of a 'secret contract' between them and the author¹⁰. Innovative for the age is Emily Brontë's use of narrators in *Wuthering Heights*, where the two narrators – actually, character narrators – have a minor implication in the story being mainly used to narrate the events. Here Mr Lockwood, one of the narrators, is assigned a double role: that of a narratee, a sort of an implied reader recipient of Nelly Dean's story, and narrator of facts heard-of or directly witnessed. To certain extent, certain events reported by Mrs Dean are also the result of hear-say from other characters.

Many novels of the age were published with illustrations in the text as a result of the development of the wood-engraving technique. Indeed, the popularity of not few novels is due to this practice of the age, which also made certain book illustrators quite famous. This was the case of Millais, the Dalziel Brothers, Arthur Hughes or Frederick Walker¹¹. Charles Dickens's novel *The Pickwick Papers* started as a collection of caricatures to which Dickens had to add the explanatory text. But soon Dickens's contribution became dominant and the public placed his chapters on the first plan. Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* appeared illustrated by the writer himself, whereas Lewis Carroll's books *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass* benefitted from the cartoons of John Tenniel which were so inspired that contemporary editions still preserve them. George du Maurier was another well-known book illustrator who collaborated with Wilkie Collins, Thomas Hardy or George Meredith¹².

If judged from the point of view of the topic around which they are constructed, the Victorian novels fall into several types detailed below.

One of them is the condition of England novels (named so by Carlyle in his essay 'Chartism') or industrial novels (as Raymond Williams calls them in *Culture and Society*), which treat the problems arising out of the Industrial Revolution and discuss the state of the nation, as for instance: Charles Dickens's *Hard*

⁹ Roger Ebbatson, *George Eliot: The Mill on the Floss* (London: Penguin, 1991), p. 35.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 39.

¹¹ Flint., 200.

¹² *Ibid.*

Times, Charlotte Brontë's *Shirley*, Mrs Gaskell's *Mary Barton* and *North and South*, or Benjamin Disraeli's *Sybil*.

A similar documentary evocation but on a lesser scale is offered by the regional novels associated with the depiction of life on a more limited territory – a province, district or local community. This is the case of George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, Elizabeth Gaskell's *Cranford* or Charlotte Brontë's *Shirley*.

No less enjoyed were the historical novels. Dickens, though more committed to the present than to the past, still wrote two such novels: *Barnaby Rudge* or *A Tale of Two Cities*. Better appreciated is W. M. Thackeray's novel *Henry Esmond*, actually a pastiche of eighteenth century prose and one of the best evocations of the atmosphere of English society in the early eighteenth century.

A more gendered orientation, though it is too early to speak about feminism, is found in certain novels that discuss the statute, position and problems of the Victorian woman facing prejudices, conventions and hostile conventions and her need for emancipation and assertion. This happens in Charlotte Brontë's *Shirley* or *Jane Eyre*, George Eliot's *Mill on the Floss* or *Middlemarch* or in Elizabeth's Gaskells *Mary Barton* or *North and South*.

Other well-liked novels of the day not only among children or adolescents, but also among adults, were either books for children or young readers or whose theme is childhood or enchanted adventure. Charles Dickens's is the incontestable author of children's stories such as *A Christmas Carol* or depicter of children in novels like *Oliver Twist*, *Little Dorrit*, *David Copperfield* or *Great Expectations*. Lewis Carroll in his novels *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass* created the memorable character of Alice in a narrative full of paradoxes, riddles and puns and in an often pastiche atmosphere of fairy-tale. Robert Louis Stephenson's novel *Treasure Ireland* has young readers as its target audience while Louisa May Alcott's book *Little Women* is a classic for girls¹³.

A popular type of novels was that which continued the Gothic tradition – the sensation novels in which the contexts of traditional social relations, homes and families are recycled to furnish settings for mystery, murder, seduction or blackmail. As

¹³ Ibid., 192.

James points out¹⁴, during the age the story of sensation which drew heavily on melodrama came as an outlet for the strict Victorian morals, repressed sexuality and way of life. By the suspense it created, the genre sold very well and offered good sales figures to writers and editors. Although marred by ordinary and valueless creations, it was given a touch of maturity and professionalism in the hands of William Wilkie Collins and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in creations such as *The Moonstone* or *The Woman in White* of the former or the character Sherlock Holmes of the latter's. In *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* Charles Dickens was also tempted to write a similar kind of novel. An interesting case of popular reading material was offered by the so-called 'Penny Dreadfuls'¹⁵, the low-priced serial novels, published in instalments as a form of escapist reading, available to ordinary youth and low classes, named for both their cheap nature, and poor, sensational quality. Such serial novels were overdramatic and sensational, and resulted in increasingly literate youth in the Industrial period. The wide circulation of this sensationalist literature, however, contributed to an ever greater fear of crime in mid-Victorian Britain. Some of the most famous of these penny part-stories were *The String of Pearls: A Romance* (introducing the character Sweeney Todd), *The Mysteries of London* (inspired by French serial *The Mysteries of Paris*) and *Varney the Vampire. Black Bess or the Knight of the Road*, became very popular outlining in 254 episodes the exploits of the real-life English highwayman Dick Turpin.

The novelists of the Victorian age are not grouped around theoretical principles. In general, their creations deal with social, political and philosophical topics. However, there are two quite distinctive generations of writers that cover this period. The first one is represented by such writers as Charles Dickens, W. M. Thackeray, Elizabeth Gaskell, Anthony Trollope, the Brontës and George Eliot, who were very popular at that time. They are a sort of spokespersons of the epoch, critical of the age but confident in sciences and progress and moral improvement of the individual. The second generation – represented by Samuel Butler, George Meredith and Thomas Hardy, who were less popular then – is more pessimistic and less confident in Victorian values, hence certain

¹⁴ Ibid., 216.

¹⁵ Cf. *Wikipedia*, Penny Dreadful (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Penny_dreadful, May 2013).

satirical overtones and insistence on the inner and darker sides of human personality.

As this articles delineates, the Victorian novel has a strong personality of its own, offering the great realistic tradition for many modern prose creations¹⁶ associated with what is called the modern British novel but also exhibiting traces of modernity, offering creative alternatives and foreshadowing the fictional creations of modernism and postmodernism of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

¹⁶ Virgil Stanciu, *Războiul gândului cu literele: Eseuri de literatură americană și engleză* (Cluj-Napoca: Tribuna, 2004), p. 195.

Dangling between Reality and Hyperreality in David Llewellyn's *Eleven*

Dan Negru¹

Abstract:

*The present paper is a text-based analysis of the main character's painful vacillation between denial and acceptance of reality and of the fragmented selves as demonstrated by the truncated narrative techniques in *Eleven*, the 2006 novel by David Llewellyn.*

Key Words: *reality, hyperreality, fragmented selves, narrative techniques*

Among other authors who dealt with the 9/11 incidents from a British perspective and with the consequences of the events upon the British Isles, David Llewellyn comes with a dark comedy *Eleven* written in 2006. Nicholas Clee considered that Llewellyn's first novel combined two major themes: office life, rarely explored in fiction and the atrocities of 9/11, and praises the author for having more taste than others, considering the novel a funny and disturbing view of a disaffected age (Clee, 2007).

The novel *Eleven* is a good piece of evidence for the postmodern need of communication, in the age of cyberculture (Taylor and Winquist 2004:75), being nothing else than a mere collection of emails written by Martin Davies, a frustrated accountant, who works for a finance company and hates his job. He hesitates a lot before actually sending an email to somebody, saving emails in his Drafts folder, and sending them first to his own email address.

In his essay *The Ecstasy of Communication*, in Hal Foster's *Postmodern Culture*, Jean Baudrillard points to the disappearance of the scene of interiority and the object's status as mirror, of the meaningful opposition between public and private and calls the postmodern

¹ University of Oradea

the protean era of connections, contact, contiguity, feedback and generalized interface that goes with the universe of communication. (...) people no longer project themselves into their objects, with their affects and their representations, their fantasies of possession, loss, mourning, jealousy: the psychological dimension has in a sense vanished... (Baudrillard 1985:126)

From the very beginning of the novel, the reader faces the multiplicity of narrators as incorporated in the emails sent and received by multiple users. The main narrator/internet user is Martin Davies whose electronic communication and office life are divided into the official messages, which he is able to send and the private messages, which he keeps saving in his Drafts folder. Martin is a split identity who does not have the courage to admit to his failure both as a professional (he has written something of a film script but never had the courage to send it to anyone) and in his love life (he is not yet able to accept the fact that he has separated from Theresa).

The 9/11 events are foreshadowed from the very first page of the novel, in the email entitled “F**king Tuesdays”, an email Martin does not have the courage to send to anyone:

Last night we went for a drink on Mill Lane. You should have come.

Anyway, as it was starting to get dark, this guy came up to us, a crazy guy with a beard and he said “take all your money out of your bank accounts, spend all your credit cards, the revolution will not be televised.”

He kept saying it was going to be the end of the world, so we might as well spend everything we’ve got.

Then I realised I’ve already spent everything that I’ve got. My credit cards and store cards are already maxed, so I’m fucked.

I couldn’t sleep when I got (David Llewellyn, 2006:7)

SAVED IN ‘DRAFTS’

One of the recurrent characteristics of the messages Martin does not have the courage to send is the fact that they are never finished. Such emails contain, among other things, his decision to quit his job (DL, 2006:17), his offensive or intimate emails directed towards his bosses (DL, 2006:18,21,32,43,68,124,125,126), his thoughts regarding other people (DL, 2006: 28,51) and the spleen he is suffering from (DL, 2006:28), his indecision to send his script to

BBC (DL, 2006: 33,38,84) and his feelings for his colleague Safina Aziz who is about to get married: “You don’t want to marry him. We’ve had this conversation before. He might be a decent man and all the rest of it, but it is really what you” (DL, 2006:35)

During the day, he realizes the uselessness of his existence:

“FROM: martin.davies@quantumfinance.co.uk

TO:

SAVED: 13:29, Tuesday September 11, 2001

SUBJECT: Words

I don’t know who I’m even writing this for. Half the time I’m just looking at the reflection of my eyes in the monitor. They look black. Why the fuck did I come back here? (...)

I work so that I can have money so that I can carry on living in my house and I can eat. I do those things in order that I can get up each day and go to work, and maybe, in the days that fall between the times when I’m working, I’ll fill myself with chemicals and I’ll put on a smile and pretend to be laughing. My pretend laugh is now more realistic than my real laugh. I do it even when somebody is telling me something really, really bad.

I work so I can live so I can work.” (DL, 2006:66-67)

SAVED IN ‘DRAFTS’

The quote “My pretend laugh is now more realistic than my real laugh.” is highly symbolical of the dichotomy between the cruel reality and the comfortable hyperreality, a

“hyperreality (which) is constructed of what Baudrillard calls models or simulacra, which have no reference to reality, but exist within a series of replication that has no historical meaning.” (Taylor and Winquist, 2004:183)

At 14:06 Martin Davies receives an email from Dan Jones, telling him about the terrorist attacks on World Trade Centre, but Martin refuses to accept reality for a while, then he tries to deny his involvement in reality: “I wish I didn’t feel so excited.” (DL, 2006:84). He perceives reality as menacing, while finding comfort in his hyperreality, in his e-reality, the reality of his (unsent) emails.

A few minutes later, in another attempt to deny reality, but foreseeing the global dimension of unpredictable terrorist attacks, he tries to find comfort in his inner world:

“I’m closing my eyes and asking myself the question, DO I GIVE A FUCK?”

There are planes crashing into America, Sue. It sounds small now, but I know it’s going to be big. (...)

What would we do if a plane crashed into us?” (DL, 2006:89)

SAVED IN ‘DRAFTS’

Martin Davies’ denial of reality: “Nothing. Nothing’s happening. None of the managers have even mentioned it. It is like it isn’t happening at all. In fact, I’m not entirely sure it is.” (DL, 2006:91 is highly symbolical of the acceptance of hyperreality.

Martin Davies, in this sense, challenges the truth and the objectivity of the 9/11 events, denying their existence, preferring, instead, the more comfortable reality of hyperreality.

Despite the emails he receives from his debauched friend Lloyd Thomas: “I’m watching people jumping out of burning buildings. This is happening, Martin.” (DL, 2006:92), Martin still clings to his own protected hyperreality “Not here, it isn’t. Not in this building. Nothing happens in this building. Not time. Not death. Nothing.” (DL, 2006:92)

The reality of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre is juxtaposed and opposed in the novel to the love triangle encompassing Lloyd Thomas, Lisa Cullis and Sara, drug consumption and corporate emails.

Martin Davies becomes gradually aware of the fact that he won’t be able to deny reality for long, that he will be forced to accept it:

“It’s not a ‘no thanks’ like you think it is. I don’t know what’s happening to me today.

I don’t know what’s happening to me today.

I don’t know what’s going to happen to me today.

I’m sorry” (DL, 2006:97)

Becoming aware of the necessity to accept reality, Martin starts becoming more assertive too. For the first time, he braves up and writes an email (which he sends too) to Theresa, his former lover, revealing his true feelings for her.

“You’re not like a person I don’t see any more. You’re like a colour that’s suddenly gone. As if somebody took away the colour blue or the colour

red. I walk through each day doing the same thing I ever did, but there's something missing, and if I think about it I realise it's you.

I miss you so much.

Martin xx" (DL, 2006:98)

Martin still vacillates between the cruel reality and to his protected hyperreality, becoming aware of the futility of fighting reality, a thing which becomes evident in the unsent emails:

"It's not real." (DL, 2006:104)

"Plans are nothing more than weak strings suspended between ideas you once had, and yet we treat them as walls and floors of reinforced concrete. When they collapse and disintegrate, we stand back amazed, wondering how it could possibly have happened.

I thought my plans were strong enough to get me through, but they're not. They are gossamer. They are the first powdery snowflakes of January. Cobwebs break on a strong breeze and snowflakes thaw.

I have nothing" (DL, 2006:116).

"What if I don't want to be loved?" (DL, 2006:120).

"What if I said I hated you all?

He takes a step in his gradual acceptance of reality, of himself and of his feelings, sending an email to Safina Aziz, his co-worker:

"You've probably gone home now. That doesn't matter. I think I'm about to fuck everything up.

I'm just so bored with everything.

I thought I loved you, but I look at the word now and it's alien, like a word somebody made up as a joke.

None of this is making any sense. I'm sorry." (DL, 2006:126)

Highly ironically, the only email in which he has the courage to accept reality is blocked by the system administrator.

In a supreme last attempt to deny reality, he sends an email to God: "Please get me out of here. I'm so fucking scared." (DL, 2006:128)

The only response he gets is:

"The following message did not reach its intended recipient:

TO: GOD

SUBJECT: WHY?

The recipient address was unknown". (DL, 2006:129)

The novel has a circular structure, beginning and ending with the same email “F**king Tuesdays”; the only difference is one of attitude: in the end of the novel, Martin has the courage to send it to everyone, whereas in the beginning he wrote three versions of the same email which he saved in Drafts:

“I haven’t seen the TV today, but it sounds as if the world’s ending, crashing into a chasm of our making. Times like this make clear the order of things, and if civilisation is about to dismantle itself backwards, we’re the first ones lined up for extinction. Why do you think those planes flew into office buildings?

We are a disposable generation. Centuries of evolution and enlightenment thrown away in an orgy of shopping and recreational sex, and it only ever got us as far as the end of this sentence. We never saw this coming. You never saw this coming. You might be reading this out of pity. You might be reading this out of morbid curiosity. You might be reading this because it’s been forwarded to you as a joke. You might not be reading this at all. Either way, you know what happens next. Have a nice fucking day.” (DL, 2006:130)

The end of the novel brings Martin Davies’ gradual passing from a reality in which he is weak, frustrated, lonely and coward to a hyperreality in which he becomes determined, aggressive, offensive and assertive.

References

- Llewellyn, David, *Eleven*, Seren Press, Ltd, Wales, 2006
Foster, Hal, *Postmodern Culture*, Pluto Press, London, 1985
Taylor, Victor, E.; Winqvist, Charles, E., *Encyclopedia of Postmodernism*, Routledge, London, 2004
Clee, Nicholas, *Day in a Life*,
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2007/jan/06/featuresreviews.guardianreview21> (January 6, 2007), accessed on February 8, 2013

The Self and the Labyrinth in Lewis Carroll's *Through The Looking-Glass* and Jorge Luis Borges's *The House of Asterion*

Dana Sala¹

Abstract: *The chosen literary works contrasted here are *Through the Looking-Glass* and *What Alice Found There* by Lewis Carroll and *The House of Asterion* (*La casa de Asterión* in original), by Jorge Luis Borges. The relationship explored in this article is that between enclosure and openness in labyrinthine spaces, such as the Looking-glass House, for Alice, irrespectively his house where “any particular place is another place”, for Asterion. We, the readers, can be inside the labyrinth revealed by text only through the interiorities experiencing it. The spatial structures of labyrinth allow the retrieval not just of the symmetrical double of the mirror but also the opening of the self, the Open in Heideggerian terms, which is present at a deeper level. Labyrinth is also the secret writing, the *El Aleph*, and it is intertextuality that can play the role of initiation from one level to another. Dream is the link between all levels and between the self and the labyrinth. By analyzing the main characters, Alice and Asterion, and their relationship with the labyrinthine space, it appears that it is the self who shapes the maze rather than the other way round.*

Key words: *labyrinth, Minotaur, dream, intertextuality, symmetry, mirrors, the role of spatial structures, Lewis Carroll, Borges.*

What happens to a character locked in a mirror? What about a character locked in a labyrinth?

Alice in *Through the Looking-Glass* by Lewis Carroll and Asterion in *The House of Asterion* by Jorge Luis Borges are two characters trapped in unreal spaces. The paradox is that they are not prisoners of the spaces they explore. On the contrary, they release the unknown dream-like potentiality of their strange abodes. Both Alice and Asterion have a book-related captivity. For Alice, this captivity is connected to her character status. Is she real or is she a character in somebody's Looking-glass book or in somebody else (Red King)'s dream? Or was she the one who dreamed the Red King? For Asterion, captivity means inability to read and to bond

¹ University of Oradea

with people. But neither of the two characters, Alice or Asterion, admits being a prisoner.

1. Labyrinthine spaces and openness

The relationship explored in this article is that between enclosure and openness in labyrinthine spaces. We could not transport Alice or Asterion to other settings. This casts a light on the fact that there is a powerful cohesion between the identity of these characters and the anchor in their abodes. The opening of the self and the symmetrical double are the source of a question. What if the symmetrical double does not help the opening of the self? What if it encloses the self in structures that further prevent an opening of the layers of truer being? An antipodean symmetrical double diverts through reflection other types of openings. The symmetry is overemphasized in *Through the Looking-Glass* by the game of chess. Therefore we must look for the opening in general terms, the opening of the *Being*, elsewhere. Heidegger discusses the Open in other terms. The advent of truth, in case of the work of art, occurs into the Open. It liberates the Open. It “holds open the Open of the world” (Heidegger, *Poetry, Language Thought*: 44). This kind of Open is beyond the symmetry.

In *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll, Alice has a “scholarly” explanation of the consequences of her falling down the rabbit-hole. She imagines she will reach the ‘antipathies’², people who walk with their heads downwards, as they live on the other side of the earth and are somehow corresponding to our double, due to the symmetry of the two hemispheres of our planet:

'I wonder if I shall fall right through the earth! How funny it'll seem to come out among the people that walk with their heads downward! The Antipathies, I think—' (she was rather glad there was no one listening, this time, as it didn't sound at all the right word) '—but I shall have to ask them what the name of the country is, you know. Please, Ma'am, is this New Zealand or Australia?' (Carroll: 13)

² Lewis Carroll, *Alice's adventures in Wonderland*. The Annotated Alice : *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland & Through the Looking-Glass* ; with illustrations by John Tenniel; updated, with an introduction and notes by Martin Gardner, Definitive edition, Norton, New York, London, 1999, p. 13

Another strange example of antipodean double is Borges's counterbook. As in *Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius*, "A book that does not contain its counter-book is considered incomplete." (Borges, *Collected Fiction*: 77).

John Irwin makes an interesting demonstration of the geometrical display of the labyrinth and chessboard. This is an important clue to put together special structures, symbols and fictional or mythical characters belonging to that kind of space. (Irwin: 282)

The two works analyzed in this paper do not share common themes or common atmosphere. But there are common grounds and there is an intertextual connection line from Carroll to Borges. Both characters are open in an inside-out way as a result of their authors' rejection of traditional ways to achieve focalization. The two characters open up the spaces they live in, in a figurative way.

Both writers had not contented themselves with the limited offer (in terms of writing devices) they had inherited. Carroll and Borges had the difficult task of finding ways to break through the devices of realism. They had to invent other devices and thus regenerate the art of narratology. Alice and Asterion reflect their authors' findings on new niches inside realism. The concept of mimesis had created a compact type of mirroring. Lewis Carroll broke that compactness, without destroying the unity of the whole. The postmodern writers resorted to other type of breakages which have disintegrated the whole. It can be even claimed that "the impetus to trace the lineage of postmodernism back to Queen Alice seems to many as inevitable as the White Queen's sticking her finger with her brooch" (Wheat: 103). Andrew R. Wheat's ironical comment, in his article *Dodgson's Dark Conceit. Evoking the Allegorical Lineage of Alice* suits the establishing he undertakes of pre-Alice quests and post-Alice quests. The latter tend to be deconstruction-oriented. Wheat argues that Alice's main quest "for unambiguous meaning" does not fit the "traditional allegorical pattern".

A question that arises an opening is that of Alice's realness, whilst Asterion is as real as his house.

"Well then, the books are something like our books, only the words go the wrong way; I know that, because I've held up one of our books to the glass, and then they hold up one in the other room." (Carroll: 142) This part comes just before Alice's invitation to

Kitty to find a way to get through into the Looking-glass House. The reverted image of the books in the mirror, along with the Jabberwocky poem of a Looking-glass book, enact Alice's genuine revelation that there is a *mise en abyme* way of perceiving the world. It anticipates the question of "Which dreamed it?" (Chapter 12). Tweedledee exclaims that Alice is in fact no-where, she is just a "thing" in Red King's dream. This very interchange of the triologue Alice, Tweedledee and Tweedledum preoccupied Jorge Luis Borges so much that he singled it out as a motto of his short-story *The Circular Ruins*. It is here that Borges quotes Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass*, "if he left off dreaming about you".

When the books in the mirror usher in the revelation that Alice might not be Alice (in *Wonderland* this is the key-situation), she also discovers through the books the logic of the world behind the mirror, where everything is "contrariwise." She goes on with that logic. But the "contrariwise" mode of perception is slightly altering who she is. The subversion of her perceptions is also an important underlying aspect (Walker and Perry).

On the other hand, Asterion cannot read books. Reading dissociated letters is dangerous. Book-reading would be a pastime able to make Asterion's house, the labyrinth, more bearable. But Asterion lacks the sustaining memory of grasping a book:

I have never grasped for long the difference between one letter and another. A certain generous impatience has prevented me from learning to read. Sometimes I regret that, because the nights and the days are long." (Borges, *Collected Fiction*:221)

In both these works the natural process of *becoming* (in the sense of a philosophy of *Being*) is blocked. Both literary works on the focus happen in a very flexible space, which accounts for a flexible context. The main characters, both with the same initial letter A, dwell in impossible abodes, and that is their house for the whole duration of their fiction time. The houses they live in or protrude into are places deprived of humanity. As Bachelard said, the infancy house has an oneiric body, it is a dream-house, but it always has the positive valorization of a shelter. Such a house is always linked with eulogy³. The space in the two works I suggested for analysis has the

³ Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, translated from French by Maria Jolas, with a new Foreword by John R. Stilgoe, Boston, Beacon Press, 1994, pp. 12-15.

characteristics of an oneiric space, but it is never a place of protection for the self inhabiting it. Neither is it the space of violent dystopias or direct aggression. There is hidden cruelty in the two stories, but both main characters are prisoners of another kind, they have book-related captivity.

2. Captivity and memory

A possible explanation we suggest is that memory in Asterion's house is a continuum. There is a relationship between the continuum of memory and the continuum of solitude. Asterion differentiates "one gallery from the others" by the remaining bodies of the nine men who come into his domicile every nine years. As if he had not known the paths in his house otherwise. But then how could he remember what one of the victims had prophesized about his redeemer, had he not had any memory? The memory in Asterion's settlement has strange attributes and an inhuman power of absorption. It is the memory without respite. Generally speaking, memory has the ability to create. It can even create a new life, a new identity. Paul Ricoeur points to the fact that the ancient Greeks did make the distinction between *mneme* and *anamnesis*, but they did not make a relevant issue from "the attribution of memory" (Ricoeur: 36). The memory inside a labyrinthine space has such a powerful creation effect that it becomes destructive. One does not know any longer what it creates. It destroys the truth of representation. Its void can multiply things, just like a mirror. The number of doors in Asterion's house is infinite, and the writer gives us a tricky footnote stating that "the original says fourteen" (Borges, *Collected Fiction*:221). This quality of infinite resolution makes the memory of labyrinth useless for bondage.

The White Queen owns a monstrous memory, too. She is amazed that Alice's memory functions in the right way. Alice cannot remember the things that have not happened yet. "It's a poor sort of memory that works backwards", the Queen remarked. (Carroll: 196) Just like the way the Minotaur is locked in the Labyrinth, Alice is locked in language. She cannot escape the contrivance of language in the memory game she plays with the White Queen. This game is also a way of destroying causalities and of believing impossible things as a volunteer mnemotechnical exercise in the 5th chapter, "Wool and Water".

The memory of the labyrinth is so pure that it is destructive and useless for bondage. Its restless quality links it to

insomnia (see Bell's article). Asterion pretends to be asleep, and because he cannot achieve that, he invents the game with the other Asterion. The sane game with herself is played by Alice with her favorite words: "I pretend". Neither can Alice bond with the White Queen, since she is somebody with such a strange memory function. Asterion even drives away from his residence, as an attempt to escape the pressure of monstrous memory, but he is recognized. Human memory is zeroed in such a place like the House of Asterion. Due to this monstrous memory, Asterion is condemned to eternal solitude in an abode which has no locks and no furniture. No person can keep his or her self integrity if his/her personal memory is annulled. The labyrinth is also the space where the unconscious drives can make mincemeat of the consciousness powers.

On the other hand, the labyrinth of mirror and that of the Minotaur are places that cannot be fully conquered. They resort to *mise en abyme* as to a mechanism for protecting the illusion and for perpetuating it. At the beginning of the second chapter, Alice behind the mirror in her finds herself in front of her own house who gets in her way: "I never saw such a house for getting in the way!" (Carroll: 157). For Asterion, the house has doors that "stand open", but at the same time is infinite, so it overlaps the world: "The house is as big as the world—or rather, it is the world".

The relationship between enclosure and openness is able to capture the ambivalence of both characters towards the space they inhabit. This ambivalence is illustrated at its best by the things that prevent a real opening of the self, but, at the same time, appear as the opposite. A good example is that of the symmetrical double. By the mirroring act, the double brings up the knowledge of the self. But this knowledge is accompanied by ambivalence. Although it apparently favors selfhood in the act of opening, the double in the mirror is a sure way to backfire the opening of the self. It is a sure way of not reaching the self, as a response to a certain fear. It only perpetuates the illusion of the self. Heidegger looked for a new way to reach certain concepts. As Simon Critchley sums it up in the article *Being and Time, part 1: Why Heidegger matters*, the German philosopher

thinks that all conceptions of the human being as a subject, self, person, consciousness or indeed a mind-brain unity are

hostages to a tradition of thinking whose presuppositions have not been thought through radically enough⁴.

The Open in Heideggerian acceptance might be such a concept that does not miss the target. This concept goes beyond that necessity of the self to miss the encounter and to remain undecided. The Open is revealed, not searched for on purpose and it is not displaced, because it needs *Being* to be anchored in the World, actually in the entire “fourfold world” of earth and sky, mortals and divinities.

The world is not the mere collection of the countable or uncountable, familiar or unfamiliar things that are just there. But neither is it a merely imagined framework added by our representation to the sum of such things given. *The world worlds*, and is more fully in being than the tangible and perceptible realm in which we believe ourselves to be at home. World is never an object that stand before us and can be seen. (...) A work [of art], by being a work, makes space for that spaciousness. «To make space for» means here especially to liberate the Open and to establish it in its structure. (...) The work as work sets up a world. The work holds open the Open of the world. (Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*: 43-44).

Mirror and labyrinth are ambivalent symbols. In this research article, mirror and labyrinth are present in their qualities as openers of the self, but also as triggers of fear towards the self.

In the case of the mirror, there is no physical space where the character could be locked, other than the division line. We do not consider at this point the imaginary space. In fact, the imaginary space will take the qualities of the oneiric space. The physical space is of two kinds: between the glass and its metal-coating, and between real presences and reflection. The second type is a transition to the imaginary space.

Can we consider the division line of a mirror a place of separation or a place of unity?

The symmetry of mirrors is made possible by a separation line. At the same time, the unity of the image with the real model is very important. There are encroachments of this unity. During Romanticism in particular, as a larger phenomenon, the

⁴ <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2009/jun/05/heidegger-philosophy>, consulted 20.10.2013

mirror double is more than willing to betray the person whose creation it is (Braga: 135).

The limit of the mirror is contained in its symmetry principle. At the same time the unity between the reflected double and the generator of the reflection is emphasized, even by a contradictory move of the double.

Symmetry corresponds to a plus-minus polarity. The most common symmetry is that between subject and object, inherently between the interior and the exterior in terms of world perception. This is a metaphysical approach. For the European thought it goes as far as the ancient Greek culture. Is this subject-object opposition still valid?

Heidegger contested this subject-object dichotomy. In order to do that with full arguments, he returned to the presocratic philosophers, such as Parmenides, therefore to the Greek philosophy prior to the powerful influence of Plato and Aristotle. Being was not conceived in terms of subject/object.

We want to draw the attention on this argument brought by Heidegger because we would like to use it in relation to mirror symmetry. For this we shall refer to another text by Heidegger, the text about *The Principle of Identity*.

Why did Heidegger reject the dichotomy subject/object? It is because this dichotomy had been very useful but also very misleading even since the times of Aristotle. This dichotomy provided European thought with a very basic tool, but it had also shaped the thinking almost irreversibly. The German philosopher wanted to find a way to rethink *Being* without resorting to shaped concepts.

Heidegger placed *Being* and *Sameness* in the *belonging-together*⁵. For our focus on the self inside a mirror and inside a labyrinth, we find in this principle of identity an argument that displaces the grounds for symmetry. Joan Stambaugh writes in the *Introduction* of the English translation of Heidegger's *Identity and Difference*:

Identity and Difference shares with *Being and Time* the fundamental problem of the relation of man and Being. But whereas in *Being and Time* Heidegger began with an analysis of the meaning

⁵ Martin Heidegger, *The Principle of Identity*, in *Identity and Difference*, translated and with an introduction by Joan Stambaugh, New York, Harper and Row, 1969, pp 7-8.

of man (*Dasein*), proceeding from there toward an understanding of Being, *Identity and Difference* asks about that very "relation" itself as the relation of man and *Being*. It does not inquire into the "components" of the relation, but into the relation as a relation. As Heidegger points out, Parmenides thinks *Being* from the point of view of identity as a characteristic of this identity. But later, Metaphysics comes to represent identity as a characteristic of *Being*. Thus the originality native to identity as thought by Parmenides became subservient to the metaphysical understanding of *Being*. In the history of Western philosophy, identity was at first thought as unity, as the unity of a thing with itself. ⁶ (Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*: 7-8)

Therefore, from Heidegger's point of view, the principle of identity is the one which may cast a light on the *Being*. The Heideggerian equation $A = A$ is not like the equation of a mirror reflection. The latter, we would say, is something like $A=A'$. If the emphasis is on the term "to be equal, to be the equivalent of", than $A = A$ is a tautology. But if the *Being* is something identical to the *Being* and not to other things, the tautology is not there (emphasis on the verb "is"). The *Being* is. Therefore *Being* and identity are in the same category. One can explain the other.

The partial conclusion we can reach at this point is the fact that the concept of unity is more important than the line of division in the case of mirror symmetry.

A further question would be what "the opening of the being" is. I start from the Heideggerian term as used in *The Origin of the Work of Art*. As an *Ursprung*, art is an origin because it provides the opening for the truth of *Being*. It is to be noted that Heidegger uses many spatial terms to discover something new about art. The tension between earth and world is the main tension to reveal the Open where the advent of the *Being* happens. (Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*: 43-44)⁷

In the counterfeit encyclopedia on the planet Tlön, in *Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius*, Borges states one of his famous teachings which is also one of the keys to the labyrinth of his universe: "that while we sleep here, we are awake somewhere else,

⁶ Joan Stambaugh in Introduction, Martin Heidegger, op. cit., p. 8

⁷ Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, translated and introduction by Alfred Hofstadter, Harper and Row, New York, 1971, pp. 43-44.

so that every man is in fact two men” (Borges, *Collected Fictions*: 76).

In *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll, Alice has a “scholarly” explanation of the consequences of her falling down the rabbit-hole. She imagines she will reach the ‘antipathies’ (Carroll: 13), people who walk with their heads downwards, as they live on the other side of the earth and are somehow corresponding to our double, due to the symmetry of the two hemispheres of our planet:

I wonder if I shall fall right through the earth! How funny it'll seem to come out among the people that walk with their heads downward! The Antipathies, I think—' (she was rather glad there was no one listening, this time, as it didn't sound at all the right word) '—but I shall have to ask them what the name of the country is, you know. Please, Ma'am, is this New Zealand or Australia?' (Ibidem)

The looking-glass is *par excellence* the place of symmetry. This symmetry has the role of diminishing the gap between two images or two realities that look alike but, in Wunenburger terms, are “ontologically different”⁸. That is why the looking-glass has become, so naturally, a technique of its own in the narratology apparatus, it brings two worlds together on the edge of “as if” situations, it places them easily in the precondition of fiction. The temporal aspect is also a key-one, the thing and its reflected image or the person and the corresponding reflected double are supposed to coincide in time, to occur at the same moment. This emphasizes the perception from the outside that they are in a certain type of oneness, even if a difference still remains.

It is through the interiority of the main characters that we perceive these spaces as something different from void or nothingness and we charge them with meaning, or even turn them into symbols. The mismatch of cause-effect sequel appears in both stories and the perception of infinitude may be one of the keys to

⁸ For the reflected image as ontologically different, with presence/absence, ontophany, incarnation see the chapter about the ontology of image, in Jean-Jacques Wunenburger, *Filosofia imaginilor, (The Philosophy of Images)*, translated into Romanian by Muguraş Constantinescu, edited and postface by Sorin Alexandrescu, Iaşi, Polirom, 2004, pp. 185-235.

explore the relationship of the characters with the derangement of time they enter or live into.

3. The self as reflected back by the labyrinth

Lewis Carroll must have found a secret niche into the realist depiction of prose, and must have placed somewhere a secret mirror, so that so many new images can be formed from new angles or even so many distortions are possible, without altering the real nature of Alice. His new way of constructing a character links the quality of mirror spaces with the openness. Borges aimed at crating labyrinths of mirrors.

On the other hand, Asterion lives in a place which we imagine as the realm of total invisibility. He is undistinguishable in his own house. His abode is the strangest placed on the earth, because it is neither lock-able nor open. His house is definitely not what we understand by shelter. It does not offer protection, but it is also not as fearful as the place of no return. Its doors are infinite.

Asterion, whose name means “the starry one”⁹, is indeed attested in the source quoted by Borges and placed as a motto in the beginning, namely a quote from Apollodorus, Library, Book 3, chapter 1, section 2¹⁰,

How do the main characters, Alice and Asterion, get there, in the first place? This aspect is relevant for the next step of the analysis. At a more careful look, Alice goes through the looking-glass land by a simple decision. But her favorite verb is “I declare”. There are no other literary techniques, no other narrative tricks of the author, she simply asserts her “I declare” as a natural sequel of another of her favorite expression, which is “Let’s pretend” (Melchior-Bonnet: 329-331). The talk with the cats and the windings of the ball of worsted are there to distract the reader’s attention from the fact that Alice does not do anything magical to enter the looking-glass. The ball of worsted with which the cat plays evokes the labyrinth.

“Let’s pretend“ has more magic for Alice than any magical wand. Therefore *Through the Looking-Glass* is not

⁹ See Labyrinthe (and the related entries: Dedale, Minotaure, Thesee, Ariadne)in Encyclopaedia Universalis, Thesaurus-index, D-L éditeur à Paris, France, 1993, pp. 1931-1932.

¹⁰ The text was translated by Sir James Frazer, see here <http://www.theoi.com/Text/Apollodorus3.html>

fantastic literature and does not defy logic in any way. Everything happens on the other side of reality. The real things are distorted by the imagination of a seven-year-old darling. In this created symmetry, unity matters most than the division line. It is the unity rather than the double nature of everything than could cast a new light on the Being. The power of the will, the *Let's pretend* is not powerful enough to lead to experiencing the unity of the being. The dream will take that role, of bringing the unity. Even in fairy tales, dream can be the unfolding of the narrative which contributes to the construction of identity. (*Bodis*: 71).

Asterion, in Borges's story, has always been in that particular house, which is like no other on the earth. Borges uses the word "labyrinth" many times in other stories, but he never uses in this very tiny one. We may wonder why. A possible explanation is in the *Garden of the Forking Paths*, where the use of the word labyrinth is paralleled with the use of the word "chess". In a game of chess, the forbidden word is chess. John Irwin also discusses this aspect providing plenty examples (Irwin: 87).

Asterion's house is a precondition of his interrupted stage of being. He does not get the chance to become fully human, he is a prisoner of the night of the being, he is condemned to remain a beast with human longings. In Borges's story he is the being of the thresholds:

I know that I am accused of arrogance and perhaps of misanthropy, and perhaps even of madness. These accusations (which I shall punish in due time) are ludicrous. It is true that I never leave my house, but it is also true that its doors (whose number is infinite (...)) stand open night and day to men and also to animals. Anyone who wishes to enter may do so. Here, no womanly splendors, no palatial ostentation shall be found, but only calm and solitude. Here shall be found a house like none other on the face of the earth. (Those who say there is a similar house in Egypt speak lies.) Even my detractors admit that there is not a single piece of furniture in the house. Another absurd tale is that I, Asterion, am a prisoner. Need I repeat that the door stands open? Need I add that there is no lock? (Borges, *Collected Fictions*: 221).

In *Through the Looking-Glass* the mirror has the role of exploring the world in the inverted sense, of finding new things and new dimensions in a place where time flows backwards. Like in the chess

game that is the main *mise en abyme*, some of the characters are allowed to move in all directions, some just horizontally or vertically or diagonally, depending on their rank or identity. Alice and the fabulous animals and plants she meets discover the play with a time moving to the past, like to the “un-birthday present” of Humpty Dumpty.

But another important role of the mirror is to prevent mirroring the abyss of the soul, to divert it. Alice is joyous at the thought that she can now prevent the other members of the house reach her, the mirror-land becomes thus a space of privacy, of sought-after intimacy.

In another moment Alice was through the glass, and had jumped lightly down into the Looking-glass room. The very first thing she did was to look whether there was a fire in the fireplace, and she was quite pleased to find that there was a real one and lazing away as brightly as the one she had left behind. "So I shall be as warm here as I was in the old room," thought Alice: "warmer, in fact, because there'll be no one here to scold me away from the fire. Oh, what fun it'll be, when they see me through the glass in here, and can't get at me!"

The pair of twins Tweedledum and Tweedledee are, as Martin Gardner states in the notes, “enantiomorphs”, mirror-image forms of each other (Gardner:182). By their favorite word, “contrariwise”, they put together the mirror symmetry as acted by the hands of a clock, introducing a temporal dimension visible in their games. The first game or trial they come up with is that referring to the reality of their substance. Alice must state if they are alive or if they are wax figures. Tweedledee and Tweedledum tell the cruel story of the Walrus and the Carpenter and they place Alice before the whole enigma of the Looking-glass realm. Is she real or is she in a dream and therefore deprived of her normal identity?

If Alice is the main character in somebody’s dream, then, strangely enough, she appears so in the dream of the Red King. We can wonder why would Tweedledee and Tweedledum point to the Red King of all strange creatures that are to be found in the Looking-Glass House. Maybe because it is his “life” that it is threatened at the game of chess, around the time Alice promotes from a pawn to chess Queen Alice.

The agents of the mirror elusive truth, if one is to be real, the other one just his reflection, we never know who is who, the twins point to another more elusive dimension, hidden this time in

the dream. The fact that the twins are ready to literally lose their heads in the battle suggest once more the fact that they are as real as the images formed in the waters of a mirror.

Alice cries at the thought that she might not be real, she might be merely a dream projection, and hopes that her real tears are a proof of her real existence, but it seems that even this proof is not valid for the twins too caught in their battle.

"He's dreaming now," said Tweedledee: "and what do you think he's dreaming about?"

Alice said, "Nobody can guess that."

"Why, about you!" Tweedledee exclaimed, clapping his hands triumphantly. "And if he left off dreaming about you, where do you suppose you'd be?"

"Where I am now, of course," said Alice.

"Not you!" Tweedledee retorted contemptuously. "You'd be nowhere. Why, you're only a sort of thing in his dream!"

"If that there King was to wake," added Tweedledum, "you'd go out -- bang! -- just like a candle!"

"I shouldn't!" Alice exclaimed indignantly. (...)

"Well, it's no use your talking about waking him," said Tweedledum, "when you're only one of the things in his dream. You know very well you're not real."

"I am real!" said Alice, and began to cry. "You won't make yourself a bit realer by crying," Tweedledee remarked: "there's nothing to cry about".¹¹

Jorge Luis Borges used a part of this very dialogue as a motto for *The Circular Ruins*, where he quotes *Through the Looking-Glass*, "if he left off dreaming about you".

If we judge the atmosphere of the two writings, Borges's choice of this motto seems very strange, because the two worlds have nothing in common. In *The Circular Ruins* the atmosphere is that of a deserted temple and the whole story moves around the feeling of sacredness surrounding the main character. This sacredness is combined with the *Frankenstein*-like atmosphere, since the narrator wants to create a new man only by using dreams as the matter of creation. At the end we find out that the narrator, the protagonist of the story discovered that he is not a real person

¹¹ Lewis Carroll, op. cit., p. 189.

himself, he is part of somebody's dream, therefore he is a mere dream projection.

The linking element of intertextuality between the two writers, between Borges and Lewis Carroll is this part of somebody discovering his or her own self completely disappearing in the dream, where it is substituted by the real existence and vice versa.

4. The threshold and the ushering into a dream space

In the short story *The House of Asterion*, Asterion is there from the very beginning. He is neither older than the house, nor younger. This recalls the image of a snail carrying its house, the function any house has for a snail. The snail is related to labyrinth both in form and in the myth, it appears after the Minotaur is killed, when Minos throws a bait to which only Daedalus could answer. Asterion's house is like his shell. We know how things are in the myth, where the labyrinth was built by Dedalulus at the command of Minos. Minos is the stepfather of the Minotaur, yet strange enough, his name has more to do with Minos than with the parents who begot him.

The myth cannot be used to highlight more of Borges's story, because it will add layers that are not genuine. Instead, we can look for examples in other of Borges's story, they will help the interpretation. Borges's own confession is of a very much use, he mentions the picture of Watts, a picture representing the Minotaur which is indeed at Tate Gallery in London. What is striking in this picture is the fact that the Minotaur has human eyes, a human way of gazing at the horizon, with a sort of nostalgia, and it is situated on the threshold. His beast part, from the middle below, remains in the dark, it is not emphasized in the picture. Asterion, in Borges's story, is seen from his human perspective. Borges said in another story that in Dante's description, the Minotaur in *Inferno* was half bull half man. But what is the Minotaur had the face of a man, not of a Taurus? This thought haunted Borges, because it would change all the basic data of the story.

In the *House of Asterion*, we do not come across the name Minotaur only at the end, after Theseus had killed him. For the rest of the story, the designated name is Asterion. The name was given both to the king of Crete, to the grandfather of the Minotaur, and to the new creature conceived by Pasiphae.

5. Oneirism, intertextuality and whose dream was it

The ending of the *Through the Looking-Glass* should contain „what Alice found there”. Instead, it brings back to the real world (where Dinah is Dinah, not humpty-dumpty, where) the impossible stuff of a dream, so nothing tangible. The lingering question is

‘Now, Kitty, let’s consider who it was that dreamed it all. This is a serious question, my dear, and you should not go on licking your paw like that—as if Dinah hadn’t washed you this morning! You see, Kitty, it must have been either me or the Red King. He was part of my dream, of course - but then I was part of his dream, too! Was it the Red King, Kitty?’ (*Carroll: 271*).

The end of the House of Asterion is ambiguous, it is so ambiguous that it could easily glide into perfect equivocal ending, making it impossible to state what had happened, who was the active agent and who the passive receiver of a violent death. In the myth we know that Theseus killed the Minotaur, but can that be a satisfactory answer for Borges as the inventor of Asterion?

If we apply the question of whose dream was it, then the situation is reverted. Asterion is the winner over Theseus. A closer look to the procedures of narratology helps us sustain this point of view:

I do not know how many there have been, but I do know that one of them predicted as he died that someday my redeemer would come. Since then, there has been no pain for me in solitude, because I know that my redeemer lives, and in the end he will rise and stand above the dust. If my ear could hear every sound in the world, I would hear his footsteps. I hope he takes me to a place with fewer galleries and fewer doors. What my redeemer will be like, I wonder. Will he be bull or man? Could he possibly be a bull with the face of a man? Or will he be like me?

The morning sun shimmered on the bronze sword. Now there was not a trace of blood left on it.

"Can you believe it, Ariadne?" said Theseus. "The Minotaur scarcely defended itself." (Borges, *Collected Fictions: 122*)

After the monologue of Asterion in an autobiographical tone which makes almost the whole story, there are three more final sentences

(“The morning sun...”) and a question (“Can you believe it?”) that alter everything. This is the ending, leaving us, the readers, with the wonder who did it and whose words are “said Theseus” about doing it. How could the author come out of nowhere, after the whole speech was the voice of Asterion, and tell us something like “this is what Theseus said to Ariadne after he had killed the Minotaur”. That is impossible because it is not very subtle. We, the readers, know from Borges’s essays how much he disliked when some translations destroyed the ambiguities of the original.

What happens in the very end is meant to protect some ambiguity, therefore we cannot look for clear explanations. The sacred dimension must have been present in the myth, in the form of the cult of Taurus, it is kept by Borges in Asterion’s desire for redemption, to meet his savior. Who is his savior? Theseus?! The reader?! The writer who dreamed the character?! Who is the voice uttering the words “said Theseus” and reproducing in quotation or as dialogue that conversation between Theseus and Ariadne? What if the voice belonged to no one else but the Minotaur himself?! That will introduce a real feeling of terror. He knows what Theseus will say to Ariadne about him at the time of the crime. What can Theseus know about the Labyrinth if he perambulates it with the bravery of a hero, but with no memory, having Ariadne’s thread as a substitute for it? It is the memory that lives in Asterion’s house. He, Asterion, is the one who breaths it every day, not Theseus.

It is not just these games I have thought up—I have also thought a great deal about the house. Each part of the house occurs many times; any particular place is another place. There is not one wellhead, one courtyard, one drinking trough, one manger; there are fourteen [an infinite number of] mangers, drinking troughs, courtyards, wellheads. The house is as big as the world—or rather, it is the world(...)Everything exists many times, fourteen times, but there are two things in the world that apparently exist but once—on high, the intricate sun, and below, Asterion. Perhaps I have created the stars and the sun and this huge house, and no longer remember it.”
(*Ibidem*: 221)

Which Dreamed It? is the final chapter of *Through The Looking-Glass*. If we apply that question to the *House of Asterion*, we have the answer. Only the inhabitant of the labyrinth, that is the Minotaur, could have dreamed his slayer. It cannot be the other way

round. It is in the very logic of an unreal space. "Every man is in fact two men", so the Minotaur contains in a way his slayer, Theseus is the appearance, the illusion of the mirror. The Minotaur dimension has to do with the interiority of the Labyrinth, Theseus has to do with the exteriority of the Labyrinth. Causality is detoured in both *Through the Looking-Glass* and *The House of Asterion*.

Lewis Carroll is considered a forerunner of the literature of the absurd (Balotă: 73-74). The Chapter *The Garden of the Live Flowers* sounds like an experimentation to prove Wittgenstein's new philosophy of language. The the chapter *Wool and Water*, the causality is deranged by the events whose effects come before the causes. The White Queen tells Alice about the Messenger who is being punished with imprisonment for a crime he has not committed yet. In the encounter between Alice and Humpty Dumpty the causality is negated by all aspects related to identity: name, birth, position of the human eyes in the face, shape.

The same deranged causality happens in another labyrinth in Borges's story *Ibn-Hakam al-Bokhari, Murdered in His Labyrinth*. In this story, we find the explanation for the Minotaur's solitude and impossibility to connect with other people. He is condemned to isolation, but if he has a human face, he will suffer more from this isolation as if if were a beast with an animal face. "A bull's head is how the Minotaur appears on medals and in sculpture. Dante imagined it the other way around, with the body of a bull and the head of a man." (Borges, *Collected Fictions*: 260)

Conclusions:

We, the readers, can be inside the labyrinth revealed by the text only by the interiorities experiencing it. The symmetry present in the two stories is relevant only if we grasp the unity of it. A resort to unity can be brought by looking at Heidegger's use of the spatial terms to arrive at the structures of the *Open* where the *Being* manifest itself, otherwise dichotomy is misleading. Unity in the act of mirroring instead of dichotomy is achieved in the writing *El Aleph* which gives the title of the volume. Aleph is itself a labyrinth. The presence of the Minotaur is first dreamed, then experienced as the terror of otherness, of somebody unknown in the same house, also in Borges's story *There Are More Things*. (*Ibidem*: 440)

Labyrinth is the space that gives unity to the world. I have not referred to the symbol of labyrinth almost omnipresent in Mircea Eliade's novels and religious works because there the symbol

is aligned with the sacred and it ultimately means the matrix where the self defeats death, is initiated and achieves *coincidentia oppositorum*. For Eliade, the labyrinth has the virtues of a magical center, it rearranges the tribulation of man so as to be reconnected with the world of the sacred which is opposed to the world of appearances.

Labyrinth is a symbol powerfully absorbed in its contradictory ambivalence. On one hand is something positive, as Eliade views it, on the other hand is something frightening, it is the place so intricate that it has now way out. By having an English granny and an English nanny, Borges inhabited the English language so well and was so familiar with the writings of all stages of the English language formation that he could have become an English writer himself. (Borges, *Cărțile și noaptea*: 9-25)

Memory is the best clue when reading *The House of Asterion*. Had Theseus been the slayer of the Minotaur, who has the memory of that fact? Human memory is annulled, only Ariadne could restore it, so she is present in the end of Borges's story. It is the memory of Asterion that survives and tell the story. Alice encounters the monstrous memory in the form of language. Asterion has no one to speak to, but Alice tries to engage with the White Queen who is in the habit of believing impossible things every day. She is blocked by the language just like Asterion's blockage in a space that is never locked. The White Queen illustrates the condition of every reader of fiction.

Intertextuality makes J. L. Borges and Lewis Carroll contemporary to each other, regardless the real historical gap, even if Borges was born a year after Charles Dodgson had died. The labyrinth may also be the symbol of the secret writing.¹² On the other hand, the labyrinth is the space itself, either the natural forms of the meanders taking the shape, or the constructed labyrinth as the one by Daedalus. The move is from one level to another, from the basic level of the space to the superior level of understanding. In mythos, this level is assimilated to what Eliade portrayed in the symbol of labyrinth. For our theme this level is associated with intertextuality. It is the symbolism of the book that may take over the symbol of other things related to initiation. Dream is the link between all levels and between the self and the labyrinth.

¹² Labyrinth, in *Enciclopedia Universalis*, p.1931

By analyzing the main characters, Alice and Asterion, and their relationship with the labyrinthine space it appears that it is the self who shapes the maze rather than the other way round. Both Lewis Carroll and Jorge Luis Borges are writers who managed to incorporate open and labyrinthine structures in their universes so that the number of interpretations may equal the number of readers.

References:

- Bachelard, Gaston 1994. *The Poetics of Space*, translated from French by Maria Jolas, with a new Foreword by John R. Stilgoe, Boston, Beacon Press.
- Balotă, Nicolae 2000. *Literatura absurdului*, Bucharest, Teora, (in Romanian), pp. 73-103.
- Bell, Michael 2007. *Nietzsche, Borges, Garcia Marquez on the Art of Memory and Forgetting*, in *The Romanic Review*, Vol. 98, No. 2-3, March –May.
- Bodis, Zoltan 2011. *Dream as Narrative Constitution of Identity in Folktales*, in „Analele Universității din Oradea Fascicula Limba și Literatura Română”, vol. 18, pp. 71-86.
- Borges, Jorge Luis 1988. *Cărțile și noaptea*, (The Books and The Night), translated into Romanian and prefaced by Valeriu Pop, Iasi, Junimea, pp. 9-25.
- Borges, Jorge Luis 1999. *Collected Fictions*, Translated by Andrew Hurley, Penguin Groups.
- Braga, Corin, *Zece studii de arhetipologie*, Cluj-Napoca, Dacia, 1999 (in Romanian).
- Carroll, Lewis 1999. *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* in *The Annotated Alice: Alice's Adventures in Wonderland & Through the Looking-Glass*; with illustrations by John Tenniel; updated, with an introduction and notes by Martin Gardner, Definitive edition, Norton, New York, London.
- Encyclopaedia Universalis* 1993. Thesaurus-index, D-L éditeur à Paris, France.
- Heidegger, Martin 1969. *The Principle of Identity*, in *Identity and Difference*, translated and with an introduction by Joan Stambaugh, New York, Harper and Row.
- Heidegger, Martin 1971. *Poetry, Language, Thought*, translated and introduction by Alfred Hofstadter, Harper and Row, New York.
- Irwin, John T. 1996. *The Mystery to a Solution: Poe, Borges and the Analytic Detective Story*, Johns Hopkins University Press.

Melchior-Bonnet, Sabine 2000. *Istoria oglinzii* (The History of Mirror), translated into Romanian by Luminița Brăileanu, preface by Jean Delumeau, Bucharest, Universe Publishing House.

Ricoeur, Paul 2001. *Memoria, istoria, uitarea*; translated into Romanian by Ilie Gyurcsik si Margareta Gyurcsik, Timisoara, Amarcord, (original title *La memoire, l'histoire, l'oubli*).

Walker, Joseph, Perry, *If You Think We're Alive, You Ought to Speak*", in *Post Script*, vol. 27, No. 2.

Wheat, Andrew R. 2009. "Dodgson's Dark Conceit: Evoking the Allegorical Lineage of Alice", in *Renascence: Essays on Values in Literature*, volume 61, issue 2, pp. 103-123.

Wunenburger, Jean-Jacques 2004. *Filosofia imaginilor*, (The Philosophy of Images), translated into Romanian by Muguraș Constantinescu, edited and postface by Sorin Alexandrescu, Iași, Polirom.

Internet resources:

Apollodorus, The Library:

<http://www.theoi.com/Text/Apollodorus3.html>

Critchley, Simon, *Being and Time, part I: Why Heidegger matters*,

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2009/jun/05/heidegger-philosophy>, consulted 20.10.2013

Shadowy Waters: a Symbolist Play?

Éva Székely¹

Abstract: *The present paper is a discussion of the cultural nationalist features of W.B. Yeats's allegedly symbolist play.*

Keywords: *Symbolism, cultural nationalism, Shadowy Waters, W.B. Yeats*

Shadowy Waters, the writing of which took Yeats about twenty years, is the play with the lengthiest gestation period in the poet-playwright's dramatic oeuvre. Out of the five versions that he published between 1894² and 1907 it was only the 1907 version that he deemed fit for the stage (Bloom 1972: 133), and, therefore, it is this version that I shall discuss in the present paper.

In a few words, the plot of this one-act play is the following: Forgael, the captain of a pirate ship, yearns for transcendent experience, for a love that exceeds all mortal imaginings. He journeys the northern seas following the lead of strange man-headed seabirds that promised to guide him to the world of ideal love. Out of the crew of the ship, it is only Forgael who can see these birds and understand their talk. From time to time, he has visions of the transcendental world, and annoys his loyal first officer, Aibric, by talking constantly about them. Aibric does not believe in the possibility of eternal love, and advises Forgael to turn his attention to the temporal world lest the sailors should mutiny against him. Forgael refuses to follow Aibric's advice, and the sailors start plotting the assassination of the 'mad' captain, whom they hate not only because of his obsessional behavior but also because of the control he exercises over them by means of a magic harp. The murder, delayed thanks to Aibric's loyalty, comes to nothing when the sailors observe a sweet-smelling spice ship and set to plunder it. While they fight for the spice ship, Forgael keeps musing on the meaning of the hovering of the man-headed sea-birds over it. The

¹ University of Oradea

² He had been working on the play since the late 1880s (Yeats & Cave 1997: 273).

load of the spice ship proves to be beyond expectations, its riches making it possible for the pirates to return home and, henceforth, lead an 'honest' life. Ironically, the ship that delivers the sailors the material wealth they coveted for brings Forgael his lover: Dectora, wife of the king whom the pirates have killed during the fight. In the beginning, Dectora acts distant and vengeful; she even tries to persuade the sailors to kill Forgael. As an act of self defense, Forgael starts to play his magic harp, and under its spell Dectora realizes that she and Forgael are the reincarnations of an ideal couple of lovers, who died a thousand years before. Recognizing Forgael as her lover for ever, she joins him on his journey to the transcendent realm while the sailors and Aibric return to the real world. The play ends with the harp's bursting into fire and Forgael's gathering Dectora's hair about him

Critics who had analyzed *Shadowy Waters* are unanimous in their opinion that it is a symbolist play (Ellis-Fermor, 1954; Wilson, 1958; Berta, 1987; Welch, 1999). There are, indeed, many reasons to deem it so. Firstly, the theme of the play -- the quest for transcendental love --, and the parabolic quality of the action -- the play, in spite of its "crowded jumble of a plot" (Rosenthal 1997:57), is, essentially, a meditation on the attainability of perfection and men's right to covet it. Secondly, the symbolical quality of the characters -- the characters of this play are embodiments of primary desires (Forgael represents man's longing for the transcendental, the sailors stand for the thirst for material wealth) and patterns of moral conduct (Dectora personifies sacrificial love, while Aibric is the epitome of trustworthiness). Thirdly, the poetic quality of the text which becomes the metaphor of a state of mind: Man's uncertainty when challenged by the transcendental. Lastly, the mise en scene: the use of symbolical forms -- the sea and the sky are represented by a semicircular cloth --, and the symbolic color design -- the various shades of blue and green of the stage set and the costumes of the characters contribute to the dim and mysterious atmosphere of the play. While all these characteristics of *Shadowy Waters* point towards a Symbolist influence, too much emphasis on them surely underplays its Revivalist bent, i.e. features of the play that connect it to the discourse of Anglo-Irish cultural nationalism of the time. We shouldn't forget that *Shadowy Waters* was intended to be staged by the Irish National Theatre Society (Yeats & Cave 1997: 273). Therefore, although it is definitely not a propaganda play, its

commitment to intimating themes that are specifically Irish and it is drawing on sources such as Irish mythology and folk belief are obvious traits that are worth of critical attention. Actually, the aim of the present essay is to refute the idea that *Shadowy Waters* is a Symbolist play per se, our thesis being that it is first and foremost a Revivalist play, more precisely, a play that is in perfect consensus both in content and in form with the ideas advanced by Anglo-Irish cultural nationalists at the turn of the century.

1. The Discourse of Anglo-Irish Cultural Nationalism of the Celtic Revival

To begin with, cultural nationalism is a distinct form of nationalism. Arising at times of crisis provoked by the modernization process, it seeks the moral regeneration of the people. For that reason, it should not be conflated with political nationalism, the aim of which is the creation of an independent nation state. Though not hostile to the idea of state independence, cultural nationalists give prominence to language, history, folk-heritage, and religion as the true indices of nationality. They argue that the glory of a country comes not from its political power but from the culture of its people and the contribution of its thinkers, artists, and educators to humanity. Convinced that the recovery of national pride is the prerequisite for successful participation in the wider world, they establish informal and decentralized clusters of cultural societies and journals designed to inspire into the people a spontaneous love of community. (Hutchinson 2003: 1-48)

The meaning of the concept of *discourse* is considerably shiftier than that of cultural nationalism. In cultural and literary theory³ it has been used with various meanings such as speech or conversation, 'the general domain of the production and circulation of rule governed statements', 'groupings of statements produced within power relations', 'a voice within a text or a speech position'(Mills 2004: 8-9) etc. In my study I shall use the term discourse in the acceptance of the foucaultian Sara Mills, who defines it as the set of rules and procedures that enable the production of particular *discourses* at particular times.

³ The variegated ways in which linguists, social psychologists and critical discourse analysts have defined the term are not enlisted here as they are of no interest from the point of view of our approach to Yeatsian drama.

I must make it clear to the reader that in the terminology of this article, following the lead of Mills, I adopted the differentiation that Foucault makes between the terms 'discourse' and 'discourses'. Discourse, as it had been stated before, is a set of rules that regulates the utterances and statements that are produced in a given historical period and social context; discourses, on the other hand, are "highly regulated groupings of utterances or statements⁴ with internal rules which are specific to discourse itself" (Mills, 44), and which have similar force or effect.

Discourse, claims Foucault, is something that produces something else: an utterance, a concept, or an effect. "A *discursive structure* can be detected", explains Sara Mills, "because of the systematicity of the ideas, opinions, concepts, ways of thinking and behaving which are formed within a particular context, and because of the effects of those ways of thinking and behaving" (2004: 15). Therefore, even if one is engaged in the disestablishing of a discursive framework, he still works within its patterns. He is still imprisoned by his pre-conceptions that were actually shaped by the very discourse that he calls into question.

Besides the discursive structure that willy-nilly operates at the production of any individual discourse, there are other factors that have a bearing on it, as well. Firstly, discourses don't occur in isolation. Their production is regulated not only by discourse but also by their relation with other discourses. Secondly, as Diane Macdonnell observes, they "differ with the kinds of institutions and social practices in which they take shape and with the positions of those who speak and those whom they address"(cited in Mills 2004: 9). As institutions and the social context as well as their interaction with other discourses have an important formative role on the production, maintenance, and circulation of discourses, one of the

⁴ Statements, according to him, are specific utterances which have some institutional force and which are thus validated by some form of authority. Statements are not utterances or sentences in the sense that a sentence may function as several statements depending on the discursive context in which it appears. The same sentence may mean or refer to different things in different discursive contexts. Thus, as Mills explains it, "discourses are sets of sanctioned statements which have some institutionalised force, which means that they have a profound influence on the way that individuals act and think." (Mills 55)

main tasks of the examination of the structures of discourses is to reveal these ‘support mechanisms’⁵ (Mills 2004: 45).

The discourses engendered by cultural nationalism vary from nation to nation and from historical period to historical period. Even within one historical period and within the boundaries of one nation or ethnic community, there is a variety of individual discourses produced by various interest groups with opposed interests. However, as Anthony D. Smith demonstrated in his study *Myths and Memories of the Nation*, there is unity amid variety, for all these discourses, irrespective of the epoch or the space in which they were engendered, incorporate the following cultural components of ethnic identities:

- a myth of ethnic descent (the time and place of the community’s origin and a presumed common ancestor or ancestors),
- a myth of ethnic election (i.e. the idea of belonging to the chosen ones),
- the symbolism of ancestral or sacred territory. (1999: 3-22)

All these constituents comprise what I shall call the discourse of cultural nationalism, i.e. the pattern according to which all individual cultural nationalist discourses are structured. In the following part of this subchapter I shall give a brief description of the keystones of the discourse of cultural nationalism as they were identified by Anthony D. Smith in *Myths and Memories of the Nation* and by John Armstrong in *Nations before Nationalism*.

2. The Myth of Ethnic Descent

Myths of ethnic descent mix legend with historical fact, and aim to motivate the members of an ethnic community to place communal interests before everything else. There are two different kinds of mythmaking: those that cite genealogical ancestry and those that refer to ideological descent. Myths of genealogical descent claim direct descent from a presumed common ancestor or ancestors of the community. Myths of ideological descent, on the other hand, indicate ‘spiritual kinship’, i.e. the members of the ethnic community are identified by the possessing of some alleged

⁵ i.e. institutions, social context, the impact of other discourses.

communal 'virtues' or other distinguishing cultural elements, such as language, folk costumes, special institutions etc. Both myths of genealogical and of ideological descent aim to restore the heroic spirit of the golden past. This is considered to be the only way by which an ethnic community can redeem itself from the torpor of a disgraceful present.

According to Anthony D. Smith, myths of ethnic descent, although unique for each nation or ethnic community in part, are made up of the same component myths: a myth of temporal origins, a myth of location and migration, a myth of ancestry, a myth of the heroic age, a myth of decline and a myth of regeneration (1999: 62-88).

Myths of location and migration are extremely important, for they legitimize control over territory, and, at the same time, contribute to the devising of stable national identities by welding the sense of spatial origins with a given territory into a 'homeland'. Homelands cater for both the physical and the emotional sense of security of the people. They are important for the definition of nations not only because they represent their homes but also because they mark their boundaries. Admittedly, a nation without a country is a contradiction in terms.

Myths of ancestry are meant to bring together not only the members of the present generation, but they represent a symbolic bond to all the previous ones, as well. Whether the common ancestor is a mythical or a historical figure, is not an issue here. The kinship ties that a myth of ancestry confers to a community are alleged ones. The sense of location and security they bestow on the community, the members of which envisage themselves as making part of an extended family, eclipses the lack of factual evidence that would validate them. The fact that myths of ancestry are the products of the imaginary mainly, explains the presence of rival genealogies devised by different strata with opposing interests.

Myths of the heroic age are destined to offer the community exemplars to be emulated in order to overcome their present state of apathy and subjugation. National heroes provide models of virtuous conduct; their past deeds strengthen the nation's belief in the possibility of a glorious future. National heroes are not necessarily real persons but they aren't the invention of nationalist historians, either. They are summoned by historians and creative artists because they are considered to possess those qualities

(wisdom, courage, and self-sacrifice etc.) the present age is deficient of. They are the epitome of communal virtues and the embodiment of the essence and of the 'true' character of their nation.

Myths of decline delve into the causes of the present state of alienation and torpor of the nation. According to nationalist myth-makers the main causes of the disgraceful condition and subjugation of their community are inner and not external. People have lost connection with their national past and, thus, forgot about their 'true' identity. They became strangers to themselves because they forgot about the collective identity formed many generations back. One of the consequences of this loss of identity is that the members of the community place individual interests above the interests of the community.

Myths of regeneration are utopian prescriptions of the steps to be taken so that the community may be restored to its past state of glory. The complete authenticity and autonomy that they devise for their nations are highly idealistic and as such, virtually unattainable.

If discussion up to this point has emphasized the component myths of the myth of ethnic descent, we should also devote some time considering the socio-political circumstances that render these myths prominent. Myths of ethnic descent gain political importance at times of crisis that endanger the sense of belonging and the identity of the individual. These may be prolonged periods of warfare or incipient secularization. The latter is usually brought about by the clashes between a technically superior culture and a more traditional, backward one. The problem for cultures alleged as backward ones is the complex of inferiority that their members experience as a result of the fact that their traditions are downgraded. Admittedly, there are two major ways in which an ethnic group may fight its complex of inferiority: it may identify itself with the 'superior' culture and thus reject its own traditions, or it may claim equal rights for itself. Nationalists' vote invariably goes for the second solution, but, by claiming equal rights for themselves, they are compelled to reshape and modernize their inherited identities so that they meet the demand of the modern times, and gain the respect of the superior culture. Hence, their individual discourses are shaped to a large extent by the rules of the dominant discourse authorized by the very culture the assumptions of which they intend to challenge.

In addition, myths of ethnic descent are the products of wishful thinking and, given the fact that nations and ethnic communities aren't cohesive groups of people, it is but natural that there are a series of competing myths reflecting the interests of the various social strata that make up the community in a given historical period. As the way of thinking and the course of actions taken by these groups of interest are susceptible to the ethnic myths they adopt for themselves, one can anticipate that the latter will have serious repercussions on the life of the community as they may trigger different groups into quite distinct, even opposing courses of actions. The presence of conflicting ethnic myths is not only an index of the segmentation of a given community. It is also the prerequisite to national regeneration for out of the tension created by the clash of various ethnic myths a new understanding of one's national identity is born.⁶ In their state of incipience rivaling myths tend to accentuate the segmentation of the community, but, in the long run, these competing identities will merge, especially, if the survival of the community comes under threat.

3. Myths of Ethnic Election

Though the idea of common roots, of a shared language, and of shared customs is important for the survival of an ethnic community, the concept of ethnic election – the idea of belonging to 'the chosen ones' – represents an even stronger bondage between the members of a given community. Only those communities manage to devise themselves a myth of ethnic election the members of which cherish the belief that their culture is unique and, as such, worth to be preserved and shared with the world at large. Consequently, not all ethnic communities or nations manage to acquire the 'assurance' that they belong to the elected, but those in luck survive for a longer period than the rest. A myth of ethnic election strengthens the community by unifying different social classes as well as different regions. Yet, being one of 'the chosen' is

⁶ "In the longer term, the rival definitions of national identity tend to merge; by provoking encounters with other national communities, by seeking title-deeds to disputed territories, they coalesce to form a community which, while still riven by social conflicts, has become more unified at the level of history and culture, and more sharply differentiated from other cultural communities." (Smith 88)

not a source of pride only. It's more than a mere feeling of superiority towards those who do not belong to it. The myth of ethnic election places heavy duties on the shoulders of those who belong to 'the chosen ones', for they have to follow a prescribed behaviour pattern, and observe certain rituals and laws. In order to demonstrate to themselves and to the others that they deserve to be elected, their life-style should be the expression of their sacred values. Hence, myths of ethnic election should not be confused with the concept of ethnocentrism.

4. The Symbolism of Ancestral or Sacred Territory

According to John Armstrong, nationalism is first and foremost exclusive and boundary-conscious. Hence, one of the most important factors of the devising of national identities is the awareness of the 'Other' against which one defines one's nationality. One of the best ways to guard a nation's boundaries is via *symbols*. Symbols are emblems of difference: flags, totems, coins, ritual objects, hymns and anthems, special foods, special costumes, representations of ethnic deities, monarchs and heroes etc. As words, they are the content of communication and, consequently, they become effective through communication. Ethnic symbols are in no way the invention of an elite group; they get crystallized over a long period of time. To enhance the effectiveness of symbols they are incorporated into *legitimizing myths*. These myths make sure that the meaning of the symbols is not lost for future generations. At the same time the recital of these myths engenders intense group awareness; it makes people aware of their common destiny and unites them in the struggle against the menacing 'Other.' According to Armstrong "it is myths, symbols and patterns of communication that 'constitute' ethnic identity, and it is myths, including mythomoteurs, that entrench sets of values and symbols over long time-spans"(1982: 283). Armstrong has a very feasible idea of how symbols and myths work in the culture of a particular ethnic group. Ethnic symbols represent to particular human groups distinctive shared experiences and values, and the role of the myths is to explain them the meaning of those shared experiences, to exemplify, and to illuminate those values they hold dear. Consequently, if myths and symbols fail to resonate with the members of the group, it is because they do not, or no longer, perform these functions; they no longer represent, explain and exemplify. They can no longer unite the members of the group, and

they are correspondingly weakened and fragmented. Culture, therefore, the meanings and representations of symbols, myths, memories and values, is not some inventory of traits, or a 'stuff' enclosed by the border; culture is both an inter-generational repository and heritage, or set of traditions, and an active shaping repertoire of meanings and images, embodied in values, myths and symbols that serve to unite a group of people with shared experiences and memories, and differentiate them from outsiders.

In addition, I'd like to emphasize that in this paper the terms *the discourse of cultural nationalism* and *cultural nationalist discourses* are not used interchangeably. They are used to refer to two different ideas. *The discourse of cultural nationalism* is a set of rules that regulates the cultural nationalist utterances and statements that are produced in a given historical period and social context while *cultural nationalist discourses* are highly regulated groupings of utterances or statements with internal rules which are specific to the cultural nationalist discourse itself, and which have similar force or effect. Our discussion draws into focus the cultural components that compose the discourse of Anglo-Irish cultural nationalism and its impact on Yeats's *Shadowy Waters*.

At the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, Anglo-Irish cultural nationalist discourses⁷ were an expression of the precarious position of the Protestants in Ireland as a minority people and as colonizers and, allegedly, usurpers of the land. Estranged from their mother country (Great Britain) and rejected by the Irish Catholics, their effort to forge themselves a genuine 'English Irish' identity was meant both to put them on a par with the British English, who treated them with condescension, and to strengthen their position as the leading caste in Ireland. Admittedly, they could not claim Celtic roots for

⁷ The Celtic Revival of the late nineteenth century encompassed two movements: the linguistic movement engendered by the Gaelic League, and the literary movement propagated by the members of the Irish Literary Renaissance. Though the initial aim of both movements was the devising of a comprehensive national identity that would have embraced both the Catholic and the Protestant population, eventually they fell out as the former developed into a campaign for Catholic rights, while the other continued its crusade for a blanket Irish national identity that may have covered both Catholics and Protestants. The present paper concentrates on the elements composing the discourse of Anglo-Irish cultural nationalism as they come through from the cultural nationalist discourses devised by the members of the Irish Literary Renaissance.

themselves. Yet, the claim of a spiritual kinship with the ancient Celts became the quintessential component of their cultural nationalist discourses. They regarded the Celts as essentially pagan, broad-minded, and artistic, the heir of an ancient civilization. They believed Ireland to have been the storehouse of ancient wisdom the integrity of which was destroyed by the materialism of the English. It was their mission to purge the nation from the pernicious influence of Britain and to build up a genuine Anglo-Irish culture and national consciousness.

The agenda of Anglo-Irish cultural nationalists included: the refashioning of English racist representations of the Irish, and the devising of a national literature that expressed the true spirit and character of the Celts. By their emphasis on the Celtic element, they hoped to bridge the gap dividing the Protestants and the Catholics in Ireland. By moulding the Celtic content into a modern form they aspired to international recognition. Their aspirations were best expressed at the beginning of the letter of intent that the founders of the Irish Dramatic Movement⁸ sent out to prospective sponsors of an Irish national theatre:

We propose to have performed in Dublin, in the spring of every year certain Celtic and Irish plays, which whatever be their degree of excellence will be written with a high ambition, and so to build up a Celtic and Irish school of dramatic literature. We hope to find in Ireland an uncorrupted and imaginative audience trained to listen by its passion for oratory, and believe that our desire to bring upon the stage the deeper thoughts and emotions of Ireland will ensure for us a tolerant welcome, and that freedom to experiment which is not found in theatres of England, and without which no new movement in art or literature can succeed. We will show that Ireland is not the home of buffoonery and of easy sentiment, as it has been represented, but the home of an ancient idealism. We are confident of the support of all Irish people, who are weary of misrepresentation, in carrying out a work that is outside all the political questions that divide us." (Gregory 1913: 8-9)

The dramas were intended to be written neither in Irish nor in Standard English but in the vernacular spoken by the bilingual

⁸ William Butler Yeats, Lady Gregory, Edward Martyn, and George Moore.

peasantry, an English rich with Irish idioms and rhythms, which the representatives of the movement hoped to turn into a literary language.

To sum up, the elements that make up the discourse of Anglo-Irish cultural nationalism – elements that figured in all the Anglo-Irish discourses produced at the end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth, whether literary or non-literary – are the following:

- a) The various ethnic groups living in Ireland are bound together by their spiritual kinship with the Celts, an ancient people distinguished by their artistry. Celtic ancestry means that:
 - The Irish have at heart a mystic and pagan outlook on life. They see the outer world just as a symbolic representation of what is within, of the spiritual truth.
 - The tokens of Irishness are: imaginativeness, excessive passions and a melancholic worldview as displayed by Celtic myths and legends.
 - The oral nature of the ancient Celtic culture left its imprints on the Irish who have an unusual amount of respect for the spoken word.
- b) The language of Ireland is Hiberno-English;
- c) Having in view that Irish tradition is fundamentally a mythological and not a historical one⁹, the symbols of Irishness are to be mythical heroes, legendary animals, and legendary objects.

4. *Shadowy Waters* and the Discourse of Anglo-Irish Cultural Nationalism

In *The Celtic Element in Literature* written by W.B. Yeats in 1902, we find the following appraisal of the specifics of Irish mythology:

The ancient farmers and herdsmen were full of love and hatred, and made their friends gods, and their enemies the enemies of gods, and those who keep their tradition are not less mythological. From this 'mistaking dreams,' which are perhaps essences, for 'realities,' which are perhaps accidents, from this 'passionate, turbulent reaction against the

⁹ The Catholic version of Irish history that presented them as the usurpers of Ireland was unpalatable for the Anglo-Irish; hence their emphasis on mythology.

despotism of fact,' comes, it may be, that melancholy which made all ancient peoples delight in tales that end in death and parting, as modern peoples delight in tales that end in marriage bells; and made all ancient peoples, who, like the old Irish, had a nature more lyrical than dramatic, delight in wild and beautiful lamentations. Life was so weighed down by the emptiness of the great forests and by the mystery of all things, and by the greatness of its own desires, and, as I think, by the loneliness of much beauty; and seemed so little and so fragile and so brief, that nothing could be more sweet in the memory than a tale that ended in death and parting, and then a wild and beautiful lamentation. (Yeats 1961: 181-182)

Indeed, in terms of theme, character, and tone, *Shadowy Waters* embraces all the characteristics – dreaminess, passion, and melancholy – Yeats associates with Irish myths (1961: 173-189). The theme of the play, the longing for eternal, supernatural love, was inspired by the tale entitled *The Dream of Aengus Og* (Gregory 1970: 118-121). In this myth, Aengus, the Celtic god of love, is visited in his dreams by a beautiful girl who plays the harp to him. The girl continues to visit him for a year, but when the year is out she quits his dreams. He becomes lovesick, and searches the whole of Ireland for her, and it is not until two years have passed in search, that he finds out that she is Caer, the swan woman, and that she turns into a swan every second year. Aengus's love for Caer is so deep that he decides to turn into a swan whenever Caer does so, so that they can always be together.

That Yeats had this myth in his mind when writing *Shadowy Waters* is not mere speculation or a chance analogy between the two plots. In one of the earlier versions of the play, Forgael and Dectora appear as reincarnations of Aengus and Etain¹⁰ (Rosenthal 1997: 57), Etain being a mythical woman who goes through a series of metamorphoses and a series of husbands in a tale the plotline of which is irrelevant for our discussion here. The idea of metempsychosis is retained in the 1907 version of the play, with the difference that in this drama Forgael and Dectora are the reincarnations of an ancient warrior: “golden-armed Iollan” and his queen. References to Aengus are not dropped altogether, for Iollan

¹⁰ See the story of *Midhir and Etain* in *Gods and Fighting Men* by Lady Gregory.

has strong connections with Aengus's land, Tir-Nan-Oge, the land of the young:

DECTORA: Is it not true
That you were born a thousand years ago,
In islands where the children of Aengus wind
In happy dances under a windy moon,
And that you'll bring me there? (Yeats & Cave 1997: 15)

Moreover, Forgael's magic harp and the birds that would guide him to the Other World are things associated with Aengus, "the god with "birds about his head"" (Rosenthal 1997: 40), the master of love and poetry.

Yet, there is nothing godlike about Forgael, nor does he have the aplomb and social consciousness associated with the *fili*¹¹. (This may be the reason why Yeats dropped the idea of Forgael as a reincarnation of Aengus.) He is more like the visionary fools of Irish belief, who are treated with fear and awe for "who knows what windows may have been opened to those who are under the moon's spell, who do not give in to our limitations, are not 'bound by reason to the wheel'" (Gregory 2004: 237). The crew of the ship regards Forgael mad, and, as such, they dread him and the uncanny powers of his harp lest they should become mad, too.¹²

FIRST SAILOR: Some crazy dream he is in, and believe me it is no crazier than the thought he has waking. He is not the first that has had the wits drawn out from him through shadows and fantasies.

.....
SECOND SAILOR: I would have made an end of him long ago, but that I was in dread of his harp. It is said that when he plays upon it he has power of all the listeners, with or without the body, seen or unseen, and any man that listens grows as mad as himself. (Yeats & Cave 1997: 3-4)

Their fears are well-founded, for at the end of the play Forgael's harp entrances them into believing that they are to go to the wake of golden-armed Iollan, who had died a thousand years before.

¹¹ a member of the class of poets in Ireland.

¹² In Irish superstition there is a type of fool, known as the Amadan-na-Briona or the Fool of the Forth the touch of which is incurable. (Gregory 2004: 237).

Forgael's status as visionary fool is also confirmed by his belief that both he and Dectora are at the mercy of otherworldly powers: "Both you and I are taken in the net." (Yeats & Cave 1997: 10). Had he believed himself a magus or a poet, there's little chance he would have taken the aforementioned view. His magic harp is, likewise, a gift of the gods: "They gave me that old harp of the nine spells" (Yeats & Cave 1997: 10), and is taken from him the moment he and Dectora cut themselves off from the real world.

Dectora, as it had been mentioned before, was originally intended to be a reincarnation of Etain, a beautiful queen in the story *Midhir and Etain*, who goes from one husband to another, is respected by all the men she takes, and remains loyal to each of them. Like Etain, she remains loyal to her husband (even after his death) until she comes to the understanding that Forgael's claims on her are better founded, he being her lover lost long time before. From that moment on, no-one and nothing can discourage her from accompanying him on his fateful journey. Yet, she is more than a simple accessory to Forgael. Dectora, like so many elements of this drama (including Forgael himself), belongs to the realm of in-between. She does not belong to the Other World – she casts a shadow, as Forgael observes –, yet, her red hair is a mark that she is a chthonian, a woman of the underworld (Gantz 1981: 60). The limitless love she feels for Forgael molds her into his equal, i.e. though human, and thus limited by nature, she reaches the absolute via absolute love. Forgael himself, who, until her act of self-sacrifice – she had been offered the possibility to return to the real world, yet she chose to stay with him –, was in doubt whether she was the woman he had dreamt of, realizes that his journey has come to a close, for he found what he had been looking for: boundless love.

FORGAEL [*gathering Dectora's hair about him*]: Beloved,
having
 dragged the net about us,
And knitted mesh to mesh, we grow immortal;
And that old harp awakens of itself
To cry aloud to the grey birds, and dreams,
That have had dreams for father, live in us. (Yeats & Cave 1997:
18)

As a counterpoise to Forgael's supernatural longings and lofty speeches – he speaks, invariably, in blank verse – the sailors crave to return to the real world and talk in a prose that borrows much

from the focusing devices specific to Hiberno-English. If Forgael's character has much in common with the Irish visionary fool, the pirates are a pagan and far more superstitious and violent variant of the nineteenth century stage Irish rogue. Like their forerunner, "they break through the conventional boundaries or the usual domestic ties" (Waters 1984: 40), they love a good drink and the company of pretty women, but they lack the stage Irish rogue's gift for blarney. Their function in the play is that of the foil to the character of Forgael, and the idiom that they speak has a great role in conferring the drama a specifically Irish flavor.

Most grammarians (Grammley & Pätzold, 1992; Filppula 1999) agree that the peculiarities of Hiberno-English derive from the specifics of Irish syntax by which it has been profoundly affected. Compared to English, which is a strict subject-verb-object language, Irish is a verb-subject-object language and this may partly explain the relatively frequent use of clefting as one of the major focusing devices¹³ in Hiberno-English. Another explanation, which may also explain the habitual use of topicalization as a focusing device, is the fact that Irish, unlike English, does not use sentence stress as a focusing device. In *Shadowy Waters* Yeats makes use of clefting and topicalization to great effect, especially at the beginning of the play, where the dialogue of the sailors provides the audience with the background information necessary to the understanding of the plot, and where the use of these devices are, indeed, appropriate:

FIRST SAILOR: *It is long enough*, and too long, Forgael has been bringing us through the waste places of the great sea

.....
 SECOND SAILOR: *It is a hard thing*, age to be coming on me, and I not to get the chance of doing a robbery that would enable me to live quiet and honest to the end of my lifetime.

FIRST SAILOR: *Some crazy dream* he is in, and believe me, it is no crazier than the thought he has waking."

¹³ "Focusing devices 'serve to assign prominence to some element(s) of an utterance or a clause Prominence' (or 'thematic prominence', as it is often called) is a discursal notion which has to do with the information structure of utterances. From this perspective, some part or parts of an utterance, conceived of as a message purporting to convey the communicative intentions of the speaker, stand out from the others as being more important than them." (Filppula 1999: 242)

It is amazing the extent to which critics tend to ignore Yeats's knowledge of Hiberno-English syntax. For not only did he master the use of focusing devices, but he also paid attention to the range of tenses used by speakers of Irish English, such as, the use of the progressive form with stative verbs ("I *have been thinking* it this good while"), the use of the 'be perfect' ("We *are agreed* to put an end to Forgael"-, or the 'extended now' perfect ("We *are* out since the new moon", "It *is* long enough"). If we add to this the frequent use of 'and' with the effect of a subordinating conjunction ("We were becalmed the same night, *and*¹⁴ he set up there playing that old harp of his until the moon had set") and the extensive use that he makes of the preposition *on* used to express possession and existence ("age to be coming *on* me"), all peculiarities that mark off Hiberno-English from other English dialects, it will become obvious the shortsightedness of such claims, such as Seamus Dean's, that in Yeats's literary work Occultism compensates for the poet's lack of Irish knowledge (Dean 1997: 110-111). Yeats may not have known Irish, but he is certain to have studied the peculiarities of Hiberno-English, and the dialogue of the Sailors in *Shadowy Waters* bears out this claim.¹⁵

Equally important, the elegiac tone of the play – the emphasis it lays on Man's longing for the spiritual world, on departure and death – is a mood associated with the world of Celtic myth and, therefore, it is a Revivalist, and not necessarily a Symbolist quality. By the same token, the symbols the play works with, although some of them are of Neoplatonic origin – the sea in Neoplatonism is the symbol for the material world and the boat is the image for the soul of man (Wilson 1958: 38)—, are in perfect consensus with the type of conflict Celtic myths work with: the tension between reality and fantasy (Gantz 1981: 1). Most symbols contained in *Shadowy Waters* stand for states of in-between (between the real and the spiritual world): the man-headed birds (i.e. the souls of the dead) are Forgael's pilots on his journey to the *Other world* (the journey itself is a state in-between), his magic harp is a gift of the gods. The harp, as one of the central symbols of the play, is extremely telling, for it connects the play to Celtic spirituality in more than one way. Besides the fact that it is the national emblem

¹⁴ In this sentence, 'and' means 'because'.

¹⁵ We shouldn't forget that Anglo-Irish writers had no intent to write in Irish. They drew on Hiberno-English, instead.

of Ireland, and as such, it represents the magic power of art, traditionally, the harp is thought of as an instrument that induces dreaminess, links the earth to the sky, and guides the souls of the deceased to the *Other world*. In addition to this, the wooden box and the strings of the harp and the soft music produced by the vibrating of the strings represent the tension between material instincts and spiritual longing (Chevalier and Gheerbrant 1993: 119).

In perfect harmony with the mood and the symbolism of the play, the stage set, as devised by Yeats, is sketchy and suggestive, its color scheme enhancing the effect of dreaminess. In a letter to his poet friend, T. Sturge Moore, he described it in the following way:

The play is dreamy and dim and the colours should be the same--(say) a blue-green sail against an indigo-blue blackcloth, and the mast and bulwark indigo blue. The persons in blue and green with some copper ornaments. By making one colour predominate only slightly in backcloth and one only slightly in persons the whole will be kept dim and mysterious, like the waters themselves." (Bridge ed. 1953: 7)

This type of *mise en scene*, owes, indeed, much to the Symbolist theatre that placed as much emphasis on stage symbolism as it did on verbal symbolism (Eynat-Confino 1987: 22). Yet, by adopting this convention, Yeats's intention was primarily a Revivalist one, for he considered that it stood in perfect consensus with the dreaminess and melancholy of Celtic spirituality.

This is a convenient place to take stock, i.e. to examine the various strands of evidence that have been laid out in order to see if our contention of *Shadowy Waters* as a Revivalist play can be drawn out of them or whether the whole idea is a fallacy. In the first part of this essay a brief outline had been given of the principal elements that compose the discourse of Anglo-Irish cultural nationalism at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, a discourse that impacted all the Anglo-Irish texts produced in the Ireland of the period. The fact that *Shadowy Waters* was staged by the Irish National Theater Society, which produced only plays on Irish themes or foreign work of the highest quality, seemed to confirm my hypothesis that it was a Revivalist play, its Symbolist qualities being merely the outcome of the specific view of the Irish nation cherished by the Anglo-Irish. This view,

which advanced the idea that the Irish were essentially Celtic, pagan, and English speaking, is well reflected by the play, the theme, the plot, and the characters of which were inspired by various Celtic myths. The language of the drama, which juxtaposes a prosaic diction conveyed in the rhythms specific to Hiberno-English with visionary speech rendered in blank verse and in Standard English, is an expression of the tension between reality and the imaginary that characterizes all Celtic art. In like manner, the symbolism of the play, which is not entirely of a Celtic stock, is in consensus with Celtic thought that lays so much emphasis on states of in-betweenness as times of personal growth. The sketchy and suggestive stage set was meant to enhance the effect of dreaminess and melancholy that pervades the play; and dreaminess and melancholy are yet another two characteristics associated with the Celts! All in all, it may be concluded, on basis of all these evidence, that *Shadowy Waters*, in spite of its debt to French Symbolist drama, is basically a Revivalist play and as such it incorporates most of the elements comprised by the discourse of Anglo-Irish cultural nationalism.

References:

- Armstrong, John Alexander, 1982. *Nations before Nationalism*. Chapel Hill NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- Berta, Csilla, 1987. *A drámaíró Yeats*. Budapest: Akadémiai kiadó.
- Bloom, Harold, 1972. *Yeats*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Bridge, Ursula ed., 1953. *W.B. Yeats and T. Sturge Moore; Their Correspondence, 1901-1937*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Chevalier, Jean & Alain Gheerbrant, 1993. *Dicționar de simboluri*. București: Artemis.
- Deane, Seamus, 1997. *Strange Country: Modernity and Nationhood in Irish Writing since 1790*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Ellis-Fermor, Una, 1954. *The Irish Dramatic Movement*. London: Methuen
- Eynat-Confino, Irene, 1987. *Beyond the Mask: Gordon Craig, Movement and the Actor*. Carbondale IL: Southern Illinois University Press
- Filppula, Markku, 1999. *The Grammar of Irish English: Language in Hibernian Style*. London: Routledge.
- Gantz, Jeffrey, 1981. *Early Irish Myths and Sagas*. London: Penguin Books Ltd.
- Gramley, Stephan & Kurt-Michael Pätzold, 2003. *A Survey of Modern English*. London: Routledge.

- Hutchinson, John, 2003. *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism: The Gaelic Revival and the Creation of the Irish Nation State*. London: Allen & Unwin.
- Gregory, Lady, 1913. *Our Irish Theatre: a Chapter of Autobiography*. New York: Putman's Sons.
- Gregory, Lady, 1970. *Cuchulain of Muirthemne*. Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire: Colin Smythe Ltd.
- Gregory, Lady, 2004. *Visions and Beliefs in the West of Ireland*. Killa, MT: Kessinger Publishing Co.
- Mills, Sara, 2004. *Discourse*. New York: Routledge.
- Rosenthal, M.L., 1997. *Running to Paradise. Yeats's Poetic Art*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Smith, Anthony D., 1999. *Myths and Memories of the Nation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Waters, Maureen, 1984. *The Comic Irishman*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Welch, Robert, 1999. *The Abbey Theatre 1899-1999. Form and Pressure*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wilson, F.A.C., 1958. *William Butler Yeats and Tradition*. New York: Macmillan.
- Yeats, William Butler, 1961. *Essays and Introductions*. New York: Macmillan.
- Yeats, William Butler & Richard Allen Cave, 1997. *Selected Plays*. London: Penguin Books Ltd.

Manques, objets, reconstructions de l'identité par l'écriture

Simona Şuta ¹

Résumé: Notre étude porte sur le caractère «descriptiocentrisme» de la création perecquienne car l'histoire de Georges Perec, constituée de manques, se reconstruit à partir des objets, qui, chez lui, peuvent contourner une identité à trous et puis l'espace qui la récupère.

Mots-clé: manques, identité, autobiographie, écriture, histoire.

La place de Perec dans la littérature moderne doit être considérée tout d'abord du point de vue de ses préoccupations esthétiques. Perec envisage la littérature comme un moyen de connaissance et de recherche sur les possibilités du langage. Sa carrière s'inscrit bien dans le mouvement de remise en cause de la littérature et du langage qui caractérise le moderne. Aussi n'est-il pas resté indifférent à l'intense activité qui a mobilisé les écrivains et penseurs regroupés autour de la bannière du Nouveau Roman et plus tard de la revue *Tel Quel*. Il convient toutefois de préciser la place de Perec face à ces deux mouvements. Cédant à la tyrannie des étiquettes, catégories ou écoles, la critique a trop souvent eu tendance à occulter la singularité de l'oeuvre de Perec pour ne la voir que comme le produit d'un franc-tireur qui restait dans la mouvance du Nouveau Roman ou du "Nouveau Nouveau Roman". Or Georges Perec s'est relevé l'un des premiers à formuler une critique soutenue de ces mouvements auxquels on a voulu l'associer. Dans une série d'articles parus de 1962 à 1963 dans la revue "Partisans", Perec a tenté d'une part de restituer le Nouveau Roman dans son contexte historique, d'autre part de faire voir les fondements idéologiques sur lesquels s'appuyait ce mouvement. On peut dire que le Nouveau Roman est apparu à Perec sous un jour paradoxal: à la fois comme le symbole de l'avant-garde et l'expression d'une vision

¹ University of Oradea

réactionnaire. Mettant en valeur les contingences historiques qui ont présidé à la genèse du Nouveau Roman, Perec montre que ce mouvement est sorti de la crise qui, à la Libération, a été provoquée par l'effondrement des valeurs humanistes dont se réclamait jusque-là la culture européenne. Devant la complexité croissante du monde, les écrivains, affirme Perec, ne pouvaient plus se servir de la langue comme par le passé. Le Nouveau Roman serait donc né en réponse aux exigences historiques et esthétiques tout à fait légitimes. Perec comprend la volonté des nouveaux romanciers de "décrasser le langage" et de démanteler les conventions littéraires qui ne permettaient plus, dans la conjoncture moderne, aucune prise sur le concret. La faillite de la littérature engagée elle-même qui, par son schématisme arbitraire restait en deçà de ses promesses a créé, toujours selon Perec, les conditions propices à l'émergence du Nouveau Roman.

Néanmoins, Perec a dénoncé dans bien de ses aspects la nouvelle esthétique que proposait le Nouveau Roman. Sa condamnation, interpellant le formalisme systématisé dans lequel s'est complu Robbe-Grillet ainsi que d'autres représentants du Nouveau Roman et de la revue "Tel Quel", porte sur les valeurs théoriques. Les formules qui ont servi à définir l'esthétique du Nouveau Roman et qui étaient censées libérer la littérature du joug de la tradition se sont avérées tout aussi contraignantes et inadéquates que les conventions dévitalisées héritées du passé. Pour Perec tout se passe comme si le Nouveau Roman, dans son désir de briser le carcan qui maintenait l'imagination prisonnière des clichés, avait érigé les murs de sa propre prison. "Purs objets", "pure présence", "tropismes", ces concepts mobilisateurs du Nouveau Roman deviennent, tels que les voit Perec, moins l'expression d'une vérité quelconque sur le monde et l'homme, que des "trucs" à la mode dépourvus de toute authenticité. Plus fondamentalement, Perec découvre derrière la prétendue objectivité du regard du nouveau romancier qui fige l'homme dans un monde immuable et indéchiffrable l'expression d'un pessimisme radical découlant d'une «idéologie réactionnaire». Loin d'être ce mouvement révolutionnaire qui chambarderait l'ordre littéraire, le Nouveau Roman que découvre Perec préserve le statu quo. Ainsi Perec pulvérise les prétentions apolitiques qu'avait affichées le Nouveau Roman.

Si Perec dénonce les limites du Nouveau Roman et de certaines démarches modernes, il ne préconise pourtant pas un

retour béat aux formules compassées de la littérature dite traditionnelle. Il se désolidarise des courants passésistes qui ont opposé un refus catégorique à toute remise en cause de la littérature.

D'un article à l'autre: «Pour une littérature réaliste», «Engagement ou crise du langage», «Le mystère Robbe-Grillet» notamment, Perec, tout en affinant les arguments critiques qu'il émet à l'encontre du Nouveau Roman, jette les bases d'une réflexion théorique sur les options qui s'offrent à l'écrivain moderne. C'est à partir d'une conception résolument ouverte sur le réel que Perec voit dans la littérature un instrument révolutionnaire.

(...) exprimer le monde dans la totalité de son devenir, en faire émerger d'une manière sensible les lois qui commandent son évolution, c'est à n'importe quel niveau de la réalité, pour chaque événement, pour chaque phénomène, poser comme base que le monde n'est pas tel quel, les choses ne sont pas ce qu'elles sont, qu'il n'est nul éternel, nul explicable, nul accessible qu'on ne puisse un jour dominer. (Perec 1992: 81)

Ces remarques sont importantes pour déterminer la place qu'occupe Perec dans le prisme de l'expression moderne et pour saisir la valeur et la portée de son oeuvre. Pour lui, plonger dans le réel, c'est s'intéresser au quotidien à tous les niveaux, du trivial au plus élevé, de la banalité infra-ordinaire aux expériences et incidents les plus curieux. Aussi n'est-il pas surprenant de le voir s'engager dès son premier roman "Les Choses" sur le terrain de l'objet. Entrant dans la carrière romanesque au coeur des débats sur le rapport objet / homme / sujet, Perec interpelle la définition de "littérature objective" que Barthes propose pour célébrer le Nouveau Roman. Perec ne partage pas la vision du monde qui a été celle des nouveaux romanciers. Pour lui, le monde n'est pas cet univers muet dans lequel l'existence humaine perd tout son sens. Il ne semble voir aucune incompatibilité entre l'art et la connaissance de l'homme. L'objectivité n'est pas la neutralité, mais la faculté de poser les bonnes questions.

Si Perec s'est opposé à la démarche de nombre de ses contemporains il se définit pourtant à partir des mêmes préoccupations. De fait, Perec, tout comme Robbe-Grillet par exemple, se réclame du réalisme. Toutefois, alors que pour un Robbe-Grillet la tâche de l'écrivain est de transcrire la réalité sans chercher à y introduire aucun principe organisateur, Georges Perec,

pour sa part, se dit réaliste justemenet parce qu'il reconnaît à l'écrivain le pouvoir d'organiser le monde pour mieux le comprendre. En effet pour Perec, la littérature est l'expression d'une expérience personnelle mais qui, pour acquérir sa réelle dimension, doit s'intégrer dans un projet plus vaste qui affecte la réalité toute entière. C'est pour lui une des exigences fondamentales du réalisme. La conception de la littérature qu'affirme ainsi Georges Perec ne saurait donc souscrire à la notion de crise du sujet qui, comme on le sait, a été le point de départ de la vision du Nouveau Roman. De plus, à la vision a-historique du Nouveau Roman, Perec substiue une perspective qui restitue le monde dans sa dimension temporelle et donc historique. La signification de son oeuvreemergerait de la convergence de la recherche formelle et du commentaire sociologique, politique et anthropologique.

Il nous semble absolument nécessaire de s'attarder davantage aux objets, qui occupent une place tellement importante dans la création de Perec, dans la création de l'espace, création qui a comme point de départ le regard.

On va s'occuper dans ce qui suit de l'encyclopédie, de l'inventaire du quotidien, qui sert à l'élaboration du contenu des textes perecquiens. La liste chez Perec, comme l'ont montré les anthropologues, notamment Jack Goody, "est doublement fondatrice de l'écriture par l'équivalence sémantique qu'elle établit entre les mots et qui relève de la fonction métalinguistique, et par l'équivalence matérielle (symétrie) qu'elle développe dans la perception des places et des formes et qui relève de la fonction poétique.» (Goody 1979: 50)

Ceci la rend indispensable à la mémoire. Or Perec écrivait pour retrouver la mémoire, la sienne – dont l'Histoire l'avait partiellement spolié – et la mémoire collective de son époque. Qui n'a pas reçu l'histoire par le récit doit la reconstituer à partir des choses. C'est pourquoi toute l'œuvre de Perec est "descriptiocentriste», selon l'expression de Nicole Bilous, les inventaires, bien sûr, mais aussi les romans.

Perec est un des rares écrivains contemporains non seulement à pratiquer les genres descriptifs techniques, mais à ne pas les séparer de ses activités littéraires et à refuser de se figer dans un genre. Perec recourt à la description mû par ses passions. Ses descriptions techniques se regroupent autour de trois pôles d'intérêt, sur lesquels il avait acquis une compétence réellement professionnelle: les jeux de société, la communication littéraire

(critique littéraire et réflexion sur les bibliothèques) et la recherche littéraire, qui tient le milieu des deux autres.

Ces spécialisations convergent vers la littérature. Le fait que Perec est un joueur a influencé non seulement sa vision de la langue et de l'écriture, mais les jeux l'ont familiarisé avec un type de calcul combinatoire dont se ressent sa pratique narrative. Les descriptions montrent que l'écriture de Perec est une sorte de jeu de solitaire qui inclut dans son écriture des règles, mais il est loin de supprimer le hasard, car il l'intègre dans ses calculs.

Dans la description scientifique et technique qu'il pratique, il prévoit tout d'avance, nature et choix des prédicats, ordre des arguments, dimension. Devant les objets ses questions affluent: que décrire? comment? Où commencer? Où s'arrêter? Ce qui l'incite c'est l'impulsion de marquage, ce qui l'arrête c'est l'impasse de la mémoire.

Perec a un penchant pour les inventaires. L'inventaire ne développe pas les prédicats, il constate simplement la présence des objets et l'inventaire est ainsi plutôt une mention qu'une description. «Son sujet est homodiégétique (témoin) par opposition au sujet autodiégétique (acteur) de l'autobiographie.» (Lejeune 1975:18) La conscience ne préexiste pas à l'inventaire, elle en a au contraire besoin pour exister, pour transformer sans cesse les états traversés. C'est le sujet transcendental de Kant qui doit se situer dans l'espace-temps avant de s'inscrire dans le discours.

Si Perec passe pour être l'inventeur de l'inventaire dans la littérature française, «c'est qu'il en a fait un genre complet, le délivrant d'un double ghetto: celui de la poésie où le maintenait la pratique, celui du récit où le confinait la ... théorie – et qu'il y est parvenu en métissant, à son habitude, expérience descriptive et expérience romanesque». (Bilous 1993:107)

L'inventaire apparaît dans la bibliographie de Perec dix ans après *Les Choses*, avec la publication en 1975 de la *Tentative d'épuisement d'un lieu parisien*. Convaincu que l'événement est un leurre qui empêche d'interroger sa propre vie, Perec donne aux choses le sens que leur a conféré son roman. Ces «choses communes» qu'il veut traquer et débusquer, ce sont indistinctement les objets et les actes qu'il provoque. La science dont il se réclame alors n'est plus la psycho-sociologie, mais la science la plus sensible à la pratique descriptive: l'anthropologie. «Peut-être s'agit il de fonder enfin notre propre anthropologie: celle qui parlera de nous, qui ira chercher en nous ce que nous avons si

longtemps pillé chez les autres. Non plus l'exotique, mais l'endotique».(Perce 1989: 11-12)

Perce a pratiqué deux types d'inventaires que l'on qualifiera selon leur mode d'énonciation (d'après Nicole Bilous) d'impersonnels ou de personnels, les premiers: tentative, essais, difficulté, inventaire, épuisement, considérations, notes; les seconds ont pour titre le très célèbre Je me souviens.

Si le „je” de l'inventaire est homodiégétique et relève de la mémoire collective, celui de la description est autodiégétique. C'est une conscience individuelle constituée, capable d'autoréflexivité, c'est-à-dire de se définir par rapport au monde et de structurer le monde à partir de sa propre spatio-temporalité.

La description se situe entre la réalité et la fiction, là où la conscience compose le réel pour le comprendre et le faire comprendre. Perce a préféré l'inventaire «parce que c'est une chose qui est partagée. C'est très différent de l'autobiographie, de l'exploration de ses propres souvenirs, marquants, occultés.» (Bilous 1993:111) Loin de reculer devant le dilemme autobiographique, il a apporté continuellement des solutions. L'autobiodescription est l'une d'elles. Puisqu'on ne peut dire de vrai sur soi qu'indirectement, c'est par la description des objets que le sujet parlant s'atteint et se décrit. Il ne se reflète pas dans les objets, il s'y cherche; et donne l'impression d'être en visite dans les lieux qui lui sont les plus familiers. Ce n'est pas un narrateur autodiégétique narcissique qui se servirait des objets pour se décrire, mais un descripteur autodiégétique désintéressé qui décrit pour eux-mêmes les objets qui l'entourent. Donc Perce relie les objets non à lui-même, à sa vie, mais avant tout entre eux.

Hors des romans, Perce alterne descriptions d'extérieurs et descriptions d'intérieurs, sans les mêler. La description d'extérieur est axée sur les mobiles qui traversent le champ de vision. L'observateur est fixe, en général, ou du moins, ne se déplace pas en décrivant. La description d'intérieur est centrée sur le rangement d'objets fixes dans l'espace. L'observateur ne bouge pas mais son regard se promène, il n'est pas sans cesse obligé de surveiller les frontières du champ visuel, puisque le hors-champ ne varie pas.

La description d'intérieure est plus simple à réaliser que celle de l'extérieur: les meubles ne bougent pas tout seuls. Mais on peut les déplacer. Le temps n'est pas absent, car les objets qui sont là peuvent évoquer les objets disparus et ceux à venir.

En décrivant les “objets qui se trouvent sur [sa] table de travail”, Perec parle au présent: «Cet aménagement de mon territoire se fait rarement au hasard. Il correspond le plus souvent au début ou à la fin d’un travail précis» (Perec 1985:18.); et même il anticipe: «Plus tard, quand mon travail avance ou piétine, ma table de travail s’encombre d’objets que parfois le hasard seul rassemble (sécauteur, mètre pliant), ou bien des nécessités éphémères (tasse à café). Certains resteront quelques minutes, d’autres quelques jours, d’autres apparemment venus là d’une façon plutôt contingente, s’installeront d’une manière permanente». (Perec 1985:9)

On peut très bien remarquer que le récit sauve de l’arbitraire l’ordre de la description, livré à lui-même dès qu’on sort des descriptions techniques.

L’intérieur, et pas seulement les intérieurs intimes, révèlent davantage la subjectivité que l’extérieur. Enfermé dans un lieu, le narrateur a le temps d’élaborer des “réactions intersystémiques avec les co-occupants” (Bilous 1993:113). Plus loin, la présence des objets devient informative: «les objets qui sont sur ma table de travail sont là parce que je tiens à ce qu’ils y soient.» (Perec 1985:19). Leur répartition varie avec l’humeur: «parfois je souhaiterais qu’elle [ma table de travail] soit la plus vide possible. Mais le plus souvent, je préfère qu’elle soit encombrée» (Perec 1985:17,19). Et si on ne les repère pas sur le moment, c’est la mémoire qui restituera après filtrage ces «détails significatifs» (Perec 1985:28).

Il y a deux sortes d’espaces individuels dans les intérieurs décrits par Perec: l’espace social et l’espace personnel. Le prototype de l’espace social est le bureau, décrit dans «Le saint des Saints» (L’infra-ordinaire). Les objets qu’il contient symbolisent l’importance de son occupant et sa capacité à en acquérir d’autres. Le prototype de l’espace personnel est la chambre, où l’individu se retire pour se livrer au sommeil, durant lequel il est plus vulnérable et perd contact avec le monde. Entre les deux, Perec institue un lieu de médiation qui est son propre bureau d’écrivain. Il a les avantages des deux autres, sans en avoir les inconvénients. C’est là qu’on a chance de trouver une image plus authentique de Perec, y compris de son activité scripturale. En décrivant les objets qui se trouvent sur sa table de travail, Perec dévoile l’environnement matériel du geste d’écriture. Le décompte des gommes, stylos et jeux de patience de l’écrivain en mal d’inspiration démystifie l’activité créatrice. Cette métonymie métatextuelle (outils de l’écriture évoquant

l'écriture) est très efficace, car elle rappelle que l'écriture est un travail, sinon une profession. Et elle cache encore l'essentiel: comment les idées se transforment en mots. Mais le rangement des objets sur la table n'est qu'une analogie pour le rangement des mots. Les «Notes concernant les objets qui se trouvent sur ma table de travail» vont s'éclairer complètement avec la publication de «Still life / Style leaf» (Perec 1989). Ce second texte est d'abord mis à jour du premier. En cinq ans la table a changé et la population d'objets qu'elle supporte a évolué. Mais Perec ne se contente pas de compléter la représentation, il la purifie. La description s'y reprend elle-même avec de légères modifications lorsque le regard du descripteur atteint après un large périple, la feuille sur laquelle il est en train d'écrire. «L'homme blessé de la première partie est agonisant dans la seconde, la manche qui pendouille feint de flotter, la boîte à cigarillons à moitié entamée est largement entamée, etc.» (Magné 1990: 97-108). Et Perec arrête la mise en abyme au premier tour, mais sur un stylo.

Références:

Bilous, Nicole 1993. *Les choses dans les Choses*, (feuilleton théorique, 1), dans *Un cabinet d'amateur*, revue d'études perecquiennes printemps, nr. 1.

Goody, Jack 1979. *La Raison graphique*, Minuit coll. «Le Sens commun». Paris.

Lejeune, Philippe 1975. *Le Pacte autobiographique*, Paris, Seuil.

Magné, Bernard 1990. *Bout à bout tabou : about «Still life / Style leaf»* dans *Parcours Perec* (Coloque de Londres – mars 1988), Presses Universitaires de Lyon.

Perec, Georges 1989. *L'Infra-ordinaire*, Paris, Seuil.

Perec, Georges 1992. *LG*, Paris, Seuil.

Perec, Georges 1985. *Penser / Classer*, Paris, Hachette.

Die Nostalgie des Nicht-Seins in Günter Grass *Die Blechtrommel*

Monica Buşoiu¹

Abstract: Oskar Matzerath's hiding strategies, the main character of the novel 'The Tin Drum' by Günter Grass, reveal the fact, that the utopian non-existence-status of a person can be spatially localized. In this interpretation hiding rituals and strategies are more than plain childhood games and represent both a way to elude reality and also a manifestation of the nostalgia for the non-existence. The research on such experiences like the nostalgia for the non-existence can be traced back to the studies on the trauma of birth, made by the psychoanalyst Otto Rank.

Keywords: Günter Grass, ombilical cord, nostalgia, non-existence, Todes- und Lebensangst

1. Theoretischer Rahmen

Der Ausgangspunkt dieser Recherche begann mit dem Studium von Otto Ranks Theorie über das Trauma der Geburt, beschrieben in seinem ersten Buch, *Das Trauma der Geburt und seine Bedeutung für die Psychoanalyse*.² Die Hauptidee des Buches ist, dass die Geburt eine fundamentale Trennung ist, die eine große Angst verursacht und dass diese Angst immer wieder in der Zeit eines Menschenlebens hervorkommt. Zugleich wird diese *Uranst*, so wie sie Otto Rank nennt, als Ursache sowohl für verschiedene psychopathologische Situationen als auch für alle Schöpfungen eines Menschenlebens betrachtet. Der Autor spezifiziert in seinem Vorwort, dass er in seinem Buch die Absicht hatte:

[...] das anscheinend rein körperliche Geburtstrauma in seinen ungeheuren seelischen Folgen für die gesamte Entwicklung der Menschheit aus analytischen Erfahrungen erstmalig zu rekonstruieren versuchen.³

Für den Theoretiker ist die Geburt sowohl eine physikalische Separation vom Mutterleib, als auch eine psychische Trennung vom Nicht-Sein, vom

¹ University of Oradea, Romania

² Rank, Otto. *Das Trauma der Geburt und seine Bedeutung für die Psychoanalyse*. Wien: Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag, 1924.

³ Ebd., S. 3.

Unbewusstsein. Der Neugeborene wird vom Leib der Mutter getrennt und gezwungen, selbstständig zu atmen und zu leben, was für ihn eine absolut neue und Angst erregende Situation darstellt. Es ist ein Trauma, das ihm Panikgefühle einfließt und diese Panik bleibt tief im Unbewussten des Menschen verborgen.

Otto Rank führt in diesem Studium auch eine andere Idee ein, und zwar die Idee, dass der Mensch zwischen zwei Typen von Angst schwankt: die *Lebensangst* und die *Todesangst*. Diese Ängste stehen in strenger Verbindung mit dem, was Rank *Urangst* nennt: „[...] Der Konflikt zwischen Entstehen und Vergehen, der direkt aus der Verdrängung des Urtraumas stammt“⁴ sei das ursprüngliche Verhältnis zwischen Geburt und Sterben. Dieses Verhältnis realisiert zugleich auch die Verbindung zwischen der Geschichte des Menschenlebens und der Menschheitsgeschichte.

Unter *Lebensangst* versteht Rank die Angst hinaus in die Welt zu gehen und ein eigenes, selbstständiges Leben zu führen, die Angst vor Trennungen, vor dem Alleinsein, vor Verantwortung. Unter *Todesangst* versteht man die Angst des Individuums, seine Selbstständigkeit zu verlieren und einer Gruppe von Leuten zu gehören, gleich ob es die eigene Familie oder eine größere Gruppe, bzw. die Menschengesellschaft ist. Es ist die Angst vor dem Verlorengehen, vor dem Aufgeben der Selbstidentität. Diese ist die Tragödie des Menschen und die Tragödie unseres Helden, Oskar. Er wird zum Sinnbild des universellen Menschen, denn er oszilliert zwischen *Todes-* und *Lebensangst* und so wie uns allen, bleibt ihm wenig Raum für individuelle Freiheit, für einen Ausweg aus der Absurdität des Lebens.

Anhand von Otto Ranks Theorie, über das Trauma der Geburt, wird in unserem Studium gezeigt, dass Oskar Matzerath die *Urangst* der Geburt überwindet, indem er sich versteckt, und Obhut vor dem Sein sucht. Oskar hat Nostalgie nach dem Zustand des Nicht-Seins, deshalb vermeidet er jede Handlung. Er will nicht leben und nicht sterben, sondern schwebt im Intervall zwischen *Lebens-* und *Todesangst* und trommelt seine Revolte gegen die absurde Existenz. Er lebt nicht, er handelt nicht, sondern existiert bloß vor sich hin.

2. Die Nostalgie des Nicht-Seins

Der Roman *Die Blechtrommel* beschreibt die Tragödie des Menschen, der seine Existenz im Schatten des unvermeidlichen Todes führen muss und sich dieser Tatsache von Anfang an bewusst ist. Oskar Matzerath, der Hauptheld des Romans, dessen individuelle Geschichte mit der großen

⁴ Ebd., S. 163.

Geschichte seines Vaterlandes eng verbunden ist, sucht verschiedene Strategien, um die Realität zurückzuweisen. Er versucht sich sowohl vor dem unbarmherzigen Schicksal des Vergehens, als auch vor den schrecklichen Ereignissen des Zweiten Weltkrieges zu verstecken, indem er unter die Röcke seiner Großmutter kriecht, und im Körper eines Dreijährigen bleibt. Gleich im Moment seiner physikalischen Geburt ist er völlig aufgeklärt über die Tatsache, dass die Existenz finit ist, dass der Tod am Ende des Lebens auf ihn wartet:

Einsam und unverstanden lag Oskar unter den Glühbirnen, folgerte, dass das so bleibe, bis sechzig, siebenzig Jahre später ein endgültiger Kurzschluss aller Lichtquellen Strom unterbrechen werde, verlor deshalb die Lust, bevor dieses Leben unter den Glühbirnen anfang; und nur die in Aussicht gestellte Blechtrommel hinderte mich damals, dem Wunsch nach Rückkehr in meine embryonale Kopflage stärkeren Ausdruck zu geben.⁵

Oskars trügerisches Maskenspiel des ewig dreijährigen Kindes führt die Erwachsenen in Verwirrung. Somit lassen sie vor Oskar die eigenen Masken fallen, sodass sich der Junge einer vollständigen Weltschau erfreuen kann. Er ist ein völlig aufgeklärter Geist im Körper eines Gnomen versteckt, der sich eine normale Existenz verweigert, indem er die Nicht-Handlung als Motto seines Lebens wählt. So wie er selbst es zugibt: „Oskars Ziel ist die Rückkehr zur Nabelschnur“.⁶ Er tut so, als ob er nicht existiere, doch sterben will er auch nicht und er begeht keinen Selbstmord, denn „das wäre wirklich zu einfach gewesen“.⁷ Jedoch will er auch nicht sterben, so bleibt der Trommler schwebend zwischen Sein und Nicht-Sein.

Im Salon der Heil- und Pflegeanstalt trommelt Oskar Matzerath die Geschichte seines Lebens. Er findet es gut, dass er seine Erzählung mit der Figur seiner Großmutter, Anna Bronski, beginnt, mit deren Begegnung mit ihrem zukünftigen Mann, Joseph Koljaiczek und mit der Zeugung seiner Mutter, Agnes. Der Grund dafür ist, dass „niemand sein Leben beschreiben [sollte], der nicht die Geduld aufbringt, vor dem Datieren der eigenen Existenz wenigstens der Hälfte seiner Großeltern zu gedenken.“⁸

Anna Bronski ist vielleicht die wichtigste Figur in Oskars Leben. Sie wird oft erwähnt, denn Oskar sehnt sich nach ihren Röcken und nach der Stabilität, Geborgenheit und Sicherheit, die sie ihm gibt. Bei ihr fühlt

⁵ Günter Grass. *Die Blechtrommel*. München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2008. S. 55.

⁶ Ebd., S. 229.

⁷ Ebd., S. 73.

⁸ Ebd., S. 12.

er sich am besten, er fühlt sich sowohl vor dem Leben, als auch vor dem Tod geschützt.

Obwohl Oskar als Erwachsener die Geschichte seiner Vorfahren schreibt, sieht er für immer seine Großmutter mit den Augen des Kindes. Deshalb wird Anna Bronski, eine einfache Bäuerin aus der Kaschubei, an der Grenze zwischen Polen und Deutschland, als eine uralte Frau geschildert.

Sie erscheint als ewige Figur und verkörpert in der von Oskar mythologisch überhöhten Szene die Urmutter Demeter, die unter ihren vier kartoffelfarbenen, in warmen Erdtönen vorgestellten Röcken einen ganzen Kosmos zu beherbergen scheint. Fest verwurzelt mit der Erde sitzt die „große Mutter“ auf dem Acker.⁹

In der Szene, wo der Leser Anna Bronski kennenlernt, sitzt sie am Feuer am Rande des Kartoffelfeldes an einem Oktobertag des Jahres 1899. Ihre vier Röcke und die Art und Weise, in der sie sie wechselt, werden ausführlich beschrieben. Anna trägt immer wieder die vier Röcke, doch sie ändert täglich die Reihenfolge, in der sie sie trägt. Der Rock, der an einem Tag am untersten liegt, wird morgen oben stehen, und so weiter. Die Röcke werden gewechselt, so wie sich die vier Jahreszeiten wechseln. Was ständig gleich bleibt, ist die Trägerin der Röcke selbst. Wie die Mutter Erde, die stabil bleibt. Die Dinge ändern sich im Laufe der Zeit, doch auf die Mutter Erde kann man sich immer verlassen, sie ändert sich nicht. Die Röcke werden zyklisch gewechselt, doch invariabel bleiben sie dieselben. So wie sich die große Geschichte immer wieder wiederholt, ohne dass eine substantielle Veränderung stattfindet:

Laut lachte meine Großmutter, versteckte die Petroleumflaschen, den Kunsthonig und die Desinfektionsmittel unter jenen vier Röcken, die trotz heftigster militärischer, politischer und weltgeschichtlicher Ereignisse nicht von ihrer Kartoffelfarbe gelassen hatten.¹⁰

Anna Bronski, mit ihren Röcken, symbolisiert nicht nur die Stabilität der Mutter Erde, sondern auch deren Fruchtbarkeit. Unter ihnen versteckt sich der Brandstifter Joseph Koljaiczek, um nicht von den Männern in Uniformen gefunden zu werden. Viktor Neuhaus meint, dass: „Der weite Rock der Anna Bronski, unter dem Joseph Koljaiczek Zuflucht vor seinen

⁹ Dieter Stolz. *Günter Grass zur Einführung*. Hamburg: Junius Verlag, 1999. S. 129-130.

¹⁰ Günter Grass. *Die Blechtrommel*. München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2008. S. 547.

Verfolgern findet und Agnes zeugt, gewinnt schon in dieser Begebenheit seinen Sexual- wie seinen Asylcharakter.”¹¹

Agnes Bronski, Oskars Mutter, wurde unter den Röcken, in deren Schutz gezeugt und in dem Moment war es „still [...] wie am ersten Tag oder am letzten.”¹² Diese Stille ist gleich der Stille zu setzen, die vor der Erbsünde herrschte. Diese Stille wird Oskar in seinem Leben vergebens suchen. Er wird immer auf der Suche nach dem Frieden unter den vier Röcken der Großmutter sein, nach dem Frieden des Nicht-Seins.

Sie werden fragen: Was sucht Oskar unter den Röcken seiner Großmutter? Will er seinen Großvater Koljaiczek nachahmen und sich an der alten Frau vergehen? Sucht er Vergessen, Heimat, das endliche Nirwana? Oskar antwortet: Afrika suchte ich unter den Röcken, womöglich Neapel, das man bekanntlich sehen haben muss. Da flossen die Ströme zusammen, da war die Wasserscheide, da wehten besondere Winde, da konnte es aber auch windstill sein, da rauschte der Regen, aber man saß im Trocknen, da machten die Schiffe fest, oder die Anker wurden gelichtet, da saß neben Oskar der liebe Gott, der es schon immer gerne warm gehabt hat, da putzte der Teufel sein Fernrohr, da spielten Engelchen blinde Kuh; unter den Röcken meiner Großmutter war immer Sommer, auch wenn der Weihnachtsbaum brannte, auch wenn ich Ostereier suchte oder Allerheiligen feierte. Nirgendwo konnte ich ruhiger nach dem Kalender leben als unter den Röcken meiner Großmutter.¹³

Ein paradiesischer Zustand herrscht unter den phantastischen Röcken der Großmutter. Es ist der rein männliche Adams Paradies, mit ewigem Sommer, mit Harmonie zwischen Gott und dem Menschen, ohne Dichotomien, ohne Konflikte. Es ist jene vorhistorische Zeit, als der Mensch zusammen mit seinem Schöpfer, das ewige Leben und die Schönheiten der Kreation genoss. Es ist die Zeit der Atemporalität, vor der Erbsünde, vor dem fatalen Sturz in die geschichtliche Zeit, vor dem Tod. Es ist der Frieden vor dem Beginn der Geschichte, Frieden, den die Menschengesellschaft für immer verloren hat.

Über diese Szene am Rande des Kartoffelfeldes schreibt Dieter Stolz, dass: „Nicht nur Oskars Mutter wird in dieser bedeutungsschwangeren Koitusszene gezeugt, sondern zugleich der

¹¹ Volker Neuhaus. *Günter Grass*. 3. aktualisierte und erweiterte Auflage. Stuttgart: Verlag J. B. Metzler, 2010. S. 72.

¹² Günter Grass. *Die Blechtrommel*. München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2008. S. 18.

¹³ Ebd., S. 160.

Weltenprozess unwiderruflich in Gang gesetzt. [...] So will es der in Gegensatzpaaren schwelgende Erzähler.”¹⁴

Der Leser nimmt als Zeuge bei dem Ursprung der Familie Bronski teil. Später im Roman, als man die Figur der Großmutter hyperbolisiert und sie mit einem Berg vergleicht, bekommt diese Szene eine kosmische Bedeutung. Es wird mit diesem Vergleich noch deutlicher, dass ihre Figur die Göttin Demeter verkörpert. Man ist also nicht nur bei der Geburt der Geschichte dieser Familie Zeuge, sondern auch bei der Geburt der großen Geschichte. Es ist nicht zufällig, dass Oskars Mutter im Jahre 1900 geboren wird, gleich mit der Geburt eines neuen Jahrhunderts. Die große Geschichte wird mit der individuellen Geschichte der Familie Bronski ineinandergeflochten.

Das zwanzigste Jahrhundert zeigte sich als das Blutigste, mit Krisen und globalen Konflikten, mit Ideologien des Rassen- und sozialen Klassenhasses. Ein Jahrhundert, dessen tragische Geschichte dem Menschenwesen erneut die Gelegenheit gab, sich selbst zu definieren. Vielleicht niemals in der Geschichte befand sich der Mensch in so einer tiefen Identitätskrise, wie die zur Zeit der zwei Weltkriege. Günter Grass *trommelt* mit seinem Roman grundsätzliche Fragen dieses Prozesses, wodurch sich die Menschheit neu definieren darf. In Rückblick darauf sieht der Schriftsteller nur versäumte Chancen und diese Erkenntnis führt umso stärker in Verzweiflung, je mehr er sich bewusst ist, dass er selbst dazu beigetragen hat. Die Attitüde dieses damals jungen Schriftstellers wurde als notwendige und aufrechte Selbstzucht zelebriert, denn sie räumte wesentlichen Fragen nach dem Sinn der menschlichen Existenz viel Platz ein.

Oskar erlebt nach diesem Vorbild eine Identitätskrise und ist der Inbegriff des absurden Menschen. Die Geschichte des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts, die zur gleichen Zeit mit der kleinen Geschichte der Familie Oskars geboren ist, determiniert die Ereignisse aus seinem Leben. Die große Geschichte kann nicht ignoriert werden. Sie strukturiert ziemlich arbiträr das Leben des Helden und bestimmt es, indem sie sich ständig wiederholt. Oskar sieht ein, dass diese Wiederkehr des Tragischen allein den Menschen zu verdanken ist, die nie die richtigen Konsequenzen aus dem Geschehenen ziehen und nichts aus diesen lernen.

In solchen Momenten der Verzweiflung will Oskar zurück zur Nabelschnur, zurück unter die Röcke seiner Großmutter, auch weil er sich aus der großen Geschichte aufheben möchte. Für ihn ist der Ausbruch des Zweiten Weltkrieges ein großes Problem, da niemand mehr an Spielzeugen interessiert ist und der Spielladen des Juden Sigismund Markus während

¹⁴ Dieter Stolz. *Günter Grass zur Einführung*. Hamburg: Junius Verlag, 1999. S. 130.

der Kristallnacht zerstört und der arme, unschuldige Besitzer des Ladens getötet wird. Traurig klagt der Trommler:

Während die Geschichte lauthals Sondermeldungen verkündend wie ein gut geschmiertes Gefährt Europas Straßen, Wasserwege und Lüfte befuhr, durchschwamm und fließend eroberte, liefen meine Geschäfte, die sich ja nur auf das bloße Zertrommeln gelackter Kinderbleche beschränkten, schlecht, zögernd, überhaupt nicht mehr.¹⁵

Oskar ist pessimistisch, auch was die Belehrbarkeit oder Umschulung der Menschen betrifft. Er weiß, dass wenn solche Versuche funktioniert hätten, man diese Tragödien der Geschichte nicht mehr erleben würde. Trotz der technischen Fortschritte im Laufe der Zeit ist der Mensch im Grunde derselbe geblieben. Gewalt, Hass, kriminelle Neigungen, Gier sind nach wie vor Ursachen für Konflikte. Eine Verbesserung in Richtung der Gründung einer Zivilisation des Friedens unter Menschen bleibt nur ein unerfüllter Wunsch. Oskar ist sich des utopischen Charakters dieser Hoffnungen bewusst. Dieter Stolz schreibt diesbezüglich:

Die resignative Einsicht dessen, der alles von Anfang an durchschaut, bestimmt auch das Geschichtsbild des Erzählers. Seine historischen Studien, Vergleiche und Ausflüchte bestätigen ihm, was er von Anfang an weiß: Es geschieht wenig Neues unter den von unbelehrbaren Menschen bevölkerten Röcken der Welt. Geschichte im Kleinen wie im Großen stellt sich aus seiner Perspektive als [...] permanente Destruktion ohne erkennbaren Sinn.¹⁶

Zur Zeit seiner Geburt, mit seinem Eintritt in die Geschichte, ist sich Oskar darüber im Klaren, dass er den Frieden des Nicht-Seins für immer verloren hat. Er vermisst gleich in dem Moment seiner Abnabelung diesen Frieden und deshalb versucht er sein ganzes Leben lang ihn wieder zu finden. Diese Suche bezieht sich nicht nur auf die zeitliche Dimension der Existenz, sondern auch auf die Räumliche. Er will zurück zu dem Ursprung seiner Geschichte, der im Grunde örtlich markiert ist. Dieter Stolz meint:

Der Tendenz zur Verweigerung, zur Ablehnung aller Integration, entspricht ein starkes Bedürfnis nach Erlösung durch [...] die Heimkehr in den Mutterschoß. Auf der Basis dieses komplexen, von psychologisch geschulten Interpreten bereits mehrfach ausgeleuchteten Arrangements ist auch Oskars größte Sehnsucht,

¹⁵ Günter Grass. *Die Blechtrommel*. München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2008. S. 334.

¹⁶ Dieter Stolz. *Günter Grass zur Einführung*. Hamburg: Junius Verlag, 1999. S. 138.

sein Verlangen nach der zeitlosen Stille unter den alle geschichtlichen Katastrophen schadlos überstehenden Röcken der Großmutter und all ihren unzulänglichen Surrogaten – Schränken, Tischen, Kammern, Särgen – zu verstehen.¹⁷

Eine Szene, in der Oskars Wunsch, aus der Welt zu verschwinden, sehr dramatisch geschildert wird, ist jene, in der er bei dem Begräbnis seiner Mutter in die Grube hinein will, um für immer zusammen mit ihr und mit dem winzigen Embryo aus dem Schoß der toten, schwangeren Frau zu bleiben:

Einen wilden Wunsch galt es zu bekämpfen. [...] Mit Mama und dem Embryo wollte Oskar in die Grube. Unten bleiben, während die Hinterbliebenen ihre Hand voller Erde hinabwarfen, nicht hochkommen wollte Oskar, auf dem verjüngten Fußende wollte er sitzen, trommeln, wenn möglich unter der Erde trommeln, bis ihm seine Mama, bis er ihr, bis jeder dem anderen zuliebe faulte.¹⁸

Oskar ist aber nicht der Erste, der diese Sehnsucht nach dem Nicht-Sein empfindet. Seine junge Mutter suchte auch Geborgenheit, fand sie aber nicht unter den Röcken ihrer eigenen Mutter, sondern unter dem Bett, im Kleiderschrank, oder unter dem Tisch, wenn Besuch da war:

Es kam dem Mädchen Agnes also darauf an, versteckt zu bleiben und im Versteck ähnliche Sicherheit, wenn auch anderes Vergnügen zu finden, als Joseph unter den Röcken der Anna fand. Koljaiczek der Brandstifter war gebrannt genug, um das Schutzbedürfnis seiner Tochter verstehen zu können. Deshalb baute er ihr [...] ein Kaninchenstall [...] einen extra für ihre Maße gedachten Verschlag. In solch einem Gehäuse saß meine Mama als Kind, spielte mit Puppen und wurde größer dabei.¹⁹

Die junge Agnes, die sich des Lebens durch ihr Spiel freuen möchte, erleidet die Angstgefühle des Auslebens und erinnert somit an Gottfried Benns *Schöne Jugend*. Während ihr Leben die expressionistische Groteske in allen ihren Aspekten darstellt, findet man in Oskars Fall dieses Tragische nur als Potentialität nicht aber als tatsächliche Verwirklichung. Oskar entgegnet diesem Tragischen mit mit Hilfe seiner Entscheidungen, zum einen nicht mehr zu wachsen und zum anderen nicht mehr artikuliert zu sprechen.

¹⁷ Ebd., S. 131.

¹⁸ Günter Grass. *Die Blechtrommel*. München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2008. S. 212.

¹⁹ Ebd., S. 28.

Als kleiner Junge bekommt Oskar kein Kaninchenhaus, sondern eine Trommel. Er versteckt sich im Körper eines Gnomen und manchmal ist ihm auch das nicht gut genug. Er will sich noch wirksamer verstecken und deshalb kriecht der Trommler unter die Röcke seiner Großmutter. Die Röcke sind der Ort, wo sich der Zustand des Nicht-Seins verwirklichen kann. Wenn diese nicht vorhanden sind, dann findet Oskar Ersatzräume dafür. Er findet ein gutes Versteck unter dem Tisch, im Schrank, unter der Tribüne oder bei seiner Geliebten. Viktor Neuhaus behauptet:

Diese regressive Sehnsucht konkretisiert sich für Oskar [...] stets in den Röcken der Großmutter. Dort zu sein, dort bleiben zu dürfen, ist die einzige Hoffnung, die einzige Utopie in Oskars Leben. Die eigene Existenz durch Rückkehr dorthin, wo alles begann, zu annullieren, wäre das Ende der Zeit, Aufhebung aller Gegensätze, Anfang einer paradiesischen Ewigkeit.²⁰

Die Haltung der Großmutter gegenüber den ungewöhnlichen Bedürfnissen ihres Enkels ist veränderlich. Als kleines Kind wurde Oskar unter den Röcken akzeptiert, aber mit der Zeit wurde es der Großmutter peinlich und sie duldet ihn nicht mehr, besonders wenn andere Erwachsene dabei waren, denn sie wurde von diesen verspottet. Immer wenn sie aber allein waren, was leider nach dem Tod Oskars Mutter immer seltener geschah, gelang es ihm ohne viele Tricks im „großmütterlichen Berg“²¹ einige Zeit zu verbringen und seiner Großmutter vorzutrommeln.

Was ich von der Großmutter erwartete, selbst heute noch breit und genussvoll ausmale, war recht eindeutig und deshalb nur selten zu erlangen: Oskar wollte, sobald er sie sah, seinem Großvater Koljaiczek nacheifern, bei ihr untertauchen und, wenn möglich, nie wieder außerhalb ihres Windschattens atmen müssen.²²

Der weite Rock der Großmutter ist ein literarisches Motiv, das sich vielmals im Laufe des Romans wiederholt.

Man beobachtet die Veränderungen der Wahrnehmung, die Oskar in Bezug auf seine Großmutter hat. In seiner Kindheit sieht er sie als eine strenge Figur, als Garantie der Stabilität und Ordnung. Sie ist eine Bäuerin, die ihre Produkte auf dem Markt verkauft. Als sie sich von der Familie Oskars immer mehr entfernt, insbesondere nach dem Tod ihrer

²⁰ Volker Neuhaus. *Günter Grass*. 3. aktualisierte und erweiterte Auflage. Stuttgart: Verlag J. B. Metzler, 2010. S. 72.

²¹ Günter Grass. *Die Blechtrommel*. München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2008. S. 276.

²² Ebd. S. 275.

Tochter, Agnes, und immer seltener zu Besuch zu ihrem Enkel kommt, wird ihr Bild hyperbolisiert. Sie nimmt in Oskars Gedächtnis die Form und Größe eines Berges. Der „Berg“ wird immer größer, direkt proportional mit der Zeitperiode, in der sie Oskar nicht zu Gesicht bekommt. Ihre Gesichtszüge werden verwischerter und ihre Röcke immer größer. Die Figur der Großmutter identifiziert sich mit ihren Röcken. Sie verwandelt sich in der Einbildungskraft Oskars in einen „in vier Röcken übereinander wandelnden Berg, der nach meiner Großmutter Anna Koljaiczek benannt war“²³. Das Bild der vier Röcke definiert nun die Figur der Großmutter.

3. Synthese des räumlichen und zeitlichen Absurden durch die Musik oder die Aufhebung der *Todes- und Lebensängste*

Die Nostalgie nach dem sorgenlosen Zustand des Nicht-Seins findet bei Oskar, wie bereits gezeigt, eine doppelte Fundierung in der persönlichen und gemeinschaftlichen Geschichte zugleich. Das bereits vor der Geburt erkannte Leiden und das Absurde der menschlichen Tragödie sind für das kleine Kind Felsenblöcke der Existenz, die er bewusst nicht akzeptiert, denn er fühlt sich nicht imstande diese wie Sisyphos hochzutragen. Trotzdem kommt Oskar seinem Schicksal entgegen, indem er seine Trommelnkunst ausübt. Zum Trotz der Götter, die ihn bestraft hatten, setzt er seine Aufgabe fort und trägt seine grausame Last mit menschlicher Würde. Man fühlt kein Mitleid ihm gegenüber, ganz im Gegenteil, er ruft Empathie und Solidarität hervor.

Günter Grass war mit dem Existenzialismus schon seit Beginn der fünfziger Jahre vertraut. Er selbst gibt zu, dass: „Doch vorher schon, ohne Kenntnis des sogenannten Absurden, dumm wie mich der Krieg entlassen hatte, war ich, der Zwanzigjährige, mit allen Seinsfragen und also mit dem Existenzialismus auf du.“²⁴ Diese Tatsache ist schon in seinen ersten Werken spürbar.

Im Roman *Die Blechtrommel* beschreibt Grass, durch seinen Helden, Oskar, die Lage des Menschen, der trotz seines Wissens über die Sinnlosigkeit des Lebens, doch nicht den Selbstmord wählt, sondern am Leben bleibt. Seine Irrationalität konjugiert sich mit der der ganzen Geschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts. Grass verleiht seinem Helden ein luzides Bewusstsein, das sich hinter der Maske eines vierundneunzig Zentimeter hohen Physikums und hinter seiner ubiquitären Trommel versteckt. Seine Einsamkeit wird durch die Linderung der Nostalgie nach dem Zustand des Nicht-Seins aufgehoben und diese momentane Linderung findet Oskar an Orten, die sich topisch mit dem Mutterschoß und mit der Trommel

²³ Ebd. S. 322.

²⁴ Günter Grass. *Kopfgeburten oder Die Deutschen sterben aus.*(S. 10, 84), zitiert von Neuhaus, 2010. S. 11.

vergleichen lassen. Dazu zählen die Röcke der Großmutter, der Tisch oder die Tribüne. Das Ineinanderfließen der zeitlichen und räumlichen Grenzen dieser Existenz ermöglichen Oskar eine ständige hin und her Bewegung zwischen *Todes-* und *Lebensangst*, die er durch sein Verstecken aufzuheben versucht. Dieser ermüdenden Verzweiflung bringt er seine Revolte entgegen, indem er in die Welt hinausschreit oder hinauströmmelt. Oskar findet somit Zuflucht in Musik. Seine Sehnsucht nach dem Nicht-Sein wird durch seine Schöpfungskraft ersetzt und Oskar wird Jazzmusiker. So wie es auch der Kritiker Dieter Stolz sieht, ist die Schöpfung die einzige Lösung für Oskars Klarheit:

Der Dichter-Narr Oskar bleibt unzuverlässig, inkonsequent und explizit lügnerisch. Episode für Episode zerschlägt er auf seiner misstönenden Blechtrommel mit seinen von Kapitel zu Kapitel wechselnden Rhythmen die traditionellen Erkenntniskategorien. Denn wer wie der mit hellwachen Skepsis ausgestattete Erzähler der *Blechtrommel* von der Absurdität des Daseins überzeugt ist – nicht nur Tristram Shandy und Becketts Romanhelden stehen Pate – dem bleibt nichts anderes übrig, als entweder zu versuchen, wieder in den Schoß der Mütter zurückzufinden, oder – so Oskar, der darum bemüht zu sein scheint, das eine mit dem anderen zu verbinden – sich als Künstler zu empören.²⁵

Abschließend lässt sich auch mit Dieter Stolz feststellen, dass die immaterielle Verborgenheit der musikalischen Ordnung, die das Absurde der menschlichen Existenz durchdringt, Oskar ermöglicht, seine Ängste zu beschwichtigen und das Chaos seines bewegten Lebens zu dominieren. Die Orte seiner geängstigten Verwirrung synthetisieren sich in den Strukturen der Jazzmusik.

Bibliographie:

Camus, Albert 2001. *Fața și reversul, Nunta, Mitul lui Sisif, Omul revoltat, Vara*. București: Editura RAO.

Grass, Günter 2008. *Die Blechtrommel*. München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag.

Neuhaus, Volker 2010. *Günter Grass*. 3. aktualisierte und erweiterte Auflage. Stuttgart: Verlag J. B. Metzler.

Rank, Otto 1924. *Das Trauma der Geburt und seine Bedeutung für die Psychoanalyse*. Wien: Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag.

Stolz, Dieter 1999. *Günter Grass zur Einführung*. Hamburg: Junius Verlag.

Internetquellen:

²⁵ Dieter Stolz, 1999. S. 127.

http://archive.org/stream/DasTraumaDerGeburtUndSeineBedeutungFrDiePsychoanalyse/Ipb_14_rank_1924_trauma_derGeburt#page/no/mode/2u.
[Zuletzt aufgerufen am 25. Okt. 2013].

**Modernity & Postmodernity
CULTURALISMS**

**Modernität und Postmodernität
KULTURWISSENSCHAFTLICHE
STUDIEN**

**Modernité et postmodernité
ÉTUDES CULTURELLES**



Argument to this issue's topic: Modernism and
Postmodernism
**What Influences Irish Writers? From Yeats to
the Present.**¹

Sean Darmody²

(A good way to read and follow this Paper is to go to each of the connections as you read through and listen, watch and learn)

It seems to me a remarkable feat that Irish writers have won the Nobel Prize for Literature four times in 70 years especially when one considers that the average population over that period of time could not have exceeded some two and a half million people and until after the second world war when the labour Government made for universal secondary education in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and 1966 in the Republic most young teenagers left school at either 12 or if at a Technical College 14 in the Republic and 15 from the state secondary school system. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland only about 30% of pupils went to the Grammar School. A review of Irish winners of The Nobel Prize in Literature: 1923 William Butler Yeats, 1925 George Bernard Shaw, 1969 Samuel Beckett, 1995 Seamus Heaney.

Sometimes the things that have influenced us most are the ones we do not notice, that we are ourselves unaware of as they are part and parcel of our upbringing and culture. We have been with them since our earliest days and they have imbued themselves

¹ This is a large section of a paper I gave at the University of Oradea 24th May 2013 for their Seminars in Anglophone Studies though I hope that there was more humour and wit there than I have managed here. I have had to edit out the last section of the talk because to do justice to the writers and you the reader would have necessitated a very much longer paper something in the order of three times longer. For this reason I have kept to the main idea of what has influenced writers and have not continued to look at writers like Heaney here.

² Trinity College, Dublin

into our unconscious as well as our conscious. We are in fact surrounded by them and are a part of them at one and the same time, so subtle is this that we accept them without question or conscious consideration until such time, as Foucault might say, we wish to think about our 'genesis'³ of who and why we are what we are, why we do what we do and what, as an artist, has profoundly influenced our thinking, our view of the world and our Art. It is precisely this socio- historic context of Irish writers that American and English professional critics do not have personal access to; this is certainly the case for Irish poets and playwrights, especially those who have followed after Yeats and are a product of the Education system of the later 60's and following and the slow opening up of Ireland whether it was in the North or the South. Ireland was at this time still an agrarian society, unlike much of the rest of Western Europe and many of the more remote parts were still, to all intense and purpose, in the 17th/18th century where there was no electricity, water had to be brought from the village pump or the well and the blacksmith was an important person in the village. There are of course some exceptions to this in the North especially Belfast which did have a large and important ship building industry however the majority of the North would have been as I said. In my own case we still used horses for farming and we did not get 'the electric' until I was about 22 years old. Seamus Heaney comments on such a life style as having a direct bearing and immediate connection to the people and the life style of ancient Greece.⁴ That they would have recognised much of the 'life style' around them and that the important thing here is the everyday life of the people governed by the seasons and the growing of crops; a much slower pace of life than we are used to today.⁵ This idea of 'the locality' or the parish has had a large bearing on Irish writers Heaney himself said, 'I learned that my local County Derry [childhood] experience, which I had considered archaic and irrelevant to 'the modern world' was to be trusted. They taught me that trust and helped me to articulate it'. Heaney is here referring to the shared experiences of us all at the

³ Foucault in his works talks about 'histories' but in a private conversation later in his life he said that he wished he had used the term genesis so I use it here.

⁴ Talk given at Coláiste Phádraig, Droim Conrach 2002-3

⁵ An interesting role is played by Jimmy Jack in Friels play 'Translations' where his quotations from classical antiquity cross between rural Ireland and the ancient world of Greece and Rome. He brings these old knowledges across time and space, into a hedge-school in nineteenth century Ireland.

level of the parish. See Kavanagh's poem 'Epic', and consider Joyce's 'Ulysses' set as it is in Dublin on 16th. June 1906. This idea of locality is also a feature of traditional Irish story telling whereby the seanchai (storyteller) would tell the story but place it locally using local features, mountains, streams etc. and local place names so that the audience would have places of reference. Note that this theme of place names is used to great effect by Brian Friel in both of his plays 'Faith Healer' and 'Translations'.

The influences that follow have no temporal or logical priority as they happen all at once in differing degrees to the different writers but whatever they cannot be escaped. One way to understand what follows is to consider the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's concept of 'field': that is the three dimensional setting of one's life and all those things that affect it. Ultimately, each relatively autonomous field of modern life, such as economy, politics, arts, journalism, bureaucracy, science or education engenders a specific complex of social relations where the agents will engage their everyday practice. Through this practice, they'll develop a certain disposition for social action that is conditioned by their position on the field (dominant/dominated, orthodox/heterodox, male/female and child/parent are only some possible ways of positioning the agents on the field; these basic binary distinctions are always further analysed considering the specifics of each field). This disposition, combined with every other disposition the individual develops through his engagement on a multidimensional (in the sense of multi-field) social world, will eventually tend to become a *sense of the game*, a partial understanding of the field and of social order in general, a practical sense, a practical reason, a way of *di-vision* (or classification) of the world, an opinion, a taste, a tone of voice, a group of typical body movements and mannerisms and so on. Through this, the social field may become more complex and autonomous, while the individual develops a certain *habitus* that is typical of his position in the social space. By doing so, social agents will often *acknowledge*, *legitimate* and *reproduce* the social forms of domination (including prejudices) and the common opinions of each field as self-evident, clouding from conscience and practice even the acknowledgment of other possible means of production (including, of course, symbolic production) and power relations. Whilst this is a complex set of ideas it helps to explain social order

and ideas of difference as well as notions and views of nationality and identity.

The Irish language and its myths and stories have influenced Irish writers from Yeats who while he did not speak Irish uses Irish grammar structures and syntax, as do Joyce and Heaney. One need only read the opening pages of 'A Portrait of the Artist' or 'Ulysses'. There is also an inherent poetry in place names which is used by Brian Friel in the opening page of his play, 'Faith Healer'. One example of this is my own address which would be in Irish 'Inbher, Bar na Trá, Ballina, Contae Mhaigh Eo and in English something like At the head of the river at the mouth of the strand at the head of the bay in the vale/valley of the yew trees. Dublin is 'the town on the black water' Donegal 'the fort of the foreigner' Derry, 'Doire' in Irish is an oak wood, Belfast (/ 'bɛl.fæst/ or /bɛl'fɑ:st/; from Irish: *Béal Feirste*, meaning 'mouth of the sandbanks', Baile Beag (later anglicised to Ballybeg) is the setting for many of Brian Friel's plays and means 'small town', and so on.

Irish has no Universal word for no and also no Universal word for yes we must agree or disagree with the verb...possibly why we speak so much. We also have no possessive unlike English which is a language of possession, property and ownership. I cannot say 'my house', 'my wife' or 'my husband'; I would have to say the house that is at me, the woman of the house or the man of the house. For music I cannot say I can sing, play the fiddle, play the piano I would say the singing is in me, the fiddle is in me the piano is in me. In this way we think that music is already in the person and that anyone can do it is not something special it belongs to all. It does not have such a strong sense of professionalism as in English. This is because our language and music belonged to the ordinary people of the countryside up to the great famine and after the loss of the Celtic tradition with the 'Flight of the Earls and of the last of the Druid tradition and the fili. According to the *Textbook of Irish Literature*, by Eleanor Hull:

The *file* is to be regarded as in the earliest times as combining in his person the functions of magician, lawgiver, judge, counselor to the chief, and poet. Later, but still at a very early time, the offices seem to have been divided, the Brehons devoting themselves to the study of law, and the giving of legal decisions, the druids arrogating to themselves the supernatural functions, with the addition, possibly of some priestly offices, and the *fili* themselves being henceforth principally as poets and philosophers,

also in Yeats, Joyce and Heaney something of the Poet as 'Seer' or prophet as perhaps Blake saw himself as well as someone who records events though 'from the slant'.⁶

The fili maintained an oral tradition that predated the Christianization of Ireland. In this tradition, poetic and musical forms are important not only for aesthetics, but also for their mnemonic value. The tradition allowed plenty of room for improvisation and personal expression, especially in regard to creative hyperbole and clever kenning. However, the culture placed great importance on the fili's ability to pass stories and information down through the generations without making changes in those elements that were considered factual rather than embellishment. In this manner, a significant corpus of pre-Christian myth and epic literature remained largely intact many centuries into the Christian era. Much of it was first recorded in writing by scholarly Christian monks. The synergy between the rich and ancient indigenous oral literary tradition and the classical tradition resulted in an explosion of monastic literature that included epics of war, love stories, nature poetry, saint tales and so forth which collectively resulted in the largest corpus of non-Latin literature seen in Europe since Ancient Greece.

It is against this tradition the one should regard Seamus Heaney who was very much aware of the Role of the Poet in a society.⁷ The role of language then is essential as it is this medium that is used and the Irish poets of the past used the language and music together in many of their performances, something that Seamus Heaney has continued.⁸ But it is not just that: what is most important is what the poems and music represent and encapsulate, for just one section of this Cd Seamus says this: 'I'll read two short extracts of poetry from an ancient source that I have translated, words that give an immemorial endorsement to the tasks that you perform and to the human values that you uphold.

⁶ ...' the American poet Archibald MacLeish affirmed that "A poem should be equal to/not true." As a defiant statement of poetry's gift for telling truth but telling it slant, this is both cogent and corrective'. From Seamus Heaney speech on receiving the Nobel Prize for Literature 1995.

⁷ Yeats also talks about what a poet should be doing though not to the same extent as Heaney; see his poem 'The Old Coat'. See also Joyce in 'Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man', when he declares 'I go to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscious of my race'.

⁸ CD The Poet and the Piper. Seamus Heaney and Liam O' Flynn.

But I thought it would be right to say something also about Liam O' Flynn's piping and his work. He's a recognised master of the Uilleann Pipes (the elbow pipes), and his mastery will be evident, of course, in his musicianship and his control of the instrument, which is amazing. But equally important is the mighty emotional power of his playing. What you'll hear in the slow air which he will play is a register of the sorrow which lies deep in historical experience everywhere and lies deep also in personal memory. What you hear too is a sympathy for all that suffering and a tragic recognition that it is a part of life'.

Liam O' Flynn: 'I'm going to play a piece of music that comes from a period of great oppression in Irish history and in spite of that oppression and out of the darkness surrounding that oppression grew a whole new genre of poetry and music called the *aisling*. We are talking about the 18th century and the *aisling* or vision, vision poem, vision poetry, vision music. The verse and music of this period is really the intimate expression of the life of these oppressed and dispossessed people. There is nothing sentimental about this music. As Seamus said it is music of powerful emotion and there is great hope in it and for sure there is great beauty in it'. Heaney goes on to tell us that. 'Our colonial masters in Tudor times, 500 years ago, tried to banish the pipers, they were causing too much resistance, and hearing Liam's music you can understand why'. So that the pipes are also a symbol of resistance much like they were in Scotland where playing the bagpipes was considered to be playing outlawed tunes on outlawed instruments. CD Seamus Heaney, Liam O Flynn the track -*Aisling Gheal*

There is much that could be said here but for now the point has been made and Irish is by its very nature a creative language: it engenders creativity even in ordinary conversation where great value is set on 'The *Cráic*' that is using, playing, creating conversation with great humour or a story or a description etc. just for the pleasure of doing so, for its intrinsic value and no other reason. This has been carried over in the English that is spoken in Ireland. The *Cráic* then, whatever the language, is the use of everyday language in a creative way in everyday life especially with friends in a pub, in the family with guests or just at work, but whatever the situation it is the sheer enjoyment in using language, this we will find is the same for music, for the music is learned as in you will learn the tune, you will then be told to, play it your own way', the principal being to find your own voice, your own style,

there is no one way. When musicians meet in a pub for a ‘session’ they will begin with a discussion of ‘What to play’ when they have agreed they then set about agreeing ‘in what style.’ Then when the musicians are playing especially if there are no lyrics they will improvise on or around a theme, a riff or a collection of notes, these are called grace notes and a part of the playing of music just for the pleasure of it; there is no payment from the pub the ‘Cráic’ is once again here; that is to play music for the sheer joy of it for the pleasure of just playing with others and it is quite usual NOT to hear the same tune played exactly the same twice.

The traditional music of Ireland is important as its influence can be found in nearly all of the writers even Yeats who though tone deaf does use a kind of chant when he recites his own work. Joyce was a great tenor singer, Beckett used a metronome when he rehearsed his actors and actresses, Brian Friel has music as an essential part of his plays and the music of tradition can be found in the meter and rhythm of many poets, play writers and novelists. To get some idea of the music and its role here are some sites that will be helpful. You will find it useful to listen to these before going on.

The stunning beauty and music of Aran Island, Ireland - Ceol na nOileán

Great Achill Island music and views-- Acaill, Ceol na nOileán - TG4
Contae Mhaigh Eo - Seosamh Ó hÉanaí

These really introduce you to the role and importance of music in the everyday life of the people and how nearly everyone engages in music either playing or in many cases dancing. I should include dancing here as part of music as in some parts of Ireland music was seen as only really for dancing There are two main types one of which many of you will be acquainted with by Michael Flatley and ‘The Lord of the Dance’ or with ‘Riverdance’⁹ But there is another which is the kind of dance that many Irish people engage in and has a long history. It is sometimes called crossroads dancing as it had been banned by the priests and English landlords in towns and villages so people met at the crossroads to dance. (Irish set dancing;

⁹ Eurovision 1994 Interval Act – Riverdance. This was the original dance from which Riverdance came. It is interesting to note the section where there is no music and the dancers keep time and step, the dancing/music is in you.

Irish Set Dancing in Killarney Street July 2010, Or look at <http://www.setdancingnews.net/wcss/wcsst.htm> From the Gleneagle Hotel, Killarney, County Kerry. Music supplied by Matt Cunningham & his band.)

Note the pace of the steps, the rhythm's beat, timing, emphasis, and personal interpretation all playing their part as reflected in language as well. The importance of the music is matched by what it is that is being sung or played. Much Irish poetry has been put to music as it lends itself well to such an activity; this also helps to account for why so much Irish poetry is well known and still sung in pubs and at gatherings. The choice is usually the singers so one never knows just what might turn up it could be anything from sean-nós to something modern. The song could be historical in content, a lament for a lost person, lost love¹⁰ or a ballad with a definite story from a definite time. Some examples follow:

Nollaig Ní Laoire - Amhrán Mhuínse

Naisrín Elsafty - Máire Ní Eidhin (Sean nós singing)

Gearóidín Bhreatnach - Tiochfaidh an Samhradh - 1-4-07

These are beautiful old songs written by ordinary people about their lives, loves, losses, hopes and desires; such stuff as poetry is made from and the universal themes are ever present. However it is also possible to find very beautiful versions of Yeats:

The Stolen Child (W.B. Yeats poem set to music)

Down by the Sally Garden. (For those interested Sally is the term used in Ireland for willows).

Song of the Wandering Aengus Christy Moore + WB Yeats

W.B. Yeats poems set to music and sung. (Here is a great selection so just choose your favourite.)

Patrick Kavanagh: *Raglan Road* a wonderful poem about lost love for an older man who knows he has little time left. This is an autobiographical poem of Kavanagh himself.

Luke Kelly- *Raglan Road* + Lyrics. Perhaps the very best version of the poem.

¹⁰ There are many songs about lost love from the 18th. & 19th century when young girls were sold at the yearly markets to English landlords as servant girls and would have to go away into service that very day often never to return.

The poems and songs are everywhere and with everyone, they speak of all the Universals that are the human condition of birth, love, loss, envy, hate, fear, joy etc. of our troubled history from the start; of rebellion and loss, death, the flight of the Earls¹¹ (also known in Ireland as ‘The Flight of the Wild Geese’) the 1798 rebellion, the Great Famine the 1916 rebellion and on into ‘The Troubles’. Our songs are full of our history. But we do not ‘live in the past’ as I have heard my English colleagues say we ‘live with the past’. We can find songs such as Brian Boru¹² a song remembering a battle against the invasion of the Vikings, or a very popular song sung at rugby matches.¹³ This song remembers the exploits of Grace O’Malley¹⁴ a pirate queen who controlled some thirty ships and six hundred men, something very unusual in the man’s world of Henry VII and Queen Elizabeth. Grace was accused of all kinds of things by the English occupiers and finally sent in chains to England as a prisoner, however Elizabeth was most impressed with her who while she could not speak English could converse in Latin as could Elizabeth, so she was released and went home; this song celebrates her home coming. Another excellent example of this idea of history is the song ‘The Fields of Athenry’ This song is about the morally unjust treatment given to a young father Michael who steals corn from the English Landlord during the famine to feed his children, his punishment is to be sent on a prison ship to Australia separated from wife and family. This song has become the most popular one to sing after every football match irrespective which team is playing.

¹¹ The flight of the Earls the last of the old Gaelic order on September 4th, 1607, was the first of many departures from Ireland by native Irish over the following centuries. In one final attempt by the old order to reverse the tide of English power a decade or so earlier, an army was organised by Hugh O’Neill, chief of Tir Eoghain, and Red Hugh O’Donnell, chief of Donegal. They began a series of battles with the English which came to be known as the Nine Years War. After strenuous efforts on their part, the Gaelic chieftains secured a promise of support from the leading continental power of the day, Spain. To meet up with the Spanish army, however, O’Neill’s and O’Donnell’s force had to march the length of the country to Kinsale on the south coast. There they fought and lost the landmark Battle of Kinsale, which ended the old Gaelic political and cultural system. A great play about this is Brian Friels ‘Making History’.

¹² Brian Boru Lyrics + Translation

¹³ Óró 'sé do bheatha 'bhaile-Sinéad O'Connor

¹⁴ For more information on Grace there is an excellent book by Anne Chambers Grace O Malley, Granuaile, Pirate Queen.

Yet it is a song that teaches a part of our history so that history becomes a part of the ordinary everyday life of the individual, it becomes in a sense commonplace but it also becomes a part of the here and the now, the present. This theme of the past echoing the present can be found in much of Irish writing especially the large number of classical Greek references as well as the continued use of Irish myth. An interesting version of this theme is Heaney's 'The Grauballe Man', 'Requiem for the Croppies', and 'The Early Purges'.

I should at this stage mention Irish Humor which has a unique place in Irish life and in our literature from Swift's 'Tale of a Tub' and 'A Modest Proposal' to Flann O' Brien's 'The Third Policeman'. Irish humor includes the use of satire¹⁵ and irony in Literature and in general conversation and there are many other examples and we could include; many of the plays of Samuel Beckett, but these will suffice for now. This humor has a certain internal logic whereby the reader is lead on logically one step at a time until you reach a place that is for all intense and purposes 'absurd' or crazy and where you wonder how you ever got there. In Flann O' Brien's 'The Third Policeman' the local Garda (policeman) has read something about the molecular theory of the Universe and that the world is made up of molecules that move and vibrate. He considers this and decides that if this is true surely 'things' can change places, that one thing, over time, can become another. He now becomes worried about the postman who he thinks is becoming his bicycle and that the bicycle is becoming the postman. The Garda has excellent empirical evidence for this change taking place for the postman leans his bicycle against the wall of the pub in exactly the same way he leans on the bar. The Garda now feels it his duty to confiscate the postman's bicycle and he puts it in prison 'to save the postman from himself'. It is this kind of logic that is at work with Pozzo and Lucky in Beckett's 'Waiting for Godot', when Lucky is reluctant to put down the suit case because he will then only have to pick it up again. The Irish language with no universal yes or no leads to a different way of thinking to the English 'this or that', its one or the other', 'black or white', we will have many in-betweens, just plain alternatives or possibly something radically different.

So all in all we have a mix of language, music, history, creativity and humor all happening at once. It is, in many ways, like

¹⁵ A great and very funny reading is Swift's 'On a Beautiful Young Nymph going to Bed'.

a tapestry or plaid/tartan and while you can take each apart to see the separate and different strands you must then put it back together to see the whole pattern and picture.

Post-industrial Offspring: Iconographies of Postmodern Motherhood and Child-Rearing in Chick Lit

A Perusal of Sophie Kinsella's *Shopaholic & Baby* -

Anemona Alb¹

Abstract: *It is the main assumption of this paper that traditional iconographies of womanhood have been supplanted by novel, post-Fordist ones; more specifically, the image of motherhood of yore has now been usurped by the brand-obsessed pregnant woman, indeed a fashionista rather interested in succumbing to peer-pressure as regards fashion during pregnancy than in the real significance of child-bearing.*

Key words: *modernism; postmodernism; post-Fordism; iconographies of motherhood; consumerism.*

Introduction

The question crops up, is Becky's (Becky is the protagonist of Sophie Kinsella's novel *Shopaholic & Baby* published in 2007) desire to become a Mum ascribable to what Leach terms 'the cereal-packet norm family'² ? Or is it rather a case of baby-as-accessory? Indeed the baby-as-accessory as integral to images of neo-bourgeois plenitude is what the chick lit novel under scrutiny here (Sophie Kinsella's *Shopaholic & Baby* 2007 and its protagonist, Becky a.k.a. Shopaholic) yields as prevailing ideology. More specifically, the Research Questions that have informed this study are:

¹ University of Oradea, Romania

² Edmund Leach (b.1910) coined the term 'the cereal-packet norm family' in 1967 to denote that the present-day small nuclear family of Mum, Dad and two kids is advertised as the norm to which everybody should aspire. (Osborne and Van Loon 1996: 159)

1. What images of femininity and motherhood emerge from a perusal of the text?
2. How and to what extent are these images thwarted by post-Fordist paradigms?

The reification of both the bearing mother and the child is part and parcel of the postmodern, postindustrial paradigm, whose main tenet is commodification and the plethora thereof. Indeed an abundance of - commodified – objects, both in the literal sense and in the sense of ‘object-for-analysis’ is what characterizes contemporary society. This is the aftermath of capitalist accumulation, of “pre-modern modes of production and representation” (Blunden 1); indeed in the post-Marxist vein,

He (Marx) clearly did see the beginnings of today’s global commodification and his truly fundamental conceptions stand up today better than ever. But we have to let go of certain conceptions which belong to an earlier day, and I believe that when we do that it becomes possible to understand the peculiar forms of domination, of mystification and alienation, of crisis and human powerlessness which affect us today (...). (Blunden 1)

In Blunden’s words, ‘domination, mystification and alienation’, this ideological triad that denotes the world today, in the sense of a detachment from the pre-modern and modern content-ridden reality (see forces of production, the Industrial Revolution, product-oriented ethos, utilitarianism etc) to nowadays form-triggered reality. Surface supersedes product; indeed image overrides all. Indeed ‘hegemony, in Gramscian terms.

The “wealth of today’s society”, Blunden (1999) notes, “manifests itself as a ceaseless flow of images and ideas, the flicker of electronic registers and a bewildering array of personal services.” In the midst of this plethora of commodified goods and services stands Becky, our heroine who at this point in her life is expecting. The unborn baby and herself are reified in all consumerism.

1. Prefiguring, projecting paradigms

Becky, our expecting protagonist is incipiently projecting her paradigms on the yet-unborn baby by engulfing the experience of pregnancy and child-birth in a plethora of high-tech, brand-ridden objects, indeed in a sea of consumer desire. In a conversation on a

car ride with her husband, Luke, she mentions a possible site and procedure for her imminent labour, a site which is New Age-informed, the latest craze in Hollywood, where decadence-triggered alternative modes supersede traditional modes:

I've been thinking very hard and doing some research'.
'Research sounds good. Even if it was just reading a piece about 'Hollywood baby trends' on fashionmommies.com.
'And the thing is ...' I swallow. 'I want to go to Venetia Carter.'
Luke makes an impatient noise. 'Becky, not this again. I thought we'd agreed –'
'I've got a place with her', I say in a rush. 'I've made an appointment. It's all fixed up.'
'You've *what*?' He brakes at a traffic light and turns to face me.
'It's my body!' I say defensively. 'I can see whoever I like!'
'Becky, we are lucky enough to have one of the most respected, renowned obstetricians in the country looking after you, and you're messing around with some unknown woman –'
'For the millionth time, she's not unknown!' I exclaim in frustration. 'She's huge in Hollywood! She's modern and she's in touch, and she does these amazing water births with lotus flowers ...'
'*Lotus* flowers? She sounds a total bloody charlatan.'
Luke jabs his foot angrily down on the accelerator. 'I won't have you risking the health of yourself and the baby –'
'She won't be a charlatan!'
I should never have mentioned the lotus flowers. I might have known Luke wouldn't understand. (Kinsella 2007: 59-60)

Luke, the husband, proves here to be the more-down-to-earth, pragmatic counterpart to Becky's New Age zest. He is a businessman clearly ideologically embedded in the modernist traditional, 'safe' ways and appalled at his wife's postmodern tribulations.

But the very fact that our two protagonists – husband and wife – get to discuss such issues in the postmodern world is by no means value-free, in the sense that the existence *per se* of spouses is remarkable in this day and age, where free association is the norm rather than the now obsolescent institution of marriage, of the nuclear family. It is what sociologists call 'functionalism'(Parsons 1980), i.e. two of the eight main functional prerequisites of society are – traditionally – instantiated here: reproduction and the family (to ensure reproduction and child-

rearing). In other words, modernism is at work here in this 'suburban fantasy of conformity' (Osborne and Van Loon 105).

Equally saliently, the fact that Becky chooses the natural way of getting pregnant (see the 'docile body' as coined by Percec 2006) as opposed to the technology-informed new modes (*in vitro* fertilization, surrogate mothers) is another instance of stagnation into modernism, as opposed to the postmodern 'technologization' of the female body, an echoing of the Foucauldean "technologies of the self" (see Haraway's 'female cyborg' 1991; and Shildrick's 'leaky bodies' 1997).

During the same car ride, Becky notices a woman pushing a logo-inscribed pram on high wheels (obviously a pastiche of the high-heels paraphernalia of feminine seduction):

We stop at a zebra crossing and a woman walks across with a really cool green space-age-looking pram on high wheels. Wow. Maybe we should get one of those. I squint, trying to see what the logo is. It's amazing, I never used to even *notice* prams before. Now I can't stop checking them out, even when I'm in the middle of a row with my husband. Discussion. Not row. (Kinsella 2007: 60)

Finally, Becky gains ideological terrain when she invokes the prevalence of 'Nature' over culture, the culture of Protestant restraint in this case:

'Luke, listen,' I say as we move off again. 'In my book it says the pregnant woman should always follow her instincts. Well, my instincts are saying really strongly, "Go to Venetia Carter." It's Nature telling me!' (Kinsella 2007: 60)

2. Paraphernalia of consumerist power

Some of the paraphernalia of consumerist power is transferred onto the unborn baby, in an urge to project paradigms, prospective ideologies. For instance, one of the icons of consumerist prosperity, skiing is mentioned here by Becky's mother in a discussion of the necessary baby-kit:

"I'll turn down the corner of the page if I see something you should get, says Mum in a businesslike way.
"OK, me too', I say, fixated on a spread of babies dressed up as animals. We have to get the baby a polar-bear snowsuit. I turn down the corner and flip to the next page, which is full of

adorable miniature ski-wear. And look at the tiny pom-pom hats!

‘Luke, I think we should take the baby skiing from really early on,’ I say as he enters the room. ‘It’ll help its development.’

‘*Skiing?*’ He looks taken aback. ‘Becky, I thought you hated skiing.’

I do hate skiing.

Maybe we could go to Val d’Isere or somewhere and wear the cool clothes and just not ski.

‘Becky!’ Mum interrupts my thoughts. ‘Look at this cot. It has a built-in temperature control, lullaby light show and soothing vibrating action.’

‘Wow,’ I breathe, looking at the picture. ‘That’s *amazing!* How much is it?’

‘The deluxe version is ...twelve hundred pounds,’ says Mum, consulting the text.

‘Twelve hundred pounds?’ Luke nearly chokes on his cup of tea. ‘For a *cot*? Are you serious?’

‘It’s state of the art,’ points out Suze. ‘It uses Nasa technology.’

‘Nasa technology?’ He gives an incredulous snort. ‘Are we planning to send the baby into space?’ (Kinsella 2007: 67)

A sense of the ridiculous pervades the scene. The grown-ups’ values are transferred onto the baby who has no say in the matter. A genealogy of values and norms is thus perpetuated.

There is redemption, though for Becky the Shopaholic and her peers: minimalism as an alternative rears its ugly head, as Becky only reluctantly agrees to consider the latter. She is even invited to give a speech on shedding addiction, shopaholism – a feat she only declaratively has instantiated. Her friend, who is an ecologist of sorts (see the cooperative in Guatemala remark whereby something that is superficial, skin-deep as it were – her tan – yields a more profound sub-text, that of the discourse of economic interventionism in third-world/low resource countries) delineates a new ideological trajectory for Becky at this juncture in her life (now that she’s pregnant):

‘You look great! You’re so tanned!’

‘Oh.’ Jess glances down at herself with zero interest, then reaches in her backpack. ‘I brought some maize biscuits. They’re made by a local cooperative in northern Guatemala.’ She hands Mum a box made out of rough cardboard, and Mum turns it in her fingers, perplexed. (p. 69-70)

‘And I’ve had another idea.’ Jess swivels on the ottoman to face me. ‘You don’t have to say yes, but maybe you could think about it.’
 ‘Right’, I say nervously. ‘What is it?’
 ‘Would you give a talk?’
 ‘A talk?’ I’m taken aback. ‘On what?’
 ‘On how you kicked your spending addiction’. Jess leans forward, her face all warm and sisterly. ‘I have a friend who’s a counselor and I was telling her about you and how much you’ve changed. She said she thought you’d be an inspiration to a lot of the addicts in her group.’
 There’s silence in the room. I can feel my face going puce.
 ‘Go on, Bex.’ Suze nudges my foot. ‘You’d be great!’
 ‘I’ll come,’ says Luke. When is it?’
 ‘It wouldn’t need to be formal,’ says Jess. ‘Just a friendly chat about resisting consumer pressure. Especially now you’re pregnant. ‘She shakes her head. ‘It’s *ridiculous*, the amount of rubbish people feel compelled to buy for their children.’
 (Kinsella 2007: 78)

In fact, minimalism, ecology and green discourse are but new forms of decadence, the new sophisticated must-have’s.

Conclusion

As laid out above, Becky’s ideological position is that of straddling the boundaries between pre-modern and modern modes of sociological production (the traditional image of femininity/motherhood and the nuclear family) and the postmodern inflation of image, here instantiated by brand-suffusion. In this sense, Becky as archetypal character can be said to be paradoxically modern and postmodern.

References

- Foucault, M. 1978. *The History of Sexuality. An Introduction*. London: Penguin Books. (transl. by Robert Hurley)
 Gramsci, A. 1995. *Historical Materialism*. London: Routledge.
 Haraway, D. 1991. *A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology and Socialist Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century*. New York: Routledge.
 Kinsella, S. 2007. *Shopaholic & Baby*. London: Black Swan.
 Leach, E. 1967. *Cereal Packet Family*. London: Routledge.
 Marx, K. (first publ. 1867). *Das Kapital / Capital / Capitalul (in vol. Opere)*. 1966. București: Editura politică.

Osborne, R. and B. van Loon. 1996. *Sociology for Beginners*. Cambridge: Icon Books.

Parsons, T. 1980. *Functionalism*. London: Routledge.

Percec, D. 2006. *The Body's Tale*. Timisoara: Editura Universitatii de Vest.

Shildrick, M. 1997. *Leaky Bodies and Boundaries. Feminism, Postmodernism and (Bio)ethics*. London and New York: Routledge.

Web sources:

Blunden, A. 1999. 'Andy Blunden's Writings' at www.home.mira.net/andy/works/

La lenteur- une philosophie à la mode en littérature

Teodora Cernău¹

Abstract. *This paper deals with a paradigm shift in the way in which our society responds to the cult of speed in the attempt to slow things down in all domains: food, city, fashion, or even literature. Slow Movement is actually a reinterpretation of our era according to the laws of ecology, social responsibility and sustainable development.*

Key words: *Slow Movement, food, fashion, literature.*

Le degré de la vitesse est directement proportionnel à l'intensité de l'oubli. De cette équation on peut déduire divers corollaires, par exemple, celui-ci: notre époque s'adonne au démon de la vitesse et c'est pour cette raison qu'elle s'oublie facilement elle-même. Or je préfère inverser cette affirmation et dire: notre époque est obsédée par le désir d'oubli et c'est afin de combler ce désir qu'elle s'adonne au démon de la vitesse; elle accélère le pas parce qu'elle veut nous faire comprendre qu'elle ne souhaite plus qu'on se souvienne d'elle; qu'elle se sent lasse d'elle-même; écœurée d'elle-même; qu'elle veut souffler la petite flamme tremblante de la mémoire. (Milan Kundera, *La Lenteur*)

Dans l'époque de la vitesse où le temps c'est de l'argent, on ressent déjà depuis quelques décennies un besoin de ralentir et d'être reconnecté au rythme de la nature. La perspective de Kundera sur notre ère dévoile son souci que la rapidité des expériences vécues annule en fait la possibilité de posséder de vrais mémoires, car c'est impossible de jouir de la beauté de choses alors qu'on court le marathon. À ce sujet, Jean Baudrillard (12) ajoute que "la vitesse est

¹ University of Oradea.

le triomphe de l'effet sur la cause, le triomphe de l'instantané sur le temps comme profondeur, le triomphe de la surface et de l'objectalité pure sur la profondeur du désir". En d'autres mots, la vitesse nous empêche d'aller au-delà de la surface et de sonder les profondeurs. Il y a un sens de l'accumulation des collections d'objets et d'expériences qui comptent par leur nombre, non pas par leur essence.

La philosophie de la vitesse a suscité aussi l'intérêt du sociologue français Pierre Sansot (*Le bon usage de la lenteur*) et du journaliste canadien Carl Honoré (*Eloge de la lenteur, et si vous ralentissiez*) qui ont analysé de divers aspects de notre obsession de manque de temps et de notre penchant pour la quantité au détriment de la qualité. Le postulat de Sansot (12) conformément auquel «la lenteur ne signifie pas l'incapacité d'adopter une cadence plus rapide» affirme que la volonté de changer le rythme de vie nous appartient et qu'il ne s'agit pas d'une abdication du règne de la vitesse, mais plutôt du besoin de prendre le temps pour vivre, de ne pas de galoper dans la vie. La personnification du temps (« brusquer le temps») qu'il utilise ensuite dans le même paragraphe rend encore plus palpable ce sentiment de nous faire du mal dans cette course aux obstacles.

Un bestseller international, traduit en plus de vingt langues, *Eloge de la lenteur, et si vous ralentissiez* met en évidence les avantages de la lenteur face au diktat de la rapidité qui ne doit plus s'emparer de notre existence. Pour Carl Honoré (23), la vitesse est «occupée, autoritaire, agressive, agitée, analytique, stressée, superficielle, impatiente, active et privilégie la quantité sur la qualité», tandis que la lenteur est «calme, attentive, réceptive, immobile, intuitive, tranquille, patiente, réflexive, et préfère la qualité à la quantité». Ces énumérations soulignent le fait que de nos jours il y a un changement de paradigme, que l'ingrédient essentiel du succès n'est plus la vitesse et que la lenteur n'est plus le synonyme du handicap. Par contre, la lenteur offre l'occasion «de contacts vrais et profonds – avec les gens, avec une culture, avec le travail, avec la nourriture, avec tout» (Honoré 23).

Ce changement de paradigme a surgi dans un premier temps dans l'industrie alimentaire en 1986 quand le sociologue et critique gastronomique italien Carlo Petrini fonda le mouvement

slow food en opposition avec *fast food*² (la restauration rapide). Ce manifeste contre la malbouffe propose une alternative à la culture généralisée de la restauration rapide (les concernes mondialisés - Mc Donald's, Burger King, KFC, etc.) et promeut un style de vie plus saine pour retrouver l'état de bien-être. En France, le début du mouvement Slow Food s'est heurté au nom anglo-saxon qui engendra quelques réticences, mais qui, heureusement, ont été surmontées.

Signé en 1989 par quinze pays, le Manifeste Slow Food veut contribuer au changement de la philosophie de vie dans notre ère, tout en proposant une alternative qui soutient la consommation responsable, l'identité culturelle, la biodiversité, le développement durable, l'éducation au goût et la bonne relation entre producteurs et consommateurs. Leur postulat est que « nous sommes devenus les esclaves de la vitesse et avons tous succombé au même virus insidieux: la "Fast Life" (Vie Rapide), qui perturbe nos habitudes, envahit l'intimité de nos maisons et nous force à manger des "Fast Food" (Alimentations Rapides) »³. De nouveau, on retrouve l'invitation à la lenteur, la seule qui peut nous guérir des effets de ce virus. À présent, le mouvement s'est répandu tout autour du globe, promouvant le plaisir de la table et les principes d'une gastronomie responsable. Le succès du mouvement est dû aussi aux efforts personnels des chefs cuisiniers tels que Jamie Oliver ou Cyril Lignac qui se sont engagés à faire de l'éducation au goût dans les écoles.

Le résultat des efforts de Carlo Petrini dans la gastronomie a inspiré le maire d'une petite ville de Toscane, Paolo Saturnini, à fonder en 1999 l'association Cittàslow⁴ qui s'occupe des projets d'urbanisme pour promouvoir un style de vie responsable, durable et écologique. Il y a déjà vingt-cinq pays du monde entier (la plupart d'Europe)⁵ qui labellisent en tant que lentes de petites villes pour contribuer à l'amélioration de la qualité de vie de ses

² En français, "nourriture lente" en opposition avec la restauration rapide (« fast food »). Puisqu'il s'agit d'un mouvement relativement nouveau et le concept a été repris dans le monde francophone avec l'appellation anglaise, nous allons utiliser la terminologie anglo-saxonne : *slow food* et *fast food*.

³ "Le Memento Slow Food", <http://www.aede-france.org/memento-slow-food.html>, consulté le 8 décembre 2012.

⁴ En français, ville lente.

⁵ Site officiel de Cittàslow Organization, <http://www.cittaslow.org>, consulté le 7 décembre 2012.

Cittàslow France: Blanquefort, Créon, Labastide d'Armagnac, Mirande, Segonzac.

citoyens. C'est un retour aux valeurs de la communauté unie où on respecte les rites religieux, le rythme de la nature, les produits authentiques, la communication avec les voisins, l'esprit de solidarité et la perpétuation des traditions. Ce mouvement remet en question «le mythe dominant, la pensée unique qui vise à faire de la croissance, du progrès, du développement (et les conséquences concrètes liées à ceux-ci) des concepts inévitables, sans alternatives possibles dans nos vies»⁶, proposant des alternatives viables et faisables.

La philosophie de l'organisation Cittàslow suit le dicton latin «festina lente»⁷ et invite les gens à vivre plus lentement. Les impératives de ralentir visent la communication, les moyens de transport, la production et la vente des produits, et l'environnement en général. Dans l'article «Slow Life: vers de beaux lents demains»⁸, les auteurs nous avertissent que la vitesse risque de nous déshumaniser et que seule la lenteur peut nous sauver. Bien que le mouvement Slow éprouve de la hardiesse dans sa propagation dans la société, on constate l'effet d'imitation qui fait possible le retour à un état épicuriste de vivre.

Des idéaux du Slow Food jusqu'à la mission Cittàslow, la philosophie de la lenteur s'est propagée facilement dans la société, ayant des conséquences directes sur une série de domaines. C'est ainsi que la lenteur comme principe de vie est devenue une condition essentielle pour l'industrie de la mode. Le concept de *slow fashion*⁹ est paru en opposition avec *fast fashion*¹⁰. Conformément à la tendance du jour, le monde de la mode est soumis aussi au diktat de la vitesse et n'échappe pas aux lois de l'hyperconsommation. Dans le tourbillon des courses, les magasins H&M, Bershka ou Zara changent leurs collections après six semaines pour encourager et stimuler l'appétit de consommation des victimes de la mode.

Kate Fletcher¹¹ considère que dans le *fast fashion* il ne s'agit pas nécessairement de la vitesse, mais plutôt de l'avidité, du

⁶ Anonyme, «Slow Literature: A Brief Manifesto», <http://slowlit.wordpress.com>, consulté le 15 novembre 2012.

⁷ Site officiel de Cittàslow Organization, <http://www.cittaslow.org>, consulté le 7 décembre 2012.

⁸ Menétrey, Sylvain et Aurélie Toninato, « Slow Life : vers de beaux lents demains », sur la revue en ligne CLES, <http://www.cles.com/enquetes/article/slow-life-vers-de-beaux-lents-demains/page/0/5>, consulté le 7 décembre 2012.

⁹ En français, mode lente.

¹⁰ En français, mode rapide.

¹¹ Fletcher, Kate, « Slow fashion », in *The Ecologist*, publié en ligne le 1 juin 2007,

désir de vendre le plus que possible. C'est l'argent qui fait le jeu de la mode. Mais pour bénéficier d'un renouvellement rapide des collections, on doit sacrifier la qualité des vêtements, car il est impossible de trouver une robe d'un tissu excellent à un bon prix et produite rapidement. Les trois éléments (qualité, coût et production rapide) n'existe pas dans la même équation: ce qui est bon et produit rapidement est cher; ce qui est bon et moins cher ne se réalise pas vite; ce qui est produit vite à un minimum de coût n'est pas bon. Dans le *fast fashion* c'est la qualité qui est sacrifiée au nom de la vitesse par l'exploitation des ouvriers et des ressources naturelles.

De nouveau, le moyen pour nous débarrasser de la toxicité de la vitesse est de revenir à une cadence plus équilibrée: le mouvement Slow. Selon Fletcher, le *slow fashion* ne dépend pas de l'axe temporel, mais plutôt de celui de la qualité en ce qui concerne le design, la production, la consommation et le bien-être¹². Tous les agents impliqués dans l'industrie de la mode veulent être plus responsables vis-à-vis des travailleurs, des communautés et des écosystèmes. Il s'agit d'une réévaluation des besoins physiques et psychologiques pour notre intégration dans la collectivité. L'idée selon laquelle le *slow fashion* est synonyme du choix, de l'information, de la diversité culturelle et de l'identité, nous indique le symptôme d'une évolution de la société vers la responsabilité et l'engagement social.

Finalement, le fil d'Ariane nous amène à ce qui nous intéresse le plus: la liaison entre le mouvement Slow et la littérature. Nous avons trouvé dans un excellent article la parallèle entre la nourriture et le livre, ce qui a engendré toute une méditation sur le besoin d'offrir des aliments nutritifs à l'esprit aussi.¹³ L'article expose une défense de la littérature d'autrefois qui présupposait cette lenteur que nous recherchons aujourd'hui. Il s'agit de la lenteur de la création des manuscrits avant la presse typographique ou de la pénurie des livres qui donnait une unicité inégalable à l'expérience de la lecture. La relation de l'homme avec le texte était établie en famille où la lecture acquérait les valences d'un rituel initiatique. À présent, nous sommes tous bombardés par le message écrit en vitesse: la pub, les textos, les blogues, les magazines, les

http://www.theecologist.org/green_green_living/clothing/269245/slow_fashion.html, consulté le 10 décembre 2012.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Bronwyn, Mauldin, *Slow Literature: A brief manifesto*, publié le 29 juillet 2011, <http://slowlit.wordpress.com/author/blog52/>, consulté le 10 décembre 2012.

revues, les stickers ou le courriel électronique. L'auteur de l'article nous informe qu'aujourd'hui il y a six corporations transnationales qui contrôlent l'industrie du livre et qui promeuvent des livres faciles à vendre pour attirer un maximum de profit. Il s'agit d'une réfutation du bestseller que l'on peut trouver aussi dans les supermarchés à côté des brocolis et qui envahit le monde de la littérature basculant les vraies valeurs. Nous saluons l'affirmation que la littérature doit suivre le modèle de la nourriture et révolutionner la manière dont elle est approchée:

Slow Literature stands at the crossroads of writing, ethics and pleasure. It opposes the standardization of taste and culture, and the unrestrained power of the publishing industry multinationals and industrial literature. We believe that everyone has a fundamental right to the pleasure of good writing and consequently the responsibility to protect the heritage of literature, tradition and culture that make this pleasure possible.¹⁴

Il postule que le mouvement Slow en littérature apporte des bénéfices dans la culture littéraire par la promotion de la qualité, de la variété, de la soutenabilité et de la responsabilité de s'interroger sur le livre que nous lisons: sa contribution à mieux comprendre le monde, sa capacité d'offrir plus d'empathie pour le monde et la planète, ou la préoccupation de la maison d'édition pour l'écologie¹⁵. Enfin, ce mouvement aurait l'objectif de nous faire réfléchir sur nos habitudes actuelles (alimentaires, littéraires, culturelles, esthétiques, etc.) et de repenser nos principes de vie en termes de la lenteur.

À l'âge de l'extrême contemporain, nous sommes forcés de subir les caprices de la mode qui s'impose dans la diffusion de tout objet et de tout mouvement esthétique. Le contexte de notre recherche s'est retrouvé donc dans les mots de Gilles Lipovestky qui considère que dans notre époque hypermoderne, la société a atteint

¹⁴ *Ibid.* Notre traduction: «La littérature *slow* se trouve au carrefour de l'écriture, de l'éthique et du plaisir. Elle oppose l'uniformisation du goût et de la culture au pouvoir sans entraves de l'industrie multinationale de l'édition et la littérature industrielle. Nous considérons que chaque personne a le droit fondamental au plaisir d'une bonne écriture et, par conséquent, la responsabilité de protéger l'héritage de la littérature, de la tradition et de la culture qui font possible ce plaisir».

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

un niveau d'hyperconsommation, en passant d'une 'modernité limitée' à une modernité 'achevée', qui a produit un changement de paradigme en ce qui concerne la perception de la littérature, le statut de l'écrivain, la lecture et le rôle du lecteur, les nouveaux canaux de diffusion des livres (Internet), la numérisation des textes (pdf, elivre, livre audio) ou les moyens de promotion (Facebook, Twitter, les salons, etc.). La lenteur est en fait la mode de l'extrême contemporain qui revient aux anciennes valeurs dans une tentative de retrouver son équilibre.

Étant donné que la mode est une notion composite qui dérive de l'art, de la vie culturelle et de la vie politique, nous ne sommes pas surpris de constater que même le rythme de notre vie peut être influencé par les tendances de société. La mode connaît des variations, se prête à des reformulations, voire à des manipulations. Pourtant, elle se rapporte à la littérature dans le contexte de l'institution de la littérature qui subit les influences des tendances de l'époque, et de la reconfiguration du champ littéraire par les processus de 'célébrification' et *bestsellerisation* qui affectent la littérature de l'extrême contemporain.

Enfin, nous revenons aux opinions de Carl Honoré qui essaie dans l'avant-propos de son livre de définir la philosophie de la lenteur, tout en peignant le contexte actuel. Selon lui, la lenteur est associée à la lutte contre la mondialisation qui uniformise les goûts et contre le turbo-capitalisme (Lipovetsky 2006:83) qui nous pousse dans les vertiges de l'hyperconsommation. Le concept de «toujours plus» (2004:32) retrouvé dans le travail de Lipovetsky se superpose à la tyrannie de la vitesse: nous n'éprouvons plus de patience à faire les choses dans leur propre rythme (la liposuccion, le four à micro-ondes, la lecture rapide, mais aussi le *speed-dating*¹⁶, les voyages en vitesse, etc.). Les partisans du mouvement Slow ne veulent pas révolutionner d'un coup le monde, parce qu'ils ont compris que l'obsession pour la vitesse «s'est transformée en dépendance» (Honoré 7), une dépendance qui se guérit lentement. Ainsi se proposent-ils de contribuer «par petites touches» à instaurer «une tendance culturelle, sans même parler de croisade mondiale» (Honoré 7), car changer la mentalité des hommes ça prend du temps.

¹⁶ En français, les "rencontres express". Le concept se réfère aux rencontres amoureuses en série entre des divers célibataires qui peuvent décider suite à des discussions en deux de se revoir mutuellement. C'est un jeu rapide pour trouver son partenaire, qui est fondé sur la première impression.

Bibliographie

- Baudrillard, Jean. 1986. *Amérique*. Paris: Grasset et Fasquelle.
- Honoré, Carl. 2005. *Éloge de la lenteur, et si vous ralentissiez*. Paris: Marabout.
- Kundera, Milan. 1995. *La lenteur*. Paris: Folio.
- Lipovetsky, Gilles. 2004. *Les temps hypermodernes*. Paris: Grasset.
- Lipovetsky, Gilles. 2006. *Le Bonheur paradoxal*. Paris: Gallimard.
- Sansot, Pierre. 1998. *Du bon usage de la lenteur*. Paris: Payot.

Sitographie

- Anonyme, *Slow Literature: A Brief Manifesto*, <http://slowlit.wordpress.com>, consulté le 15 novembre 2012.
- Anonyme, *Le Memento Slow Food*, <http://www.aede-france.org/memento-slow-food.html>, consulté le 8 décembre 2012.
- Bronwyn, Mauldin, *Slow Literature: A brief manifesto*, publié le 29 juillet 2011, <http://slowlit.wordpress.com/author/blog52/>, consulté le 10 décembre 2012.
- Cittàslow Organization, <http://www.cittaslow.org>, consulté le 7 décembre 2012.
- Fletcher, Kate, *Slow fashion*, in *The Ecologist*, publié en ligne le 1 juin 2007, http://www.theecologist.org/green_green_living/clothing/269245/slow_fashion.html, consulté le 10 décembre 2012.
- Menétrey, Sylvain et Aurélie Toninato, *Slow Life: vers de beaux lents demains*, sur CLES, <http://www.cles.com/enquetes/article/slow-life-vers-de-beaux-lents-demains/page/0/5>, consulté le 7 décembre 2012.

Globalization and Localization: Experiments in Scottish Fiction Today

Magda Danciu¹

Abstract: *The study aims at acknowledging the way in which traditionally marginal cultures wedge in the mainstream body through adopting and incorporating the trends that facilitate such a shift. The selection of texts belonging to the corpus of Scottish contemporary fiction attempts to demonstrate the validity of such a change through their readiness to experiment and absorption of novelty.*

Mapping traditional trends in Scottish fiction today

A keen reader of Scottish fiction might easily notice that there is a complexity of directions nowadays which work simultaneously to posit the commonly perceived marginal writing among the generally accepted trends that operate worldwide, thus setting it free from the traditional constraints characterizing a peripheral stock of values meant to conservation so as to protect the authentic and the genuine against any contamination with non-local elements. Contemporary writers do their best to range Scottish prose writings among those categories that are challenging through their novelty and discovery of the former marginalized voices in a complex process of recovery and conquering of new textual territories.

There plenty of titles and authors that can demonstrate the dynamic and constant development of this literary genre in an apparently highly traditional and monolithic culture by working with the local elements such as legends, myths, the Caledonian antiszygy embodied in the theory of the second self and the divided soul, the landscape, urban or rural, accessible or isolated, the people, ordinary, hard men, enacting common everyday

¹ The University of Oradea, Romania

experiences, employing a vernacular, demotic language that help to discursively render a particular cultural identity.

These elements display a particularly vital strain in Scottish contemporary fiction for praising tradition and enhancing the Scottish imagination by giving a certain flavour to the Scottish novel, a lasting resonance, and generates a specific vision of the world, commonly rooted in two key works, James Hogg's *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824) and Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886) – the inspiration for so many generations of artists.

The literary stage in contemporary Scotland has been consolidated by the constant contribution of prose writers such as Alasdair Gray, Emma Tennant, Iain Banks, Alice Thompson in promoting the theory of the double self, or James Kelman for best describing Glasgow and faithfully portraying its inhabitants, or George Mackay Brown for working with the Orcadian lifestape. William McIlvanney, James Kelman and Irvine Welsh have become famous for the way in which they succeeded to present the characters' voices through the mixture of traditional Scottish words with demotic pronunciation of English. Their works emphasize the geographic location and avoid establishing any hierarchy of language, yet they obtain a text visually designed “to resist the moment of arrest in which the reader switches between the narrative voice of the text and the represented speech of a character” thus creating “a linguistic equality between speech and narration which allows the narrator to adopt the speech idioms of his characters, or the characters to think or speak in ‘standard English’, with equal status”(Cairns Craig, 1999: 101).

Working with the Global/international tendencies

It is a fact that there is a tendency to reconcile and juxtapose, adapt and challenge traditional views with new visions in a combination meant to render the national imagination as a dialogical space between the inheritances and all elements of the past and the openness to a new evaluation; there is also an obvious tendency for incorporating the wave of experiment and innovation in a coherent framework while at the same time asserting Scottishness.

Even if the term postmodernism is not always labeled to their works, Scottish novelists do not hesitate to use the further development of the modernist stream-of-consciousness technique or the inner monologues and interior time to construct the doubled

identity and the world of their characters, such as seen in Alasdair Gray's 1982 *Janine* (1985), *Poor Things* (1992) and *The Book of Prefaces* (2000), Iain Banks' *The Wasp Factory* (1984) or Emma Tennant's *Two Women of London* (1989). This allegiance to questioning the nature of identity, challenging the idea of the unified self while experiencing an internal dividedness, so evident in the above mentioned works in the process of exploring the characters' subjectivity and creating a sense of "division" of their self, brings these writers closer to Pynchon, Fuentes, Calvino, Robbe-Grillet on the international literary stage. Alasdair Gray shows constant interest for intertextuality and metafiction in almost all his novels by inducing a higher degree of authenticity when turning into the editor of his books (*Poor Things*, *The Book of Prefaces*), a method much similar to that in Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire* (1962), regarded as an extension of the very modernist technique that conveys the challenge for certainty, the revealing of fiction making as a project of postmodernism.

The effect of the globalizing forces can be traced in writers' attempts to reconfigure the typical location of their Scottish characters in an effort to subvert the traditional view of this particular land/lifescape epitomized in Carla Sassi's statement: "Place, associated with memory and identity, and landscape in its ahistorical and purely geological dimension have always been core pieces of Scottish identity, and along with music, they are perhaps the most enduring icons of this country" (Carla Sassi, 2005: 178). Whenever attempting to recreate key historical sites and cultural hallmarks, the vital issue that recurs in Scottish writings is that of identity, sometimes purposely reduced to stereotypical components, ready to be "sold" to foreigners, and most often acknowledged as the pillar of national imagery. A good demonstration comes from one of the most typically Scottish writer, James Kelman whose character in *You Have to Be Careful in the Land of the Free* (2004) charts the Caledonian prominence in an idealized recollection, incorporating the traditional mental representation of being a Scots, as stated by one of Alasdair Gray's characters, "Scotland? A poor province. A neglected province. A despised province. But four hundreds of years back we conceived. Ourselves to be a chosen people. We had a leader then" (A. Gray, 1985:137), under the circumstances of the exile when assessing one's Scottish identity, especially a Glaswegian one, is an attempt to put an end to his constant marginalization in terms of religion, race,

class, nationality, so visible in the case of a Celtic male, fair-haired and blue-eyed, whose “physicality and language are passport and visa” (Kelman, 2004:20) in this world.

It is rather easy to identify the authentic, the particular, the local as part of a larger, globalized, universal framework as authors continue to assert their Scottishness through settings and characters which is the rock on which their appeal and relevance are founded, while dialogically juxtaposing them to the new strategic tendencies thus revealing the permanent force of cohesion that impinges the advance of Scottish literature, originally assessed as powerless, neglected, marginalized., now so much re-dimensioned.

Scotland, like many other nations, experiences the threat of globalization in terms of a possible dilution of the much acclaimed Scottish pride, of the vanishing borders between formerly clean-cut entities such as nations, countries, regions, communities due to geopolitical forces, of the discrediting belief in immutable values, such as grand narratives, histories, traditions, languages, cults. Consequently, one can sense an increasing tendency of the Scottish novel to investigate questions of ontology most often expressed as “an uncertainty about the relationship between the real and the unreal, between simulacra and simulation, and about authenticity and fakery, as well as nostalgia for lost and displaced selves and organic communities.”(Nick Bentley, 2005:10).

Scottish fiction, like Scottish culture in general, has reached a stage of a certain ‘overdefinition’ which might easily lead to the death of “the protean, polyphonic tradition” and of the cultural autonomy and identity established at home and in Europe/world, because of the spread of those ‘pernicious discourses’ about Tartanry, Kailyardism, Clydesideism which prominently marked Scottish artistic productions, mostly novels, in the process of cultural ‘exoticisation’, as Carla Sassi labels it, within the arena of international reading public, respectively, art lovers. She favours Robert Crawford’s suggestion of de-defining Scottishness, that is, of de-Scotticising Scottish literature revealing the fact that “Scottishness comes after an unpredictable consequence of the literary text, and certainly is not its active aim, even less its primary source of inspiration”(Carla Sassi, 2005: 168-9), as gets visible in Alexander McCall Smith’s books of Scotland or in Brian McCabe’s *A New Alliance* (2001) where Scottishness and Scotticisms transcend the space of Scottish imagination when imagining Scotland and generate a specific vision of the world,

transmitting transcultural messages about one nation's reality and striving to decode these messages into units of meaning and slides of experiences.

Incorporating global tendencies and making Scottish fiction visible within the general process of „planetary integration” brings forth the questioning of the degree of authenticity of a certain nation, such as the Scottish one, whose cultural heritage consisting of traditions and practices passing from one generation to another in an honest attempt of their preservation, and the potential threat of its alteration. James Kelman (2002), the consecrated champion in rendering and displaying Scottishness in his prose, proud that „no true Scots man or woman ever was ashamed of any aspect of our society” (James Kelman, 2002: 336), suggests a new perspective on Scottish culture, a larger culture enriched by the diversity it has been facing once ethnic communities in Scotland were acknowledged as part of the synoptic picture of the traditional culture, fully reflecting „the reality of Scottish life” (338).

The demographic structure in Scotland points out that the country has become considerably more ethnically-diverse, being populated by an increasing number of as the non-Scottish population, visible and non-visible minorities, as seen in the streets, institutions, malls, a situation which grants a cohabitation dictated by rules, regulations, policies meant to prevent any form of discrimination or segregation. This diversity is gradually reflected on and appropriated by Scottish writers nowadays who share the view that cultural plurality can increase the sense of authenticity of the national values and practices, by revealing those hidden values that one becomes aware of only when either comparing them or lacking them. Fictionalization of cultural identity as is in the book of Andrew O'Hagan, *Personality* (2003) or constructing, by adjustment and completion, of a different self as in Anne Donovan's book, *Buddha Da* (2003) are but instances operating with the emotional perspective, or the cognitive dimension. Emotions that O'Hagan's Italian characters experience are seen here as a site of social control, so crucial in the development of people's knowledge and understanding of the dimensions of the multicultural phenomenon, its process and dynamics. The search for equanimity, for that evenness of mind that Donovan's Glaswegian Buddhists need in such a critical moment of Scottishness facing this process of global integration by encouraging cultural and social changing

realities which interrogate and often subvert the validity of tradition and of national practices.

These shifts from a monolithic to a multicultural society are to be identified even in Scotland whose constant intentions and attempts to preserve a cultural heritage to be passed from one generation to another are completed by the new tendencies of becoming a sensibly larger culture now, enriched by the diversity it has been facing once ethnic communities in Scotland were acknowledged as part of the synoptic picture of the traditional culture, fully reflecting „the reality of Scottish life” (James Kelman, 2002: 338).

Bibliography

- Bentley, Nick 2005. *Introduction: Mapping the Millennium: Themes and Trends in Contemporary British Fiction*, in *British Fiction of the 1990s*. Nick Bentley (Ed.). London: Routledge
- Craig, Cairns, 1999, *The Modern Scottish Novel. Narrative and the National Imagination*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press
- Cairns Craig, 1993, *Resisting Arrest: James Kelman*, in *The Scottish Novel since the Seventies*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press
- Gray, Alasdair, 1985, *1982 Janine*, London: Penguin Books
- Kelman, James 2002. „*And the Judges Said...*”. *Essays*, London: Vintage
- Kelman, James, 2004, *You Have to Be Careful in the Land of the Free*, London: Hamish Hamilton
- Sassi, Carla 2005. *Why Scottish Literature Matters*. Edinburgh: The Saltire Society

Moderne literarische Ikonen einer klassischen Schönheit. Grenzüberschreitungen oder die Wort-Bild-Koexistenz in Poesie und Malerei

Hajnalka Hegyesi¹

Abstract: *The main theme of the present study is the transgression of the medial boundary between word art (literature) and pictorial art (painting). The methods of iconising of literature are the first and second suppletion and the association, while the methods of lingualising of painting are the image-internal titling and signing and the collage. The study introduces on the one hand possibilities of remaking Leonardo da Vinci' Mona Lisa in the literature of the 20th century based on the examples of lyrics by Kasimir Malevitsch und Hans Helmuth Hiebel. On the other hand possibilities for verbal communication in painting.*

Keywords: *iconising, lingualising, symbiosis of word and painted image, Kasimir Malevitsch, Hans Helmuth Hiebel*

Einleitende Vorüberlegungen

Die Epoche der Moderne lässt sich unter dem Bruch mit der Tradition der Grenzziehung zwischen Literatur und bildender Kunst das heißt unter dem Phänomen der medialen Grenzüberschreitung in den vorerwähnten Bereichen subsumieren. Das traditionell-literarische Medium der Sprache überwiegt in Form von Buchstaben, Wörtern, Sätzen, Texten legitimiert sich als das Medium der bildenden Kunst, während sich das traditionell-bildkünstlerische Medium, das Bild in Form von Fotos, Grafiken usw. als Medium der Literatur etabliert:

Literatur und bildende Kunst befinden sich im 20. Jahrhundert in einem irritierenden Prozeß: Die Literatur findet zum Bild; die bildende Kunst eignet sich das Medium

¹¹ West Universität Temeswar

der Literatur, die Sprache, an. Seit dem Kubismus, Futurismus, Dadaismus, seit der abstrakten Kunst und dem Surrealismus können wir in den Avantgarden eine wechselseitige Durchdringung von Literatur und bildender Kunst beobachten. Die Literatur gelangt dabei in der visuellen Poesie zum sprachlosen Bild, in Wort-Bild-Texten bezieht sie Fotos und Grafik mit ein. [...] Die bildende Kunst nimmt Sprache in sich auf: Wir finden Wörter, Sätze, Texte in Bildern von Pablo Picasso und Georges Braque, René Magritte, Andy Warhol und Cy Twombly. (Faust 7)

Bei Wolfgang Max Faust finden zwei Subphänomene, nämlich „die Ikonisierung“ (Faust 10) der Literatur bzw. „die Lingualisierung“ (Faust 15) der bildenden Kunst² (Boehm 11-38; Mitchell 89-94; Bergmann 171-192) Erwähnung. Aus der *Ikonisierung* der Literatur und aus der *Lingualisierung* der bildenden Kunst entsteht das Hauptphänomen das heißt die mediale Grenzüberschreitung zwischen der klassischen Wortkunst und Bildkunst. Unter der *Ikonisierung* der Sprache (Literatur), der primär von ihm geprägte Terminus, versteht Faust Folgendes:

Will man das Gemeinsame, das hinter dieser Literatur in der Bewegung hin zum Visuellen steht, so kann man von einer *Ikonisierung der Sprache* sprechen. Sprachliche Elemente vom Buchstaben über das Wort bis zum Text, aber auch Satzzeichen und typografische Zeichen werden entweder mit ihrer bildhaften Qualität vorgeführt oder zu visuellen Bedeutungsträgern montiert. [...] Das reicht vom einfachen

² In Analogie zu der Faust'schen Terminologie, worunter *die Ikonisierung der Sprache* bzw. *die Lingualisierung des Bildes* zu verstehen sind, ergeben sich erstens der 1994 von Gottfried Boehm im Aufsatz *Die Wiederkehr der Bilder* postulierte Terminus *iconic turn* auf Deutsch *ikonische Wende*, zweitens der 1992 durch William James Thomas Mitchell im gleichnamigen Aufsatz *The Pictorial Turn* initiierte Terminus *pictorial turn* auf Deutsch *bildliche Wende*, und drittens der 1964 von Gustav Bergmann in *Logic and Reality* geprägte Terminus *linguistic turn* auf Deutsch *linguistische Wende*. Die *ikonische Wende* mit anderen Worten die Wende zum Bild setzt die Dominanz des Bildes über das Wort auf dem gesamten Kulturgebiet insbesondere auf dem literarischen Gebiet voraus. Demgegenüber setzt die *linguistische Wende*, anders gesagt die Wende zur Sprache, die Vorherrschaft des Wortes über das Bild auf dem bildkünstlerischem Gebiet voraus. Im ersten Fall handelt es sich um einen bildzentrischen Rezeptionsmodus von Kultur, während im zweiten Fall eher um einen textzentrischen Rezeptionsmodus davon.

Buchstabenspiel bis zum Aufbau komplexer Environments. [...] In ihnen wird die Buchseite als Präsentation der Sprache aufgehoben und in ein dreidimensionales Raumgefüge eingebracht. Die *Ikonisierung* der Sprache nutzt hierbei bildkünstlerische Erfahrungen und Vorstellungen. (Hervorhebung des Verfassers; Faust 10)

Mit der *Lingualisierung* des Bildes (bildende Kunst), der sekundär von ihm geprägte Terminus, meint Faust das Folgende:

Dieser Bezug der bildenden Kunst zur Sprache soll im Folgenden unter dem Begriff *Lingualisierung* gefasst werden. Er benennt die unterschiedlichen Möglichkeiten einer Verbindung der bildenden Kunst mit Sprache: ihre Einbeziehung ins Kunstwerk, ihre Verwendung als Medium der bildenden Kunst, ihre Benutzung neben dem Werk. (Hervorhebung des Verfassers; Faust 15)

Die *Ikonisierung* der Literatur lässt sich als das literarische Bestreben nach Visuellem definieren, während die *Lingualisierung* der bildenden Kunst als das bildkünstlerische Bestreben nach Verbalem definiert wird. Im Kontext der Literatur ist der Übergang der Sprachkonstituenten von unterschiedlicher Dimension, von den minimalen Dimensionen Buchstabe und Wort bis zu den Maximalen, wie der Satz oder der Text, und der Interpunktionszeichen bzw. Zeichen typografischer Herkunft zu rein bildlichen, visuellen Stimuli zu beobachten, während im Kontext der bildenden Kunst der Übergang von denen zu rein verbalen Stimuli beobachtet wird. Daraus erschließt man einerseits, dass die Poesie als Trägerin des Museumstempels betrachtet werden könnte, andererseits dass das Kunstwerk als Buch über den Buchhandel Herrschaft gewinnt.³

1. Komposition mit *La Gioconda* (1914) von Kasimir Malewitsch

Kasimir Sewerinowitsch Malewitsch lässt sich von der Literaturwissenschaft als einer der Hauptvertreter der russischen Avantgarde, weiterhin als Beeinflusser sowohl der damaligen als auch der heutigen Künstlergenerationen kategorisieren. (Weiss/Diederich 12)

³ Man vergleiche dazu auch Schwanberg, S. 152.

Die *Lingualisierung* der bildenden Kunst erfolgt hier durch die bildinterne Titelgebung, das bildinterne Signieren und die Collagierung.

Die „beschnittene“ und „zerschlissene“ (Lüthy 34) Mona Lisa Malewitschs befindet sich im Inneren des Bildes und ist heftig durchgestrichen mit einem roten Kreuz über ihrem Antlitz und mit einem anderen roten Kreuz über ihrem Dekolleté. Das vorherrschende Gefühl lässt sich eher als eine Art ernsthafter Missfallensbekundung und weniger als ein bewusstes Lächerlichmachen der international verehrten Kulturikone Mona Lisa Da Vincis erkennen. Der gängige Gioconda-Kult wird von dem russischen Künstler als ein Beispiel von falschem artistischem Bewusstsein betrachtet. (Sassoon 146 209) Malewitsch bringt seine diesbezügliche negative Meinung zum Ausdruck: „Man sollte diejenigen Sachen einer Untersuchung unterwerfen, die malerisch sind, und unter keinen Umständen einen Samowar, eine Kathedrale, einen Kürbis oder die Mona Lisa“. (Steinberg/Coleman 362: Übers. „People ought to examine what is painterly, and not the samovar, cathedral, pumpkin or Mona Lisa.“)

Hierbei ist der russische Gesamttitel „chastichnoe zatmenie“ (Ingold 256) in wortwörtlicher deutscher Übersetzung „teilweise oder partielle Sonnenfinsternis“ (Ingold 258) auf der „edlen“ (Butor 23) Gemäldevorderseite, anstatt auf der „verschämten“ (Butor 23) Gemälderückseite auffindbar. Ausgehend von dessen Platzierung an einem besonders günstigen Leinwandhorizont, das heißt exakt an der besonders ins Auge springenden Stelle auf der Vorderseite, lässt sich feststellen, dass der Gemäldetitel im vorliegenden Fall nicht etwas Vernachlässigbares, etwas Minderwertiges ist. Oder mit Butors Worten ausgedrückt: „Doch wenn der Titel für den Maler eine solche Bedeutung hat, dass er wünscht, der Betrachter des Bildes solle ihn immer vor Augen haben, muss er ihn selbst auf der Vorderseite anbringen.“ (Butor 24)

Der Buchstabekombination (za) lassen sich zwei unterschiedliche Bedeutungsebenen zuordnen. Primär wird (za) gemäß der Leserichtung von links nach rechts als die Präposition *hinter* verstanden, die als das Indizwort für den Neologismus „za/um“ auf Deutsch „alogisch, trans-rational, hinter oder nach dem Verstand“ (Ingold 256) zu erkennen ist. Sekundär ist (za) gemäß der sogenannten krebsgängigen Leserichtung von rechts nach links entweder als die erste Singularperson *ich* oder als der

allererste Kyrillbuchstabe *az* zu verstehen. (Ingold 256) Der Buchstabenkombination (*tmenie*) ist die Bedeutung Dunkel und Finsternis zugeschrieben. Der ersten Dreibuchstabenkombination (*čas*) lässt sich die Hauptbedeutung „Stunde“/„Zeit“ (Ingold 258) zugeschrieben. Des Weiteren fungiert die zweite Dreibuchstabenkombination (*tič*) gemäß der in Krebsbewegung verlaufenden Leserichtung das heißt gemäß der rückwärts gerichteten Leserichtung als ein Verweiswort für den Lesevorgang selbst „čitat“. (Ingold 258). Abschließend kann eine Parallele zwischen der dritten und zugleich letzten Dreibuchstabenkombination (*noe*) und dem gleichlautenden, in dem deutschen Sprachgebrauch üblichen Adjektiv *neu* gezogen werden. Ausgehend von dem Malewitschen Zerstörungsgestus, seinem nihilistischen Gestus im Bereich der Wortgrenzen, kann ihm den Nachfolger-Status der avantgardistischen Innovationspolitik zugeschrieben werden, die sich von Aleksej Krutschonch bestens formulieren lässt:

[...] wir haben erkannt, dass man für die Darstellung des schwindelerregenden heutigen Lebens und des noch dynamischeren zukünftigen [Lebens] die Wörter auf neue Art und Weise kombinieren muss, und je mehr Unordnung wir in den Bau der Sätze bringen, desto besser.“ (Ingold 259)

Die Lösung des vom Autor aufgegebenen Worträtsels lässt sich in die Aufgabensphäre des Betrachterpublikums, genauer gesagt des Lesepublikums einschreiben. Die semantische Eindeutigkeit lässt sich durch Polysemie ersetzen. Aus der wortinternen Grenzaufhebung bzw. aus der auf der Wortebene erfolgten Zerstückelung resultieren die Erweiterung des begrenzten semantischen Horizonts sowie zusätzliche Interpretationsmöglichkeiten. *Partielle Sonnenfinsternis* ist hierbei im übertragenen Sinn gemeint, das heißt sie wird in ihrer metaphorischen Bedeutung „geistige Umnachtung“ oder jene „Sinnverdunkelung“ (Ingold 258) verwendet.

Die Wort-Übersetzung ins Bild verwirklicht sich durch die Collage. (Faust 53-55) Der sich quer über Mona Lisas Brust erstreckende erste collagierte Zeitungsfetzen „peredaeisia kvartira“ (Malevich/D’Andrea 208) auf Deutsch entweder „Wohnung zu vermieten“ (Lüthy 34) oder „Wohnung abzugeben“ (Gassner 18) sowie der links unterhalb der Mona Lisa auffindbare zweite

collagierte Zeitungsfetzen „v Moskve“ (Malevich/D’Andrea 208) auf Deutsch „in Moskau“ (Gassner 18) sind hier zu erwähnen. Die strengstens rot durchgestrichene Gioconda ist zur Löschung vorgesehen, das heißt, ihre ehemalige Spitzenstellung in der Kunstgeschichte wird durch die zwei vorerwähnten Zeitungsanzeigen für Zukünftiges frei erklärt bzw. sie ist jederzeit neu besetzbar. (Lüthy 34). Hierbei handelt es sich um die passive Wortaufnahme ins Bild. Die Wahl des Künstlers fällt auf etwas (von einem Anderen) Vorgefertigtes, auf etwas Gefundenes anstatt auf etwas Selbstgefertigtem. (Butor 124) Die Druckschrift bildet die Ausnahme von der Regel. Die Übersetzung der Druckschrift auf die Leinwand erfolgt in einem nicht manuellen Modus das heißt überwiegend durch die Collagierung und die Schablonierung einer aus Printmedien stammenden vorgefertigten Schrift. Die Erklärung für ihre Verschiedenheit von den anderen Schrifttypen ist in der Genese der Schrift zu finden. Die gedruckte Schrift erweist sich nicht mehr als handgebunden, sondern vielmehr als maschinengebunden, als das maschinell Gefertigte nicht mehr als das Handgefertigte. (Butor 121)

Die Signatur Malewitsch, im Butor’schen Kontext bekannt als bescheidene Signatur, weist eine Erschwernis in deren Decodierung auf. Deren Lesbarkeit hängt von einem einzelnen Faktor ab, nämlich von den Distanzbedingungen. Das Lesen erfolgt mit unbewaffnetem Auge erst von einer geringeren Distanz oder von einer größeren Nähe. (Butor 80) Die bescheidene Signatur adoptiert einen Erzählstil von holzschnittartiger Knappheit, der sogenannte minimalistische Erzählstil, die Reduktion der Erzählinhalte auf das Wesentliche erzielend. (Butor 81) Hierbei handelt es sich nicht um die Signatur-Platzierung in Konformität mit den Erwartungen, das bedeutet, die Bildecke von unten rechts erweist sich nicht mehr als Ort des Signierens. Stattdessen entscheidet sich Malewitsch für die dritte Butor’sche Signiermöglichkeit geprägt durch die Künstlerpräferenz für etwas Neues, für das Experimentieren trotz der physischen Anwesenheit der rechten unteren Bildecke. Die intentional also voluntaristisch gewechselte Signatur-Lokation, der Wechsel von der Bildecke von unten rechts zu der von unten links, ist mit einem speziellen für die Adressaten neu definierbaren Bedeutungsgehalt versehen (Butor 82-83):

der gewählte Platz auf einem Bild, das eine Ecke unten rechts hat, die durch eine Platzierung der Signatur an anderer Stelle deshalb eine bestimmte Bedeutung erhält, weil wir uns fragen, warum die Signatur nicht an dieser Stelle steht. (Butor 83)

Das Bild als „Träger einer [entweder gemalten oder gedruckten]”Schrift« (Hervorhebung des Verfassers; Faust 15), also als Besitzer des sogenannten bimedialen Charakters, als visuell-verbales Kompositum erlaubt dessen linear-sukzessive Lese-Rezeption, was bei einem Bild im klassischen Sinne des Wortes völlig unvorstellbar wäre. (Faust 49)

Aus dem Eindringen von verschiedenartigen Sprachelementen – wie Buchstabe, Wort, Satz, Text, Titel, Signatur – in die Bildkomposition resultiert die Ausstattung des Bildes mit einer nicht-naturgegebenen Kompetenz, beispielsweise mit der Kompetenz zum Erzählen, mit der sogenannten narrativen Kompetenz: In den Faust’schen Worten ausgedrückt „Bilder werden Worte“ (Faust 7), also Bilder werden etwas Erzählfähiges. Des Weiteren ermöglicht die Wort-Bild-Symbiose die Überwindung der Unlesbarkeit von Bildern. (Faust 45)

2. *Mona Lisa im Schnee* (1975) von Hans Helmut Hiebel

Hans Helmut Hiebel wird von der Literaturwissenschaft als der Vertreter der surrealistisch-absurden Lyrik kategorisiert.

Bis hierher ist die Rede von der *Lingualisierung* der bildenden Kunst gewesen, doch von diesem Punkt an wird die Konzentration auf den umgekehrten Prozess das heißt auf die *Ikonisierung* der Literatur gerichtet. Die *Ikonisierung* der Literatur erfolgt hier durch die Transposition (Kranz 27-46), fernerhin durch den ersten (Kranz 47-54) und zweiten Suppletionstypus (Kranz 54-65), und nicht zuletzt durch die Assoziation (Kranz 73-99).

Die literarische Präsenz der Mona Lisa von Leonardo da Vinci wird durch das Indizwort „bild“ (Hiebel 5) signalisiert. „Bild“ (Hiebel 5) fungiert als der von dem Dichter ernannte, bevollmächtigte Vertreter des in räumlicher Hinsicht abwesenden jedoch in der Wirklichkeit vorhandenen, materiellen Gemäldes. Es soll an dieser Stelle jedoch Erwähnung finden, dass das Resultat des sprachlichen Vor-Augen-Führens bzw. der literarischen Sichtbarmachung des Bildes ein auf Illusionen beruhendes „Als - ob” - Bild (Rajewsky 195) das heißt ein im Lesepublikum mental hervorgerufenes Bild ist.

Im Fall der vorgegebenen Hiebel'schen Poesie werden die beiden Kriterien der Transposition (Kranz 27 - 46) das heißt die Sicherung des Wiedererkennens bzw. das Erreichen der Erneuerung erfüllt. Als Beweis für die Erfüllung des ersten Kriteriums fungiert der Name der leonardesken Frauenfigur Mona Lisa und die visuelle Dimension. Demgegenüber wird die Erfüllung des zweiten Kriteriums durch die Bildergänzung mit neuen, malerisch unvorstellbaren Dimensionen, und zwar mit der Bewegungsdimension, mit der taktilen, auditiven, gustativen, olfaktorischen Dimension und mit der meditativen Dimension bewiesen. Das letzte oder zweite Kriterium beinhaltet schon den ersten bzw. den zweiten Suppletionstypus und nicht zuletzt die Assoziation.

Die in der Poesie vorkommenden Bewegungsverben „setzen“, „kommen“, „bringen“, „zurückschreiten“ und nicht zuletzt „werfen“ (Hiebel 5f) lassen sich in erster Linie durch die Dynamisierung des malerisch vorgegebenen Statischen charakterisieren. Trotz der ständigen irreführenden Präsens-Verwendung verfügt die Poesie über zwei Zeitdimensionen, und zwar über die Zeitdimension der Vergangenheit kurz gesagt des Vorhers, und über die Zeitdimension der Zukunft kurzum des Nachhers. (Kranz 51) Von dem Nichtvorhandensein der Temporaladverbien bzw. von der Nichtabwechslung der Tempusformen auf der Gedichtebene ausgehend, ist das Vorhandensein der zwei Zeitdimensionen bei Hiebel nicht ausgeschlossen. Das Verb „zurückschreiten“ (Hiebel 5f), das eine Rückwärtsbewegung auf der Zeitskala bis hin zu dem Vorher das heißt bis hin zu der Zeitdimension der Vergangenheit voraussetzt, erweist sich als der Ausgangspunkt des im Folgenden skizzierten Gedankenganges. Mit Mona Lisas Leben in der monotonen Gefangenschaft des Gemälderahmens, mit ihrem Zurückschreiten ins Bild und mit ihrem Werfen eines grünen Apfels in die Richtung des Autors sind hierbei die Zeitdimension der Vergangenheit gemeint. Unter der Zeitdimension der Zukunft, die eine Vorwärtsbewegung auf der Zeitskala bis hin zu dem Nachher voraussetzt, sind hier ihr temporäres Verlassen des Bildraumes, ihr Heraustreten aus dem vordefinierten Gemälderahmen in die Natur genauer gesagt in eine Winter Naturlandschaft, ihr Setzen der Papierschiffchen in den Bach, ihr Bringen einer Tüte Schokolade, ihr Wegwerfen der Tüte zu verstehen. Der einzige Augenblick der Malerei wird poetisch mit Bewegung stimulierenden Gedanken in

einen Handlungsablauf im üblichen Sinne des Wortes das heißt in einen Handlungsablauf mit einem Handlungsbeginn und -ende verwandelt. Der verewigte flüchtige Augenblick wird zu einem der Wahrheit näher stehenden dynamischen Zeitfließen. Es geht um die Bild-Ergänzung mit der malerisch fehlenden Bewegungsdimension, kürzlich um den ersten Suppletionstypus.

Im vorliegenden Fall erfolgt die Schlussfolgerung, dass der prädominant angesprochene Sinnesbereich das Sehen ist. Eine besonders hohe Anzahl von visuellen Elementen, unter anderem unterschiedliche vom Sehorgan abhängige Farbbezeichnungen das Purpur (Hiebel 5), das Rot (Hiebel 5), das Rosarot (Hiebel 5f), das Grün (Hiebel 5f), das optische Sinneseindrücke hervorrufende Verb *leuchten* (Hiebel 5) und nicht zuletzt das optische Hauptwahrnehmungsverb *sehen* (Hiebel 5) ist hierbei zu erkennen. Darüber hinaus sollen noch vier klassische Sinnesbereiche Erwähnung finden, die die Hiebel'sche Mona Lisa anspricht. Der Sinnesbereich des Schmeckens bzw. des Riechens lässt sich durch „schokolade“ (Hiebel 5) bzw. „apfel“ (Hiebel 5f) ansprechen. Das Ansprechen des Sinnesbereiches des Hörens erfolgt durch „bach“ (Hiebel 5). Der Sinnesbereich des Tastens wird durch „schnee“ (Hiebel 5) bzw. „pulli“ (Hiebel 5f) angesprochen. Daraus ergibt sich die Schlussfolgerung, dass Hiebels Mona Lisa gleichzeitig fünf klassische Sinne aktiviert, nämlich den Seh-, Hör-, Tast-, Geruchs- und den Geschmackssinn. Im Rahmen hiervon handelt es sich statt um die passive Bildaufnahme ins Wort, eher um die aktive Bild - Ergänzung mit den fehlenden Dimensionen, und zwar mit der visuellen, gustativen, taktilen, auditiven, olfaktorischen Dimension, kurzum um den zweiten Suppletionstypus.

Hierbei ist auch die Assoziation zu finden, die den Verlust der ursprünglichen Bildidentität und zugleich die Verleihung der neuen Assoziationszünder-Identität (Kranz 87) an dem Bild voraussetzt. Dementsprechend ist das Bild mit einem Verweis-Charakter, mit einem zur Meditation anregenden Charakter, also insgesamt gesehen mit einem produktiven Charakter versehen. Das Bild verfügt über die Fähigkeit des Hervorrufens von mythischen bzw. biblischen Assoziationstypen (Kranz 99). Von dem Apfel ausgehend, lassen sich zwei prävorhandene Materialien mythischer Sinnkonstruktion aus dem Mona Lisa - Bild Hiebels hervorrufen, erstens der biblische, alttestamentarische Mythos vom Sündenfall der Protoeltern Adam und Eva (Bibel 23), zweitens der griechische Mythos von Paris und

den drei Göttinnen Aphrodite, Athene und Hera (Krauss/Uthemann 85).

Was die Mona Lisa Hiebels anbetrifft, handelt es sich hierbei um den Ersatz der ursprünglichen Bekleidetheit sowohl durch die partielle Nacktheit als auch durch die andersartige Bekleidetheit. Der vestimentäre Unterschied zwischen der Leonardo'-schen und Hiebel'-schen Mona Lisa besteht einerseits in dem Mangel an Fussbekleidung und andererseits in dem Ersatz des dunkelschwarzen Kleides durch die Uniform des modernen Zeitalters das heißt durch den Pullover. „Barfuss“ (Hiebel 5) bzw. „die purpurschuhe unterm arm“ (Hiebel 5) fungieren als Indizwörter für die Entblößung der Füße, während „ihre im pulli schaukelnden brüste“ (Hiebel 5f) als das Indizwort für den Kleidungswechsel gilt.

Das Resultat des Bild-Eindringens in die Poesiekomposition lässt sich am besten in Faust Worten resümieren: „Worte werden Bilder“ (Faust 8), also Worte werden etwas Bildhaftes, Bildfähiges. Überdies zieht die Wort-Bild-Symbiose die Überwindung der Nicht-Ikonizität nach sich.

3. Abschließende Erwägungen

In Balls Tagebuch betitelt *Die Flucht aus der Zeit* lässt sich die Bild-Wort-Relation definieren: „Das Wort und das Bild sind eins. Maler und Dichter gehören zusammen. Christus ist Bild und Wort. Das Wort und das Bild sind gekreuzigt.“ (Ball/Echte 99) Von dem Tagebucheintrag Balls vom 13. Juni 1916 (Wacker 94) ausgehend, kann festgestellt werden, dass es sich um eine Relation komplizierter Art handelt. Das Wort ist das Bild und das Bild ist das Wort. Das Wort fungiert als Metasprache des Bildes und gleich umgekehrt das Bild als Metasprache des Wortes (Baitello 56).

Die Erstellung einer hierarchischen Rangordnung zwischen Wort und Bild führt zu Schwierigkeiten. Die Frage, ob dem Wort oder dem Bild die Priorität zukommt, bleibt offen.

Zwei völlig antithetische Konzeptionen, die zwei entgegengesetzte Richtungen erzielen, nämlich die Richtung Wort bzw. die Richtung Bild, rivalisieren miteinander, kämpfen unaufhörlich um den Vorrang miteinander. Die erste Konzeption in Richtung des Wortes lautet wie folgt: „Im Anfang war das Wort und das Wort war bei Gott und Gott war das Wort. [...] Alles ist durch das Wort geworden, und ohne das Wort wurde nichts, was geworden ist.“ (Bibel 1039) Die zweite Konzeption in Richtung des

Bildes als ein bloßes Negieren der vorhergehenden christlich-biblischen Konzeption lautet so: „Am Anfang war das Bild. Und es war nicht das Wort. [...] Erst sieht der Mensch, dann beginnt er zu sprechen.“ (Rauterberg 18) Die erste Konzeption wird durch den Evangelisten Johannes vertreten, während die zweite Konzeption von dem renommierten Redakteur der *Zeit*, Hanno Rauterberg formuliert wird.

Im Spektrum der Macht gesehen, lässt sich bei der ersten Konzeption die absolute Dominanz des Wortes zum Ausdruck bringen. Die göttliche Welterschaffung vollzieht sich durch das Aussprechen der Schöpfungswörter, kurzum durch das Medium Wort. Die Welt erweist sich als das Resultat des göttlichen Sprechaktes. Das Wort steht im Zentrum des schöpferischen Aktes Gottes. Ohne Wort wäre die Weltkreation vollkommen unvorstellbar gewesen. Erstens „Gott sprach“ (Bibel 9), und erst dann „[...] Gott sah an alles, was er gemacht hatte.“ (Bibel 10) Der Sprechvorgang das heißt das Medium Wort gewinnt Priorität gegenüber dem Sehvorgang das heißt dem Medium Bild. Demgegenüber ist bei der zweiten Konzeption eine absolute Bild-Dominanz zu erkennen. Hierbei geschieht es gleich umgekehrt also der Sehvorgang das heißt das Medium Bild lässt den Sprechvorgang das heißt das Medium Wort hinter sich. Es zeigt sich eine klare Fokussierung im Rahmen der Erstgenannten auf die göttliche Dimension der Dominanz, und im Rahmen der Zeitgenannten auf die anthropologische Dimension der Dominanz. Die primäre Denkweise beruht auf dem ursprünglichen Schöpfungsmythos, während die sekundäre Denkweise auf dem Existenzbeginn des Homo sapiens fußt.

Es ist würdig, mit Lessings eigenen Worten abzuschließen: „Nie sind Malerei und Poesie in einen gleichern Wettstreit gezogen worden. Der Sieg blieb unentschieden, und beide verdienten gekrönt zu werden.“ (Lessing 159) Laut Lessing soll das Resultat eines möglichen Konkurrenzkampfes zwischen Malerei und Literatur, das ist zwischen Bild und Wort weder gewonnen, noch verloren, sondern gleich dazwischen also unentschieden werden. Dieser Kampf mit unentschiedenem Ausgang verhindert die klassische Aufteilung in Gewinner und Verlierer. Hierbei könnte nur von der feierlichen Verkündigung der beiden Kämpfenden das heißt des Wortes und Bildes zum Sieger die Rede sein. Sowohl das Bild als auch das Wort erweisen sich als

unbestrittene Sieger der vorgegebenen kämpferischen Konfrontation.

Literatur

- Baitello, Norval. 1987. *Die Dada-Internationale: Der Dadaismus in Berlin und der Modernismus in Brasilien*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
- Ball, Hugo. 1992. „Die Flucht aus der Zeit“ in *Die Flucht aus der Zeit*. Bernhard Echte (Hrsg.). Zürich: Limmat.
- Bergmann, Gustav. 1964. *Logic and Reality*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Bibel*. 2009. Köln: Naumann & Göbel.
- Boehm, Gottfried. 1994. „Die Wiederkehr der Bilder“ in *Was ist ein Bild?*. Ders. (Hrsg.). München: Fink.
- Butor, Michel. 1992. *Die Wörter in der Malerei*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- Faust, Wolfgang Max. 1987. *Bilder werden Worte. Zum Verhältnis von bildender Kunst und Literatur. Vom Kubismus bis zur Gegenwart*. Köln: DuMont.
- Gassner, Hubertus. 2007. *Das schwarze Quadrat: Hommage an Malewitsch*. Hamburg: Hamburger Kunsthalle.
- Hiebel, Hans Helmut. 1975. *Seelensatz*. Erlangen: Palm & Enke.
- Ingold, Felix Philipp. 2004. *Im Namen des Autors*. München: Fink.
- Kotte, Andreas. 2005. *Theaterwissenschaft*. Köln: Böhlau.
- Kranz, Gisbert. 1981. *Das Bildgedicht. Theorie. Lexikon*. Köln: Böhlau.
- Krauss, Heinrich. Uthemann, Eva. 2003. *Was Bilder erzählen. Die klassischen Geschichten aus Antike und Chirstentum in der abendländischen Malerei*, München: C. H. Beck.
- Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim. 1964. *Laokoon oder Über die Grenzen der Malerei und Poesie*, Stuttgart: Reclam.
- Lüthy, Michael. 1759. *Andy Warhol: Thirty Are Better Than One. Eine Kunst-Monographie*. Frankfurt am Main: Insel.
- Malevich, Kasimir Severinovich. D’Andrea, Jeanne. 1990. *Kazimir Malevich, 1878-1935: [exhibition], National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 16 September 1990-4 November 1990, the Armand Hammer Museum of Art and Cultural Center, Los Angeles, 28 November 1990-13 January 1991, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 7 February 1991-24 March 1991*. Los Angeles, California: Armand Hammer Museum of Art and Cultural Center, University of Washington Press.
- Mitchell, William James Thomas. 1997. „Der Pictorial Turn“ in *Privileg Blick. Kritik der visuellen Kultur*. Christian Kravagna (Hrsg.). Berlin: ID-Archiv.

- Rajewsky, Irina O. 2002. *Intermedialität*. Tübingen: Francke.
- Rauterberg, Hanno. 2006. „Lust auf Bildung. Bildende Kunst“ in *Die Zeit* Nr. 4/2006.
- Sassoon, Donald. 2001. *Becoming Mona Lisa. The Making of a Global Icon*. New York: Harcourt.
- Schwanberg, Johanna. 2003. *Günter Brus: Bild-Dichtungen*. Wien: Springer.
- Steinberg, Mark D. Coleman, Heather J. 2007. *Sacred Stories: Religion and Spirituality in Modern Russia*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Wacker, Bernd. 1996. *Dionysius DADA Areopagita. Hugo Ball und die Kritik der Moderne*. Paderborn: Schöningh.
- Weiss, Evelyn. Diederich, Stephan. 1993. *Russische Avantgarde im zwanzigsten Jahrhundert*. Köln: Josef-Haubrich-Kunsthalle.
- Zöllner, Frank. 2006. *Leonardos Mona Lisa. Vom Porträt zur Ikone der freien Welt*. Berlin: Klaus Wagenbach.

BOOK REVIEWS
BUCHBESPRECHUNGEN
REVUE DU LIVRE



Roger Craik Revealing and Delivering Poetry...

Those Years (Professional Reading Series van Zeno Press Cleveland, Ohio, 2007); *Of England Still* (Finishing Line Press Georgetown, Kentucky, 2009); *The Pied Piper of Hamelin, A Child's Story* by Robert Browning Illustrated and coloured by T. W. Craik and W. A. Craik (Blaze Vox 2013)

Ioana Cistelean¹

Yesterday Stasis...

I find it quite refreshing whenever the circumstances compel me to admit a simple truth that great minds pretty much think alike. Imagine thus my surprise when reading Roger Craik's poems and detecting a similar intrinsic imaginary reminding of, for instance, our Romanian contemporary poet Ion Muresan; there is a sort of Neo-Expressionism, a coded inter-/ para- and meta-textuality and also an imagery of the poet's interior stasis built up from and with concrete elements which place the two of them within the same lyrical modern and post-modern paradigm. In this respect, if we are to encompass Roger Craik in a given acknowledged poetical pattern or if we are to appropriate him to our familiar poetic proximity, he might belong to our so-called 80's generation of writers, displaying the same thematic, turbulences and tonalities.

Those Years (Professional Reading Series van Zeno Press Cleveland, Ohio, 2007) deals with Roger Craik's inner crisis in his adult pose; both *incertitude* and *solitude* act as either the recurrent motif or the soul's label within this poetry. All modern series of "lacks" are to be identifiable in the author's volume: the couple's crisis, the lack of meaningful communication, the solitude as a burdening reality combined with the lack of it (tangible merely in a promise posture), the hollowness of love declarations, the routine's emptiness of living without her, always thinking of her, waiting for her sign, any kind of sign, all in vain – "Thursday dawned and Thursday came./ I knew my telephone would never ring again/ as it had done at nine o'clock/ for eighteen months before."; "as once again,/ adrift, alone,/ I dial the number I know better than my own// to leave a few more tiny words of love, in vain"; "You will go for walks, together./ You will never be alone// Perhaps I'm wrong. Perhaps no woman truly wants to be alone.// (...) Or so I hope."; "I think of as he turns to sleep/ toward you still, your face turned to the wall,/ and hopes tomorrow you'll be once again/ as once you were/ to him." Both *the poem* and *the poet* make a resilient pair obviously opposed to *he and she couple's* impermanence. The authorial voice is self-defining by constantly including in his organism both the permanency (meaning the poem) and the absence (meaning the female figure). The solitude is bitterly marking the proximity in temporal and spacial limits while the fulfillment is joyfully marking the memories. Consequently, the reader is dealing with a fragile balance between reality and probability, respectively possibility, between the actual and the virtual, between loss and accomplishment – "Although he doesn't know it, these days are the last/ of his marriage. Perhaps he's reading now/ on his

¹ University of Oradea

side of the bed, beneath his lamp, while you/ peruse the book of myths my father bought/ second-hand, in England, twenty years ago.”; “Alone, of course, / again and again/ I press my bell/ and every time, although it’s not/ - although my reason tells me that it’s not -// it’s you, it’s you, it’s always always you.”; “I may never be included here,/ but if I am, I’d like to say/ that from his birth in 1956/ he flapped around/ doing this and that/ (...) where he continued to be lost until ... “. The organic, sonorous remembrance of her is inserted within detailed micro-realities, flooding the poem in a mixture of dull present and oneiric retrospections and projections; Roger Craik’s reader lives under the impression of watching a screen and following the poet’s intrinsic dynamic quite similar to a narrative; there is a story hidden in each of the author’s poems x-raying jealousy, incompleteness and mainly the couple image which is exclusively complete in projected realms, never in reality: the couple’s habitat is stamped by a Garden of Eden lost the minute she walked away...

Of England Still (Finishing Line Press Georgetown, Kentucky, 2009) reveals no split personality, no double rhetoric, but the ambivalence, the construction of a whole self, made up of pieces, of fragments, of both nostalgia and reason. Roger Craik is revisiting himself in his early childhood years and later in his teenage hood restoring a reunion, a copulation of the younger, inexperienced self to the adult photo of his ego; all senses are revitalized and they are all capturing their own pseudo-forgotten story, a stage of the good always prevailing embodying a well-defined reality as far as the child’s world is concerned. The family portrait is be it complete, be it fragmented and it inserts the acute feeling of loss: the loss of innocence installs itself among disruptions, among distances imposed by exterior circumstances between the child and his parents; this very loss is comprised within the metaphorical transgression from colors to words, from innocence to corrupted adulthood – “Years passed. My colors faded into words,/ then schools and universities, awards/ for things that led me further from myself.”; “You are two years old./ You are sitting on an air raid shelter/ at the end of your grandparents’ garden./ The concrete is hot.// (...) You know that the daylight always comes.”; “I saw my mother in her fifties skirt/ (...) and then, as if to race the train,/ my father running after me/ not as an athlete would/ (...) but stroking, pressing down the air/ (...) I saw him in my mind’s eyes running thus/ (...) outdistanced, and outdistanced further still.” As he grows up, the bliss becomes disjointed as well, while the fear of misplacing the childhood and mostly the figures populating it definitely installs. Evolving as a human being gets to be similar to dropping your sincerity, to developing and mastering the art of faking. The adult’s mask would comprise all his past marks and the adult’s desperate attempt to recapture his past’s equilibrium, its certitude, its bliss is compelling him to act, to artifact himself. – “until it flaps away and I am left/ to muse how habit over fifteen years/ has withered us of words. And so I write/ these lines you’ll read when it’s too late to say”; “now I’m pretending that I’m loath to leave/ and when we are finally into our coats, and the band/ are packing up their instruments/ (...) I see his hand still holding her hand”; “over to the gramophone, draw out/ the ridged prismatic-black of album from/ its sleeve, perform// the delicate, the fearful/ act of lowering the arm”. Once again the reader is dealing with the feeling of loss, another kind of loss: the burden of missing the dear ones, the severe possibility of misplacing them - they both performance as a definite proof of your broken, incomplete childhood circle. Time is no longer patient and

this particular awareness of the fact that we are all facing the end and that nothing stays forever represents the inner bitter inscriptions of adulthood. – “Forty minutes left. The air is growing thinner, shorter-breathed./ Urgently, before it gets too late,/ I want to tell my mother that I love her,/ more than world away.”; “And so instead I choose to celebrate/ his *peterrades*, those volleyed trumpeting/ (...) and knew in mirth a boy’s unspoken love.”

Today Stasis...

The most recent volume we are referring to, *The Pied Piper of Hamelin, A Child's Story* by Robert Browning Illustrated and coloured by T. W. Craik and W. A. Craik (Blaze Vox 2013) does not bear the signature of the poet Roger Craik; it is actually the facsimile of Robert Browning's *The Pied Piper of Hamelin, A Child's Story* beautifully illustrated and colored by his parents and given to him on his 6th birthday in 1962, when he was considered old enough to enjoy it. However, his parents “invented” the book a few years earlier. His father described the circumstances to his son as follows and described in the foreword of the book: “In September 1958 I went to New York to teach for the academic year at Queens College (CCNY), and Wendy accompanied me. (You remained in England, at Kingston, with Rita and Gary.) (Roger’s maternal grandparents). During the day, while I was teaching, she pursued her research on Jane Austen’s novels in the New York Public Library. We were living in East 58th Street. In February 1959 we used the break between semesters to visit Williamsburg, Va., where we bought the attractive traditionally-bound book in handmade paper which now contains *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*. Our idea was to create a present for you on our return. I calculated the length of the poem and the space available and in the evenings of about a fortnight wrote it out and drew the pictures, which Wendy coloured in watercolour. We returned to England in May 1959.” Of course, Roger Craik remembers nothing of this, being only 3 years old at the time, but he does remember enjoying *The Pied Piper* being read to him, and sensing his parents’ relish in reading aloud and their pausing to point to the illustrations.

In order to refresh our childish memories, a series of facts must be uttered relating the text: *The Pied Piper of Hamelin* in its initial form represents the subject of a legend concerning the departure or death of many children from the town of Hamelin, Lower Saxony, Germany, in the Middle Ages. The earliest references describe a piper, dressed in multicolored clothing, leading the children away from the town never to return. In the 16th century the story was expanded into a full narrative, in which the piper is a rat-catcher hired by the town to lure rats away with his magic pipe. When the citizenry refuses to pay for his service, he retaliates by turning his magic on their children, leading them away as he already had proceeded with the rats. This version of the story spread as a fairy tale. This version has also appeared in the writings of, amongst others, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, the Brothers Grimm and Robert Browning. The story may reflect a historical event in which Hamelin lost its children. Theories have been proposed suggesting that the Pied Piper stands for a symbol of the children's death by plague or catastrophe.

Thus, as the editor specifies, “the dramatic events that Browning recorded in 1842 marvelously unfold in the Craiks' illustrations. The pages have bold, imaginative drawings, deep lines, rich colors and fine (often idiosyncratic) details. From the pillaging rats to the gluttonous council members, every pen and

brush stroke brings Browning's moral home. This work contains over 40 illustrated pages with hand lettering and includes a foreword by Roger Craik detailing this book's creation by his parents. This unique book is intended for all ages.”

Roger Craik has therefore proceeded with the rats (in a manner of speaking), he is re-experiencing his childhood's completion and bliss, making it possible for all of us to relive and moreover enjoy our past misplaced luggage, our remembrances belonging to our childhood splendid days, offering this particular colorful and joyful book as a gift intended not only for the public, but especially for his own parents; this proof of gratitude so original and ingenious reveals a genuine Roger Craik playing still, pursuing the rats...

Emil Cioran: De la France **Éditions de l'Herne, 2009**

Floarea Mateoc¹

Ce petit livre de 93 pages est un essai que Cioran a écrit à Paris, en 1941. C'est une oeuvre charnière qui marque la fin de l'écriture en roumain et le début de la période française du penseur. A 22 ans il publie son premier livre, *Sur les cimes du désespoir*, le cri d'un jeune révolté qui, paradoxalement, devient spécialiste dans le problème de la mort. Trois autres ouvrages (*Le livre des leurres*, *Transfiguration de la Roumanie*, *Des larmes et des saints*) complètent l'oeuvre roumaine de Cioran. Après une bourse à Berlin de la part de la Fondation Humboldt (1933-1935), son âme déjà crépusculaire se sent attiré par Paris où il s'installe en 1937, ayant obtenu une bourse de la part de l'Institut français de Bucarest. A ce temps-là, Paris était déjà occupé par les Nazis mais en dépit des vicissitudes historiques, Cioran est atteint par les lumières de la ville et par la civilisation française. En outre, l'esprit français de l'époque colle à son scepticisme et à son pessimisme. En 1938, il s'inscrit à la Sorbonne afin de faire une thèse sans aucune intention sérieuse, ne voulant que profiter de toutes les facilités de la vie estudiantine. Attiré par la diversité de la France, il veut connaître toutes ses régions et fait de longs voyages à bicyclette, à travers le pays. Il se mêle aux gens de condition sociale différente pour mieux comprendre l'esprit des catholiques et des communistes. Dans l'intervalle 1937-1944, il continue d'écrire en roumain publiant encore en Roumanie, des articles et deux livres, *Le crépuscule des pensées* et *Bréviaire des vaincus*, le dernier étant imprimé seulement en 1991 à Bucarest.

De la France est écrit aussi en roumain et le manuscrit a été retrouvé après la mort du philosophe par sa compagne de vie, Simone Boué. Alain Paruit en a fait la traduction en français et en a écrit aussi la préface. Il trouve ce livre "étrange" et "kafkaïen"; étrange parce que Cioran écrit sur la France en roumain. Un titre flou qui annonce un livre ambivalent sur la décadence du pays mais aussi sur sa grandeur. C'est une ode, un hymne d'amour et une oraison funèbre à la fois. Un livre kafkaïen parce que le philonaziste d'hier, celui qui avait écrit une ode au Capitaine (Zelea Codreanu) avait renoncé à toute forme d'extrémisme. Si le philosophe se plaît à percevoir la décadence de la France il ne fait que l'apprentissage pour *Précis de décomposition*, son premier livre en français, paru en 1949 à Paris.

La déclaration d'amour que Cioran dédie à la France est enveloppée dans la mélancolie provoquée par le déclin d'une grande civilisation. Venu des contrées primitives des Carpathes, il y trouve le lieu idéal pour vivre intensément son négativisme et ses désillusions. Le jeune furieux, cultivé et doué, muni d'une

¹ University of Oradea

“folie agissante” découvre l’énorme contraste entre son lieu natal et le pays d’accueil. En fait, Cioran dévoile deux facettes de la France: la France éternelle avec ses grandes valeurs et la France fragile qui commençait à se montrer dès 1941. Le grand talent du philosophe est d’avoir ressenti le danger de cette fragilité et de lui avoir montré les raisons. De ce point de vue, le texte cioranien fait une prophétie qui s’avère être très actuelle malgré qu’il l’ait faite sept décennies auparavant.

Dans la première partie de l’essai, Cioran passe en revue les grands traits de l’identité française qu’il ne cesse d’admirer. La France et les Français se placent sous le signe de la grandeur. Ne le dit-il pas d’une façon comprimée et un peu ironique à la page 55? “Rien n’est plus gênant que de voir une nation qui a abusé – à juste titre- de l’attribut *grand- grande nation, grande armée, la grandeur de la France*”. Mais d’où vient la grandeur de la France ? Cioran essaie d’en faire une configuration tout en comparant les valeurs françaises à celles des Anciens et des autres grands pays européens: l’Allemagne, l’Espagne et la Russie. Il fait la preuve non seulement d’une richesse de connaissances de toute sorte mais aussi d’observations très fines et pertinentes dans son analyse. Selon lui, la France est le pays de “l’accomplissement” qui a vécu pleinement tous les âges de l’Histoire, apportant chacun sa pierre à l’évolution de l’Humanité. Sans se soucier d’une certaine diachronie dans sa présentation, il marque les composantes de la grandeur française commençant par les cathédrales gothiques et continuant par les représentants du Grand Siècle, les philosophes Pascal, Descartes et les moralistes. Il souligne que le siècle des Lumières est une époque de référence dans la culture et la civilisation françaises; c’est “le siècle le plus français, le salon devenu univers.” (p. 14). Sans doute fait-il allusion à l’Encyclopédie comme oeuvre fondamentale de l’Humanité mais aussi à la vocation universelle de la langue française qui est devenue à ce temps-là “la langue de l’Europe”. Le XVIII-e siècle est aussi l’époque en quête du progrès et du bonheur, qui a découvert le bien et le beau, reliant l’éthique à l’esthétique. Cioran remarque aussi l’harmonie de l’espace français renfermé dans un hexagone qui a imposé peut-être l’esprit géométrique dans sa civilisation. Mais ce qu’il apprécie le plus c’est l’amour vif des Français pour leur pays qu’ils n’ont pas eu l’habitude de quitter. C’est pourquoi, ils n’ont pas subi les épreuves du déracinement et n’ont pas vécu le sentiment doux-amer de la nostalgie. Mais leur pays est devenu terre d’accueil pour tant de gens de toutes origines, de tous les coins du monde. Ce qui étonne le penseur c’est le fort sentiment d’amour de ces étrangers à l’égard de la France qui les a sauvés dans leurs moments de souffrance et de désespoir.

D’autres qualités des Français sont mis en évidence: le souci de la forme, devenu un culte à côté du raffinement et le bon goût, tout cela sous la domination de la raison. Ce peuple “accablé par la chance” possède aussi l’art de parler et le plaisir de la table; pour eux, manger n’est pas seulement satisfaire les besoins biologiques mais c’est surtout un acte de civilisation et de culture. Même les gens de peu sont plus cultivés qu’ailleurs puisque dans les bistrotts leurs sujets de conversation attirent l’attention: “on se lance dans les bistrotts des répliques de salon”. (p. 35). Malgré toutes ces qualités, Cioran n’hésite pas de souligner l’ethocentrisme des Français qui ne s’intéressent pas trop à d’autres cultures et à d’autres langues.

Si les syntagmes consacrés- *la France dans le monde, à la française, la France éternelle*- sont la preuve d'une victoire contre le temps, il existe un autre qui trahit son déclin et que Cioran se plaît à nommer "la France mortelle".

«Qu'elle a été grande, la France! s'exclame-t-il à la page 46 trahissant son empathie pour ce pays dont il ressent la déchéance. Cette image de la France s'harmonise mieux avec toutes les blessures de son âme crépusculaire: "je perçois bien la France par tout ce que j'ai de pourri en moi". (p. 40). Mais d'où viendrait la décadence de la France? Tout comme il l'a fait pour configurer la grandeur du pays, il scrute le déclin français pour en montrer les raisons. Il s'agit surtout d'un certain malaise, d'un "mal de l'âme" qui tue toute ambition créatrice. Pendant son périple à travers la province française, il a remarqué la léthargie et le manque de vitalité des gens sous l'emprise d'un catholicisme "pénible et poussiéreux (p. 47). La décadence provient aussi du manque d'idéaux, de mythes, de héros et de prophètes. Le destin révolutionnaire de la France est terminé parce qu'il n'y a plus d'idées à défendre. Malgré cela, Cioran nourrit un brin d'espoir qui viendrait d'une possible révolution mais une "sans grandeur, sans originalité et sans écho" (p. 73). Il faudra prêter des mythes selon le modèle des communistes français, les seuls capables d'un frisson révolutionnaire par leurs discours composés de vieilles phrases avec des réminiscences anarchistes. Cioran entrevoit un certain éveil par l'apparition du prolétariat, "la populace" de la banlieue qui pourrait maintenir l'esprit de révolte. "Une France prolétaire est désormais la seule possible...Sauf que sa classe ouvrière n'a ni ressources d'héroïsme ni élans renversants. La carrière révolutionnaire de la France est virtuellement terminée." (p. 73). Par ces pensées, Cioran fait preuve de lucidité et de clairvoyance. Sa prophétie est toujours pertinente si l'on pense à l'esprit de la banlieue française de nos jours où s'entassent des immigrants dont les problèmes sont négligés par des générations de politiciens. Et par la suite, c'est la délinquance et l'esprit de révolte qui se maintiennent.

Par sa structure et par la richesse des idées, l'essai de Cioran est très actuel. On pourrait l'associer à celui d'Andreï Makine intitulé *Cette France qu'on oublie d'aimer*, écrit et publié en 2006. Ode et pamphlet à la fois, cet essai scrute aussi la grandeur et la déchéance de la France contemporaine dont l'identité s'érode. Cependant, tous les deux nourrissent un brin d'espoir pour cette France fragile qu'ils voudraient oublier d'aimer. Ou comme le dit Cioran à la fin de son livre, la France aura toujours de son côté ses fils adoptifs qui ne cessent de l'aimer: "dans quelque direction, sur quelque plateau ou sentier que nous orientions nos pas, la France ne mourra pas seule, nous expierons ensemble le goût de la fugacité." (p. 93)

Mircea Mihaieș: Ce rămâne. William Faulkner și misterele ținutului Yoknapatawpha (*What Lingers. William Faulkner and the Mysteries of the Yoknapatawpha County*)

Polirom Publishing House, Iași, 2012

Teodor Mateoc¹

It is not by chance that Mircea Mihaieș's study gets published in 2012. This is linked both to the writer's posterity (in the light of the 50 years since his death, in July 1962) and to the unabated interest that the Timisoara Professor has shown for works by this North-American author, or more accurately, this exemplary writer of the American South, "Uncle Sam's other (literary) province."

"The publication of this book, now in 2012, is therefore also a tribute paid to William Faulkner, the first modernist novelist from across the pond, who can accompany the big names in the Anglo-Saxon literary realm: Virginia Woolf, James Joyce or D.H. Lawrence. All the more surprising as neither the literary rendering of the literary South, nor Faulkner's words belong to the repertoire of early 20th century modernism. This is equally what prompted this perfectly articulated portrayal of an author, in terms of psychological, moral or esthetic mechanisms. Hardly anybody has written more persuasively, more saliently about William Faulkner in Romanian criticism, in the last few decades, since the 'classic' study by Sorin Alexandrescu (*William Faulkner, 1969*) until now. The originality of the critical endeavor arises primarily from the idiosyncratic, unwonted approach: instead of the postmodernist, totalizing academic jargon, of a cultural critique in terms of gender, ethnicity or class or a mythological or biography-driven approach, what we're dealing with here is an essay-informed approach, one might say cordial, an approach that relies on "the ineffable, the imprecise, the indefinable and the subjective".

The critic is here looking for *le mot juste*, the exquisite word, a rare lexicon; indeed, he is looking for the memorable phrase, the telling episode – all this is meant to resurrect the fabulous world of the American South, mythical Yoknapatawpha, in the process allowing for the *je ne sais quoi* to emerge, ever so fleetingly, indeed for what Faulkner himself calls "the truth of the heart", one that he more often than not prefers to "the truth of the mind". The eternally human, therefore, also all things trite, suffering and labor, glory and failure, love and betrayal, truth and lying, hope and despair, that the destinies of his fictional heroes are riddled by, but more generally speaking, Man in his time.

"What remains? What lingers?" is the question that prefaces each of the six sections of Mihaieș's exegesis.

¹ University of Oradea

First, “Flight and Predestination” in the one novel that does not belong to the Yoknapatawpha cycle (*Soldier’s Pay*, 1926; *Mosquitoes*, 1927; *Pylon*, 1935; *The Wild Palms*, 1939; *The Fable*) and that yields the obsessions that are to underpin his subsequent work, envisaged in the guise of a polyphonic concerto: the overture, the capriccio, the hymn, glissando or cantata.

Then, “Curse and Periphery”, in other five novels that prefigure the tragic destiny of some of his heroes doomed to damnation: *Sartoris*, 1929 (published again posthumously as *Flags in the Dust*, 1973), the first assessment of Faulkner’s world, *Sanctuary*, 1931, exuding sexuality, violence and corruption, *Requiem for a Nun*, 1951, a hybridized prose and drama, *The Unvanquished*, 1938, a collection of six short-stories previously published in magazines; and an evocation of the American South and of a family standing for the gentry, now experiencing fall, i.e. Colonel Sartoris’s family; *Intruder in the Dust*, 1948, a racially-informed novel about the post-war South.

Nothingness and melancholy is the generic title of the chapter dedicated to the Snopes Clan trilogy (*The Hamlet*, 1940, *The Town*, 1957, *The Mansion*, 1959), sinister arrivistes belonging to a world populated by malevolent individuals, people obsessed with power and getting rich. The next section, *Initiation and Sway*, deals primarily with *Go Down Moses*, 1942, an exquisite book, one that is exemplary in terms of the faulknerian vision of a South with an idiosyncratic, trans-racial identity, but equally yielding a solemn litany on the demise of a quasi-mythical world; then *The Reivers*, 1962, a novel that evokes humorously and ironically the birth of a ‘brave new world’ informed by modernity and the relativity of mores. *The Road* and *the Ashes* are the two metaphors that the author uses in order to sum up the stakes of two of the best-known faulknerian novels: first the rather odd novel *As I Lay Dying*, 1930, one of the best illustrations of modernist experimentalism, and subsequently *Light in August*, 1930 and the motif of the tragic mulatto, torn between two identities and incapable of self-definition.

The final section of Mihaies’s study tackles the two masterpieces by Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*, 1929, the tragedy of the Compsons and that of an entire order of the aristocratic South, a polyphonic novel that illustrates yet again, if need be, the radical experimentalism of form and the highly effective stylistic use of interior monologue and the stream of consciousness technique and *Absalom, Absalom!*, 1936, a grand narrative structured along five narrative voices and a tragic musing - echoing the Bible - on the fate of the American South.

Upon reading the book one fathoms, perhaps more clearly, the mysteries of the Yoknapatawpha county and consequently one can understand Faulkner’s world more closely. What lingers, for sure, is the refreshing feeling one gets of an encounter with a memorable book.

Bogdan Crețu, *Inorogul la Porțile Orientului. Bestiarul lui Dimitrie Cantemir* (vol. I Premise. Bestiae Domini; vol II. Bestiae Diaboli)

Editura Institutul European, Iași, 2013; 250 pag; 500 pag

Marius Miheț¹

The Hieroglyphic History. Beyond Conventions

The young and promising academic figure of Iasi, Bogdan Cretu, proposes a new and comparative approach to Dimitrie Cantemir's well-known book *Istoria Ieroglifica* (*The Hieroglyphic History*). Dimitrie Cantemir (1673-1723), a notorious and quite encyclopedic man among his contemporaries, is being re-interpreted by Bogdan Cretu through the author's given bestiary. It represents a symbolic habitat meant to decode all hidden significances of this unique literary work as far as the European culture is concerned. The young researcher would insist and focus on the way *The Hieroglyphic History* is constructed; he would pay attention to that époque's pretty complex context and he would bravely and almost surgically identify its stereotypes, its undergrounds, its subversive codes and strategies. Thus, the proximal result of his analysis is a generous perspective including both the cultural history and the ideas' history which come overlaid in anthropological strata. In this particular respect, the readers are enjoying a complex text, displaying open-endings for several and diverse interpretations. Nevertheless, Bogdan Cretu's personal choice is that of dropping the boring and pretentious academic analytical mask and instead he would attempt to identify the very sources of both the book's symbols and bestiary, in order to succeed in turning Dimitrie Cantemir's kaleidoscopic vision into concepts and also in proving that the writer in question deserves to be literary canonized from now on.

Possessing the ability of speaking many foreign languages in his time, Dimitrie Cantemir is successfully inserting within his own texts some antique and medieval information belonging to both Occident and Orient, thus mastering an ingenious mixture quite difficult for his contemporary readers to deeply decode. Moreover, he proves passion in rendering all sorts of symbols to his writing, encrypted symbols so that they should offer an image of perfection for an imperfect world. This specific intentionality is being consequently explored in details by Bogdan Cretu. The first volume of the book reveals a Cantemir excessively preoccupied with allegory, this particular approach actually representing the only possible formula in x-raying the very geography of a world in which a scholar's proper place has been quite delicate. Bogdan Cretu is identifying the data of Cantemir – the writer's polymorphs, being interested in the constitutive episteme. We are thus discovering a writer very much seduced by

¹ University of Oradea

the language's tricks, a writer definable exclusively through the contraries' poetics in the Romanian culture paradigm. The first volume opens the path for the interpretations concerning the divine, while the second is in charge with the evil bestiary. Bogdan Cretu seems to realize that the only way to reach a credible source is by decoding all the animal representations of *The Hieroglyphic History*. Thus, the animals are turned into virtues' labels and respectively into vices' symbols. In the researcher's opinion, an animal symbol must always be analyzed within its own context. Consequently, its significance would permanently be flexible and elastic. Only then comes the imaginary and Cantemir is always displaying remarkable artistic availabilities as far as this imaginary is in question. This is why *The Hieroglyphic History* reveals the zoomorphic symbol as being the only one possible and as the real accurate way to pursue in a literary – or in a generic cultural analysis. But Dimitrie Cantemir appeals to a tricky strategy. As Bogdan Cretu notices, Cantemir's vision on reality would make the writer turn the reality into an artifact covered under a rationalist-iconic appearance. The writer needed all these in order to inspiringly juggle with the Christian zoomorphic symbols according to his intentions. It's quite fascinating to see how a man, part of such a precarious and uncertain time, would eventually succeed in imposing a critical attitude towards the upside-down world. Belonging to his personal values system, the evil characters although spoiling the perfection of the divine mirror are nevertheless intrinsic-necessary not only in a moralizing perspective. In other words, the second volume closely follows and suggests the evil characters' symbolic values; the negatively denominated heroes are much more complex in comparison to the divine or positively denominated ones included and analyzed within the first volume. Actually, there is a certain distinction, a beauty aesthetics to be blamed for it. But as far as this particular beauty aesthetics is concerned, given the fact that there has been none authentic conceptual synthesis following the antique systematization, Cantemir had no other choice than keeping in mind and guiding after the Renaissance idealism or its exaggerations. However, in our opinion, he proves to be a precursor of the romantic aesthetics for many reasons. Taking into account the reality given by the fact that he has finalized *The Hieroglyphic History* in 1705, his own perspective definitely becomes much more intriguing. As far as the Romanian culture is concerned, *The Hieroglyphic History*'s publication actually represents the very beginning of... literature. His text still is a pretty complex one, abundant in playful strategies and rhetorical art. Generally speaking, for the Occident reader, Cantemir would seem a spectacular author due to his multitude of both antique and medieval associations and due to the modern openings as well. Aesop, Aristotle, Ovid, Plutarch and many others are present within the writer's imaginary or they end up by being re-written, re-evaluated as a result of Cantemir's mysterious assimilations.

Nowadays, the author's ability to irradiate such diverse knowledge is quite fascinating; all these pieces of information are to be found within a charming text, still generous in ideas after each reading. For the entire European culture, Dimitrie Cantemir's work functions as a landmark of multi-cultural-ism, a landmark of morality and truth which are transmitted through the only possible instrument: the imagination's freedom. *The Hieroglyphic History* finally represents a prestigious academic work permanently acting as a cultural liaison.

Next Issue's Topic:
Gender, Race & Ethnicity
Applied on Literary and Cultural Items

Thematik der nächsten
Ausgabe:
Gender, Rasse und
ethnische Angehörigkeit

Thématique du prochain
numéro:
Race. Genre. Ethnicité
Application sur des sujets littéraires
et culturels

Confluente, Annals of the University of Oradea, Modern Literature Fascicule is an academic, double blind peer-reviewed journal that appears once a year.

The executive editors and the advisory board shall decide on any change about the frequency of the journal.

TCR specializes in bridging the world of academic literary criticism and theories with the aliveness of everyday literary phenomenon as reflected in the cultural media and book-production.

The topics covered by our journal in its 2 generous sections – **Literary - Isms & Cultural - Isms** are as they follow:

British and Commonwealth Literature
American and Canadian Literature
German Speaking Literature
French Literature
Emmigrants' Literature
Cultural and Gender Studies
Literature and Media

Foundation:

As a research journal, the beginnings can be traced back to the academic year 1966- 1967, when, under the name *Lucrari stiintifice*, the section of academic research emerged at the University of Oradea. In 1991 the research journal changed its name and template, focusing on topics of immediate relevance and on thorough going studies, on cultural studies, research articles on Romanian literature, comparative literature. In 2006 emerged *Confluente*, a Modern Literature Fascicule including academic literary studies in English, French, German and Italian. In 2012 the Ministry of Education and Research (Romania) ranked our journal category C.

Submission:

The details about the submission of papers, instructions for the contributors and on the preparation of the manuscript are published online at:

<http://www.deoradea.info/confluente/notes.shtml>

Peer review:

Our journal advocates the double blind peer-review system. The quality of the research article is the single argument taken into account when operating the selection of articles.

The administration of the peer-review process is the attribution of the reviews editors that are selected from the members of the advisory board. The sender of the manuscript does not know the names of the reviewers of his/her particular case, only the complete list of reviewers.

The complete list of reviewers will be included in every other issue .The editor-in-chief may supplement the initial list of reviewers, if necessary.

Konfluezen, Jahrbuch der Universität Oradea, Band für Neuere Literaturen und Fremdsprachen, ist eine wissenschaftlich begutachtete Fachzeitschrift, die ein Mal im Jahr erscheint.

Der Redaktionsbeirat ist befugt, über die Erscheinungsfrequenz der Zeitschrift zu entscheiden.

TCR setzt sich zum Ziel, die Welt der akademischen Literatur- und Kulturforschung mit dem dynamischen Alltag des literarischen Phänomens, so wie dieses von den Kulturmedien und von der Buchproduktion widerspiegelt wird, in Einklang zu bringen.

Die in den zwei umfangreichen Sektionen dieser Zeitschrift behandelten Thematiken umfassen:

Die Dynamik des literarischen Phänomens
Die Interdisziplinarität von Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaft
Identitäts- und Alteritätsstudien, Anthropologie- und Kulturtheorien anhand der Literatur
Literarische Identitätsmodelle
Zeit und die Literaturtheorie
Mythos in der postmodernen Literatur
Komparatistische Literaturstudien

Geschichte:

Als wissenschaftliche Fachzeitschrift wurde das Jahrbuch der Universität Oradea, im Universitätsjahrgang 1966-1967 zum ersten Mal unter dem Titel *Lucrări științifice* herausgegeben. 1991 änderten sich Titel und Format der Zeitschrift, während der Inhalt sich auf Forschungsthemen mit Aktualitätsbezug aus dem Bereich der rumänischen Literatur und der Komparatistik fokussierte. Im Jahr 2006 entstand *Confluente*, ein Band für Neuere Literaturen in den Fremdsprachen Englisch, Französisch, Deutsch und Italienisch. 2012 wurde die Zeitschrift von CNC SIS und dem Bildungs- und Forschungsministerium Rumäniens als Publikation in der Kategorie C anerkannt.

Hinweise zur Einreichung des Manuskripts:

Auskunft über die Einreichung des Manuskripts entnehmen Sie unserer Internetseite:

<http://www.deoradea.info/confluente/notes.shtml>

Begutachtungsverfahren:

Unsere Redaktion setzt ein doppel-blindes Begutachtungsverfahren ein, im Verlauf dessen die Beiträge anonym den jeweiligen Begutachtern zukommen. Allein die Qualität der Studien spielt eine Rolle für die Auswahl der zu veröffentlichenden Artikel.

Die Verwaltung des Begutachtungsverfahrens ist die Aufgabe des Redaktionsbeirates, denen die Aufgabe zukommt, die ansprechenden Begutachter aus der Liste des akademischen Beirates der Zeitschrift zu wählen und anzusprechen. Die Autoren der eingereichten Beiträge kennen den Namen jener Begutachter nicht, die über ihre Studie referieren.

Die vollständige Liste der Begutachter erscheint in jeder Nummer. Der Chefredakteur hat die Befugnis, diese Liste zu ergänzen.

Confluences, les Annales de l'Université d'Oradea, Fascicule Littérature moderne, est une revue académique évaluée qui paraît une fois par an. Les directeurs exécutifs et le comité scientifique vont décider tout changement concernant la fréquence de la revue.

TCR a le but de réunir le monde de la critique littéraire académique et des théories avec le phénomène vivant de la littérature d'aujourd'hui tel qu'il est reflété dans les médias culturels et dans la production du livre.

Les sujets contenus par notre revue dans ses deux sections généreuses – **Littéarismes** et **Culturalismes** sont les suivants:

Les dynamiques de la littérature, tendances
L'interconnexion de la littérature et de la culture
Identité, altérité, anthropologie et littérature, études culturelles
L'identité et son expression en littérature
Temps et théorie littéraire
Myths et auteurs postmodernes
Littérature comparée et études comparées

Fondation:

Comme revue de recherche, son commencement remonte loin, dans l'année académique 1966/1967, lorsque sous le nom de *Travaux scientifiques*, la section de la recherche académique a démarré à l'Université d'Oradea. En 1991, la revue a changé son nom et sa forme se fixant sur des sujets d'intérêt immédiat et sur des études approfondies, sur la culture, sur la littérature roumaine, sur la littérature comparée. En 2006 a paru *Confluences*, un Fascicule de littérature moderne incluant des recherches académiques littéraires en anglais, en français, en allemand et en italien. L'année 2012 la revue a été classifiée niveau C per le Ministère de l'Education et de la Recherche de Roumanie

Soumission

Les détails pour la soumission des articles, les instructions pour les contributeurs et pour la préparation du manuscrit sont publiés en ligne:

<http://www.deoradea.info/confluente/notes.shtml>

Évaluation

Notre revue soutient un système d'évaluation ouverte, considérant que les noms des auteurs des articles ne doivent pas être envoyés comme anonymes aux évaluateurs, parce que cela pourrait avoir un petit impact sur la qualité de l'article soumis. La qualité de l'article de recherche est le seul argument dont on tient compte lorsqu'on fait la sélection des articles.

L'administration du processus d'évaluation est la tâche des éditeurs évaluateurs. L'expéditeur du manuscrit ne connaît pas les noms des évaluateurs de son cas particulier mais seulement la liste complète des évaluateurs.

La liste complète des évaluateurs sera incluse dans un numéro sur deux. L'éditeur général peut augmenter la liste initiale des évaluateurs, si nécessaire.