

POSTMODERN BESSARABIAN POETRY AS RESISTANCE THROUGH CULTURE

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Abstract. The Bessarabian eighth decade of the twentieth century does outline its poetry following the synchronizing produced „at the scale” of an entire generation, the process of „extended synchronizing” being a recurrent fact, recognized as a particular form of „resistence through culture,” as a reply in addressing the model generated by *homini sovietici*. To this phenomenon may be added „the passing of the major poetry to the minor poetry by resorting to desolemnizing, ludic, and ironical and by changing the lyrical ego into a personage.¹”

Keywords: Bessarabian literature, the 80s literature movement, postmodernism, imaginary.

As a rule, when the talk is about the eighth decade of the twentieth century as an „epiphenomenon of postmodernism”² the opinions are limited while evidencing two cultural events, ”engaged into a Moebius-esque relation,” generated by the launching through the publishing ”overbidding” of a ”incommodious generation” and by forcing the entrance in postmodernism, accepted as a ”distinct literary moment,” a ”literary current,” a ”new paradigm,” and so on, and so forth.

On the structure of ”non-Euclidean shifting” at which was referring the university PhD professor Gheorghe Manolache, the Romanian literary postmodernism is not anything but a particular case of some cultural epiphenomena, looked at in a non-Euclidean perspective in which the ”geometry” is no longer true, it is ”advantageous,” by suggesting to us the choosing which is better adapted to ”the characteristic features of our body” as it is made more precise by our brothers of the quill of the eighth decade of this past century from Bessarabia. At the same time with this multiple tackling, the end of the unique perspective in literature (in the art, by and large) is evidenced.

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¹ Grigore Chipere, *Poezia optzecistă basarabeană. Schimbare de paradigmă*. [The Bessarabian Eighth Poetry], Jassy, 2013, Tipo Moldova Publishing House, p. 38.

² Gheorghe Manolache, „Diagnoza unei generații” in vol. *Regula lui doi* (registre duale în dezvoltarea postmodernismului românesc), [The second rule (dual registers in the development of Romanian postmodernism)], Publishing House University ”Lucian Blaga”, Sibiu, 2004., pp. 19-71.

”The fact that certain Romanian literary phenomena, of the eighth decade of this past century allow to be inserted to the same (postmodernist) typologies, however they won’t succeed in attracting us to adventure ourselves into a unique and definitive edifice, well anchored into a canon (the type of the one projected by Nicolae Manolescu) – in accordance with which the entire postwar Romanian literature (valuable!), and all the contemporary currents, are not anything else, but postmodern resumptions.”³

As far as the coming into sight at the horizon, the growing, and especially, the picking up of a new “generation of creation” are concerned, in Bessarabia, the opinions are divided. In the Republic of Moldova, as well as in Romania, „the entitling of poet belonging to the eighth decade of the twentieth century is not by any means a glorious one – the connotations that accompany it are coming rather from the „minus sign” of the axis.”⁴

Nicolae Leahu is reproducing the group photograph, monopolized by the Dionysiac picturesqueness which is made by Eugen Lungu to the ”Bessarabian excentrics,” the image of the poets of the eighth decade of this past century ”from the banks of Bîc river,” being superposed to the one offered by the poets of the eighth decade of the twentieth century ”from the banks of the Dâmbovița river: ”Nonconformists, irreverents, by declining the lyricizing putting on airs and barrack-like blockheadedness, in opposing to the refinement of beauties a refinement of irony, spiritual, incisive, anti-technocrat and preoccupied by an ecology of the soul, and of the surroundings, by finding the subjects direct in the street, equal for all its aspects and fragrances, by democratizing the expression and by behaving violently with the taboos, by displaying the rebelliousness, sometimes making blunders from an avant-gardist upsurge, and by admitting as a supreme authority only his own taste...”⁵

And despite the fact that some poets theoretically share in the eighth decade of this past century ideology, in the option of Eugen Lungu, they seem to be much more attracted by the ”glorified summer lightning,” emanated by the preceding generation, already fixed to the canon, (with all the advantages which follow from here: the presence in the school curricula, literary and cultural prizes,

³ Gheorghe Manolache, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

⁴ Grigore Chiper, *Poezia optzecistă basarabeană. Schimbare de paradigmă*, [The Bessarabian Eighth Poetry], Jassy, 2013, Tipo Moldova Publishing House.; Nicolae Leahu, *Poezia generației '80. Eseu*. Ediția a II-a, [Poetry of the 1980s], Cartier Publishing House, Chișinău, 2015; Vitalie Răileanu, *Reversul ludic al (dia)criticului*, [The playfulness reverse of criticism] Tipo Moldova Publishing House, Jassy, 2013.

⁵ Nicolae Leahu, ”Poezia basarabenilor. De la facere, la refacere și (pre)facere” VIII, în vol. *Literatura din Basarabia în secolul XX. Poezie.*, [Literature from Bessarabia in the 20th century. Poetry], Știința & Arc Publishing House, Chișinău, 2004, p. 25.

the inclusion on the lists of those who are considered "representative," etc.). As a consequence, Eugen Lungu remarks a "dilemmatic swinging," discerned both in the modernist critique and in the one of "last hour."⁶ No matter which ones are the motives to reach this conviction, the phenomenon was marked even from the inside of the promotion with the sense that, as they are perceived by Nicolae Leahu, "the poets from the eighth decade of this past century from Bessarabia do not display a generation mentality."⁷

In the chapter „The eighth decade of the twentieth century and the generation concept,” Nicolae Leahu, while examining the problem which is talked about, concludes that a literary generation must favor the homologation, to represent a distinct aesthetic phenomenon, with a sure ideological *covering*, differing from the one of the preceding generations. As far as the eighth decade of this past century from Moldova is concerned, this one not only that is written down in the theoretical scheme prefigured by Nicolae Leahu, but it confirms, through collective debuts similar to those from Romania, the changing of paradigm. Yet, without having to replace the modernist canon with a new one, with the postmodernism, in this case.

The publishing of the collective volume „A group portrait” (Chişinău, the publishing house "Arc," 1995), was expected to be the "business card" of the eighth decade of this past century generation from the habitat of the Bessarabian poetry. We make more precise that it is a collection conceived with the intention to illustrate the lyrical "explosion," as it may be seen, out of the effects of the poetical reaction which is extremely rapid, violent, accompanied by the creative effects (mechanical, sonorous, enlightening).

The seating inside the historiography of the eighth decade of this past century poetry, in accordance with the identity card and not in conformity with the certificate of "literary birth," (debut), gives the impression of "platoon" and less of a "Brownian poetic structure," as the eighth decade of the twentieth century poetic phenomenon recommends itself: Eugen Cioclea (04.08.1948), Valeria Grosu (22.07.1950), Arcadie Suceveanu (16.11.1952), Călina Trifan (30.04.1953), Leo Bordeianu (19.07.1955), Vsevolod Ciornei (14.09.1955), Teo Chiriac (29.05.1956), Vasile Gârnet (13.02.1958), Nicolae Popa (13.02.1959), Valeriu Matei (31.03.1959), Grigore Chiper (16.04.1959), Constantin Olteanu (15.10.1959), Lorina Bălteanu (21.12.1960), Irina Nechit (01.01.1962), Ghenadie Nicu

⁶ Eugen Lungu, "Poezia optzeciştilor: nevoia de înnoire artistică," în vol. *Literatura română postbelică. Integrări, valorificări, reconsiderări*, coord. Mihai Dolgan, [*Romanian post-war literature. Integrations, capitalization, reconsideration*], coordination. Mihail Dolgan, Chişinău, 1998, Central Printing House, p. 142.

⁷ Nicolae Leahu, *op.cit.*, pp. 26-47.

(03.02.1963), Nicolae Leahu (20.07.1963), Ghenadie Postolache (02.04.1964), Emilian Galaicu-Păun (22.06.1964), Aura Cristi (12.01.1967).

In the attempt of the novel paradigm to change the canon, the literary critics from the Republic of Moldova (Mihai Cimpoi, Grigore Chiper, Eugen Lungu, Mihail Dolgan, Nicolae Leahu, Vitalie Răileanu, etc.), following in the steps of their colleagues from Romania, try to catch only a glimpse of the breach which is opened by this generation in "the overturning" of the modernist relation between the poet, language, text and reality. The systematics of the eighth decade of this past century poetry from Bessarabia suggests delimitations, after a method previously thought about, methodically, well organized in the "wake of taxonomy from Romania;" the perspectives have their proper and necessary justification in the historical-literary, thematic development, etc., of the eighth decade of this past century.

The reaction of the eighth decade of the twentieth century authors (Mircea Cărtărescu & comp.), concerning the free agreement between mental(ity) and economic progress, comes to contradict not only a Marxist way of thinking which aims at the relation between the material basis and superstructure, but also the older theory which refers to the agreement between content and form, by agreeing with an updated variant of synchronization. Naturally, the comment is valid, also, in the case of Bessarabian eighth decade of this past century, itself written down, also, within the paradigm of "modernism without modernity."

At the seeing again of the "file of the eighth decade of this past century" (in theoretical texts, published between the years 1979-1989), worked out by Gheorghe Crăciun in 1994,⁸ may be uncoupled both the appreciations on the aesthetic innovations, at which the eighth decade of this past century authors appeal, and their relationship with the literary tradition "recovered" on one's own account.

In coming back to the aporia of the eighth decade of this past century, under the pretext of "going back" to the real and human, "in the most natural manifestations," out of the *integral eighth decade of this past century* theses, it advances with difficulty the idea that „The man and his immediate reality will acquire, by the time, suggestive formulations: "the new anthropocentrism" (a term which was created by Alexandru Mușina, as a reaction to Ortega y Gasset' thesis on dehumanizing the art), "the transitive poetry" (a concept created by Vianu, transferred by Gheorghe Crăciun in the area of postmodernism), or, on the

⁸ Gheorghe Crăciun, *Competiția continuă. Generația '80 în texte teoretice*, [Competition continues. Generation '80 in theoretical texts], Vlasie Publishing House, Pitești, 1994.

autochthonous ground, "the individual lion" and "re-discovery of human body (Em. Galaicu-Păun)."⁹

We keep in mind as valid, pertinent and objective the finding out of Grigore Chiper concerning the fact that the Bessarabian eighth decade of this past century was "crystalized" into a mature process of an "ample synchronization" with the literature from Romania. In this sense, the Bessarabian eighth decade of this past century poets have not operated, theoretically and practically, the well known "opposition" as against a certain generation, "the generation immediately preceding," the synchronization with the neo-modernists from the Country being a "sporadic, on one's own account, and among the initiates" phenomenon. Therefore, the eight decade of this past century from Bessarabia was born on a normal way, as a response to that which was "ossified in the letters from S.S.R.M.," the writers of the years '80es (poets most of them), being "the first generation" which came to light from the political labyrinth of a "culturally totalitarian regime and one profoundly anti-Romanian." After reaching the conviction that their "purpose" was "to realize the synchronizing with Romanian literature" they transpose it in a fact.

The eighth decade of the twentieth century represents a closed historical phenomenon, and the discussions about an eighth decade of this past century after the year 1995 are gratuitous, without any literary or of any other nature foundation."¹⁰

Vasile Răileanu, being convinced of "de facto" existence of the Bessarabian eighth decade of this past century, focuses himself on the resources (reserves) of a bookish structure of the ludic, parodical, and ironical poetry, which are produced by a "specific geography and history," transposed into an "ironical, wordplaying language."¹¹

The curiosity regarding the physiognomy and physiology of the new type of *Poesis* has determined Vasile Răileanu to accept it as it is: a "recoverer" of the grace state, a word bearer of the "novel humanism," a weak "knitting" of "discourses which incorporate the ironic, the ludic, the comical."

We assist at an exchange of cultural paradigm: the good and the evil no longer exist in a pure state, nor the beautiful and the ugly, or the sacred and the profane. The writers do ironically, parodically and playfully illustrate their own steps, and despite all of these, they leave the defense of poetry on the care of its own creating."¹²

⁹ Grigore Chiper, *Ibidem*, p. 19.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 23.

¹¹ Vitalie Răileanu, *Reversul ludic al (dia)criticului*, [The playfulness reverse of criticism], Tipografia Moldova Publishing House, Jassy, 2013, p. 169.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 170.

Re-calibrated on the optics of Linda Hutcheon on the parody, irony, etc.,¹³ as forms by which "a writer may dialogue with the past, interpreted as a bookish history," the vision of Vitalie Răileanu on the Bessarabian postmodernism, (formed from the works "different between themselves" of the eighth decade of this past century authors, Eugen Cioclea, Emilian Galaicu-Păun, Maria Șlehtițchi, Nicolae Leahu, Teo Chiriac, etc.) do convince that, "for Bessarabia the postmodernism is equivalent also to a cultural vector directed to the west, by the synchronizing with the literature from the other bank of the Prut river and by the orienting after the cultural-artistic tendencies from Occident."¹⁴

Similar opinions could be recognized, also, in the Maria Șlehtițchi's studies, who is convinced that in the sovietized literatures, it may be found out a recessive phenomenon of assimilating and of metabolizing of some postmodern experiences, which were considered in the eighties years "underground" phenomena: „*The Spring of Prague* of the literatures from USSR means the connecting to the aesthetic paradigm of modernism, but for the more courageous writers – at the postmodern paradigm. By the general imposing of phenomenon, only the writers from the eighties years will succeed in completely synchronizing eastern literatures and those central-European with the general directions of the Occidental paradigm.”¹⁵

The fact that the vulcan from the eighth decade of this past century is still active, may be noticed even from the article of Ioana Revnic "How much is the Romanian literature from Bessarabia known in Romania and in Europe?" who, at her turn is convinced that: „the synchronizing of the writers from the Republic of Moldova with the Romanian contemporary literature and their performance within the Romanian literary space have become barely possible after the declaration of state independence of August 27, 1991. (...)

Twenty years after the events of August 1991, the best known writer from Bessarabia remains, for Romanians, a poet: Grigore Vieru. His notoriety is explained by the specific of his lyrics; by the presence of the poet in the public space immediately after the fall of communism from the two sister countries, by the inclusion of his poems in the schoolbooks.”¹⁶

¹³ Linda Hutcheon, *Poetica postmodernismului*, [*Poetics of Postmodernism*], Universe Publishing House, Bucharest, 2002..

¹⁴ Vasile Răileanu, *Ibidem*, p. 170.

¹⁵ Maria Șlehtițchi, *Romanul generației '80. Construcție și reprezentare*, [*The novel of '80. Construction and Representation*], Cartier Publishing House, Chișinău, 2-14, p. 8.

¹⁶ Ioana Revnic, *Cât de cunoscută este literatura română din Basarabia, în România și în Europa?*, [*How famous is the Romanian literature from Bessarabia, Romania and Europe?*] Available at <http://erizanu.cartier.md/literatura-romana-din-basarabia-in-romania-%C8%99i-europa-3211.html> [last access 07.07.2017].

In brief, the content traits of the Bessarabian eighth decade of the twentieth century are similar to the ones from Romania, with the meaning that, in addition to: „the realism and the authenticity of the poetry, the tendency of progressive de-lyricizing, the aspects of the poetic ego, many times diffusive, mixing up visions and epochs, the preferred forms of intertextualism, in vogue at the beginning, then falling into desuetude, the strong sensations of a upside down universe, which are lived by the poets at socio-human and cultural crossroad times,”¹⁷ we no longer encounter fundamental differences; thus, ”the moving from poetry to reality, the abandoning poetic language, clearly looked for, perceived as precious, in the favor of a colloquial language at the extent of the expressed content,”¹⁸ are just some of the axes by which the Romanian poetic eighth decade of this past century is completed.

Looked at again through the mirror of integral literature, the Moldavian eighth decade of this past century, in a postmodern variant, disposes of the same poetic „DNA” recognized in invariants such as: prosaism and oralism, ironic and parodic, ludic, grotesque, multi-styliform, biography-sm, authenticity, textualism, intertextuality, collage, and so on, and so forth.

Such arguments that we are faced with an integrating phenomenon are found out, also, in some other „reflexes of the integration” rediscovered in „the literary press from Bessarabia.” In this way, there is in the play a phenomenon which is different from the one of cultural flowing into, that is, of Romanian literature from Bessarabia into the matrix-literature.

Maria Șlehtițchi¹⁹ was writing down that, during the last decade of the twentieth century, the integration has known various forms of manifestation, out of which, the ones offered by the literary press are worthy of being mentioned: the recovering of historical literary values – a national patriotic perspective (the magazine *Nistru/Basarabia, Literatura și arta*); the synchronizing of internal component elements of Romanian literature – an aesthetic perspective (the magazines *Contrafort, Sud-Est Cultural, Semn*); Europeanism and globalization – a trans-national perspective (the magazines *Contrafort, Sud-Est Cultural*)²⁰.

Into a first stage, ”the integrationist effort” of magazine *Nistru*, which subsequently became *Basarabia*, may be found inside the initiative generated by the ”perestroika effort,” visible within the sphere of recovering the literary values,

¹⁷ Grigore Chiper, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 28-29.

¹⁹ Maria Șlehtițchi, ”Reflexe ale integrării,” in vol. *Cerc deschis. Literatura română din Basarabia în postmodernism*, [Open circle. Romanian Literature in Bessarabia in post-communism], Timpul Publishing House, Jassy, 2007, pp. 187-188.

²⁰ Maria Șlehtițchi, *art. cit.* in *op. cit.*, p. 188.

literary and cultural, out of the Romanian patrimony, of which the ordinary Bessarabian individual had been deprived.

Without an aesthetically re-articulated project, depending on the cultural horizon of the end of the twentieth century, the magazine will run off the rails in the swamps of protochronism, even though the awakening of national conscience, by involving the literature in the unionist project, does constitute a desideratum of national significance. Simultaneously with the taking over of the leadership by the eighth decade of this past century poet, Nicolae Popa, the coming back to the synchronizing process by cultural re-integration is unfolding somehow in a more visible way. Not even in the case of the weekly magazine *Literatura și arta*, the situation is not substantially different from the making chronic the autochthonism of inter-war origin.

Hardly at the same time with the publishing of the magazine *Contrafort* (1994-2003), coordinated by the writers of the eighth decade of this past century Vasile Gârneț and Vitalie Ciobanu, a publication of the young Bessarabian writers, especially known for its programs of literary and cultural integration in the third millenium's *saeculum*, *Cultural South-East*, *Sign*, we may openly talk about endorsing the Romanian values from the both banks of the Prut River.

The magazine assumes the position of "cultural buttress," by becoming the wall column of Bessarabian literature, which forms a common body with the literature from Romania and which serves at increasing the resistance of postmodern phenomenon in which may be found again Romanian writers, within the integrality of common literature.

In the light of those presented above, it follows that, in its intention to be instituted as an "autonomous literary model, the eighth decade of this past century/postmodernism imposes, by its behaviour a mentality of major model,"²¹ without excluding from the play rule, the recessive, dual relationship, on which the exegesis of Gheorghe Manolache was relying on. Consequently, the specific situation of postmodernism as a major literary model resides in the fact that it, at the same time with the delimitation from modernism, avant-gardism and traditionalism, does not break completely off with them, only at the extent in which, beyond the afirmation of some particular aspects (biography-sm, prosaism, stylistic synchrony, textualism, etc.), which it imposes as pointed end of spear for

²¹ Nicolae Leahu, "Conceptie și delimitări," în *op. cit.*, p. 107.

the discourse, *it programmatically assumes the previous paradigm out of a relativizing perspective: ludic, ironic, parodic.*²²

The eighth decade of this past century quadrangle, looked at in its integrality, is recommended by a series of "modeling structures," interdependent on one another, centred upon the coming back in the foreground of the "emitting instance," with all which is related to the "rediscovering" of the lyrical value of the cultural and existential biography, of the poetic instance of the eighth decade of the twentieth century. Or, it may be instituted another order of priorities, by placing the emphasis on the concentration over re-configuring "the structure of the real," by re-assuming the recessive relation between the weak memory of the "emitting instance" and the poetic trasfiguration of the "existing," on one hand, and on the other hand, on the structure of the metaphysic, thanks to which the eighth decade of this past century/postmodernist poem capitalizes, on its own account, the mythical, magical, religious, esoterical resources, which are found in the chamber of the poetical imaginary.

The ironic, ludic, parodical, palinodic perspective on the procedures inter- and trans-textual for creating a poem, completes the eighth decade of this past century brand, by what Nicolae Leahu accepted as a "meta-textual-inter-textual structure."

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²² Gheorghe Manolache, *op. cit.*

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