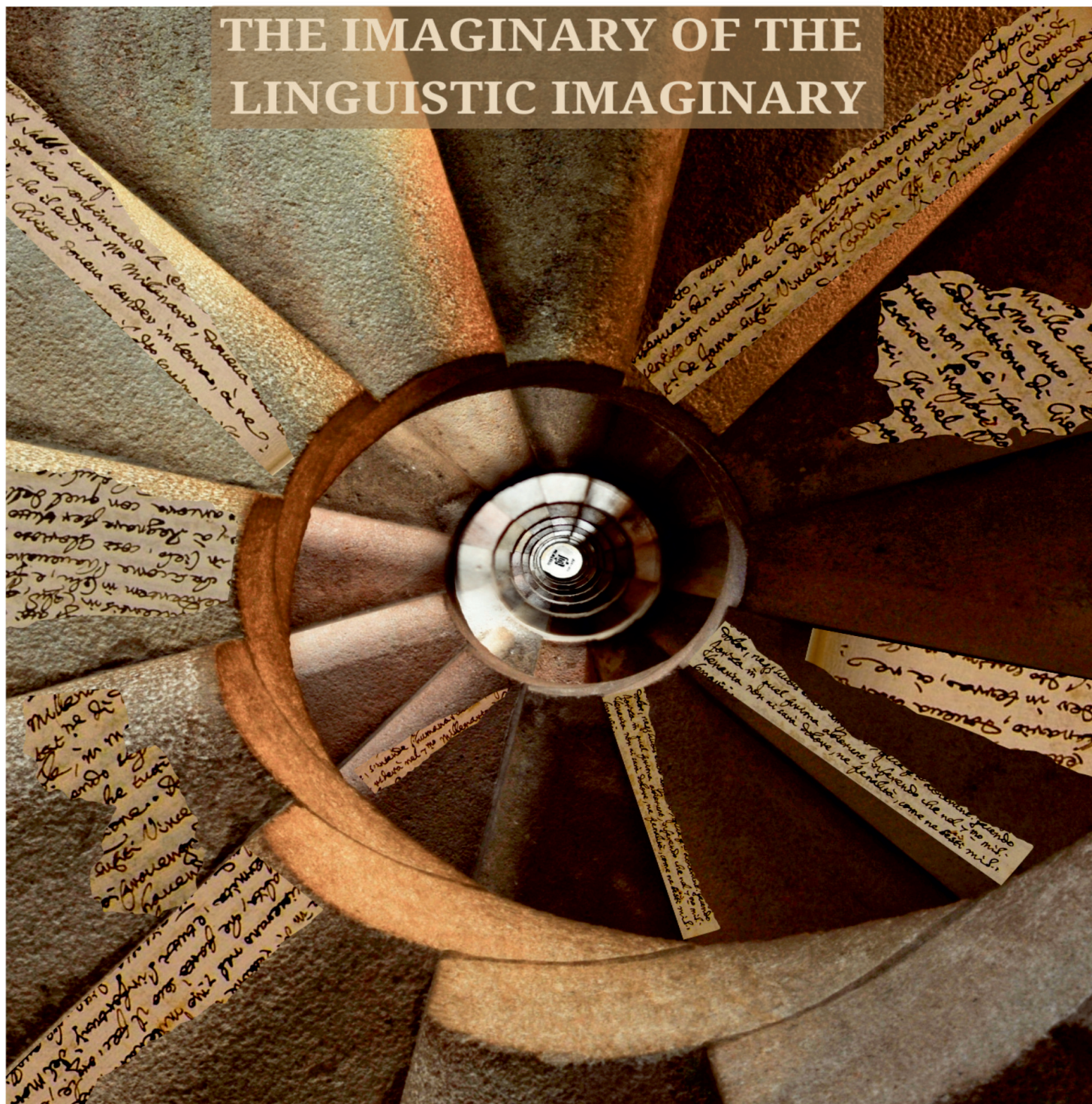


THE IMAGINARY OF THE LINGUISTIC IMAGINARY



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THE IMAGINARY OF THE LINGUISTIC IMAGINARY. FOREWORD

The concept of *linguistic imaginary* is still in the process of being accepted and taken seriously in the Romanian academic world. Although it was coined a few decades ago by Anne-Marie Houdebine-Gravaud (2002), many Romanian linguists regard it with suspicion and are somewhat intrigued by it, considering it a *speculative invention* (Ardeleanu 2013, 5). It seems that the main reason behind the scepticism is the fact that linguistic imaginary is perceived as not truly belonging to a consecrated line of research in Romanian linguistics.

The attitude can also be explained by the fact the concept of *imaginary* in general has been surrounded by prejudice, as it has been associated with chaos, lack of coherence and consistency, a “space” in which various products of human fantasy float about freely. In fact, we encountered a similar reaction five years ago, when Babeş-Bolyai University launched an extremely ambitious project¹: an *Encyclopedia of the Romanian Imaginaries*, which included a volume dedicated to the *Romanian Linguistic Patrimony and Linguistic Imaginary* (Platon *et alii* 2020), together with four other volumes on literary, religious, historical and artistic imaginary.

At first, it felt as if we were swimming in the moving waters of the linguistic imaginary, struggling to reach a shore where we could finally feel safe. This was the beginning of our attempt to give scientific substance to a concept which, on the one hand, inspired mistrust and, on the other hand, we found fascinating for all the possibilities it seemed to offer. In the process of searching for the right approach, we identified three main theoretical models which, one way or another, could provide a solid scientific basis for the linguistic imaginary. All three models seemed compelling, however, they regarded the imaginary as being “linguistic” for very different reasons. We were therefore unsure whether we would be able to reconcile and integrate these perspectives or not, so that we could finally offer a comprehensive definition for the concept of linguistic imaginary.

Thus, the authors of the studies included in the *Encyclopaedia* approached the concept of linguistic imaginary from three different perspectives: a metalinguistic, an ethnolinguistic and a cognitive perspective. We will offer here only a brief overview, since all three approaches have been described in detail in a separate study

¹ The project’s title is *Enciclopedia imaginariilor din România*. It was coordinated by Corin Braga and financed by the Ministry of Research and Innovation, CCCDI – UEFISCDI, project number PN-III-P1-1.2-PCCDI-2017-0326 /49 PCCDI, in keeping with PNCDI III.

dedicated to the theoretical analysis of the concept of linguistic imaginary (Platon 2019), as well as in the introduction of the *Encyclopaedia* (Platon 2020, 11-28). We believe that thanks to these three theoretical models, the linguistic imaginary will no longer be perceived as an ambiguous term, but it will be regarded as a complex and dynamic concept, whose coherence can be revealed through the careful analysis of linguistic data.

The first and, in fact, the only officially recognised theoretical model for the linguistic imaginary places language as the object of the imaginative act in the centre. More specifically, it is what we call the metalinguistic perspective, theorised by Houdebine-Gravaud (2002). According to this particular model, the concept of linguistic imaginary refers to the speakers' representations of their own language or the language of the community they belong to or wish to belong to. This theory was born out of the Saussurian dichotomy *langue* and *parole*, as well as Lacan's ideas about discourse, Labov's studies on sociolinguistic variations and, finally, Martinet's research on the dynamic synchrony in language. Thus, according to more recent tendencies in linguistics, the emphasis moves from describing language phenomena to the speaker's representations of the language itself and their relationship with it. But as the promoter of the concept of linguistic imaginary notes, we cannot justify certain concepts just by referring to linguistic criteria. There are other elements to be considered, such as historical, ideological or sociological factors. Therefore, we cannot clearly separate the linguistic imaginary from a cultural imaginary, and it is not easy to analyse the relationship between the two, especially because language itself is a "cultural object", which would entail that the linguistic imaginary could be integrated into the broader cultural imaginary. A real help in clarifying this relationship came from ethnolinguistics (a term preferred especially by Slavic-speaking countries such as Poland, Ukraine, Belarus and the Czech Republic) or linguistic anthropology (a term used mainly on the American Continent). This represents the second theoretical approach.

In ethno-linguistics, linguistic imaginary is no longer limited to representations about the language, but refers to a variety of representations about the world, as they are reflected in language. Language here is not the object of the imaginary, but rather the means to express it, a conveyer of a collective imaginary. By assimilating the linguistic imaginary with the representations about the world of certain cultural communities, ethnolinguistics regards the imaginary as being "linguistic" because these representations are set in linguistic data (Bartmiński 2009), and not in images or music, for example. Therefore, according to the ethnolinguistic view, language is a way of manifestation and, implicitly, of investigation and restoration of the cultural imaginary, as well as a way of shaping it.

Still, the ethnolinguistic view offers a static view of the linguistic imaginary, as it emphasises *the product as it is set in linguistic data*. Finally, cognitive linguistics, the third model, less interested in the cultural mark, investigates language in order to identify the internal mechanisms of linguistic creativity associated with the concept of linguistic imaginary. Cognitive linguists emphasise *the process of producing language* and speak of a collective imagination encoded in linguistic facts and organised according to conceptual frameworks, often metaphorical in nature, with a high degree of universality, that are not only specific to language, but also to human reason in general and thus are trans-linguistic and fairly indifferent to cultural differences. While ethnolinguistics is more concerned with linguistic particularism, with how a specific language reflects the worldview of a community, cognitive linguistics is more of a universalist theory. As we were reflecting on these theories in order to find the best way to circumscribe and define the object of our investigation, we began producing, in turn, an imaginary of the concept of linguistic imaginary. Since its essence seemed to escape us, we managed, in the end, to imagine a working definition for linguistic imaginary, one that is sufficiently broad and flexible and, more importantly, open: a collective imaginary that is set in linguistic data and shaped by culture, which includes all the representations about the objects or phenomena in the world (both real and imagined), including representations about language itself (seen as a cultural object) (Platon 2020, 25).

This integrated perspective also guided the way the studies included in this special issue dedicated to linguistic imaginary were conceived. Each article helped enrich the various facets of the imaginary, as they are revealed by the linguistic data analysed. This collection of articles is proof that the theory of linguistic imaginary is an “open theory” (Ardeleanu 2013, 8), which allows us to discover new angles from which we can approach language, while avoiding traditional linguistic descriptions that study language forms for their own sake.

Andreea-Nora Puşcaş, the author of the first study, offers a well-structured analysis of the metaphors of God in Orthodox prayers. The article looks at how the religious imaginary is configured and does so with the help of Lakoff’s and Johnson’s theory of conceptual metaphor. The author identifies a number of primary and non-primary metaphors systematically ordered by mental schemes: *God is a creator, God is a ruler, God is a provider*.

The second article, *The Clown – a metaphor for the artist identity in the circus of history and existence*, looks at the similarities and differences in the way Norman Manea and Matei Vişniec, two prominent writers of the Romanian exile, present the existential failure, by building a cultural and linguistic imaginary related to the representation of individual and collective identity.

In *The Representation of Ritual (Im)Purity Through Meteorological Metaphors in Folkloric Language*, Elena Platon talks about ritualistic purity in the mythical-

magical thinking of Romanian archaic and traditional communities. She identifies several linguistic expressions she calls *meteorological metaphors*, organised around elements such as the morning dew, mist or the rainbow, representing either purity, cleanliness or uncleanness, thus offering a glimpse into the world view of the archaic communities and the way they understood and explained the architecture of the universe.

Zoica Balaban's article – *Space and Time Expressions in the Romanian Linguistic Imaginary* – offers an overview of the conceptualisation of space and time in Romanian with the help of metaphors. The Romanian linguistic imaginary, she notes, is characterised by a *vertical spatiality*, specific to a pastoral world, and by *eternal temporality*.

Anna Oczko's *Linguistic conceptualization of spatial prepositions: Romanian "în" and Polish "w"* represents a comparative approach to the way spatial relationships are expressed by the two prepositions in both languages and explains how the cognitive approach allows the delineation of some image schemes behind the core meaning of the linguistic expressions investigated.

Joanna Porawska analyses a number of set phrases with the lexeme *Thursday* in Polish and Romanian (*czwartek* and *joi*) and discusses the implications of adopting one of the two seven-day week systems that characterize the Indo-European languages: the planetary week and the church week. The author offers a thorough inventory of linguistic expressions with the word *Thursday* and identifies not only the similarities and differences between the two languages, but also suggests several possible causes for them.

In *Metafore del cibo – una forma di eredità culturale e innovazione linguistica. Un paragone tra metafore del cibo in romeno, inglese e italiano*, Cristina Gogățã compares food metaphors in Romanian, Italian, and English and identifies cognitive frameworks that reveal common representations of various features that Italian, English and Romanian speakers associate with food metaphors.

The next two articles focus on ideology and discourse. Anca Ursa proposes an analysis of the Romanian communist anthems and the *mythemes* of the age, the unconscious representations of the community, identifiable in the patriotic verses, while Ioana Sonea explores the public discourse of the Iron Guard, the "exotic" Romanian fascist movement, and its complex relationship with the Romanian Orthodox Church, through the lens of Gilles Fauconnier's and Mark Turner's conceptual integration theory.

The next article, Maria Ștefănescu's and Ștefan Minică's – *On "the Fabrick of the Tongue". Language metaphors used to advocate descriptivism /prescriptivism in English and Romanian dictionaries* – examines the perceived interdependence between 'mother tongue' and 'fatherland' and by offering a survey of some lexicographical work undertaken in Great Britain and Romania between the

middle of the 18th century and the beginning of the 20th century to compare decisions on prescriptivism or descriptivism in dictionaries, and the reasons behind them.

Diana Burlacu's article, on the other hand, highlights some key-concepts in translation – *abusive fidelity*, *domestication* and *foreignization* (covert and overt translation), *culturemes* – and then focuses on the ludic aspect of translation, by relying on several illustrations from translating jokes from German to Romanian and the challenges that come with this endeavour.

Anamaria Radu and Alexandra Cotoc look at what they call the collective imaginary of Romglish in cyberspace and face-to-face interactions, more specifically to the way in which Romanians perceive their use of Romglish online and in face-to-face interactions: the use of the code, the mechanisms of linguistic choices and linguistic creativity, frequency of code-switching and code-mixing, etc.

The final three articles included in this volume are dedicated to the relationship between the linguistic imaginary and teaching. In *Building translation competence through diary studies: at the crossroads of students' reflection and imagination*, Valentina Mureşan and Andreea Şerban tackle translation competence acquisition (TCA) by focusing on a group of first-year students of the Applied Modern Languages Programme and the use of diaries as a research instrument to investigate the strategies and tools employed by students as they were learning to develop good practices for their future career as translators. Nicoleta Neşu, on the other hand, analyses a series of answers to a questionnaire applied to students of Romanian origin who live and study in Italy, as well as a corpus consisting of compositions written by students and entitled *An Open Letter to Romania*. In her analysis, she focuses on key concepts such as *migration*, the *ethnic language/heritage language* and *the new identity typologies*. Finally, Ivica Kolečáni Lenčová and Zuzana Tomčániová investigate the role played by visual mental representations and associative relations (as part of the speaker's individual lexicon) in foreign language education. On a practical level, the article presents new approaches to teaching German as a foreign language through works of fine art.

Although seemingly heterogeneous in terms of topics and theoretical approaches, the articles included in this collection are united by the concept of linguistic imaginary, as defined by the three main theoretical models: the metalinguistic perspective, ethnolinguistics and cognitive linguistics. The language data analysed here, the methods of investigations, as well as the areas in which the results can be applied – discourse analysis, traductology, comparative studies, language teaching –, are diverse and point to the fact that the concept of linguistic imaginary may indeed prove to be extremely prolific.

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THE METAPHORS OF *GOD* IN ORTHODOX PRAYERS

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ABSTRACT. *The Metaphors of God in Orthodox Prayers.* In this paper we look at the conceptual metaphors of *God* that we encountered in a collection of Orthodox prayers. Prayers are a type of discourse genre belonging to liturgical sublanguage, which is described as conservatory and intangible. We aim at identifying the way in which religious imaginary is configured as part of the linguistic heritage. We do not only intend to analyse the mechanisms of the conceptualization of *God* in the discourse of devotions, but also to connect it to religious teachings and dogmas, to have a better understanding of the outlined imaginary. The concept of *God* is deeply rooted in prayers and is lexicalized into coherent and logical structures, interwoven into a pluralist perspective on divinity.

Keywords: *God, Cognitivism, conceptual metaphor, linguistic imaginary, Orthodox prayers*

REZUMAT. *Metaforele referitoare la Dumnezeu în rugăciunile ortodoxe.* În prezenta lucrare ne propunem să identificăm metaforele conceptuale referitoare la *Dumnezeu* într-un corpus de rugăciuni ortodoxe. Rugăciunea este un tip de discurs aparținând sublimbajului liturgic, descris ca intangibil și conservator. În cele ce urmează, vom urmări modalitatea în care se configurează imaginarul religios ca parte a patrimoniului lingvistic. Nu intenționăm doar să analizăm mecanismele prin care *Dumnezeu* este conceptualizat în discursul rugăciunii, ci și să relaționăm aceste reprezentări cu învățăturile religioase și dogmatice, pentru a înțelege mai bine modul în care este configurat imaginarul verbalizat. Conceptul de *Dumnezeu* este puternic înrădăcinat în limbajul rugăciunii, fiind organizat în structuri coerente și logice care oferă o perspectivă pluralistă asupra divinității.

Cuvinte-cheie: *Dumnezeu, cognitivism, metaforă conceptuală, imaginar lingvistic, rugăciuni ortodoxe*

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1. Introduction

Religion and religiosity can be studied from many points of view (historical, dogmatic, ritualistic, moral, linguistic, etc.), with the prevailing modern-day practice of approaching this field from an interdisciplinary perspective. One of the recent tendencies integrates religion with the field of cognitive sciences, in general, and with cognitive linguistics in particular, seeking to approach linguistic creativity. In this respect, as human thought is studied from the perspective of the role of its metaphorical structures, it can be stated that research into religious language is a key factor in understanding the imaginary of a certain religious community. Taking the cognitivist approach to religious imaginary implies studying the relationship between metaphors and religion or, in Witzig's (2013, 2) words, identifying the "metaphors Christians worship by". Also, Lakoff and Johnson (1980/2003, 193) noted that religious conceptual systems are metaphorical, so metaphors contribute to the understanding of religious experiences, since they are "an important tool to comprehend partially what cannot be comprehended totally: feelings, aesthetic experiences, moral practices and spiritual awareness". Moreover, there are two levels of interpreting religious metaphors: a metaphysical universal level ("what it may mean to be a self-conscious human being flung amidst the diversity of the world") and a local one (the "impulse to structure accordingly both society and the psychological posture of that group"). Metaphors are configured into imaginative models which evolve around basic root metaphors, or, in other words, the listener is taken "to a familiar set of information and experiences through which the idea may be decoded" (Erussard 1997, 199–200).

Religious language cannot be related only to the imaginary, but also to linguistic legacy, since "long-used metaphors have become cultural currency, exerting influence at pre-cognitive levels" (DesCamp and Sweetser 2005, 223). We understand religious language in terms of a common heritage passed down from previous generations (Pușcaș 2020), due to its main features: continuity, stability, archaicity and preservation. Some centuries ago, Romanian religious language coincided with the language of highly cultivated men, therefore contemporary religious texts are a proof of old "bookish" Romanian. Several religious sublanguages can be distinguished, the biblical one being of central importance due to its intangible, conservative and epiphanic dimensions, as the Bible is the fundamental Christian text; the language of the Scriptures has also a dominant role in organizing religious language in general. With the cognitive approach, new light has been shed on biblical metaphors, such as Jesus Christ's metaphorical discourse (see Witzig 2013), the metaphors of "The Song of Songs" (see Verde 2016), as well as the metaphors of *God* employed in The Old and New Testaments (see DesCamp and Sweetser 2005).

Following these previous lines of research, the present paper pursues the examination of cognitive metaphors used in Orthodox prayers (our corpus consists of a prayer book, the *Horologion*, and the *Liturgy book*). We, therefore, aim at liturgical sublanguage, a type of religious language employed in religious practices, also intangible and conservative; the metaphors we intend to analyse are not new, spontaneous, or truly creative, as they are related to the theological perspective of Christian life. In addition, this type of discourse explores the relationship between the believer and divinity and must be understood and interpreted in the context of spiritual life (privately praying to God), since concepts are embodied in actions. That is why Rosenberg (2016, 75) claimed that religious metaphors should be considered in connection to their significance in one's life, intimately related to personal spiritual experiences.

We have decided to focus on the metaphors of *God* due to their central significance in Christian life. The abundance of metaphors provided in the language of prayer is almost self-evident, because understanding God implies the reference to an entity who is the main object of faith, "a reality that is transcendental and surpassing any reality that is known to humans, to their experiences, knowledge and thoughts"; consequently, "religious language needs metaphors that can be understood, imagined, experienced and practised" (Kuczok 2014, 54–5).

2. Theoretical and methodological background

Although it is normally believed that cognitive metaphors were first examined by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in 1980, and described in more detail in 1993, the conceptual dimension of the metaphor was not new, as it had been approached by Aristotle, and had re-emerged in the modern age; consequently, cognitive linguistics is "the result of a long tradition that has the merit of clarifying the cognitive mechanisms of metaphorical processes"² (Verde 2016, 45).

According to cognitivism, metaphors are a matter of thought, not mere linguistic devices aimed for literary embellishment. It is, therefore, a conceptual or cognitive metaphor which manifests itself through language, thought and

² In this respect, Verde's work (2016) is illuminating: Aristotelian metaphorology included a cognitive perspective, while in the modern era the cognitive dimension of the metaphor was anticipated by Tesauro (through the image of 'birth': intellect generates new meanings and makes connections to familiar elements) and Vico (the metaphorical process implies creating a conceptual image through sensory experiences); later, the cognitive dimension was developed by philosophers such as Richards (metaphors seen as a form of interaction between metaphorizing and metaphorized terms), Black (metaphors imply more than a substitution process) and Blumenberg (metaphors convey a *Weltanschauung* perspective), by Ricoeur (metaphors are alive and create a new way of thinking), and Eco (the literal meaning, the cultural and contextual dimensions of the metaphor should also be taken into account).

actions (we speak and act through metaphors, as they impose structure on our thinking) and which is noticeable in a variety of everyday life situations (that is why “we live by” metaphors, although we might be unaware of them). Hence, metaphor is a useful tool in building the way we perceive reality; through the process of metaphorization, abstract concepts such as *time*, or *feelings* (the input examined, called “target”, or “theme”) are expressed in concrete terms, taking into account the direct experiences of individuals (the input providing the structure for the metaphor, called “source”, or “vehicle”). This results in systematic “mappings” or conceptual correspondences between the two domains. The source domain is often based on the knowledge extracted from our bodily experiences in the world (movement, object manipulation and senses), while corporality is metaphorically projected in different areas, including religious experience (Lakoff 1993, 208–9; Lakoff and Johnson 1999, 89).

Lakoff and Johnson’s theory was continued by other researchers and improved through the concept of *blending*. According to the *blending theory* (Fauconnier and Turner 2002), brain processes cognitive material instantly and inadvertently; cognitive blending means selecting and combining meaning from firmly set cognitive structures in order to build new meaning. The metaphorical process implies the following: source, target, generic space (the aspects the two domains have in common) and blended space (a balanced and potent mixture of elements belonging to the two domains). Metaphors divide into two categories: single scope blends (a systematic pattern of mapping between the two inputs: the relationships from the first domain are projected onto the second one, while the language and the structure of the input space are used in the blend) and double scope blends (meaning is imported from at least one input space, while the blended space conveys the structure through elaboration, inference and completion).

Later, Edward Slingerland (2004) introduced the concept of “experiential” or “embodied realism” to refer to conceptual metaphors in a text, expressing a point of view that goes somewhere between antirealism and Enlightenment realism. In his point of view, “there are structures of cognition common to all human beings regardless of their culture, language, or particular history. [...] these commonalities are not reflections of some a priori order existing independently of humans and necessarily true for any conceivable rational being but, rather, arise out of the interactions of human bodies with a fairly stable physical world over the course of both evolutionary and personal time, which makes the emergence of certain primary metaphors and other cognitive structures almost inevitable” (16–8). Metaphors in a text are seen as primary vehicles for meaning, since they are close to our embodied experience.

The above-described theoretical background is useful when trying to understand and analyse the mechanisms of the imaginative act through which

transcendental reality is conceptualized. However, when dealing with linguistic imaginary, the cognitive approach should be extended to the cultural dimension of language, which goes beyond cognitive mechanisms; linguistic imaginary is culturally tailored and includes all the representations about objects and phenomena established in language (Platon 2020, 24).

3. An inventory of metaphors

According to Christian teachings, theological thinking is apophatic, as God cannot be limited to words, notions, or definitions. Therefore, He is described through negative words: *immeasurable, ineffable, incomprehensible, unreachable, unspeakable* (Schmemmann 1993, 63). Apart from the use of *alpha privativum* words, there are certain names in the Holy Scriptures employed by God to refer to Himself, which indicate a more distant relationship between men and divinity: "I am the existing one" (Exodus 3:14), "I too am working" (John 5: 17). The analysis of the metaphors of *God* in Orthodox prayers in light of cognitive linguistics has in view the domains, the cross-mapped conceptual elements and the configuration of the blended space; eventually, the analysis of the way the interrelated conceptual elements are mingled is to be undertaken. The target domain is God, while the source domain very often unveils an anthropomorphic representation of divinity, because, as DesCamp and Sweetser (2005, 215) noted, "Human concepts of God must necessarily take place within the realm of human cognitive capacities". Most identified metaphors are structural, i.e., one concept (God) is metaphorically structured in terms of another one.

The corpus abounds in instances of the general metaphor **GOD IS A HUMAN BEING**³. This metaphor usually harmonizes with "the basic normative root metaphor of Christianity", i.e., **GOD IS LOVE**, which functions as an organizing principle or a sustained metaphor that "organize subsidiary metaphors and diffuse new ones" (Erussard 1997, 198). From this point on there seems to arise an entailment of specific metaphors:

GOD IS THE CREATOR

→ **GOD IS THE FATHER**. The metaphor originates in Lord's prayer (Matthew 6: 9–13), in which Jesus Christ calls God a father as He is God's only-begotten Son and includes Himself in a brotherhood with humans. The metaphor uncovers the following map taken from the biological family organizing frame: Christians → God's children; Christians → brothers; Christians' sins → children's

³ Concepts are printed in capital letters to show that they do not occur at the language level, but at the conceptual one.

mistakes; God has mercy on men → the father helps and protects his children. The generic mental space implies an agent and a patient, who can also become an agent, and their corresponding characteristics. For example: *Tatăl nostru, Care ești în ceruri / Our Father, Who art in heaven* (CR, 7; L, 77); *Părinte sfinte, miluiește-ne / Holy Father, have mercy on us* (CR, 46); *Părinte a toată lumea, binevoiește a îngriji și de aceste ființe nevinovate / Father of the whole world, deign to watch over these innocent beings* (CR, 83); *și-mi deschizi părinteștile Tale brațe / and open unto me Thy fatherly arms* (CR, 102); *binecuvântează moștenirea Ta / bless Thy inheritance* (L, 97); *Părinte atotțiitorule / Almighty Father* (C, 43).

The fatherhood metaphor has been tackled by DesCamp and Sweetser (2005, 217; 234), who noted that it is so culturally entrenched that it functions as a primary metaphor that “can be utilized and re-worked in cognitive blending”. According to the authors, “Parenthood is arguably the strongest human experience of emotionally close (and emotionally symmetric, in that affection and relationship are mutual), but hierarchically asymmetric relationship”. However, in terms of theological interpretation, the concept of family relationship exceeds DesCamp and Sweetser’s view, since God’s paternity is not natural, or anthropomorphic, as it was shown by Christ: “no one knows the Father except the Son” (Matthew 11:27) (Schmemmann 1993, 188). With the coming of Christ into the world, man regains the status of God’s son and Christ’s brother, so God can be called a father. Father is the source of life, protects, and resurrects His offspring, revealing completely His identity: He is Love manifested in His mercy and care, which is vividly illustrated by the image of the embracing arms (Bistrițeanu 2021, 23–33).

Furthermore, the Church is sometimes seen through the lens of maternity: *să ajungă a fi credincioși fii ai sfintei noastre Biserici / come to be devoted children of our holy Church* (CR, 93), Christians’ loyalty being pointed out. The Church is viewed as a mother and people carry out their spiritual gestation in its womb; church life starts with baptism and finishes with the soul’s passing from this world (Noica 2002, 40).

→ **GOD IS A BUILDER.** The metaphor relates to God being the Creator of the world and has its own set of entailments: God → builder; the human being → God’s construction; the construction is refurbished → God forgets human beings. Worthy of being mentioned, God is humanized through the image of the hands, which becomes a creation symbol, as it is unconsciously assumed that creating something involves the use of hands. Examples: *Miluiește-mă, Stăpâne și Făcătorul meu / Have mercy on me, my Master and Creator* (CR, 33); *Cel Ce m-ai zidit, Dumnezeuule, miluiește-mă / Thou Who hast fashioned me, God, have mercy on me* (CR, 77); *Ziditorul meu, nu mă uita pe mine / my Fashioner, do not forsake me* (CR, 287); *a zidit pe om cu mâinile / He hast fashioned man with His hands* (CR, 290); *pe om l-ai zidit după chipul și asemănarea Ta și cu tot harul Tău l-ai*

împodobit / You have created man according to Your image and likeness and adorned him with all the gifts of Your grace (L, 23); *Tu ești Cel Ce din neființă ne-ai adus întru ființă / You are the one Who brought us out of nothing into being* (L, 61); *Mâinile Tale m-au făcut și m-au zidit / Your hands have made and fashioned me* (C, 20). In theological words, the world is created for all humans and every person is created for the world, while the transition from inexistence to existence means encountering God's light, love, and wisdom (Schmemmann 1993, 89; 189).

GOD IS A GUIDE

→ **GOD IS A GUARDIAN.** The organizing frame delineates a mental space in which the following activities occur: God → protector; believers/virtues → the protected; enemies → hardship. Moreover, God takes on the traits of a safeguard who guides the believer and offers him good advice. Examples: *Păzitorul nescricăciunii / Guardian of incorruption* (CR, 87); *Păzește-ne întru toate zilele vieții noastre / Protect us all the days of our life* (CR, 88); *păzește de vrăjmașii văzuți și nevăzuți pe soțul meu / deliver my husband from enemies visible and invisible* (CR, 89); *Tu [...] priveghezi asupra mea, îndreptezi pașii mei în calea binelui / Thou [...] wakefully watch me, order my steps aright* (CR, 101); *Apără, mântuiește, miluiește și ne păzește pe noi, Dumnezeule, cu harul Tău / Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace* (L, 12); *Domnul te va păzi pe tine / God will guard you* (C, 28). The metaphor mirrors the more general metaphor GOD IS LOVE, as He is the only one who manifests love in the way described by the Gospels.

→ **GOD IS A SHEPARD.** This prevailing metaphor with elements taken from the frame of pastoralism finds its roots in the Biblical parable of the shepherd who leaves the 99 sheep alone to find the lost one (Luke 15:4–6). The metaphor has already been analysed by DesCamp and Sweetser (2005, 218) through the employment of Fauconnier and Turner's diagram. Its generic mental space involves an agent, the agent's characteristics and duties, an object and its characteristics; the mental space of each input includes God → shepherd; Israel → sheep, while according to the blended mental space, God is a shepherd; God feeds and leads Israel, carrying for the most vulnerable. We consider an extension should be added to this interpretation, as sheep does not refer only to the people of Israel, but also to the individuals who are lost due to their sinful condition; so, the following mapping can be added: committing a sin → getting lost from the flock; the grass eaten by the sheep → the Eucharist. The metaphor is supported by examples such as: *Iisuse, Păstorul meu, nu mă pierde pe mine / Jesus, my Shepherd, destroy me not* (CR, 287); *Iisuse, Păstorul meu, caută-mă pe mine / Jesus, my Shepherd, seek me* (CR, 295); *Iisuse, Păstorul meu cel preaîndurat /*

Jesus, my most-merciful Shepherd (CR, 299); *numără-mă între oile turmei Tale preaaalese. Hrănește-mă împreună cu ele din verdeața dumnezeieștilor Tale Taine / number me among the sheep of Thy chosen flock. Nourish me with them on the grass of Thy Holy Mysteries* (CR, 304); *și-i numără cu turma Ta cea aleasă /and number them among Your chosen flock* (L, 36). The mappings are enriched by the metaphor CHRIST IS A LAMB, which points at the crucifixion of Jesus and, consequently, at the Eucharist: *Se sfărâmă și Se împarte Mielul lui Dumnezeu / The Lamb of God is apportioned and distributed* (L, 80). Despite the specific zoological reference, the same idea of looking after sheep is put forward; in addition, the double role of Jesus, who is seen both as a shepherd and lamb, establishes an identity between the agent and the patient, which evokes hypostatic union.

→ **GOD IS A DOOR OPENER.** The metaphor is related to another common religious metaphor, (CHRISTIAN) LIFE IS A JOURNEY, indicating a shorter itinerary and an easier to reach destination. The entailment of the metaphor is the following: the sinner → the visitor; the wish for change → knocking at the door; the heart → the door; forgiveness → the space behind the door. According to the frame, people are not passive, while their actions are benefic and necessary. Examples: *Iisuse, deschizătorul celor ce bat, deschide inima mea cea ticăloasă / Jesus, Opener to those that knock, open my wretched heart* (CR, 292).

→ **GOD IS A TEACHER.** The two inputs are framed as follows: God → a teacher; Christianity → a school; Christians → students; good deeds → the subject taught. Structures are imported from the source domain and reveal an illuminating didactic process, which is useful to inner life; spiritual growth starts with the five senses, which take man to a better knowledge of God until they become familiar with Him, the process of teaching being seen as reciprocal (Noica 2002, 14; 18). Examples: *Luminează-mi ochii mei, [...] ca nu cumva să adorm întru moarte / Enlighten mine eyes, [...] lest at any time I sleep unto death* (CR, 42); *să mă îndreptezi de astăzi înainte spre bine, până la sfârșitul vieții mele / guide me in the way of good from today till the end of my life* (CR, 49); *ne-ai învățat ca întotdeauna să ne rugăm unul pentru altul / You taught us to always pray for one another* (CR, 89); *Să-i învețe pe dânșii cuvântul adevărului / Rightly teach them the word of truth* (L, 35); *învăță-mă îndreptările Tale / teach me Thy statutes* (C, 18); *Fă să înțeleg calea îndreptărilor Tale / Make me understand the way of Thy statutes* (C, 18).

GOD IS A CONTROLLER OF EXISTENCE

→ **GOD IS A KING.** The metaphor is Bible-based – “The Kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:21) – and can be understood only with reference to biblical times, when “every person had a king, just as every person had a parent.

The conduct and priorities of the king had immediate and central importance to the lives of his subject” (DesCamp and Sweetser 2005, 234). In addition, religious services also have a royal appearance manifested in the tonality of the music used in worship (in this respect, a proper example is the Song of Cherubims), or in the symbols of royal authority, which are a proof of the influence exerted by the Byzantine imperial court over rite performance (Schmemmann 1993, 123).

The mapping of the metaphor implies the following steps: God → king; Christians → subjects; praying to God → worshipping the king; directing things and actions → reigning. The generic mental space includes an agent and a patient and their corresponding duties. Examples: *Veniți să ne închinăm Împăratului nostru Dumnezeu / Let us worship and fall down before Christ our King and God* (CR, 12); *Dumnezeule veșnic și Împărate a toată făptura / Eternal God and King of all creation* (CR, 30); *Cel Căruia ne închinăm, Împărate sfinte / worshipful God, holy King* (CR, 31); *Și-i învrednicești pe toți [...] veșnicei Tale împărății / And lead them all [...] into Thine eternal kingdom* (CR, 48); *cârmuitorul atotputernic și preaînalt al lumii întregi, Care privești de pe tronul Tău pe toți locuitorii pământului / almighty and supreme ruler of the whole world, Who watch over all inhabitants of the earth from Thy throne* (CR, 80); *Binecuvântată este împărăția Tatălui și a Fiului și a Sfântului Duh / Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit* (L, 9); *să se învrednicească de cereasca Ta împărăție / be deemed worthy of Your celestial Kingdom* (L, 41). The image of the king unable to get separated from his kingdom is very common in the analysed corpus; theologians explain this representation in terms of knowing and loving God, which translates into being united with Him, as God represents the source of life and life itself. There are no visible signs of God’s kingdom, which will emerge at the end of the world, when people will recognize their true emperor; however, those who believe in God have already found the kingdom of heavens (Schmemmann 1993, 47–8).

→ **GOD IS A MASTER.** The conceptual blends of the metaphor rely on a frame provided by the experience of serving others: God → master; Christians → God’s servants, God being described as merciful. The generic mental space involves an agent and a patient with their specific characteristics: *Miluieste-mă, Stăpâne / Lord, have mercy on me* (CR, 33); *Stăpâne, Iubitorule de oameni / Master, Lover of mankind* (CR, 38); *Iisuse, Stăpânul meu cel preamilostiv / Jesus, my greatly-merciful Lord* (CR, 299); *duhul curăției, al gândului smerit, al răbdării și al dragostei dăruiește-l mie, slugii Tale / a spirit of chastity, humble-mindedness, patience, and love bestow upon me, Thy servant* (CR, 104); *Doamne, Dumnezeul nostru, a Căruia stăpânire este neasemănată și slavă neajunsă / Lord, our God, Whose dominion is incomparable and glory incomprehensible* (L, 13); *Stăpâne, Doamne / Master, Lord* (L, 17); *să-Ți aducem datorita închinare și preamărire /*

to You all glory, honor, and worship are due (L, 23–24); *Robul Tău sunt eu / I am Thy servant* (C, 22); *fericită este sluga pe care o va găsi priveghind / blessed is that servant whom He shall find watching* (C, 25). The concept of bondage exceeds the idea of rigid dominance; according to Christian thought, God knows better than human beings what they need or wish for; although they may desire to find life, they may erroneously search for it, while they eventually realize God gives them exactly what they have wished for (Noica 2002, 20).

→ **GOD IS A JUDGE.** The metaphorical link between the two domains draws on the stock of commonplace knowledge about trials in a court: the judge decides how a person is guilty of a crime. The pattern of the metaphorical structure is: God → a lawmaker; sinner → sentenced people; saints → rewarded people. The agent is described as righteous and enraged, applying a spontaneous judgment to the patients. Examples: *Fără de veste Judecătorul va veni și faptele fiecăruia se vor descoperi / Suddenly the Judge shall come, and the deeds of each shall be laid bare* (CR, 11); *Doamne, Iisuse Hristoase, Judecătorul meu și Dumnezeu veșnic / Lord, Jesus Christ, my judge and eternal God* (CR, 63); *în ziua dreptei Judecăți să dăruiești lor și nouă bucuria și fericirea sfinților / on the day of your righteous judgment vouchsafe them and us to find the joy and gladness of saints* (CR, 79); *în dreapta Ta mânie îi pedepsești pentru greșelile lor / in Thy righteous fury you condemn them for their sins* (CR, 84); *răspuns bun la înfricoșătoarea judecată a lui Hristos / a good defence before the dread judgment seat of Christ* (L, 76); God makes the laws: *Fericiți cei [...] care umblă în Legea Domnului / Happy are those [...] who walk in accordance with God's Law* (C, 17); *Lăuda-te-voi întru îndreptarea inimii, ca să învăț judecățile dreptății Tale / I will confess Thee with uprightness of heart, when I have learned the judgments of Thy righteousness* (C, 17). In front of a judge, people usually experience fear, which, in Christian terms, refers to the fear of not losing God and to the loving relationship with Him; therefore, this type of fear gets people closer to God. Another important aspect relates to forgiveness, which is given to people by God before they ask for it (Noica 2002, 97; 121).

GOD IS AN ORGANIZER OF EXISTENCE AND A PROVIDER

→ **GOD IS AN ADMINISTRATOR.** According to this metaphor, which relies on the field of experience, God surpasses the role as creator and assigns the one of a reliable and skillful administrator of the terrestrial creation: *Chivernisitorul cel bun al celor lumești / good provider of earthly things* (CR, 87); *Cel Ce ai așezat în ceruri cetele și oștile îngerilor și ale arhanghelilor spre slujba slavei Tale / Thou Who hast placed the choirs of angels and archangels in heavens to celebrate Thy glory* (CR, 17); *Cel Ce prin adâncul înțelepciunii, cu iubirea de oameni toate le*

chivernisești și ceea ce este de folos tuturor le dăruiești / Thou Who by the depth of Thy wisdom dost provide all things out of love for mankind, and grantest unto all that which is profitable (C, 28). The metaphor gains a more nuanced perspective through its mapping: God → administrator; the world → entity; angels → subordinates.

→ **GOD IS A CLEANER.** The metaphor involves a regular pattern of mapping between the source and the target domains: committing a sin → getting dirty; sins → dirt; being forgiven by God → being cleaned, while the agent acts upon the subject along the transcendental experience. Examples: *curățește fărădelegile mele / cleanse my iniquities* (CR, 292); *curățește-mă după mare mila Ta/ cleanse me according to Thy mercy* (CR, 296); *curățește-mă pe mine păcătosul / purify me, the sinner* (CR, 15); *curățește-ne pe noi de toate întinăciunile noastre trupești și sufletești / cleanse us from every defilement of flesh and spirit* (CR, 18); *să ne curățești sufletele și trupurile de toată necurăția cărnii și a duhului / You may cleanse our souls and bodies from every defilement of flesh and spirit* (L, 41); *sufletul meu curățește-l de tot păcatul / cleanse my soul of all impurity* (C, 63). In religious practices, the domain of cleaning is related to the Sacrament of Confession which does not suppose only a simple enumeration of sins, but also a state of being, involving understanding and repentance (Noica 2002, 56).

→ **GOD IS A CLOTHES PROVIDER.** The following schema is invoked to highlight the metaphor: good deeds → clothes; supernatural power → clothes; God → clothes (provider); nakedness → lack of good deeds. The generic mental space involves a merciful agent who exerts his powers over an unworthy subject. For example: *Iisuse, Care ai îmbrăcat cu putere de sus pe Apostolii Tăi [...], îmbracă-mă și pe mine cel golit de toate faptele cele bune / Thou Who didst clothe with power from on high Thine apostles [...], Jesus, clothe also me stripped bare of all good works* (CR, 287); *Iisuse, acoperământul cel de bucurie, acoperă-mă pe mine nevrednicul / Jesus, Shelter of Joy, cover me, the unworthy* (CR, 292); *Iisuse, veșmântul cel luminat, înfrumusețează-mă / Jesus, Garment of Light, adorn me* (CR, 301); *la vremea potrivită învrednicește-i de [...] veșmântul nestrăicării / grant them at a proper time [...] the garment of incorruption* (L, 36); *Domnul este acoperământul tău / God is your garment* (C, 28). The apparently inconsistent images – the conceptualization of God as an item of clothing and as a clothes provider – work together to form a coherent metaphorical concept. More specifically, longing for God means understanding with the whole being that His absence is synonymous with darkness, desertedness, or uselessness, as He is the reason and joy of all things (Schmemmann 1993, 106).

→ **GOD IS A DOCTOR.** The image schema of this extremely frequent metaphor activates the metaphorical process in the following way: God → a clinician; sins → the cause of the disease; God's wounds → medicine. Examples: *durerile noastre le-ai ridicat, de unde cu rănila Tale noi tămăduindu-ne / You*

didst take on our infirmities, being healed through Thy wounds (CR, 291); *dă-mi tămăduire mie, celui ce-Ți cânt / grant healing to me who cry unto Thee* (CR, 298); *tămăduiește-mi trupul cel rănit cu păcatele / heal my body scabbed with sins* (CR, 299); *de durerile cele sufletești și trupești izbăvește-mă / from sickness of soul and body deliver me* (CR, 301); *cu patimile Tale vindecă patimile mele, cu rănilile Tale tămăduiește rănilile mele / heal my passions with your passions, heal my wounds with your wounds* (CR, 302); *doctorul sufletelor și al trupurilor noastre / physician of our souls and bodies* (L, 78). The blending of the conceptual elements can be paraphrased as follows: fallen human condition is in decay and only God can offer people a cure to overcome their state.

→ **GOD IS A DEBT'S SAVIOUR.** Inferences are transferred in the following way: God → the person the debtor owes money to; believer → debtor; God's gifts → debt. Examples: *Dezlegătorule al tuturor datoriiilor / Absolver of all debts* (CR, 300); *nemărginite sunt datoriile mele către Tine / my debts to You are innumerable* (CR, 102). The mention of the never-ending debts evokes God's mercy and compassion, which surpasses people's mistakes.

→ **GOD IS A REDEEMER.** The entailment of the metaphor is the following: sins/the devil → killers; Christian life → war (the specific metaphor CHRISTIAN LIFE IS WAR was analysed by Witzig 2013, 5); God → the helper that rises people's soul from the dead. There are more possible cross-mappings activated by the metaphor, but the most frequent one relates to people's need to exert more effort in their endeavour in order to improve or become better persons. Examples: *nu mă lăsa să adorm în moartea păcatelor / Grant me not to fall asleep in the death of sin* (CR, 15); *să măntuiești zidirea Ta / save Thy creation* (CR, 49); *S-a sculat Domnul, omorând moartea / The Lord awoke destroying death* (CR, 67); *dulcele Mântuitor al sufletului meu / sweet Saviour of my soul* (CR, 59); *înviază și sufletul meu cel omorât cu păcate / raise my soul, deadened by sins* (CR, 286); *apără-i de vrăjmașii văzuți și nevăzuți / protect them from enemies, visible and invisible* (CR, 81); *să mă ajuți a birui ispitele ce mă învăluiesc / help me drive away the assaults of temptation* (CR, 92); *Pentru ca să fim izbăviți noi de tot necazul, mânia, primejdia și nevoia, Domnului să ne rugăm / For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord* (L, 11); *răstignindu-Te [...] cu moartea pe moarte ai călcat / You were crucified and [...] conquered death by death* (L, 15); *Mâna Ta să mă mântuiască / Let Thy hand be for saving me* (C, 24). The images in the structures parallel the theological thinking according to which, in his Love, God could not let men die, so He took all their sufferings and flaws by assuming the cross experience (Noica 2002, 119). Therefore, God's love is humble (Noica 2002, 31) and through His incarnation (as God and man's son simultaneously), God itself is understood as Love revealed to mankind (Schmemmann 1993, 140).

The general metaphor **GOD IS AN INANIMATE OBJECT** is manifested through the metaphorical expression **GOD IS BREAD**. The generic mental space includes an object (God) which can act upon the patients (believers). There are also practical implications of the metaphor: food is made to be eaten. This metaphor is related to the Eucharist, the sacrament of sacraments in Orthodox tradition. At the Last Supper, Jesus Christ took the bread and the wine and told his apostles to consume them as His Flesh and Blood (Matthew 26: 26–8). Examples: *Iisuse, pâinea vieții, satură-mă pe mine, cel flămând / Jesus, bread of life, fill me who am hungry* (CR, 292); *pururea Se dă de mâncare și niciodată nu Se sfârșește / ever eaten, yet never consumed* (L, 80). The metaphor originates from the field of religious practices, the fulfilment of the Eucharist meaning the encounter of God's kingdom; bread and wine, people's terrestrial food, become Christ's Body and Blood, a transformation which is real, exceeding the symbolic role (Schmemmann 1993, 35–44).

Oriental metaphors embodied in Orthodox prayers are in accordance with people's everyday experience. In other words, they relate to primary metaphors, "the metaphors at the most grounded level, which are based on primary scenes", connecting perceptual experiences and subjective responses (DesCamp and Sweetser 2005, 216). The spatial organization up/down generally suggests positive versus negative experiences, which express a repertoire of motions and physical interactions. They indicate the following mapping: God is up; sinners are down; devils are in the lowest point; committing a sin → being pulled down; the descend of God → saving people; being forgiven by God → being pulled up. Examples: *Iisuse, ziditorul celor de sus, răscumpărătorul celor de jos, pierzătorul celor de dedesubt / Jesus, Creator of those on high, Redeemer of those below, Vanquisher of the power of hades* (CR, 289); *durerile noastre le-ai ridicat / You didst take on our infirmities* (CR, 291); *mintea spre cele dumnezeiești să o suim, că pentru aceasta Dumnezeu pe pământ s-a pogorât, ca să ne ridice la ceruri pe noi / let us set our mind on things divine, for God came down to earth that He might raise us to heaven* (CR, 294); *ne-ai ridicat pe noi / Thou didst raise us* (CR, 293); *întru deznădăjduire zăcând eu m-ai ridicat / while I was lying in despair upon my bed, Thou hast raised me up* (CR, 11); *Binecuvântează, părinte, scaunul cel de sus / Master, bless the throne on high* (L, 24); *Doamne, Dumnezeuul nostru, Cel Ce întru cele de sus locuiești și spre cele smerite privești / Lord our God, Who dwells on high and watches over the humble* (L, 36); *Cel Care sezi împreună cu Tatăl sus / You Who are enthroned with the Father on high* (L, 79); *Iarăși și de multe ori cădem la Tine și ne rugăm Ție / Again and countless times we fall down before You, and we implore You* (L, 41). According to theologians, keeping one's heart up refers both to one's inner heaven and to the heaven created through people's good relationship (*Inimă curată zidește întru mine, Dumnezeule, și duh drept înnoiește întru cele dinlăuntru ale mele / Create in me a clean heart, O God,*

and put a new and right spirit within me – L, 65); the human being falls not only from the heights of God, but also from the ones of his real nature (Schmemmann 1993, 172; 190).

Another underlying metaphorical conceptual structure is **the container image schema** based on the sensorimotor experience of a container which is filled with liquid, and on the primary experience of pouring liquid or putting objects into a container: God → the person who pours something into the container; man's heart/house → the container; virtues → substances: *Varsă în sufletul lui credință vie, nădejde tare, dragoste sfântă / Fill his soul with true faith, unfailing hope, holy love* (CR, 78); *binefacerile, bucuriile și binecuvântările pe care le reversi neîncetat asupra lor / the unending benevolence, enjoyment and blessings that you pour out upon them* (CR, 84); *umple casa noastră de toate bunătățile cele de pe pământ / fill our house with all the good earthly things* (CR, 88); *Umple inima lui de bucuria mântuirii Tale / Fill his heart with the gladness of Thy salvation* (CR, 95). Apart from this common schema, the believer is the agent who “pours” his prayer towards God (the container): *Rugăciunea mea voi vărsa către Domnul / I will pour out my prayer unto the Lord* (CR, 268). Moreover, the metaphor of the soul (recipient) overflowed with sins is also frequent: *s-a umplut sufletul meu de răutăți / filled with evils is my soul* (CR, 268); *Hristoase, pe toate umplându-le Tu, Cel Ce ești necuprins / Christ, You Who are uncontainable, fill up all things* (L, 51). Although inconsistent, the metaphors belonging to this category act in a coherent way.

The image schema source/path/goal arises out from the subjective judgment of achieving a purpose and out from the sensorimotor experience of reaching a destination. It is patterned as follows: humans live their life → the journey; God's way → the destination; God → the road owner; redemption → destination; temptations → obstacles along the way: *să umble întotdeauna pe cărările Tale / always set their footsteps in Thy paths* (CR, 86); *arată-mi [...] calea Ta cea dreaptă / guide me [...] in the way of Thy righteousness* (CR, 97); *Îndreptează calea noastră [...], întărește pașii noștri / Make straight our path [...], make secure our steps* (L, 91); *La poruncile Tale voi cugeta și voi cunoaște căile Tale / On Thy commandments will I ponder, and I will understand Thy ways* (C, 18); *Pe calea poruncilor Tale am alergat când ai lărgit inima mea / The way of Thy commandments have I run, when Thou didst enlarge my heart* (C, 18). There are some practical implications of this metaphor: the traveler should avoid being side-tracked and follow God's guidance. In the generic mental space, there is an actor undertaking an action under somebody else's guidance.

4. Conclusions

Analysing the discourse about God is a task which involves describing “a reality that by its very nature is indescribable” and which, therefore, requires

conceptualization (Kuczok 2014, XV), while metaphors acquire the role of “vehicles for meaning” (Witzig 2013, 6). The metaphors encountered in the analysed corpus are diverse in nature and are organised by mental schemes which work together coherently. When mapping the entailment of metaphors, information was extracted from the field of experience, from the field of knowledge (general or specific) and from the one of religious practices.

The entailments of metaphors partially overlap and supplement one another, emphasizing various aspects and indicating a generic space in which divinity is described as a positive authority. On delving into prayer texts, we found some characteristics that recur in our mappings at a high rate: human metaphors are preferred, God is usually represented as a subject, while humans are the objects upon whom the agent acts. Also, in this type of religious texts, both primary and non-primary metaphors are encountered. The most frequently mentioned characteristics of God in the corpora of Orthodox prayers are those of providing paternal care, manifested as nourishment, garment, shelter, protection, or guidance. God also proves to be almighty, righteous and loving. The discourse of prayers abounds in orientational metaphors, too.

Religious metaphorical expressions can be properly understood only within the space of religious imaginary, taking into consideration the broader context of the cultural and theological background of the metaphors employed, which provide a deeper layer of meaning. In our interpretation, it was necessary to go beyond the cognitive dimension, by appealing to theological interpretations and views, as religion cannot be reduced to a matter of conceptual systems (Rosenberg 2016, 72). It is only profound experience that gives content to the concepts of religious language, while religious concepts can be empty without any relation to religious experiences (Gerhart, Russell 1984, 13).

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IL CLOWN - UNA METAFORA PER L'IDENTITÀ DELL'ARTISTA NEL CIRCO DELLA STORIA E DELL'ESISTENZA IN MATEI VIȘNIEC E NORMAN MANEA

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ABSTRACT. *The Clown – a Metaphor for the Artist Identity in the Circus of History and Existence at Matei Vișniec² and Norman Manea.* The paper will highlight affinities and differences in the way Norman Manea and Matei Vișniec, two prominent writers of the Romanian exile from the 80s, narrate the existential failure in the novel *The Black Envelope* and respectively in the play *Old clown wanted*, making extensive use of the modalities provided by an intensely poetic imaginary. The dreamlike representations, which acquire opposite connotations in the plots of the two authors, as well as certain image-metaphors, elaborated according to the models inspired by Federico Fellini, highlight some aspects

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² Per la trascrizione del cognome dello scrittore romeno-francese ho optato per la forma Vișniec in tutte le occorrenze in cui si tratta dell'identità e dell'opera dell'autore pubblicata in lingua romena, e per la variante Visniec, adottata dallo scrittore stesso in Francia, per tutte le occorrenze in cui si fa riferimento all'universo francese degli stessi aspetti.

that distinguish the perspective expressed by each writer regarding the dense and broad semantics of the circus. In Matei Vişniec's play, the circus topos declines in the forms of precariousness, which defines the artist's condition as well as the general human condition - perpetually threatened by the inexorable passage of Time. As for Norman Manea's novel, the writer concentrates in this plot the perception of History as a buffoonish and vulgar manifestation, which condemns the individual, the artist in the first instance, to the status of victim. In this way Manea and Vişniec actually explore the forms of manifestation peculiar to a cultural and linguistic imaginary related to the representation of individual and collective identity.

Keywords: *clown, circle, artist, dictator, history, theater within theater, poeticity*

REZUMAT. Clovnul – o metaforă pentru identitatea artistului în circurile istoriei și al existenței la Matei Vişniec și Norman Manea. Articolul va evidenția afinități și diferențe în modul în care Norman Manea și Matei Vişniec, doi scriitori marcantți ai exilului românesc din anii '80, povestesc eșecul existențial în romanul *Plicul negru* și respectiv în piesa *Angajare de clovn*, recurgând amplu la instrumentele unui imaginar de natură intens poetică. Reprezentările onirice, care capătă conotații opuse în tramele celor doi autori, precum și anumite imagini-metafore elaborate după modele oferite de Federico Fellini, evidențiază aspecte care disting perspectiva exprimată de fiecare scriitor referitoare la semantica densă și amplă a ciroului. În piesa lui Matei Vişniec, toposul ciroului se declină în formele precarității, care definește condiția artistului precum și pe cea general umană – amenințată perpetuu de trecerea inexorabilă a Timpului. Cât privește romanul lui Norman Manea, scriitorul concentrează în această tramă percepția Istoriei ca manifestare bufonescă și vulgară, care condamnă individul, artistul în primă instanță, la statutul de victimă. În acest mod, Manea și Vişniec explorează, de fapt, formele de manifestare proprii unui imaginar cultural și lingvistic legat de reprezentarea identității individuale și colective.

Cuvinte-cheie: *clovn, circ, artist, dictator, istorie, teatru în teatru, poeticitate*

Introduzione

In questo saggio sarà analizzato e interpretato il simbolo del Clown che in Norman Manea e Matei Vişniec agisce come una metafora, concentrando nei suoi segni polisemici vere e proprie visioni che saranno destinate a riverberarsi in seguito, nell'opera complessiva dei due scrittori.

Mi soffermerò, nel caso di ciascuno scrittore, su alcune affermazioni raccolte in interviste, che i due autori hanno rilasciato a chi scrive e nelle quali entrambi si dichiarano affascinati dalle potenzialità metaforiche della figura del Clown.

Credo sia una mirabile coincidenza che sia Vișniec, sia Manea riconoscano l'influenza e il fascino che esercita su di loro il mondo dei Clown di Federico Fellini, con i suoi diversi accenti, magico-onirico-poetici, ma anche tragici, connotando soprattutto nel secondo autore l'artificialità, l'illusione, il surrogato, la violenza, ecc.

Occorre notare che questi scrittori, che sono anche esponenti di spicco dell'esilio romeno degli anni '80, illustrano con mezzi propri, anche comuni in certi contesti, aspetti che, allo stesso tempo, distinguono la prospettiva espressa da ciascuno in relazione a una semantica densa e ampia del circo. Nella *pièce Angajare de clown* [Vecchio clown cercasi] di Matei Vișniec il topos circense si declina nelle forme della precarietà, che giunge a definire la condizione dell'artista e quella generalmente umana, senza associare necessariamente questa fragilità strutturale a motivazioni di ordine ideologico o politico. Per quanto riguarda il romanzo *Plicul negru* [La busta nera], nella sua trama Norman Manea concentra la sua percezione della Storia con maiuscola, vista come manifestazione buffonesca e volgare, nei cui ingranaggi l'individuo, l'artista *in primis* è condannato di fronte al potere politico allo status marginale di Clown-prigioniero, ma egli resta tuttavia capace di conservare la forza di ribellarsi e di denunciare il ruolo oppressivo dell'autorità, indebolendola.

I Clown felliniani nella riscrittura di Norman Manea

Per quanto riguarda *La busta nera*, sarà opportuno individuare tra le sue caratteristiche principali le marche stilistiche di una multiforme commedia del linguaggio, che conferisce spiccato rilievo al profilo del protagonista Tolea nei suoi rapporti con gli altri personaggi. Questo specifico genere di registro stilistico decide il *sound* prevalente in tante opere dello scrittore.

Inoltre, nel volume del 2017, *Corriere dell'Est. Conversazioni con Edward Kanterian*, Manea spiega il significato del suo stilema preferito, citando il titolo del suo primo libro dedicato alla figura del Clown, *Primii ani de ucenicie ai lui August Prostul* [I primi anni di apprendistato del Povero Augusto] apparso nel 1979, in cui l'immagine simbolica del circo si era già estesa da un significato circoscritto alla storia nazionale a uno generalmente umano (Manea 1979). Dunque, l'emblema del Clown agisce come metafora in Norman Manea fin dal periodo del suo esordio:

L'emblema del Clown alludeva non solo alla congiuntura politico-sociale su cui si incentrava il libro, ma più in generale, alla Storia come Circo, all'individuo come potenzialità tragicomica, al destino umano burlesco...

Il Clown, eroe del derisorio, il fanciullo-cavaliere della farsa che zompetta sopra il precipizio. La tragedia umana divorata da una tragedia più grande: la commedia³ (Manea 2017: 29-30).

La letteratura di lingua tedesca, ma anche altri orizzonti culturali avevano già messo in circolazione in anni precedenti all'uscita dei *Primi anni di apprendistato...* dei capolavori dedicati alla polisemia di questo simbolo, come le *Opinioni di un clown* di Heinrich Böll, pubblicato in traduzione italiana nel 1965, libro il cui autore ha apprezzato la letteratura di Manea e da cui è stato citato a sua volta (Böll 1963).

Ma delle affinità più marcate con la condizione dell'Artista nel mondo, assimilato a un audace Clown "sospeso sull'aereo trapezio del Mondo", sono riscontrabili, ad esempio, in passi commentati dall'autore stesso e tratti dal romanzo *Felix Krull* di Thomas Mann (1954), con cui lo scrittore romeno di origini ebraiche instaura dei fertili dialoghi intertestuali nel saggio che include anche le sue splendide "postille a Fellini"⁴. (Fellini 1972: 47).

Pur rivestendo una rilevanza cruciale per la corretta comprensione dell'immaginario della letteratura di Manea, è ancora insufficientemente esaminato in sede critica il debito che Manea riconosce nei confronti di Federico Fellini, sulle orme del quale lo scrittore romeno sviluppa in maniera propria, del tutto originale, quella dimensione duplice del Clown, che porta sulla scena della storia il Dittatore, mettendolo di fronte all'Artista o semplicemente davanti all'intellettuale, cioè all'uomo dotato di spirito critico, perché si confrontino in una lotta simbolica esemplare.

³ Nel volume di Manea, *Corriere dell'Est. Conversazioni con Edward Kanterian*, il tema del Clown ritorna anche nei contributi di Claudio Magris, "La Venezia și la Padova, cu și pentru Norman Manea" / "A Venezia e a Padova, con e per Norman Manea", p. 18-21, in cui, accennando alle tematiche principali che hanno fatto l'oggetto degli incontri occasionati dal lancio del libro (*Corriere dell'Est*), nelle due città menzionate nel suo titolo, l'autore italiano indica le diverse forme dell'esilio vissute in prima persona da Manea (p. 18-19). Si vedano inoltre nel medesimo volume, nel contributo "Curierii, sau clovnii, din Est în Italia" / "I corrieri, oppure i clown, dall'Est in Italia" di Edward Kanterian, coautore insieme a Manea del *Corriere...*, i passi che ripropongono le fonti della figura del Clown in Manea: Fellini e Montale (p. 32-33) e diverse declinazioni dello stesso topos nell'opera dello scrittore romeno (p. 30-31).

⁴ Il nesso con la coppia felliniana appare menzionato anche da Corin Braga, nel capitolo "Norman Manea. Totalitarism și traumă", in *Psihobiografii*, Iași, Polirom, 2011, p. 204-216, in un'interessante analisi condotta con gli strumenti della psicanalisi. Sul motivo del Clown assimilato in Norman Manea a un Povero Augusto, si vedano inoltre il capitolo "August Proslul – excentricul discret" di Claudiu Turcuș, nel volume *Estetica lui Norman Manea*, București, Cartea Românească, 2012, p. 94-100 e gli articoli di Paul Cernat, "Despre clovni și totalitarisme", in *Observator cultural*, n. 297, 1 dicembre 2005; di Claudiu Groza, "România cu oameni și clovni", in *Apostrof*, n. 10, ottobre 1997; di Ion Simuț, "Disperarea clovnului", in *România literară*, n. 23, 21 giugno 2007.

L'individualità e la diversità che Manea imprime al suo universo claunesco, pur conservando la traccia dell'intertesto felliniano, devono la loro marcata specificità all'esperienza esistenziale ben differente maturata dall'autore proveniente dall'Europa dell'Est, nell'orrore di una società permeata dallo scontro violento tra meccanismi politici implacabili, di stampo dittatoriale, e l'individuo solo, sovente schiacciato, quasi un perdente, una vittima mai disposta però a riconoscersi tale. Dunque, la coppia felliniana l'Augusto-il Clown Bianco, presentata dal suo creatore nel saggio "Un viaggio nell'ombra" (Fellini 1972), e a cui lo scrittore romeno si riferisce nell'intervista, si trasforma nella scrittura di Manea acquisendo tratti identitari propri, in cui si rispecchiano sia l'autore con la sua biografia e la personale inclinazione temperamentale, sia allo stesso tempo, molti dei suoi personaggi. Nell'intervista cui ho fatto cenno in precedenza lo scrittore dichiarava: "Dunque, ho pensato di esprimermi tramite il Clown. *Corrispondeva forse a una mia predisposizione di carattere*, ma anche al concetto di mettere in discussione l'autorità mediante lo stratagemma della risata"⁵ (Manea 2020, 65 in versione italiana e 64 in romeno).

Il ricorso ai mezzi della derisione, condotto al fine di bersagliare il potere, merita di essere approfondito più avanti, poiché riveste un'importanza cruciale nella poetica dello scrittore.

Ora è invece indispensabile far notare che l'Augusto di Fellini, divenuto nello scrittore romeno il Povero Augusto, conoscerà la sua più interessante incarnazione nel ritratto dell'Artista nella società, mentre il Clown Bianco, figura dominatrice, prepotente, sempre cinica e malvagia, con cui il primo contende la stessa arena sociale, prende in Manea le sembianze del Dittatore stesso, il funesto Ceaușescu, e, come si avrà modo di vedere dalla ricognizione che riserverò ad alcuni aspetti stilistici del romanzo, anche di un personaggio enigmatico come il Dottor Marga.

Tornando all'intervista con lo scrittore, va detto che Manea giunge non solo a far coincidere l'Artista e il Clown – in quel passo preferisce usare il termine buffone –, ma vi si immedesima anche, invocando più orizzonti culturali e antropologici in cui tale figura estetica ha assunto particolare riguardo, vale a dire la tradizione ebraica, quella legata agli studi di Bachtin e al ruolo da esso attribuito al carnevale nel Medioevo e nel Rinascimento e, nella stessa misura, le società contemporanee, libere o soggette a chiusure ideologiche, ugualmente burlesche per l'autore, che nella risata e nella sua "ambiguità giocosa, ironica, sarcastica, beffarda" hanno trovato l'antidoto migliore contro le forme più diverse di imposizione sociale e politica. Pertanto, lo scrittore ha fiducia nell'efficacia degli strumenti che producono la derisione e li vede come un'arma infallibile:

⁵ Il passo dell'intervista si trova alla p. 65 in traduzione italiana e a p. 64 nell'originale romeno. Corsivo di chi scrive.

Ma il libro si ispira anche a Fellini, a un suo saggio in cui descrive i due tipi di clown, il Clown bianco e il Povero Augusto. Il Clown bianco è l'arrogante, l'attaccabrighe che sempre sgomita, mentre Augusto è colui che incassa, si picchia da solo, piange, ride. Ero senza dubbio dalla parte di quest'ultimo. Fellini stesso vede in lui la figura dell'artista nella società. Il libro introdusse nella mia letteratura la figura del Povero Augusto, che mi è molto vicina. [...]. Nella tradizione ebraica c'è il personaggio del buffone, di cui si dice che sia amato da Dio. [...]. Noi oggi sappiamo che nella letteratura mondiale il buffone aveva un suo ruolo presso re e dittatori. Mi sembra che la realtà, tanto quella socialista quanto quella capitalista, sia una realtà burlesca, una realtà che sminuisce il ruolo dei padroni, siano essi padroni per motivi ideologici che per motivi di denaro. [...]. Bachtin diceva che il coro popolare ride, sempre e ovunque. Dunque, questo voler introdurre la risata, questa ambiguità giocosa, ironica, sarcastica, beffarda è un'operazione di sabotaggio dell'autorità più accessibile e più efficace.

(Manea 2020, 63-65 in italiano e 62-63 in romeno).

Dunque, per tutte le ragioni esposte nel brano sopraccitato e per altre ancora, Manea condivide con Fellini la convinzione che il Clown sia un emblema ideale per connotare la figura dell'Artista nella società, introducendo tuttavia i propri distinguo, che vanno a legarsi alla sua personale esperienza culturale e storica, di scrittore nato in un paese in cui "il buffone aveva un suo ruolo presso dittatori".

La risemantizzazione dell'Augusto operata da Manea trova piena sintonia in questo dettaglio del ritratto che egli plasma nei confronti del suo Artista-Povero Augusto, tenendo presente il saggio *Un viaggio nell'ombra* felliniano. Vi afferma Fellini:

Il clown incarna i caratteri della creatura fantastica, che esprime il carattere irrazionale dell'uomo [...], quel tanto di ribelle e di contestatario contro l'ordine superiore che è in ciascuno di noi. È una caricatura dell'uomo nei suoi aspetti di animale e di bambino, di sbeffeggiato e di sbeffeggiatore. (Fellini 1972, 111).

Per quanto riguarda il Clown Bianco, in linea di massima il confronto col modello tratteggiato da Fellini regge altrettanto, poiché i due personaggi – a mio avviso – cui tale maschera prena di simbolismo si addice principalmente sono il Dittatore nella raccolta di saggi *Clown. Il dittatore e l'artista* e il Dottor Marga nel romanzo *La busta nera*, tutti e due caratterizzati dalla malvagità, dal cinismo e dalla prepotenza, anche se diversamente dosate e con impatto ampiamente collettivo, nel primo caso, e più limitato, individuale, nel secondo. Come si noterà più avanti, nei commenti che saranno riservati alla coppia clownesca Tolea-Dottor Marga, nel romanzo gli stratagemmi coercitivi del Clown Bianco Marga sono decisamente sottili, quasi impercettibili, a differenza dell'orrore

palese che scatena su masse o intellettuali e artisti singoli il Clown Nazionale (Manea 2004b, 52). Dunque, pure su questo aspetto le descrizioni dei Clown malefici coincidono, anche se si dovrà desumere che l'idea e soprattutto la pratica della "repressione" si carichi nell'universo di Manea di significati più gravi e tragici: "Il clown bianco è uno schiaffeggiatore" e più avanti "Il clown bianco spaventa i bimbi perché rappresenta *il dovere*, o per dirlo con un termine alla moda, *la repressione*" (Fellini 1972, 113 e 114).

La lettura dello stesso passo felliniano da parte dello scrittore romeno restituisce chiarezza riguardo la sua accezione del termine "repressione": "La *repressione* - un termine alla moda? [...]. Per noi, repressione era la realtà più immediata, la respiravamo per le strade, nell'atmosfera dei luoghi di lavoro e nei ristoranti". (Manea 2004b, 51).

Il ritratto dell'Artista si completa sempre in questa prospettiva che ritorna all'inizio del capolavoro di Manea, *Întoarcerea huliganului* [Il ritorno dell'huligano], dove l'immedesimazione fra le inclinazioni del Povero Augusto e l'esperienza di vita dell'esule è ancora e più che mai esplicita e chiama in causa quella di Paul Celan, simile per tanti versi e che appare testimoniata dall'altro illustre esule con le stesse modalità espressive, vale a dire con uno stile diretto, tagliente, che fonde allo stesso tempo nella poeticità la forza della metafora capace di concentrare con massima asciuttezza degli accenti tragici:

"Che cos'è la solitudine provata dal Poeta?", era stato chiesto, più di mezzo secolo fa, subito dopo la guerra, al giovane Paul Celan, mio conterraneo di Bucovina. "Un numero da circo non annunciato", aveva risposto il poeta. [...]. La storia del Circo, come Storia... [...]. Il Povero Augusto va a caccia delle proprie debolezze piuttosto che di quelle altrui, spiando, sospettoso e sarcastico, l'attimo che gli chiede, di nuovo, di impersonare il ruolo di vittima preteso dagli spettatori. In questo ruolo aveva accumulato, a poco a poco, scetticismo e rassegnazione, terapia dell'esilio. (Manea 2004a, 27).

La vicenda umana di un ribelle per eccellenza compone anche la narrazione della *Busta nera*, l'ultimo libro scritto in Romania dall'autore e pesantemente censurato, le cui vicissitudini di scrittura e di pubblicazione raccontate da Manea nel saggio "Il rapporto del censore" esemplificano in modo sufficientemente dettagliato le prassi censorie inflitte per decenni in Romania alla produzione culturale complessiva (Manea 2004b, 77-108).

Il protagonista, l'eccentrico Anatol Dominic Vancea Voinov, detto Tolea, è ai suoi cinquanta anni un Clown sconfitto dalla Storia, che crolla nel finale del romanzo, vigorosamente caratterizzato dal linguaggio veemente e, nel contempo, efficace nello smascherare la menzogna e l'oppressione sociale. Tolea è una specie di ribelle che non accetta di far parte della grande messinscena sociale, dove tutti

sono prigionieri-burattini. L'ex professore di un liceo di provincia – estromesso dall'insegnamento, per presumibili, ma mai comprovate ambiguità nei rapporti con gli studenti, finisce per essere “retrocesso” a portiere di un albergo sordido della capitale.

Quali tratti identitari del personaggio e della trama indicano, dunque, in lui un ribelle e un contestatore dell'ordine costituito? Il libro è ambientato negli anni Ottanta, a Bucarest, allorché il figlio si mette a ripercorrere la vicenda che aveva portato il suo genitore, eccelso professore universitario laureatosi alla Sorbona, a suicidarsi quarant'anni prima. Questa opzione, a cui Anatol dà corso con grande capacità esplorativa, lo catapulterà in un mondo sotterraneo di organizzazioni clandestine, informatori e archivi segreti e, sul piano compositivo, sarà sempre questo il motore che consentirà al narratore di intessere una fitta rete di analogie tra il passato e il presente, tra la dittatura di Antonescu e il regime autarchico voluto dal nuovo *conducător*, Nicolae Ceaușescu. L'indagine così impostata fu anche uno degli aspetti sensibili del romanzo di cui la censura chiese la soppressione.

Il padre di Anatol Vancea Voinov era scomparso dopo aver ricevuto una strana lettera che portava il simbolo della Guardia di Ferro, il movimento legionario fascista di estrema destra costituitosi in Romania nel 1927. Dunque, tutto faceva pensare a una lettera minatoria da parte delle istituzioni del potere: si era nel 1940, ovvero nel periodo del regime dittatoriale governato dal generale Ion Antonescu e dalla Guardia di Ferro.

La morte del padre e la lettera ricevuta da costui poco prima, nella faticosa “busta nera” attorno alla quale aleggia un fitto alone di mistero, sono gli elementi che fungono da motore per la progressione del racconto.

Alla fine dell'indagine di Tolea sembra riuscire a fare luce sui fatti accaduti, ma la verità ultima sfugge al suo esame: quella fantomatica lettera non sembrava fosse opera di un qualche organo superiore, ma in realtà l'autore di essa poteva essere stato uno spasimante della sorella di Tolea, che per i quarant'anni successivi si era nascosto in un ricovero per sordomuti. Tolea arriva dopo ripetute ribellioni e crisi nervose a perdere gradualmente la ragione, ma non prima di seppellire la lettera e insieme a lei il mistero che, assillandolo senza tregua, aveva dato un senso alla sua esistenza offesa e mutilata dalla storia. In effetti, il libro propone un enigma psicologico rivelatore di quello che uno dei personaggi denomina “psicologia della clausura” (Manea 2009, 304), oppure, più esplicitamente, dello sconforto e della nevrosi causati dall'esilio interiore di cui sono affetti molti dei personaggi del romanzo *Busta nera*.

Si tralasciano volutamente altri aspetti, per concentrarsi più approfonditamente sugli spunti che Norman Manea avrebbe potuto cogliere dalla visione felliniana del Clown, alcuni dei quali sono già emersi durante la ricognizione critica che ho condotto fino ad ora.

Nel ritratto del protagonista Tolea, frustrato e deluso, che cerca di resistere a un'esistenza votata alla mediocrità e al compromesso, manifestando un'indifferenza superiore, traboccante di sarcasmo e impertinenza, si possono agevolmente riconoscere i tratti identitari forti dell'Augusto felliniano: l'atteggiamento marcatamente "ribelle" e "contestatario contro l'ordine superiore" e la capacità del Clown di presentarsi come "una caricatura dell'uomo nei suoi aspetti [...] di sbeffeggiato e di sbeffeggiatore". (Fellini 1972, 111).

Senza dubbio, l'ispirazione che Manea dichiara di aver tratto da Fellini risiede principalmente nel rigetto dell'autorità e, in compenso, nel largo uso del sarcasmo. La predisposizione ribelle di Anatol è rivolta contro il fallimento e il degrado cui la società lo condanna.

Un esempio lampante in tal senso è, ad esempio, l'esilarante *performance* del protagonista, in realtà, uno spettacolo tragi-comico, amaro e allo stesso tempo divertente, che scatta al momento della messa in vendita di carne di pollo nel negozio di alimentari Gostat⁶. Il capitolo rivela tutta la capacità istrionica del personaggio, la sua statura di Clown veemente e beffardo, definita attraverso il linguaggio e la gestualità.

Inoltre, se si vuole riflettere sul nome del personaggio Anatol Vancea Voinov, nome che detiene una certa dignità, gravità, eleganza, sarà agevole notare che nominandolo Tolea, l'autore, cui si unisce alla voce del narratore, trasforma il protagonista, partendo dal livello onomastico, in un Clown, in un Povero Augusto. Nell'analisi di Fellini questa osservazione troverebbe riscontro nell'affermazione secondo cui: "Il clown è uno specchio in cui l'uomo si rivede in grottesca, deforme, buffa immagine" (Fellini 1972, 111).

Ad esempio, il narratore lo designa sistematicamente con l'appellativo Tolea, sorta di falso ipocoristico, poiché tale alterazione fonetica appare presentata più come un intervento spregiativo, che come un vezzeggiativo. Altri personaggi che si rivolgono al protagonista, riprendono, seppure in modi diversi, la stessa sfumatura semantica (negativa).

Eppure Tolea è perfettamente in grado di recitare talvolta la parte di un Clown irriverente. Il più sovente egli si mostra tanto irriverente da rasentare l'insolenza più spinta, trovando maggiore appiglio nel rapporto soffocante, in realtà, di vera e propria dipendenza e coercizione, che lega il protagonista al famoso Dottor Marga, l'ex amico della sua famiglia. Sifatto legame dà luogo a una illustrazione tra le più calzanti nell'opera di Manea del rapporto che si instaura fra il Clown Bianco e il Povero Augusto. Tale frequentazione, che detiene una rilevanza fondamentale nella poetica del romanzo, reitera il vincolo autoritario

⁶ Gostat - rete di negozi molto nota e con diffusione capillare in Romania, che commercializzava delle porzioni razionate di salumi, uova, verdura e carne, nel periodo della profonda crisi alimentare degli anni '80 del Novecento.

imposto al protagonista da un'istanza superiore, assimilabile allo stesso tempo a un sostituto simbolico di grado inferiore del dittatore. Il medico neuropsichiatra dirige nel romanzo un istituto di salute mentale, una specie di microcosmo della società romena invaso dalla follia, riflesso di un dato di fatto reale, raccontato con icastica limpidezza dall'autore stesso:

Nel Circo totalitario, gli studi psichiatrici sovraffollati diventano un luogo di rifugio, di preghiera e di simulazione. [...]. Sono luoghi di sotterfugio e di rifugio «legale», dove si può evadere dall'arena-palude, con le sue punizioni, le sue farse e i suoi gemiti quotidiani. Visto che la repressione psichiatrica è stata impiegata contro tanti casi «scomodi» sembra una vera incoscienza che sia tu stesso a offrire allo STATO l'arma più facile per annientarti. (Manea 2004b, 64).

Crediamo che anche il legame, insieme tormentoso e non autentico fra Tolea e il medico Marga, assuma questi precisi significati: il protagonista, consapevole della falsità dell'amicizia cui l'altro finge di essere disposto, finisce per subire trattamenti assimilabili a veri e propri atti di repressione psichiatrica, a lui applicati con guanti bianchi, e che difficilmente possono essere identificati come tali. Nella sua foga di rincorrere la verità sul passato del padre, Anatol bersaglia il dottore di domande scomode, di parole che spaventano l'interlocutore per le allusioni al suo possibile coinvolgimento nei tragici accadimenti di una volta, al punto che Marga tratterà questo paziente recalcitrante sottoponendolo alla sedazione durante le visite "amichevoli" che si svolgono a casa sua, e verso la fine dell'opera non esiterà a rinchiuderlo in un apposito istituto, con l'esito che il "malato" scivolerà ben presto in uno stato fulminante di degrado mentale.

Il Dottor Marga appare come un personaggio ambiguo, malefico. È, a tutti gli effetti, un Clown Bianco, che indossa un vestito bianco, vale a dire un camice da medico e soprattutto si atteggia come una sorta di dittatore a scala ridotta o di sostituto (di grado inferiore) del medesimo, al punto che la discrezione con cui esercita il suo potere occulto rende inafferrabili e invisibili dall'esterno della sua cerchia fidata gli atti repressivi di cui è il mandante. Il dottore si dimostra un manipolatore pericoloso, essendo l'unico personaggio del romanzo il cui ritratto fisico o la cui personalità consentano di individuare delle somiglianze con il profilo del Clown Bianco di Fellini:

Il primo è l'eleganza, la grazia, l'armonia, l'intelligenza, la lucidità, che si propongono moralisticamente come le situazioni ideali, le uniche, le divinità indiscutibili. [...]. L'augusto [...] si ribella ad una simile perfezione, si ubriaca, si rotola per terra e anima, perciò, una contestazione perpetua. Questa è, dunque, la lotta tra il culto superbo della ragione (che giunge a un estetismo proposto con prepotenza) e l'istinto. (Fellini 1972, 112).

Ecco spiegate le ragioni della ribellione che l'Augusto fa esplodere nei confronti del Clown Bianco, nell'accezione di Fellini condivisa da Manea.

Il topos del Clown messo in risalto attraverso l'approccio autotraduttivo e con i mezzi del *teatro nel teatro*

Nella *pièce Angajare de clown* le valenze polisemiche della figura del Clown sono rivelate principalmente dal processo traduttivo operato dall'autore stesso tra la versione linguistica originale (composta nella sua madrelingua) e la trasposizione della stessa nella lingua della sua seconda patria (il francese), processo che perviene a imprimere al testo drammaturgico un'intensa poeticità, da interpretare in una prospettiva più estesa del teatro di Vișniec che, grazie ai propri tratti strutturali e all'incessante "spettacolo" di filtrazioni, riscritture, trasferimenti linguistici, emozionali e culturali, tende verso una poetica del testo bilingue, aperta e in progressivo costituirsi di se stessa.

La succinta analisi dell'immaginario linguistico (più precisamente, certe accezioni a livello compositivo, simbolico-metaforico e semantico), connesso alla figura del Clown, è intesa a esplicitare soprattutto nella versione autotradotta (in francese) le interessanti potenzialità incarnate dal Clown, anche grazie alla presenza del *teatro nel teatro*, che mettono in luce significati supplementari di particolare rilevanza nell'economia del testo complessivo.

Dunque, passerò ora ad esaminare in modo comparativo alcuni aspetti presenti nella versione originale e i loro nessi, in posizioni simmetriche, nell'autotraduzione. Si impongono alcune considerazioni preliminari. Le libertà che l'autore può arrogarsi quando assume anche la veste del traduttore delimitano il proprio spazio di autonomia in relazione alle norme della traduzione allografa e, al tempo stesso, aprono l'opera verso una dimensione più spettacolare, in virtù di una sua prerogativa esclusiva che lo autorizza a mettere in pratica tutte le modifiche atte, nella sua accezione, a completarla.

È proprio questo il punto nodale in cui interviene in Vișniec una vera e propria *poetica della traduzione*, volta a segnalare la piena consapevolezza dell'autore, secondo cui trasferire l'opera in un'altra lingua significa anche modificarla ampliandone le potenzialità stilistiche, simboliche e, talvolta, anche tematiche.

Il testo drammatico *Angajare de clown*, scritto ancora in Romania, tra il 1986 e il 1987, e tradotto già nel 1988 in collaborazione con Claire Jéquier, illustra nella biografia di Matei Vișniec il momento liminale, anche in senso linguistico, tra la fase romena e quella francese della sua opera teatrale.

La *pièce* mette in luce un tratto caratterizzante della drammaturgia dell'autore, ovvero la rivisitazione della poetica del teatro dell'assurdo, che la sua visione rinnova e adatta al mondo contemporaneo, smantellandone sistematicamente procedure e meccanismi.

Ritornano in Vişniec alcuni dei paradigmi più omologati del Teatro dell'assurdo, a partire dall'idea di esplorare la condizione umana senza illusioni, espressa dal reiterarsi della triade attesa – angoscia – alienazione, e attraverso la congiunzione tra comico e tragico, in una visione in cui l'essere umano è ridotto allo status di vittima rinchiusa in un universo infernale e irrazionale, che mette in discussione il concetto stesso di realtà. Dunque, Vişniec esaspera e trasgredisce le strategie del Teatro dell'assurdo con accentuato senso grottesco. A riprova di quello che è stato affermato in precedenza, questa *pièce* dimostra pienamente tale ipotesi interpretativa.

Per quanto riguarda la sua trama, si tralasciano di necessità diversi aspetti secondari, per esporre in sintesi il nocciolo tematico intorno al quale si dipana la fitta rete di significati che si intessono man mano, al passaggio da una versione linguistica all'altra.

I tre personaggi sono vecchi Clown che conservano ricordi comuni. Dopo che tutti hanno letto l'annuncio per l'assunzione di "Clown vecchio", essi si incontrano per caso, nel luogo della selezione, in una sala d'attesa, cioè in uno spazio simbolico. La "gioia" della scoperta si trasforma ben presto per i Clown Niccolò, Filippo e Peppino in una feroce rivalità, che svela nel *Atto primo* la falsità e la perversità della loro difficile condizione, sintomo di profonde fragilità e insicurezze dei personaggi. In attesa del fatidico incontro, i Clown si lanciano insulti e ingiurie con tono ora scherzoso, ora severo, facendo riaffiorare dal loro passato ricordi e illusioni di gloria ancora vive. L'assurdità irrisoria di queste esistenze diventa chiave di lettura per la tragica spettralità e per l'assoluta solitudine della condizione umana *tout court*.

Soltanto nella seconda parte, quando un circo vero attraversa le strade della città, nei tre Clown si risvegliano reminiscenze di innocenza e purezza, che imprime sui loro volti la luce magica di un'autentica felicità. Un orribile malinteso muta il finale in tonalità tragiche: dopo essersi dimostrati premurosi nell'aiutare Peppino, allorché egli mima con perfetta arte la propria morte, non esitano a colpirlo con ferocia e ad abbandonarlo allorché il vecchio Clown è colto davvero da un male improvviso.

Prima di commentare il fondamentale nocciolo di senso verso il quale converge tutta una serie di scene, come il susseguirsi di momenti performativi che hanno come protagonisti i Clown e in particolare Peppino, vale a dire il personaggio creato per illustrare delle funzioni metateatrali in questa *pièce*, dobbiamo osservare che proprio gli stessi momenti e atti di *teatro nel teatro* annunciano e anticipano in modo speculare, in una *mise en abyme* simile a un gioco di riflessi inter- e intra-testuali, il motivo poetico principale ed unificatore del testo teatrale. Inoltre, i monologhi incentrati sulla condizione dell'arte circense e del Clown, assegnati dall'autore a Peppino, rispecchiano con maggiore intensità la

lucidità tragica del personaggio. Infine, sarà pur sempre il Clown più saggio a calarsi nei panni dell'attore tragico per reincarnare il dilemma amletico, che nel testo di Vișniec porta a identificare lo statuto ontologico del Clown – inutile, marginale e condannato alla solitudine assoluta –, alla condizione generalmente umana:

Peppino: [...] Oggi essere o non essere clown, questo è il problema⁷.
(Vișniec 2007, 448).

In un altro contesto, laddove in francese non si esita a esprimere il soggetto 'clown' esclusivamente attraverso la ripetizione del sostantivo nelle frasi che definiscono lo status del commediante – nome mantenuto persino nella terza sequenza –, in romeno si ricorre alla sostituzione pronominale (terza persona singolare) ossia alla forma 'el'. Tale soluzione traduttiva non va dunque intesa come tentativo di esplicitazione e tantomeno di normalizzazione linguistica, ma sarebbe più adeguato leggerla come rimando intertestuale all'universo beckettiano, governato dal principio assiomatico che l'arte è l'apoteosi della solitudine (Fusini 1993, 29).

Ridere stupidamente è tutto quello che sapete fare... un vero clown non ride mai. Non il clown ride, ma è il pubblico, non il clown⁸.
(Vișniec 1998, 26).

Prima che Peppino pronunciasse una battuta di cruciale rilievo nell'economia della *pièce* complessiva, di cui soltanto l'autotraduzione ne rivela il senso più profondo – definendo sotto forma di un'irrevocabile condanna la condizione della loro arte dissacrata e dei Clown come artisti destinati all'incomunicabilità più atroce col mondo –, esistevano alcuni 'antefatti' opportunamente segnalati poco prima, in questo contributo, che rivestono altrettanta rilevanza nella struttura e nella poetica dell'opera.

Pertanto, nell'*Atto primo*, si è potuto assistere alle esibizioni dei tre Clown, disseminate proprio nella sostanza drammatica dell'opera, e destinate a determinare l'avanzamento della trama. Altri numeri circensi, "eseguiti" dai protagonisti nel loro passato, erano stati ricordati con nostalgia, o forse alcuni non avevano nemmeno avuto tanto splendore se non nei loro sogni di gloria, dando tuttavia occasione a momenti di autoriflessione metateatrale sul decadimento del senso della loro arte. Tali sequenze sono volte ad anticipare in chiave tragica

⁷ Si fornisce la versione originale, in romeno, del brano citato: "Peppino: [...] A fi sau a nu fi bufon, asta-i întrebarea". Traduzione in italiano di chi scrive.

⁸ Si fornisce la versione in francese del brano citato: "Rire bêtement, c'est tout ce que vous savez faire... un vrai clown ne rit jamais. C'est pas le clown qui rit, mais c'est le public, pas le clown". Traduzione in italiano di chi scrive.

l'incantevole sfilata per strada di quel circo vero, cui loro viene impedito l'accesso visuale, perché nella sala d'attesa in cui si trovano le finestre mancano.

Il crescendo creato da questi 'antefatti' sfocia a un certo momento in una frase di cruciale importanza, pronunciata da Peppino, il cui senso profondo, svelato solo dall'autotraduzione, rappresenta il nucleo simbolico attorno al quale convergono le linee di forza del testo e definisce in forma di condanna irrevocabile la condizione dell'arte dissacrata dei Clown, vale a dire di artisti destinati all'impossibilità di comunicare con il mondo.

Confrontiamo i passi simmetrici della sequenza nelle due lingue del teatro di Vişniec:

Peppino: Ce s-o mai lungim. V-ați tâmpit, gata. *S-a terminat*. Mai bine uitați-vă cât e ceasu'.

(Vişniec 2007, 442).

Peppino: On va pas passer le réveillon là-dessus! Vous êtes devenus complètement idiots, ça c'est sûr. *Finita la commedia*. Dites-moi plutôt l'heure qu'il est.

(Visniec 1998, 24).

Rispetto alla costruzione impersonale 'è finita', indeterminata e poco suscettibile di introdurre informazioni semantiche significative per la comprensione e l'interpretazione globale del testo, la trasposizione autotraduttiva attraverso l'espressione consacrata e specializzata nell'universo scenico ed estetico, *Finita la commedia*, opera un repentino mutamento dell'orizzonte di attesa del lettore.

Nella versione francese il passo riassume e chiarisce motivi già presentati, ma non ancora del tutto trasparenti nel disegno complessivo dei significati testuali, disegno destinato a precisarsi soltanto alla fine. Allo stesso tempo, nel brano dove appare collocata ancora nell'*Atto primo* della *pièce*, la sentenza anticipa quel delinarsi conclusivo dell'opera verso il quale maturano i diversi piani e livelli di senso. In accezione stilistica, il procedimento è assimilabile a un'analepsi e insieme a una prolessi.

Il sintagma, essenzialmente polisemantico e introdotto nel testo francese in lingua italiana – il veicolo linguistico in cui conobbe la diffusione più ampia, per segnare poi la storia del teatro universale –, calamita l'attenzione del pubblico lettore/spettatore, segnalando che si recita una *commedia nella commedia*, una *performance* di tipo circense all'interno di un'opera drammaturgica, i cui significati travalicano i confini dell'arte o della convenzione strettamente artistica, per definire in accezione negativa lo statuto ontologico generalmente umano.

Come un verdetto di morte, la sentenza sanziona alla metà della *pièce* con poche e precise parole il senso grottesco, artificiale e falso delle tristi simulazioni, completamente estranee al senso dell'arte, per mezzo delle quali ciascuno dei Clown aveva esercitato perfidamente la propria presunta superiorità

nei confronti di un partner d'attesa ritenuto più debole. La risposta del Clown più saggio avverte dunque, in secondo luogo, che, in effetti, si è attori in una *commedia grottesca nella commedia*, poiché *lo spettacolo* si staglia sullo sfondo di una tragedia che rende irreali il comico.

La replica potrebbe stabilire un fertile dialogo intertestuale con l'opera lirica *I pagliacci* di Ruggero Leoncavallo, incentrata pur sempre su un dramma che si consuma prima della recita di una commedia, tra gli attori comici di una piccola compagnia e sempre in registro e con senso tragico. Alla prima rappresentazione, al Teatro dal Verme nel 1892, i personaggi principali interpretano le proprie parti in veste di attori della commedia dell'arte e del teatro popolare, incarnando allo stesso tempo, sotto precisa indicazione registica, i modelli stilistici e scenici consacrati da Arlecchino, Colombina e Pagliaccio, il che legittima ulteriormente la chiave di lettura della *pièce Angajare de clown*, proposta in precedenza. La connotazione ultima riconduce alla loro particolare condizione di esseri umani divorati dal tempo, di cui l'approdo in ordine esistenziale è ormai destinato alla dissoluzione e al crollo implacabile di ogni svolta futura.

Dunque, si potrà identificare qui uno dei nodi tematici principali che accomunano l'opera drammaturgica di Vișniec e il romanzo di Manea, e che è rappresentato dalla condizione tragica dei protagonisti, due Clown al crepuscolo della loro esistenza, uno sconfitto dalla storia avversa e dal male ideologico, ossia da cause estranee all'individualità e all'intimità, l'altro vittima di un tempo che passa inesorabilmente, il cui oltraggio, percepito a livello strettamente individuale, si estende a "contaminare" in modo indiscriminato l'universale condizione umana.

La battuta *Finita la commedia* indica anche una *mise en abyme* che rende possibile - nei termini di Lucien Dällenbach - l'esistenza dell'"autotestualità", per designare l'insieme dei rapporti possibili che un testo possa sviluppare con e dentro se stesso. Dällenbach considera le forme di riassunto interne a un testo (a un'opera), così come ogni genere di *mise en abyme* come illustrazioni dell'"autotesto", poiché funzionano come "citazioni del contenuto" oppure come "riassunti intratestuali" (Dällenbach 1976: 283-284).

Giunti in questo punto dell'analisi sarà legittimo chiedersi chi o cosa abbia fornito all'autore romeno-francese lo spunto per plasmare la sua *pièce* in un universo immaginario italiano, come lo indicano anche i nomi dei Clown, oltre a questa frase quasi miracolosa. Durante un'intervista che mi ha rilasciato nel 2013, lo scrittore aggiunge altre connotazioni, connesse in modo più diretto alla fonte felliniana della sua *pièce*:

[Il sintagma, *n. m.*] Viene direttamente da Fellini. Ero molto influenzato da Fellini quando l'ho scritta [la *pièce Angajare...*, *n. m.*]. È una *pièce* che devo in totalità a Fellini. Mi sono ispirato al suo film *I clown*, dunque, all'universo sonoro dei film italiani e, mentre scrivevo, mi venivano in mente delle

battute. Ad esempio, in *La strada* c'è una scena in cui compaiono due personaggi, la ragazza e l'uomo capace di spezzare le catene, interpretato da Antony Queen. Questi avevano dei rapporti con un giovane e ad un certo momento Antony Queen picchia quel giovane, che muore veramente. Io ho rivisto questo film dopo quarant'anni o forse dopo trenta, e, probabilmente da quella scena è venuta fuori in modo inconsapevole la mia scena dei clown. [...]. I film di Fellini hanno segnato profondamente la mia adolescenza⁹. (Vişniec 2017).

L'autore rivela anche l'esatta circostanza e l'immagine mentale attorno alla quale si sono coagulati altri (possibili) significati culturali della famosa frase. Ambientando la sua *pièce* nell'universo di Fellini e della cultura teatrale italiana, Vişniec ha scommesso su una frase con estesa eco polisemantica in altre lingue, "in virtù"–spiega lo scrittore–"di questa enorme forza di suggestione, portatrice di segni culturali, che è propria della lingua italiana". (Vişniec 2017)

La frase ha come nucleo un vocabolo magico e onnicomprensivo, 'commedia', in cui convergono rispettivamente i significati attribuiti da Balzac e da Dante alla condizione umana, ai quali il testo associa esplicitamente le suggestioni della *commedia dell'arte*, per denotare sul piano tematico, ma anche della stilistica teatrale, scenica, l'inesauribile ampiezza delle manifestazioni che l'umanità possa incarnare. Inoltre, l'autore afferma:

L'idea di commedia rimanda a un intero scatenarsi di passioni, pertanto, le connotazioni vengono ad associarsi rapidamente. Talvolta non ce ne accorgiamo nemmeno, ma una parola provoca un vero e proprio sisma nel cervello di colui che la riceve, suscita a fare collegamenti con altre informazioni e crea una sorta di scossa emozionale e culturale¹⁰. (Vişniec 2017).

Per conseguenza, Vişniec non solo ha introdotto una metafora dove l'originale non la prevedeva, ma, inoltre, ha collocato questa metafora in un

⁹ Si fornisce il brano citato nel testo nella sua versione originale, disponibile col titolo "Convorbire cu M. Vişniec", in Emilia David, *Consecințele bilingvismului în teatrul lui Matei Vişniec*, Tracus Arte, Bucurest, 2015, p. 516: "[Sintagma, n. m.] Vine direct din Fellini. Eu eram foarte marcat de Fellini când am scris-o [piesa *Angajare...*, n. m.]. Este o piesă pe care i-o datorez integral lui Fellini. M-am inspirat din filmul său *Clovnii*, deci, din universul sonor al filmelor italiene, și când scriam îmi veneau în minte replici. De exemplu, în [filmul] *La strada* e o scenă în care sunt două personaje, fata și spărgătorul de lanțuri, jucat de Antony Queen. Aveau niște raporturi cu un tânăr și la un moment dat Antony Queen îl bate pe tânărul acela care chiar moare. Eu am revăzut filmul acesta după 40 de ani sau poate 30 de ani, și – probabil – din scena aceea, în mod inconștient, am tras scena mea cu clovnii. [...]. Filmele lui Fellini m-au marcat enorm în adolescență".

¹⁰ Si fornisce il brano citato nel testo nella sua versione originale, disponibile in *ibid.*, p. 517. "Ideea de comedie sugera o întreagă dezlănțuire de pasiuni, și atunci conotațiile vin rapid. Uneori nici nu ne dăm seama, dar un cuvânt provoacă un seism în creierul celui care îl primește, incită alte informații și creează un fel de fior emoțional-cultural".

punto nodale, di massima rilevanza nel testo, dove la versione francese avrebbe potuto continuare su un piano non metaforico, conferendo alla *pièce* complessiva un supplemento di significato di fondamentale rilievo.

Dalla prospettiva traduttologica, si può asserire che la trasposizione autoriale elude il principio secondo cui è possibile presupporre la perfetta equivalenza di una sequenza linguistica attraverso la sua identica trasposizione letterale nella lingua d'arrivo. Poiché l'autore non si è dato il compito di stabilire una corrispondenza delle metafore tra l'originale e la traduzione, sarà forse più corretto parlare di una *sovratraduzione* o, comunque, di un *potenziamento della poeticità* del testo di partenza. In questa accezione, la traduzione è intesa come apertura del testo verso nuove potenzialità di significato, in una logica in cui le trasformazioni introdotte dall'autore si integrano con naturalezza in un sistema di parallelismi che obbedisce a una logica propria, bilingue.

Si tratta del fatto che, come scrive Antoine Berman, ogni autore bilingue si costruisce in modo intuitivo (come nel caso di Matei Vișniec) oppure facendo ricorso a una coscienza teorica più elaborata un "progetto di traduzione", che prevede un insieme di potenzialità insite nella prima variante linguistica, che solo la traduzione è in grado di far germinare e attivare appieno (Berman 2008, 112).

Conclusioni

La ricognizione che è stata qui riservata al potenziale metaforico della visione del Clown e del circo nel romanzo *La busta nera* di Norman Manea e nella *pièce Vecchio clown cercasi* di Matei Vișniec porta a concludere che, mentre nel primo scrittore la rappresentazione dell'individuo – dell'intellettuale e dell'Artista in particolare – prigioniero nel Circo totalitario o semplicemente nell'arena variopinta dell'esistenza, ha la forza di irradiazione e la capillarità di una *forma mentis* nell'insieme dell'opera, nel secondo, seppure il Clown occupi nell'economia di questo saggio soltanto lo spazio simbolico del testo drammaturgico diventato lungo il tempo il dramma dell'autore maggiormente rappresentato sui palcoscenici internazionali, l'emblema circense giunge a connotare la fragilità della condizione umana stessa e dello status ontologico dell'individuo inteso, dunque, in accezione negativa. Occorre, tuttavia, precisare ancora che in altri testi teatrali di Vișniec il Clown non manca di essere accostato a profili funesti di tiranni.

Nella ripresa intertestuale del topos del Clown felliniano, dapprima illustrata in Manea, sono state messe in luce, come anche nella *pièce* di Vișniec, delle continuità di grande interesse critico, ma anche delle diversità di significato rispetto al modello. Esse indicano nello scrittore romeno-americano, oltre all'universalità della rappresentazione della Storia intesa come circo grottesco e volgare, la specificità irriducibile riflessa nella figura paradigmatica del Clown ribelle e irriverente, ovvero quell'emblema del Clown che nel carnevale infernale del potere dittatoriale mostra la sua forza invincibile, scaturita dal sarcasmo e dalla derisione.

Tale materia letteraria trova modo di manifestarsi in N. Manea nella spiccata frammentarietà delle trame, presente d'altronde a tutti i livelli compositivi, ma soprattutto si trasmette con modalità marcatamente poetiche, vale a dire nella ricorrenza di immagini e topoi metaforici che, associati fra di loro oppure impiegati singolarmente, danno origine nei suoi libri a un'elaborata griglia di strumenti poetici. A questi procedimenti andrebbe ancora aggiunta almeno l'opzione a favore della drammatizzazione accentuata del racconto, assimilabile a tratti a uno spettacolo teatrale, che nella *Busta nera* si declina come commedia totalitaria, rafforzata da una commedia del linguaggio.

Per quanto riguarda Vişniec, la poeticità deriva nella sua drammaturgia da due fonti principali: *in primis* dalla natura eminentemente poetica della sua scrittura teatrale, in cui la poesia permea in modo capillare tutte le sue opere dedicate ai palcoscenici e, secondariamente, come è stato mostrato in questo contributo, dal bilinguismo del suo teatro, in cui il passaggio ininterrotto da una versione linguistica all'altra di una stessa *pièce*, nelle diverse fasi della produzione letteraria dello scrittore, consente il delinearsi nel suo teatro di un dialogismo intertestuale, in accezione traduttologica, ma anche critica in senso esteso, che diventa fonte di uno spettacolo inesauribile delle differenze culturali, antropologiche, semantiche, stilistiche, insomma, compositive in senso esteso.

Le angolature da cui è stata analizzata la pratica dell'autotraduzione rendono possibile l'interpretazione del bilinguismo di Matei Vişniec nei termini di una poetica, che ha al centro l'idea della resa traduttiva intesa come trasposizione poetica. I nessi con una tale analisi, ricavabili nelle versioni autotradotte delle sue *pièces*, sono – come è stato illustrato precedentemente – le estensioni di senso e di visione, gli effetti del bilinguismo riscontrabili al confine tra l'invenzione stilistica e lessicale, le potenzializzazioni operate su diversi piani e livelli di significato, che conducono all'arricchimento complessivo delle valenze insite in ciascun testo. A perseguire questo proposito, i procedimenti messi in opera da Vişniec nella sua drammaturgia sono senz'altro più numerosi rispetto al quadro tracciato di necessità in modo sintetico e soltanto parziale in questa sede.

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THE REPRESENTATION OF RITUAL (IM)PURITY THROUGH METEOROLOGICAL METAPHORS IN FOLKLORIC LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT. *The Representation of Ritual (Im)Purity through Meteorological Metaphors in Folkloric Language.* For the mythical-magical thinking of archaic and traditional communities, ritualistic purity represents a fundamental dimension of the entire universe, most often linguistically expressed through a reference to its antinomian pair, with the help of the *clean-unclean* opposition. According to the degree of contamination with various impure things, such as the multitude of *good* and *evil spirits* that populated the world, both space and time were qualitatively differentiated in *good places* and *bad places*, *good hours* and *evil hours*. People themselves had, in turn, to fulfil this condition of ritual purity, before beginning an important activity. If they were not pure from this point of view, they would be unsuccessful whether it was about working in the fields, going to church, or travelling somewhere. However, these metaphors from folkloric language, long discussed in Romanian ethnological literature, will be invoked only as points of reference in our study, since we intend to closely analyse here some of the least investigated meteorological metaphors, such as *morning dew*, *mist*, *clouds* and *rainbow*. We consider that they too deserve close attention, considering that a person, as a passing being, is represented in many folkloric creations as a forever wanderer, who begins their path *With morning dew on your feet/With mist on your back*. Starting from the image of the bathed person and, thus, purified by the morning dew, but burdened by the thick,

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impure mist that they symbolically carry on their back, we will attempt to remake the imaginary scheme that connects the pure and the impure in the archaic mentality, a scheme organised not after the principle of antithesis, but of the ambivalence specific to symbolic logic.

Keywords: *pure, impure, morning dew, mist, cloud, hail, dragon, silver, rain, rainbow*

REZUMAT. Reprezentarea (im)purității rituale prin metafore meteorologice în limbajul folcloric. Pentru gândirea mitico-magică a comunităților arhaice și tradiționale, puritatea rituală reprezintă o dimensiune fundamentală a întregului univers, cel mai adesea aceasta fiind exprimată lingvistic prin referire la perechea sa antinomică, cu ajutorul opoziției *curat-necurat*. În funcție de gradul de contaminare cu diverse lucruri impure, cum ar fi mulțimea de *duhuri bune* și *rele* care însuflețeau această lume, atât spațiul, cât și timpul erau diferențiate calitativ, în *locuri bune* și *locuri rele*, *ceasuri bune* și *ceasuri rele*. Omul însuși trebuia, la rândul lui, să îndeplinească această condiție a purității rituale, înainte de a începe o activitate importantă. Dacă nu era curat din punct de vedere ritual, nici muncile agricole, nici mersul la biserică, nici plecarea într-o călătorie nu aveau sorți de izbândă. Însă aceste metafore din limbajul folcloric, îndelung discutate în literatura etnologică românească, vor fi invocate doar ca simple puncte de referință în studiul nostru, întrucât ne-am propus să analizăm aici, îndeaproape, câteva metafore meteorologice mai puțin investigate, precum *roua*, *ceața*, *norii* și *curcubeul*. Considerăm că și ele merită o cercetare atentă, având în vedere că omul, ca ființă trecătoare, este reprezentat în multe dintre creațiile folclorice ca un veșnic călător, ce pornește la drum *Cu roua-n picioare/Cu ceața-n spinare*. Pornind de la imaginea omului spălat și, deci, purificat de roua dimineții, dar împovărat de ceața densă, impură, pe care o cară, simbolic, în spate, vom încerca să refacem schema imaginară care leagă purul și impurul în mentalitatea arhaică, o schemă organizată nu după principiul antitezei, ci al ambivalenței specifice logicii simbolice.

Cuvinte-cheie: *pur, impur, rouă, ceață, nor, grindină, balaur, argint, ploaie, curcubeu*

1. Preamble

One of the most impressive images present in Romanian ceremonial funeral songs is that of the human being who starts in the long journey to the other world, early in the morning: *With morning dew on your feet/With mist on your back*². This stereotypical image, indicating the moment of departing, when

² My translation, the original text: "*Cu roua-n picioare/Cu ceața-n spinare*". Unless otherwise mentioned, all quotes in foreign languages are translated by me.

the fields are filled with morning dew, and the valleys are cloaked in mist, also appears in epic songs, such as *Miorița*³ (*Little Ewe*). However, it also reminds us of the love incantations in which the girl leaves to find her love, also early in the morning: "The cheek I haven't washed/To icons I haven't prayed,/The path, the footpath I took/*On the unbeaten footpath,/On the untouched morning dew...*" (Marian 2000b, 20)⁴.

And still, the image does not represent a simple clipping from a scenery. On the contrary, if we reintegrate it in the ceremonial funeral song it belongs to, we realise that the two elements, *the morning dew* and *the mist*, outline defining landmarks of another reality, of a mythical-magical nature, in which the required gesture cannot be fulfilled in reality, but only at a symbolic level, where the path is *long* and *without shadow*: "Wake up, John, wake up,/With your eyes see,/With your hand receive./That we have come,/That we have heard/That you're a wanderer,/With dew on your feet,/With mist on your back,/On the long path,/Long, without shadow..." (Brăiloiu, *apud* Pop 1998, 209)⁵.

Considering that the ceremonies related to family life, all great *wanderers* – whether it is the *newborn* who is entering life, the *newlyweds* who cross the threshold to enter a new social condition or the *dead-wanderer* who is exiting the *white world* to leave for the *black world* – must pass through a *ritualic bath*⁶, we understand that this emblematic image needs a different interpretation. More precisely, it cannot be separated from the idea of ritual purity, mandatory in the most important "paths" in a person's life. In fact, there is also a linguistic argument that the image must be interpreted in this key, namely, the metaphor used for the deceased in Romanian funeral texts: *dalbul de pribeag* (*white wanderer*) where the adjective *white* means "candid, delicate, proud, shining, enchanting" (Șăineanu 1999, 160-163). Decoding the above image following an imaginary scheme built around purity, the dead-wanderers appear before us with their feet washed – and, thus, purified – by the morning dew but, at the same time, burdened by the thick mist, magically impure, that they symbolically carry on their back.

Thus, the two meteorological metaphors suggest that, in order to understand the manner in which ritual purity is presented in the imaginary of archaic and traditional Romanian communities, we have to position ourselves in an ambivalent,

³ For instance, in a variant from Gr. Tocilescu's collection: "Joi dă dimineață,/ Pă rouă, pă ceață" (*apud* Pop 1998, 209) ("Thursday in the morning,/ On dew, on mist").

⁴ "Pe obraz nu m-am spălat/ La icoane nu m-am închinat,/ Pe cale, pe cărare m-am luat/ Pe cărare necălcată,/ Pe rouă nescuturată..."

⁵ "Scoală, loane, scoală,/ Cu ochii privește,/ Cu mâna primește./ Că noi am venit,/ Că am auzit/ Că ești călător,/ Cu roua-n picioare,/ Cu ceața-n spinare,/ Pe cea cale lungă,/ Lungă, fără umbră..."

⁶ This is done by certain people, at a certain moment, with a certain water, having the purpose of easing the integration of the deceased in the beyond (Ghinoiu 1999, 218-219).

symbolic, logic, in which *the clean* and *the unclean* are in a relation of solidarity. *The morning dew* and *the mist* are associated in a binomial structure similar to other great complementary pairs that structure the imaginary of folklore, such as *mare* (*big*) and *mic* (*small*), linguistically materialised in expressions such as: *fata mare* (*marriageable daughter*) and *fata mică* (*young daughter*); *socrul mare* (*the bridegroom's father*) and *socrul mic* (*the bride's father*); *Crăciunul mare* (*Big Christmas*) and *Crăciunul mic* (*Small Christmas*); *Vinerea mare* (*Good Friday*) and *Vinerea mică* (*Small Friday*) (Latiş 1993, 59-62) etc. Thus, the imaginary scheme of ritual purity seems to be built in the same way, since the linguistic expressions that mark the degree of contamination with various impure things of the more important dimensions of existence indicate a binomial organization as well. For instance, both space and time are qualitatively differentiated in the imaginary of folklore, materializing in *locuri bune/curate* (*good/clean places*) and *locuri rele/necurate* (*bad/unclean places*), in *ceasuri bune* (*good hours*) and *ceasuri rele* (*evil hours*) (Bernea 1985, 22, 217). In fact, the entire world of folklore is livened by the multitude of *duhuri bune* and *rele* (*good and evil spirits*), the *bun-rău* (*good-evil*) entirely corresponding to the *clean-unclean* pair.

We have chosen to speak here about this axis of the imaginary, since the inhabitants of this world did everything in their power to obey the condition of ritual purity being convinced that, if they were not pure, they would be unsuccessful whether it was in working in the fields, shepherding, going to church, or going on a (real or imaginary) journey. The ritualistic bathing was always present in family customs or in relation to various holidays or calendar, being observed with the utmost attention at gatherings, at the offering of gifts, at sacrifices etc. The participant, whether “active” (in the case of incantation) or “passive” (in the case of Christmas carols, the nuptial or funeral ceremonial etc.) had to go through the ritualistic bathing for, otherwise, they would be “eliminated from the ceremony” (Eretescu 1974, 8)⁷ or fail in their endeavours. The consecrated gesture through which the hero would wash their white face before leaving for battle, also present in the Christmas carol *Ciuta* (*The Hind*): “Cause our young king/*His white face washed*/A golden shepherd's alpenhorn he took,/Throughout the country the horn he blew,/A great army he gathered up...” (Teodorescu 1985, I, 39)⁸ is especially eloquent to this end.

Similarly, after any type of “contamination” with unclean things, the performer had to regain their initial state of cleanliness. This happened not only within the funeral ceremony, when everyone who became impure through contact with the deceased are required to wash themselves “nine times back to

⁷ “eliminat din ceremonie”.

⁸ “Căci tânărul nostru împărat/ *Pe fața-i albă s-a spălat*,/ Bucium de aur a luat,/ În țară a buciumat,/ Mare oaste-a rădicat...”.

back” (Marian 2000c, 45)⁹, but also in the case of birth, where the midwife was ritually bathed, in order to become purified after contact with the new mother¹⁰: “the *niece* pours water in a dish, and then takes that water with her hands, washes the midwife’s hands; and after washing them, she give her a new headcloth, to wipe her hands. Both the headcloth and the new kerchief remain as a gift for the midwife’s trouble. The washing is compulsory, under the threat that, otherwise, in the beyond the midwife will be “*bloodied up to her elbows*” (Marian 2000a, 179)¹¹. The significance of this gesture, accepted by the entire community, emerges from the obligation to perform it at the funeral of the niece who neglected to execute it during her life and who died before her time. In this case, at the funeral, her relatives will perform her gesture at her behalf, wiping the midwife’s hands with the actual cloth found on the deceased’s face.

Considering the importance of this binomial structure of the world, in the present study, we will not only look at the meteorological metaphors of purity, but also at other impurities, as they appear connected to each other according to the laws of symbolic logic. Certainly, in order to be able to reconstruct a more complete and complex semantics of the pure and the impure, we will make use not only of the deciphering of *conceptual metaphors*¹², through which the *clean-unclean* idea is “materialised”, but also of the entire composite of ritual beliefs and practices that ensure the framework of the ethnographic reality and, clearly, of the cultural charge of the linguistic imaginary that is discussed especially in ethnolinguistics (Bartmiński 2018). Since the “humble” metaphor of the drop of morning dew is one of the most widely spread images to illustrate the health/beauty of the one *cleaned* with the help of magical formulae uttered

⁹ “de nouă ori dupăolaltă”.

¹⁰ The beliefs about the impurity of the new mother (lehuza) and the tabooing of relationships with her are widely spread in Romania. Among other interdictions, she is not allowed to go to the fountain, because the spring will dry up, or milk the cows, so that the milk spring will not disappear (Ciauşanu 2007, 280).

¹¹ “*nepoata* toarnă apă curată într-un blid, și apoi, luând cu mânele sale apă de aceea, spală cu dânsa mânele moașei; iar după ce i le-a spălat, îi dă o ștergură nouă, ca să se șteargă. Atât ștergura aceasta, cât și o năframă nouă, rămân ca dar pentru osteneala moașei. Spălarea este obligatorie, sub amenințarea că, în caz contrar, în cealaltă lume, moașa va fi toată „până în coate *sângioasă*”.

¹² This type of metaphor is also named a conventional or everyday metaphor, being different from the poetic metaphor. It demonstrates that “Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature” (Lakoff, Johnson 2003, 3), that the metaphoric transfer is not only related to language, but it constitutes the very essence of the manner in which human thought functions, regulating our entire daily activity and structuring both the manner in which we perceive things and that in which we behave in the world or interact with one another. In a very broad sense, the essence of this theory is that any new concept is understood and, thus, configured in the terms of another concept: “We claim that most of our normal conceptual system is metaphorically structured; that is, most concepts are partially understood in terms of other concepts” (Lakoff, Johnson 2003, 56).

by an enchantress, we will continue to research the meaning that was attributed to it in the Romanian archaic and traditional mentality, in relation to other meteorological metaphors of (im)purity.

2. Morning dew – a metaphor of ritual purity

Light-Morning dew. If, in the emblematic verses invoked in the preamble of this study, the idea of the purity of the morning dew does not show through with sufficient clarity, and the hypothesis of the ritual *bathing* of the deceased's feet in the fresh morning dew could be considered a simple supposition, the stereotypical formulae that conclude the incantations confirm, without a doubt, the pure character attributed to this substance. In these ritual poems, which have the purpose of improving (= purifying), through magical means, a person touched by various things considered, par excellence, impure, such as various diseases, ugliness or lack of love, the morning dew-purity identity is explicitly expressed: "Let so-and-so remain/*Clean/Enlightened,/Like* the day they were born,*/Like the star* in the sky,*/Like the morning dew* on the ground..." (Teodorescu 1985, II, 38)¹³.

Even though, according to the logic of "orientational" metaphors defined in cognitive linguistics, what is found below should be considered evil and, thus, impure, while what is above is good and beautiful (Lakoff, Johnson 2003, 17) and, thus, pure¹⁴, in the magical formula rendered here this imaginary scheme does not seem to work. On the contrary, in this incantation gathered in 1884, the morning dew, in the terrestrial plane, and the stars, in the celestial plane, appear as two ends of an axis that integrated the world above and below with the light metaphor. Transferring the purity of the star above onto the drop of morning dew below, the bedewed field becomes a symmetrical, shining figure, while the black ground magically transforms in a reverse/correspondent image of the starry sky. The *light* of the stars and of the drop of morning dew, even if passing and disappearing when the sun rises, is the trait that reunites the two life planes: the terrestrial and the celestial. The morning dew thus becomes a *container-metaphor* of the *substance* type (30), which incorporates the brightness generating light. Certainly, however, the ephemeral nature also represents a semantic trait that joins together the morning dew and the star, both being a

¹³ "Să rămâie (cutare)/ *Curat,/ Luminat,/ Ca-n ziua maica ce-a fapt,/Ca steaua din cer;/ Ca roua din pământ...*".

¹⁴ In other context, however, this logic organised on a vertical axis completely works. For instance, the practice of the upward aspersion that shepherds make in Maramureş when they have to cross a running water with their sheep, splashing them with water "de jos în sus" ("from toe to head") (Latiş 1993, 67), confirms the efficiency of a gesture that references pure, upstream river springs.

type of *newborns* fated to perish every day, once the sun rises in the sky. Moreover, in the magical formula discussed here, there is also a reference to the moment of birth of the enchanted one, a symbolic state of the human being for the highest degree of cleanliness.

Incorporating the light of dawn, the morning dew becomes a subtle substance, “filled with celestial material”¹⁵, associated with the pearl, as it emerges from the manner in which it is put in a metaphor in riddles: “*The Lady’s little earring/From the bottom of the sea*” (Pamfile 2018, 341)¹⁶. Thus, it was interpreted as an authentic sign of “the sky and earth’s hierogamy” (Evseev 1998, 402)¹⁷. Light is the binder between purity metaphors in the following love incantation as well, where the protagonists are enchanted so as to remain *clean*: “*Clean like the silver/Lit like the sky/Like the star up above,/Like the morning dew down below/ Like the lap of the Virgin Mary*” (Pamfile 1998, 197)¹⁸. Here, the *clean silver*¹⁹ metaphor clearly guides the reading of the other metaphors through the same source-domain of the light, the brightness being seen however not just as an effect of the astral light, but also as an emanation of the sacred being (the Virgin Mary). In fact, the purifying role of the light is well known, being confirmed in popular beliefs, where light is considered “the fright of unclean spirits” (Ciauşanu 2007, 105)²⁰, and, by contrast, the unclean place is “the place where the sun never shines” (Niculiţă-Voronca 1998, 188)²¹.

The purity hypothesis derived from the bright nature of the drop of morning dew is further consolidated by its power to return sight to the blind (not by chance, the pupil is also called *the light of the eyes*), as told by fairytales: “The poor blind man was sitting propped against a cross and thinking about his misfortune, when he heard from the cross some *magical birds* speak. *One was saying: «if only the blind man would wash with morning dew, he would instantly see»*” (Şăineanu 1978, 523)²². However, the gesture of washing with morning

¹⁵ “plină de materie celestă”.

¹⁶ “*Cerceluşul Doamnei/Din fundul mării*”.

¹⁷ “hierogamiei cerului şi al pământului”.

¹⁸ “*Ca argintul curăţat/ Ca cerul luminat,/ Ca steaua de sus,/ Ca roua de jos/ Ca poala Maicăi Precistii*”.

¹⁹ Not only *pure silver* but also gold is invoked as a landmark for the final purification of the one enchanted, as it happens in the incantation for a child born with a mark and which was collected in Moldavia: “Let N. remain *clean/ Clean/ And enlightened/ Like pure gold/ Like the Virgin Mary,/ Who left him,/ Like morning dew in a field,/ Like the star in the sky!/ Amen*.” (“N. să rămână *curat/ Curat/ Şi luminat/ Ca aurul strecurat/ Ca sfânta Maică Marie,/ Ce l-a lăsat,/ Ca roua-n câmp,/ Ca stea-oa-n cer!/ Amin*.”) (Marian 2000a, 23).

²⁰ “spaima duhurilor necurate”.

²¹ “locul unde nu luminează soarele niciodată”.

²² “Sărmanul orb sta rezemat de o cruce şi se gândea la nenorocirea lui, când auzi de pe cruce vorbind pasări năzdrăvane. Una spunea: «de s-a spăla orbul cu rouă, îndată ar vedea»”.

dew recommended here to regain eyesight can also refer to the therapeutic valences attributed to this aquatic substance, of which we will discuss later on.

The untouched morning dew. Another potential source of the morning dew's purity is represented by its intact nature, which must be associated, in a magical-ritual context, with the *virgin water*, called *aqua virgo* by Ancient Romans, used in magical practices to restore the health or beauty of the enchanted one. In order to keep its purity, the water must be protected from any type of touch: it is taken from wells "early in the morning, and not after others", then it is "quickly" brought home, in a new jug, "from which no one has drunk", "without speaking to anyone" and "in covered jugs" (Gorovei 1990, 138)²³. In fact, pure-untouched identity is also demonstrated by the equivalency between *clean places* and *unbeaten places*, as it emerges from the description of the enchantresses' home: "In *clean places*,/ *Unbeaten by the foot*" (Ghinoiu 1999, 158)²⁴. We are told by beliefs that, just like the devil's step, the step of the unclean person contaminates with impurity the beaten place, according to the principles of magic through contiguity. On the other hand, the touching of a clean girl/woman makes everything grow "as if out of water", and the dry grass turn green (Niculiță-Voronca 1998, I, 133). As it is known from magical practices as well, sampling the trace of the loved one is done precisely because it concentrates complex information about the wearer that even the hunter from Palaeolithic was researching by following the wild beasts they intended to hunt (Evseev 1998, 369). As metonymy for the human being, the *trace* is negatively valued in Romanians' beliefs as well, just like in those of other peoples, which is confirmed by the expression: *a călca în urmă rea* (*to step on a bad trace*), which marks the appearance of a misfortune.

Through this expression, we better understand why the *unbeaten morning dew*, a true *ontological metaphor* invented by the archaic person, becomes the ideal linguistic expression through which the virgin, intact aspect of the concept of purity materialises. By dying at the moment it is touched by the sun's light²⁵,

²³ "dis-de-dimineată, și nu după alții", "din care nu a băut nimeni", "fără a vorbi cu cineva", "în vase astupate".

²⁴ "În locuri curate,/ De picior neumblate".

²⁵ Certainly, even the ephemerality of this meteorological phenomenon stimulated the imagination of the traditional individual, making them transform it into a symbol of absolute purity. More precisely, since it melts under the sun's heat, the morning dew does not have time to become contaminated with the evil things that invade the diurnal space (this is the reason why there are also prescriptions regarding performing ritual practices before sunrise). This feature is frequently invoked in lyrical songs: "Taci, taci, taci, inima mea/ Rabdă pe cât vei putea,/ că nu-i trăi cât lumea/ că-i trăi o zi sau două/ și te-i topi ca ș-o roaună" ("Be quiet, be quiet, be quiet, my heart/ Bear as much as you can,/ for you won't live forever/ for you'll live a day or two/ and then melt like morning dew") (the Jarník-Bîrseanu collection, *apud* Gherman 2020, 163) or in disenchantments for the evil eye: "Fugi, deochi,/ Dintre ochi,/ ...Să te duci, să piei,/ Cum piere roua la soare/ Cum piere spuma de mare..." ("Run, evil eye,/ From between the eye,/ ...Go, and perish,/ Like morning dew perishes under the sun/ As foam perishes in the sea...") (Teodorescu 1985, II, 41).

the morning dew remains the absolute symbol of ephemerality. However, it is precisely this ephemerality that saves it because the danger of its exposure to black magic disappears. The same semantic value also derives from the imaginary of the *Câmpul rourat* (*The bedewed field*), described in Christmas carols. This is a sacred space, found in the vicinity of another mythical-magical space, pivoted by the *Mărul-rotat* (*Round-apple tree*), and their mystification is based on the same *pure-unbeaten* equivalency: being found at the edge of the world, they are difficult to access for the mere mortals, being rarely – if ever – beaten by a human foot. The feather from the plumage of celestial vultures brought by the protagonist from these spaces found at the edge of the earth is also protected with great care, so that it is not touched by wind or by rains that could affect its integrity/purity and, as a result, its efficiency as a magical instrument: “...Cause *I was far/ at the Round-apple/ at the Bedewed field/ Where I have fighting/ Two baby vultures/ Two grey chicks/ Up in a small cloud/ On a flake of gold*” (Teodorescu 1985, I, 50)²⁶. The places where diseases are banished and where there is no profane human gesture are also spaces of magical-ritual purity. These are described with the help of the “invalidated metaphor” (Brătulescu 1966, 91)²⁷: “Where grass *doesn't grow*”, “Where people *don't tread*” or “Where grass *is not stepped on*” (Gorovei 1990, 175-176)²⁸.

The pure and, at the same time, sacred nature of the unbeaten *bedewed field* appears in other genres of oral literature: fairytales, dirges or nuptial poems. For instance, when asking forgiveness from the bride, those who are part of the groom's train, represented in the form of great boyars who descend onto the bride's yard, pretend their horses are fed with hay and green trefoil, cut on Saint George's Eve, while respecting precise ritual conditions: “*With morning dew untaken,/ With flowers unshaken,/ Gathered on a day of rest/ By two sister girls...*” (Teodorescu 1985, I, 128)²⁹. The image of purity derived from the lack of touch appears in the ballad *Iorgu Iorgovan* as well, where the virgin-sister retreats in order to prevent incest in the protecting space of the forest. Here too the image of the chaste girl, untouched by the wind and unseen by anyone is presented through the invalidated metaphor: “*On the narrow footpath,/ Through the deep valley,/ In loneliness,/ Under slabs of stone,/ By wind untouched,/ By no one seen...*” (Crețu 2014, 152)³⁰. The metaphor appears in other variants of the ballad as well, where the “wild” girl throws herself in the Cerna river, but

²⁶ “...Că am fost departe/ la Mărul-rotat/ La Câmp rourat/ Unde mi se bat/ Doi pui de vulturi/ Doi pușori suri/ Sus într-un norel/ P-un fulg d-aurel”.

²⁷ “metaforei infirmate”.

²⁸ “Unde iarbă nu crește”, “Unde oameni nu umblă” or “Unde iarbă nu se calcă”.

²⁹ “Cu roua neluată,/ Cu floarea nescuturată,/ Strâns în sărbători/ De două fete surori...”.

³⁰ “Pe potecă strămtă,/ Prin valea adâncă,/ În singurătate, /Sub lespezi de piatră,/ De vânt nebătută,/ De nimeni văzută...”.

is reborn for eternity at a cosmic level, under conditions of absolute purity, converted in: "Proud flower,/ Proud/ Like the day,/ *Tender*³¹/ *Like morning dew*,/ Under slabs of stone,/ Placed in the shade,/ *Untrodden by anyone*" (152-153)³².

The ballad *Cicoarea (Chicory)*, gathered in 1858, also invoked the untouched purity of the girl with whom the Sacred Sun falls in love. She walks on a *rivulet of morning dew* while gathering the drops in a glass. However, her purity is threatened right when she is discovered (i.e. seen) by the sun: "*On a rivulet of morning dew/ Walking her walk,/ The young sprout,/ Barefoot through the morning dew,/ The fairy of flowers,/ The flower of dawn,/ Her morning dew gathering,/ Her glass filling./ And she thinks,/ That she's unseen./ But she was seen,/ By the dear, sacred Sun...*" (Teodorescu 1985, II, 152)³³.

The fairytale *Fata din dafin (The Laurel Girl)* also brings to the foreground the same image of the *clean girl*, who appears only before the one who will have found her secret. In fact, one of the virtues of this unseen and untouched flower, hidden in the heart of the laurel, is that it can make the fairytale hero who manages to open the laurel, collecting the flower-girl and putting her next to his chest invisible (Roşianu 1973, 137). In fact, by becoming visible, the girl will lose her initial purity, for the magical formula for opening the laurel suggestively builds the same image of cleanliness that has not been spoiled by any touch: "*Open, green laurel,/ The clean girl to exit,/ By the sun,/ Unseen,/ By wind untouched,/ By man unseed*" (Teodorescu 1985, II, 87)³⁴. This image is found in other variants of Iorgovan's ballad as well: "*Face/ Fair,/ By wind untouched,/ By man unseen*" (Teodorescu 1985, II, 114)³⁵.

In lyrical poetry as well the clean girl is metamorphosed through the *bedewed flower (floarea rourată)*, by comparison to the man who is antithetically associated with the *fanned chaff (pleava vânturată)* (Bîrlea 1979, 88). In an allegory the first cycle of a girl's life is portrayed through the blooming scenario: "And with rain I was rained me/ And with *dew I was bedewed*;/ From rain I

³¹ *Fragă* (like the morning dew) has, here, most likely, the meaning of "tender", "raw", "delicate", since the syntax imposes an adjective and not a noun, while semantically, according to DEX, *fraged* also means "recently grown", which would give complete coherence to the text. For prosody reasons however, the adjective *fraged* seems to have been modified after the model of the noun *fragă*.

³² "Mândră floricea,/ Mândră/ Ca ziuă,/ *Fragă/ Ca rouă*,/ Sub lespezi de piatră,/ La umbră băgată,/ *De nimeni călcată*".

³³ "*Pe pârâu de rouă/ Plimbă-mi-se plimbă, /Tânără mlădiță,/ Prin rouă desculță,/ Zâna florilor,/ Floarea zorilor, /Rouă adunându-și, /Paharul umplându-și. /Și ea mi se crede,/ Că nimeni n-o vede./ Dar o a văzut,/ Drăguț sfântul Soare...*"

³⁴ "Deschide-te, dafin verde,/ Să iasă fată curată, /De soare/ Nevăzută, /De vânt/ Nebătută,/ *Pe pământ/ Neumblată, /De voinic/ Nesărutată*".

³⁵ "*Față/ Cu albeață,/ De vânt nebătută,/ De om nevăzută*".

sprung/ From morning dew I bloomed,/ When the sun arose/ I beautifully bloomed..." (100)³⁶.

Morning dew-sacred water. Certainly, the healing power of the morning dew is due not only to the light that it incorporates but also to the fact that it reunites earthly and heavenly waters. In most universal beliefs it is considered as "a pure, precious water, the water of principles by excellence"³⁷, a condenser of the generating forces of the wet principles (Chevalier, Gheerbrant, III, 175), a status that certainly charges it with sacred powers. Thus, in riddles, the morning dew is metamorphosed under the form of the largest water on Earth, and in a wedding oration the groom being obligated to answer, in order to prove his wisdom and to be allowed to leave with the bride from home towards the church, the question: "*What water is the largest/ Here, under the sun?*", the right answer being "*The largest water,/ Here under the sun, Summer morning dew/ Over the entire world*" (Gherman 2020, 164)³⁸. However, the morning dew is also identified with a water mythical in origin, namely the *water drops* from the bottom of the sea, sprinkled everywhere by the tails of the four gigantic fish that support the earth, with the *sweat* of the four giants, who are sweating under the weight of the earth or even with the *earth's sweat* (162). However, the sacred character of the water from the morning dew drop, more guessed in the legends that speak of fish or giants that support the earth placed on water, is also explicitly stated in popular beliefs. These show that the morning dew is *sacred* for it is "dripped from the sky", being sent "as a gift from God, to revive the crops" (161)³⁹.

The beliefs that identify the drops of morning dew with "*the tears of the Virgin Mary shed at Christ's cross*" (162)⁴⁰ speak of the celestial and sacred nature of the morning dew water as well. However, even if they don't come from a divine character, the tears seem to be some corresponding metaphors, analogous from a formal, but also semantic point of view to the drop of morning dew, which strengthen its symbolism. Similar to the morning dew they too have life generating virtues, as it emerges from the fairytale *Făt-Frumos din lacrimă* (*Prince Charming of the Tear*), in which the queen, saddened by not being able to bear children, cries while praying to the Virgin Mary. A tear from her "black eye" – here again we have the light-darkness binomial – is sipped by the queen who instantly becomes "îngreunată" ("heavy with child") (Șăineanu 1978, 402), this gesture of autophagy explaining the title of the fairytale as well. The tear

³⁶ "Și cu ploaia m-a plouat/ Și cu roua m-a rouat;/ De ploaie am răsărit,/ De rouă am împupit,/ Când soarele-a răsărit/ Io frumos am înflorit...".

³⁷ "apă pură, prețioasă, apa principilor prin excelență".

³⁸ "Ce apă-i mai mare/ Aici, pe sub soare?", "Apa cea mai mare,/ Aici pe sub soare, Roua de vara/ Pe toată lumea".

³⁹ "picurată din cer", "ca dar de la Dumnezeu, spre învierea semănăturilor".

⁴⁰ "lacrimile Maicii sfinte vărsate la crucea lui Hristos".

has purifying virtues as well⁴¹, being enlisted in the sphere of pure substances, as we find out from fairytales: “the *crystal clear* spring water was running” (Gorovei 1990, 371)⁴² or from riddles that metamorphose the tear as a special water, “without sand” or “without soil”: “What water *without sand* is there in the world?” (Papadima 2009, 266)⁴³ or “The most stillest of waters/ and *without soil*” (267)⁴⁴. Lamentations also tells us that they have the strength to wash/whiten the black clothes (i.e. dirty) of the deceased, sent from the depth of the earth on the messenger-wind: “When your *shirt* be *black*,/ Send it to me, dear mother,/ On the wind’s son,/ From the earth’s depth/ (...) / *Washed in lil’ tears*/ And dried in lil’ thoughts...” (Marian 2000b, 355)⁴⁵. Moreover, fairytales speak even of the power of tears to bring heroes turned to stone back from the dead: “The king’s son placed the stone in one of the palace’s chambers and his wife, stricken by pain, cried for three days, until she filled a big basin with tears that once poured over the stone, the fisherman’s son quickly came back to life” (Șăineanu 1978, 388)⁴⁶.

The gesture of gathering the tears in a basin, with a therapeutic purpose, is also found in “bedewing”, recorded in certain parts of Bukovina, where girls would wash their eyes in the morning dew gathered from “the clean field in the morning of Saint George’s, so as to be more lovely and more attractive” (Marian 2022, 285)⁴⁷. The therapeutic power increases if the morning dew is gathered in sacral moments, such as Saint George’s Day or Easter, before sunrise, at the first sound of the semantron, while strictly following certain ritual conditions: the gathering is done while wearing a *new headcloth*, in *seven or nine mornings*, from the bedewed crops, the morning dew being kept as a cure in a small bottle (Gherman 2020, 165). It is worth mentioning that this is the same way in which Romanians keep Holy Water from Epiphany throughout the year, which strengthens the hypothesis of the sacral character attributed to the morning dew. The diseases that can be cured through *bedewing* are very diverse: headaches and aches of limbs, various external diseases, such as boils, warts and scabies,

⁴¹ The purifying valences also emerge from the equivalency with elements that are not aquatic in nature. For instance, the morning dew is metamorphosed as a sponge capable of cleaning any type of uncleanliness: “*Un burete uriaș, / A șters praful din oraș, / A înviorat câmpia / Și a sporit bogăția*” (“A giant *sponge*,/ *Dusted* the city,/ *Reinvigorated* the plain/ *And increased* wealth” (Papadima, 335).

⁴² “apa izvorului care curgea *limpede ca lacrima*”.

⁴³ “fără nisip”, “fără tină”: “Ce apă este în lume *fără nisip*?”.

⁴⁴ “Apa cea mai lină/ și mai *făr’ de tină*”.

⁴⁵ “Când ți-a fi *cămeșa neagră*,/ Să mi-o trimeți, maică dragă,/ Pe fecioru vântului,/ Din fundul pământului/ (...) / *Spălată-n lacrimele*/ Și uscată-n gândurile...”.

⁴⁶ “Feciorul de împărat așeză stana într-o cameră a palatului și soția sa, de durere, plânse trei ani de zile, până umplu o strachină mare cu lacrimi pe care, turnând-o peste stană, feciorul pescarului învie numaidecât”.

⁴⁷ “un câmp curat în dimineața de Sfântu Gheorghe, ca să fie mai drăgălașe și mai atrăgătoare”.

but also eye diseases (pink eye). All of these were “cleaned” through the simple washing with morning dew, the human bodies becoming contaminated with the purity of this sacred element, according to the principle of magical adjacency. The morning dew is used as a prophylactic as well, especially to prevent the appearances of blemishes on the cheek (the luminous cheek, without blemishes, could be associated with the luminous nature of the drop of morning dew as well), the sun itself taking, in its anthropomorphic stage, before setting for the world, a morning dew bath, prepared on its table “ca să se întărească” (“so as to strengthen itself”) (Olteanu 2021, I, 250).

It is evident that, due to its purifying power, morning dew is beauty generating. Beliefs show that the one who washes themselves with morning dew will have their face whiter and more tender (Ciauşanu 2007, 22). The morning dew also cleans the protagonist of enchantments from everything that is ugly: “– Good morning,/ Dew, lil’ mornin’ dew!/ – Thank you,/ Dearest!/ – Dew, lil’ mornin’ dew,/ I came to pray/ And to ask you to wash me,/ To clean me,/ To cleanse me/ Of all hates/ And enchantments/ To make me/ Sweet and beautiful...” (Pamfile 1998, 195)⁴⁸. This enchantment confirms the hypothesis launched in other ethnological research, according to which, in the imaginary of the person of oral culture, beauty is a true “gift of the water”: “Water, bedewed water,/ Make me fair and beautiful...” (Ursache 2014, 9, 27)⁴⁹. As a natural continuation of this belief, it is said that the morning dew gathered from the plains on the mornings between Easter and Pentecost can even attract the love young men (Gherman 2020, 166).

Morning dew is however a source of health, vigour and beauty not only for people, but also for the animal kingdom. For instance, the horse of the hero from ballads is fed with fresh grass and with morning dew untouched by human foot, in order to gain strength and beauty (*a thick mane* here represents equine beauty): “Stay, dark-bay, tethered some more [...],/ ‘Cause if I marry,/ I’ll also free you,/ To graze field grass,/ To drink mountain water,/ To graze *untouched grass*,/ *Of morning dew unshaken*,/ To drink water from rock/ Filtered between the corners,/ To grow a *thick mane*,/ A *thick, dishevelled mane*,/ To be *quick paced*,/ To help me in haste” (Teodorescu 1985, I, 58)⁵⁰. The practice of the *împrourat* (early morning grazing) reflects the same therapeutic valences attributed to the fields filled with morning dew: still on the day of Saint George’s, until daylight,

⁴⁸ “– Bună dimineața,/ Rouă, rouliță!/ – Mulțămim dumitale,/ Mândră drăguliță!/ – Rouă, rouliță,/ Am venit să mă închin/ Și mă rog să mă speli, /Să mă curățești,/ Să mă limpezești/ De tăte urile/ Și făcăturile/ Ca să mă faci/ Drăguță și frumoasă...”

⁴⁹ “dar al apei”: “Apă, apă rouoasă,/ Fă-mă mândră și frumoasă...”

⁵⁰ “Mai șezi, murgule, legat [...],/ Că dacă m-oi însura,/ Și ție drumul ți-oi da,/ Să paști iarba câmpului,/ Să bei apa muntelui,/ Să paști *iarbă neumblată*,/ *De rouă nescuturată*,/ Să bei apă de pe piatră/ Printre colțuri strecurată,/ Ca să-ți crească *coamă lată*,/ *Coamă lată, respirată*,/ Să fii *iute de picior*/ Să-mi ajuți la câte-un zor”.

cattle are taken to *împroor*, meaning to graze on morning dew, so that the cattle would be healthy (Olteanu 2021, I, 361). In stories, horses “are raised in the dark, given milk to drink and *fed with morning dew*) (Șăineanu 1978, 645),⁵¹ the morning dew probably replacing the lack of light through its specific aforementioned qualities.

Mana-morning dew. Despite being positively valued, morning dew can be used in black magic as well. *Master-people*, also called *wraiths*, use it to destroy the crops of other – grain crops – and to help theirs. In the morning of Saint George’s Day, the “master” goes early in the morning to the grain crops, where they undress before sunrise, they recite an enchantment, and with a table cloth they gather the morning dew from the neighbour’s or another’s grain crops and shakes it out on their own crops. By doing this, they “*take the mana from the food and gives it to their grain crops* (so that their crops will be incomparably more plentiful than those of others)” (Gherman 2020, 166-167)⁵². This practice comes to explain and consolidate, at the same time, the imaginary about the regenerating virtues attributed to the drops of morning dew, since morning dew seems to concentrate *the mana of grain crops* itself, that fertilizing power that the harvest is dependent on every year. The story of the *morning dew gathering luck*, which comes with clothes wetted by the morning dew gathered from all the fields while bringing the mama to the old woman’s field, also supports this *mana-morning dew* equivalence (Pamfile 2018, 341).

Blood-morning dew. Another belief that speaks about its generating power is one related to Adam, in which it is stated that even “human blood was made from morning dew” (Gherman 2020, 162)⁵³. Even in the forgivenesses towards the bride, recorded by Sim. Fl. Marian in the 1892 collection, the image of the blood originating from morning dew appears, also when Adam is described, thus strengthening the idea of semantic solidarity between the two elements: “And they built/ Our ancestor Adam,/ From whom we all come,/ With bones from stone,/ With eyes from the sea,/ With *blood from morning dew*,/ With soul from the holy spirit...” (Marian 2000b: 534)⁵⁴

3. (Im)pure mist

Devil-mist. Although associated with impure things, mist is not entirely separated from morning dew. On the contrary, in beliefs it is seen as a type of vehicle that ensures the connection between sky and earth, collecting the morning

⁵¹ “sunt crescuți la întuneric, adăpați cu lapte și hrăniți cu rouă”.

⁵² “*ia mana de la bucate și o dă la holda lui* (așa că holda lui va fi neasemănat mai rodită decât ale altora)”.

⁵³ “sângele omenesc a fost făcut din rouă”.

⁵⁴ “Și și-a zidit/Pe strămoșul nostru Adam,/ De la care ne tragem toți neam,/ Cu oasele din piatră,/ Cu ochii din mare,/ Cu *sângele din rouă*,/ Cu sufletul din duhul sfânt...”.

dew and raising it to the sky: "At night mists descend on the earth, in the morning dew is gathered from the grass and crops and is raised to the clouds..." (Gherman 2020, 163)⁵⁵. However, beyond these positive valences, most often mist is negatively valued, due to its opacity. Judging things from the perspective of symmetry with the *light-morning dew* metaphor, we observe that now we are talking about an element that does not allow the purifying light to pass and, in this dark fog, there are various evil spirits certainly hiding. Of these, the devil himself appears in pastoral beliefs embodied in the form of mist. Thus, it is believed that the devil "...would come out towards daylight from water and from lakes, and then, *widening itself like a mist*, falls over the sheephold and disfigures the sheep" (Latiş 1993, 66)⁵⁶.

Silence-mist. The impure nature of the mist is also derived from the fact that it is lacking a voice. Its unearthly nature seems to derive from the fact that it moves without noise, only being identifiable at the visual level and not at the level of sound, as stated by riddles: "It sits in the woods, *without sound*; / It's a cloud, / And doesn't roar" (Papadima 2009, 202)⁵⁷. The fact that its presence cannot be noticed from an auditory point of view: "What goes through the shrubs / And *doesn't make a sound*?"⁵⁸ nor signalled by the bark of watch dogs: "What goes through the village, / And *dogs don't bark at*?"⁵⁹ (202) enlists it in the series of dangerous and, thus, impure elements, since in the scenery, described with the help of the invalidated metaphor, as a space stripped of any sign of life, also constitutes, as we remember, the place where diseases and evil spirits in enchantments are banished: "Run, evil eye, / From between the eyes,... / Where the priest / Doesn't sound the semantron, / Where the girl / Doesn't dance, / Where the rooster / Doesn't crow, / Where the cow / Doesn't bellow, / Where the cat / Doesn't meow" (Teodorescu 1985, II, 41)⁶⁰.

Death-mist. Even the death of someone dear is symbolised with the help of the mist that sets in the morning at the window: "Yesterday in the mornin', / A *mist set*, / *Mist at the window*, / And a black she-raven, / Whirling above, / Wings flapping, / Me it hit, / Clouding my eyes, / Tarring my face, / Gluing my lips. / I cannot speak, / To thank them" (Pop 1998, 207)⁶¹, thus confirming

⁵⁵ "Noaptea se lasă neguri pe pământ, dimineața culeg roua de pe iarba și semănături și o ridică la nori...".

⁵⁶ "...ar ieși înspre ziuă din apă și din lacuri, apoi, *lățindu-se ca o ceață*, cade peste stână și pocește oile".

⁵⁷ "Stă-n pădure, *Nu răsună*; / Nour îi, / Și nu tună".

⁵⁸ "Ce trece prin tufe / Și nu s-aude?".

⁵⁹ "Ce trece prin sat / Și câinii nu bat?".

⁶⁰ "Fugi, deochi, / Dintre ochi,... / Unde popă / Nu toacă, / Unde fată / Nu joacă, / Unde cocoș / Nu cântă, / Unde vacă / Nu zbiară, / Unde pisică / Nu miorlăie".

⁶¹ "Eri de dimineață, / *Mi s-a pus o ceață*, / *Ceață la fereastră*, / Și-o corboaică neagră, / Pe sus învolbând, / Din aripi plesnind, / Pe min' m-a plesnit, / Ochi a-mpânjenit, / Fața mi-a smolit, / Buze mi-a lipit, / Nu pot să grăesc, / Să le mulțumesc".

that the mist from the dead-wanderer, mentioned above, in the emblematic verses from the *Preamble*, could truly symbolise death itself carried on one's back, while walking through the morning dew is the ritual washing that conditions becoming integrated in the other world.

Mourning-mist. Mist is also chosen in the imaginary of the folkloric person to metamorphose the feeling of profound sadness that weighs on the heart of the one left by their beloved. Just as in the context of the funerary ceremonial, the mist sets on the house's gate, but also on the heart, as shown in traditional lyrical poetry: "Since my love left/ *Fog set over the gate,*/ Both over the pole and the twig,/ *And over my lil' heart*" (Bîrlea 1979, 90)⁶². In fact, even the expression *they have a face as long as a wet week*⁶³, still used today in standard Romanian, reflects this olden association between a person's feelings and bad weather.

4. (Im)pure clouds

Clouds-oxen of the sun. On an even higher plane, mist has clouds as a symbolic correspondent, which also do not allow light to reach the earth, overshadowing the sun⁶⁴. Most often, mist and clouds appear simultaneously, just like in the carol of a young highland shepherd, collected in 1887 and entitled *Ciuta (The Hind)*. Here, the hero goes on a hunt: "Thursday in the morning/ *On cloud and mist*" (Teodorescu 1985, I, 40)⁶⁵. Moreover, there are also some popular beliefs that join together mist and clouds, stating that clouds are born from the very mist that envelops the valleys and transforms into clouds by raising to the sky: "clouds are spread on earth in the form of fogs, which hide within valleys and mountain crevices"⁶⁶, those rising from the woods being stronger than those that rise from waters; the clouds "rest on words, on high and untrodden mountains or even under the earth in the form of fogs that come out only at the breath of the dragon, who is master over them"⁶⁷ (Gherman 2020, 79). According to their origin, clouds have various colours and, thus, a different magical charge: the *bluish milky*

⁶² "De când bădița s-o dus/ *Negură-n poartă s-o pus,*/ Și pe par și pe nuia,/ *Și pe inimuța mea*"

⁶³ *Parcă tot îi ninge și îi plouă.*

⁶⁴ Another clear proof that the clouds are in an antithetic rapport with the light is represented as well by the practice of casting clouds away by using a candle and a cross, but also by burning incense (Niculiță-Voronca 1998, II, 192). Even against the hailstone (the *stone from the sky*) brought by black clouds a candle from Easter is lit, with the purpose of chase away the storm (Gherman 2020, 173). These elements, present in the defence practices against the devil, confirm the association of clouds with the devil, as it can be noticed below.

⁶⁵ "Joi de dimineață/*Pe nor și pe ceață*".

⁶⁶ "norii sunt împrăstiați pe pământ în formă de neguri, care se ascund prin văi și crăpăturile munților".

⁶⁷ "hodinesc pă păduri, pe munți înalți și neumblați ori chiar sub pământ în formă de neguri și ies afară numai la suflarea balaurului, care e stăpân pe ei".

clouds, and thus clean, are formed from the steam that emerges from mountain valleys (clean), while the *bluish-black* clouds, unclean, emerge from swamps, the favourite place where even the impure devil, called *The unclean one*, nestles.

The clouds' diversity of colours and shapes has, thus, stimulated people's imagination, giving birth to an entire mythology that has given them an ambivalent status: white, luminous clouds, as the source of the rains invoked in times of drought, generally represent an epiphany of the light forces, being metamorphosed as the *sun's oxen*, tasked with carry water to the *sun's court*, identified with "cearcănul soarelui" ("the sun's dark circles") (78). They are also the ones that forecast good weather and, according to their shape and the mythical-magical charge that is attributed to them, they are metaphorically called: *oile lui Dumnezeu* (*God's sheep*), if they are small, *norii mieilor* (*lambs' clouds*), if they have "levels and white strings"⁶⁸, *nori de miel* (*lamb clouds*) (a sign of clear skies and good weather), *nori-mioare* (*ewe clouds*) (a sign of sunshowers), *nori oiști* (*sheep clouds*), if they are spread over the sky like sheep, *negurici* (*foggies*), if they are spread over the sky and forecast rain during strong heat (82). In the category of *clean* clouds we also have golden-white clouds, called *mana*, that detaches from fir woods (the fir tree being itself a sacred tree in Romanian beliefs), when the wind blows or after rains (Pamfile 2018, 337).

The beneficial, fertilising valences of clean clouds, similar to those held by the *mana*-morning dew, are also referenced by Romanian ethnologists who have described the hyperbolic paths of shepherds that equally intersect the terrestrial and the celestial. Where the carols show us that "shepherding takes place unhindered both on earth and in the sky"⁶⁹, the sheep being driven to pasture, during the day, "pă cer, pă pământu" ("in the sky, on the ground") and, at night, they shelter "în cel cercă de lună" ("in that dark circle of the moon"), drinking water from the "norețul de ploaie" ("rain cloudlet)" (Crețu 2014, 158).

Dragon-clouds. In contrast to clean clouds, considered a true spring of fertility, according to the meaning of the metaphor that designates them (*the sun's oxen*⁷⁰), threatening clouds, thick as a blanket and that forecast storms, are part of the *unclean* clouds, whose names are suggestive for their relation with the darkness populated by all types of obscure forces: *black clouds*, *dark clouds*, *buffalo-clouds*, *fogs* (Gherman 2020, 81) or *even bulls* or *black cows*. The presence of this last symbolism is signalled in the recitative formulae from children's folklore, where *Murga*, a black cow or female buffalo, appears as the demonic personification of clouds (Evseev 1998, 308).

⁶⁸ "trepte și șinoare albe".

⁶⁹ "păstoritul se desfășoară nestingherit atât pe pământ, cât și în cer".

⁷⁰ The white bull is considered a solar symbol and "apare în multe rituri agrare al românilor, având funcții fecundatoare, apotropaice și augurale" ("appears in many Romanian agricultural rituals, having impregnating, apotropaic and augural functions") (Evseev 1998, 54).

However, *unclean* clouds, carriers of hailstone and threatening storms, are also associated with other demonic beings, such as *dragons*. The imaginary scheme that creates solidarity between *clouds* and *dragons* has at its basis beliefs according to which clouds would have their origin in the very “steam rolled through the nostrils by a tired dragon” or in “the water raised by dragons from rivers and seas” (Gherman 2020, 77)⁷¹. Thus, the impurity of the clouds derives from the impurity of dragons, due to their malevolent nature, as they are often identified even with *The unclean one* (Niculiță-Voronca 1998, II, 197). Moreover, Romanian mythology explains the appearance of dragons through the transformation of some giant snakes that, after spending seven years under the face of the earth, “rise into clouds as storms” (Șăineanu 1978, 530)⁷². It is worth noticing that the transformation of snakes into dragons is conditioned by an interdiction that reminds us of the restrictions imposed in the case of a human initiation act, valid no matter whether the initiation is a positive or negative one. Practically, both in the case of dragons and humans, the purity of the one initiated is also ensured through the lack of contact with any disruptive force. Thus, snakes can transform into dragons only if they stay isolated from people and *do not see* and *do not bite anyone* for twelve years (Niculiță-Voronca 1998, II, 192). As it can be observed, what is avoided are the foreign look, charged with a potential for malevolent magic and which we know well from the beliefs related to the evil eye, but also any direct contact with an impure external factor, which could compromise the process of magical transformation. Moreover, we notice that this sacral purity, given by the lack of any touch, also functions in the zone of demonic forces since, as it is known, in the heart of the sacred the complementary game of contraries is sheltered. From an etymological point of view, *sacer* means both “blestemat” (“cursed”) and “divin” (“divine”), which means that the sacred can be both “sfânt” (“sacrosanct”) and “spurcat” (“impure”) at the same time (Coman 1983, 174). The second condition of the transformation of snakes into dragons is the mixing of their own slobber with those coming from other snakes that are equal participants in the initiation process. From this mixture what results is foam that will transform, in turn, in an expensive stone or in a diamond, assimilated to a true cornucopia, that gives food to the one that owns it, at a simple command: “My little stone: to eat and drink!” (Niculiță-Voronca 1998, II, 207)⁷³. Thus, we are witness to true alchemy since the resulting precious stone has miraculous therapeutical properties, which also explains how it is possible for the fairytale hero becomes more beautiful and smarted after being swallowed and, then, spit out by a dragon.

⁷¹ “aburii vărsați pe nări de un balaur obosit” or in “apa ridicată de balauri din râuri și mări”.

⁷² “se ridică în nori ca furtuni”.

⁷³ “Pietricica mea: de mâncat și de băut!”.

The impure nature of the dragons also derives from the humid places where they live: lakes, swamps (similar to the devil) or fountains and, thus, still waters associated, in general, with the unclean aquatic element by comparison to pure running waters or with the untouched water from the practices for disenchantment. Beside this intimacy with the aquatic environment, dragons also have a direct connection to clouds, since it is believed that they live “in clouds” and they ride them, leading them everywhere in order to carry hailstones and rain, in which case they “also carry the name of *ale* or *hale*, personifying the hurricane and strong winds” (Șăineanu 1978, 531)⁷⁴.

Enemy-clouds. Similar to the mist, associated with the devil incarnate, clouds represent as well the embodiment of other mythological beings, enemies of humanity, such as *zmeii* (*dragons*), who generally live in the *dark world* underground (Șăineanu 1978, 288), thus a world deprived of sunlight. Thus, in fairytales, we find out that a dragon turned into a *cloud* had kidnapped the three daughters of the emperor (Șăineanu 1978, 408). If in the traditional lyrical poetry the *cloudy sky-mourning* metaphor prevails: “I’m so *upset*/ *As the sky’s cloudy*” (Niculiță-Voronca 1998, II, 128)⁷⁵, ballads highlight another imaginary scheme, that in which clouds mean “enemies”, considered, in turn, unclean. For instance, pagan Turks appear in the form of a *thick cloudlet* (Niculiță-Voronca 1998, II, 115).

God’s sheep-clouds. In both instances, pure and impure, the clouds have a sacred character, being intimately connected to all types of divine beings that entered the scene once Christianity appeared: Saint Elijah, Saint Peter, Saint Alexis or even God, as it also emerges from the name, *God’s sheep*, given to the clouds. The clouds are also represented as *God’s ladder*, down which He comes every time He wants to come and see what the people are doing. In this case, the contamination with the sacredness of biblical characters with which He comes into contact is as evident as possible. However, it should be mentioned that these associations with Christian divine beings most likely constitute an addition to ancient beliefs about dragons that live in the clouds or even turn into clouds in order to be able to intervene in the human world. It should be noticed however that biblical characters receive the role of controlling the dragons, ordering them to raise the clouds high up in the sky and “*să-i cârmuiască*” (“to lead them”) (Gherman 2020, 80). In this manner, the forces of good brought by Christianity take control of pagan forces. In fact, even *Solomonarii*⁷⁶

⁷⁴ “poartă și numele de *ale* sau *hale*, personificând uraganul și vântul turbat” (N.B. *ale* is another term for “dragon”, while *hale* can mean “tempest” or “monster”).

⁷⁵ “Atâta-s de *supărat*/ *Cât ceriul de-nourat*”.

⁷⁶ *Solomonarii* (Conjurers) are the main wizards from traditional Romanian beliefs, capable of directing meteorological phenomena according to their desire. As “traditional meteorological wizards” they are sometimes considered as *the devil’s disciples*, other times they are “saints, God’s underlings” who carry the *Cartea/Cărțile Solomonarului* (*The Conjurer’s Book(s)*), which

(*Conjurers*), mythological creatures that ride on clouds, leading them wherever they want to start rains, are also called “God’s people” despite being formed at the devil school. Even the beliefs about the origin of hailstone, traditionally also called *stone*, betrays a mixture of Christian and pre-Christian elements: the stone from the clouds is made either by dragons, devils, or even by Saint Peter who, in Bukovina, is called “the master of hailstone and dragons”⁷⁷, the one who sends to earth stone boiled by dragons for three days, in an alchemy that is full of meaning. However, he makes the clouds give hailstorms only in the places where the greatest sins were committed: for instance, where aborted fetuses were buried, the earth being made impure by the sinful girls, or where someone committed suicide (Niculiță-Voronca 1998, II, 189-190). And, thus, he becomes a true divine vigilante.

5. (Im)pure rainbow

The last meteorological phenomenon discussed here is considered “one of the most optimistic and oldest symbols of humanity”, a true “communication bridge between sky and earth” and a “symbol of cosmic harmony” (Evseev 1998, 105)⁷⁸. It is true that, at the level of the rainbow, there is a perfect synthesis between the celestial and terrestrial mediums, namely, between light, air and water, it being, through the explosion of light and colours, the perfect candidate for the representation of absolute purity. Metamorphosed as a *waist belt of the sky/of the earth/of the Virgin Mary*, based on a similarity in shape, the rainbow is also a presence charged with sacredness (Gorovei 1972, 139), invoked either to stop excess rain, either as a source of abundance (Olteanu 2021, I, 458). Moreover, the belief according to which it would drink *new water* (pure, from rain) or even water “numai din rouă” (“only from morning dew”) (Niculiță-Voronca 1998, II, 244) contributes to investing it with attributes of purity and sacredness. Additionally, the beliefs about the miraculous powers of the perforated stone through which the rainbow drinks, contaminated with sainthood due to the magical touch of the rainbow, consolidates this semantics. Thus, we find out that the perforated stone is left as inheritance, since it can give omniscience and other uncommon qualities, while also having therapeutic properties. For instance, it is used to milk the cow, three times crosswise, if it gives milk with blood, or it is disenchanted of cysts or the cattle and calves are protected from enchantments (Niculiță-Voronca 1998, II, 245).

concentrates the true “învățătură globală a magiei populare” (“global wisdom of popular magic”) (Kernbach 1994, 243-245).

⁷⁷ “domnul grindinei și al balaurilor”.

⁷⁸ “unul dintre cele mai optimiste și mai vechi simboluri ale omenirii”, “punte de comunicare între cer și pământ”, “semn al armoniei cosmice”.

However, even the rainbow's sacredness is an ambivalent one, found at the crossroad between the clean and the unclean. Being metamorphosed as "the path of dragons" that they take to drink water (Niculiță-Voronca 1998, II, 245), it is also contaminated with the impurity specific to these demonic, antihuman and anthropophaginic entities. Even in children's folklore the rainbow appears as a bridge between the sky and the earth, that dragons use to take water from the depths of the earth that they then take to the sky and pour back over the earth, as beneficial rains. Here, an archaic magical incantation is kept, whose purpose is to cause the appearance of the rainbow: "Rainbow, bow,/ *Drink water from the tarn,/ Rainbowlet, owlet/ Drink water from the vine*" (Evseev 1998, 105)⁷⁹. Finally, even riddles represent the rainbow as a *giant dragon* that slurps the earthly waters: "*Striped snake, over the Prut tossed*" (Gorovei 1972, 140)⁸⁰, but also as "*Striped towel/ Over the clouds tossed*"⁸¹, the second metaphor explicitly referencing its purifying valences.

However, what emerges most is its power to reunite opposites in belief that it can determine the cancelling of any differences, including those related to sex. Thus, girls invoke the rainbow in order to turn into boys: "Rainbow, rainbow,/ You have colour like my waist belt,/ And *drink water from the creek,/ And make me a boy*", while the boys do it to be turned into girls: "Rainbow, rainbow,/ You have colour like my waist belt,/ And *drink white-hot water,/ And make me a girl*" (Evseev 1998, 106)⁸². Moreover, the performing of a complex ritual can ensure the permanent androgynous nature of the protagonist, the only one able to ensure self-knowledge and exceptionalism: "They who *rides a pig* to where the rainbow drinks water and *goes head over heels three times, will become boy for a month and girl for another*. And the *child born* of the pregnant woman who will *walk on her knees* to where the rainbow drinks water, *will say "Our Father" three times and drink water from more downstream will be a girl for a month and boy for another* and will know everything in the world and be wonder-working" (Niculiță-Voronca 1998, II, 245)⁸³.

However, the most eloquent information that reflects the power to reunite contradictions attributed to the rainbow appears in the traditional beliefs that speak about the fight between God and the devil imagined at the end of the world. They, the two cosmocrats will hold on to the rainbow placed right in the

⁷⁹ "Curcubeu, beu,/ *Bea apă din tău,/ Curcubiță, biță/ Bea apă din viță*".

⁸⁰ "*Șarpe vărgat, peste Prut aruncat*".

⁸¹ "*Ștergar vărgat/ Peste nori aruncat*".

⁸² "Curcubeu, curcubeu,/ Ai culori ca brâul meu,/ *Și bei apă din pârau,/ Și mă fă pe min' flăcău*", iar, băieții, pentru a fi transformați în fete: „Curcubeu, curcubeu,/ Ai culori ca brâul meu,/ *Și bei apă turbată,/ Și mă fă pe mine fată*".

⁸³ "Cine merge *călare pe porc* unde bea curcubeul apă și *se dă de trei ori peste cap, se face o lună băiat și o lună fată*. Și care femeie îngreunată va merge în *genunchi* până unde bea apă curcubeul, *să zică „Tatăl nostru” de trei ori și să beie apă mai la vale, copilul acela ce-l va face are să fie o lună fată și o lună băiat și are să știe tot ce-i pe lume, are să fie năzdrăvan*".

middle of the world (for the rainbow “is purposefully made from the beginning of the world through the middle of the sky, so that it would be a border at one point”⁸⁴): the devil with all his imps and with the sinful souls on one side, and God with His angels and good souls on the other”. And then, “whoever will win, will get everyone else” (Olteanu 2021, I, 259)⁸⁵.

6. Conclusions

Following the manner in which the idea of ritual purity and, respectively impurity is represented in the imaginary of archaic and traditional Romanian communities, with the help of these “humble” meteorological metaphors, we discovered that, generally, the morning dew is raised at the level of metaphor of absolute purity. Although it represents an aquatic entity, it appears as well as celestial matter, symmetrical to the intangible stars, incorporating in its semantics the light that casts out evil spirits and all of earth’s unclean things. Due to the light, but also its perishable and intangible, it becomes a true sacred substance, used not only therapeutically and cosmetically, but also ritualistically, in order to ensure the absolute cleanliness necessary when performing certain ritual acts of major importance. On the contrary, the mist and the clouds that obstruct solar light constitute the metaphors chosen to represent a(n) (im)pure sacredness, clouds having, for instance, positive properties as well when associated with beneficial rain. Finally, the rainbow also represents an ambivalent metaphor of sacredness, which reunites opposites: the sky and the earth, light and water, masculine and feminine and, last but not least, the pure and the impure. Thus, the individual from the folklore world was able to research meteorological phenomena – that the modern individual has isolated himself from with various walls –, using them as instruments for the understanding of the manner in which the universe is built and, in the end, for the understanding of the meaning of life itself. Seen as some epiphanies of purity-impurity, these elements gain sacred values, being profoundly ennobled in the imaginary of the individual from the olden days.

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⁸⁴ ”e anume făcut de la începutul lumii prin mijlocul cerului, ca să fie odată hotar”.

⁸⁵ ”care pe care va dovedi, acelaia vor rămâne toți ceilalți”.

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SPACE AND TIME EXPRESSIONS IN THE ROMANIAN LINGUISTIC IMAGINARY

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ABSTRACT. *Space and Time Expressions in the Romanian Linguistic Imaginary.*

This work aims to inventory, with the help of space and time conceptual metaphors, the expressions that contribute to shaping a linguistic imaginary. The expressions represent a *sine qua non* condition of linguistic creativity and once identified, they pave the way to other cultural spaces. The language is our home, and the way we live in it, through expressions, proverbs, sayings, represent an unstable balance between *inside* and *outside*, between *up* and *down*, between *then* and *now*, creating a protective space - time and, at the same time, exposed to the outside world's actions. To highlight the role of space and time expressions in shaping a linguistic imaginary, we used the conceptual metaphors theories as they were defined and illustrated by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson. We will try to demonstrate that in the Romanian linguistic imaginary there is *a vertical spatiality* (in terms of an *up-down* metaphor), which belongs to the pastoral world, in which the archaic man raises his eyes to the sky in a perfect communion with the Divinity (the expressions with *sky*, *earth*, *sun*, *moon*, *stars*, etc.). As far as it concerns time, we will inventory those expressions and sayings that reflect, in the collective mind, the time perception between ephemerality and eternity. In the Romanian linguistic imaginary, there is *an eternal temporality* (the expressions with *vreme*, that reflect the past-present-future triad) and *a stationary one*, representing the measure of a time slot (the expressions with *ceas* that reflect simultaneity, sequence, and duration). We will demonstrate, with the help of ontological metaphors, that temporal perception, through expressions, varies depending on the different possible consciousness states (pain, joy, love, dream, etc.). The research-based result will be to highlight the space and time linguistic images and their role in shaping the Romanian linguistic imaginary.

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Keywords: *space expressions, time expressions, linguistic imaginary, concept metaphor, language, cultural space*

REZUMAT. Expresii ale spațialității și temporalității în imaginarul lingvistic românesc. Lucrarea își propune să inventarieze, cu ajutorul metaforelor conceptuale spațiale și temporale, expresiile care contribuie la conturarea unui imaginar lingvistic. Expresiile reprezintă o condiție *sine qua non* a creativității lingvistice și, odată identificate, deschid drumul către alte spații culturale. Limba este casa noastră, iar felul în care locuim în ea, prin expresii, proverbe, zicători, reprezintă un echilibru instabil între *interior* și *exterior*, între *sus* și *jos*, între *atunci* și *acum*, creând un spațiu-timp protector și, în același timp, expus la acțiunile lumii exterioare. Pentru a evidenția rolul expresiilor spațialității și temporalității în modelarea unui imaginar lingvistic, am folosit teoriile metaforelor conceptuale așa cum au fost definite și ilustrate de George Lakoff și Mark Johnson. Vom încerca să demonstrăm că în imaginarul lingvistic românesc există o *spațialitate verticală* (în termenii unei metafore *sus-jos*), care aparține lumii pastorale, în care omul arhaic ridică ochii spre cer, într-o comuniune perfectă cu Divinitatea (expresiile cu *cer, pământ, soare, lună, stele* etc.). În ceea ce privește timpul, vom inventaria acele expresii și zicători care reflectă, în mentalul colectiv, percepția timpului între efemeritate și eternitate. În imaginarul lingvistic românesc există o *temporalitate eternă* (expresiile cu *vreme*, care reflectă triada trecut-prezent-viitor) și una *staționară*, reprezentând măsura unui interval de timp (expresiile cu *ceas* care reflectă simultaneitatea, secvența și durata). Vom demonstra, cu ajutorul metaforelor ontologice, că percepția temporală, prin expresii, variază în funcție de diferitele stări posibile ale conștiinței (durere, bucurie, iubire, vis etc.). Rezultatul cercetării va fi evidențierea imaginilor lingvistice ale spațialității și temporalității și rolul acestora în modelarea imaginariului lingvistic românesc.

Cuvinte-cheie: *expresii ale spațiului, expresii ale timpului, imaginar lingvistic, metaforă conceptuală, limbă, spațiu cultural*

1. Linguistic Imaginary

The paper entitled *Space and Time Expressions in the Romanian Linguistic Imaginary* aims to list the expressions that contribute to the shaping of a linguistic imaginary by means of conceptual metaphors of space and time.

This paper is a follow-up of my interests in the field of linguistic imaginary in recent years, as a member of the research team of a large-scale project, completed with the publication of a fundamental work, in five volumes, for the Romanian culture, namely: *Enciclopedia imaginariilor din România*².

² *Enciclopedia imaginariilor din România (Encyclopedia of Imaginaries from Romania)*, Corin Braga (general coordinator), Iași: Polirom, 2020 – 5 vol. ISBN 978-973-46-8183-9. This *Encyclopedia of Imaginaries*

At first sight, the linguistic imaginary concept may seem a paradox; how is it possible for a descriptive discipline like linguistics, to intertwine with the unstable waters of the imaginary, a concept, too difficult to define, for a long period of time? This concept, however, is not a new one; it has been theorized since the '70s in international cultural circles. In the Romanian cultural space, there were two different approaches regarding the linguistic imaginary concept: on the one hand, with some caution, there was an approach more related to the surprise of a possible rapprochement between *linguistics*, seen as a discipline that studies the varieties of language and their characteristics, and the *imaginary*, viewed as an undulatory space, undefined and imprecise. On the other hand, in the Romanian space, a space of both territorial and cultural interferences, there has also been some openness towards this concept, an approach in an appropriate and unprejudiced manner, being regarded as an "open theory" that offers new possibilities of deciphering "the Language reality" (Coroi 2013). There are several approaches to the concept of linguistic imaginary by the different branches of linguistics: *the metalinguistic perspective*, *the ethnolinguistic perspective*, and *the cognitivist perspective*. Firstly, *the metalinguistic perspective* proposes an approach on how the speaker relates to the language he speaks. The metalinguistic function of language (in Roman Jakobson's view) implies, on the speaker's part, an in-depth check of how the speaker is understood or the speaker understood what had been communicated to him. According to several researchers in the field of metalinguistics, including Houdebine-Gravaud (1997), the speaker's relationship with language implies an intimate dimension, which "contains the subject's own phantasms and fictions", not supported by a social discourse and not shaped by any prescriptive academic nature norm, as well as "a sociological and ideological one, shaped by the knowledge of grammatical norms and the proximity to a specialized discourse" (Platon 2020, 14). Secondly, *ethnolinguistics* offers the levers for the second approach to the linguistic imaginary; ethnolinguistics perceives language as a function of culture, meaning that the language is a society product. This approach focuses, therefore, on the way in which the world's variety of representations is reflected in language. Finally, there is also *a cognitivist perspective* of the linguistic imaginary. Cognitive linguistics focuses on the process of producing linguistic facts and on the internal mechanisms that explain linguistic creativity.

To highlight the role of space and time expressions in shaping a linguistic imaginary, we used the conceptual metaphors theories as they were defined by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson. The conceptual metaphor theory was formulated for the first time in the '80s by Lakoff and Johnson and explains the mechanisms of lexical creativity through *metaphorical type transfer*. From a cognitivist

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perspective, the metaphorical transfer is a transfer of double association: both everyday language and poetic language are associated with it: “Our concepts structure what we perceive, how we behave in the world and how we relate to others. Our conceptual system plays a central role in defining our everyday realities. If we are right to suggest that our conceptual system is largely metaphorical, then the way we think, what we experience and what we do every day is very much a matter of metaphor” (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 12, 124). Metaphorical expressions thus become a reflection of our way of thinking: “linguistic expressions are manifestations of conceptual metaphors” (Kövecses 2010, 7). The presence of metaphor in everyday language is explained by the need to express certain abstract concepts, such as time, ideas, emotions, phenomena with the help of other concrete concepts, which can be easier understood due to the individuals’ direct experience. According to the cognitivist perspective, there are three large categories of conceptual metaphors: a) structural metaphors, the ones that are mostly used, through which a concept is metaphorically structured in terms of another concept, which thus allows the restructuring of the first concept, b) orientation metaphors that give concepts spatial orientation based on individual’s body experience such as *up-down*, *left-right*, *forward-backward* and c) ontological metaphors that are focused on human experience, having as target domains the objects of the experiential world, emotions, ideas or different events. Through ontological metaphors, individuals perceive non-physical entities, such as events, activities, emotions, and ideas as physical entities.

2. Vertical Spatiality. Space Expressions in the Linguistic Romanian Imaginary.

Mother tongue is a vast repository of spirituality, it is living thought, the language to which we owe a good part of our human quality. The expressions contribute to shaping a linguistic imaginary and represent a *sine qua non* condition of linguistic creativity. For our research, we will consider the space expressions that, once identified, pave the way to other cultural spaces. The Romanian cultural space is a space of cultural, historical, and social interferences. Situated at the crossroads of several empires, between the East and the West, with a continuous presence of ethnic minorities, with a turbulent historical past (Boia 2016) and with a fascination for other European cultural models, the Romanian cultural space was a real identity mosaic in which the language and “its infinite philosophizing possibilities” (Noica 1987) experienced meaning changes and acquired new ones, creating a linguistic imaginary, in which the self is (re)discovered through the other and the other is (re)discovered through the filter of one’s aspirations and experiences. In the Romanian linguistic imaginary, we can talk about a double spatiality: on one hand, a vertical spatiality, which belongs to the pastoral world,

in which the archaic man raises his eyes to the sky in a perfect communion with the Divinity. On the other hand, we witness a horizontal spatiality³, easily identified in expressions that describe the other, the foreigner, who can be good or bad, depending on one's individual or collective experience. The first part of our paper will deal with vertical spatiality and will seek to inventory the expressions of this spatiality in the Romanian linguistic imaginary, starting from two defining concepts for the matrix of the Romanian people: *cerul* (the sky) and *pământul* (the earth).

2.1. Expressions with *cer* (sky)

According to the folk mentality, the world is the image of a perfect communion between two fundamental entities: *cerul* (the sky, the heaven) and *pământul* (the earth). *Cerul*, in the collective mind of an archaic society, has a constitutive ontological dignity: it is the starting point of genesis, but it is, at the same point, the home of God, Sun, Moon and stars. Romanian legends and folk tales present the sky as a large vault, too far and totally untouchable, in reality, by the archaic man. One of the legends says that there is a bridge, from which the heavenly world would be up, and the earthly world down; the bridge would be imagined, again, as a thick iron vault, placed on the water that surrounds the earth and, on the pillars, but also having doors where the angelic creatures walk, to transmit the news from the earth to God (Antonescu 2016, 144-145).

Regardless of the meaning and interpretation provided by Romanian legends and traditional beliefs, there is a certainty regarding *cerul* and the way in which people perceived it. *Cerul* remains untouchable, having sacred values, a place for the transcendent. There are many expressions in the Romanian language that best reflect this transcendental side of *cerul*. The *up-down* spatial orientation metaphor associates everything that is *up* with the idea of good, and everything that is down with the idea of evil / bad. In terms of the same metaphor, verticality represents, every time, a form of ascent, light, refinement, and wealth, whereas darkness, pain, poverty are, every time, marked downward.

Therefore, *cerul* is used in expressions like: *A fi în al nouălea cer*⁴ (To be on cloud nine; this is an expression used to express a state of bliss, elation, or

³ For a detailed description of the horizontal spatiality (expressions, proverbs, sayings, and the written press), see the article Balaban, Maria-Zoica. 2020. "Expresia Alterității". In *Enciclopedia imaginariilor din România*. Vol. II. Patrimoniul și imaginar lingvistic, volume coordinated by Elena Platon, 277-295. Iași: Polirom.

⁴ All expressions from this paper are taken from Dumistrăcel, S. (2001). *Până-n pânzele albe. Dicționar de expresii românești. Biografii. Motivații*. 2nd edition, revised and augmented. Iași: Institutul European, Dumistrăcel, S. (2011). *Lexic românesc. Cuvinte, metafore, expresii*. Iași: Casa Editorială Demiurg Plus, Zanne, I. (1895-1903/2003-2004). *Proverbele românilor*. Anastatic Edition, vol. I-IX, București: The Romanian Association for Culture and Orthodoxy "Scara" and Muntean, G. (1967). *Proverbe românești*. București: Editura pentru Literatură.

full happiness)⁵; *A înălța pe cineva la cer* (to praise someone very much); *A privi la cer* (to be proud); *În înaltul cerului* (at a very high point or Up to the sky!); *Împărăția cerurilor* (the Kingdom of Heaven – a biblical meaning, that of God’s house, the heaven). All these expressions reflect a vertical ascent, valued, each time, positively. Greater attention should be paid to the expression *Până-i cerul!* (as far as the sky goes which means never) used to represent, in terms of a spatial metaphor, one of the most abstract time dimensions, that of *never* and the expression *La poalele cerului!* (At the feet of the sky, which means far away) used to represent, also in terms of a spatial metaphor, one of the undefined space dimensions, that of *being far*. *Cerul* is not only a fundamental, untouchable entity, but it is also a reference point while referring to expressions that draw attention to the sky’s immensity and the archaic man’s need to relate to its overwhelming greatness in carrying out certain actions that require effort and sacrifice: *Nu cade, nu pică din cer*⁶ (it doesn’t fall from the sky which means that you cannot get anything for free or nothing comes ready); *Doar nu s-o face gaură în cer!* (there won’t be much damage / loss). The expressions with *cer*, that reflect certain inappropriate human behaviours, also have engaging meanings. Because of these types of behaviour, *cerul*⁷, in its spatial and temporal immensity, will not remain indifferent and will be able to give certain punitive signals: *Nedreptate strigătoare la cer* (Blatant injustice to the sky – which refers to obvious injustice that leads to revolt); *A cădea / a pica cerul pe cineva* (to fall / to make the sky fall on someone which means to be very ashamed of someone).

The expressions *A fi picat din cer* (to have fallen from the sky) and *A pica / a cădea din cer* (to fall from the sky) need special attention. The first expression signifies the state of a disoriented man, paradoxically cut off from reality on earth, but fallen from a heavenly reality that he cannot transcend; what we have here is a de-semantization of the original meaning and a re-semantization of it. The second expression, when used affirmatively, has a positive meaning (something that happens unexpectedly: e.g., receiving good news, unexpected help, etc.).

2.2. Expressions with pământ (earth)

If *cer* appears, most of the time, in expressions that reflect the heavenly ascent (up), wealth, elegance, refinement, hope and light, the expressions with

⁵ According to a Romanian legend, it is said that there are nine skies/heavens, God living in the last one – this is where the use of number nine in the expression comes from – therefore, the expression is a possibility sign, that of acquiring a divine state of happiness of a divine nature.

⁶ *A cădea* and *a pica* are Romanian verbs that are both translated in English with the verb *to fall*. In the Romanian language, these two verbs are synonyms; there is still a difference in meaning between the two: *a cădea* is formal, whereas *a pica* is informal, and it is mostly used in spoken Romanian.

⁷ In the case of these expressions, *cerul* is associated with the image of God.

pământ reflect the exact opposite (down); the different degrees of pain are marked downward, whether we speak of poverty, sadness, neglect, vulgarity, darkness or death. The expressions: *A face una cu pământul* (to make havoc among/in/of or to make one's mash); *A băga în pământ* (to make a fadeway); *A fi la pământ* (to look crest-fallen); *A intra în pământ* (to be very sad, depressed; this expression is used in contexts that assume a very great shame that someone can feel); *A nu mai încâpea pe cineva pământul*, *A nu mai răbda pământul pe cineva* (these expressions are used to characterise lowly, very bad people). Special attention needs to be given to the expression: *A fi cu picioarele pe pământ* (to be with one's feet on the ground; this expression always has a positive meaning and indicates a vertical ascent, determined by the feet, and describes a person who has a sense of reality).

2.3. Expressions with *cer* (sky) and *pământ* (earth)

The second fundamental entity is *pământul* (the earth). In the folklore language, *pământul* seems to be subject to the sky, having a secondary importance compared to the sky. In popular culture, there is the belief that things that were originally organically united and then separated, remain united forever; it is the case of *cer* and *pământ*. Moreover, the connection is so intimate that any action applied to the detached part also affects the whole from which it originates, no matter the distance that separates it from the whole. This is directly reflected in the case of the Romanian expressions that are formed with both words: *cer* and *pământ*. In the Romanian mythology, the earth is the sky's pair, between the two a harmonious relationship is established, a perfect correlation, either analogical or contrastive and which is present in all types of sky imaginary modelling. The analogical correlation between *cer* and *pământ* is reflected by expressions such as: *A (se) ruga cu cerul și cu pământul* (to pray with the greatest perseverance), where each of the two elements (*cer* and *pământ*) indicates the same involvement degree, and verticality no longer has a strictly ascending meaning, but it reflects a perfect symbiosis between *up* and *down*, a flattening of verticality at the level of horizontality. A good reflection stimulation on the space expressions in the Romanian linguistic imaginary is represented by: *Când s-a lipit cerul de pământ* (when the sky stuck to the earth) or *A promite cerul și pământul* (to promise the sky and the earth), the first rendering the most abstract dimension of temporality, that of *never*, while the second one refers to impossible, unachievable things.

Between *cer* and *pământ*, there is also a contrastive correlation, that emphasizes the infinite and immeasurable distance between the two concepts, perceived as extremes/limits. The unique distance that separates the sky from

the earth has also become the greatest unit ever imagined to measure abstract notion, such as the distance or the intensity of some human states, enciphered in expressions that are still extremely fashionable: *Departe cât cerul de pământ* (Far as the sky from the earth - an expression used to refer to a very long distance); *Ca de la cer la pământ* (As from heaven to earth - an expression used to draw the clear distinction between two things); *A fi cu o falcă în cer și cu una în pământ* (To be with one jaw in the sky and one on the earth - an expression used to describe a very angry person); *A răscoli cerul și pământul* (To scour sky and earth - an expression used to describe all possible actions you can do to find a lost thing).

2.4. Expressions with cer (sky), soare (Sun), lună (Moon) and stele (stars)

The expressions of vertical spatiality in the Romanian linguistic imaginary are not limited to the expressions with *cer* and *pământ*, but go further, introducing us to the inhabitants, par excellence, of the sky: the Sun, the Moon, and the stars, all of them representing the two temporal faces: light and darkness, day and night. In popular mythology, the moon is believed to be *the eye of God* and the Sun's younger sister. Another legend says that the two brothers, Cain and Abel, would live on the Moon, and the spots that can be seen on the Moon represent the scene of Abel's killing by his brother, Cain.

The Moon represents the time that passes; it metaphorically evokes beauty, but also light in the immensity of darkness. In the collective mind, the Sun has a privileged position representing warmth, light, life, fertility, and immortality. A popular legend says that the Sun would be the big star, the Moon, the middle one and the stars would be the sky's small lights. In terms of an *inside-outside* spatial orientation metaphor (with the variants: day-night or dark-light), the Sun's ascent on the celestial vault is an ascent movement (from bottom to top) grabbed in three important moments: sunrise, followed by the slow ascent on the sky until noon, and later, the descent towards sunset, during which the Moon goes through, in the opposite direction, the same movement of ascent and later, of descent, less visible. The expressions with the Sun and the Moon reflect this ascent of the stars on the celestial vault: *A se uita ca la soare* (to look at someone with full appreciation); *A trece pe sub soare* (to live), or the sayings: *După ce apune soarele, laudă ziua* (After the Sun sets, praise the day - this is an expression used to express as a sign of thanksgiving for the things that happened every day); *E mai cald soarele când răsare, decât când luna asfințește* (The Sun is warmer when it rises than when the Moon sunsets - this expression is used to express the joy and happiness that one can experience in the morning, and the regret in the evening); *Să n-ating luna cu mâna, nici soarele cu picioarele!* (Do not touch the moon with the hand, nor the Sun with the feet! -

this is an expression used to show the deep respect that archaic people used to have for God's creation; touching the divine creation is forbidden to humans). In popular fictions, the Sun appears, almost without exception, anthropomorphized: it wakes up in the morning, rests at night and has human qualities. In the archaic perception, the Sun is subject not only to daily rejuvenation and aging, but also to annual birth and death; it is born at the winter solstice, when it is as small as the day, it grows and becomes strong enough at the vernal equinox, when the day is equal to the night, it reaches its full strength at the summer solstice, when the day is the longest of the whole year, after which the day wanes, the Sun wanes, the forces of darkness become strong and the Sun dies; the Sun's symbolic metamorphoses and ages (in anthropomorphic terms – birth, youth, old age, death) are the fundamental rhythms of life on earth. In terms of an up-down spatial metaphor, the Sun and the Moon are the sky's messengers; through anthropomorphic extrapolation, they could see everything is going on in the earth. There are many expressions with the sky's messengers in the Romanian language, with a wide range of meanings: *A fi cu stea în frunte* (to be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth; this is an expression used to characterize very special people); *A (nu) se naște sub o stea norocoasă* (to be or not to be born under a lucky star – this is an expression used to describe a(n) lucky/unlucky person); *A crede în steaua ta* (to believe in your star – this expression is used as an urge to believe in your own destiny); *A fi rupt din soare* (to be very beautiful or handsome); *A se uita ca la soare* (having an endless love for someone); *clar de lună* (a shiny light). All these expressions reflect the Sun and the Moon's anthropomorphism. The distance between the earth, the Sun and the Moon is highlighted in expressions such as: *A cere (și) luna de pe cer* (to ask for the impossible); *A promite cuiva și luna de pe cer* (to make impossible promises); *A dori câte-n lună și-n soare* (to have a lot of wishes difficult to achieve); *A făgădui/a povesti câte în lună și în soare și în stele* (to talk a dog's/donkey's/horse's hind leg off – this is an expression that could also be used for impossible promises); *A căra soarele cu oborocul* (to do useless things). There are also few expressions in the Romanian language that reflect other human states and behaviour: *A vorbi câte-n lună și-n soare/ A vorbi câte-n lună și-n stele* (to talk nonsense); *A fi vai de steaua lui!* (this expression is used to express pity for someone); *A vedea stele verzi* (to see stars; this expression is used when you receive strong blows); *A se uita ca la lună nouă* (this expression is used for someone who doesn't have the necessary knowledge and has no idea about a topic/subject, etc.); *A fi căzut din lună* (to live in the clouds - this expression is used when someone is unprepared or doesn't have knowledge), *A-i rășări* or *a-i ieși cuiva luna în cap sau în ceafă* (an expression mostly used in popular language; the Moon loses its initial meaning and has a totally new one, being used in a context that involves alopecia and its effects on the individual).

3. Time Expressions in the Romanian Linguistic Imaginary

In the Romanian linguistic imaginary, *timpul* (the time) “is part of that strange category of entities that, while familiar, they are still impenetrable. The easier we sense, the harder it is to conceptualize it. No one has been able to define it”⁸ (Marcus 1985). The same idea of time eternity appears in Saint Augustine’s definition: “time – the moving image of eternity”. So, time can be imagined and represented. In the case of language, as in the case of perception, time symbolizes a limit in duration, a way of drawing the border between our world and the timeless world of eternity. Time is a fundamental dimension of life and society. Each human being has their own time, a time that represents a small part of the absolute time. The man’s whole spiritual life is, to some extent, a form of his continuous fight against death and his ambition to control time, to be one step ahead of it. But, on the scientific level, all time relative considerations can be organised with the help of two interacting triads: a) simultaneity – succession – duration and b) past – present – future. Temporal perception varies not only depending on the age and the individual, but also in relation to the different possible states of consciousness, such as wakefulness, pain, pleasure, dream, etc. In the linguistic Romanian imaginary, the image-time is formed, on one hand, on the linear axis of chronological time (from left to right), in the form of three steps, convincingly described by Tudor Vianu (1968, 77)⁹: “*time in posse*: it suggests a possible action, having a virtual character; *time in fieri*: it represents the image in the process of becoming, its character being a possible one; *time in esse*: the image-time is already finished, this time corresponding to the real defined as: past, present, future”. The present is the central point of the axis, being an extension of the past, that is, on a time that really existed, and, at the same time, the present is also an extension towards the future, on a time that hasn’t been yet, it’s fictitious.

3.1. *The stationary time in the Romanian linguistic imaginary. Expressions with ceas (clock)*

The process of understanding the concepts is naturally done with the help of metaphors. The metaphor of *stationary time* and the observer moving

⁸ Marcus, Solomon. 1985. *Timpul*. București: Albatros: “Timpul face parte din acea stranie categorie de entități pe care, pe cât de familiare, pe atât de impenetrabile. Pe cât de ușor îl intuim, pe atât de greu îl conceptualizăm. Nimeni nu a fost în stare să-l definească.” (Marcus 1985)

⁹ Vianu, Tudor. 1968. *Studii de stilistică*. București: Editura Didactică și Pedagogică: “*timp in posse*: sugerează o acțiune posibilă de realizat, având un caracter virtual; *timp in fieri*: reprezintă imaginea în curs de devenire, caracterul ei fiind unul posibil; *timp in esse*: imaginea timp este deja încheiată, acest timp corespunzând realului definit ca: trecut, prezent și viitor”. (Vianu 1968, 77)

through time, seems to be preferred in the European culture. In this metaphor, the role of time is changed with that of the observer. Time is perceived as a spatial landscape, in which an observer moves. The past is behind the observer, and the future is in front of him. The observer is in the present and moves towards the future. Each landmark in this landscape is associated, in our minds, with a moment of time. In the Romanian linguistic imaginary, the stationary time is reflected with the help of different expressions with the word *ceas*: *Ceasul morții* (sau de moarte, de apoi, cel (mai) de pe urmă) (this expression refers to the last moments in one's life); *Ceasul nașterii* (or de naștere) (this expression refers to the birth moment); *Cât e ceasul, a crăpat ceasul!* (în sfârșit!) (this expression is used to express the meaning of finally); *A da ceasul înainte/înapoi* (to change the hands of the clock – forward or backward); *A se da de ceasul morții* (to struggle a lot, to make desperate efforts); *Din ceas în ceas* (from moment to moment); *În ceasul al doisprezecelea* (in the last moment, a moment before it's too late); *Pe ceas, pe ceas* (from moment to moment); *Nu aduce anul ce aduce ceasul* (this is an expression used to define a short moment, which could be very important); *A veni ca ceasul cel rău* (to come quickly); *Ceasul rău* (an unhappy moment), *A-i veni ceasul* (one's time has come to die); *Ceasul dimineții e aurul vieții* (this is an expression used to describe the fact that any action done in the morning is more successful on the long run); *Ceasul pierdut nu-l întoarce anul* (this is an expression used to realise that time is irreversible).

3.2. The eternal time in the Romanian linguistic imaginary

3.2.1. Expressions with *vreme* (time)

The eternal time has no limit, and it always refers to an unspecified period. In the Romanian language, there are two terms that refer to *timp* (time): *vreme*¹⁰ (time) and *timp* (time). *Vreme* has doubled the concept of time in the Romanian language, without replacing it because it does not cover its entire meaning register. This noun has a fascinating linguistic development. There is a very meaningful saying in the Romanian language that explains both the similarities and the differences between *the stationary time* and *the eternal time*: *Ceasul bate, lovește și vremea stă, vremuieste*. There is also a more widespread version of this proverb, also retained by George Munteanu in his volume *Romanian Proverbs* (1967) that says: *Ceasul umblă și lovește iar vremea se odihnește* (The clock walks and strikes, and the time rests). The Romanian philosopher Constantin Noica has an extraordinary essay about the term *vreme*, the verb *a vremui* (to

¹⁰ The noun *vreme* is the term that doubled the concept of time in the Romanian language. Therefore, the Romanian language has two terms for the English word: time; one is *timp* and the other one is *vreme*.

time) and their meanings: “First, you are astonished at this contrast between the clock and time: the hour striker would be the one moving forward, while time would still stand. Second, it amazes you – and if you have the urge for philosophy, it even delights you – to see that *vremuirea* (the time) does not have the more widely known meaning of bad, wintry weather, but it means something related to thought, bringing into play a deep and, perhaps, bitter meaning about the still-flowing part of the world”. (Noica 1987, 54)¹¹ In the saying mentioned above, there is the noun *vremea* but there is also the derived verb *a vremui*, with the present form *vremuieste*. What seems to be interesting is the fact that the verb *a vremui*, derived from the noun *vremea* is something uncommon and Noica explains how the derivation process took place, in a very meaningful way: “not all languages, however, succeeded in forming the *internal verb* from a noun, and success occurs only with a few nouns ... but, in the case of *vreme* or, by extension *timp*, success is not complete in other languages, because a contraction occurs. In Slavic language from which we have borrowed *vreme*, this noun doesn’t seem to admit any verbs, except a verb with a restricted meaning: to temporize. In English, the verb *to time* simply means: to fit to time, to measure” (Noica 1987, 57)¹². And he concludes by saying that “Our *vremuire* is natural and preserves almost all the concept’s meanings, respectively of the noun from which it is derived” (Noica 1987, 57)¹³.

In the Romanian language, there are a lot of expressions with the noun *vremea*, all of them rendering the image of a time that cannot be defined, an eternal time: *A-și căuta vreme* (to look for the right moment/opportunity); *A cumpăra vremea* (to gain time); *La vremea potrivită* (at the right moment); *De la o vreme* (since a while); *În ultima vreme* (lately); *Din vremea lui han-tătar* (since immemorial times); *Din vreme în vreme* (sometimes); *La răstimpuri fără vreme* (too soon); *A fi bătrân ca vremea* (to be very old/ as old as a hill); *A fi de pe vremea lui Pazvante (Chiorul)* (sau a lui Tata Noe) (since immemorial times); *A fi în pas cu vremea / A ține pas cu*

¹¹ The original text: “Ești surprins, întâi, să vezi opoziția aceasta între ornic și vreme: băcătorul de ore ar fi cel care înaintează, pe când vremea ar sta pe loc. În al doilea rând, te miră - iar dacă ai îndemnul filosofiei, te și încântă – să vezi că *vremuirea* nu are aici sensul, mai larg cunoscut, de: vreme rea, viscoleşte, ci înseamnă ceva de ordinul gândului, punând în joc un înțeles adânc și poate amar despre partea de curgere nemișcată a lumii” (Noica 1987, 54) (my translation).

¹² The original text: “nu tuturor limbilor, însă, le reușește crearea *verbului intern*, născut dintr-un nume, iar reușita are loc în cazul prea puținoor nume ... dar, iată, în cazul *vremii* sau, mai larg, al timpului, reușita nu e totală în alte limbi, căci se petrece o îngustare. În limbile slave, de unde am luat *vreme*, substantivul acesta nu pare a îngădui decât un verb cu sens restrâns, de a temporiza. În limba engleză, verbul *to time* înseamnă doar a potrivi la timp, a măsura” (Noica 1987, 57) (my translation).

¹³ The original text: “*Vremuirea* noastră e firească și păstrează aproape toate sensurile conceptului, respectiv ale substantivului din care se trage” (Noica 1987, 57) (my translation).

vremea (to be modern / fashionable); *În vreme ce* (while); *A intra vremea în sac* (to pass the time); *A încurca vremea / A pierde vremea* (to waste time); *Nezăbavă vreme* (soon, right away); *O bucată de vreme* (a moment in time); *A păzi vreme / a pânde vreme* (to wait for the right moment); *Vremea patului* (bedtime); *Vreme bună* (nice/god weather); *Vreme câinească* (very bad weather); *Vreme cu prilej* (the right opportunity / the right moment); *Din vreme în vreme* (from time to time).

3.2.2. Expressions with *timp* (time)

In addition to the expressions with *vreme*, in the Romanian language, there are also a lot of expressions with *timp* (time), all of them reflecting the image of a time that cannot be defined, a time that suffers changes, modifies itself, expands and contracts, but it remains endless or seemingly endless: *A avea tot timpul* (to have all the time); *Cât timp* (as long as); *Câtva timp* (some time); *Cu cât trece timpul* (as time goes by); *Pe măsură ce trece timpul* (as time goes by); *De la un timp* (since a while); *Din alte timpuri* (other times); *Din timp* (before being too late); *Din toate timpurile* (all time); *Era și timpul* (it was about time); *A fi de-o seamă cu timpul* (to be very old); *Înainte de timp* (too early); *În alte timpuri* (in the past, time out of mind); *În contratimp* (against the clock, inappropriate, to be in a hurry); *În doi timpi și trei mișcări* (very fast); *Cât ai clipi din ochi* (very fast); *În noaptea timpurilor* (in the night of time, time out of mind); *În răstimp* (in the meantime); *În timp ce* (while); *La timp* (on time, on the dot); *A-i fi timpul* (the favourable moment has arrived, it's time to). All these expressions reflect the image of an eternal time, that can no longer be organized on the usual past-present-future line, but according to its importance in different circumstances, depending on the needs' intensity and their fulfilment.

There are also a few sayings with *timp* that have compelling meanings; one of the most common sayings with *timp* is: *Timpul e un sfetnic bun* (Time is a good advisor, mostly used in circumstances that express the need for a tough decision) or the saying *Timpul vindecă toate* (Time cures all things/Time is the best healer, mostly used in situations that involve a high level of sadness, stress and anxiety). The period of time is not specified but the healing power of time in space is used in an efficient way to achieve a goal, that of healing a spiritual or physical wound). It is worth mentioning a few more Romanian sayings that focus on the eternal side of time: *Timpul trece mai încet pentru cine așteaptă* (A watched pot is long in boiling/A watched pot never boils; this saying is mostly used to express the idea that, as human beings, we need to know how to wait; time is patient, but individuals need to be patient too; we mustn't be faster than time; therefore time is a very valuable capital, which we must use wisely, especially since we cannot give it back). Another saying is *Amânarea e hoțul timpului* (procrastination

is the thief of time) which is used in life-related contexts when people tend to postpone things till the last moment and, sometimes, they sadly realise that there is no time left; a saying that denotes that procrastinating - postponing things unnecessarily - causes people to waste a lot of their time. This saying is meant to encourage people to take action in a timely manner, instead of delaying.

4. Conclusions

Space and time expressions in the Romanian language represent a *sine qua non* manifestation of linguistic creativity and true nuclei of the imaginary. One of the main challenges was to explain space and time expressions from the Romanian language in English, taking into consideration the distinctiveness of Romanian expressions in contrast with universal or common expressions from English. Many of them were meant literally in their original use, but sometimes the attribution of the literal meaning changed and the phrase itself grew away from its original roots - typically leading to a folk etymology, as pointed out in the following fragment from *Cuvânt împreună despre rostirea românească*: "what words are the ones we cannot detach from? They do not belong to the linguist, for whom the words should also have a uniqueness, since they are scientific. Nor are words as a means of communication, because then any other word would be good. [...] A whole range of meanings can be concentrated in one word or one sentence"¹⁴ (Noica 1987, 321). The fundamental entities, so close to the collective mind, yet so far because of conceptual abstractization, best reflect both space and time in the Romanian linguistic imaginary; the expressions and sayings associated with them reflect, most of the time, pertinently and undoubtedly, different levels of time and space (without these levels, we would be so empty). The individuals in a space relate to Divinity, but they must also relate to their own self in a time that is both *stationary* and *eternal*. The clear awareness of space and time's existence, creates a space-time image, where there is *un cer* (a sky) and *un pământ* (an earth), and in which the expressions and the sayings take their freedom to change, tending to reflect not only the meanings covered by the thought but also all kinds of analogical and metaphorical meanings.

¹⁴ The original text: "Ce cuvinte sunt acestea de care nu ne putem desprinde? Nu sunt ale lingvistului, pentru care cuvintele ar trebui să aibă și unicitate, de vreme ce se vor științifice. Nu sunt nici cuvintele ca mijloc de comunicare, căci atunci orice alt cuvânt ar fi bun. [...] În câte un cuvânt sau câte o formulare se poate concentra o totalitate de înțelesuri." (Noica 1987, 321) (my translation)

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LINGUISTIC CONCEPTUALIZATION OF SPATIAL PREPOSITIONS: ROMANIAN "ÎN" AND POLISH "W" – A COMPARATIVE APPROACH

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ABSTRACT. *Linguistic Conceptualization of Spatial Prepositions: Romanian "în" and Polish "w" – Comparative Approach.* The Romanian preposition "în" corresponds to the Polish preposition "w". Both express the spatial relationship that consists of placing an object in a limited space; they indicate the interior of the space where something is located. In addition to this general definition in both languages, the preposition acquires other semantic functions that may be convergent, rendered directly by the pair Rom. *în* = Pol. *w*. Furthermore, representation of some linguistic relations can be different: for a Romanian speaker, the space relation could be reflected by preposition representing a closed space – *în*, but for a Polish speaker, it reflects an open space or a surface correlated to the Polish preposition – *na*. The main objective of this article is to analyze the differences that, first, result from the distinctive conceptualization of space reflected in the language using prepositions and, secondly, result from heterogenous grammatical system (Roman vs. Slavic). The analysis is based, among other things, on the frequent mistakes in the use of prepositional structures that Polish speakers make when learning Romanian. The wrong structures appear especially at the level of abstract language, in phrases or verbs, when the regime imposes prepositions or cases that do not correspond functionally to the native ones; however, the linguistic image of the space is also different and difficult to identify in the metaphorical or abstract structures. The cognitive approach allows the delineation of some image schemes that represent the core meaning of the preposition. The

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comparative study of the preposition in the Romanian and Polish languages shows that the prepositional system in the Romanian language is more developed and richer than the Polish one, and the latter presents a much stronger and more direct attachment to the feature of "interiority" expressed by the preposition "w / în" than in the Romanian language.

Keywords: *prepositions, Romanian as a Foreign Language, linguistic conceptualization, prepositional structures, polish language*

REZUMAT. Conceptualizarea lingvistică a prepoziției spațiale românești „în” și a celei polone „w” – abordare comparativă. Prepoziției române „în” îi corespunde prepoziția poloneză „w”. Ambele exprimă relația spațială care constă în plasarea unui obiect într-un spațiu limitat, indicând interiorul spațiului unde se află ceva. Pe lângă această definiție generală, în ambele limbi prepoziția capătă și alte funcții semantice care pot fi convergente, redate direct de perechea rom. *în* = pol. *w*. Pe de altă parte, reprezentarea unor relații lingvistice poate fi diferită: ceea ce, pentru un vorbitor român, reprezintă spațiul închis – *în*, pentru un vorbitor polonez, reflectă spațiul deschis sau o suprafață – *na*. Obiectivul principal al acestui articol este de a analiza diferențele care rezultă, în primul rând, din diferita conceptualizare a spațiului, reflectată în limbă cu ajutorul prepozițiilor, și, în al doilea rând, din distincțiile sistemelor gramaticale (roman vs. slav). Analiza este bazată, între altele, pe greșelile frecvente în folosirea structurilor prepoziționale pe care le fac vorbitorii limbii polone învățând româna. Structurile greșite apar mai ales la nivelul limbajului abstract, în sintagme sau la verbe, când regimul acestora impune prepoziții sau cazuri gramaticale care nu corespund funcțional cu cele din limba maternă. În plus, imaginea lingvistică a spațiului este și diferită, și greu de identificat în aceste structuri metaforice (abstracte). Abordarea cognitivă permite delimitarea unor scheme imaginare, care indică sensul primordial al prepoziției. Studiul comparativ al prepoziției în limbile română și polonă arată că sistemul prepozițional în limba română este mai dezvoltat și bogat decât cel polonez, iar acesta din urmă prezintă o atașare mult mai puternică și mai textuală (ad litteram) la trăsătura de „interioritate” exprimată de prepoziția „w/în” decât limba română.

Cuvinte-cheie: *prepoziții, RLS (româna ca limba străină), conceptualizare lingvistică, imaginar lingvistic, structuri prepoziționale, limba polonă*

1. Preliminaries

The main objective of the present study is to compare the semantic concepts of prepositions in Romanian and Polish. The analysis will be limited to the functional and semantic comparison of the Romanian preposition *în*

correlated to the Polish preposition *w*, thus making Romanian the starting point of the analysis. Some graphic models, that illustrate the way this preposition is conceptualized in both languages, are the result of the comparison. In the present study, we understand the term "conceptualization" as a cognitive intuition, therefore, an apperception of the relationships and functions performed by prepositions and prepositional phrases.

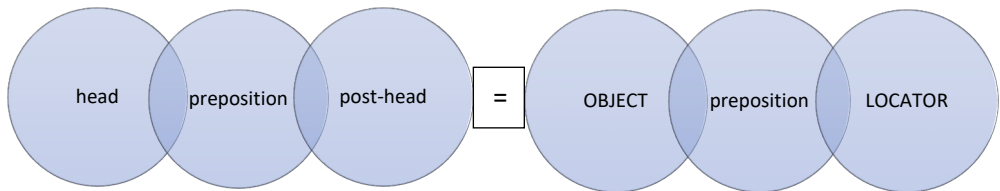
The errors that Polish students make during learning Romanian as a foreign language was the motivation for comparative research on prepositions in Romanian and Polish and, therefore, an attempt to construct imaginary models representing different functional aspects of the prepositions. The divergence of the grammatical systems in these two languages, based on either the Slavic or the Romance paradigms, determines the different functional-semantic connotations, which in turn cause linguistic errors and calques, e.g., *a adus multe împrumuturi la limba română*, cf. Polish *do języka rumuńskiego*; *după revenirea lor la patrie*, cf. Polish *po powrocie do ojczyzny*, where Polish preposition *do* is correlated to Romanian *la*, instead of *în*.

Research on the functions of prepositions appears right at the beginning of the twentieth century, with the foundation of the structuralist school and attracted the attention of linguists, developing according to linguistic conceptions and theories. Hjelmslev's approach in the study of cases was to distinguish the morphological categories of the case and the preposition as a separate morphem (1935). In the analysis of functional relationships (mostly spatial ones), the structural, syntactic-semantic approach is dominant, and, in the last period, the logical-semantic approach predominates. The latter is based on cognitive models that use imaginary models (Przybylska 2005, 158). There are multiple studies regarding the grammatical, functional, and semantic analysis of prepositions; referring to this article, it is worth mentioning the publications of Polish linguists, such as Anna Bluszcz (1987), Maciej Grochowski (1997), Renata Przybylska (2002), and Romanian ones, such as Laura Vasiliu (1961), Alexandru Mardale (2010, 2011), Dorin Cosma (2010) or Ionuț Geană (2013).

In the Romanian-Polish context, a comparative study by Adam Weinsberg *Przyimki przestrzenne w języku polskim, niemieckim i rumuńskim* (Spatial prepositions in Polish, German, and Romanian) from 1973 should be mentioned, a study based on the classical method of structuralist research. The linguist claims that the prepositional system in Romanian is more developed and richer than the Polish one. He analyzes 22 meanings of locative prepositions, including *după, în, între, la, lângă, pe, peste, printre, către, înspre, spre*. The last three he considers synonymous in Romanian and, in general, 17 meanings coincide in Polish and Romanian.

2. Teoretic approach

According to the most recent definition proposed by Romanian linguists, the preposition belongs to the class of indeclinable words that express syntactic relations of dependence between the parts of a sentence. This is the connecting element participating in organizing the utterance; it does not have its own syntactic function; however, it marks relations of subordination (GALR I 2008, 322). As a connector, the preposition is engraved on a ternary structure:

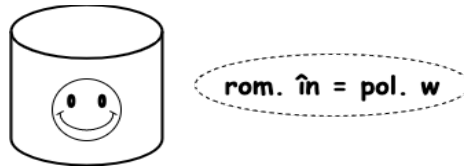


Several features can be added to this general definition, depending on the applied methodology. According to some linguists, the preposition, like the conjunction, polish particles, adverbs, and so on, is a functional phrase or expression that has a variable syntactic-semantic function depending on the context (Grochowski 1997, 5). From the lexicographic point of view, the preposition is an independent lexeme (descriptive method), while the grammatical meaning (paradigmatic) refers to the functions performed by the preposition (structural school) (Bluszcz 1987, 8). When contextually analyzed, the preposition has individual properties that are repeated in series limited to a few elements, as well as those characteristics by the significant level of contextual variety – depending on the context, various grammatical and semantic particularities appear (Grochowski 1997, 5). In the functional approach, the preposition is a symbolic unit that indicates a determined and objective type of spatial relation or other types of relationships between objects (Przybylska 2005, 151). Weinsberg proposes the most general definition, noting that prepositions are *small parts of statements that, nevertheless, possess meaning* (1973, 13).

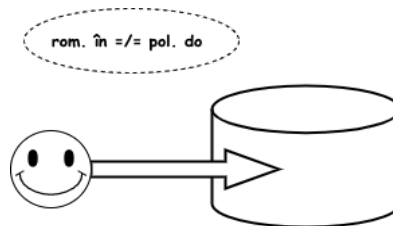
The cognitive methods which are mainly applied in studies of prepositions rely to their semantic analysis based on an image schema. These concerns the meaning of the prepositions could be presented as a schematic configuration of some elements in cognitive space (Przybylska 2002, 95).

3. Comparative analysis of prepositions: Romanian *în* and Polish *w*

The core meaning of the Romanian preposition *în* corresponds to that of the Polish preposition *w*, indicating *the interior of the space*. This concept is embedded in the mind of the Polish student due to the graphic representations used to illustrate this relation, as seen not only in RLS textbooks, but also in other foreign language textbooks, presented as follows:



Progressing in learning the Romanian language, the student gains knowledge about other uses of this Romanian preposition. Some of the concepts are convergent to those in Polish, e.g., the time in which an action takes place: *în august = w sierpniu*, *în anul 2022 = w roku 2022*. However, most of the concepts are different, and the correlation between action and space refers to another Polish preposition, e.g. the interior of space toward which the movement is directed, e.g. *intră în casă* \neq *wchodzi do domu*.



Both Romanian and Polish dictionaries use descriptive methods to explain the meaning and use of the preposition. As one can observe, the definitions are multiplied, they present different examples of preposition use, and their order is not identical. To illustrate this aspect, we analyse the definitions of the Romanian preposition *în* and those of the Polish preposition *w* as they are presented in two dictionaries similar in terms of methodological approach and number of words that present the basic use of the preposition – *Dicționarul Explicativ al Limbii Române* (DEX 2016, 587-588) and *Słownik języka polskiego* (SJP 2006, 1115). These were supplemented with definitions from (MDA 2003, 136) and *Uniwersalny Słownik Języka Polskiego* (UJSP 2003, 5-6). The Polish definitions were arranged according to the Romanian ones².

² The comparison of the definitions and the table were prepared in collaboration with Aleksander Podgorny, a student of Romanian Philology at Jagiellonian University.

1. Definitions that correspond in both languages:

	DEX	SJP
1.	Indică interiorul spațiului unde are loc o acțiune, unde se află ceva, spre care are loc o mișcare [1]: <i>Intră în casă.</i>	Intră în componența unor structuri care indică locuri unde se află ceva sau direcția unei acțiuni [1]: <i>Coś jest w pudełku</i> 'e ceva în cutie'; <i>włożyć w pudełko</i> 'a pune în cutie'; <i>Pracować w lesie</i> , 'a lucra în pădure'; <i>Iść w pole</i> 'a merge în câmpie'; <i>Krążyć w koło</i> 'a merge în cerc'; <i>Ustawić się w rzędy</i> 'a sta în rânduri'.
2.	Indică starea unui lucru, a unui fapt etc. <i>a fi în extază</i> (MDA 2003, 136).	Formează expresii care definesc stările determinate de substantiv [8]: <i>żyć w samotności</i> 'a trăi în singuritate'; <i>być w nędzy</i> 'a fi în sărăcie'.
3.	Indică scopul [4]: <i>Se duce în peșit.</i>	Indică scopul acțiunii [9]: <i>Iść w odwiedzin</i> 'a merge în vizită'.
4.	Indică o comparație – în formă de..., ca... [6]: <i>Fumul se ridică în spirală.</i>	Leagă un obiect sau un obiect deja transformat care s-a format ca rezultatul schimbării despre care este vorbă în enunț [21]: <i>Pokroiła ser w kostki a kielbasę w plasterki</i> 'A tăiat cașul în cuburi iar salamul în felii'; <i>Zła czarownica przemieniła księżniczkę w żabę</i> 'Vrăjitoarea rea l-a transformat pe prinț într-o broască'. (UJSP 2003, 6)
5.	Introduce un complement prepozițional [8]: <i>Adâncit în gânduri. Casă transformată în muzeu.</i>	Leagă determinantele cu cuvintele regente [14]: <i>Wierzyć w coś</i> 'a crede în ceva'; <i>Włączyć się w coś</i> 'a se băga în ceva'. <i>Wprawić w zdumienie*</i> 'a uimi pe cineva'.
6.	Indică ideea de măsură, cantitate [26]: <i>Volum în litri</i> (MDA 2003: 136).	Formează expresii care indică componența cantitativă, o limită cantitativă [7]: <i>Podanie w dwóch egzemplarzach</i> 'cerere în două exemplare'; <i>Powieść w trzech tomach</i> 'romanul în trei volume'; <i>Powiedzieć coś w kilku słowach</i> 'a spune ceva în câteva cuvinte'; <i>Rysunek w skali* 1:1000</i> 'desen la scară 1:1000'.
7.	Indică ideea de distribuție [28]: <i>În sferturi</i> (MDA 2003, 136).	Formează expresii care indică rezultatul [10]: <i>Obrócić w popiół</i> 'a preface în cenușă'; <i>Zetrzeć w proch</i> 'a transforma în praf'.
8.	Indică ideea de multiplicitate [29]: <i>În două rânduri, în trei rânduri</i> (MDA 2003, 136).	Formează expresii care definesc modul în care se derulează o acțiune [11]: <i>Zaśmieać się w głos</i> , 'a râde cu glasul tare'; <i>Grać w takt</i> , 'a cânta în ritm'.
9.	Indică trecerea dintr-o stare în alta [7]: <i>Se preface în cerb</i> (MDA 2003, 136).	Constituie o parte a locuțiunii adverbiale [15]: <i>w dwójnasób</i> 'în două moduri', <i>w poprzek</i> 'transversal', <i>w zamian</i> 'în schimb'.
10.	Indică o transformare [8]: <i>Se schimbă în bine</i> (MDA 2003, 136).	Formează expresii care precizează o calitate, o încadrare sau un tip de realizare [6]: <i>Płacić w gotówce</i> 'a plăti în numerar'; <i>Otrzymać coś w darze</i> 'a primi în dar'; <i>w dowód przyjazni</i> 'în semn de prietenie'; <i>Rzeka obfituje w ryby</i> 'Râul abundă în pește'.
11.	Indică modul în care se face sau se derulează o acțiune [30]: <i>în salturi</i> (MDA 2003, 136).	
12.	Indică ideea de preț sau de echivalență [23]: <i>Socotesc în lei</i> (MDA 2003, 136). Indică ideea de consecință, <i>în urma, ca, drept</i> [25] (MDA 2003, 136).	

2. *Definitions that partially correspond or are apparently identical:*

Indică timpul în care se petrece o acțiune [2]: <i>În iunie se coc cireșele.</i>	Formează expresii care indică timpul în care se petrece o acțiune [12]: <i>W niedzielę</i> 'duminică, duminică'; <i>w czerwcu</i> 'în iunie'; <i>w dzieciństwie</i> 'în copilărie'; <i>w samą porę</i> 'la timp'.
Indică forma unui obiect [31]: <i>În trei muchii</i> (MDA 2003, 136), delimitat de trei muchii.	Formează expresii care indică forma, aspectul fizic sau trăsătura exterioare caracteristică unui obiect [5]: <i>Materiał w paski*</i> 'materialul cu dungi'; <i>Cukier w kostkach*</i> 'zahăr cubic'; <i>Włosy w lokach*</i> 'părul cu bucle'.

3. *Romanian definitions without a Polish equivalent (DEX 2016, 587-588; MDA 2003, 136):*

a) Indică suprafața pe care are loc o acțiune sau spațiul dintre obiecte unde se află ceva, unde se produce o mișcare [1b]: *Se suie în pom*, cf. pol. *Wspina się na drzewo*.

b) Indică obiectul de care atârnă ceva [1c]: *Pune-ți haina în cuier*, cf. pol. *Wiesza ubranie na wieszaku*.

c) Indică o parte a corpului care este acoperită, îmbrăcată etc. [1d]: *Și-a tras ghetele în picioare. Nu sta cu căciula în cap*, cf. pol. *Włożył buty na nogi. Nie siedź w czapce na głowie*.

d) La, în dreptul [1e]: *Haină roasă în coate*, cf. pol. *Ubranie przetarte na łokciach*.

e) Indică intervalul de timp care se scurge de la un anumit moment; după, peste [2b]: *Pleci de mâine în două zile*, cf. pol. *Wyjeżdżasz za dwa dni (po dwóch dniach)*.

f) Indică o cauză – *din pricina...; în urma...* [3]: *Pomul se clătina în vânt. Ochii-i ard în friguri*, cf. pol. *Drzewo chyli się na wietrze. Oczy go pieką od gorączki*.

g) Indică instrumentul, relația [5]: *S-au înțeles în scris*, cf. Pol. *Porozumieli się na piśmie*.

h) *Conform cu..., potrivit cu...* [7]: *Fiecare în legea lui*, cf. Pol. *Każdy wedle (podług) swego prawa*.

4. *Polish definitions without a Romanian equivalent (SJP 2006, 1115):*

a) Formează expresii care indică obiectul unei acțiuni [2]: *trafić w cel*, a nimeri ținta (a trage la țintă); *skaleczyć się w palec*, a se răni la deget'.

b) Formează expresii care indică o instituție sau un grup social etc. [3]: *Grać w orkiestrze* cf. Rom. *a cânta în orchestră; Pracować w biurze* cf. Rom. *a lucra la birou*.

c) Formează expresii care indică vestimentația sau trăsătura caracteristică a aspectului fizic [4]: *Chodzić w dzinsach*, cf. Rom. *a purta blugi / a se îmbrăca în blugi*; *w okularach*, cf. Rom. *a purta ochelari*; *ktoś w rumieńcach*, cf. rom. *cineva este îmbujorat*, rom. *a aduce rumeneala în față, a fi rumen în obraji*; *koń cały w pianie*, cf. rom. *La castel în poartă calul Stă a doua zi în spume*. EMINESCU, O. I 68.

d) Formează expresii (frazelogisme) nepredicative [13]: *W nogi!* 'Fugiți (hai repede!) *W górę go!* 'Haide sus!' (haideți să-l luăm pe sus!)

Some of functions of the preposition *w* presented in Polish language dictionaries do not have a corresponding definition in Romanian dictionaries. Nevertheless, the examples prove that the Romanian preposition *în* can function in a similar context, cf. (b) and (c). Expressions (d), which cannot be translated as such, cannot be the object of direct comparison, even though the locator that is part of an expression refers to an image of space (*w górę*) or to the regimen of the omitted/implicit verb (*w nogi*). The only example of functional discordance is (a). The "target" object is imagined as a delimited space in which an action ends.



The comprehensive analysis of the examples above, selected from dictionaries, clearly indicates the fact that most of the differences emerge from the different conceptualization of the relations, primarily the spatial ones, expressed by the Romanian preposition *în* and the Polish preposition *w*. Noticeably, the Romanian preposition *în* is mainly translated into Polish by two prepositions, **w** and **na**, with a few exceptions (*wedle prawa, od gorączki*). Considering the functions performed by the preposition *în* in the ternary structure (followed by a locator), these functions, according to the study by L. Vasiliu (apud Geană 2013: 19), can be included in seven major fields:

- 1) the interior of an object or a continuous space, of a period or a process, of a state/mood;
- 2) insertion inside an object, a continuous space, or a period;
- 3) creating order within a process;
- 4) formation within a substance;
- 5) shape transfer within another shape;
- 6) relationship;
- 7) abstract direction towards a person or an object.

In our opinion, in ternary structures, the locator is the one determining the choice of the appropriate preposition. We emphasize the fact that the present

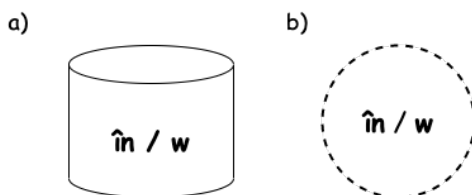
analysis does not focus on the structures in which the verb fulfills the head function, and the preposition choice depends on its regimen, e.g. *a transforma în ceva = zmieniać w coś*. The ternary structures that coincide in Romanian and Polish do not cause confusion because their conceptualization does not differ. In general, we are considering cases in which the locator is associated with the interior of (a) closed, delimited, or (b) well-defined, determined (a state, mood) space, e.g.:

a) *Studentii au cursul de limba română în sala 307 = Studenci mają zajęcia z języka rumuńskiego w sali 307.*

În oraș sunt multe cluburi și restaurante. = W mieście jest dużo klubów i restauracji.

b) *N-am fost în stare să înțeleg. = Nie byłem w stanie zrozumieć.*

Cum se comportă cei care sunt în depresie? = Jak zachowują się osoby w depresji?



From the point of view of the verbal conceptualization of the preposition, the most interesting situations are those where prepositional structures partially coincide or do not coincide at all in both languages.

a) When indicating the thermal and light environment, e.g.:

b) *Nu-mi place să stau în frig. = Nie lubię siedzieć w zimnie (alternative: **na** zimnie).*

c) *Produsele lactate trebuie păstrate la rece. = Należy przechowywać w zimnie.*

But:

d) *Nu-mi place să stau la căldură. =/= Nie lubię siedzieć w ciepłe.*

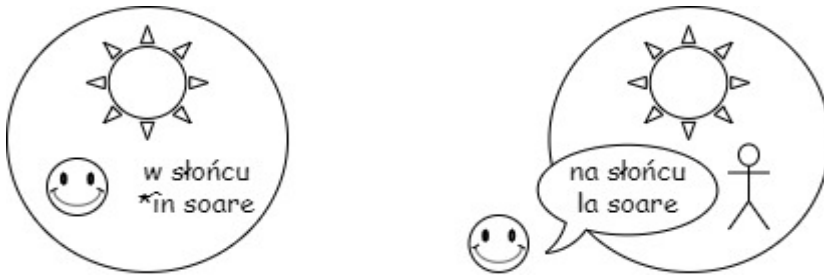
e) *Îmi place să stau la umbră. =/= Lubię siedzieć w cieniu.*

f) *El întotdeauna stă în umbră (despre cineva modest sau a pândi dintr-un loc ascuns) = On zawsze stoi w cieniu / Ukrywa się w cieniu.*

g) *Nu poți sta atâta timp la soare. =/= Nie możesz siedzieć tak długo w słońcu.
= Nie możesz siedzieć tak długo **na** słońcu.*

These apparently functionally identical statements have a semantic difference in Polish. They generally describe an objectively identical spatial relation, yet this relation has a different conceptual interpretation (Przybylska 2005, 156).

The preposition *w* (in) locates the object within the locator's inner field, whereas the use of the preposition *na* presents the perspective of a virtual observer, located outside this field, observing the object. It seems that the spatial conception in Romanian presents the same type of perception of the placement of the object in relation to the locator, cf. *la umbră* and *în umbră*.



In general, when indicating the interior towards which a movement takes place, the Polish language uses the preposition expressing movement toward a direction: pol. **do**, e.g.

- a) *Merg în oraș.* = / = *Idę do miasta.*
- b) *Urc în tramvai.* = / = *Wchodzę do tramwaju.*
- c) *Cobor în vale.* = / = *Schodzę do doliny.*

However, in Polish, there are prepositional structures that, at first glance, seem to be identical to the Romanian ones. They possess the value of movement but semantically place the object inside the locator, which structurally has an imaginary limit, but metaphorically represents an unlimited and abstract space. The locator in Polish becomes an abstract, physically indefinite notion, e.g.

Merg în pădure:

a) *Idę w las* – it is impossible to say with certainty which forest I am going to, its location, or its borders. At the phraseological level, this expression can be interpreted as a loss: *nauka poszła w las* ‘învățătura n-a adus niciun efect’.

b) *Idę do lasu* – *las* ‘pădure’ (forest) is a concret and delimited space.

There are also some situations where the perception of the locator is very different in Romanian and Polish languages. The first is when the locator indicates the limit point of an elongated object. These objects can vary; however, the idea of the limit point of the elongated shape remains the same, e.g.:

a) elongated shape:

Locuiesc în capătul străzii. = / = *Mieszkam na końcu ulicy.*

În vârful turnului este cuibul de barză. = / = *Na szczycie wierzy jest bocianie gniazdo.*

Bătrânul se sprijină în baston. = / = *Staruszek wspiera się na lasce.*

b) When indicating the object from which something hangs or is tied to:
Pune-ți haina în cuier. = / = *Powieś ubranie na wieszaku.*

La țară mulți câini sunt ținuți în lanț. = / = *Na wsi wiele psów trzyma się na łańcuchu.*

c) When indicating a body part that is covered:

E frig afară, pune mănuși în mâini și căciula în cap. = / = *Jest zimno na polu, włóż rękawiczki na ręce i czapkę na głowę.*

In Polish, this concept is reflected by the preposition **na** which, in general, is associated with locating an object on a surface. The Polish speaker interprets the statement *Pune cizme în picioare* as depicted:



Any surface, as well as an insignificant depth, is correlated in Polish with the preposition **na**, both semantically and functionally. Poles and Romanians have a different perception of the depth of the locator, thus *o farfurie* in Romanian is perceived only as a delimited object with some degree of depth, e.g. *supa se servește în farfurie*, while in Polish the surface is the decisive aspect: *zupę serwuje się na talerzu*. However, if *o farfurie* (a plate) appears to be deep enough and contains soup that can also be served *în castron – w misce*, then the preposition *w = în* can also be used in Polish. When the verb expresses a movement, the locator – *farfurie* – is preceded by the preposition pol. *do*, with a primary function expressing movement towards a direction, e.g. *Nalewa zupę do talerza*, *Varsă supa în farfurie*'.

Another aspect of the surface that accompanies the Romanian preposition *în* is that on which a movement takes place, e.g. *Se suie în pom*. In Polish, the appearance of the tree surface seems to be more important than the action that takes place, so the Polish speaker will say *Wspina się na drzewo*, 'se suie *în pom' *siedzi na drzewie*, *stă *în pom*'. Another interpretation of the Romanian structure with the preposition *în* might be related to the idea of the elongated object.

The comparative study of these two prepositions cannot overlook some exemplary situations in which the use of an improper preposition radically changes the meaning of the statement. Moreover, the prepositions cross Polish and Romanian meanings.

Romanian		Polish	
la oraş =/= în oraş		w mieście	
în mediul urban 'in the urban environment'	nu acasă 'not at home'	without any semantic difference 'in the urban environment' or 'not at home'	
la munte = / = în munte		w górach (pl.) =/= na górze (sg.)	
în mediul montan 'in mountains environment' Polish calques: <i>*în munți</i>	în vârful muntelui 'on the mountain top' Polish calques: <i>*la munte</i>	în mediul montan 'in the mountain environment'	în vârful muntelui 'on the mountain top'
la țară =/= în țară		na wsi / we wsi = / = w kraju	
în mediul rural 'in the countryside' Polish calques: <i>*în țară</i> cf. <i>we wsi</i>	în stat (în Polonia) 'in the country, in Poland'	în mediul rural 'in the countryside'	în țară (în Polonia) 'in the country, in Poland'
la vârf =/= în vârf		na końcu =/= na szczycie	
'end, extremity of a thing', <i>la vârf</i> 'on the toe of the shoe' <i>la vârf</i> (colloquial expression) 'in power'	piscul muntelui 'on the top of the mountain, summit'	na czubku (buta) 'on the toe of the shoe' na szczycie władzy 'in power'	na szczycie góry 'on the top of the mountain, summit'

The above pair of prepositions also occurs when the locator is equivalent to the name, usually of a big city. The perception of the Polish speaker associates movement with the preposition *la* (*spre*) corresponding to the Polish preposition *do* (with dynamic value), while the preposition *în* has a more static aspect. Within this frame of reference, it is difficult to understand Romanian structures in which both *la Cluj* and *în Cluj* have, at the same time, the static aspect (to stay) and the dynamic one (to go). In this context, the Polish language presents a strict delimitation between the dynamic aspect (*Jadę do Klużu*) and the static one (*Jestem w Klużu*).

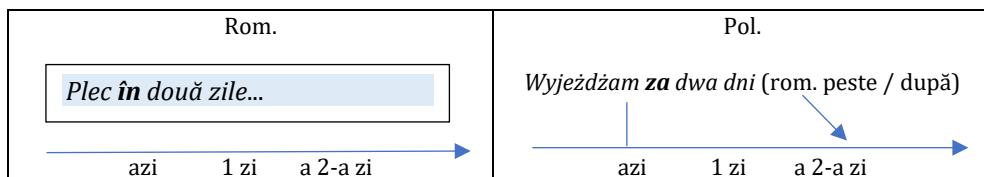
In addition to the spatial aspect of prepositions *în* and *w*, their temporal function is also noteworthy, as some interesting differences are also observable in this regard. As cited in the table of definitions from dictionaries, both indicate the time when an action takes place:

=	without a determiner	
	în iunie	w czerwcu
	with determiner	
	în anul 2022 În luna aceea fusesem la teatru	w roku 2022 w tamten poniedziałek byliśmy w teatrze,
=/=	without a determiner	
	(0) luni / luna (0) iarna	w poniedziałek / w poniedziałki w zimie, zimą (cazul instrumental)
	with determiner	
	(0) luna viitoare: (0) săptămâna viitoare (0) anul viitor	w przyszłym miesiącu w przyszłym tygodniu w przyszłym roku

The verb's regimen can also condition the use of the temporal preposition, e.g. rom. *a se naște în: M-am născut în 15 ianuarie*, while in Polish the date is used in the genitive case, e.g. *Urodziłam się 15-go stycznia*. The structure is generated by the genitive case regimen of the verb, which is non-existent in Romanian. Moreover, statements indicating exact dates are formed in Romanian with the preposition **în**: *În ce zi suntem azi? Suntem în 15 ianuarie*. Polish speakers use impersonal forms of the verb: **Jest 15 stycznia** (= genitiv). Some prepositional structures in Romanian, especially those with an indefinite article, e.g., *într-o seară, într-o zi, într-o săptămână*, expressing a temporal estimation, are replaced in Polish with adverbs, e.g., *wieczorem* (cf. rom. *seară*), or with adverbial phrases, e.g., *w ciągu dnia, w ciągu tygodnia* (cf. rom. *pe parcursul zilei*).

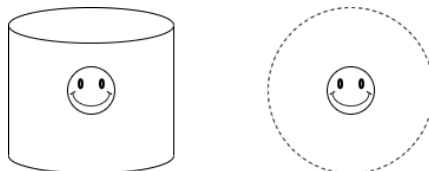
One of the functions of the preposition is to indicate the time interval that elapses from a certain moment, which is synonymous with the prepositions *după* and *peste*. In Polish, this idea can only be expressed with the Polish equivalents of the latter, e.g.

Pleci în două zile =/= *Wyjeżdżasz za dwa dni* = *Plec peste / după două zile*. This relation can be illustrated as follows:

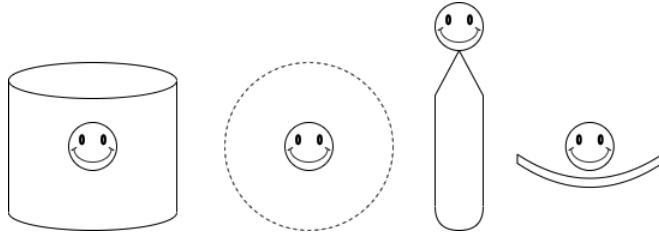


Each preposition associates a conceptual structure based on an imaginary model that reflects a spatial relation (Przybylska 2005, 158). The cognitive approach allows the creation of imaginary models that illustrate the meaning of the preposition in ternary structures. This model is, in fact, a conceptual image of the space projected onto aspects of reality. Metaphorically, these relations can be transposed to other abstract notions, e.g., *în vârf* > *în bază, în funcție de*, or even transposed to other functions, such as purpose, e.g., *în sănătatea lui*, method *s-au înțeles în scris*, or time, e.g., *în ce zi suntem azi?*

Conceptual image of the locative preposition **w** – Polish language:



Conceptual image of the locative preposition **în** – Romanian language:



4. Conclusions

The analysis shows that the form the locator presents in ternary structures conditions the choice of the preposition. The imagined locator introduced by the Romanian preposition **în** generates more conceptual images (four) than the Polish preposition **w** (two). From the Polish speaker's point of view, the most surprising conceptual image of the preposition **în** is the placement of an object in an elongated locator, e.g. *în vârful (degetelor)*, *în baston*, etc. In Polish, such a situation is represented through the preposition **na** which corresponds to the idea of a surface. Obviously, in Polish, the locator must have at least an edge, a limit, corresponding to the idea of the interior, even if it is an imaginary, conventional limit. Another important distinction is the "dynamics" of the Romanian preposition **în**. This feature allows its correlation with verbs of movement, and the preposition expresses "movement towards, in the direction of". In Polish, **w** is only static. Even when used with verbs of movement, e.g. *jechać w góry (a merge la munte)*, it is combined with the locator (*w góry*) and does not result from the prepositional regimen of the verb. The conceptual image of the locators accompanied by the locative prepositions **în** and **w** largely coincides with the idea of the interior; thus most of the particular functions described in dictionaries can be similarly expressed in Polish and Romanian. This is the case for approximately 12 out of the 23 functions cited for Romanian, to which 10 functions (out of the 16 cited) correspond. The difference in numbers is due to different ways of defining notions and functions. Eight Romanian definitions have no correspondence in Polish, and it is generally the case in situations in which the locator has an elongated shape, whereas in Polish there is only one definition. The other six present particular situations, which can be expressed in the same way or, due to their different lexical structures, represent a different type of regimen.

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SET PHRASES WITH THE LEXEME "THURSDAY". CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING THE LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL IMAGE OF THE DAYS OF THE WEEK IN THE POLISH AND ROMANIAN FOLK CALENDAR

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ABSTRACT. *Set Phrases with the Lexeme "Thursday". Considerations Regarding the Linguistic and Cultural Image of the Days of the Week in the Polish and Romanian Folk Calendar.* Ever since the 1970s and 1980s, the relationship between language and culture has been a topic of broad interest for linguists, which undoubtedly contributed to bringing linguistics closer to humanities. The prefix *ethno-* contained in the term *ethnolinguistics* used over the course of this article should be interpreted as an abbreviation for *ethnology*, a term synonymous with the American *anthropology*. Describing so-called *language stereotypes* is one of the main topics of interests for what we generally call "Polish cognitivism", conducted for years by Polish linguists. The term *stereotype* itself is used in its original Lippmann's meaning as a schematic and one-sided "picture or image in a person's mind" of a phenomenon, human being, or thing and at the same time an opinion assimilated from the environment even before discovering the object itself. In Polish language and culture, days of the week were not personified. Therefore, to a philologist-linguist who is comparing the two languages, the data derived from folklore will be a "weaker" starting point than "hard" linguistic confirmations

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(fixed structures). My goal is to offer a Polish and Romanian comparative analysis which is supported by ethnological or historical data.

Keywords: *ethnolinguistics, Polish and Romanian comparative study, folk calendar, Thursday*

REZUMAT. *Frazeologisme conținând lexemul „joi”. Considerații privind imaginea cultural-lingvistică a zilelor săptămânii în calendarul popular polonez și în cel românesc.* Începând cu anii 1970-1980, relația dintre limbă și cultură a reprezentat o temă de larg interes pentru lingviști. Prefixoidul *ethno-*, conținut în termenul *etnolingvistică*, așa cum este utilizat în acest articol, ar trebui interpretat ca o abreviere de la *etnologie*, un termen sinonim celui de *antropologie* în cultura americană. Descrierea așa-numitelor stereotipuri lingvistice reprezintă una dintre temele predilecte ale curentului cunoscut sub numele de *cognitivism* polonez. Termenul *stereotip* este utilizat în sensul său original, ceea ce Lippmann numește „o imagine schematică, unilaterală în mintea cuiva” asupra unui fenomen, ființe sau lucru și, de asemenea, o opinie asimilată din mediul în care ne aflăm, chiar înainte de a descoperi obiectul în sine. În limba și cultura poloneză, zilele săptămânii nu sunt personificate. Prin urmare, pentru un filolog care compară cele două limbi, datele culese din folclor reprezintă un punct de plecare „mai slab” decât dovezile lingvistice „tari”, sub forma structurilor fixe. Obiectivul nostru aici este să oferim o analiză comparativă între română și polonă, sprijinită de date etnologice și istorice.

Cuvinte-cheie: *etnolingvistică, cercetări comparate polono-române, calendar popular, ziua de joi*

Starting with the 1970s and 1980s, relations between language, civilization and culture have increasingly become a field of interest for linguistic research. This has decisively oriented linguistics towards the field of humanities, somewhat restoring its status and character as a discipline belonging to humanities, while the description of relations between language, culture and civilization became one of its main objectives. The “ethno” component of *ethnolinguistics* (as it is currently used in Poland) must be interpreted as an abbreviation from the word *ethnology*, which is the equivalent of the American linguistic anthropology (Nagórko 1994, 5).

At the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, students follow a three year programme in Romanian philology and, at the end of the three years, they are required to write and defend a BA thesis in Romanian. For a few years now, some of the theses referring to language align with the previously described trend, involving the description of the *cultural-linguistic image of the world*. The starting point consists of language: the research of the semantic motivations of designations, derivatives, set expressions and proverbs, with references to the

field of ethnology and that of history of ideas. In the case of Romanian linguists, this type of endeavour can be found with older theoreticians (starting with B.P. Haşdeu, L. Şăineanu, O. Densusianu, S. Puşcariu, T. Papahagi, Th. Capidan) and, more rarely, with Eugen Coşeriu and his continuators, among whom S. Dumistrăcel and the authors of *Enciclopedia imaginariilor din România*. These linguists' contributions are based "on the conviction that Romanian, with its special historical evolution, represents a special case for the exploration of how a certain «way of life» and/or a certain «mentality» – determined by specific socio-historical circumstances – are reflected linguistically" (my translation) (Borcilă 1979, 179)². Considering that religion and denomination play a fundamental role in a person's social life, this type of description, which is much more interesting for students than simply grammatical analyses, also involves getting to know the respective culture and civilization and various realities that belong to it. The comparative perspective often constitutes a very interesting starting point for such theses.

In reference to the importance of ethnolinguistic (folkloric) information in the teaching of Romanian as a foreign language, I would like to mention here a small volume for "in-house use", *Basme populare româneşti. Texte structurale (Popular Romanian fairytales. Structural texts – my translation)* (Cuceu et al. 1977) and *Snoave româneşti (Romanian anecdotes)* (Danciu et al. 1978), which "offer students the possibility for a pleasant exercise for reading and enriching one's vocabulary" (my translation)³. According to the author of the preface, professor G. Gruită, (Cuceu et al. 1977, 2-3): "the proposed readings were deliberately chosen from popular prose. Our intention was for students to become familiarised with our popular folklore and mythology while learning Romanian" (my translation)⁴. Forty years later, this position is still valid: the practical knowledge of a language is not sufficient for a thorough understanding of different cultures. Without ethnolinguistic knowledge, especially without the awareness of the existing differences, the act of communication can be incomplete or even unsuccessful or false. In such cases, the specialised literature uses the notion of *culturem* as "the totality of the socio-cultural models and rules for behaviour", and that of *xenism* as "the misinterpretation of certain false conclusions" (my translation)⁵ (Nagórko 1994, 11). Moreover, the texts included in the above mentioned volume have not "gotten old", although they do not include phrases or expressions from a more practical register of Romanian, which can now be encountered in typical

² „pe convingerea că limba română, cu dezvoltarea ei istorică aparte, reprezintă un caz privilegiat pentru explorarea felului în care un anumit «mod de viaţă» şi/sau o anumită «mentalitate» – determinate de circumstanţe istorico-sociale specifice – se reflectă în plan lingvistic”.

³ „oferă studenţilor posibilitatea unui plăcut exerciţiu de lectură şi de îmbogăţire a vocabularului”

⁴ „În încheiere, menţionăm că lecturile propuse au fost în mod deliberat alese din proza populară. Intenţia noastră a fost aceea ca odată cu însuşirea limbii române studenţii străini să se familiarizeze şi cu folclorul şi mitologia noastră populară”.

⁵ „interpretarea greşită a unor concluzii false”.

A1 textbooks (referring to shopping, meetings etc.). The aforementioned publications are among the few of the kind that include elements of "high culture", which are interesting for more motivated students, who are eager to discover, from a beginner's level, the similarities and, especially, differences between cultures. Only then do some of these students make the decision of continuing studying Romanian at the B or C levels⁶.

Our research is an analysis of the semantic layer of the lexeme *czwartek* and *joi* ("Thursday") in Polish and Romanian calendars. We note here that both in culture and language, the seven day week for Indo-European languages can be divided into two categories: the planetary week and the church week. The former, with Chaldean, Greek and Egyptian roots - typical for the Mediterranean region - was adopted by the Romans from the Greek. In this system, the names that initially referred to Greek names of god-planets⁷ were replaced with the names of the Roman gods. At the same time, in this stage of calendar development, Sunday strengthens its position as the first day of the week, while Saturday becomes the seventh day. The majority of Romance languages keep the names inherited from Vulgar Latin. As for the second type, it represents the church week (stemming from the Old or New Testament), in which numeric names are introduced. According to Jewish tradition, the days were numbered starting with the Sabbath (meaning Saturday). In the one rooted in the New Testament, this is no longer the case, as Christians start their week with Sunday, the day of the Resurrection. Gradually, the numeric church week replaces the planetary week, while Christian Churches tend to eliminate the planetary names, for their connection with Pagan gods. When the Roman Empire split (in 395), the Eastern part, through Greek, adopted the numeric system, while the Western part (with the exception of Portuguese), the planetary system. Romanians adopted the planetary system as well, although geographically they belong to the East.

However, we note that, in Romanian folklore, we find "a numeric" way of thinking about the days of the week. To this end, notice the following description: *The people made by God started having children and every day they would have one; this is how God wanted for days to be made. On the first day Sunday, a girl, was born; then Monday, a man; Tuesday, a man; Wednesday, a woman; Thursday, a man, then Friday, a woman, as well as Saturday, so that saints may have days* (my translation)⁸ (Olteanu 2001, 693). Ivan Evseev concludes:

⁶ To this end, also see Porawska 2008.

⁷ In Greece, these names did not become common and were replaced with numeric names. More details can be found in the chapter *Tydzień a systemy wierzeń* "Săptămâna și sistemele credințelor" / "The week and belief systems" (my translation) in (Waniakowa 1998, 20-25).

⁸ *Oamenii pe cari i-a făcut Dumnezeu au început a face la copii și tot făcea în toată ziua câte unul; așa a vrut Dumnezeu ca să se facă zilele. În ziua întâi a făcut pe Duminica, fată; apoi pe Luni, bărbat; pe Marți, bărbat; pe Miercurea, femeie; pe Joi, bărbat, apoi pe Vinerea, femeie, precum și pe Sâmbăta, ca să aibă oamenii sfinți, zile.*

"A series of names of week days from Slavic languages attest to the existence of another way of counting in the old European Europe, a precursor to the Christian week. Here the week started with Monday. (...) There is a series of folkloric indexes referring to the days that allow us to assume that this system was used on our country's territory as well. Its interference with the liturgical system contributed to the ambivalence of some of the week days, which is visible in Romanian culture" (my translation) (Evseev 1998 b, 14)⁹.

The names for the days of the week used in Romance languages (apart from Portuguese) come from Latin. In colloquial Latin, they are the following: *Lunae dies*, *Martis dies*, *Mercurii dies*, *Iovis dies*, *Veneris dies*, *Sabaturnum*, *Dies Dominica* (Danka 1999, 111; Maneca 1958). The name for the fourth day is *giovedì* in Italian, *jeuves* in Spanish, *jeudi* in French, *joi* in Romanian.¹⁰ The names for week days in Polish follow the numeric system (starting with *Monday*): *poniedziałek*, *wtorek*, *środa*, *czwartek*, *piątek*, *sobota*, *niedziela*.

Czwartek (*czwarty* meaning "the fourth") appears for the first time in the 15th century (Waniakowa 1998, 102), while the Romanian *joi* can be found in the 16th century, in Coresi (MDA, 253), originating in the second element from the binary Latin syntagm *diēs Iovis*, similarly to other Romanian dialects (ar. *gioi(a)*/*džoi(a)*, megl. *joi*). The form *diēs Iovis* (calqued after Greek) is attested, for the first time in 205, in an inscription from Transylvania (Waniakowa 1998, 91).

While describing the primary etymological meanings of the names for Thursday in Indo-European languages, Waniakowa groups them as follows: I "the day of Zeus-Iovis-Donar (...)", II "the fifth day of the week", III "the fourth day (after Sunday) of the week", IV "the fourth day of the week", V "others" (my translations)¹¹ (Waniakowa 1998, 91). While submitting this day to detailed analysis, we must refer, for its description in Polish culture, to group III "the fourth day of the week", specific to Slavic languages, and, for Romanian culture, to the first group I, "the day of Zeus-Iovis", dominating in the contemporary nomenclature of Romance languages.

⁹ "O serie de denumiri ale zilelor săptămânii din limbile slave atestă existența unui alt mod de numărare a zilelor existent în vechea lume europeană, premergător săptămânii creștine. Aici săptămâna începea cu ziua de luni. (...) Există o serie de indici folclorici referitor la zilele care ne permit să presupunem că acest sistem a funcționat și pe teritoriul țării noastre. Interferența lui cu sistemul liturgic a contribuit, în bună parte, la ambivalența unor zile ale săptămânii, vizibilă în cultura românească".

¹⁰ In an Istro-Romanian dialect from the village Jaiän, the names of *luni* (*Monday*) and *vineri* (*Friday*) follow the Latin model (*Iur*, *viner*), while *marți* (*Tuesday*), *miercuri* (*Wednesday*), *joi* (*Thursday*) continue the Slavic forms (*utora*, *sreda*, *cetarta*). <http://istro-romanian.com> (accessed on 28.10.2022).

¹¹ I „ziua lui Zeus-Iovis-Donar (...)”, II „a cincea zi a săptămânii”, III „a patra (după duminică) zi a săptămânii”, IV „a patra zi a săptămânii”, V „altele”.

There is evidence preserved in the language, in the form of fixed expressions, which reference past or present customs. In order to reconstruct a part of the cultural-linguistic image of the world, I take into consideration *lexical solidarities*, the utterances belonging to what we call *repeated discourse*, in other words “everything that in the speech of a community is repeated more or less identically as a fixed discourse or a combination that is more or less set, as a long or short expression, something that qualifies as «what has already been said»” (my translation)¹² (Coșeriu 2000, 258, *apud* Munteanu 2007, 316).

In the following sections of the article, we are going to analyse the lexeme *joi* or one of its derivatives.

References to various aspects of Christian life

The Polish examples. *Wielki Czwartek* “Maundy Thursday” is the last Thursday before Easter and it is a day with Christian connotations. On this day, the Washing of the Feet and the Last Supper of Jesus of Nazareth¹³ are commemorated. We also find a confirmation of the form *Zielony czwartek* (SGP, 221) “Green Thursday”, with the annotation: “*Maundy Thursday* (before Easter) or the name of the mobile Catholic celebration *Body and Blood of Christ*” (which always falls on a Thursday) (my translation)¹⁴. Fasting and other forms of abstinence constitute a common element for the examples analysed below. This «cópie a realității» («copy of reality» - my translation), the term used by Stelian Dumistrăcel (2001, 15), the Christian duty of fasting on Friday (also on Wednesday in the past, in Poland) represented a starting point for the set expression *Krzywi się jak środa na czwartek* “making grimaces as Wednesday does towards Thursday” (my translation) (NKP II, 223). The same day is also referred to as *Tłusty czwartek* (ostatni czwartek karnawału) «Fat Thursday» (the last Thursday of the Carnival), which refers to culinary customs related to the Carnival period when, traditionally, the Polish prepare and eat (to this day) donuts in large quantities. The proverb *Powiedział nam Bartek, że dziś Tłusty czwartek (myśmy uwierzyli, pączków nasmażyli)* “Bartek told us that today is Fat Thursday (we believed him and made donuts)” (my translation) (Kopaliński 2003, 1321) is motivated by the same onomasiologic class. Similarly, the name *Combrowy czwartek*, “Combrowy Thursday”, offers us a glimpse into the Polish cultural-linguistic imaginary, *comber* being popular entertainment during the medieval period, which still takes place in various regions

¹² „tot ceea ce în vorbirea unei comunități se repetă într-o formă mai mult sau mai puțin identică sub formă de discurs deja făcut sau combinare mai mult sau mai puțin fixă, ca fragment lung sau scurt, a «ceea ce s-a spus deja»”.

¹³ Beside the strictly liturgical names, I have used upper case letters only with the first element of a syntagm, considering that, in both languages, the written form might be different, according to the source used.

¹⁴ „*Joi* Mare (dinainte de Paști) sau denumirea sărbătorii catolice mobile *Trupul și Sângele Domnului*”.

of Poland, usually on Fat Thursday. Important information on this custom has been kept about certain festivities in Krakow, where townswomen used to organise parties with drinks and dancing in the Main Square (Gloger IV, 1985, 25; Szczypka 1984, 45-46).

The Romanian examples

The Romanian names for the same day are more difficult to analyse, as they are marked by a syncretism of popular elements (not necessarily Pagan) with others related to the religious calendar (Orthodox in Romania and Catholic in Poland). The syncretism is noticeable in various expressions referring to Romanian customs, but also in the (Christian) hierarchy of the days of the week, in which *Thursday* is related to *the Good/Holy Thursday* (the Thursday before Easter). An adequate example could be the derivative *joimărița* (*witch/old hag* – my translation) and its various meanings, quoted here from MDA (253). We notice that only one (5) refers to a religious custom:

joimăriță (*joi+mare+iță*) (Pop.) 1 (Mtp) Imaginary being carrying the image of a repulsive woman, that is believed to punish lazy women and girls who are lazy when it comes to spinning and combing hemp or wool on the night before Maundy Thursday. Also *joimărică* (1). 2 (Pan; fig.) Very ugly woman. 3 (Fig.) A female monster used by adults to frighten for children. 4 Popular custom on Good Thursday, when young men go around the village, to the houses of girls who are at the age when they can get married and if they find unspun hemp or flax, they take it and set it on the fire. 5 The commemoration of the Thursday when Jesus Christ was caught by the Jews. 6 (Orn.) Owl (*Bubo bubo*) (my translation)¹⁵.

To these explanations, we can also add the set expression *A ajunge o Joimăriță/a fi Joimăriță* (*To become a witch/to be a witch* – my translation), which Iuliu Zanne describes as “meaning thin and ugly; 2. Being or thing that scares you” (my translation) (Zanne VII, 2004, 29)¹⁶.

Other names that strictly refer to the religious calendar are: *Joia Paștilor* (*Easter Thursday*), *Joia Mare* (*Maundy Thursday*), *Joia Patimilor* (*Passion Thursday*) (my translations), all connected to the passions of Christ. Then, there are several set expressions containing the word *joii*: *A mânca Joia post și Vinerea carne* (*To*

¹⁵ *joimăriță* (*joi+mare+iță*) (Pop.) 1 (Mtp) Ființă imaginară cu aspect de femeie respingătoare, despre care se crede că pedepsește, în noaptea care precede Joia Mare, pe fetele și femeile leneșe la tors și la dărăcit. Și *joimărică* (1). 2 (Pan; fig.) Femeie foarte urâtă. 3 (Fig.) Sperietoare pentru copii. 4 Obicei popular practicat în Joia Mare, când flăcăii umblă prin sat, pe la casele fetelor de măritat și unde găsesc cânepa sau inul netoarse, le iau și le pun pe foc. 5 Comemorare a joi în care a fost prins Mântuitorul Iisus Hristos de către evrei. 6 (Orn.) Bufniță (*Bubo bubo*).

¹⁶ „adică slabă și urâtă; 2. ființă sau lucru de care te sperii”.

fast on Thursday and eat meat on Friday) “to do things backwards, to be stupid” (Zanne VII, 2004, 118), *De Joi în Paști (Din Joi în Paști)* (*Every Maundy Thursday*, with the English equivalent *Once in a blue moon*) “meaning rarely, at great intervals” (Zanne I, 2004, 43), *Joi în Paști (Thursday at Easter)* “said to someone who does not get his or her actions straight, inappropriate, also to someone who does not ponder their words” (Zanne I, 2004, 43), *De Joi până Vineri (From Thursday to Friday)* “something that does not last long” (Zanne IX, 409) (my translation)¹⁷. The idiom *Joi după Paști (Thursday after Easter – my translation)* (Zanne I, 2004, 42-43; 163), “meaning never”, is explained by the author as follows: “In the week that follows Easter day, it is customary not to work, especially on the Thursday of that week; from here it results that when we promise to do something *Thursday after Easter*, knowing beforehand that we will not be working on that day, it is the same as rejecting the request”¹⁸ (my translation)¹⁹. The expression *a îndruga de Joia-mare (to gabble on Maundy Thursday – my translation)* “to prattle, to talk nonsense” (my translation)²⁰, found also under the form of *a îndruga ca de Vinerea-mare (to gabble as on Good Friday – my translation)*, which, according to Iuliu Zanne, can be explained by the custom of reading twelve chapters from the Gospel on Maundy Thursday in the week before Easter, from evening to midnight (Zanne, I, 2004, 87).

In this subclass we must also include *Sfânta Joi (Holy Thursday, or Saint Thursday)*, as in Romanian, both *holy* and *saint* are translated by *sfânt, sfântă*), related to the personification of the days of the week (that can still be found today), as it results from the folkloric text entitled *Rugăciunea zilelor săptămânii (Prayer of the days of the week – my translation)*, recorded in Maramureș in 2011²¹.

References to various secular aspects of daily life

The Polish examples

Among the examples identified in Polish, we find references to different superstitions. For instance, sneezing has different connotations, the Polish augur being eloquent to this end: *Jeżeli się kicha w poniedziałek, to na nowinę; we wtorek*

¹⁷ *A mânca Joia post și Vinerea carne „a face lucrurile pe dos, a fi prost”* (Zanne VII, 2004, 118), *De Joi în Paști (Din Joi în Paști)* „adică rareori, la intervale de timp mari” (Zanne I, 2004, 43), *Joi în Paști* „se zice cuiva când nu-și potrivește faptele, cum se aplică, *ca nuca'n perete*, la fel cuiva care nu-și cumpănește vorbele” (Zanne I, 2004, 43), *De Joi până Vineri* „lucru care ține puțin” (Zanne IX, 409).

¹⁸ I am using the current written form for Romanian.

¹⁹ „În săptămâna care urmează ziua de Paști, nimeni nu se apucă de lucru, și mai cu seamă în Joia acelei săptămâni; de unde rezultă că atunci când făgăduim că vom face ceva, *Joi după Paști*, știind dinainte că nu vom lucra în ziua aceea, este tot același lucru ca și când am respinge cererea făcută nouă”.

²⁰ „a flecări, a spune verzi și uscate, a vorbi multe și una peste alta”.

²¹ Recorded by Făt, text published in *Formula As*, April 2012, p. 26-27.

na trunek; we środę na gościa; we czwartek na umarłego; w piątek na smutek "If you sneeze on Monday, it means you will get some news; if you sneeze on Tuesday, there will be alcohol, on Wednesday, you are waiting for guests, on Thursday, someone dear will die, on Friday, it's a sign of sadness" (my translation) (NKP II, 57). We see here that Thursday is related to death, also confirmed in: *We czwartek urodził się Bartek, w piątek już wlaź w kątek, w sobotę poszedł na robotę, w niedzielę był w kościele, w poniedziałek zjadł chleba kawalek, we wtorek przyniósł żyta worek, we środę nosił wodę, we czwartek umarł Bartek* "Bartek was born on Thursday, started walking on Friday, went to work on Saturday, went to church on Sunday, ate a piece of bread on Monday, brought a sack of rye on Tuesday, carried water on Wednesday, and Bartek died on Thursday" (my translation) (when someone says *cai verzi pe pereți* – talks nonsense – my translation) (NKP I, 64). The name *Bartek* (derived from the surname *Bartłomiej*), which is widely spread among Polish peasants, appears here for euphonic reasons, since it rhymes with *czwartek* "Thursday", just like in the next example: *We czwartek przyjechał Bartek* "Bartek came on Thursday" (my translation) (used ironically with the meaning: great guest, great celebration!).

SGP also offers the meaning of the word *czwartek* as "Quarter Moon phase", motivated by the numeral *czwarty* "the fourth" (SGP V, 220), while J. Szadura (2017, 310) mentions the derivative *Czwartula, Czwartacka, Czwartocka, Ćwiartula*, names for cows born on Thursday.

Beside the Polish linguistic forms that mirror the cultural-linguistic imaginary preserved in the popular, rural psyche, we also find some examples specific to other social categories. The examples of set idioms in Polish, as recorded by the NKP (NKP I, 393), refer to various customs, not necessarily related to folklore, for instance hunting: *Czwartek dzień myśliwców, niedziela i święto przeciwnie* "Thursday is a day for hunters, Sunday and holidays, on the contrary" (my translation). Another one worth mentioning here is *Pragnie jak żak czwartku* "They yearn like the apprentice for Thursday" (my translation) (meaning highly impatient, Thursdays being destined for recreations, in the old days). There are also the meetings of Polish intellectuals, organised by king Stanisław August Poniatowski, after the model of literary salons in Paris (the first meetings took place in 1770) – *obiady czwartkowe* "Thursday lunches" (my translation) (Kopaliński 2003, 853).

The Romanian examples.

I. Zanne, I. Evseev, I. Ghinoiu, O. Hedeșan, A. Olteanu, N. Știucă and other Romanian researchers offer a plethora of interesting explanations, extremely helpful for this attempt of an ethnolinguistic analysis²² of the set expressions

²² To this end, see as well the paper of the Polish researcher Ewa Kocój (2013, 259-262).

selected bellow. For each of these names and fixed expressions, a separate description would be necessary which, however, is beyond the scope of this research.

In this subclass we find many examples from Romanian, some related to plants and animals, others to various superstitions. They indicate how old they are and the fact that they belong to another calendar, different from the religious one. The syncretism, consisting of references to the religious calendar (Thursdays after Easter) and to the popular one (not necessarily Pagan), is visible in various explanations surrounding Romanian customs.

To illustrate this, we will give a few examples of magical thinking that explain the forms: *Joile oprite* (*Prohibited Thursdays*), *Joile pomenite* (*Thursdays of the departed* – special days dedicated to praying for the dead), *Joile nepomenite* (days when services dedicated to praying for the departed cannot be performed in Church), *Joile domnești* (*Lord's Thursdays*), *Joile mari* (*Great Thursdays*), *Joierele* (*Great Thursdays*), *Joile verzi* (*Green Thursdays*), *Joile grele* (*Hard/Tough Thursdays*), *Joile păzite* (*Protected Thursdays*), *Joia furnicilor* (*Ants' Thursday*), *Joia neagră* (*Black Thursday*), *Joia iepelor/Joi-Mărica* (*Mare Thursday*), *Joia tuturor jivinelor* (*Thursday of all beasts*), *Joia oalelor* (*Pots Thursday*), *Joia preotului* (*Priest's Thursday*), *Joia verde* (*Green Thursday*), *Joia ciorilor* (*Crows' Thursday*), *Joia necurată* (*Unclean Thursday*); *Joia frumoasă* (*Beautiful Thursday*), *Joia seacă* (*Fasting Thursday*), *Joia mânioasă/Joia moșilor* (*Angry Thursday/Old Men Thursday*), *Joia rea* (*Bad Thursday*), *Joia paparudei* (*Paparuda*²³ *Thursday*), *Joia bulcelor* (*Loaf Thursday*), *Joia caloianului* (*Caloian*²⁴ *Thursday*) (my translations). According to N. Știucă, “the Thursdays after Easter have been observed over generations because of the heavy rains happening around this time of year; if someone goes ploughing, if they cultivate or work anything in the field, they will be hit by hailstone. Not keeping the seven or nine Thursdays after Easter brings collective punishments: not only does the one who violates suffer the damage, but also the rest of the people in the village” (my translation)²⁵ (Știucă II, 75). *The Great Thursday* (or *Joi-Mărica*) is, in the end, through the punishments it imposes on those who ignore the holiday, an anticipation to the day consecrated to *Cailor lui Sântoader* (*Horses' Easter*) (“they who do not wash their hair and work, will be killed by mares' hooves” (my translation)²⁶) (Olteanu 2001, 593). “Not as related to the religious calendar, Great Thursdays, the Thursdays between Easter and Pentecost, are days to be feared, when certain activities must be avoided,

²³ In Romanian mythology, *paparudă* is a deity for fertilizing rain, a rainmaker.

²⁴ *Caloian* is a clay effigy that would be buried or thrown into water during drought to invoke rain.

²⁵ „Joile de după Paști s-au păstrat din bătrâni din cauza ploilor prea mari; dacă cineva iese cu plugul la arat, dacă merge la prășit sau muncește orice la câmp, acea muncă va fi bătută de piatră. Nesocotirea celor șapte sau nouă joi de după Paști aduce pedepse colective: nu doar cel ce le încalcă are parte de păgube, ci și consătenii lui”.

²⁶ „cine nu se spală pe cap și lucrează, îl omoară iepelile cu copitele”.

as they are «angry days» that can bring storms, hailstones, various plant diseases for «the weather is not yet settled» (my translation)²⁷ (Știucă II, 5). The day of *Joimari* has another old purpose: fulfilling some of the most ample post-funeral rituals. It is pre-eminently the celebration of the dead (Știucă, II, 58; Hedeșan, 244-248). Phrases containing the lexeme *joi*, found in the Romanian sources, are the following: *Haine noi, de Joi până apoi* (New clothes, from Thursday 'till after – my translation) “for the person who does not know how to save their wealth” (my translation)²⁸ (Zanne III, 178), *de Joi până mai apoi* (from Thursday to later” – my translation) “2. endlessly, 3. always, 4. never, 5. said about something done superficially” (my translation)²⁹ (MDA, 253), *La Joia-Verde* (on Green Thursday – my translation) “meaning never, since Green Thursday is not a Romanian holiday” (my translation)³⁰ (Zanne VII, 28), *Își păzește taina de Joi până mai de apoi, întocmai ca o muiere* (protects their secret from Thursday to later like a woman – my translation) “they are not capable of not telling everything they know” (my translation)³¹ (Zanne VII, 597).

I. Evseev (1998 a, 207), while describing the ludic-erotic aspect of the expressions related to Thursday, shows that it “has penetrated even the purist totalitarian era, which, among the work days of the week, did however accept to include “youth Thursday” (my translation)³². The derivatives *joian*, *joiană*, *jocan*, *joică*, *joienică* “young cattle”, *joichiță*, *joienel* “cattle born on Thursday” complete the rural linguistic imaginary.

Conclusion

According to its axiological value, “Thursday seems to be the most contradictory of all the days of the week and this is probably because of the contamination of the two systems of counting days” (my translation)³³ (Evseev 1998 a, 206). The fourth day of the week is called a contradictory holiday by A. Olteanu as well “(even if we just look at the portrait of Thursday: «Thursday is half man and half woman»), in which blessed elements (it is a day of love, a day good for marriage) are combined with ill-fated ones (especially Thursdays following Easter)” (my

²⁷ „Nu la fel de strâns legate de calendarul religios, *Joierele* sau *Joile Mari*, cuprinse între Paști și Rusalii, sunt zile de temut, păstrate prin evitarea anumitor activități, fiindcă sunt zile mânioase care pot aduce furtuni, grindină și mană, căci vremea nu e încă așezată”.

²⁸ „pentru omul care nu știe să-și economisească avutul”.

²⁹ „2. la nesfârșit, 3. mereu, 4. niciodată, 5. Se spune despre un lucru făcut de mântuială”.

³⁰ „adică niciodată, căci Joia-Verde nu este o sărbătoare românească”.

³¹ „nu e în stare să nu spună tot ce știe”.

³² „a străpuns chiar barierele puritanismului epocii totalitare, care, în cursul zilelor lucrătoare ale săptămânii, a admis, totuși, „joia tineretului”.

³³ „Joia pare a fi cea mai contradictorie, sub aspectul valorificării ei axiologice, dintre toate zilele săptămânii și asta, probabil, din cauza contaminării celor două sisteme de numărare a succesiunii zilelor”.

translation)³⁴ (Olteanu 2001, 702). The popular calendar offers us some clues according to which Thursday was a weekly holiday celebrated similarly to Sunday.

I. Ghinoiu shows that, in Maramureş, in some villages, weddings would be organised on Thursday and not on Sunday. “On Thursday it is always good to bathe, to comb, to love, to dust, to take care of the house, ‘cause everyone loves you; this day belongs to love” (my translation)³⁵ (1994, 59-60).

I. Ghinoiu (1994, 60), while speaking about a clear Pagan-Christian syncretism, mentions the tradition of cremating the dead and the sacrificial fires from the Holy Week. The derivative *Joimari*, referring to a day of the dead, confirms this tradition (Hedeşan, 244-248). J. Szadura (2017, 317-319), when describing customs related to *czwartek* “Thursday” in Polish traditions, mentions it is the day of contacting the dead³⁶. The same researcher also offers some examples suggesting the connection between this day and love. Moreover, the children born on Thursday can become witches (this day being related to their meetings at *łysa góra*) (Gloger 1, 1908, 267) and they are good at commerce.

Adding to the ethnological description of the fourth day of the week, I wanted to offer here an ethnolinguistic and comparative analysis, limited to strictly linguistic data (the article is more of an outline and a search for the adequate method than an exhaustive description). The cultural-linguistic image of Thursday in Polish is poorer than the one in Romanian language and culture. Plus, the analysed material is not homogeneous, the Polish sources being more modest and also including sayings or proverbs coming from Polish nobility, beside the expressions typical for folk language.

Classifying the material based on the onomasiological principle (basic semantic structures motivate their figurative meaning) shows many resemblances between the two languages and cultures in the field related to Christianity (structures: the hierarchy of days in a week, fasting days and different kinds of abstinence, the names of the respective days). A subclass compiled from “references to other, non-religious aspects of daily life” shows more differences, containing examples related to the world of plants, popular customs, superstitions – the examples related to Romanian being more numerous for this category. Even the personification of the days of the week, inexistent in Polish folklore is a good

³⁴ “(Judecând fie și numai după portretul lui Joi: «Joaia e jumătate bărbat și jumătate femeie»), în care se îmbină elemente faste (este o zi a dragostei, a căsătoriei) cu cele nefaste (cu deosebire joile după Paști)”.

³⁵ “Joaia îi bine întotdeauna să te lai, să te piepteni, pentru dragoste, să scuturi, să grijesti prin casă, că toți te iubesc; acea zi îi a dragostei”.

³⁶ In southern Poland, on *Joaia Mare* (Maundy Thursday) there is another interesting custom, called *palenie Judasza* “the burning of Judas”, which would deserve to be compared to Romanian customs from the Holy Week. To this end, see the article by U. Janicka-Krzywda (2018). On the third day of Easter, there is also the celebration of *Rękawka* in Krakow, interpreted by Z. Gloger (1908, 1, 222-223), as a remembrance of the past funeral repast.

argument in this sense. In both languages we find traces of older beliefs, but more numerous in the Romanian culture than in the Polish one. This influence is, however, materialised differently. In popular Romanian culture, the influence can be easily analysed at the level of the various names of this day, as well as traditions and customs, while in Polish it is set in language through proverbs.

There are two possible causes: the period in which the two languages were recorded in writing (which obviously favours metaphorical creation), longer for Polish than for Romanian, and the firm attitude of the Catholic Church (in comparison to the Orthodox Church) in fighting Pagan traditions. The first cause has obvious consequences: a concrete manner of expressing thought and the lack of generalization are typical for folk culture³⁷, and this tendency can be noticed in a series of Romanian examples referring to interdictions, as recorded in the ethnographic Romanian sources. The second however is only a hypothesis that should be verified. Thus, the present analysis represents only the beginning of a comparative Romanian-Polish ethnolinguistic description.

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METAFORE DEL CIBO – UNA FORMA DI EREDITÀ CULTURALE E INNOVAZIONE LINGUISTICA. UN PARAGONE TRA METAFORE DEL CIBO IN ROMENO, INGLESE E ITALIANO

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ABSTRACT. *Food Metaphors – A Form of Cultural Heritage and Linguistic Innovation. A Comparison between Romanian, English, and Italian Food Metaphors.* Food is the centre of our world, both as a vital resource, and as a social, religious, and aesthetical experience. The cognitive theory of metaphor focuses on the capacity of food metaphors to convey representations of the world specific to individual languages. The aim of our research is to compare food metaphors in Romanian, Italian, and English. The cognitive frameworks taken into consideration reveal common representations of physical and moral human features that Italian, English and Romanian speakers associate with food metaphors. In this manner, food metaphors act as a cultural matrix encoding beliefs and stereotypes about us, about what we perceive as success and/or failure. Also, the food metaphors have a strongly motivated character, as the traits of food are similar to the physical and moral traits of the human beings. Nevertheless, the comparison of the three languages reveals differences in the foods that are considered central, vital to each gastronomic community and in the traits that are valued or disregarded. Another subchapter of our research analyses food metaphors in argot, albeit its fast transformation due to its functioning as a secret language.

Keywords: *food metaphors, cognitive framework, cognitive theory, Italian, Romanian, English*

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REZUMAT. Metaforele alimentare – o formă de moștenire culturală și de inovație lingvistică. O comparație a metaforelor alimentare în limbile română, engleză și italiană. Mâncarea se regăsește în centrul vieții noastre, atât ca resursă vitală, cât și ca practică socială, religioasă ori estetică. Teoria metaforei conceptuale vizează potențialul metaforelor alimentare de a transmite reprezentări individuale ale lumii, în funcție de fiecare limbă. Scopul prezentei cercetări este de a compara metafore alimentare în limbile română, italiană și engleză. Schemele conceptuale analizate dezvăluie reprezentări comune ale trăsăturilor fizice și morale pe care vorbitorii italieni, români și englezi le asociază cu metaforele alimentare. Astfel, metaforele alimentare funcționează ca o matrice culturală care însumează credințe și stereotipii despre noi și despre ceea ce considerăm drept succes și/sau eșec. De asemenea, metaforele alimentare au un caracter profund motivat, deoarece trăsăturile alimentelor sunt similare trăsăturilor umane fizice și morale. Cu toate acestea, comparația în cele trei limbi relevă diferențe în ceea ce privește alimentele considerate centrale, esențiale pentru fiecare comunitate gastronomică, precum și în privința trăsăturilor care sunt valorizate sau disprețuite.

Cuvinte-cheie: *metafore alimentare, schemă conceptuală, teoria metaforei conceptuale, limba română, limba italiană, limba engleză*

Introduzione

Il cibo si trova al centro del nostro mondo: è un carburante, fonte di energia, sostiene la vita; il cibo è sempre compreso come un'esperienza e pratica estetica, religiosa, mitica, sociale, ecc. Nel corso del tempo, gli approcci teorici intorno al cibo hanno evidenziato diversi significati: dall'approccio antropologico di Claude Lévi-Strauss, per cui il cibo rappresenta il passaggio dalla **natura** alla **cultura**, all'approccio semiotico di Roland Barthes, che considera il cibo un sistema di comunicazione, un corpo d'immagini e protocollo di usi, di situazioni e di usanze, fino alla teoria cognitiva della metafora sviluppata da George Lakoff e Mark Johnson: gli studiosi considerano che il nostro sistema concettuale ha una natura piuttosto metaforica e le metafore superano la dicotomia oggettivo-soggettivo, avendo una natura sperimentale (Lakoff, Johnson 1980: 119-125; 227-228). Per Lakoff la metafora è innanzitutto concettuale e solo dopo linguistica, gestuale e visuale. In questo modo il pensiero metaforico e la comprensione metaforica di una situazione si sviluppano indipendentemente del linguaggio (Lakoff 2014: 1).

Le ricerche romene in questo ambito seguono la stessa teoria cognitiva della metafora – secondo la quale la metafora è percepita come un meccanismo

cognitivo piuttosto che linguistico o stilistico. Oana Chelaru-Murăruș propone un'analisi di alcune metafore in cui l'immagine del cibo è il termine-fonte, con lo scopo di determinare e osservare la specificità della lingua, la maniera in cui i termini sono associati e le modalità con cui funziona la matrice cognitiva e culturale (Chelaru-Murăruș 2018, 193-215). Daniela Corina Ionescu effettua due analisi contrastive in romeno e inglese che si concentrano sulle espressioni idiomatiche legate al cibo (Ionescu 2017; Ionescu 2020, 87-107). Anche Daniela Gheltofán (2016) ha effettuato analisi contrastive in romeno e russo – sempre sulle metafore del cibo (Gheltofán 2016, 91-110). Loredana Pungă analizza alcune metafore antropomorfe nell'ambito dell'enologia (italiano, spagnolo, francese), avanzando l'idea dell'ubiquità della metafora antropomorfa (Pungă 2016, 73-90).

Le frasi idiomatiche implicano un quadro culturale, quello della cognizione culturale, che è una dimensione dinamica della conoscenza umana, negoziata e rinegoziata tra le generazioni, tra spazio e tempo dai membri di un gruppo sociolinguistico (Sharifian 2011, 36). Le espressioni idiomatiche possono essere delle frasi con specificità culturali, perché la cultura è una gerarchia di sistemi semiotici in cui il sistema linguistico gioca un ruolo fondamentale (Ionescu 2017, 84). Secondo Ionescu, un modo di dire in inglese per mentire è *butter would not melt in his mouth* (lett. *il burro non si fonderebbe nella sua bocca*), mentre in romeno abbiamo *nici usturoi n-a mâncat, nici gura nu-i pute* (lett. *né ha mangiato dell'aglio, né gli puzza la bocca*). Dagli esempi suddetti si può dedurre che i due cibi sono culturalmente specifici, il burro per la cucina inglese e l'aglio per quella romena (Ionescu 2017, 64).

Un'altra qualità delle frasi idiomatiche è la loro gradualità (conoscono una certa gradualità dell'espressione): possono essere trasparenti oppure opache, in base alla motivazione linguistica. Esistono espressioni trasparenti, per esempio, per dire un segreto in inglese *c'è to spill the beans* (lett. *rovesciare i fagioli*) e in romeno *a-i zbură porumbelul din gură* (lett. *far volare una colomba dalla bocca*). D'altra parte, le espressioni opache necessitano di un grado più alto di codificazione linguistica e/o culturale: ad esempio, un modo di dire per morire in inglese è *to kick the bucket* (lett. *calciare il secchio*), un'espressione che fa riferimento all'impiccagione o al sacrificio degli animali (Ionescu 2020, 91-92; Ionescu 2017, 74-75).

Lo scopo della nostra ricerca è di realizzare un inventario di espressioni idiomatiche che fanno riferimento al cibo e di paragonare gli schemi cognitivi sottintesi nelle rispettive metafore in tre lingue: romeno, inglese e italiano.

Stato dell'arte e quadro teorico e metodologico

La linguista Oana Chelaru-Murăruș (2017) propone un'analisi delle metafore in cui l'immagine del cibo è un termine-fonte che progetta la sua

configurazione semantica su alcuni termini che indicano lo scopo. La studiosa identifica anche degli schemi metaforici concettuali, nello stesso ambito della teoria cognitiva della metafora. In questo modo, si può osservare la maniera specifica in cui la lingua romena funziona come una matrice cognitiva e culturale.

La ricercatrice analizza gli alimenti che funzionano come termine-fonte delle metafore e parte dalle seguenti premesse:

1. I campi onomasiologici da cui provengono i termine-fonte delle metafore sono stati circoscritti ai nomi che si riferiscono a ingredienti e prodotti alimentari, a condimenti/spezie e bevande. L'autrice ha aggiunto alla lista parole che denominano varie parti commestibili del corpo degli animali, vasellame, oggetti utilizzati nell'ambito della cucina, verbi e aggettivi che si riferiscono alle qualità, alla preparazione, al servizio e alla consumazione del cibo.
2. L'anzianità e la produttività dei termini sono dei criteri per mezzo dei quali si giunge a raggruppare le espressioni in parole ed espressioni popolari, colloquiali e argotiche. I termini recentemente apparsi nel registro argotico-familiare confermano la produttività espressiva del lessico alimentare.
3. I modelli sintattici delle metafore alimentari aggiornano e diversificano i modelli delle metafore esplicite (*in praesentia*) e implicite (*in absentia*). Le metafore esplicite hanno le seguenti strutture: A è B (per es. *l'individuo è una verdura*); AB (una relazione appositiva, per es. *una gonna salmone* – del colore del salmone, cioè rosso-arancione); A di B/B di A (una relazione preposizionale, per es. *formaggio di coniglio*, una cosa impossibile o *un uomo fatto di polenta*, una persona senza personalità); AB_{Genitivo} / BA_{Genitivo} (la metafora genitivale, per es. *l'uovo del ginocchio* – la rotula o *nipote del pesce* – una persona che beneficia di protezione). Le metafore implicite contengono solo il termine metaforico B tramite un nominale o un gruppo nominale con struttura ed estensione variabile (per es. *formaggio stagionato* – soldi; *brodo lungo* – chiacchiere; *zuppa di campana* – la morte; *il fuoco del peperoncino* – l'amore).
4. La maniera in cui si collegano i termine-fonte delle metafore alimentari con gli ambito-scopo mette in luce sia la ricchezza espressiva di ogni campo onomasiologico, sia gli schemi cognitivi (Chelaru-Murăruș 2018, 194-198).

Dopo aver analizzato nove categorie di alimenti (*verdura e piante commestibili, frutta, prodotti di origine animale, dolci, cereali e prodotti derivati, ingredienti ausiliari e spezie, piatti, lattati, bevande*), l'autrice arriva alle seguenti conclusioni: innanzitutto, la maggior parte delle metafore esplicite o implicite registrate nel linguaggio popolare, familiare e argotico ha un carattere motivato, i

meccanismi che associano i termini-fonte con i termini-scopo valorizzano tratti comuni, come la forma, l'aspetto, la consistenza, la preparazione dei referenti. Le analogie gustative sono più rare, mentre quelle cromatiche sono quasi assenti. Il registro argotico include metafore criptiche, eufemistiche e ironiche, tratti specifici per questo tipo di linguaggio, perché, in questo caso, la metaforizzazione non risponde solo ad alcune necessità esclusivamente espressive, ma anche a vincoli sociolinguistici. Le metafore del cibo inventariate qui operano spesso con schemi caratteristici di una cultura pastorale-agraria tradizionale, che valuta gli alimenti primordiali (il latte, il miele, il pane, alcuni cereali) e che presta attenzione alla varietà del mondo vegetale (verdure, frutta, alcune spezie) (Chelaru-Murăruș 2018, 204).

Daniela Ionescu (2017) propone un inventario interlinguistico di *item* lessicali alimentari incontrati in espressioni idiomatiche inglesi e romene. Ci possiamo riferire a questi *item* come a stereotipi culturali e metafore/metonimie. Pertanto, la ricercatrice trova i seguenti schemi metaforici:

- **cipolla** – essere senza valore;
- **pesce** – termine fondamentale nella cultura inglese, ubiquo;
- **osso** – indica una mancanza di sostanza (di ricchezza), indicativo di povertà, privazione), causa di conflitto tra due persone: en. *bone of contention* (lett. *osso della discordia*); ro. *a fi numai piele și os* (lett. *essere solo pelle e ossa* – magrissimo);
- **pane e sale**: stereotipo romeno, suggerisce l'ospitalità;
- **pane e burro**: stereotipo inglese (il burro non è presente nelle espressioni idiomatiche romene, perché è indicativo di una classe sociale superiore); *burro e miele* – un grado di ricchezza (in. *butter and honey*) o essere ipocrita (ro. *a fi numai unt și miere*, lett. *essere solo burro e miele*);
- **vino** – afrodisiaco e tranquillizzante in entrambe le lingue;
- **carne e dolci** – indicano la ricchezza e la sostanzialità, in generale;
- **latte versato, liquido versato** – rimpianti non necessari – stereotipo comune;
- **uovo** – presente in espressioni metaforici e metonimici, indica vantaggi immediati, mancanza di rischi, profitto – in espressioni inglesi, ma è assente negli idiomi romeni;
- **formaggio** – una vita buona, una qualità – stereotipo comune;
- **il maiale** – animale percepito come un indicatore di sporcizia, la parte difficile della vita, mancanza di educazione, di raffinatezza, comportamento schifoso – stereotipo comune: ro. *nu mânca din troacă, pentru că te mănâncă porcii* (lett. *non mangiare dalla mangiatoia perché ti mangiano i maiali*); in. *cast pearls to swine* (lett. *gettare perle ai maiali*);
- **grano, cereali in genere** – indicatore di impegno e ricompensa morale – stereotipo comune (Ionescu 2017, 101).

La ricercatrice fa un inventario di modi di dire per i seguenti aspetti: la somiglianza, il paragone tra elementi discrepanti, un'influenza negativa, la vita nell'ambito nativo è la più apprezzata, fornire gli alimenti di base, l'avidità, la fame, la fame assimilata a un animale divoratore – il lupo –, avere le cose fondamentali per la sopravvivenza, la capacità umana di fare qualsiasi cosa, giovane vs. anziano per dimostrare la padronanza della propria conoscenza, l'ipocrisia umana, sperimentare situazioni difficili nella vita, per apprezzare i momenti felici, la povertà estrema, valutare giustamente una situazione, l'appartenenza di qualcuno, la ricompensa per un buon lavoro, aumentare una sofferenza, infuriarsi rapidamente, alterarsi, perdere tempo, azioni inutili, essere avido e corrotto, la collera – intesa come liquido bollente e messo sotto pressione in un contenitore –, la mancanza d'intelligenza – espressa con riferimento a oggetti piccoli (Ionescu 2017, 102-157).

Daniela Gheltofán (2016) realizza un inventario di metafore concettuali redatto in romeno e russo, seguendo i modelli proposti da Lakoff & Johnson (1980) e Kövecses (2002). L'equazione concettuale che l'autrice segue è "X è Y", dove X è il dominio-scopo e Y è il dominio-fonte. Le strutture concettuali analizzate sono: le idee sono cibo, la gente è cibo, le caratteristiche umane sono cibo, le caratteristiche intellettuali umane sono caratteristiche del cibo, le caratteristiche temperamentali sono caratteristiche del cibo, il comportamento umano è una caratteristica del cibo, gli stati fisiologici umani sono cibo, la mancanza di maturità/esperienza è cibo, le azioni umane sono procedure/operazioni culinarie, le emozioni sono procedure culinarie, l'amore è mangiare, vivere insieme/condividere è mangiare, la morte è un prodotto culinario, l'astratto è concreto, i soldi sono cibo/prodotti culinari (Gheltofán 2016, 91-110).

Corpus di espressioni

Nella nostra ricerca² paragoneremo espressioni che si riferiscono al cibo in tre lingue – romeno, italiano e inglese raggruppate nelle seguenti categorie:

- tratti fisici;
- tratti temperamentali e psicologici;
- tratti fisiologici;
- tratti morali;
- processi cognitivi e azioni;
- l'ambito.

Per questo inventario abbiamo selezionato espressioni romene interpretate dalle linguiste Oana Chelaru-Murăruș (romeno), Daniela Ionescu (romeno e inglese) e Daniela Gheltofán (romeno e russo, anche se abbiamo

² L'autrice ringrazia Prof.ssa Emilia David, Dott.ssa Maria Rita Butticè e Dott.ssa Francesca Pizzinga per le loro osservazioni e annotazioni sull'inventario dei modi di dire italiani.

mantenuto solo le espressioni romene, per lo scopo della nostra ricerca). A questo inventario abbiamo aggiunto le espressioni italiane e altre espressioni romene e inglesi, per dimostrare che gli schemi cognitivi che si riferiscono al cibo sono universali. Per le espressioni italiane abbiamo usato il *Dizionario dei modi di dire della lingua italiana* (Quarto, Rossi: 2012) e *treccani.it*, nonché discussioni con parlanti madrelingua italiani e per le espressioni inglesi abbiamo usato il dizionario enciclopedico *thefreedictionary.com*, sottodominio *idioms* e *macmillanthesaurus.com*.

Gli schemi cognitivi seguiti sono copulativi: “Il tratto/Il processo/L’ambito è cibo”. Le similarità e le differenze tra queste espressioni circoscriveranno i cibi fondamentali nelle tre culture.

1. La rappresentazione dei tratti fisici

➤ le parti del corpo umano:

ro: la testa è pop. *bostan*, *dovleac* (zucca), *cartof* (patata), arg. *gulie* (cavolo rapa), fam. *ridiche* (ravanello); un naso grande diventa *o pătlăgea* (un pomodoro acerbo); i peli sulle gambe sono *mărar* (aneto); le dita dei piedi – *cartofi* (patate);

it.: *zucca*, *patata*, *melone*; naso a *patata*;

in: *potato* (patata, per la testa).

➤ la magrezza:

ro: *slab ca un țâr* (lett. magro come un’aringa – magrissimo); *a fi ca o smochină sfrijită* (lett. essere come un fico secco);

it: *secco come una acciuga*;

in: *skinny as a beanpole* (lett. magro come una pala).

➤ i capelli rossi:

ro: *păr morcov* (lett. pel di carota);

it: *pel di carota*;

in: *carrot top* (lett. cima di carota).

➤ una persona grassa:

ro: (*gras ca un pepene*) *pepene* (lett. grasso come un melone);

it: *melone* (riferito proprio alla pancia e non al fatto che qualcuno sia grasso);

in: *potbelly* (lett. panciuto).

➤ i seni:

ro: *pere* (pere);

it: *pere/meloni*;

in: *melons* (meloni).

➤ le gambe troppo magre:

ro: *grisine* (grissini);

it: *grissini* (solo per le gambe, non per le caviglie);

in: *sticks* (bastoni).

- **la gioventù, la bellezza:**
 ro: una ragazza giovane è *mandarină* (mandarino); *lăptucă* (lattuga); *trufanda* (le primizie);
 it: *pelle liscia come una pesca*;
 in: *a peach* (una pesca); *fresh as a young head of lettuce* (lett. fresco come una lattuga fresca); *hot tomato* (lett. un pomodoro attraente, in gergo).
- **l'ubriachezza:**
 ro: *a fi turtă* (essere un pasticcio);
 it: *inzuccarsi, ubriaco come una zucca/cucuzze*;
 in: *drink like a fish* (lett. bere come un pesce).
- **l'affollamento:**
 ro: *a sta ca sardelele* (lett. stare come le sardine);
 it: *pigiati come sardine*;
 in: *packed like sardines* (lett. stipati come sardine).
- **il picchiarsi, la violenza fisica:**
 ro: *a face terci/pilaf/chiseliță pe cineva* (lett. ridurre qualcuno in poltiglia/risotto/marmellata di prugne); *a bate ca la fasole* (lett. battere come si fa per ottenere la vellutata di fagioli o la battitura dei fagioli); *a face pe cineva pastramă* (ridurre qualcuno in carne affumicata); *a mânca pe cineva de viu* (lett. mangiare qualcuno mentre esso ancora vive);
 it: *fare a polpette*; *ridurre in brandelli*; *fare a pezzetti, ridurre in poltiglia*;
 in: *warm one's onions* (riscaldare le cipolle di qualcuno); *beat someone like a stock-fish* (lett. ridurre qualcuno in pesce secco); *eat someone alive* (lett. mangiare qualcuno mentre esso ancora vive).
- **la velocità:**
 ro: *a fi iute ca ardeiul* (lett. essere piccante/veloce come un peperoncino);
 it: *essere un peperoncino*;
 in: *faster than a dog with a bone* (lett. più veloce di un cane con un osso).
- **l'ubiquità:**
 ro: *a fi ca cimbrul* (lett. essere come il timo);
 it: *essere come il prezzemolo*;
 in: –.
- **arrossire:**
 ro: *roșu ca sfecla* (lett. rosso come la barbabietola);
 it: *rosso come il fuoco/un gambero/un peperone*;
 in: *red as beetroot* (lett. rosso come la barbabietola).
- **la maldestrezza:**
 ro: *a fi un mleat (cu ochi), o mămăligă* (lett. essere una polenta non cotta (dotata di occhi), una polenta);
 it: *essere un salame; avere le mani di pasta frolla/ricotta*;
 in: *to have butterfingers* (lett. avere le dita di burro).

➤ **l'esaurimento:**

ro: *a fi varză* (lett. essere cavolo); *a scoate untul din cineva* (lett. estrarre il burro da qualcuno);

it: *essere alla frutta*;

in: *to be drained* (lett. essere svuotato, come una bottiglia).

2. La rappresentazione dei tratti temperamentali e psicologici

➤ **la somiglianza:**

¹ro: *a fi ca două boabe într-o păstaie* (lett. essere come due chicchi in un baccello);

it: *se non è zuppa è pan bagnato*;

in: *like two peas in a pod* (lett. essere come due piselli in un baccello).

²ro: *a fi făcut/plămădit din același aluat* (lett. essere fatto dello stesso impasto);

it: *fatti della stessa pasta*;

in: *made from the same mold* (lett. fatti nella stessa forma).

➤ **la collera, la furia:**

¹ro: *a fi iute ca ardeii (iute)* (lett. essere infiammabile come il peperoncino);

it: –;

in: *mad as a wet hen* (lett. arrabbiato come una gallina bagnata).

²ro: *lasă-l să fiarbă în suc propriu* (lett. lasciar bollire qualcuno nel suo brodo);

it: *lasciar cuocere qualcuno nel suo brodo*;

in: *let him stew* (lasciar bollire qualcuno a fuoco lento).

³ro: *a se umfla fasolea/orezul în cineva* (lett. veder gonfiarsi i fagioli/il riso dentro qualcuno); *a-i da cuiva borșul în foc* (arrivare a traboccare sul fuoco riferito al bortsch); *a i se sui piperul la nas* (lett. salire il pepe al naso a qualcuno);

it: *la goccia che fa traboccare il vaso*;

in: *go bananas* (trad. appross. trasformarsi in banane), *go nuts* (trad. appross. trasformarsi in noci).

➤ **essere irritabile:**

ro: *a fi acru ca oțetul* (lett. essere acido come l'aceto);

it: *acido come l'aceto/un limone*;

en: *as sour as vinegar* (lett. essere acido come l'aceto).

➤ **essere noioso, fiacco:**

ro: *a nu avea sare și piper* (lett. mancare a qualcuno il sale e il pepe);

it: *essere insapore/sciocco*;

in: *be white bread* (lett. essere pane bianco).

➤ **vantarsi prima di realizzare qualcosa:**

ro: *a fi cu borșul pe foc și cu peștele în iaz* (lett. avere il bortsch sul fuoco e il pesce nel lago);

it: *essere tutto fumo e niente arrosto*;

in: *make not your sauce before you have caught your fish* (lett. non fare la salsa prima di aver pescato il pesce).

- **l'esperienza:** giovane vs. anziano per dimostrare la padronanza della propria conoscenza:

¹ro: *nu învață oul pe găină* (lett. non è l'uovo che insegna alla gallina);

it: *le uova non hanno nulla da insegnare alla gallina*;

in: *teach one's grandmother to suck eggs* (lett. insegnare alla nonna come succhiare le uova); *eggs can't teach the hen* (lett. le uova non possono insegnare alla gallina).

²ro: *găina bătrână face supă bună* (lett. la gallina vecchia fa la zuppa buona);

it: *gallina vecchia fa buon brodo*;

in: *fat hens make rich soup* (lett. le galline vecchie fanno la zuppa ricca).

³ro: *a fi coptă la mîntă* (lett. avere la mente cotta); *a fi unsă cu toate unsoarele/alifile* (lett. essersi messo tutte le creme sulla propria pelle); *a fi sare pămîntului* (lett. essere il sale della terra).

it: *per fare una buona minestra servono sale e sapienza*;

in: *have enough sense to pound salt* (lett. avere abbastanza buon senso per battere sul sale).

⁴ro: *a trebui să mai mănînce mămăligă* (lett. dover ancora mangiare della polenta); *a avea caș la gură* (lett. avere cagliata ai margini della bocca);

it: *deve ancora mangiarne di pasta e fagioli* (in Calabria);

in: *eat an elephant one bite at a time* (lett. mangiare un elefante pezzo per pezzo).

- **la capacità umana di fare qualsiasi cosa:**

ro: *a scoate ceva din piatră seacă* (lett. estrarre, far scaturire qualcosa perfino dalla roccia);

it: *cavar sangue dalle rape*;

in: *get blood out of a turnip* (lett. estrarre sangue da una rapa).

- **la mancanza d'intelligenza, di giudizio, l'incapacità di ragionare, la confusione:**

ro: *creier de găină* (lett. cervello di gallina); *a avea tărățe în cap* (avere crusca nella testa); *a avea cap de bostan* (lett. avere una testa di zucca); *a avea mîntă de cocă* (lett. avere la mente d'impasto); *a avea un ghiveci/tărățe în cap* (lett. avere uno stufato di verdure/crusca nella testa);

it: *testa di rapa/zucca/patata*; *avere crusca/segatura nel cervello, cervello di gallina*; *non avere sale in zucca*;

in: *pea brain* (cervello come un pisello); *potatohead* (lett. testa di patata); *cabbagehead* (lett. testa di cavolo); *fish* (pesce); *have no more brains than a turnip* (lett. non avere più cervello di una rapa).

➤ **essere innamorato, l'amore:**

¹ro: *a înghiți/a sorbi pe cineva din ochi/cu ochii* (lett. assorbire qualcuno con lo sguardo);

it: *mangiare qualcuno o qualcosa con gli occhi*;

in: *be the apple of one's eye* (lett. essere la mela per l'occhio di qualcuno).

²ro: *dragostea trece prin stomac* (lett. l'amore passa per lo stomaco);

it: *l'amore passa per lo stomaco*;

in: *the guts uphold the heart, and not the heart the guts* (lett. lo stomaco sostiene il cuore e non il cuore lo stomaco).

➤ **rifugiarsi nell'alcol:**

ro: *a-și bea mințile* (lett. bere la propria mente); *a-și îneca amarul* (lett. annegare l'amarrezza);

it: *bersi anche il cervello, annegare i problemi nell'alcol*;

in: *wine is the best broom for troubles* (lett. il vino è la scopa perfetta per i guai); *drown one's sorrow* (annegare la tristezza).

➤ **la paura:**

ro: *piele de găină* (lett. pelle di gallina);

it: *pelle d'oca*;

in: *goosebumps/gooseflesh/gooseskin/goose-pimples* (lett. carne/pelle/puntini d'oca).

➤ **l'ingenuità:**

ro: *a crede că tot ce zboară se mănâncă* (lett. credere che tutto quello che vola si mangia).

it: *avere il prosciutto (o le banane) sugli occhi*;

in: *to fall off the cabbage truck* (lett. cadere dal furgone con i cavoli); *wake up and smell the coffee* (lett. svegliati e senti l'aroma del caffè).

3. La rappresentazione dei tratti fisiologici

➤ **la fame:**

¹ro: *foamea e cel mai bun bucătar* (lett. la fame è il miglior cuoco che ci sia); *sătul ca șoarecele în biserică* (lett. sazio come il topo in chiesa);

it: *la fame è il miglior condimento*;

in: *hunger makes the best cook* (lett. la fame crea il miglior cuoco).

²ro: *a avea o foame de lup, a înfuleca de parcă ar fi un lup flămând* (lett. avere una fame da lupo, divorare cibo come un lupo affamato);

it: *avere una fame da lupo, avere la lupa*;

in: *as hungry as a wolf* (lett. affamato come un lupo); *a growing youth has a wolf in his belly* (lett. un giovane in crescita ha un lupo nella pancia).

➤ **l'appetito:**

ro: *pofta vine mâncând* (lett. l'appetito viene mangiando);

it: *l'appetito viene mangiando, metti pane sotto ai denti che la pancia se lo sente (siciliano)*;

in: *appetite comes with eating* (lett. l'appetito viene mangiando).

➤ **la morte:**

ro: *a i se face coliva* (fare il dolce rituale dei morti per qualcuno); *a mânca cuiva coliva* (mangiare il dolce rituale di qualcuno);

it: *fare il brodo* (cibo rituale del commiato), *diventare cibo per i pesci*;

in: *be/become a loaf of bread* (lett. essere/diventare una pagnotta).

4. La rappresentazione dei tratti morali

➤ **la bontà:**

ro: *a fi pâinea lui Dumnezeu* (lett. essere il pane di Dio);

it: *essere un pezzo di pane; buono come il pane*;

en: -.

➤ **la sedentarietà, la pigrizia:**

ro: *a sta ca o plăcintă* (trad. appross.: essere seduto come un pasticcio);

ro: *mălai-mare* (lett. grande polenta);

it: *essere una patata lessa, molle come un fico*;

in: *be a couch potato* (lett. essere una patata seduta sul sofà).

➤ **la mancanza di personalità:**

ro: *o mămăligă* (lett. una polenta);

it: *essere un carciofo/bietola*;

in: *as soft as butter* (lett. soffice come il burro);

➤ **la menzogna:**

ro: *gogoasă* (lett. ciambella ripiena); *a vinde gogoși* (lett. vendere ciambelle);

it: *falso come l'acetosella* (dall'aspetto sembra dolce, invece è acida); *aria fritta*;

in: *a fish story* (lett. una storia di pesca).

➤ **una persona piacevole:**

ro: una ragazza simpatica è *o bomboană* (una caramella); un bambino simpatico è *o dulceță* (dolcezza); un ragazzo gentile è *un băiat de zahăr*

(fatto di zucchero); *a fi dulce ca mierea* (essere dolce come il miele);

it: *uno zuccherino* (questa ragazza è proprio uno zuccherino), *essere dolce come lo zucchero/il miele*;

in: *eye candy* (lett. una caramella per gli occhi); *as sweet as sugar* (lett. dolce come lo zucchero); *sugar and spice (and everything nice)* (lett. zucchero e spezie e tutte le altre cose piacevoli).

➤ **un'influenza negativa:**

ro: *măr putred* (lett. mela marcia);

it: *mela marcia*;

in: *bad apple* (lett. mela marcia), *bad egg* (lett. un uovo marcio).

➤ **l'avidità:**

ro: *și cu slănină în pod, și cu pâinea unsă nu se poate* (lett. non si può avere sia il lardo nella soffitta, che il pane spalmato di grasso);

it: *non si può avere l'uovo e la gallina; non si può avere la botte piena e la moglie ubriaca;*

in: *you can't eat your cake and still have it* (lett. non puoi mangiare la tua torta e pretendere di averne ancora).

➤ **l'ipocrisia umana:**

ro: *vulpea, când nu ajunge la struguri, zice că sunt acri* (lett. quando la volpe non arriva all'uva, dice che è acerba);

it: *quando la volpe non arriva all'uva, dice che è acerba;*

in: *that sounds like sour grapes* (lett. questo ricorda dei grappoli di uva acerba).

➤ **essere avido e corrotto:**

ro: *a umbla la borcanul cu miere* (lett. mettersi le mani nel boccale di miele); *a prinde pe cineva cu mâna în sac* (cogliere qualcuno con le mani nel sacco);

it: *cogliere qualcuno con le mani nel sacco; tanto va la gatta al lardo che ci lascia lo zampino;*

in: *catch someone red-handed* (cogliere qualcuno con le mani rosse); *(as) crooked as a barrel of fish hooks* (lett. corrotto/storto come un barile pieno con ami da pesca).

➤ **togliere la fonte di reddito di qualcuno/il sacrificio:**

ro: *a lua cuiva pâinea de la gură* (lett. prendere il pane dalla bocca di qualcuno); *a-și lua de la gură* (lett. togliersi di bocca);

it: *togliere il pane di bocca a qualcuno; togliersi il pane di bocca;*

in: *take the bread out of people's mouths* (lett. togliere il pane dalle bocche della gente).

➤ **la mancanza di valore:**

ro: *a nu face nici cât o ceapă degerată* (lett. non valere neanche quanto una cipolla congelata); *spanac* (spinaci);

it: *un fico secco; essere come una pala di ficodindia;*

in: *not be worth a hill of beans* (lett. non valere una collina di fagioli); *not give a fig* (lett. non valere un fico); *small beer/small potatoes* (lett. una birra piccola, patate piccole).

➤ **corteggiare: (adulare)**

ro: *a fi mieros* (lett. essere mellifluo);

it: *fare i fichi;*

in: *butter the whiting* (lett. mettere del burro sul pesce); *butter up* (lett. spalmare con burro).

5. La rappresentazione dei processi cognitivi/azioni

➤ **paragone tra elementi discrepanti:**

ro: *a compara mere și pere* (lett. confrontare le mele con le pere);

it: *confrontare le mele con le pere; prendere fischi per fiaschi;*

in: *apples and oranges* (lett. mele e arance).

➤ **la differenza:**

ro: *altă mâncare de pește* (lett. altro piatto di pesce);

it: *capre e cavoli;*

in: *different kettle of fish* (lett. altra caldaia con pesce).

➤ **la vita nell'ambito nativo è la più apprezzata:**

ro: *fie pâinea cât de rea, tot mai bine e-n țara mea* (lett. anche se nel mio paese il pane fosse il peggiore al mondo, sarebbe sempre migliore di quello che si mangia altrove); *din pumni străini nu te saturi când bei apă* (lett. non ti riempi/non ti passa mai la sete quando bevi acqua da mani straniere); *a mânca o pâine amară printre străini* (lett. mangiare pane amaro tra gli stranieri);

it: *bisogna fare il pane con la farina che si ha;*

in: *better is a slice of bread and garlic eaten at one's own table than a thousand dishes eaten under another's roof* (lett. meglio mangiare una fetta di pane all'aglio alla propria tavola che mangiare mille piatti sotto il tetto di qualcun altro); *dry bread at home is better than roast meat abroad* (lett. il pane secco a casa propria è meglio di una bistecca in terra straniera).

➤ **sperimentare situazioni difficili nella vita, per apprezzare i momenti felici:**

ro: *cine n-a gustat amarul/nu știe ce e zaharul* (lett. chi non ha assaggiato l'amaro/non sa cos'è la dolcezza);

it: *bontà delle bucce di patate* (riferito a contesti di prigionia);

in: *take the bitter with the sweet* (lett. prendere l'amaro insieme alla dolcezza).

➤ **valutare giustamente una situazione, l'appartenenza di qualcuno:**

ro: *a ști în ce apă se scaldă/se adapă* (lett. sapere, conoscere esattamente il genere di fonte da cui qualcuno si abbeverava);

it: *conoscere i propri polli; (non) sapere che pesci prendere/pigliare; essere il pane di qualcuno;*

in: *know one's beans* (lett. sapere i propri fagioli); *know one's onions* (lett. sapere le proprie cipolle).

➤ **l'inadeguatezza:**

ro: *ca nuca în perete* (lett. come una nocciola nel muro); *ca fasolea în ziua de Paști* (lett. come i fagioli nel giorno della Pasqua);

it: *starci come il cavolo a merenda;*

in: *like a saddle on a sow* (lett. come una sella sulla scrofa).

- **adeguatezza:**
 - ro: *ca sarea în bucate* (lett. come il sale nel cibo);
 - it: *come il cacio sui maccheroni*;
 - in: *cream of the crop* (lett. la crema del raccolto).
- **la cautela:**
 - ¹ro: *a călca ca pe ouă* (lett. camminare sulle uova);
 - it: *camminare sulle uova*;
 - in: *walk on eggshells* (lett. camminare su gusci d'uovo);
 - ²ro: *cine s-a fript cu ciorbă suflă în iaurt* (lett. chi si è bruciato con la zuppa soffia anche nello yogurt);
 - it: *chi si è bruciato con l'acqua calda, quella fredda gli sembra che bolla*;
 - in: *who has burnt himself with hot food blows it cold* (lett. chi si è bruciato con il cibo bollente soffia anche quando esso è freddo).
- **impegnarsi in troppe direzioni:**
 - ro: *a alerga dupa doi iepuri* (lett. fuggire dopo due conigli);
 - it: *mettere troppa carne sul fuoco*;
 - in: *to have too many irons in the fire* (lett. avere troppi pezzi di ferro sul fuoco).
- **una evoluzione perfetta:**
 - ro: *a merge ca uns* (lett. andare come unto);
 - it: *andare liscio come l'olio*;
 - in: –.
- **aumentare una sofferenza:**
 - ro: *a pune ardei iute/sare peste rană* (lett. mettere peperoncino/sale nella ferita);
 - it: *mettere sale su una ferita, girare il coltello nella piaga*;
 - in: *rub salt into the wound* (lett. strofinare/buttare del sale sulla ferita); *to twist the knife (in the wound)* (lett. girare il coltello nella piaga).
- **perdere tempo, azioni inutili:**
 - ro: *a tăia frunză la câini* (lett. tagliare foglie ai cani); *a freca menta* (lett. strofinare la menta);
 - it: *fare la zuppa nel panier*;
 - in: *be a lazy bun* (lett. essere un panino rotondo pigro);
- **l'aspetto più sgradevole di una situazione:**
 - ro: *omboana de pe colivă* (lett. la caramella sul dolce funerale);
 - it: *(essere) la ciliegina sulla torta, la goccia che fa traboccare il vaso*;
 - in: *rotten tomato* (lett. un pomodoro marcio).
- **fare una stupidaggine, sbagliare:**
 - ro: *a o face de oaie* (trad. appross. finire come una pecora); *a o pune de mămligă* (trad. appross. prepararsi per fare la polenta); *a face un ghiveci* (lett. fare uno stufato di verdura); *a o sfecli* (trad. appross. fare una barbabietola); *a călca în străchini* (lett. calpestare le scodelle);
 - it: *fare una frittata/la frittata è fatta, rompere le uova nel panier, essere fritto*;

en: *be toast* (lett. essere fritto); *make an omelette* (lett. fare un'omelette); *the fat is in the fire* (lett. il lardo è sul fuoco).

➤ **interferire negli affari altrui:**

ro: *a se băga ca musca în lapte* (lett. impicciarsi come la mosca nel latte);
it: *rompere le uova nel paniere, essere come il prezzemolo*;
in: *cook somebody's goose* (lett. cucinare l'oca altrui).

➤ **sprecare le risorse su persone che non valgono l'impegno:**

ro: *a strica orzul pe găște* (lett. sprecare l'orzo sulle oche);
it: *dar le perle ai porci; al maiale dai da mangiare e lui respinge il contenitore*;
in: *like giving a donkey strawberries* (lett. come offrire fragole a un asino); *cast pearls to swine* (lett. gettare perle ai maiali);

➤ **cose impossibili, rare, preziose:**

ro: *brânză de iepure* (lett. formaggio di coniglio); *scump ca șofranul* (lett. caro come lo zafferano);
it: *latte di gallina*;
in: *when pigs fly* (lett. quando volano i maiali).

6. Rappresentazione dell'ambito

➤ **avere le cose fondamentali per la sopravvivenza:**

ro: *a avea pâine pe masă* (lett. avere del pane sulla tavola); *a mânca slănină cu ceapă* (lett. mangiare lardo e cipolla);
it: *vivere di pane e acqua; mangiar pane e cipolle*;
in: *to be the bread and butter* (lett. essere il pane e il burro).

➤ **una vita felice e ricca/soldi:**

ro: *a mânca o pâine albă* (lett. mangiare pane bianco); *numai lapte și miere* (lett. solo latte e miele); *a avea cașcaval/ mălai/ osânză* (lett. possedere formaggio farina di mais/ lardo); *a face mălai* (produrre farina di mais);
it: *avere tanta abbondanza da poter legare i cani con la salsiccia*;
in: *cabbage* (verza – per soldi); *longbread* (lett. pane lungo).

➤ **la povertà estrema:**

ro: *a nu avea (nici) după ce bea apă* (trad. appross.: essere così povero, da non aver nulla da mangiare, per poi poter bere dell'acqua); *a nu avea sare de mămligă* (lett. non avere sale per la polenta);
it: *povero in canna; se un povero mangia una gallina o è ammalato il povero o è ammalata la gallina; mancare il pane*;
in: –.

➤ **procurare le cose essenziali:**

ro: *a aduce pâinea acasă* (lett. portare il pane a casa);
it: *portare la pagnotta a casa*;
in: *bring home the bacon* (portare la pancetta a casa); *be a breadwinner* (essere colui che guadagna il pane).

- **la ricompensa per un buon lavoro:**
ro: *roadele muncii* (lett. i frutti del lavoro);
it: *i frutti del lavoro*;
in: *fruits of labour* (lett. i frutti del lavoro).
- **vivere insieme/condividere:**
ro: *a mânca pâine și sare cu cineva* (mangiare pane e sale con qualcuno);
a mânca din aceeași strachină/dintr-un blid cu cineva (mangiare dalla stessa scodella con qualcuno);
it: *mangiare nello stesso piatto; devi mangiare due salme (1 salma = 300 Kg.) di sale con qualcuno per conoscerlo*;
in: *break bread with someone* (lett. rompere il pane insieme a qualcuno);
eat one's salt (lett. mangiare il sale di qualcuno).
- **troppa gente impegnata nella stessa azione:**
ro: *prea mulți bucătari strică ciorba* (troppi cuochi rovinano la zuppa);
it: *troppi cuochi rovinano il brodo*;
in: *too many cooks spoil the broth* (troppi cuochi rovinano il brodo).

Conclusioni

Gli schemi metaforici che possono essere identificati nell'ambito del cibo sono i seguenti:

I tratti fisici:

- la mancanza d'intelligenza è una verdura;
- la magrezza è pesce essiccato, frutta secca o pane asciutto;
- la grassezza è frutta;
- la gioventù e la bellezza sono frutta o verdura fresca;
- i tratti negativi (pigrizia, maldestrezza, ubriachezza) sono cibi/piatti amorfi;
- i tratti sgradevoli/atipici sono verdura/spezie;
- la violenza è cucinare/mangiare;
- l'ubiquità e la velocità sono spezie.

I tratti temperamentali:

- la somiglianza è un legume/un impasto;
- la collera è bollire/bruciarsi;
- l'irritabilità è acidità/gonfiore/frutta;
- la noia è mancanza di spezie.

I tratti psicologici:

- l'esperienza è un uccello femmina fertile/mangiare;
- la mancanza d'intelligenza è verdura/derivato dei cereali/cervello d'uccello;
- l'impegno è preparazione del cibo;
- l'amore è mangiare;
- rifugiarsi è bere;
- la paura è la pelle di un uccello.

I tratti fisiologici:

- la fame è un cuoco/un lupo;
- la morte è mangiare/cucinare;
- l'esaurimento è svuotamento/frutta/verdura.

I tratti morali:

- la bontà è pane;
- la mancanza di personalità è verdura/un cibo amorfo;
- una persona piacevole è un cibo dolce;
- l'influenza negativa è un cibo marcio;
- l'avidità è mantenere il cibo;
- la corruzione è manomettere il cibo;
- la fonte di reddito è il pane;
- la mancanza di valore è frutta/verdura;
- corteggiare è un dolce/un grasso.

I processi cognitivi/le azioni:

- gli elementi discrepanti sono frutta/pesce;
- la vita nell'ambito nativo è pane;
- i momenti felici sono dolci;
- la giusta valutazione è conoscere il cibo;
- l'inadeguatezza è cibo;
- la cautela è bruciarsi/manipolazione del cibo fragile;
- l'evoluzione perfetta è un grasso;
- la sofferenza è sale;
- un'azione inutile è una preparazione del cibo;
- sbagliare è preparare il cibo;
- interferire negli affari altrui è rovinare il cibo;
- sprecare le risorse è offrire del cibo;
- le cose impossibili sono cibo;

La rappresentazione dell'ambito:

- le cose fondamentali per la sopravvivenza sono il pane, il lardo/la pancetta e le cipolle;
- una vita felice è pane/latte e miele/carne/farina di mais;
- la ricompensa è frutta;
- vivere insieme è mangiare pane e sale;
- troppa gente impegnata nella stessa azione è una procedura culinaria.

I tratti fisici sono visti in modalità simili nelle tre lingue: i pesci essiccati (l'aringa, l'acciuga) e la frutta secca sono associati con la magrezza, la carota con i capelli rossi, il grasso e i seni con la frutta rotonda, le gambe magre con i grissini, la gioventù e la bellezza con la frutta e le verdure fresche, la violenza con la preparazione della carne, l'affollamento con le sardine, la maldestrezza con alimenti informi. Tratti temperamentali come la somiglianza sono rappresentati

in modi simili (i chicchi), mentre la furia è rappresentata diversamente (ammollamento in romeno, crescita della tensione in italiano, trasformazione in frutta in inglese). Esistono somiglianze anche nell'ambito dei tratti psicologici, come la paura (pelle di gallina/oca), l'amore (l'associazione stomaco-cuore, l'amore collegato all'ingoiare), la mancanza d'intelligenza (oggetti piccoli, alimenti informi, rifiuti, verdura), l'esperienza (la gallina, l'atto di mangiare) *versus* l'inesperienza (l'uovo, la cagliata, non aver mangiato abbastanza). I tratti fisiologici meglio rappresentati sono la fame, associata con la mancanza delle aspettative e con il lupo e l'appetito – l'ultimo visto come un processo autogenerante.

Nei tratti morali si osserva la tendenza a descrivere le persone piacevoli con riferimenti ai dolci, la bontà è associata con il pane in romeno e in italiano, mentre in inglese non abbiamo trovato un'espressione equivalente, la mancanza di personalità è associata con alimenti informi, l'influenza negativa con cibi marci, l'ipocrisia con la volpe, l'avidità e la corruzione con l'atto di mettere la mano in un contenitore, le fonti di reddito con il pane, la mancanza di valore con i cibi "per i poveri" (la cipolla per la cultura romena, i fichi per quella italiana, le patate o la birra per quella inglese), l'atto di adulare con i cibi dolci (il miele, i fichi) o oleosi (il burro) e l'ingenuità con verbi come *credere, cadere* o con la cecità.

Si osservano somiglianze anche nel caso dei processi cognitivi: il paragone tra elementi discrepanti ha come termine centrale la mela, mentre il termine centrale nel sottolineare la differenza è il pesce, la difficoltà di vivere con gli stranieri tiene centrale il pane, le situazioni difficili sono descritte con il paragone dell'amarezza e la dolcezza, la giusta valutazione di una situazione o persona è sempre realizzata in tutte e tre le lingue con il verbo *sapere*, seguito da nomi concreti (*le acque, i fagioli, i polli, il pane*), l'inadeguatezza è descritta con paragoni assurdi, la cautela ha due nuclei – l'atto di calpestare le uova e quello di bruciarsi –, l'evoluzione perfetta è percepita come un atto di scorrimento. Gli sbagli sono visti come atti del cucinare (preparare una polenta, una frittata) e gli aspetti più sgradevoli di una situazione sono resi con alimenti dolci in romeno e in italiano e con il pomodoro in inglese.

Per quanto riguarda l'ambito, il pane e l'acqua sono i cibi fondamentali in tutte e tre le lingue. La ricchezza è percepita diversamente – la salsiccia per l'italiano, il latte e il miele per il romeno, il pane lungo o il cavolo (cioè soldi) per l'inglese. Anche la povertà è messa in relazione con aspetti fondamentali: l'acqua, il pane, il sale. Le cose essenziali si riducono al pane, con l'adagio della pancetta per la lingua inglese. La ricompensa per un buon lavoro è vista come "i frutti" in tutte e tre le lingue e così anche l'eccesso di gente impegnata a fare la stessa azione (i cuochi che rovinano il brodo). Vivere insieme e conoscere una persona sono messi in relazione con i cibi fondamentali (il pane, il sale) e con il piatto, in tutte e tre le lingue. Il maiale è associato con la sporcizia e lo spreco di risorse, la gallina con la mancanza d'intelligenza, mentre la carne degli animali domestici è associata con la ricchezza.

Tuttavia, esistono anche delle differenze tra le lingue analizzate: il riferimento alla barbabietola per il rossore in romeno e in inglese, dove la barbabietola è un alimento comune, mentre in italiano si osserva il paragone con il fuoco o con il gambero. Anche se sono presenti in tutte e tre le lingue, i riferimenti al pesce sono centrali per la lingua inglese, mentre quelli al pane sono più visibili nel romeno e nell'italiano.

Per concludere, la nostra analisi ha messo in luce sia le somiglianze sia qualche differenza tra espressioni che si riferiscono al cibo e può essere sviluppata in ricerche ulteriori, perché i modi di dire che contengono riferimenti alimentari codificano i nostri modi di vedere il mondo.

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POLITICAL MYSTICISM AND THE LEGIONARY MOVEMENT IN INTERWAR ROMANIA. A COGNITIVE APPROACH

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ABSTRACT. *Political Mysticism and the Legionary Movement in Interwar Romania. A Cognitive Approach.* The purpose of this article is to explore the public discourse of the Iron Guard, the often called “exotic” Romanian fascist movement. I will focus especially on the messianic figure of Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, the charismatic leader of the movement, and the long lasting fascination he has exerted in the Romanian public space for more than a century now. The approach taken here is based on Gilles Fauconnier’s and Mark Turner’s conceptual integration theory and it is an attempt to show how by blending various mental spaces, from religious elements to medieval historical characters and events, the movement managed to create a unique mix that seemed to set it apart from other European fascist movements. Its members were extremely young and, by all accounts, genuinely religious, even practicing a type of political „mysticism” that was rather uncommon elsewhere.

Keywords: *discourse, ideology, cognitive linguistics, mental space, conceptual integration, political religion*

REZUMAT. *Misticism politic și mișcarea legionară în România interbelică. O abordare cognitivă.* Articolul de față propune o incursiune în discursul public al Legiunii Arhanghelului Mihail, „exotica” mișcare fascistă românească din perioada interbelică. Ne vom concentra mai ales pe figura mesianică a lui Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, liderul carismatic al mișcării și pe fascinația pe care a exercitat-o și continuă s-o exercite în spațiul public românesc. Abordarea pe care

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o propunem pornește de la teoria integrării conceptuale a lui Gilles Fauconnier și a lui Mark Turner și reprezintă o încercare de a demonstra cum, prin amalgamarea mai multor spații mentale – de la elemente religioase la personaje și evenimente istorice –, mișcarea a reușit să creeze un univers unic, care-o separă de celelalte mișcări fasciste din epocă. Membrii Legiunii Arhanghelului Mihail erau, în general, extrem de tineri și, după toate aparențele, autentici religioși, practicând un fel de misticism politic greu de găsit în altă parte.

***Cuvinte-cheie:** discurs, ideologie, lingvistică cognitivă, spații mentale, integrarea conceptuală, religii politice*

1. The context

On April 24th, 1938, Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, the leader of the Romanian Iron Guard and of the Legion of the Archangel Michael, finds himself in Jilava Prison. It's cold and damp and he feels his lungs are being "pierced by needles, by bullets". It's Saturday evening before Easter and the young man is "awaiting the Resurrection of our Lord". After a brief visit from the guardians who, at least according to his account, seem to understand his "inner sadness", he begins to recount the recent events that preceded his arrest. He then thinks of his family, the wife and daughter he left behind, and finally starts to pray: „Lord, I pray to You, on this night of the Resurrection, to receive my sacrifice! Take my life! Since for you, O Country, our life is not required. It is our death that you desire. It is undoubtedly past midnight. Who knows, perhaps even later than one o'clock in the morning. I did not hear the bells sound the Resurrection. I light the candle and recite the traditional *Christ has Risen!*" (Codreanu 2015, 15). "O Country, he later exclaims, How you reward your sons!" (15).

When reading Codreanu's lamentations, one cannot help but notice that he seems to address two deities: first of all, God, the Christian God, to be more precise, to Whom he was a devout and honest servant, and then another entity called "Country", also spelled with a capital C (a convention that is normally reserved to God only). Feeling betrayed by this other deity (a mother-like figure), he turns to God and asks Him to receive his sacrifice. This is just a snapshot or a quick glimpse into the world view of an entire generation of young students, renowned intellectuals, politicians, priests and teachers that lived in interwar Romania and adhered to the legionary movement.

This phenomenon, the Romanian more or less "exotic" version of the European fascist movement (or so would most researchers agree), was and remains a source of fascination for researchers and the wider public alike. The

impressive number of books and scientific articles dedicated to it, as well as primary sources, such as articles from the newspapers of the time, manifestoes, journals, recordings, posters and pictures generously shared online by the supporters and followers of the Legion today, attest to this fascination. But perhaps nothing bewilders the contemporary reader more than the involvement of major Romanian intellectuals of the era, such as Mircea Eliade, Emil Cioran, Constantin Noica, Nae Ionescu with the Iron Guard, and not just their involvement, but their outright enthusiastic support. In his *Journal. 1935-1944. The Fascist Years*, Mihail Sebastian offers a tragic and lucid depiction of the atmosphere of those days. He watches his close friends (Mircea Eliade, Nae Ionescu, Emil Cioran, Camil Petrescu) grow ever more distant under the influence of the right wing ideology. "Perhaps one day things will have calmed down enough for me to read this page to Mircea and to see him blush with shame. Nor should I forget his explanation for joining the Guard with such passion: 'I have always believed in the primacy of the spirit'. He is neither a charlatan, nor a madman. He is just naive. But there are such catastrophic forms of naiveté." (Sebastian 2000, 114). And perhaps the most shocking interaction recorded by Sebastian in his journal is that with Nae Ionescu. As they are discussing the anti-Semitic measures taken by Octavian Goga's government in 1938, Sebastian, as a member of the Jewish community, remarks: "the slow or even impetuous killing of Jews would not have quite such implication of that kind and anyway, the Iron Guard would surely not operate differently". Nae Ionescu's reply is memorable: "Not in their deeds, but in their mind (...). There is a big difference between a man who kills you in a mocking spirit and one who does the same with pain in his heart" (144).

So what exactly drew the young (and not so young) intellectuals to the legionary movement to the point where they thought that getting killed was justified as long as the killer had good intentions, a reason or a purpose and „pain in his heart”? Just like many of their European counterparts, the Romanian intellectuals, Roger Griffin notes in *Modernism and Fascism*, "embarked on idiosyncratic quests for sources of cultural renewal before being drawn to the Iron Guard" and promoted "nationalism as a remedy to modernity's ills" (Griffin 2007, 358). The same ambitions seem to have constituted the driving force (at least in part) behind the political activists of the organisation and their supporters coming from various social backgrounds: students, country priests, school teachers, peasants, aristocrats, workers etc. They were all hoping for a renewal of what they perceived as being a corrupt society (often times a justified perception), they all dreamt of a new world, they were all haunted by what Roger Griffin calls "the 'sense of a beginning', the mood of standing on the threshold of a new world" and by "the belief that transcendence can be achieved through cultural, social, and political transformation" (1, 2). Not to be ignored, of course, are the

more pragmatic aspects, such as the social injustice, poverty, and the general political climate of interwar Romania, one that was dominated by violence and corruption². Finally, and this takes us to the actual purpose of this article, the religious dimension of the movement, be it genuine religion or a political religion, played an important part in attracting enthusiastic and loyal followers.

The connection between religion (Christianity) and the legionary ideology, as well as, more specifically, between the Iron Guard and the Romanian Orthodox Church is obvious to all those who are even just slightly familiar with the phenomenon. The language, the rituals, the system of beliefs are all inspired by, if not built around what we generally call Orthodox Christian Spirituality. The international reception of the movement and the attempts to describe and define it varied greatly, and, at least as far as its connection with Christianity goes, there are two main lines of argumentation.

On one hand, there are those who regard it as genuinely religious and thus tend to exoticise it among other European fascisms. For Ernst Nolte, the Legion of the Archangel Michael was one of the most interesting and complex fascist movements in Europe. In *Three Faces of Fascism*, he notes that Codreanu's "allegiance to the church was closer than that of all fascism's founders" and his "views had an affinity to those of the Romanian Orthodox tradition" (Nolte 1965, 37). However, despite the honest devotion to the Orthodox Church, Codreanu felt that "with few exceptions, the clergy did not support the Iron Guard" (37). In *A History of fascism 1914-1945*, Stanley Payne also emphasizes the unique character of the movement: "The Legion was arguably the most unusual mass movement of interwar Europe. It is generally classified as fascist because it met the main criteria of any appropriate fascist typology, but it presented undeniably individual characteristics of its own" (Payne 2003, 279-280). "What made Codreanu especially different, Payne goes on, was that he became a sort of religious mystic, and though the Legion had the same general political goals as other fascist movements, its final aims were spiritual and transcendental" (280). The Romanian Legionary or Iron Guard movement, the author of *A History of Fascism* concludes, was "a mystical, kenotic form of semireligious fascism that represented the only notable movement of this kind in an Orthodox country. It was also marginal" (466). In *The Nature of Fascism*, Roger Griffin also affirms the uniqueness of the ideology of the Romanian Legionary movement, which was "based on a blend of Orthodox Christianity, xenophobia and anti-Semitism rooted in peasant culture, with a Romantic nationalism cultivated in university circles. The Legionary elite fused the commitment to Romania's rebirth that grew out of these ideas with an initiatic leader worship and death cult which is

² For an overview of this topic, see Oliver Schmitt, the chapter "Criza și camarila", in Schmitt 2017.

unparalleled in other fascist movements” (Griffin 1993, 139). Despite the rather uncommon combination that constitutes its system of beliefs, “the ideas of the Iron Guard, Griffin adds, are from those of the various strands of Fascism, they share with them the same core of palingenetic ultra-nationalism” (139). In *Reflections on Fascism and Religion*, Roger Eatwell discusses the relationship between fascism and religion and pays special attention to the term “clerical fascism”, which he generally feels is a misleading concept in most cases, but can be somewhat justified in the case of certain “fascist movements which were overtly and sincerely religious, such as the Romanian Iron Guard, led by the devoutly Orthodox Corneliu Codreanu” (Eatwell, 2003 145-146). Due to the genuine religiosity of the leaders and members of the Iron Guard, Eatwell feels that “there are problems in unequivocally including the Iron Guard within a radical generic fascist pantheon” (154).

On the other side, we find Radu Ioanid, who although accepts that “mysticism was a distinctive quality of Romanian fascism”, regards it less like a sincere manifestation of religiosity and more like an attempt to insert Orthodox Christianity into its political doctrine (Ioanid 1990, 140). The author of *The Sword of the Archangel* believes that, despite the important religious propaganda, the results were modest in comparison with the effort put into it because “Eastern Christianity, unlike other Christian and non-Christian religions, was impregnated by a more tolerant spirit, which was incompatible with the fanaticism of the legionnaires”. For Emilio Gentile, in line with his famous theory of the sacralisation of politics, the Iron Guard “may be placed within the dimension of sacralised politics, notwithstanding their exaltation of Catholic or Orthodox Christianity, because their ideology makes the sacralisation of the nation and the State evident, even if through a strongly politicised version of a traditional religion”. In Gentile’s view, the Iron Guard assumes “the character of a political religion in that they become the main factor of legitimation for the sacralisation of the nation, and for the nationalisation of Orthodox Christianity itself” and it constitutes a clear example of his theory “about the syncretic symbiosis between political religion and traditional religion” (Gentile 2004, 361-362). Finally, in his chapter dedicated to the Romanian legionary movement and entitled *God’s Chosen Warriors* from *Comparative Fascist Studies*, Constantin Iordachi summarises his position as follows: “although building on a popular and widespread cultural Christian code, the cult of the Archangel Michael was, in fact, the main axis of the process of sacralisation of politics in Romania” (Iordachi 2010, 322). For him, despite the fact that through its public discourse, the Legion put forward “mainstream religious themes, their motivations, means and goals are different from those of the Church” (350).

In his brand new book dedicated to this topic, Iordachi makes an attempt to offer “a novel theoretical research framework for reconceptualising the origins, history, and main features of the Legion ‘Archangel Michael’ in Romania” (Iordachi 2023, 2). He makes a compelling case for defining the ideology of the Iron Guard “as a palingenetic political faith of a theological type, called Legionarism” (8). Part of the belief system of this political faith were the idea of an elect people – in this case Romanians – who can lead humanity to salvation under the guidance of a charismatic leader, as well as the idea that this must be done by using sacrifice, martyrdom and violence in order to achieve social regeneration. While Iordachi’s theory builds on other theoretical frameworks, such as Griffin’s palingenetic myth of the regeneration of the nation through violence as central to the fascist ideology and on Emilio Gentile’s sacralisation of politics and his definitions of political and civil religions, among others, it departs from the original sources in several significant ways. Unlike Griffin, who uses the term palingenesis metaphorically and, in a sense, divorced from its religious sources, for Iordachi the term is used in a proper mystical sense (albeit new and different from the one assumed by traditional religions) and is part of the larger project of reconceptualising the sacred by modernity. Apart from the *palingenetic* core of the legionary belief system, Iordachi also mentions *messianic nationalism* (with its Romantic roots) and its *charismatic type of leadership*. When talking about the charismatic leader, Iordachi uses the term in a proper sense, so to speak. A charismatic leader is not simply somebody endowed with magnetism, but is someone who is chosen by God and remains in relation with God (or at least he is presented as such) and so the transcendental dimension of charisma becomes central to the belief system. Finally, unlike Gentile who seems to suggest that the final goal of a political religion is totalitarianism, the concentration of power in the hands of a leader or of a group of people, Iordachi feels that totalitarianism is simply the means through which a higher goal is achieved: the salvation of the nation and the birth of a new man (15-26). That is why he considers the fascist movement in Romania more like a fascist faith that „can be defined as a gospel of national redemption based on an inner transformation of the followers through Christian technologies of the self” (27).

The Legion of the Archangel Michael has captivated the attention of scholars from various fields and Corneliu Zelea Codreanu remains a constant source of fascination both for sincere admirers and for researchers. While the contributions mentioned above offer us a good explanation of the phenomenon in terms of *what* and *why* it happened, my analysis here is more concerned with *how* it happened. Rather than looking at the historical context, cultural, social or religious factors, this article represents an attempt to look at the phenomenon

through the lens of cognitive linguistics, more precisely, the theory of mental spaces and cognitive integration, a theoretical framework put forward by Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner.

2. Mental spaces and conceptual integration

In their seminal book *Metaphors we live by* (1980), George Lakoff and Mark Johnson note that our conceptual system is largely metaphoric, so the way we think, act or feel is in strong connection with the metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 3). They describe what they call a „conceptual metaphor” in terms of a *target* and a *source domain* which partially overlap for the purpose of communicating certain aspects of reality, while often concealing others. Inspired by this initial idea, the *theory of conceptual blending* or *conceptual integration* was later developed by Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, as the new approach seemed to offer new possibilities of covering a larger variety of linguistic phenomena (metaphors, metonymies, counterfactuals, irony, hyperboles, etc.). Mental spaces are “very partial assemblies constructed as we think and talk for purposes of local understanding and action” (Fauconnier 2007, 351). Or, as Seana Coulson puts it, “a mental space contains a partial representation of the entities and relations of a particular scenario as perceived, imagined, remembered, or otherwise understood by a speaker. This representation typically includes elements to represent each of the discourse entities, and simple frames to represent the relationships that exist between them” (Coulson 2006, 21). Mental spaces are constructed as we speak and think and they interact with each other creating conceptual networks. A basic conceptual network contains four mental spaces: a generic space, two input spaces and a blend. The generic space contains the general structure that the two spaces share, while the process of conceptual integration consists of selecting certain elements from the two input spaces and putting them together in the blend. It is important to note that projecting things from the two input spaces into the blend is selective: only certain elements get transferred into the new space. Due to the fact that this is a selective process, new structures may emerge in the blend through *composition* (elements from the two blends are transferred into the blend), *completion* (additional structure is brought into the blend) and finally *elaboration* (the blend starts working or running on its own, imaginatively) (Fauconnier and Turner 2002, 39-50). It is also worth mentioning here that the initial input spaces can suffer transformation in the process, as new elements can be projected back into them, which technically means that mental spaces are ever changing realities that constantly interact among themselves.

For the purpose of this argumentation it is important to emphasise the fact that, as a highly imaginative mental operation, conceptual integration is characterised by *invisibility* and *speed* and we are often times unaware of it. The

correspondences the speaker uses in order to connect elements within a conceptual network are not objectively there, but are suggested by the speaker (20). The interlocutor then has to process an imaginative scenario, one that does not correspond to an existing reality, as if it were real. Because this process is so fundamental to our cognitive system and because it makes communication possible, we have the tendency to be open to interpreting, understanding and accepting this new creation, even when it contains unlikely and impossible elements. Fauconnier and Turner note that many blends are “so compelling that they come to represent, mentally, a new reality, in culture, action, and science” (21).

It is precisely this fundamental human ability to create mental spaces that are built dynamically as we think and speak in our working memory and that can be temporary or become entrenched in long term memory, which can help explain phenomena such as the legionary movement in Romania and the fascination it exerted on an entire generation of people coming from various backgrounds (students, priests, intellectuals, members of the aristocracy, politicians, peasants, blue collar workers, priests). Through repeated overlapping and blending of mental spaces, the members of the Legion and their supporters created a strange, romantic, imaginary world, populated by demons, angels, archangels, knights, musketeers, Romanian medieval kings, saints, alongside real characters, such as politicians and political activists. The borders between what was real and what was imagined, between past and present, between the physical and the spiritual realm became fuzzy and uncertain, moral instincts and reason were easily suspended and it was all made possible by the powerful process of conceptual blending. The following sections are dedicated to the analysis of several conceptual networks, all of them related to the interaction between the legionary and the Christian imaginary: the unseen war or the Armageddon, the saviour-like figure and the legionary version of an *imitatio Christi*, the Orthodox doctrine of theosis and the idea of “the whole Adam”, all reinterpreted so that they fit the intended purpose.

3. Armageddon

In his exceptional book dedicated to the life of Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, Oliver Jen Schmitt remarks that what truly mobilised the members and the supporters of the Legion was their belief in an eschatological war. The fire sword of the archangel, he notes, was not a metaphor for them. Instead, they genuinely thought they were fighting against the powers of hell (Schmitt 2017, 110).

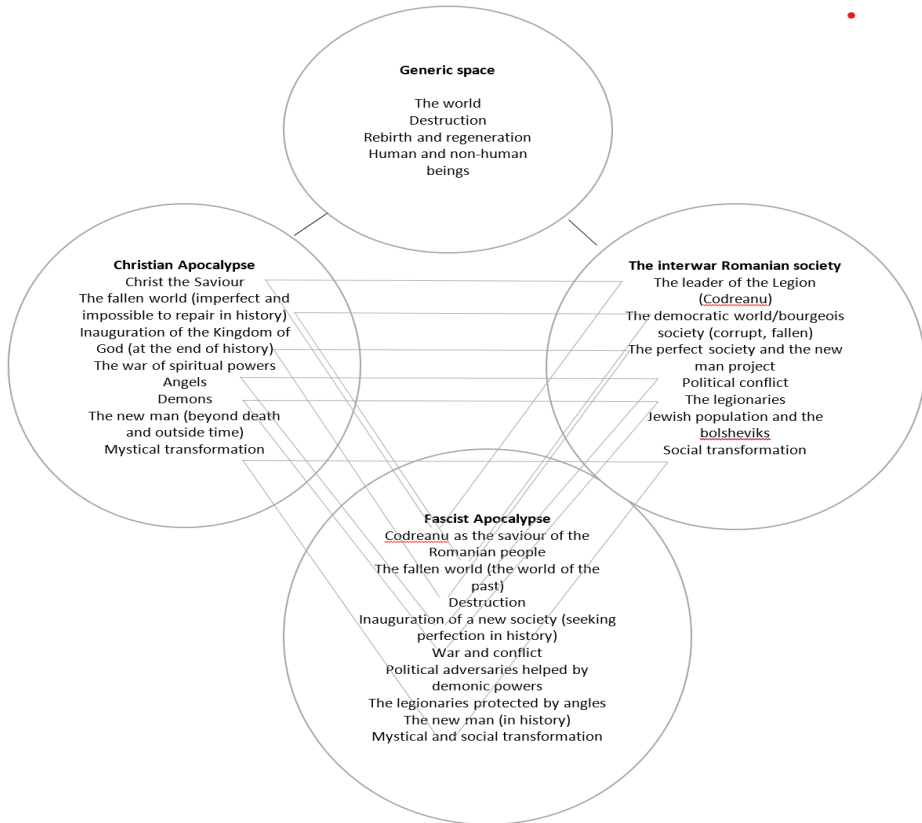
For example, in his programmatic book *For my Legionaries*, Codreanu sums up his view on the nature of the war he was carrying on as follows:

“Wars were won by those who knew how to summon the mysterious powers of the unseen world from above and to ensure their help. These mysterious powers are the souls of the dead, the souls of our ancestors who too were once attached to this land, to our furrows, and who died in the defence of this land, and who today also are attached to it by the memory of their life here, and through us - their children, grand-children and great-great-grandchildren. But above all the souls of the dead stands God” (Codreanu 2007, 175).

Several things become evident in this description: the mystical understanding of a nation as an organic body, encompassing past, present and future generations and their belief in the actual presence of the entities belonging to the spiritual realm: angels, demons and the souls of the dead. While so far nothing here contradicts the typical Orthodox world view and is in fact very much in line with the spiritual tradition of the Church, there are very subtle interpretations and changes that the leaders and the public communicators of the legion operated in order to justify their actions or to determine the desired reactions in those reading or listening to them.

In the *Apocalypse* of Saint John, we find the depiction of the *Second Coming of Christ* and the events preceding it. According to Saint John, before the *Second Advent* and before the *Last Judgement*, humanity will witness the final battle between good and evil and will go through a period of great tribulations. Most fascist movements in Europe made great use of the imagery from *The Book of Revelation*, but did so in a rather metaphorical and symbolic manner. They embraced the fin du siècle mood and used the traumatic experience of the First World War in order to forge their own Apocalypse, not one marking the end of the world and the inauguration of the Kingdom of God, but rather one that had more pragmatic goals. They felt that liberal democracy was a dead end, that materialism became exacerbated in the 19th century and that the world no longer revolved around grand ideals, but around the mediocre values of the bourgeois society. They wanted to put an end to society as they knew it and to build instead a brand new world and a new man. The change would have to be total and violence was not only necessary, but also desired for the vitality and power of regeneration it brought along. In this scenario, the kingdom of God was not going to be inaugurated in the Eschaton, marking the end of history, but within history, in the here and now, a vision that is in fact typical for what Frank Kermode describes in *The Sense of an Ending* as “the modern apocalypse”. “And although for us the End has perhaps lost its naïve imminence, he observes, its shadow still lies on the crises of our fictions; we may speak of it as immanent” (Kermode 1966, 6).

If we examine the network in Figure 1, we can follow the process of conceptual blending of the two mental spaces mentioned above, as well as the mappings between various elements and, finally, their compression in the blend and the new structures that emerge there.



(Figure 1)

An apocalyptic vision can also be found in the following paragraph extracted from an article published by Ion Moța, one of the main leaders of the Legion, in “Cuvântul Studentesc”, in 1936:

”If our eye could gaze into the heavens above, from where our Saviour will soon descend on Romanian land, we could see, next to our Saviour and his saints, all the brave men who gladly sacrificed their lives in order to help those around them: we would see there Horia, Tudor, Avram Iancu, Brâncoveanu and the all those who sacrificed themselves from the treasure

of their hearts. It is in these men that Christianity was most alive and they, more than others integrated in the community of the Christian Church, forming her living, complete body” (my translation)³ (Moța 1936).

We find here the same interaction between two separate mental spaces. In the blend, we find Christ descending from heavens, but not just anywhere, “on Romanian land”, and we find the typical parallel between national heroes and Christian saints. The historical characters mentioned above sacrificed themselves mainly for social or national ideals and were persecuted or killed by other Christians (apart from Brâncoveanu who is an actual saint of the Church and who was beheaded because he refused to renounce Christianity and to accept Islam). Nevertheless, elements belonging to the two mental spaces – Christian apocalypse and Romanian history – are projected into the blend through composition. Two new elements then make their way into the blend through completion: the Saviour’s second coming happening “on Romanian land” and the sanctification of national heroes and their turning into Christian heroes. The resulting scenario starts “working” independently and the distinction between saints and heroes remains unnoticed as the two elements are compressed in the blend, becoming one element.

In his latest book, Iordachi summarises the conceptual network of the legionary Armageddon as follows: the legionaries perceived themselves “as an earthly army bearing divine revelation, who guided the nations under the direction of the charismatic leader and alongside the heavenly army of God’s angels against Satan; the Romanian people and humanity as the recipients; Jews, led by demons, and the Bolsheviks, were the enemies; Romanian politicians and the church leaders were the Judas and the traitors; and the interwar period was the apocalyptic battle scene” (Iordachi 2023, 91).

4. *Imitatio Christi*

The notion of *Imitatio Christi*⁴ is based on the idea that Christians must follow the example of Christ, they must behave as disciples who seek to imitate

³ „Dacă ochiul nostru ar putea înțelege zărite cerești în mijlocul cărora se va coborî în curând Mântuitorul pe pământul românesc, el ar vedea, alături de Mântuitorul și de sfinții Bisericii, toate sufletele de viteji care s-au jertfit bucuros și conștienți pentru a ajuta pe aproapele lor: n-ar lipsi nici Horia, nici Tudor, nici Avram Iancu, nici Brâncoveanu, nici mulțimea celor care s-au jertfit cu adevărat, din toată comoara sufletului lor. Căci în ei mai mult decât în alții creștinștatea a fost vie, ei mai mult decât alții s-au integrat în comunitatea Bisericii creștine, formându-i trupul viu, împlinit.”

⁴ Perhaps an even better notion to describe the way the legionaries saw themselves in relation with Christ is that of *Alter Christus*. More than just following Christ, they sought to become *like Christ* or simply become *a Christ*. For a detailed history and analysis of the notion of *Alter Christus* see Candida R. Moss, *The Other Christs: Imitating Jesus in Ancient Christian Ideologies of Martyrdom* (2010).

their teacher, by first following His teachings and then by going as far as sacrificing themselves on behalf of their faith. *Imitatio Christi* is obviously central to the legionary belief system and while all members of the Legion were expected to adopt this devotional model, its appropriation is perhaps the most obvious in the case of the charismatic leader of the movement. Iordachi notes that although religiously inspired, their world view included motivations, goals and methods that were “fundamentally different from those of the Church”. The use of violence is one example, and so is the subtle substitution of Christ with the charismatic figure of Codreanu, which Iordachi sees as a “form of blasphemy” (Iordachi 2010, 350).

It is striking to see how Codreanu himself, as well as those around him, interpret various episodes of his life in this key. *The Nest Leader's Manual* along with *For my Legionaries* both function as two central books that record the legionary teachings and can be considered the Gospel of the new faith. Like Jesus, Codreanu did not come to abolish the law, but to fulfil it. Although Christ presented a path to salvation that involved self-denial, sacrifice and universal love (enemies included), the legionaries felt that this path was no longer enough or adequate for the specific historical circumstances they were dealing with. Or rather, although they accepted that reaching the high state of universal love was the ultimate goal of a Christian, violence – which they recognised as a sin – was necessary to undo the wrongs of history: “Caring the halo of sacrifice, the Captain appears to be an apostle, who did not come to change the laws of the Christian faith, but to reactivate them, to help Romanian souls live these laws more intensely, to call Romanians to the fruitful spirituality of the first Christians. The power of the Legion lays in its mystical character, and so does its future victory” (Roman 1940).

The Captain was systematically identified as a Messiah of the Romanian people and there are enough proofs that he regarded himself as one as well: “For two thousand years our people has been waiting for someone to lead us towards imperial paths. For two thousand years we have been praying, working, fighting, hoping, a Captain will rise up over all Romanians and will lead us towards the great victory of the peoples” (Herseni 1940). Emil Cioran is also famous for drawing the parallel between Christ and Codreanu and for offering one of the most encomiastic portraits of the Captain: “With the exception of Jesus, no dead person has ever been more present among the living [...]. This dead man scattered eternity over our human dust” (Cioran 1940).

Codreanu's *For my legionaries* and *The Prison Notes* give us a glimpse into his world view and his own interpretation of his destiny in general and of several key episodes of his life. He was arrested a few times, once, just like Jesus, at night, in a garden. When the prefect Manciu arrests him in Iași, while working

in the garden, alongside his comrades, Codreanu yells, echoing Christ's words: "Everybody hold back. Don't do anything" (Codreanu 1999, 154). Every arrest was followed by a *Via Dolorosa*: "We were carried almost 2 km in the city centre, before the eyes of the Jewish population, staring at us, in this humiliating position" (Codreanu 1999, 155). Elsewhere, he writes: "And again I was taken, between fixed bayonets, to the Secretary's office. When I went outside and I rediscovered the Sun, fresh air and warmth, I felt them as a caress. It seemed to me that, despite the fixed bayonets escorting me, the sky was blessing me." (Codreanu 2015, 26). Similarly, immediately after he shot prefect Manciu to death, he describes the scene as follows: "In a few minutes, in front of the courthouse a few thousands Jews gathered. They were holding their arms up in the air, clenching their fists in hatred, waiting to tear me apart" (Codreanu 1999, 170). The scene (as presented by Codreanu) obviously resembles the one in which Pilate brings Jesus outside in order to consult the Jewish population regarding His condemnation, and the people shouted in response: "Crucify Him!" (Matthew 27, 22).

There is also his version of the prayer from Gethsemane and the Christic gesture of taking upon Himself the sin of all humanity: "Lord, we take upon ourselves all the sins of this people. Receive our suffering. Make our suffering bear fruit for our nation one day" (Codreanu 1999, 132).

Particularly memorable is the "replay" of the "Last Supper". At His Last Supper, Jesus tells His disciples that He had been betrayed by one of them. "Surely you don't mean me, Rabbi?", asks Judah (Matthew 26, 25). While in Văcărești Prison, after having been arrested for conspiracy, Codreanu shares a meal with his comrades: "I am compelled to bring you sad news", he tells his mates. The betrayer has been identified. He is in our midst sitting at the table with us. Everyone was looking at everybody else. Moța and I followed everyone's face hoping for an indication. I put my hand into my breast pocket saying: "Now I will show you the proof." At that moment Vernicheseu stood up, hesitated for an instant, gave Bandac the key to the food box and said: "I am leaving." (Codreanu 2007, 97). Thus, the first Judah enters the scene, followed by many others later. However, unlike in the biblical story, the Judahs of the legionaries do not voluntarily commit suicide, but are promptly punished, often by execution. "If I had but one bullet, the Captain remarks somewhere, and I were faced by both an enemy and a traitor, I would let the traitor have it" (Codreanu 2007, 92).

Then, of course, there's the final arrest, his assassination, the burial and his exhumation and rehabilitation two years later. All the details are there, including the white shroud prepared to cover his body, just like the mihrt

bearing women covered Jesus's body. The articles reporting the event described it in terms of a resurrection: "And still, the miracle happened. The captain and his martyrs rose from the dead. I say this without fear. Their rising from their graves has nothing human in it. It belongs to God's will and the eternity of the other resurrection, which happened almost 2000 years ago. It was truly a resurrection" (Posteucă, 1977)."

In an article published in "Chemarea Vremii", in November 1940, Ion Siugariu uses similar language to describe the episod: "The legionary movement has never been just a political movement. It began from a burning feeling, from the thirst for history, for fulfilment, for justification in time, so it had to accept and promote martyrdom as a first and admirable necessity. It held nothing back, it endured everything gladly, it suffered crucifixion without hesitation, knowing that it will rise again from the dead three days later" (Siugariu 1940).

The constant mappings between the two main mental spaces – Jesus's life on earth, as presented in the Gospels and Codreanu's destiny as the leader of the legionary movement – the permanent going back and forth between them, the creation and recreation of blended spaces shared by biblical characters and by members of the inter-war Romanian society created a baffling and emotionally charged atmosphere. The Christ-like figure becomes "like Christ" for his followers and begins to receive the same kind of adoration. He has his own group of disciples, a John the Forerunner (A. C. Cuza, his university professor and godfather), a Mary Magdalene (Nicoleta Nicolescu, the leader of the legionary women's organisation), his persecution, martyrdom and, finally, "resurrection". Whenever political adversaries or other voices pointed out the discrepancies between the Christian doctrine and what the Legion was promoting – such as the use of violence – they would reply by saying that killing is allowed in wars and that the Church canons not only allow the use of weapons in such circumstances, but also bless them. Of course, there was no war going on in the Romanian society, not in the proper sense of the word. However, both the legionaries and their oponents (the government, the monarchy, other political parties) used inflammatory speech which was meant to create the impression that they were at war, which of course justified violence on both sides. In again the newly created blend, political conflicts became "wars", acts of injustice became "murders", political activist became "soldiers", killing became a necessity, and it is all the result of our natural ability for conceptual integration: political or social conflicts and war are conflated in the blended space and those involved started to adjust their behaviour accordingly, oblivious of the fact that this newly created "reality" is the feat of their imagination.

In their desire to assume the *Imitatio Christi* model, the legionaries went to great lengths. In *The Fascist Faith of the Legion Archangel Michael*, Iordachi argues that what the legionaries sought even through their violent actions against civilians (political adversaries, authorities) was not as much the elimination of their enemies, but the martyrdom it involved. After killing whoever they targeted, they followed a similar scenario: they would surrender to the authorities and accept the consequences (Iordachi 2023, 27). Again, through conceptual integration, through compression, they arrived at a new, creative understanding of martyrdom, in which there was no clear delineation between the killer and the one getting killed, the victim and the persecutor.

5. Theosis

While the idea that the ultimate goal of a totalitarian regime was to craft a new world and a new man could be found in all fascist regimes or movements in Europe, I argue that the legionary understanding of this process of transformation was presented more as an inner, spiritual renewal and less as (although not excluding) an outer, social change. The fact that the Legion refused to put forward a political program and thus came across more as an anarchist, anti-establishment movement can be explained at least in part by the fact that it was an organisation of mostly young people (the first “student movement in Europe” (Schmitt 2017), some would argue), but also by the influence of the Orthodox Church and, more specifically, by the influence of the monastic spirituality of Eastern Christianity. Central to this spirituality is the doctrine of *theosis* or deification, according to which the true purpose of human life is achieving likeness to and union with God, first through the purification of one’s heart and body and then through illumination⁵. In *On the Incarnation*, St. Athanasius the Great famously wrote: “God became man so that we might become God” (Athanasius, Discourse I, Paragraph 39). The idea that the Incarnation made the deification of human beings possible can be found at many other Church Fathers, who always make sure to explain that this elevation of creation through theosis is not the product of human nature, but the result of the union with God, which is done through Grace (through God’s uncreated energies).

In Christian terms, at the heart of most ideologies of modernity lays of course *the devil’s deceit* that the human beings can evolve and become perfect, can create a perfect society here on earth and they can do so by themselves, not

⁵ For the concept of *theosis* in relation to the life and mission of the Orthodox Church, see C. Sonea, “Theosis and Martyria—The Spiritual Process of Deification and Its Implication for the Mission of the Church” (2023).

through Grace, but through their own will and power. As far as the legionaries are concerned, it seems that they went back and forth between a traditional understanding of theosis and the modern apostasy. The traditional path to theosis involves specific practises such as renouncing the worldly things (by choosing monasticism, for example), praying, meditating, practising obedience to a spiritual father and, above all, humility. These, I believe, describe a very specific way of living and a specific attitude towards other human beings and reality in general. Those choosing this journey begin by renouncing the world, which means giving up their attachment to material things, but also giving up the idea that any kind of “perfection” is possible for the fallen world, at least while we still dwell in a historical time. This attitude is not necessarily one of passivism, but one which regards human beings and their limits with realism and humility. The legionaries picked certain elements from the traditional view of theosis: faith in God, prayer, meditation, not being attached to material things, ascetical practices such as fasting, vigil, hard physical labour, etc. These were the elements that their admirers and followers their admirers and followers found so compelling. The legionaries displayed a certain purity, austerity and moral rigorism which they opposed to the corrupt politicians of the day and that made people overlook their fanaticism (Schmitt 2017, 129). However, the element that makes its way into the blend from the mental space of the typical modern world view is the subtle displacement of God from the centre. Human beings take up His position, sometimes unconsciously. While the legionaries were practising Orthodox believers, they became tempted to “correct” and “complete” the Christian tradition, to introduce new goals and new practices that often went against a Christian world view, but which perfectly fit the modern world view. They did so largely unconsciously, but their sacralisation and exultation of secular things such as the nation, war heroes, national history, their own role as the creators of a new society led them to a place where, in their system of beliefs, God became a mere warrant for their purposes, a quiet protector, while the charismatic leader took His place at the centre of the universe. Those attending the meetings organised by the Legion could remark that they recited *Our Father* sitting down, but rose with reverence when the legionary martyrs or national heroes were mentioned. It is, I believe, a very telling scene for what went on in their minds, whether they were aware of it or not.

6. The Whole Adam

Finally, I believe that the doctrine of *the whole Adam*, synthetized by St. Sophrony Sakharov and by St. Silouan the Athonite in the second half of the 20th century, (although otherwise present in the Church tradition and

spirituality in various ways and under various names from the first centuries A.D.) is also central to understanding the legionary worldview. *The whole Adam* typically refers to all the people that live on the Earth at a given time, but also those who lived in the past and will live in the future, until the end of times. Praying for *the whole Adam* was a practice the Fathers of the Church talked about from the first Christian centuries, based on the conviction that we are all connected to each other in unseen ways, that through our sins or good deeds we influence the rest of humanity, whether we want it or not. Perhaps one of the earliest and deepest intuitions of the transcendental unity of humanity belongs to Gregory of Nyssa (Moş and Octavian 2020, 43-44) who writes: "I think that the entire plenitude of humanity was included by the God of all, by His power of foreknowledge, as it were in one body" (Gregory of Nyssa 2004, 406). And then he goes on: "the whole race was spoken of as one man, namely, that to God's power nothing is either past or future, but even that which we expect is comprehended, equally with what is at present existing, by the all-sustaining energy. Our whole nature, then, extending from the first to the last, is, so to say, one image of Him Who is" (639).

In the legionary world view, there are at least two elements that are rooted in this doctrine. The first was their conceiving of the nation, of the Romanian people, but also, at a smaller scale, of their organisation as one organic being. They talk about the nation having a "physical, biological patrimony - her flesh and blood" (Codreanu 2007, 217), but also about various illnesses, gangrenes, infections, cancers that needed to be addressed, needed to be cured (Codreanu 1999, 196). The fact that they regarded the nation as one biological body is significant in several ways, but I will mention here just one that could justify the use of violence when necessary. It is obvious when taking a closer look at their actions that they had the tendency "to punish" the external enemy (the Jewish minority), whom they described as *parasites*, "only" by beating them up, but instead showed no pity towards those they perceived as traitors – fellow legionaries or Romanian politicians. In Jesus's teachings, He commanded forgiveness for one's enemy: "You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also" (Matthew 5, 38-39). The legionaries did not "turn the other cheek" when it came to their Jewish "enemies", but they were merciless with the traitors. I would argue that this attitude is also "biblically inspired" and very much in line with the concept of *the whole Adam*. In Matthew 18, 8-9, Jesus says: "If your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than to have two hands and two feet and be thrown into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two

eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.” Since the legionaries saw the nation as one body, there was nothing wrong with cutting off one limb that “caused it to sin”. It hurt, but it needed to be done for the sake of the national redemption.

While the Church tradition presents us with this idea of seeing humanity as one body, the fact that the legionaries modified it so that it was now limited to one group or one nation is significant and is also the result of our ability to perform semantic leaps, to modify and compress relations between various items in our cognitive networks. The problem, I believe, was not metaphorically seeing a group of people as one being (a natural process in our conceptual system), but not applying this mental operation at the right level, which is the universal level. In a Christian world view, universal love is central and one is asked to move past any fragmentations and divisions and restore the state of communion that God meant for the human beings when He created them. Having enemies becomes impossible this way, since there is no us versus them. And when we are told to cut and throw away the hand or the foot that causes us to sin, one has to remember that, being created in the image of the Holy Trinity, human beings share one nature, but are also separate persons, and when it comes to *oneness*, we are expected to find guilt strictly within ourselves and when concentrating on *otherness*, we are expected to apply the laws of love and humility.

The same idea – that we see humanity, a nation, a political party or any other kind of (organised) groups as one person – has also been included by Lakoff and Johnson among their conceptual metaphors: “Nations are people” (Lakoff 1980, 260). In an article entitled “Metaphor and War: The Metaphor System Used to Justify War in the Gulf”, Lakoff talks about “the state as person system”: “A state is conceptualized as a person, engaging in social relations within a world community. Its landmass is its home. It lives in a neighbourhood, and has neighbours, friends and enemies. States are seen as having inherent dispositions: they can be peaceful or aggressive, responsible or irresponsible, industrious or lazy” (Lakoff 2009, 7). Although these are all valid observations, in the case of the legionaries, the metaphor went possibly further than we think. It did not only shape their worldview, influencing their actions, but it also received a deeply mystical dimension, it became their way of experiencing the sacred in the very midst of violent political conflicts.

7. Conclusions

Human beings routinely imagine new stories and scenarios that run counter to what they are actually experiencing at a given time. Also, they have the ability to connect sometimes conflicting mental spaces or to blend them in

order to create a new space, containing elements from the input spaces, as well as new emergent structure. Mark Turner notes that “running multiple mental spaces, or, more generally, multiple constellated networks of mental spaces, when we should be absorbed by only one, and blending them when they should be kept apart, is at the heart of what makes us human” and it is a process that “works almost entirely bellow the horizon of consciousness” (Turner 2007, 378). The analogies we draw on a daily basis or even the very basic mental operation of establishing identity are not as straight forward as we may think. Imagination plays a more important part than we are generally aware of. Imagination is in fact “the central engine of meaning behind the most ordinary mental events” (Fauconnier and Turner 2002, 15). Shedding some light on this invisible, but powerful operation was perhaps one of the main purposes of this article, as it is my belief that tragic events such as those surrounding the legionary movement in Romania can be avoided if we become even just a little more aware of how the mechanism works and of how easy it is to take an entire generation of students, professors, intellectuals, priests or peasants and place them in an imaginary world, populated by demons, knights, medieval kings, angels and ordinary people alike.

While it is indeed true that the past marks the present in decisive ways, it is also true that claiming that some medieval king who lived several centuries ago is now fighting along with us for a certain cause is simply the fruit of our imagination. What would be, might be or might have been is not the same as what actually is. A truism indeed, but one often overlooked. Also, we can of course summon the angels or other spiritual powers, but whether we receive their help and approval is also a matter of interpretation. The Church, as a matter of fact, has a well-established practise when it comes to limiting interpretation of our present (mystical) experiences: tradition. The decision making process in the Orthodox Church is famously slow and inefficient. It takes decades and sometimes centuries until they reach a conclusion. I would argue that as inefficient as it may seem, especially to our modern eyes, the process shows wisdom in many ways. By allowing enough time to pass, one can see the outcomes of an action more clearly, since the distance helps us detach from the emotionally charged exchanges we find ourselves in, from the powerful conceptual networks of an age. The analogies or connections that appear obvious at a given moment may not pass the test of time. That being said, I still believe it would be helpful if the Orthodox Church stated its position concerning the legionary movement in Romania and, more generally, if it developed a proper theology of history. As far as the former is concerned, perhaps the Church is like the man in the parable who sowed good seeds in his field and at night his enemy

came and sowed tares among wheat. He then instructed his servants to let that tares and the wheat grow together and only separate them at the harvest (Matthew 13, 24-30). As for a theology of history, it is high time the Church clarified its views on matters such as history, time, the role played by the historical time in the process of salvation, whether the struggle to reach perfection or deification is reserved for the kingdom to come or can also be “imperfectly” achieved in time (as well as the framework and specifics of a *theosis* that is possible in time), the tension between the inauguration of the Kingdom of God at the end of times, but also its unseen presence in time, and, finally on more mundane but otherwise urgent issues such as the role of nations in the history of salvation.

By examining the conceptual networks that form the world view of the legionary movement, we conclude that the architecture of their Weltanschauung presents the regular characteristics of a fascist movement (the centrality of the palingenetic myth, the typical fascist metaphors, the sacralisation of politics). However, there are also traits that make it stand out among other movements: a genuine religiosity and a mystical component under the influence of the spiritual and dogmatic tradition of the Orthodox Church (Sonea 2020, 346). I have only touched upon several doctrines that have been borrowed and reinterpreted by the legionaries: the *Imitatio Christi/Alter Christus* model, *theosis* and the concept of the *Whole Adam*. The vast corpus of articles, programmatic books and other types of documents easily accessible to the researcher should be explored more by linguists and specialists in discourse analysis and, of course, by theologians.

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THE LEGITIMIZING TOOLKIT OF THE ROMANIAN COMMUNIST ANTHEMS. IDEOLOGY AND LINGUISTIC IMAGINARY

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ABSTRACT. *The Legitimizing Toolkit of the Romanian Communist Anthems. Ideology and Linguistic Imaginary.* Anthems are associated with nationhood and are part of its legitimizing toolkit. Their complete interpretation usually goes through the analysis of the linguistic imaginary, namely of the *mythemes* of the age, of the unconscious representations of the community, identifiable in rhythmical patriotic verses. National myths, recycled in patriotic songs Romanians have created since the 19th century, have been coloured differently, according to the ideology of the era. However, during 1948-1989 a double orientation could be “read” in the three national anthems: the natural insinuation of the community’s unconscious projections on the one hand, and the evidence of ideological charge meant to change Romanians’ representations of national reality on the other. Thus, the anthems *Broken Shackles (Zdrobite cătuşe)*, *We Glorify Thee, Romania (Te slăvim, Românie)*, and *Three colours (Trei culori)* mark different stages in the communist discourse, even if they seemingly reuse the same motifs specific to the imaginary of the time: *the country, the flag, the proletariat, the victorious past, the bright future and the “crushed” enemies.*

Keywords: *national imaginary, identity legitimation, mythemes, anthems, homeland, ritual, communism, wooden language*

REZUMAT. *Instrumentarul legitimator al imnurilor comuniste româneşti. Ideologie şi imaginar lingvistic.* Imnurile se asociază cu naţiunea şi fac parte din instrumentarul ei legitimator. Interpretarea completă a acestor creaţii trece,

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de obicei, prin analiza imaginarului lingvistic, respectiv a *mitemelor* epocii, a reprezentărilor inconștiente ale comunității, identificabile în versurile patriotice ritmate. Miturile naționale, reciclate în cântecele patriotice pe care le-au creat românii începând cu secolul al XIX-lea, au fost colorate diferit, în funcție de ideologia epocii. În perioada 1948-1989, în cele trei imnuri naționale, poate fi „citită” însă o dublă orientare: insinuarea firească a proiecțiilor inconștiente ale comunității, pe de o parte, și evidența încărcăturii ideologice, menite să schimbe reprezentările românilor despre realitatea națională, pe de altă parte. Așadar, imnurile *Zdrobite cătușe*, *Te slăvim, Românie* și *Trei culori* marchează etape diferite ale discursului comunist, chiar dacă aparent reiau aceleași motive specifice imaginarului vremii: *patria*, *drapelul*, *proletariatul*, *trecutul victorios*, *viitorul luminos* și *dușmanii* „*zdrobiți*”. Explorarea imaginarului lingvistic pune în evidență modificările încărcăturii semantice și simbolice, de la un imn la altul.

Cuvinte-cheie: *imaginar național, legitimare identitară, miteme, imnuri, patrie, ritual, comunism, limbă de lemn*

1. Introduction

After more than six decades of constitutional monarchy, Romania enters, in 1947, a long communist period that would end with the 1989 Revolution. Together with the flag, the coat of arms and the updated history, the anthem becomes a strong legitimizing instrument for the new leadership and is changed three times under the totalitarian regime of the Romanian dictators Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej and Nicolae Ceaușescu. The first era promotes Russian internationalism, “unity” with the “liberating Soviet people” through the *Broken Shackles* and *We Glorify Thee, Romania* anthems, while the last one, *Three colours*, whose introduction is supervised by Ceaușescu himself, aims to be an aspirational symbol of “humane communism”.

Unlike the present anthem, the communist songs are only to a small extent an echo of the collective imaginary, establishing themselves more as forms of a controlled management of national symbols, a profitable endeavour for the socialist order. Although anthems have a dense mythological charge and they can become a socio-cultural key in deciphering the era they represent, they are under-theorised. Together with Kit Kelen, I assert that they deserve more attention from theoreticians, in order to explore the imaginary of national communities, even though, generally, they are aesthetically weak and put forward at best a mediocre literature, often compiled from many clichés and a clear kitsch (Kelen 2015, 39 and 123).

2. Methods

National anthems are not simply ideology put into verse and music, and they are not simply literature. They represent a complex reality – “anthem are a political/historical, sociological/linguistic, cultural/literary/musical phenomenon” (Kelen 2015, 11) – and deserve a multi-interpretational approach, from complementary angles. However, the present study does not have such exhaustive ambitions: it will insist only on the verses, understood as an identity mirror for Romanians, in a difficult historical stage.

In the analysis of identity images, I consider that the most profitable toolkit, from the point of view of inclusion, variety and dynamics, belongs to the analysis of the imaginary since it allows for the understanding of the mythological, cultural and semantic charge of anthem representations, in their temporal evolution, with occurrences used and received differently, according to the paradigm of the era. The method, as theorised by Gilbert Durand, focuses on identifying the archetypal collective subconscious, which emerges at the level of consciousness, in culturally conditioned expressions: “the primordial meta-language accommodates itself in the natural language of the social group” (my translation) (Durand 2004, 114)².

However, in understanding communist anthems, the imaginary is not sufficient to grasp the ideological dynamic and the mechanisms of mass manipulation. In accordance with Anderson’s *imagined communities*, I consider that on the one hand the imaginary dimension of the nation insinuates the communicated content, while on the other the manipulation of the images and symbols is just as evident (Anderson 1983, 4). The *cultural artefact* also obliges to the highlighting of the ideological charge, which is capable of perfidiously changing society’s representations of the national identity as a whole. Furthermore, the insistence on national identity makes the nationalism paradoxes theorised by the American professor to represent a useful and relevant grid in the reception of the mentioned communist anthems: “(1) The objective modernity of nations to the historians’ eyes vs. their subjective antiquity in the eyes of nationalists. (2) The formal universality of nationality as a socio-cultural concept [and] (3) the ‘political power of such nationalisms vs. their philosophical poverty and even incoherence.” (Anderson 1983, 5).

Last but not least, since the message is one that is created within the coherence of the communist regime, one cannot omit the understanding of the mechanisms of *newspeak*, as pointed out by Françoise Thom: a language that conceals reality, hides it in prefabricated formulae, changes the meaning of

² “metalimbajul primordial se acomodează în limba naturală a grupului social”

words, and creates “an automatic system of thinking, of words that hypnotise the spirit and paralyse reason” (my translation) (Thom 1987, 211)³. In the wake of the French author’s theories, Rodica Zafiu selects the avatars of *newspeak* in the Romanian space in her volume *Limba și politică (Language and politics – my translation)* and explains that, starting with the 50s, the communist discourse varies “from a more violent and Russian influenced language, in the stage of imposing the regime, to a conservative, ceremonious, euphoric one with mystical-nationalist accents, in the stage of stability” (my translation) (Zafiu 2007, 47)⁴.

Thus, the three mentioned anthems, each representing different stages of Romanian Communism, will be interpreted in what follows, through the grid of the imaginary, of the manipulating nationalism and of the ideologically charged language. Or, with a new summative concept, they will be explored with the instruments of the linguistic imaginary, “which could reveal, through linguistic data, something essential about human beings, about their thinking mechanisms, their way of representing the world and the manner in which these representations regulate their entire system of attitudes and behaviours” (my translation) (Platon 2020, 14)⁵.

3. Zdrobite cătușe – Broken Shackles (1948-1953)

After the end of World War II, the Red Army troops that had remained in Romania had a decisive role in changing the status of the country and of Romanian leadership. In 1945, the first step was the imposition of the puppet-government of Petru Groza, which was pro-soviet and dominated by communists. The next year, the general elections were falsified and the National Democratic Bloc, compiled of the Communist Party and its satellites, fraudulently won. In 1947, King Mihai I is forced to abdicate and Romania is proclaimed the People’s Republic. For 18 years, Gheorghe-Gheorghiu Dej is Romania’s communist leader, a leader without studies, known for his cruelty during the first years of the communist order: intellectual elites were incarcerated for the most part, land was taken away from peasants during the collectivization process, and the newly created manufacturing plants and factories determined the uprooting of many peasants, moved to the periphery of industrialized cities.

³ “système de pensée automatique, de parole machinale qui hypnotise l’esprit et paralyse la raison”.

⁴ “de la un limbaj mai violent și mai influențat de rusă, în faza de impunere a regimului, la unul conservator, ceremonios, euforic, cu accente mistic-naționaliste, în faza de stabilitate”.

⁵ “care poate releva, prin intermediul datelor lingvistice, ceva esențial despre ființa umană, despre mecanismele sale de gândire, despre felul în care își reprezintă lumea și despre modul în care aceste reprezentări îi reglează întreg sistemul de atitudini și de comportamente.”

Under the given conditions, national symbols receive a special importance, having to induce a feeling of solidarity in a society devastated by war and the violence of the institution of the new regime. The avant-garde playwright Aurel Baranga received the party task of creating the text for the new anthem. Then, musician Matei Socor composed the rhythmically-mobilizing line. Both creators were subsequently rewarded, for their political dedication, with important positions in the central communist structures.

<p>1. Zdrobite cătușe în urmă rămân În frunte-i mereu muncitorul, Prin lupte și jertfe o treaptă urcăm, Stăpân pe destin e poporul</p> <p>(<i>Refren</i>) Trăiască, trăiască Republica noastră, În marș de năvalnic șuvoi; Muncitori și țărani, cărturari și ostași Zidim România Republicii noi.</p> <p>2. În lături cu putredul vechi stăvilar E ceasul de sfântă'ncordare Unirea și pacea și munca-i stegar' Republicii noi populare.</p> <p>3. Spre țelul victoriei mari ne îndreptăm E ceas de izbânzi viitoare Credință în muncă și luptă jurăm Republicii noi populare.</p>	<p>1. Broken Shackles are left behind, The worker is always in front Through struggle and sacrifice a step we climb The people are masters of their destiny.</p> <p>(<i>Chorus</i>) Long live, long live our Republic! In a march of a tempestuous overflowed torrent We, workers and peasants, bookmen and soldiers, Are building the Romania of the new Republic.</p> <p>2. Eliminating the old putrid dam It is the hour of holy suspense Union and peace and work are carrying the flag Of the new People's Republic.</p> <p>3. By the great victory we are going, It is time for future triumphs. We swear that we will work closely and fight By the new Republic.⁶</p>
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The first Romanian communist anthem appears as an allegory of “the new world” and is built in a clear antithetic relation with the monarchy’s values, whose threat is still strongly felt. With a term used by Perreault *et alii* in classifying national anthems, the verses from *broken shackles* are addressed to the *endogroup*, meaning to the citizens of the country for which it is created, and not to the *exogroup*, namely other people, whether friend or foe (Perreault *et alii* 2018: 90). The inevitable antinomy from early proletcultist⁷ texts is between “us”, the people saved from the slavery of the former social organization, and the “others”, the defeated “exploiters” of the newly developed social classes, the

⁶ The non-literary English translation of the three communist Romanian anthems was taken from the website <https://lyricstranslate.com>.

⁷ The proletcultist texts represent a mirror of the proletcultism, a movement started in the U.S.S.R., in order to foster an art and a culture expressive of proletarian interests and activities.

workers and the peasantry. Here, the Manichaean totalitarian vision simplistically reduces the enemy to the metaphor “the old putrid dam”, in order to bring together the opposing political group disgracefully, already defeated. During the height of an internationalism imposed by Moscow, the fight is not with outside enemies, but with the competing elitist monarchic system by blaming it (Boia 1999, 47).

The leitmotif of the three quatrains and of the chorus is *the new people's republic*, with four in-text occurrences, with the purpose of inducing solidarity around the new socio-political construct, through the almost hypnotic repetition of the etiquette. Romania and Bulgaria are the only countries from the communist bloc, built at the end of World War II, which introduced an anthem after the soviet model, in profound agreement with the new ideology. The theme and motifs follow the same *mythemes*. The following verses, from the USSR anthem (1944-1991), practically represent the canvas for the first Romanian anthem: “We raised our Army in battles,/And swept the vile invaders from the path!/In battles, we determine the fate of generations...”⁸. The concrete violence of the gestures, the fight with the enemies, the metaphor of the upward path, the new order as destiny are all found in the Romanian anthem as well.

The imaginary of the violence opens the poem through the “broken shackles” and is strengthened throughout thanks to the use of some phrases from the *necessary aggression* category: “struggle and sacrifice” (“lupte și jertfe”), “tempestuous overflow torrent” (“năvalnic șuvoi”), “holy suspense” (“sfântăncordare”). Most of the official and proletcultist texts, from the beginning of the 1950s, overuse the violence lexis, especially at the level of active verbs: “it’s either about a hit per se – *to hit, to slam, to cleave, to smash, to sever, to slay, to bite, to rip* –, or about an auditory aggression – *to cuss, to scold, to bark, to shriek, to scream* etc.” (my translation) (Zafiu 2007, 71)⁹. Beyond the involuntary projection of the image of a ruling category that is impulsive and bellicose, the verses intend to create an impetuous identity portrait of Romanian, which is meant to oppose the representations of a passive, resigned individual, as it appeared in the inter-war interpretation of national myths (Mircea Vulcănescu, Constantin Rădulescu-Motru, Lucian Blaga etc.). It is about offering motivation and, thus, cohesion to a society that did not yet have common values and ideals around which it could unite. Therefore, any identifiable image, even one of an aggressive citizen, with an implacable will, serves to create an imagined community, as proposed by Anderson.

⁸ State Anthem of the Soviet Union - Wikipedia.

⁹ “e vorba fie de o lovire propriu-zisă – *a lovi, a izbi, a despica, a zdrobi, a reteza, a răpune, a mușca, a smulge* –, fie de o agresiune sonoră – *a sudui, a ocârî, a lătra, a chiu, a zbiera* etc.”.

The new citizens escape the symbolic shackles through a violent gesture; they are left behind, in the impetuous march towards victory. It is a good occasion to introduce the communists' favourite metaphor, that of the *path*, always associated with *advancement*, *progress* and *ascent*, with the latter being necessarily seen as a *step* or as *flight* (Zafiu 2007, 59). As a matter of fact, the next occurrence of the *path* in the text is the ladder itself ("a step we climb"). In the series of advancement, other images cumulatively appear, with a military connotation: "...in front" ("În frunte-i..."), "in march" ("în marș"), "are carrying the flag" ("-i stegar"), "we are going" ("ne îndreptăm"). This preference for military lexis is not in the least foreign to the totalitarian ideological discourse, whether it is from the left or the right.

The deictics from the text – almost exclusively implying the first person plural – subliminally build a plural of solidarity: "we climb" ("urcăm"), "our Republic" ("Republica noastră"), "we are building" ("zidim"), "we are going" ("ne îndreptăm"), "we swear" ("jurăm"). The unifying virtue of the new republic comes with both gained freedoms and the restrictions and conditionings of a precise order ("În frunte-i mereu muncitorul" – "The worker is always in front", "Credință în muncă și luptă jurăm" – "We swear that we will work closely and fight"). Slowly, freedom will be eclipsed by the authoritarianism of the new elite, as is involuntarily announced by the new communist anthem. The utopian solution of socialist equality and fraternity is undermined from the inside. The seemingly equalising listing from the verse "We, workers and peasants, bookmen and soldiers," ("Muncitori și țărani, cărturari și ostași") implies, however, a hierarchy, and order of the importance of the categories invoked. The worker opens the series of amalgamated professional groups and has a central role, anticipated by the second verse, where they are placed "always in the front" ("în frunte mereu"). Then comes the second class in importance, the peasantry, and only on the third position does the "bookman" appear, respectively the intellectual, thus confirming the widely spread joke from the communist period, "We work, we don't think" ("Noi muncim, nu gândim"). In fact, intellectual virtues are not promoted by any anthem in the world, emotional values prevail in most national anthems (Pavcović and Kelen 2016, 27). Returning to the first order role of the worker, it must be mentioned that its promotion is just an ideological trick of the elites of the sole party, improperly named of the workers under the leadership of Gheorghiu Dej:

"The elite were pulverised, its members perishing in prisons, resigning themselves in exile or ending by mingling and losing themselves in the new social mould. The collectivization dismembered the peasantry, considered until 1944 as the fundamental class of the Romanian society, the

keeper of the national spirit and traditions. The massive industrialisation filled the city space with an uprooted and easily manipulated mass. The centre moved from village to city, an actual move, but especially a symbolic one. The workers became the most representative class, the so-called “ruling” class, but in fact the ideological alibi of the party aristocracy.” (my translation) (Boia 1997, 65)¹⁰

Before seeing how these symbols and roles metamorphoses in the second communist Romanian anthem, the presence of some words with sacred connotation still needs to be explained, in one of the identity communist texts, built against any idea of the presence of the sacred in the world: “It is the hour of *holy* suspense” (“E ceasul de *sfântă* ncredare”) and “We swear that we will work closely and fight” (“*Credință* în muncă și luptă jurăm”) (my emphasis). Even understood as metaphoric images of the new order, Baranga’s option for words with such a high meaning charge, which are impossible to re-semanticize, is still surprising. Even more so since the previous Romanian anthem, dedicated to the king and valid for six decades, abounds in marks of the presence of the divinity, invoked as a protection shield for the monarchy. Most likely, in outlining the national self-image, such words have the purpose of legitimizing the transfer of the sacrum towards a new type of myth, the socialist nation, with its derivatives – the revolution and Communism. Likewise, in his anthology of communist poetry, Eugen Negrici makes an inventory of the socialist cults: the holy martyrs (the Soviet soldier, the civilizing hero, the communist sacrificed for the happiness of his countrymen), the protecting church (the party), the apostles of the faith (Lenin, Stalin, Gheorghiu-Dej), the heavenly kingdom (Soviet Union) and the New Man (Negrici 1995, 350). Thus, a new religion appears “according to which humanity is formed (through divine will or natural disposition) from national entities, history fulfilling itself in its universality, through each of its nations, and the individual in turn can redeem themselves only within their own nation, as an insignificant part of a collective destiny” (my translation) (Boia 1999, 11)¹¹. In the next two anthems, such an

¹⁰ “Elita a fost pulverizată, membrii ei pierind în închisori, resemnându-se la exil sau sfârșind prin a se amesteca și a se pierde în noul aluat social. Colectivizarea a dezmembrat țărâtimea, considerată până la 1944 drept clasa fundamentală a societății românești, depozitara spiritului și tradițiilor naționale. Industrializarea masivă a umplut spațiul citadin cu o masa dezrădăcinată și ușor manevrabilă. Centrul s-a deplasat dinspre sat spre oraș, deplasare efectivă, dar mai ales simbolică. Muncitorimea a devenit clasa cea mai reprezentativă, clasa zisă „conducătoare”, de fapt alibiul ideologic al aristocrației de partid”.

¹¹ “potrivit căreia umanitatea este alcătuită (prin voință divină sau dispunere naturală) din entități naționale, istoria are să se împlinească, în universalitatea ei, prin fiecare națiune în parte, iar individul, la rândul-i, nu se poate mântui decât în interiorul propriei națiuni, ca parte infimă a unui destin colectiv.”

explicit change in paradigm no longer appears, but it will be substituted by *mythemes* of new mysticism, dedicated to the supreme leader.

4. *Te slăvim, Românie – We glorify thee, Romania (1953-1977)*

Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej was a long-lasting and strong communist dictator since, for many years, he did not change at all the communist repression line imposed by Moscow. Even the prison system in which former Romanian elites found their punishment or end was copied after the Russian system, at Stalin's suggestion. The moment the soviet leader died, Gheorghiu-Dej did not hesitate to distance himself from his drastic reforms and to discreetly move closer to the West. He however remained a leader with an ambivalent attitude. Beyond the discreet questioning of the cultural influence from Moscow, the freeing of multiple political prisoners, he continued the process of social purging through the sombre institution of the Securitate and the action of massive industrialization. Until the Soviets retreated from Romania, in 1958, his de-Stalinization gestures were rather secret. This is why, the second communist anthem, imposed in the year of Stalin's death, still maintains the line of submission before the Russians, who were still perceived as ideological brothers.

We glorify thee, Romania has other elements common to the previous anthem as well: the music belongs to the same composer loyal to the communist cause, Matei Socor, with a similar rhythm, and the structure of the support-poem is identical: three quatrains (albeit five verses each) and with a chorus inserted between them. This time, the authors of the verses are two, Eugen Frunză and Dan Deşliu, who, together with Mihai Beniuc, made up the triad of court poets of the Romanian Workers' Party, responsible for a consistent part of the Romanian proletcultist poetry. Since there are so many connections, why was it necessary to reinvent the national anthem after only five years? Pavcovic and Kelen explain, in their book about anthems and the creation of nations, that when the change of such a consistent national symbol takes place, there was either a historical trauma or the nation felt the need to change the identity image in the eyes of their own citizens or of other people, as it was the case of Romania in 1953: "sometimes the change is not a result of any trauma but instead it comes from a desire to change the image that the nation projects to itself and to outsiders" (Pavcović & Kelen 2016, 18).

1. Te slăvim, Românie, pământ părintesc Mândre plaiuri sub cerul tău paşnic rodesc E zdrobit al trecutului jug blestemat Nu zadarnic, străbunii eroi au luptat Astăzi noi împlinim visul lor minunat.	1. We glorify you, Romania, our Motherland Proud lands under your peaceful sky are yielding The cursed yoke of the past is smashed It was not in vain that our heroic ancestors fought; Today we're fulfilling their wonderful dream
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<p>(<i>Refren</i>) Puternică, liberă, Pe soartă stăpână Trăiască Republica Populară Română</p> <p>2. Înfrățiți fi-va veșnic al nostru popor Cu poporul sovietic eliberator. Leninismul ni-e far și tărie și avânt Noi urmăm cu credință Partidul ne-nfrânt, Făurim socialismul pe-al țării pământ.</p> <p>3. Noi uzine clădim, rodul holdei sporim Vrem în pace cu orice popor să trăim Dar dușmanii de-ar fi să ne calce în prag Îi vom frânge în numele a tot ce ni-e drag Înălța-vom spre glorie al patriei steag</p>	<p>(<i>Chorus</i>) Powerful, free, Master of your fate Long live the Romanian People's Republic!</p> <p>2. May our people be forever brothers With the liberator Soviet people Leninism is our lighthouse and force and momentum We're following with faith our invincible Party We're creating socialism on our country's land.</p> <p>3. We're building new factories, we're increasing the yield of the land We want to live in peace with all peoples But if our enemies come to trample us We will defeat them in the name of everything we love And we will rise to glorify our Motherland's flag.</p>
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As it can be noticed, part of the communist toolkit of the previous anthem is assumed here. The violence imaginary, legitimised by Lenin in his theses as a useful factor in class struggles, is not yet exiled from the official discourse, whether political or literary: “the old putrid dam” (“putredul vechi stăvilar”) becomes “the cursed yoke of the past is smashed” (“e zdrobit al trecutului jug blestemat”) in the new anthem. Moreover, the new expression is preceded by the lexeme that aggressively opens the first poem, which it is not used with an adorning meaning, but as a passive verb and, thus, as an already completed action. As a result, the third verse already closes the recent past, of the confrontation of the previous order. At the same time, it will open another gate towards revolutive eras that I will return to later. Still from the register of violence, the *defeat* of the enemies is recycled in the last quatrain. The following overlapping advances the idea of a controlled destiny: “the people are masters of their destiny” (“stăpân pe destin e poporul”) vs “master of your fate” (“pe soartă stăpână”), a symbol of the unrestrainable power of the reinvented nation. Last but not least, the metamorphosis of the building metaphor (“are building the Romania of the new Republic” – “zidim România Republicii noi”) is synonymously reinvented, through an action of construction: “we’re building new factories” (“noi uzine clădim”), in the attempt of emphasising the concrete, visible, and measurable progress of some aspirational abstractions. In fact, *construction* is one of the four metaphors venerated by the communists, together with *path*, *watering* and *blooming* (Zafiu 2007, 59-60).

However, there are also some clear differences between the collection of *mythemes* of the two anthems, and the meaning of the discrepancies

discreetly underline the change of the identity self-portrait: the direct address from the first verse (and, implicitly, from the title), the substitution of non-relational social categories with the family metaphor, the introduction of the spatial-temporal dimension and the removal of the class struggles from the equation, in order to build the *good-bad* polarization at the *exogroup* level, between Romanians and another potentially aggressive people.

The introduction of the second person, right from the title, changes the rhetoric of the discourse: the first person plural, of the need for social cohesion, no longer exclusively appears, but rather there is an initiation of a dialogue with three abstract, but contextually anthropomorphised, instances: *country*, *people* and *sole party*. In such a context, more useful than the andersonian analysis of imagined communities could be a gender exploration, as proposed by Lauenstein *et alii* in the study about family representations in national anthems. The constitutive categories of the nation are no longer simply joined together, as in *Broken shackles*, but relationally perceived in a family allegory: the forefathers fought, Romania is the mother who keeps watch (“our Motherland” – “pământ părintesc”) over her sons and is protected in turn, and the Romanian people fraternises with the Russian one, for freedom. The allegoric artifice will be felt as a useful instrument in inducing social coherence and will be taken up again in the third communist anthem, because it is richer in the organizing and manipulating factors of an awaited social order. This symbolic family brings major social benefits and serves the need for control of the communist elite “(1) providing a clear, hierarchical *structure*; (2) prescribing *social roles and responsibilities*; (3) being linked to *positive affective connotations*; and (4) *reifying social phenomena* as biologically determined.” (Lauenstein *et alii* 2015, 309).

As stated before, the second communist anthem introduces time and space in the identity discourse, as defining national dimensions. The world outlined in the other anthem seemed stuck in a present of action, a world invented out of nothingness and without a perspective on the future, preoccupied to change the present that is still troubled. However, *We glorify thee, Romania* institutes the idea of descending from heroic forefathers (how else could the forefathers of a special people be?) and prepares the perspective of a bright, eternal future of fraternising with the “liberating soviet people” (“poporul sovietic eliberator”). Neither the past nor the future is invoked through precise events or ideals. However, they are not necessary since reality is not the one pursued, but the feeling of belonging to a group, to common emotions, easy to guide towards the party’s interest: “Motivating citizens to pride in the arbitrary (right or wrong) facts of their collective situation is a trick of the ideological kind.” (Kelen 2015, 122). The space appears in the first and second quatrains, with a similar role:

“Proud lands under your peaceful sky are yielding” (“Mândre plaiuri sub cerul tău pașnic rodesc”) and “We’re building new factories, we’re increasing the yield of the land” (“Noi uzine clădim, rolul holdei sporim”). The epithet “peaceful” (“pașnic”) does not necessarily bring a spatial clue in the first quatrain, but rather a temporal one, the good news that the country has entered a period of balance, after the previous years, of fights and chaos, inevitable in the creation of a new world. The other spatial elements – *lands (plaiuri)*, *factories (uzine)*, *fields (holde)* – are a strengthening of the symbolic national representation for the proletariat, freshly updated through another national symbol, the coat of arms changed only a year prior (Fig 1.). Just like the graphic symbol, the natural spaces associated with the workers and the peasants have to be included in the communist imaginary.



Figure 1¹²

The last image updated in the anthem is that of the conflict with enemies, an image that any totalitarian regime needs in order to justify their rigidity and appeal to force. This time, they appeal to the *exogroup* since, in the newly created society, there can no longer be internal conflict once it has become “peaceful” and it wants to live “in peace”. As a result, tension is created from the encounter with the outside aggressor: “But if our enemies come to trample us/We will defeat them in the name of everything we love” (“Dar dușmanii de-ar fi să ne calce în prag/Îi vom frânge în numele a tot ce ni-e drag”). Despite the Leninism previously invoked, one can sense in the cited verses Romania’s evolution towards a distinct nationalism and the detachment from model of soviet internationalism, which envisioned imposing its political, social, and cultural model onto the entire Eastern-European bloc.

¹² Source for the image: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coat_of_arms_of_Romania.

Right in the middle of the anthem a verse appears that seems to not be connected to the familial model previously outlined or with the fight for the emancipation from the Russian model: “We’re following with faith our invincible Party” (“Noi urmăm cu credință Partidul ne-nfrânt”). However, it represents the central point: all the toolkit unfolded before and after has the role of supporting the coagulation of Romanian society around the sole party, of inducing the saviour and guiding roles of the invoked political institution. Beyond the awkwardness of the introduction of the subject pronoun “we” (“noi”), unused in Romanian next to the conjugated verb, one can sense the manipulating image of Romanians’ destiny as a group, which can be fulfilled only through the subordinating relation towards the invoked “political lighthouse” (“farul politic”).

Before moving to the understanding of the last socialist anthem, it is worth underlining some dissonances of the communist newspeak, which give birth to images that are of a delicious involuntary comedy. An example is the image of the *land* yielding. The term land is part of the national mythology, first through the presence in the beginning of the most well-known Romanian ballad, *Miorița* (*The little ewe* – my translation) (“On a foothill...” (my translation) – “Pe-un picior de plai...”), and then through the dedicated philosophical exegeses. The communist poets take it on without discernment and associate it with the fruitful lands from their agricultural imaginary, without realising that it is a hill or mountain land, with meadows that are not in the least adapted to the dreamt fruitful fields. Another senseless verse is “Leninism is our lighthouse and force and momentum” (“Leninismul ni-e far și tărie și avânt”). If we transpose this abstraction in this concrete image, we can hardly imagine a concept that would offer, at the same time, guiding to those lost, energy and enthusiasm since there are states and emotions from different registers. However, the propensity of the communist discourse towards appeasing contraries was sufficient to generate and validate such senseless phrases.

5. *Trei culori* – Three colours (1977-1989)

In 1965, Gheorghiu-Dej dies and it is speculated that he was irradiated by the soviets after he tried to repair Romania’s relations with the United States. The same year, Nicolae Ceaușescu is elected secretary general of the Romanian (Workers’) Communist Party, and in 1974 he becomes the president of the Socialist Republic of Romania. Just like his predecessor, he was a leader with no formal education, a shoemakers’ apprentice, but with a rich activity within the communist party, from the time when it was still illegal. At the beginning, Ceaușescu’s distancing from Moscow created high hopes in a Romania that was already exhausted by Dej’s communist regime. The new leader’s popularity

increased greatly, both nationally and in the West, when, in 1968, he refused to participate in the invasion of Czechoslovakia together with the troops of the Warsaw Pact. However, in 1971, the Romanian leader makes a visit to North Korea and China, becoming fascinated by the national transformation and cultural revolution implemented there. As a result, in the next two decades, he moves away from Dej's model, he contests the communism of the "obsessive decade", and creates for himself a pathological cult of personality, while the life of Romanians was becoming increasingly hard, having to deal with the lack of electricity, heat, and food.

As early as 1975, Ceaușescu sees the national anthem as dated, no longer representing the image of his Romania. He intends to introduce a 19th-century anthem, composed by Ciprian Porumbescu, but discovers in time that it had become the national anthem of Albania at the beginning of the century. The same forty-eight¹³ Romanian composer is the author of the music and verses of the *Tricolour* (my translation) (*Tricolorul*), inspired by the Revolution of 1848, and the Romanian dictator personally decides to adopt it as an anthem, with the condition that he supervised the change of the verses or even personally make changes (Vasile 2016, 58). Only the first verse was kept form the original, with all the others becoming carriers of Ceaușescu's ideology.

1. Trei culori cunosc pe lume, Amintind de-un brav popor, Ce-i viteaz, cu vechi renume, În luptă triumfător.	1. Three colours I know in this world, Reminding me of a brave people, Which is brave, with an old reputation, Triumphant in battle.
2. Multe secole luptară Străbunii noștri eroi, Să trăim stăpâni în țară, Ziditori ai lumii noi.	2. Many centuries have they fought Our heroic forefathers, For us to live as leaders on this land, Layers of the new world.
3. Roșu, galben și albastru Este-al nostru tricolor. Se înalță ca un astru Gloriosul meu popor.	3. Red, yellow and blue Is our tricoloured flag. Rising up as if a star My glorious people.
4. Suntem un popor în lume Strâns unit și muncitor, Liber, cu un nou renume Și un țel cutezător.	4. We are a people in the world Tied in unity and toil, Free, bearing a new rename And a stout goal.
5. Azi partidul ne unește Și pe plaiul românesc	5. Today the party unifies us And on the Romanian realm

¹³ Representative of the Wallachian Revolution of 1848.

THE LEGITIMIZING TOOLKIT OF THE ROMANIAN COMMUNIST ANTHEMS.
 IDEOLOGY AND LINGUISTIC IMAGINARY

Socialismul se clădește, Prin elan muncitoresc.	Socialism is being installed, Through working spirit.
6. Pentru-a patriei onoare, Vrăjmașii-n luptă-i zdrobim. Cu alte neamuri sub soare, Demn, în pace, să trăim.	6. For the country's honour, The rivals we crush in clash. Among other states under the sun, Rightfully, in peace, let us live.
7. Iar tu, Românie mândră, Tot mereu să dăinuiești Și în comunista eră Ca o stea să strălucești.	7. And you, proud Romania, For ever last And in the communist eon Such as a star blare.

With *Three colours*, the communist discourse fundamentally distances itself from the rough register of the first years, renouncing the strongly polarised metaphors and offers a ceremonious tone, almost neutral from an emotional point of view. However, this does not mean that the socio-political repression softened, rather that the state force took over the reins of power (Zafiu 2007:47), in place of the manifest anger of early communism. The official language became ceremonious, exhilarating at times, in presenting an identity that was more nationalist than national, but vague and modest in content, focusing on expressing some abstract concepts. In the terms of Françoise Thom, such a manifestation touches the perfect form of newspeak, a new type of communication without an explicit message.

The seven quatrains have an almost narrative evolution. More than the first communist anthems, *Three colours* insists on a reinvented glorious past: Romanians are “a brave people” (“un popor brav”), “triumphant in battles” (“triumfător în lupte”), with “Heroic forefathers” (“străbuni eroi”), who have fought over “many centuries” (“multe secole”). Since it had failed economically, and especially “in terms of materialising the illusions that were so seductively portrayed theoretically”¹⁴, communism had to stake on something else to justify itself, “in order to keep people tightly united around a project”¹⁵ (my translation) (Boia 199, 105-106). This project will prove to be the glorious past, which justifies the contemporary isolationism, the contesting of the pro-soviet attitude and the fuelling of a hard to match nationalism. In fact, this change in attitude will be made in the name of a better, “humane” communism, a phrase inspired by the human faced socialism promoted by the *Prague Spring*. Completed around

¹⁴ “în planul materializării iluziilor atât de seducător înfățișate teoretic”

¹⁵ “pentru a-i ține pe oameni strâns uniți în jurul unui proiect”

the protochronism¹⁶ of the 70s, the plan of rewriting Romanian history reaches alarming heights when, in 1980, a grandiose celebration of 2050 years from the founding of the Burebista's unitary and centralised Dacian state bizarrely took place (Boia 1997, 76). The project had the role to justify and legitimise the unity of Romanians around their supreme leader. Anderson's first paradox underlines this incongruence between the nation's objective modernity and the subjectivity of the ancient perception of one's own nation. Ceaușescu takes the recovery of the heroic to the extreme and often places himself, in the proletcultist art forms, in the centre of some series of historic personalities, whether they are graphic or literary representations.

The third, fourth, and fifth quatrains are dedicated to the present, but it is almost impossible to extract a coherent idea about the traits or values of the group that is being described, in the good tradition of *newspeak*, with its lack of content: a glorious people that "rising like a star" ("se înalță ca un astru"), is bound "in unity and toil" ("unit și muncitor"), and has "a stout goal" ("un țel cutezător") (which is never revealed). The outlined ordinary traits could fit just as well in any anthem, about any other people in the world. The reclaiming of the old and new reputation in the first and forth quatrains are only justifiable through vague clichés related to bravery and exceptionality, meaning values through which each European people proclaims its "uniqueness", as stated by Muñoz-Galiano *et alii*, after cataloguing all the anthems from the old continent (Muñoz-Galiano *et alii* 2022, 183). The only gesture that is more distinctly defined is the reaction from the old metaphor of smashing the enemies, which itself is undermined as well by the justification through a confused ideal, "for the country's honour" ("pentru-a patriei onoare").

The last quatrain is dedicated to the future, in the quasi-narrative order of the verses' evolution. The rhetoric of directly addressing hails to an anthropomorphised country is reiterated. Thus, it seems that it has not consumed all of its rhetorical valences in the previous anthem: "And you, proud Romania,/Forever last" ("Iar tu, Românie mândră,/Tot mereu să dăinuiești"). The association of the country with eternity subliminally builds a substitute for redemption, borrowed from the religious imaginary "because eternity is in remarkable contrast with the common experience of mortality of individual human beings it creates favourable conditions for identification with the acceptance of a promise for a kind of immortality, which earlier was provided solely by religion." (Csepeli and Örkeny 1998, 40). Thus, the individual is left only to suppress their personal impulses and to accept the supra-individual

¹⁶ A pejorative term describing the tendency to ascribe, largely relying on questionable data and subjective interpretation, an idealized past to the country as a whole.

destiny of building socialism, under the guidance of the party that, in turn, appears as an instrument of a salutary national(ist) force.

6. Conclusions

The three Romanian anthems, from the communist period, mark the three stages of totalitarian discourse. On the one hand, the support-poems reproduce the myths and recover the symbols from the era's imaginary, and are intentionally ideologically charged with sets of clichés that keep up with the authorities' carefully controlled transformation of the identity image of Romanians. From the violent register of the 48s-50s, reflected through simplistically polarized metaphors in *Broken shackles*, it goes on to the familial organization of the nation in *We glorify thee, Romania*, so as to communicate a quasi-abstract identity portrait, through the conservative tone of the Ceaușescu newspeak, almost without meaning in the third anthem. The control toolkit and the ideological manipulation are just as present in the interrogated anthems as the sets of identity images of the national unity around the values promoted by communist authorities.

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ON “THE FABRICK OF THE TONGUE”. LANGUAGE METAPHORS USED TO ADVOCATE DESCRIPTIVISM/PRESRIPTIVISM IN ENGLISH AND ROMANIAN DICTIONARIES

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ABSTRACT. *On “The Fabrick of the Tongue”. Language Metaphors Used to Advocate Descriptivism/Prescriptivism in English and Romanian Dictionaries.*

There has been considerable scholarly interest in the relationship between language and national identity. The topic is vast and multi-faceted, but in this paper we are especially interested in the manner in which the perceived interdependence between ‘mother tongue’ and ‘fatherland’ has often prompted policies intended to protect the former, and therefore the latter, of whatever was regarded as harmful influence. In particular, we intend to survey some lexicographical work undertaken in Great Britain and (what is now) Romania between the middle of the 18th century and the beginning of the 20th century in order to compare decisions on prescriptivism or descriptivism in dictionaries, and the reasons behind them. While some background information will be necessary, our main focus will be the language metaphors which lexicographers and other people who brought a contribution to dictionary making resorted to in order to support their arguments in favour of or against prescriptivism/descriptivism.

Keywords: *language metaphor, lexicography, dictionary, descriptivism, prescriptivism, purism*

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REZUMAT. Despre „țesătura limbii”. Metafore prin care se promovează descriptivismul/prescriptivismul în câteva dicționare englezești și românești.

Relația dintre limbă și identitatea națională a făcut obiectul a numeroase cercetări. Subiectul este unul vast și complex, însă în contribuția de față ne propunem să acordăm atenție în special modului în care legătura care a fost stabilită între „limba maternă” și „pământul strămoșesc” a avut drept consecință (și) instituirea unor politici lingvistice menite să o protejeze pe prima (și, prin implicație, pe cel de al doilea) de orice influență considerată dăunătoare. Mai precis, ne propunem să trecem în revistă câteva dicționare elaborate în Marea Britanie și în România între mijlocul secolului al XVIII-lea și începutul secolului al XX-lea pentru a compara maniera în care lucrările respective se poziționează în chestiunea descriptivismului /prescriptivismului în lexicografie. Câteva date privind contextul istoric și cultural vor fi necesare, însă cea mai mare parte a articolului de față va fi dedicată inventarierii și analizei metaforelor de care s-au servit lexicografii, dar și alți specialiști care au avut un cuvânt important de spus în alcătuirea lexicoanelor, pentru a-și susține argumentele în favoarea sau împotriva descriptivismului /prescriptivismului.

Cuvinte-cheie: metaforă despre limbă, lexicografie, dicționar, descriptivism, prescriptivism, purism

There has been considerable recent scholarly interest in the relationship between language and national identity. Substantial research has been done on the manner in which, especially after the emergence of modern nationalism in many parts of Europe, language increasingly came to be perceived as a key marker of group (ethnic/national) identity, prodigious efforts being therefore put into promoting and ‘perfecting’ it. The topic is vast and multi-faceted, but in this paper we are especially interested in the manner in which the perceived interdependence between ‘mother tongue’ and ‘fatherland’ has often prompted policies intended to protect the former, and therefore the latter, of whatever was regarded as harmful influence. In particular, we intend to survey some lexicographical work undertaken in Great Britain and (what is now) Romania between the middle of the 18th century and the beginning of the 20th century in order to compare decisions on prescriptivism or descriptivism in dictionaries, and the reasons behind them. While some background information will be necessary, our main focus will be the language metaphors which lexicographers and other people involved in dictionary making resorted to in order to support their arguments in favour of or against prescriptivism /descriptivism. Without going so far as to claim that “all of our concepts of language are in fact metaphorically constructed”, we do believe – and hope to be able to indicate by some examples – that “just as we can search for metaphors ‘in’ language, if we

wish to pin down what we mean by language we must search for it 'in' metaphors" (Underhill 2011, 15).

When Samuel Johnson started work on his *Dictionary of the English Language* (first published in 1755), he and his contemporaries were vividly aware that other continental nations had established academies (Accademia della Crusca, l'Académie française) with the specific purpose of regulating their respective languages by the help of authoritative and prescriptive dictionaries (Hitchings 2005). British feeling on the matter was divided. While some (Daniel Defoe, Joseph Addison, Jonathan Swift and Alexander Pope, for example) thought that setting up an English Academy would be highly desirable and beneficial, others, among whom Johnson himself, felt that British love of freedom, which could "never wish to see dependance multiplied" (Johnson 1755, n.p.), was incompatible with any regulating body in matters of language (Hitchings 2005, Reddick 2009). Under the circumstances, Johnson's *Dictionary* – an individual endeavour of considerable magnitude and, as it turned out, prestige – came rather conveniently to fill in a philological as well as a patriotic gap (DeMaria 1986, Hitchings 2005).

It has been argued that there is a marked difference between the *The Plan of a Dictionary of the English Language* which Johnson wrote in 1747, before the inception of the dictionary, and the *Preface* which, eight years later, was to introduce the finished work. In the latter, it is claimed, the author "has renounced his more narrowly prescriptive notions", having understood "the importance of descriptive lexicography" (Hitchings 2005, 204). While this is in some sense true, the difference may be one of degree rather than principle. In the *Plan*, as well as the *Preface*, Johnson's "chief intent [...] is to preserve the purity and ascertain the meaning of the English idiom" (Johnson 1747, n.p.); in the former, as in the latter, this endeavour (and more prominently its regulative end) is, on the other hand, regarded as daunting and perhaps doomed to remain wishful thinking: "to correct the language of nations by books of grammar, and amend their manners by discourses of morality, may be tasks equally difficult; yet as it is unavoidable to wish, it is natural likewise to hope" (Johnson 1747, n.p.). That being said, Johnson's optimism that the "mutability" of the English language could successfully be slowed down is perhaps stronger in the *Plan* than in the *Preface*. The language metaphors that he deploys seem to testify to this.

The dominant metaphor in the *Plan* equates words with human beings. Some "are naturalized [...] others still continue aliens, and are rather auxiliaries than subjects"; some live close to home, but one "may wander from the tropic to the frozen zone" in search of other "progenitors of our speech" (Johnson 1747, n.p.). Overall, a language is like a people whom the lexicographer, a valiant conqueror (though plagued by a sense of hubris), sets out to (begin to) subdue:

When I survey the Plan which I have laid before you, I cannot [...] but confess, that I am frightened at its extent, and, like the soldiers of Cæsar, look on Britain as a new world, which it is almost madness to invade. But

I hope, that though I should not complete the conquest, I shall at least discover the coast, civilize part of the inhabitants, and make it easy for some other adventurer to proceed farther, to reduce them wholly to subjection, and settle them under laws (Johnson 1747, n.p.).

The one mineral metaphor in the *Plan* is most telling for Johnson's ideal project: rather than the words of the language being obedient subjects to be settled under laws, it would be better still if they were atoms, so that they "might obtain the firmness and immutability of the primogenial and constituent particles of matter" (Johnson 1747, n.p.). Who, Johnson exclaims, "can forbear to wish" this? However, languages have but the destiny of people: over time, we are told, they become enfeebled and decay; therefore immutability "is a privilege which words are scarcely to expect; for, like their author, when they are not gaining strength, they are generally losing it" (Johnson 1747, n.p.).

Johnson is not the only one to believe that language change means language degradation. This view is frequently expressed by his contemporaries (DeMaria 1986, 168-169), the widespread perception being that "linguistic change is inevitable and inevitably bad" (DeMaria 1986, 168). Therefore, in the *Preface* to his *Dictionary* Johnson acknowledges the right of his readers to expect of his work "that it should fix our language, and put a stop to those alterations which time and chance have hitherto been suffered to make in it without opposition" (Johnson 1755, n.p.). However, he defends himself against charges of having failed to meet this goal by resorting once again to the metaphor *words are people*. Just as "men grow old and die at a certain time one after another", so too words, which are but "the daughters of earth", cannot be "secure[d] [...] from corruption and decay" (Johnson 1755, n.p.). This elegiac note is struck time and again in the *Preface*. It is yet appropriate that, just as measures are taken to protect and prolong human life, efforts should be put into ensuring language a long and dignified life: "If the changes that we fear be thus irresistible [...] It remains that we retard what we cannot repel, that we palliate what we cannot cure. Life may be lengthened by care, though death cannot be ultimately defeated" (Johnson 1755, n.p.). In the case of English, one particularly effective intervention is the return to the masters of style – for Johnson, in principle, from Philip Sidney to Restoration authors although, in fact, he does cite occasionally earlier or later sources (Hitchings 2005, Reddick 2009) – from whose writings spring "the wells of English undefiled". Undefiled, in particular, by an unwelcome "Gallick" influence as a consequence of which English departed "from its original Teutonick character"; its purity, therefore, needs to be restored by emulation of earlier writings and speech, as well as a careful selection of acceptable borrowings, "only such as may supply real deficiencies, such as are readily adopted by the genius of our tongue, and incorporate easily with our native idioms" (Johnson 1755, n.p.).

In the concluding section of his *Preface*, Johnson makes it clear that his endeavour was essentially one meant to enhance the glory of Britain: "In hope of giving longevity to that which its own nature forbids to be immortal, I have devoted this book, the labour of years, to the honour of my country, that we may no longer yield the palm of philology, without a contest, to the nations of the continent" (Johnson 1755, n.p.). About a hundred years later, in the wake of the emergence of "Romantic linguistic nationalism" (Turner 2014, 128) as well as of some new high profile continental dictionaries, "the honour of the country" seems once more to be at stake. There is talk of compiling a new lexicon, based on historical principles and more comprehensive than all previous ones, in the undertaking of which "one might almost say the national honour of England is engaged" – therefore, philologist F. Max Müller continues, "no effort should be spared to make the work as perfect as possible, and at all events no unworthy rival of the French Dictionary recently published by Littré, or the German Dictionary undertaken by the Brothers Grimm" (quoted in Mugglestone 2000a, 5).

Very much in the air is J. G. Herder's pronouncement "that the language of each people – or race, or nation: terms still interchangeable – expressed in its vocabulary and structure that nation's distinctive sensibilities and ways of thinking. Language, that is, articulated a people's unique identity – or [...] its spiritual essence" (Turner 2014, 127). More specifically, claims Richard C. Trench (archbishop and philologist whose contribution to the beginnings of *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, later known as the OED, was consequential as well as multi-faceted), "a clear, a strong, an harmonious, a noble language [...] bears witness to corresponding merits in those that speak it, to clearness of mental vision, to strength, to harmony, to nobleness in them that have gradually formed and shaped it to be the utterance of their inmost life and being" (Trench 1859, n.p.). The care of the national language thus becomes of paramount importance for the very survival and prosperity of the nation: "may we hope to be", Trench exhorts in the same work, "guardians of its purity, and not corrupters of it". One would expect that preserving the purity of English would involve somehow leaving out whatever was felt to be "impure". The decision on this point, however, did not prove easy. In the preparatory stages of the OED opinions were repeatedly heard both in favour of and against prescriptivism, often in connection with one's preferred metaphorical understanding of language.

With respect to this last aspect, a marked partiality of Victorian writers for organic metaphors has already been noticed (Weaver 2015). Indeed, the language is often seen as a living organism: it grows, it develops, it is, as once again R. Trench puts it, "a tree in which the vital sap is circulating yet, ascending from the roots into the branches; and as this works, new leaves are continually being put forth by it, old are dying and dropping away" (Trench 1859, n.p.). Geological metaphors – equally frequent and reflecting the latest developments in the natural sciences (Brewer 2007, Weaver 2015) – also testify to growth,

although past growth, now recorded in the “strata” of the language. Recalling Emerson’s claim that language is “fossil poetry”, Trench elaborates:

[...] he evidently means that just as in some fossil, curious and beautiful shapes of vegetable or animal life, the graceful fern or the finely vertebrated lizard, such as now, it may be, have been extinct for thousands of years, are permanently bound up with the stone, and rescued from that perishing which would else have been their portion, – so in words are beautiful thoughts and images, the imagination and the feeling of past ages, [...] there are these, which might so easily have perished too, preserved and made safe for ever (Trench 1858, n.p.).

If for Johnson any language has “a natural tendency to degeneration” (Johnson 1755, n.p.) from a former state of excellence and each lexicographer’s duty is to attempt to slow down the process, Victorian philologists schooled in Romantic thought often celebrate organic growth (and its past record); one’s duty, therefore, is to tend to the healthy growth of one’s language.

An important condition for healthy development is, of course, the presence of healthy roots. As Weaver argues, “the metaphor of roots was especially powerful as a bulwark against a number of anxieties” (Weaver 2015, 338) since it promised firmness and stability in an increasingly changing world. Max Müller gives voice to an opinion that was not singular: “All words [...] whether in English or in Sanskrit [...] must in the last instance be traced back, by means of definite phonetic laws, to [...] roots. These roots stand like barriers between the chaos and the cosmos of human speech” (quoted in Weaver 2015, 339). In terms of their symbolic value, however, not all roots are equal. In the case of English, favoured by far are the Anglo-Saxon. While concerns were voiced before about the danger which loanwords from French, Latin or Greek might pose to “Teutonic” English, it was in the middle of the 19th century that “interest in both Anglo-Saxon history and language expanded greatly [...] as they came to be seen as vital to English national identity” (Weaver 2015, 336). It is now felt that the Anglo-Saxon is the “essentially national element in the language” (Trench, 1859, n.p.). If English is likened to a body, “all its joints, its whole articulation, its sinews and its ligaments [...] are exclusively Saxon” (Trench, 1859, n.p.); if to a building, “the Latin may contribute its tale of bricks, yea, of goodly and polished hewn stones, [...]; but the mortar, with all that holds and binds the different parts of it together, and constitutes them into a house, is Saxon throughout” (Trench, 1859, n.p.). The Latin segment of the vocabulary is not, however, to be dismissed lightly. While German linguistic nationalism, through the voice of J. G. Fichte, claims that the superiority of German over other languages (and implicitly of the Germans over other nations) derives from its purity, as it remained unadulterated by foreign elements (Edwards 2009), Trench’s own patriotism compels him to a different conclusion. Precisely because it welcomed

the right loanwords, English (like Britain) holds a uniquely advantageous position and may be destined for a great future:

It would be difficult not to believe, even if many outward signs said not the same, that great things are in store for the one language of Europe which thus serves as connecting link between the North and the South, between the languages spoken by the Teutonic nations of the North and by the Romance nations of the South; which holds on to and partakes of both (Trench, 1859, n.p.).

Whatever promises the future had in store, it could be argued that the present itself was glorious enough. Britain was at the peak of its Empire might and "English was already on its way to becoming a world language" (Brewer 2007, 112). However, this very prominence brought about particular dangers. As J. H. Marsden warned, "in the extremities of this wide empire the purity and precision of the language itself are likely to be corrupted and lost" (quoted in Brewer 2007, 113). The admonition also reflected the qualms of other contemporaries when confronted with the intention voiced by the members of the Philological Society in their *Proposal for a Publication of a New English Dictionary* and, previously, by Trench in his lectures *On Some Deficiencies in Our English Dictionaries*. All these early contributors to the destiny of the OED argued that, "in accordance with the dictates of the new philology", the dictionary should include *all* the words of the language and linguistic usage should "be registered rather than reformed or purified" (Mugglestone 2000b, 189). In the event, this ideal of inclusiveness could not be achieved, but the OED managed to strike a balance between prevalent descriptivism and some degree of prescriptivism (Mugglestone 2000b). However, at the time of its inception it was again to language metaphors that the proponents of each course of action resorted in order to make their case.

For F. J. Furnivall, the second editor of the OED, the words of English are like the people of England, all of whom deserve a place in the nation: "we have set ourselves to form a National Portrait Gallery, not only of the worthiest, but of all the members, of the race of English words which is to form the dominant speech of the world [...] Fling our doors wide! all, all, not one, but all, must enter" (quoted in Brewer 2007, 111). For H. H. Gibbs, a friend of J. Murray's, words may be like people, but, he argues, not all people should be welcomed into one's home:

It is well – very well – to fix the first entry of a word into the language; but you must be quite sure it *has* entered [...] and is not a mere vagrant knocking at the door & who will be deservedly sent about his business [...] If you must honour such words [...] by taking notice of them, in case they should ultimately creep into the language [...] you should have a separate limbo to which to relegate them – a hot one, I should suggest (quoted in Brewer 2007, 120).

James A. H. Murray himself, long-time primary editor of the OED, on whom decisions concerning the inclusion/exclusion of some words often rested, chose a different set of metaphors in order to describe the fluid borders of English:

That vast aggregate of words and phrases which constitute the Vocabulary of English-speaking men presents, to the mind that endeavours to grasp it as a definite whole, the aspect of one of those nebulous masses familiar to the astronomer, in which a clear and unmistakable nucleus shades off on all sides, through zones of decreasing brightness, to a dim marginal film that seems to end nowhere, but lose itself imperceptibly in the surrounding darkness (Murray 1888/1969, 59). Or, in the language of the natural sciences so dear to the 19th century, in its constitution it may be compared to one of those natural groups of the zoologist or botanist, wherein typical species forming the characteristic nucleus of the order, are linked on every side to other species, in which the typical character is less and less distinctly apparent, till it fades away in an outer fringe of aberrant forms, which merge imperceptibly in various surrounding orders, and whose own position is ambiguous and uncertain. For the convenience of classification, the naturalist may draw the line, which bounds a class or order, outside or inside of a particular form; but Nature has drawn it nowhere (Murray 1888/1969, 59-60).

An accomplished scholar with a “shrewd understanding of language” (Brewer 2007, 117) and a committed descriptivist, Murray thus attempted to explain why, despite everyone’s best efforts, neither full comprehensiveness nor full consistency could be achieved in a work of such magnitude: for the OED some “limits were unavoidable, whether determined on practical grounds [...] or theoretical ones [...] [or] for reasons of taste, or morality, or legality” (Brewer 2007, 119-120).

Published between 1873 and 1877 A. T. Laurian and I. C. Massim’s *Dicționarul limbei române (Dictionary of the Romanian Language)* represents the chief lexicographical flowering of Latinate purism in Romanian philology. It comes rather late in the day, at a time when consistent endorsement of the movement was only to be found among the members of the newly established Romanian Academic Society (soon to become the Romanian Academy and soon to actually discontinue its support for the etymological and Latinized spelling and vocabulary cleansing advocated by Laurian and Massim; Macrea 1969). Its ideological roots are to be traced back, however, more than a hundred years before to the so-called Transylvanian School (Școala Ardeleană). It was its leaders who (often coming from the ranks of the Romanian Uniate Church and educated in Western universities), struggling to obtain for Uniate Romanians the status of *natio* which the Magyars, the Szekelers and the Saxons living in Transylvania already had, “look[ed] for the legitimization of their political claims in the sphere of the Latinate culture” (Kamusella 2009, 207). In particular, they restated the linguistic argument that Romanian was a Romance language

in terms that were more explicitly favourable to the political ends they envisaged: (1) there was a direct link between the Romanian language then spoken in Transylvania and the ancient Latin language, although the former had been spoiled by the ravages of time and polluted by contact with other languages, and (2) there was a direct link between the (Transylvanian) Romanians and the Romans who had conquered Dacia in 106 A.D., the former being the legitimate political heirs of the latter. It is in this context that the project of the "ideological reconstruction of the language" (Mitu 1997) emerges, in the form of (various degrees of) Latinate purism, first in Transylvania, later to be embraced by a number of scholars from Moldavia and Walachia. Similar processes are well documented and are not specific to the Romanian context: "once language has been deemed the most central and most sacred girder of identity, [...] strenuous attempts will be made to assert its primacy, to differentiate it from other forms and to protect it" (Edwards 2009, 12).

For dictionary compilers, protection usually involves a prescriptive approach, and Laurian and Massim are certainly not shy about their regulative intentions. So much so that the words of Romanian which are believed to be of non-Latin origin – whose usage should therefore be discontinued – are not included in the two volume work, but relegated to an independently published *Glossariu*. Language metaphors abound in *Prefatione*, the preface to the dictionary, most often harnessed to support the same regulative approach. Romanian is "a living and organic entity, which grows from a small number of roots just as a lush, magnificent tree grows from a tiny seed sown in the soil"³ (Laurian, Massim 1871 [1873], viii). However, care must be taken to protect the happy development of the language by making sure that the Latin roots remain pure and unadulterated. All external influences (i.e. all non-Latin loanwords) must be carefully avoided since "enlarging and enriching a language by foreign borrowings is [...] as contrary to its nature as it would be to the nature of a plant or an animal" (Laurian, Massim 1871 [1873], viii). Indeed, "the language which has had the misfortune to be infested and more or less smothered by foreign words is, like a plant infested by parasites, prevented from growing naturally and doomed to languish" (Laurian, Massim 1871 [1873], viii).

In terms of another often reiterated metaphorical conceptualisation, words are like people. They have a legal and social status, hence they can be granted or denied "Romanian citizenship" (Laurian, Massim 1871 [1873], ix) and can even be conferred – "on condition that they have a pure Latin origin" – "an undisputed nobility title" (Laurian, Massim 1871 [1873], xxi). On the contrary in the case of other words, the "foreigners" which leech on the national language and "suck and drain the most vital vein of its life" (Laurian, Massim 1871 [1873], viii), "banishment" is the right and necessary course of action.

³ All translations from Romanian are ours.

Probably the crowning metaphor of the preface, in terms of its intended emotional impact, is the representation of Romanian as a female figure. The conceptualization is not new (French, for example, has also been regarded as “an object of veneration and desire”, “as a mistress, imperious in her capacity to command her disciple-lover” – Underhill 2011, 173), but Laurian and Massim lay a peculiar emphasis. Far from being an empowered and demanding mistress, Romanian is a damsel in distress, an unfortunate maiden whose body is covered by “blows” and “wounds” (Laurian, Massim 1871 [1873], viii), whose “lovely face” bears the marks of contact with too numerous “foreigners”; however, she is no ordinary maiden but “a noble and graceful Roman virgin” (Laurian, Massim 1871 [1873], viii). If the Romanians would only direct strenuous efforts towards the purification and felicitous development of their language, future editions of the dictionary would be able “to present a more and more faithful image of the daughter of eternal Rome whom her mother had placed in the valleys of the old Danube” (Laurian, Massim 1871 [1873], xxvi). Once recovering its pristine purity, Romanian would finally be able to fulfil its glorious destiny: “to protect and spread to Eastern realms the lights of civilisation” (Laurian, Massim 1871 [1873], xxvi).

While the fascination exerted by the representation of Romanian as “the daughter of Latin” was to last for a long time, all concrete efforts to engineer the language by reforming its spelling or cleansing its vocabulary of non-Latin words would come to an end soon after the publication of Laurian and Massim’s dictionary, partly as a consequence of the cold reception it was met with (Macrea 1969). Over the span of the 19th century national self-perception underwent slow changes. A significant impulse towards revaluing the people and traditions of the land came from some Moldavian writers associated with the review *Dacia literară* (1840), but foreign accounts of the country and its inhabitants contributed as well. E. Quinet’s words about the Romanian peasant and his language, namely that “it is under the peasant’s reedy roof, in listening to his plaint, his *doinas*, that [the Romanians] seek to rediscover the true imprint of their ancestral language, not altered or disfigured by the neologisms of the large towns” (quoted in Drace-Francis 2013, 33), would soon be echoed by local writers. While initially “perhaps it was inevitably more natural for a Western author to focus on the figure of the peasant as a symbol of purity and simplicity”, this representation did correspond to an emergent self-definition among members of the Romanian intelligentsia and “the peasant as the bearer of the ‘ancestral imprint’ would at a later time become firmly entrenched in the local literary imagination” (Drace-Francis 2013, 33).

Likewise, the understanding of how the national language should present itself changes. While there is general agreement that Romanian needed a standardized form, support for a scholarly variety that was to be largely artificially engineered to resemble Latin as much as possible is replaced by an

indorsement of the vernacular. The standardization of the language, it is now argued, should be based on a selection of words from the main dialects (with much precedence given to the Wallachian dialect) and on the language of the old religious books and chronicles. In symbolic terms (to be found in countless 19th century writings), it is now the "sweet", "old", "undefiled" language of the "people", which becomes the "language of our forefathers" and deserves appreciation and protection. The change is also reflected by institutional decisions. The Romanian Academy commissions B. P. Hasdeu to compile a new dictionary the title of which is telling enough, although difficult to render faithfully into English: *Etymologicum Magnum Romaniae. Dicționarul limbei istorice și poporane a românilor*. The Romanian language which the new dictionary is to record, and establish as standard, is "the historical language of the (ordinary) people". In the preface to his work, the familiar motif of the interdependence between language and national identity is indicated by Hasdeu in the metaphorical terms of the "national portrait gallery": "in its language, a nation regards itself as in a long gallery of portraits from different ages, some perhaps somewhat damaged by time or circumstances, but in which the nation still fully recognizes its specificity" (Hasdeu 1887, XVIII).

In the event, Hasdeu is unable to complete the project, and finally the responsibility to publish a multi-volume historical dictionary of Romanian under the aegis of the Romanian Academy is taken over by Sextil Pușcariu, the primary editor of *Dicționarul limbii române* (DA, as the dictionary came to be known). Pușcariu is a scholar educated in the spirit of modern philology and is, therefore, inclined to inclusiveness and descriptiveness. He believes that "from a linguistic point of view, any word ever recorded in writing is important" (Pușcariu 1913, XI) and worthy of lexicographic attention. On the other hand, he knows he is to work under rather severe constraints: the historical dictionary of the Romanian language has long been overdue, so he is pressed for time; also, he has only limited resources available (not enough citations excerpted, not enough co-editors). Hence, setting limits to the 'compass of the vocabulary' is necessary, but these are not to be influenced by "non-scientific considerations such as a subjective-aesthetic classification of words [...] or patriotic preferences" (Pușcariu 1913, XII). In principle, DA is to reflect a descriptive and impartial approach to language – and this will actually be the case to a large degree.

However, as Pușcariu himself points out, a definitive criterion for the inclusion/exclusion of words in a dictionary is difficult to find, all the more so when the language to be recorded does not yet have a written standardized form but is in the process of establishing one, while at the same time receiving an affluence of Romance (especially French) borrowings. It is this last aspect that Pușcariu and his co-editors regard as somehow problematic and with reference to it they reintroduce the language of prescriptiveness. Recent loanwords are, of course, a challenge for any lexicographer because he/she does not know whether they will ultimately remain in the language or not.

However, Pușcariu's reference to this situation is not neutral, but loaded with symbolic weight: "our present-day standard written language, which follows our old traditions and gathers riches from the endless treasure of the people's oral language, has not yet managed to counterbalance the influence of Gallophiles" (Pușcariu 1913, XV). Therefore, dictionary compilers should aim to leave out those new borrowings – "foreign adornments" (Pușcariu 1913, XV) – which, in their estimation, attempt to replace an already existent native word. The well-established metaphorical conceptualization *words are human beings* presents itself handily once more: old Romanian words are legitimate citizens, whereas "ephemeral neologisms which the ordinary people borrow from the language of the educated classes" will not finally be "granted citizenship" (Pușcariu 1913, XVII) and should not be entered the dictionary. Recent loanwords are "newcomers" which have "usurped" (Pușcariu 1913, XVI) the rights of old native words, a situation which needs to be rectified because only the latter "convey the genius of our tongue" (Pușcariu 1913, XVI). By re-learning to use them, if necessary, "we shall be able to show how one can express in a truly Romanian fashion many ideas which today, all too hastily, we clothe in vestments borrowed from abroad" (Pușcariu 1913, XL).

Some of our conclusions confirm the findings of previous, more comprehensive, studies: language prescriptiveness tends to be the norm in older dictionaries, while in more recent ones, a prevalent descriptive tendency coexists with some degree of prescriptivism (Cowie 2009). Typically dictionary compilers' efforts to regulate language by means of purist policies are motivated by patriotic reasons, as it is understood that perfecting the language (or preserving its "perfection") means ensuring the prosperity of the nation (Mitu 1997, Edwards 2009, Kamusella 2009). One difference can be noticed, in this regard, between languages with a long tradition of excellence in writing and early standardization, such as English, and languages with a much more recent written tradition and late standardization, such as Romanian. In the former case, a perceived age of excellence of the language is hallmarked and all further change is regarded as "degradation", to be slowed down as much as possible (see, for example, Johnson's *Dictionary*). On the contrary, if the language never had an attested 'golden age', then great symbolic weight is attached either to an originary 'mother' language, usually highly prestigious, which the 'daughter' language should be made to resemble as much as possible (see Laurian and Massim's dictionary) or to a vernacular variety which is believed to epitomize national identity ("the language of the people" endorsed by Hasdeu and Pușcariu).

Metaphors have been a frequent ingredient in lexicographic discourse on language until quite recent times. Indeed,

linguistic purists justify the need to protect their language by attributing certain inherent values or properties to it, such as character or spirit (*Sprachegeist*, *Sprachgenius*) which contains certain values (manly, rational,

warm), and which are likened to living organisms (young, growing, blossoming, dying languages). Such metaphors are used to explain the perceived superiority of one's language (Langer, Nesse 2012, 622).

As we hope to have indicated, other metaphors are used to warn about perceived threats to one's language, or to advise on its perceived 'proper' development. Some metaphors seem to retain a permanent appeal (for example, *words are people* in the prefaces to both English and Romanian dictionaries), others may be more closely associated with a given time and country (for instance, geological metaphors used by British lexicographers in the wake of the emergence of Darwin's theory of evolution). Sometimes the same basic metaphorical conceptualization (*words are people*) can be developed to serve opposing ends: both prescriptive action (words which are granted or denied citizenship, words which are members of the family vs. vagrants, faithful friends vs. traitors) and descriptive policies (the national portrait gallery). While perhaps less appealing to modern sensitivities (more inclined to dispassionate descriptivism in both lexicographic theory and practice), all these language metaphors which earlier lexicographers and others reflecting on language and dictionaries felt they needed to resort to were believed, in different ways, to "stand like barriers between the chaos and the cosmos of human speech".

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HOMO LUDENS AMONG CULTURES AND TRANSLATIONS – A PRACTICAL APPROACH

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ABSTRACT. *Homo Ludens among Cultures and Translations – A Practical Approach.* Not only once have we learned about the parasitic, mimetic structure of a translation, or the inauthenticity of the invisible translator, a performer *without a stage*, as Robert Wechsler² would describe it. Yet, beyond such a shallow disparaging perspective, (good) translation obviously means art, being shaped by the translator’s expertise, talent and imagination, and resembling a creative Lego game rather than an already set puzzle game, hence its uniqueness. The present study aims to briefly highlight certain key-concepts in this ambiguity-fraught domain, such as abusive fidelity, domestication and foreignization (covert and overt translation) or culture-bound terms, the so-called *culturemes*. Mainly relying on practical illustrations, encountered while translating a series of jokes from the German language into Romanian, during a translation course within the Leipzig University, the article will focus on the ludic aspect of translation, which paradoxically does not always trigger a laughter on the part of the translator, sometimes faced not only with difficulties, but with impossible equivalences. Ultimately, the study will try to

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² See Robert Wechsler. 1998. *Performing without a stage: the art of literary translation*, Catbird Press.

justify the reasons for which communicative translation should prevail over the semantic translation or why an authentic target-language text proves superior to a faithful-to-the-source-text translation.

Keywords: *abusive fidelity, communication, cultureme, equivalence, meaning, mediation, wordplay*

REZUMAT. *Homo ludens, printre culturi și traduceri – o abordare practică.*

Nu de puține ori ne-am confruntat cu diferite formulări referitoare la structura parazită, mimetică a traducerilor sau la lipsa de autenticitate a traducătorului invizibil, un interpret *fără scenă*, așa cum îl descrie Robert Wechsler. Totuși, dincolo de o asemenea perspectivă depreciativă, traducerea (de calitate) înseamnă, cu siguranță, artă, modelată de experiența, talentul și imaginația traducătorului. Comparabilă cu un joc creativ realizat din piese Lego, mai degrabă decât cu un joc de puzzle prestabilit, orice traducere este unică. Studiul de față își propune să evidențieze câteva concepte-cheie din acest domeniu plin de ambiguități, printre care conceptul de fidelitate abuzivă, adaptare sau înstrăinare (în alți termeni, traducere implicită și traducere explicită), și cultureme, acei termeni ancorați într-o cultură. Articolul se bazează, în principiu, pe o serie de exemple practice, oferite de traducerea unor glume din limba germană în limba română, în cadrul unui curs de traduceri de la Universitatea din Leipzig, astfel concentrându-se pe aspectul ludic al traducerilor, care, în mod paradoxal, nu stârnesc întotdeauna râsul traducătorilor, deseori confrunțați nu doar cu situații dificile, ci chiar cu echivalențe imposibile. Nu în ultimul rând, vom încerca să demonstrăm că o traducere comunicativă este de preferat unei traduceri semantice și că un text autentic în limba-țintă va fi, fără îndoială, superior unei traduceri aservite textului-sursă.

Cuvinte-cheie: *fidelitate abuzivă, comunicare, culturem, echivalență, sens, mediere, joc de cuvinte*

Motto:

*Translation is not a matter of words only:
it is a matter of making intelligible a whole culture.
(Anthony Burgess³)*

As You Like It. Preliminary Remarks

In an already punning note, “the history of translation theory [can] be thought of as a discussion of the polysemy of the word ‘translation’” (Söll quoted by Gutt, in Hickey 1998: 47), hence the difficulty to provide only one comprehensive definition. Besides interlanguage translations, be they literary

³ *Goodreads Inc.*, <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/3211247-translation-is-not-a-matter-of-words-only-it-is>, accessed on January 7, 2023.

texts or special-purpose translated texts (legal, medical, technical, etc.), there are also other forms of ‘translations’ in our highly meaningful world, for example converting a discourse into sign language or regulations into traffic signs, the last ones being out of the scope of the present article.

Translation is plainly defined as the alteration of an original in another language. Some critics would naturally emphasize the parasitic character of such translations, accused of lacking ideastic originality and frequently being regarded as mediocre quality. Others, however, would praise the translator’s adaptability, diplomacy and wits when mediating between two languages and cultures. In a complex interpretation,

Translation is a cross-linguistic sociocultural practice, in which a text in one language is replaced by a functionally equivalent text in another. The fundamental characteristic of a translation is therefore that it is a text that is doubly bound: on the one hand to a text in the source language, the ‘source text’ or the original and, on the other hand, to the communicative-linguistic conditions holding in the culture to which the addressees belong (House, in Hickey 1998, 63).

Actually, Juliane House has coined the term *linguaculture* (House, in Hickey 1998, *passim*), as synonym for any language, which is intrinsically anchored in the respective culture.

The aforementioned functional equivalence is of utmost importance, since translating individual words would often turn into meaningless laughing stock (a real case in point was the ludicrous literal translation of the Redox reactions into Romanian as the ‘red ox’ reactions – *reacțiile bouului roșu*). Fortunately, this is not the case with certain extremely well-selected literary names or book titles, such as Astrid Lindgren’s fictional character Pippi Longstocking/Germ. *Pippi Langstrumpf*/It. *Pippi Calzelunghe*, translated into Romanian as *Șosețica* (‘little sock/little short stocking’) and not the literal *Ciorap lung* (even though her father bears the name of *Efraim Cioraplung*). The preference for the first variant certainly took into account the difference between the masculine noun *ciorap* and the feminine *șoseță*, its diminutive *șosețică* turning out to be the best option for the funny red-haired girl.

It is worth mentioning here three further ingenious titles in the contemporary Romanian-Moldovan literature – in the original, *Vârstele jocului. Strada Cetății* (*The Ages of the Game – Citadel Street*), by Claudiu M. Florian, Ioana Pârvolescu, *Inocenții*, and Liliana Corobca, *Kinderland*.

The first novel is a self-translation into Romanian of *Zweieinhalb Störche* (*Two storks and a half*), the titles bearing abstract and respectively concrete references to the author’s childhood in Transylvania, in a Romanian – German (Transylvanian Saxon) family, hence the presence of more than one stork to

have delivered the multicultural baby. The next title, *The Innocents*, would have been reckoned another identical name in a long series of miscellaneous books. Focusing on the same childhood topic in Transylvania (this time, at the confluence of three different identities – Romanian, German and Hungarian), the German translator wittingly changed it to: *Wo die Hunde in drei Sprachen bellen* (*Where the dogs bark in three languages*). Although the original title of the last novel is German (in the author's confessions, an echo of the reality in post-communist Romania and Moldova, when children have dreamt not only of Kinder chocolate eggs but also of their parents as labour migrants to return home from their jobs abroad), it would have plainly meant children's land, a playground, so its translation was poetically entitled: *Der erste Horizont meines Lebens* (*The first horizon of my life*), a reference to the 12-year-old narrator. Such inspired titles surely obey the communicative-linguistic conditions stated above.

Even if its object of study may be intrinsically associated to the mythological Tower of Babel, which dates back to the Old Testament Book of Genesis, Translation studies as a separate domain or research field was actually born in the mid-20th century, a fact explained by the marginal importance it has been granted over the time, thus having been included in various literary, linguistic, sociocultural or historical studies.

Does the perfect translation exist? Could jokes be translated? What does *abusive fidelity* or *domestication* mean? The present study will aim to provide answers to such questions, illustrating the theoretical issues with examples excerpted from a consistent book of jokes, *Das Superbuch der Witze* [The Great Book of Jokes], written in German and published in 2012, in Munich. The concrete samples represent translations into Romanian of a series of quips, a common endeavour of four Erasmus students (native speakers of Romanian) at the Leipzig University, between October and December 2022. No matter how simple the translating process seems at first sight, it implies various connective multifaceted procedures, ranging from tact, linguistic and cultural competences, to flexibility, mediation skills, astuteness and persistence. The strategies that a translator should appeal to mainly when translating culturemes or word-plays are detailed in what follows.

To be or not to be... the same. Perspectives on translation

Subsequent to Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutics, Maitland (2017, *passim*) discusses at length the stages which any translator should take into account: firstly, interpreting the text to be translated, after properly reading and understanding it; secondly, distancing oneself from the original space and time; thirdly, incorporating the translated text into the new spatial and temporal context; fourthly, transforming it to an autonomous text. These stages are perceived

differently, according to the perspectives translation theoreticians or linguists have adhered to.

The rather obsolete distinction between literal or faithful (word for word) and free or communicative (meaning for meaning) translation hardly holds nowadays. It is rather a lucid selection to the type of text to be translated (a contract, a set of instructions, a lesson or a poem, for instance) or a reasonable combination of the two (the highest percentage still held by the second approach), filtered through the fine judgement of the translator-mediator.

A second classical dichotomic perspective would be faithfulness to the author and the source-text or to the readers and the target-text. A compromise represents the ideal solution also in this situation, since the “loyalty to the author is meaningless if it does not coexist with a loyalty to the receptors” (Di Jin, in Leppihalme 1997, 17). Faced with a text fastened to another linguistic and cultural context, the translator must rewrite it not only interlingually, but also interculturally. Permanently aware of all the subtleties and nuances of both languages, s/he must be simultaneously faithful to the original meaning and to the target-language (TL) choice of words. Lawrence Venuti distinguished between domestication and foreignization as translation strategies, namely adapting the text to the new TL conditions and norms to such a measure that it creates “a transparent, fluent style in the TL” (Palumbo 2009, 38) or, on the contrary, having a lesser influence on the translated text, which will thus appear unnatural, for the sake of sounding like a translation. More than often, reformulating no matter the costs or irrespective of the original may interfere with the author’s style (sparse nouns, verbs, repetitions or punctuation), that will be changed too drastically by a controlled systematic translation.

The ultimate “creative transposition” (Jakobson, in Gentzler 1993, 41) in the target-language highly relies on equivalence, one of the most debated concepts in the translation studies:

A single primary denotation may be shared; but the constellation of secondary meanings, the movement of rings of associations, the etymological echoes, the sound and its own levels of association, do not have an equivalent because they cannot (Merwin, in Gentzler 1993, 39-40).

Such a perspective has been shared by most critics⁴, convinced that total equivalence is rather idealistic (not only on the semantic level, but also on the grammatical and formal levels). Theoretically, the shorter and the more concrete

⁴ For closer information see Radegundis Stolze, *Übersetzungstheorien: eine Einführung* [Translation Theories: An Introductory Guide] (1994), Mona Baker, *In Other Words. A Coursebook on Translation* (1997) or Mary Snell-Hornby, *Handbuch Translation* (2003).

a sentence is, the higher the chances are to find equivalence in another language. Yet compare the examples:

(1.1) Rom. *Ana are mere*. (Ana has apples.)

(1.2) Rom. *Ana are șapte ani*. (*Ana has seven years./Ana is seven years old.),

the expression of age in English being rendered by a different verb (*to be*, not *to have*) plus the adjective *old*.

Thus, Chomsky's theory about deep and surface structures can be also adapted to translation, as the two examples show. Moreover, an approximate and dry translation in its first variant(s) should eventually reach natural and living equivalence, in need of what Pound calls the vortex, "the point of maximum energy" (Pound, in Gentzler 1993, 21) it will acquire in the new language. At the same time, things are more intricate than such a black-and-white situation – translators should mediate between the two linguacultures, thus applying 'cultural filters' (House, in Hickey 1998, 66), "often so expertly integrated into the fabric of the text that the seams do not show" (House, in Hickey 1998, 66).

A case in point would be the mediation of *culturemes*, the culturally specific terms which have no exact equivalence in other languages. In a German context, culturemes such as *Apfelschorle* (a traditional drink made of apple juice and mineral water), *Volkshochschule* (a lifelong learning institution), *Schultüte* (or *Zuckertüte*, a traditional giant cone filled with sweets on the first day of school) or *Ampelmännchen* (the plain little man on the traffic light, actually a dispute symbol between the West and East Germany)⁵ represent a challenge for any translator. For instance, their counterparts in Romanian range from literal to non-equivalence, so the most appropriate translation strategies ought to be carefully sought for. The *Ampelmännchen* literally reads as *omulețul de pe semafor*, but the cultural and social dimension will be surely lost in absence of further details; the *Apfelschorle* could be reduced to *suc de mere* (apple juice – a case of the so-called cultural mediation through omission – Katan 1999, 177, instead of the cumbersome *suc de mere cu apă minerală carbogazoasă/sifon*). Lacking its reference in Romanian, the *Volkshochschule* should be retained as such and explained by means of a footnote or endnote. The existence of a foreign term in the Romanian translation illustrates Venuti's 'abusive fidelity':

[T]he translator seeks to reproduce those very features of the foreign text that "abuse" or resist the prevailing forms and values in the receiving culture, thereby allowing the translator to be faithful to aspects of the

⁵ See also Diana V. Burlacu. 2021. "Translating Culturemes." In *The Proceedings of the 20th International Scientific Conference Limba română – modernitate și continuitate în cercetarea lingvistică*, Edited by Cezar Bălășoiu et al.. 229-238. Bucharest: Bucharest University Press.

source text, but still participate in effecting cultural change in the target language (Venuti, in Gentzler 2001, 39).

On the contrary, the *Schultüte* has an approximate cultural equivalent in the Romanian mentality, the bouquet. Yet, the latter is frequently offered to the class teacher or favourite teachers every year, on various occasions, in comparison to the *Schultüte*, presented to the schoolboy or -girl only once, on a special ceremony, short before the beginning of the 1st class, as a symbol for the new stage in life. A perfect commingling of both cultures would eventually be *buchet cu dulciuri* (bouquet of sweets).

In a Romanian context, probably the legendary Păcală, Caragiale's Mitică, or Bulă and Bulișor, father and son (translated as little Johnny or the German *Fritzchen*), are some representative culturemes, as the epitome of Romanian (sometimes bitter) humour, Bulă being a symbol of the ultimate hope and a witty yet risky means of venting under Ceaușescu's communist regime. In a sociological explanation, "[w]here there is anxiety, there will be jokes to express that anxiety. Thus, a society with political repression will generate an abundance of political jokes" (Dundes quoted by Muhawi, in Vandaele 2002, 346-347).

Even if still hard to be translated or mediated, culinary names, such as *sarmale* (stuffed cabbage), *mămăligă* (polenta), *bors* (borscht) or *jumări* (greaves/pork-scraps) do not represent Romanian culturemes per se, since they belong to a much broader area than Romania or the Balkan states.

The Comedy of Errors. Translating jokes

Although laughter is universal, not every joke is enjoyable: local wisecracks are hardly understood by outlanders, lexical or cultural puns are relatively opaque, while the individuals or categories that are laughed at would be embarrassed, frustrated or angry rather than amused. As a matter of fact, "laughter acts as an indexical with both discourse and social functions such that its significance can only be grasped in terms of the context in which it is embedded" (McLachlan 2022, 46). In another perspective,

Humor [...] depends on thought – it is not just a reflexive response to a stimulus that is inherently funny; it requires a certain category of information processing involving most of the faculties of thought, including memory recall, inference, and semantic integration (Hurley et al. 2011, 22).

To put it differently, various cognitive mechanisms come into play when decoding jokes or even more, when translating jokes and adapting them to a

new cultural and linguistic context. Translators should particularly retain the ‘dynamic equivalence’ (Nida’s “mode of translation in which the message of the original text is transported into the TL in such a way that the response of TL receivers is essentially the same as that of the original text receivers” – Palumbo 2009, 39-40) or the perlocutionary effect – the amusement or the laughter should occur in both the original and the translated jokes.

Quoting Raskin, Attardo underlines the specifics of jokes:

A text can be characterized as a single-joke-carrying-text if both of the [following] conditions are satisfied:

i) The text is compatible, fully or in part, with two different scripts.

ii) The two scripts with which the text is compatible are opposite.

The two scripts with which some text is compatible are said to overlap fully or in part in this text (Raskin, in Vandaele 2002, 181).

Arguing about the mechanism of jokes, Attardo and Raskin have categorized six parameters in relation to their coined General Theory of Verbal Humour (Vandaele 2002, 176), namely: Script Opposition, Logical Mechanism, Situation, Target, Narrative Strategy and Language (Attardo, in Vandaele 2002, 183). When one or more parameters are flawed, humour is generated, yet in the case of translations, there is not only the challenge of finding equivalence in the TL, but also of triggering laughter on the part of the TL recipients. At the same time, Vandaele discusses on the incongruity and the superiority of humour, as its innate qualities. As a general rule, the “(humorous) effect [is] caused by a departure from normal cognitive schemes” (Vandaele, in Vandaele 2002, 156) and more than often appears from a feeling of superiority, which blends with “feeling of intelligence [...], stupidity, aggression, hostility, derision, disparagement, deprecation, in- and out-group feelings, solidarity, stereotyping [...], antipathy, pressure and relief/release, threat and safety” (Vandaele, in Vandaele 2002, 157).

Due to their conciseness, in comparison to other literary genres, jokes seem easy to translate but this is also one of the reasons why the translator can hardly ignore or delete parts of them. A further difficulty lies in the fact that jokes are rather told/performed than read, thus having an oral character. Moreover, because of their anchorage in a linguaculture, sometimes they may be partially or completely untranslatable, especially in the case of verbal plays or puns. The examples to follow are excerpted from the 380-page *Great Book of Jokes* (in German, *Das Superbuch der Witze*, henceforth labelled as SW), which provides more than 2000 jokes from all possible domains and for all tastes. To a certain extent similar to the canned laughter present in certain TV series, such a title already shapes the mindset of the readers, who will thus expect to have

fun by reading the texts, in every translated version (German, Romanian and their gloss into English). Several types of jokes will be approached, the focus being wordplays. “[A] labour-saving device and a bargain: two meanings for the price of one word or phrase; a bonus” (Redfern 1984, 26), puns result from “the projection of the paradigmatic onto the syntagmatic” (Sherzer, in Chiaro 1992, 34). As illustrated below, verbal plays introduce “variety and refreshment into saturation” (Redfern 1984, 131), since “the intellect is submitted to some sort of hot and cold douche in one shower. The mind half accepts, half rejects, what is being offered to it for recognition” (Feeney, in Redfern 1984, 117).

Some instances of ironic incongruity or *asteismus*, when “conversational markers are taken literally, [for example] a request for information is misunderstood to imply an offer” (Chiaro 1992, 43) and the situational context (here, the court) is distorted (2) or is deliberately ignored (3), as a strategy to postpone or to milden the penalty, are the following jokes:

(2) Der Richter verurteilt den Angeklagten mit den Worten:

«Und nun hoffe ich, Sie das letzte Mal gesehen zu haben.»

«Wieso, Herr Vorsitzender? Gehen Sie etwa in Pension?» (SW: 5)

Judecătorul condamnă inculpatul cu următoarele cuvinte:

- *Și acum, sper să vă văd pentru ultima oară.*

- *Cum așa, Onorată Instanță? Ieșiți cumva la pensie?*

[Gloss: *The judge condemns the accused by saying:*

'I hope this is the last time I have seen you'.

'Why, Your Honour? Are you retiring?']

(3) «Zeuge Lehmann, was ist Ihr Vater?»

«Erkältet, Herr Richter!»

«Was er tut, will ich wissen!»

«Er niest schrecklich, Herr Richter!» (SW: 5)

- *Martor Lehmann, ce este tatăl dumneavoastră?*

- *Este bolnav, domnule judecător.*

- *Ce face, vreau să știu!*

- *Strănută întruna, domnule judecător.*

[Gloss: *Witness Lehmann, what is your father?* (the intention: job-related, thus *to be* plus a noun)

'He is sick, Your Honour!' (the incongruous answer: current state of health, thus *to be* plus an adjective)

'I want to know, what he does'. (the intention: again professionally, what he does for a living)

'He sneezes a lot, Your Honour!' (the incongruous answer: again current state of health)]

Regarding (3), the laughter is already initiated in the ‘jab line’ (or the non-final punch line – Antonopoulou in Vandaele 2002, 198) and reaches climax in the punch.

The translation differences are scarce: in (2), the Romanian version employs the present tense, in comparison with the present perfect; the punchline, which makes use of the typical English present continuous, has in German and Romanian a similar structure (only the verbs differ, namely *to go* and *to go out*) and the same adverb *probably* or *by any chance*, which is omitted in the gloss. In (3), the English text preferred the adverbial *a lot*, instead of the German *terribly* or the Romanian *again and again*.

A third joke from court is an illustration of “*antanaclasis*, ‘where the same word is used in two different meanings’” (Culler 1988, 5). It humorously hints to the illicit business some magistrates are part of, the pun lying in the homonymic verb *to give* – a sentence or money in exchange for something, the latter being actually a slip of the tongue. However, the perlocution of all three texts “depends on ‘seeing’ the fun or incongruity and enjoying it as a result of grasping both levels: the incongruity and an alternative congruity at the same time” (Hickey, in Hickey 1998, 231).

(4) Fragt der junge Richter seinen ergrauten Kollegen: «Ich habe da einen Schwarzbrenner, der Zwetschgengeist gemacht hat. Wieviel soll ich ihm wohl geben? »

«Auf keinen Fall mehr als fünf Mark pro Liter! » (SW: 5)

Tânărul judecător îl întreabă pe colegul grizonat:

- *Am un om care a vândut la negru țuică de prune. Oare cât să îi dau?*
- *În niciun caz mai mult de 5 mărci pe litru!*

[Gloss: *The young judge asks his grey-haired colleague:*

‘I have an illicit distiller of plum brandy. How much should I give him?’

‘Under no circumstances more than five mark per litre!’]

The translation went smoothly, the only differences being the loss of the verb *to make* (rendered in Romanian as *sell*) and of the particle ‘wohl’ in the gloss, an emphazier of the question itself.

The last examples gradually show the partial or total changes of the punchlines in the translations, since jokes should trigger a similar response in both the SL- and the TL-reader, namely smile or laughter. The next joke contains a literary reference (Robinson Crusoe and his friend named Friday), unintelligible to the non-connoisseurs:

(5) «Na, verehrter Herr Kollege, wie ist die Arbeitsmoral in Ihrem Institut? »

«Wie bei Robinson: Warten auf Freitag! » (SW: 6)

- *Ei bine, stimate coleg, cum este moralul angajaților la institutul dumneavoastră?*

- *Ca-n Robinson: așteptăm să vină Vineri.*

[Gloss: 'Well, my dear colleague, how is the employee morale in your institute?'
'Like in Robinson: Waiting for Friday!']

The English text is a literal transcription of the original (in German, all nouns are capitalised, hence the completeness of the pun), excepting for the understated adjective *dear* instead of *esteemed*. However, the Romanian initial variants excluded each other:

(5.1). *Așteptăm vinerea/ziua de vineri.*

(5.2). *Îl așteptăm pe Vineri,*

since the meaning would have been partially retained to the detriment of losing the implicature, the cultural reference and naturally the punchline: either the fifth day of the week (as in 5.1) or the name of the character in Daniel Defoe's novel (as in 5.2, which contains a special grammatical structure used for persons only). After such approximate alternatives, the best option turned out to be the insertion of the verb *to come*, in order to ambiguate the reply:

(5.3). *Așteptăm să vină Vineri.*

On the contrary, the next quip relies on the reduction of the last question to one word. The punchline is complete in German due to the synonymy *Sie* (formal you) – *sie* (they), which is impossible to render either in Romanian (*dumneavoastră – ei*) or in English. Accordingly, the literal meaningless double question: *What vehicle do you have/do they have?* was reduced to a one-word request (although the interviewer should ideally be more polite, by asking complete questions: *Are you married?* or *Do you have children?*). The punchline reads as an implicature to not having any car or, quite the reverse, having a much too expensive car to be mentioned during such an interview.

Moreover, when translating jokes, finding the equivalent Romanian or English names enhances the humorous effect and lends authenticity to the TL-context. The German similar noun *Knolle* informally translates as potato, so Murphy seems appropriate, whereas in Romanian no successful variant could be found, the classical name *Ion* (John) being eventually selected:

(6) Knoelle stellt sich vor. Der Personalchef füllt den Fragebogen aus und fragt ihn: «Verheiratet?»

«Ja! »

«Kinder? »

«Ja – einen zweijährigen Sohn und eine dreijährige Tochter! »

«Welches Fahrzeug benutzen Sie? »

«Ein Dreirad und einen Roller! » (SW: 27)

Ion la interviu. Managerul de la Resurse Umane completează chestionarul și îl întreabă:

- *Căsătorit?*
- *Da!*
- *Copii?*
- *Da, un băiat de 2 ani și o fată de 3.*
- *Vehicul?*
- *O tricicletă și o trotinetă!*

[Gloss: Murphy has an interview. The staff manager fills in the questionnaire and asks:

'Married?'

'Yes!'

'Children?'

'Yes, a 2-year-old son and a 3-year-old daughter!'

'Vehicle?'

'A tricycle and a kick scooter!']

As already mentioned, the most difficult jokes to translate are the lexical plays on words, which appear when “*structural features* of the language(s) used are exploited in order to bring about a *communicatively significant confrontation* of two (or more) linguistic structures with *more or less similar forms* and *more or less different meanings*” (Delabastita quoted by Attardo, in Vandaele 2002, 189). The following gag represents even a greater challenge, due to its non-translatability. Therefore, certain background information (allusive to bedtime) has been inserted in the Romanian and English translations, which eventually found rhyming correspondents:

(7) Sagt die Holzwurmmutter zu ihren Kindern:

«Husch, husch ins Brettchen! » (SW: 10) (instead of *Bettchen*)

Seara, la culcare, mama car, către copilași:

Hai-hai, în lemnuț! (instead of pătuț)

[Gloss: In the evening, the woodworm mother tells its children: 'Hurry up, in the slab!' (instead of *bed*)]

The last example represents a creative translation, explained by Hickey as follows:

If, however, the perlocution depends on a specifically linguistic or intertextual feature, then she should extricate the underlying formula on

which the potential effect is based and thereupon generate another, new, text or joke in the target language, keeping as close as possible, or relevant, to the propositional content of the original (Hickey 1998, 230).

Although the question is identical in all three texts, the replies are different in Romanian and English, the latter still finding a similar pun between *bear* and *beer*, impossible to relate in Romanian. However, the colour domain and the pronunciation similarity have been retained:

(8) Warum heißt der Eisbär Eisbär? Wenn er rot wäre, würde er Himbär heißen. (SW: 30)

De ce se numește ursul polar urs polar? Pentru că dacă ar fi galben, s-ar numi urs solar.

[Gloss*: Why is the polar bear called polar bear?

Because if it were red, it would be called raspberry/*raspbear*.

Gloss: Why is the polar bear called polar bear? Because if it were yellow, it would be called solar bear.]

As a matter of fact, this is a case of the so-called paronomasia:

Depending on similarity of form and disparity of meaning, a pun evokes disparate meanings in contexts where each differently applies. But disparate meanings may be connected in numerous ways. Paronomasia or adnominatio, a broad figure of classical rhetoric closely related to the modern pun, 'is a figure in which, by means of a modification of sound, or change of letters, a close resemblance to a given verb or noun is produced, so that similar words express dissimilar things' (Culler 1988, 5).

All's Well That Ends Well. Concluding Remarks

In spite of reaching an end, the present study is far from being complete. Due to the length limitations, it offered merely a glimpse into this complex domain, focusing on the classical dichotomic perspectives on the translation process and the main translation strategies, as well as drawing attention to the translator's significant role while mediating among linguacultures. The semantic or communicative translation was mostly preferred, taking into consideration that "all jokes are translatable, at the perlocutionary level" (Attardo, in Vandaele 2002, 189); in other words, such humorous texts should further create amusement in any language they are translated into.

The chapters, whose subtitles purposely echoed the theatrical world of Shakespeare, one of the greatest masters of language and word-plays, ranged from slightly theoretical to mostly practical. They briefly presented several

culturemes in the German context and then examined various jokes originally written in German and rendered into Romanian and English (the glosses in English are semantic, rather than literal, acquiring an autonomous status – they read as jokes too).

It is also worth mentioning that a joke is a paradox – even if the others laugh, there is always a target to be laughed at (oftentimes perceived as cultural, national or social stereotypes). Consequently, “while humour can be used to strengthen the sense of belonging among members of a community, it can also be used within a community to *mock* the perceived non-belonging of a person” (Arab & Milner 2022, 4). Thus, behind the wit and the spontaneous laughter triggered by an anecdote, this type of a narrative actually contains a certain dose of aggressiveness, indirect criticism and blunt sincerity, observed in the current practical analysis. As illustrated before, certain puns were anchored linguaculturally to such an extent that they had to be almost completely altered in order to retain the humorous effect. The most convincing explanation for such creative translations has been provided by Maitland: “Translators must do more than read and interpret texts; they must also read and interpret the needs, knowledges and expectations of their target audiences and then they must create a text of their own to which their audiences can respond” (Maitland 2017, 52). Consequently, translated texts (pragmatically categorized by Mounin⁶ as ‘*les belles infidèles*’) should always strive to become readable, understandable and natural.

If we are to extend one of Redfern’s definitions of the pun, we may state that a joke is “an indirect mode that expresses most by specifying least” (Redfern 1984, 90). For example, deadpan humour or even one-liners can provide complex information on social or professional categories, regional or national stereotypes, linguistic or semantic subtleties. The appropriate understanding of verbal plays actually depends not only on the *homo ludens* in ourselves, but mostly on “the existence of common cognitive schemes, [...] based on a dichotomy of ‘inside-implicit’ (i.e., shared assumptions) and ‘outside-explicit’ (i.e., shared humorous stereotypes of the other)” (Vandaele quoted by Muhawi, in Vandaele 2002, 363). More than one hundred years ago, Bergson actually believed that humour could function as a ‘social corrective’ (Bergson, in Hurley et al. 2011, 85), struggling with the flaws of the society or with individual rigidities. Yet, even nowadays, unable to reach such an idealistic goal, humour continues to mirror, not to correct our world, thus offering us slices of life in a pleasurable and surprising manner.

⁶ Mounin, Georges. *Les belles infidèles*. Nouvelle édition [en ligne]. Villeneuve d’Ascq: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2016 (généré le 11 février 2023). Disponible sur Internet: <http://books.openedition.org/septentrion/76123>.

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THE COLLECTIVE IMAGINARY OF ROMGLISH IN CYBERSPACE AND FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTIONS

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ABSTRACT. *The Collective Imaginary of Romglish in Cyberspace and Face-to-face Interactions.* The activity of Romanian users in digital spaces oftentimes exhibits a dynamic code containing Romglish (the combination of Romanian and English features), which also reverberates in offline discourses and has an ongoing boomerang effect between offline and online interactions. By means of a survey, this paper investigates the Romanian collective imaginary which is set in the linguistic data. As the Romanian language constitutes a matrix in which English and Globish (a simplified pragmatic form of English) are embedded and they become part of a new dynamic code, destined to be changed at all levels (lexical, morphological, and syntactical), Romanian native speakers' perception of Romglish is an important dimension. As such, this paper will analyse how individuals perceive their personal use of Romglish online and in face-to-face interactions: the use of the code created, the preferences and mechanisms of linguistic choices and linguistic creativity, the frequency of code-switching and code-mixing both in formal and informal contexts, and the degree of universality

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of the code used. The findings will provide insight not only specific to the aspects of the Romglish, but also related to the cognitive processes involved and the reasons which trigger such processes.

Keywords: *collective imaginary, Romglish, Globish, cognitive processes, online and offline interactions*

REZUMAT. Imaginarul colectiv al romglezei în spațiul digital și în interacțiunile față în față. Activitatea utilizatorilor români în spațiile digitale prezintă de multe ori un cod dinamic conținând romgleza (combinația dintre elemente de română și engleză), care reverberează și în discursurile offline și are un efect de bumerang între interacțiunea offline și cea online. Prin intermediul unui chestionar, această lucrare investighează imaginarul colectiv românesc care se reflectă în datele lingvistice. Întrucât limba română constituie o matrice în care engleza și *globish* (o versiune pragmatică simplificată a limbii engleze) sunt încorporate și devin parte a unui nou cod dinamic, menit să fie modificat la toate nivelurile (lexical, morfologic și sintactic), percepția vorbitorilor native de română asupra *romglezei* reprezintă o dimensiune importantă. Ca atare, această lucrare va analiza percepția nativilor cu privire la utilizarea *romglezei* în spațiul cibernetic și în interacțiunile față în față: utilizarea codului creat, preferințele și mecanismele de selecție a unor structuri, frecvența *code-switching-ului* și a *code-mixing-ului* atât în contexte formale, cât și informale, precum și gradul de universalitate al codului utilizat. Rezultatele vor oferi nu doar o perspectivă asupra aspectelor ce țin de romgleză, ci și asupra proceselor cognitive implicate și a motivelor care declanșează aceste procese de selecție.

Cuvinte-cheie: *imaginar colectiv, romgleză, globish, procese cognitive, interacțiuni online și offline*

Introduction

In the context of globalisation, increased use of new technologies and social media platforms, the Romanian language has acquired a new dimension, Romglish, which is a dynamic code that reflects people's adoption and adaptation of global values, elements, and trends both at the sociocultural level, and the linguistic level. Wanting to document the features of this code and its propensity to render an up-to-date representation of Romanian collective imaginary, our attention to Romglish is linked to its rapid creative, dynamic, and fluid nature, changing from a controversial and rejected code to an embraced and highly investigated linguistic reality (see for example Zafiu 2001; Călărășu 2003; Stochițoiu Ichim 2006; Ungureanu 2010a, 2010b; Nicolaescu 2015; Radu 2020; Radu, Cotoc 2021).

This paper contains a theoretical part in which we present the state of the art regarding the use of Romglish in Romanian society: the use of Romglish as an embedded practice in everyday discourses both online and face-to-face and its role in articulating identities and revealing the current Romanian collective imaginary. The paper also contains a practical part in which we analyse the results obtained in a survey administered in the timespan October-November 2022 with the purpose of investigating the current use of this code and respondents' perception of the situations in which they use this code, the reasons for using this code and the impact this code has on them.

Romglish: State of the Art

Romglish represents a new facet of the Romanian language, showing how malleable this language is, how much potential it has, and that English influences current Romanian to a great extent. The term has been used to label cases "perceived as *excessive borrowing* or for the adaptation of lexical elements or phrasal constituents from English into Romanian, such as calques, and sometimes for the cases of code-mixing" (Vişan, 2016, 138). Nevertheless, in recent years, the effects of globalisation, the impact of digital technologies, and new realities which emerged as a consequence (new devices, new apps, new fields of expertise, and new jobs) have changed the status of this new code and the interactional patterns and linguistic manifestations in which we encounter it. Hence, we could state that its occurrence is already established in Romanian society, even though it is always changing and evolving in accordance with the rapid changes in the sociocultural context influenced by global trends. This makes it a dynamic code, "a new glocal (global and local) variety of language, which is created online and expands offline as well, acting like a boomerang between the online and the offline discursive spaces" (Radu, Cotoc 2021, 723).

We consider Romglish to be a *modus vivendi* because the use of this code constructs the reality for the discursive participants and the cognitive frameworks operating in day-to-day interactions. We could also adapt Saxena's reflections (2014) and state that Romglish reflects 'lifestyle diglossia', as "the language choices (such as language change or shift) people make are closely connected to chosen lifestyles" (Lytra 2016, 137). These chosen lifestyles are represented by an entire conglomeration of facts, activities, products, situations, events, and festivals which are extended from a global level to different local communities worldwide (Globish phenomena). The Romanian sphere acts like a magnet to this rapid expansion and integration of global elements into the culture and everyday practices, acquiring new ways of acting faster and more efficiently than the conventional ways (see Marinescu 2012, 88). Moreover, the manner in which information is displayed and disseminated through social media promotes

increasingly homogeneous societal patterns with a visible effect in the Romanian sociocultural sphere where foreign elements are integrated rather than rejected or ignored. In this respect, the digital environment is the engine of communication at the global level, contributing to the creation of a global society (see Marinescu 2012, 88). Other researchers mention the concept of “global village” to define the way in which people “are increasingly connected by electric (or electronic) technologies, which virtually eliminate the effects of space and time so that the globe contracts into one interconnected, metaphorical ‘village’” (Gibson and Murray 2012, 312). We witness the global village effects in every field of activity and we provide several concrete examples to support this view: fitness programmes include and are based mainly on English terminology. For instance, fitness trainers use *squats* instead of *genuflexiuni*, *push-ups* instead of *flotări*, there are new exercises which do not even have a Romanian equivalent (*burpees*); new methods have been developed in landscaping and gardening (see the example of *raised beds*); more and more people watch Netflix instead of/more than local/national TV channels (PRO TV, Atena 1, TVR 1, etc.); eating out and cuisine (see the examples of *steak*, *brunch*, *fine dining*, *happy hour*). Regular exposure to the same content triggers the integration of English terms in the flow of discourses in an automatic, even unconscious manner, the result being Globish and the feeling of overfamiliarity while code-switching and code-mixing. We thus experience an imaginative work that is “part of backstage cognition, invisible to us and taken for granted” relatable to what Fauconnier and Turner employ to refer to the use of desktop interface (2002, 23).

This code shows a clear link between language and identity, articulating identities and stories which activate the current Romanian collective imaginary and revealing collective imagination which is encoded in linguistic facts. Even more so, the use of Romglish shows: “the desire of users to be connected to a reality through the use of new technologies, but also the desire not to lose sight of the prestige attracted by the use of the English language, the temptation of the West, without omitting the mother tongue, the awareness of belonging to the Romanian linguistic space”³ (our translation). Thus, Romglish contributes to the performative construction of a desired up-to-date ‘prestigious’ individual and group identity and Romanian collective imaginary. In the same line of thought put forward by Lytra who states that “language users move fluidly and flexibly across languages in social contexts” (2016, 137), we could say that Romglish stands as an example of fluidity and flexibility in discourses in which and through which identities are constructed. Also, using and understanding

³ dorința utilizatorilor de a fi conectați la o realitate trecută prin prisma noilor tehnologii, dar și dorința de a nu pierde din vedere prestigiul atras de folosirea limbii engleze, tentația Occidentului, fără a omite însă limba maternă, conștiința apartenenței la spațiul lingvistic românesc (Radu 2020, 404).

Romglish entails power relations and inclusion-exclusion dynamics in terms of group identification and membership. We also agree with Lytra, adapt her line of thought to the use of Romglish and state that “beliefs about language are never neutral; rather, they provide a window to investigating how individuals and groups make sense of their own language activity, how some languages, language varieties or linguistic forms are more valued than others and how ascribed values may be accepted or resisted” (2016, 135). This makes Romglish a social and cultural construction specific to and adopted in different manners by various individuals, groups and communities with the desire to mark group membership through linguistic resources and attitudes towards language and linguistic codes.

Methodology

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to explore the attitude of native speakers of Romanian towards the use of Romglish both in online and face-to-face interaction. This would provide insight into the Romanian collective imaginary in the context of a digital and globalised world, reflecting local identities and stances.

Participants and Procedure

The research method used was the survey (Google Forms) which was administered in the timespan October-November 2022. We analysed the data collected quantitatively and qualitatively.

The first section of the survey collects demographic information, and we analysed the responses provided by 159 participants in the research, out of which 133 were female (83.6%) and 26 male (16.4%). The age of the participants is 18-20 (23.3%), 21-30 (21.4%), 31-40 (42.8%), 41-50 (11.3%), 51-60 (1.3%). Roughly half of the participants declared having a Bachelor degree or being enrolled in a Bachelor programme (52.2%); 23.9% of the respondents have a Master degree or are enrolled in a Master programme; 13.8% of the respondents have a high school diploma; 9.4% are either enrolled in doctoral studies or hold a PhD (see Figure 1 below). As shown by these socio-demographic variables, the vast majority of our respondents are women who live in urban areas and who hold a university degree (or are enrolled at a university). As such, the results of the study are based, in their vast majority, on the perspective of a highly educated urban feminine group.

159 responses

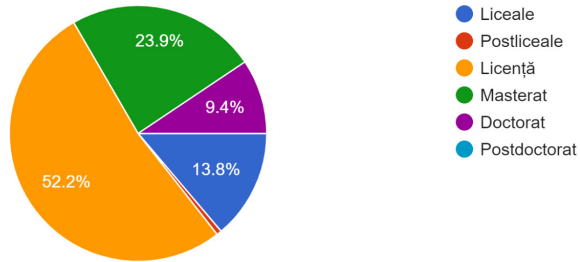


Figure 1 Studies

The vast majority of the participants live in an urban area (89.9%), while the remaining 10.1% live in a rural area (see Figure 2 below).

159 responses

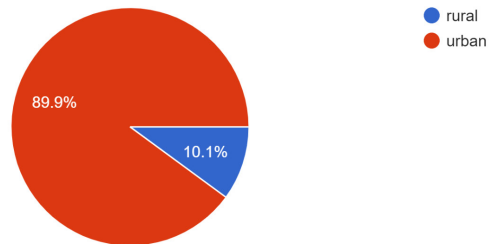


Figure 2 Urban versus Rural Area

We also asked our participants to select the social network sites on which they have an account. The results show that the preferred social network sites can be organised in sets of three: set 1 includes the three most used platforms by the Romanians, namely WhatsApp, Facebook and YouTube, set 2 follows closely and is represented by Pinterest, LinkedIn, and TikTok, set 3 includes the least used platforms: Twitter, Reddit and Telegram. It comes as no surprise that all respondents have a social media platform as none of them chose the option “I do not have an account on any social media platform” (see Figure 3 below).

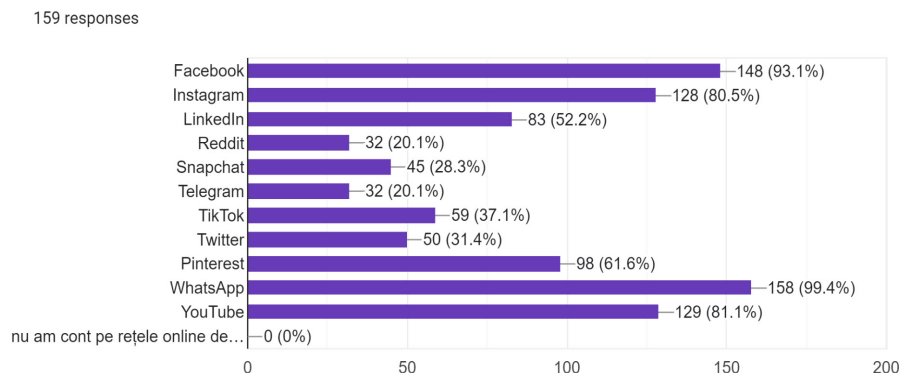


Figure 3 Social Media Presence

Research Instruments

The survey contains 3 main sections: the first section (Demographic information) contains the 5 items described above; the second section focuses on features of Romglish and includes 8 items (two open questions, a 5-point Likert scale, 3 checkboxes, 2 multiple choice items) and the last section focuses on concrete examples of Romglish (12 items), including 1 multiple choice item; 7 checkboxes and 4 open questions.

Research Hypotheses

Our study targeted the following research hypotheses:

1. Romglish has become as popular in face-to-face interactions as it is in cyberspace.
2. Native speakers of Romanian use Romglish in their discourse in order to show distance in relation to various situations, rendering taboo words and ideas.
3. It is used to mark prestige in communication and interaction and it constructs layers of individual and group identity.
4. When using this hybrid idiom, Romanians are motivated by the familiarity, precision, and up-to-dateness of Romglish.

Results and Analysis of Results

The study analyses a selection of the responses, placing the findings in line with our research hypotheses, and demonstrating how respondents perceive the use of Romglish in everyday interactions. We provide our translation for each of the responses selected in this study.

The first section of the survey, *Romglish: general aspects*, focuses on our respondents' general use of Romglish: their understanding of the concept, the extent to which they use Romglish in general and in swearing, the kind of structures they use, the context and reasons for using it. This offers us an overview of the status quo of Romglish both in online and offline interactions.

Related to the Romanians' perception of the use of Romglish, we started our research by asking our respondents to define Romglish. According to them, the use of Romglish is seen negatively or positively in the Romanian collective imaginary. We notice that the responses analysed configure five broad representations of Romglish that are set in the linguistic data.

Familiarity Framework Representation: 72 of the respondents associate Romglish with a certain degree of familiarity, stating that Romglish represents for them familiarity, frequent and colloquial use and a smooth flow in communication. For these respondents, Romglish means "combining the Romanian language with phrases from the English language that have become much more often used nowadays than their Romanian version"⁴, "the use of English words in current Romanian speech"⁵, "English words that are used in Romanian and everyone knows what they mean"⁶, "Romanian and English lexis and grammar combination, a means to simplify interactions or make them more interesting"⁷.

Negative and Unfavorable Representation: 12 users consider Romglish in the frame of a negative perspective on language change, constituting what Crystal labelled as prophets of doom (1999, 2005) who do not swim with the tide in this sea of language change. Their answers reflect reluctance, rejection, invalidation and disapproval: "adaptation/improper use of English words when

⁴ Combinarea limbii romane cu sintagme provenite din limba engleza care au devenit mult mai des folosite în zilele noastre, decat varianta lor in romana.

⁵ Folosirea de cuvinte din engleza în vorbirea curentă în limba română.

⁶ Cuvinte din engleza care se folosesc în română și toți știu ce înseamnă.

⁷ Folosirea in conversatii a unui amestec de cuvinte din limba engleza si limba romana cu scopul de a simplifica conversatia sau de a o mai interesanta , aparent doar.

speaking Romanian”⁸, “a broken mix between the 2 languages”⁹, “barbarisms used extensively”¹⁰, “a mumble jumble”¹¹, “the process by which the Romanian speaks faster than she/he thinks and adds terms from English in speech”¹².

Force of habit and Frame of Mind Representation: 28 respondents view Romglish as a spontaneous, practical, and fast linguistic production. In this respect, a respondent highlights the reasons that prompt the use of Romglish: “the intention of emphasising a message or a particular state of mind”¹³, “the purpose of rendering an idea faster by selecting English words when forgetting the Romanian equivalent”¹⁴, “By Romglish I understand using words from English and Romanian to form sentences/phrases faster.”¹⁵ Another user mentions the genuineness and easiness of expressing one’s ideas using English words embedded in the Romanian language: “In general, when English sounds better than Romanian, it is easier to express the idea”¹⁶. 4 respondents even use Romglish in defining the concept: “*the switch* between Romanian and English in the same sentence”¹⁷ (our emphasis). It is also noted by some respondents that Romanians modify English words using Romanian morphology: “modifying some English words to make them sound Romanian (by attaching Romanian suffixes, etc.)”¹⁸.

Fil-in-the-gap and Prestige Representation: The embeddedness of words/phrases/structures in English by native speakers of Romanian in their discourse is associated by 20 respondents with the rendering of concepts, ideas, and situations with precision, fidelity, and accuracy. Operating within this representation sometimes entails that people use words in English even if there are words in Romanian to describe the reality expressed by these words, but the English version is preferred, nonetheless. As such, some respondents state: “The usual use of words of foreign origin to better iterate certain feelings,

⁸ adaptarea/folosirea în mod necorespunzător a cuvintelor englezești în vorbirea în limba română

⁹ Un mix stalcit între cele 2 limbi

¹⁰ Barbarisme folosite extensiv

¹¹ O varza în care nu știi ce vorbești

¹² Procesul prin care românul vorbește mai repede decât gândește și adaugă termeni în vorbire provenite din engleză.

¹³ scopul de a accentua mesajul sau o anumită stare

¹⁴ scopul de a-ți termina ideea într-un timp mai rapid prin încorporarea unor cuvinte în engleza în cazul în care ai uitat pe moment corespondentul aceluși cuvânt sau acelei expresii în limba română.

¹⁵ Prin romgleză înțeleg folosirea cuvintelor provenite din engleză și română pentru a forma propoziții/fraze rapide.

¹⁶ În general când engleza suna mai bine decât româna sau e mai ușor de exprimat ideea.

¹⁷ *Switch-ul* între română și engleza în aceeași frază

¹⁸ Modificarea unor cuvinte din engleza astfel încât să pară românești (prin atașare de sufixe românești etc).

actions, etc., because we have the impression that the Romanian language does not have an equivalent.”¹⁹; “Using English words and expressions, either to be 'cool' or to fill a real gap in the Romanian language”²⁰; “replacing words in speech when we have a slip of the tongue and instead of explaining what it means we find an English term for that word to ease the conversation”²¹, “To use words or expressions in English in a conversation in Romanian to better express a thing, a state or a situation”²².

Representation connected to the Digital medium: The last broad representation of Romglish shows that the respondents consider this mix as being connected to the world of social media, the Internet, and professional communication. This representation is different from the fill-in-the-gaps and prestige representation in that it covers a new reality. 23 of the respondents' answers include: “Words/expressions taken from the English language and adapted to the Romanian language, most often encountered in the business environment or the Internet.”²³; “A combination between Romanian and English, usually used by young people, both in face-to-face interactions and on social networks.”²⁴; “A linguistic phenomenon, a hybrid between the Romanian and English languages as an effect of globalization in various fields (IT, economy, finance, mass media, advertising, etc.)”²⁵. In the Romanian collective imaginary, Romglish is already perceived also as an independent idiom as can be seen in the following answer given by one of our respondents: “Romglish is a **dialect** of the Romanian language spoken by Romanian speakers who are exposed to the English language because of their profession or the time they spend on social platforms, the Internet, etc. where English is used.” (Our emphasis)²⁶.

¹⁹ Folosirea în mod uzual a unor cuvinte de proveniență străină pentru a mai bine itera anumite sentimente, acțiuni etc, deoarece ni se pare ca nu găsim un echivalent în limba română

²⁰ Apelarea la cuvinte și expresii în engleza, fie pentru a fi 'cool', fie pentru a suplini o reala lacuna a limbii romane.

²¹ înlocuirea cuvintelor în vorbire cand avem un lapsus si în loc sa explicăm ceea ce înseamnă găsim un termen în engleza pentru acel cuvânt pentru ușurarea conversatiei.

²² Sa folosesc cuvinte sau expresii în limba engleza într-o conversație în limba română pentru a exprima mai bine, un lucru, o stare sau o situatie.

²³ Cuvinte/expresii preluate din limba engleza si adaptate limbii romane, cel mai des întâlnite în mediul de afaceri sau internet.

²⁴ O combinatie între română și engleza, folosită uzual de persoanele tinere, atat în discuțiile fata-n fata, cât și pe rețelele de socializare.

²⁵ Un fenomen lingvistic, o hibridizare între limbile română și engleză ca efect al globalizării în diverse domenii (IT, economie, finanțe, mass-media, publicitate etc.).

²⁶ Romgleza e un dialect al limbii române vorbită de vorbitori romani care sunt expusi limbii engleze din cauza profesiei sau a timpului petrecut pe platforme sociale, internet etc. unde se folosește limba engleza.

When asked how frequently they use English words/structures/sentences in Romanian, we notice that more than half of our respondents declare they do this often (25,8%), and very often (28,3%), 27,7% declare doing this sometimes. Only a small percentage declare doing this rarely (16,4%), while only 1,9% declare never doing this (see Figure 4 below).

159 responses

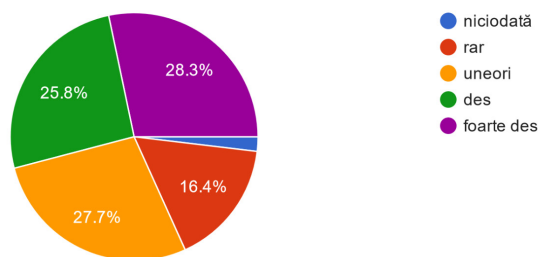


Figure 4 Frequency of Use

As shown in Figure 5 below, our respondents consider that the mix of English with Romanian is found in their discourse mainly at the level of words (90.6%), but high percentages are also found with more complex structures (52.2%), entire clauses or sentences (41.5%), and English suffixes (40.9%). Only 2.5% state that this linguistic production does not characterise their discourse.

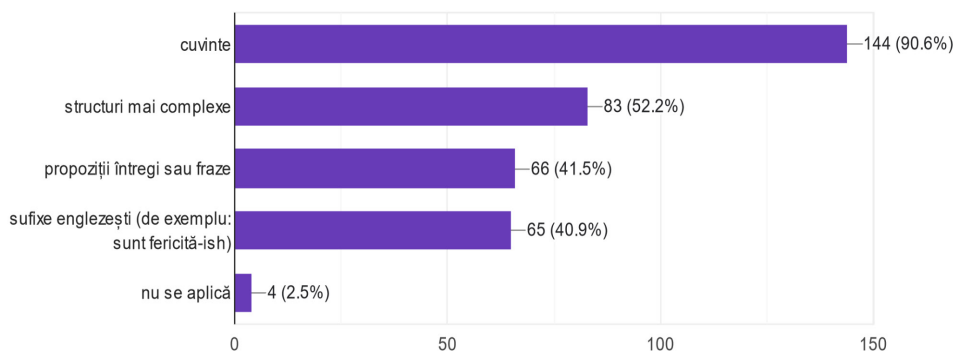


Figure 5 English Structures

When asked to mention the situations in which they mix English with Romanian, the vast majority of our respondents declare using this mix both online and face-to-face (91.2%), while only 5.7% limit this to face-to-face

interactions and only 3.1% declare not using this mix in any situation. Interestingly enough, no respondents affirmed to limit this mix to the online environment (see Figure 6 below).

159 responses

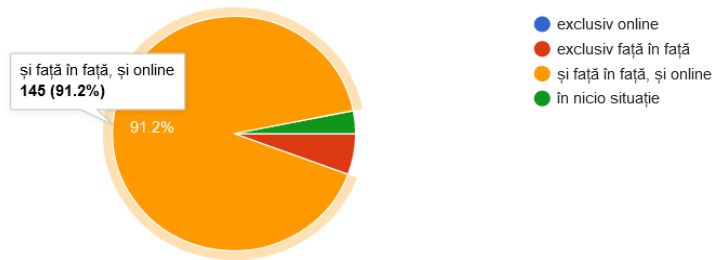


Figure 6 Online vs. Face to face

When asked to choose the reasons for mixing the two codes, our respondents' selection shows that the five representations of the Romanian collective imaginary are configured again in their answers: the highest percentage (76.1%) is registered for the precision of the English terms (fill-in-the-gap and prestige representation), 51.6% of the respondents opt for mixing the codes because it comes natural for them (force of habit and frame of mind representation), 45.9% select adaptation to the interlocutor(s) as a reason for their mix between English and Romanian (familiarity framework representation), the lack of a proper Romanian equivalent (representation connected to the digital medium) is chosen by 67.3% of our respondents (see Figure 7 below).

159 responses

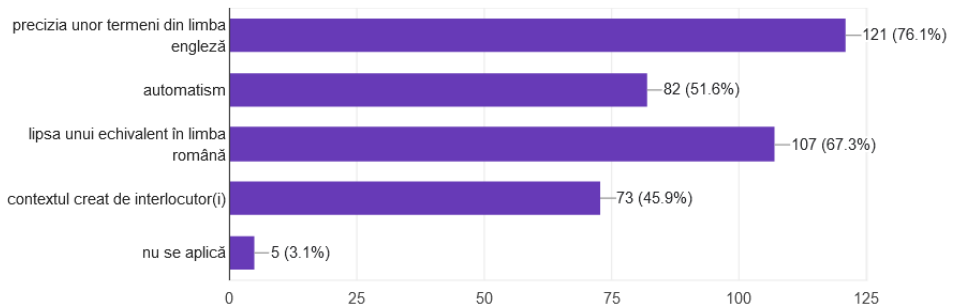


Figure 7 Reasons for Mixing the two codes

Regarding the use of swearing and curse words, the percentages obtained are quite similar (Figure 8): 28.3% of our respondents declare swearing both in Romanian and in English; 27% of our respondents declare that they do not swear in any of these two languages; 20.1% of our respondents state that they swear mostly in Romanian; 18.9% of our respondents affirm that they swear in English; a very small percentage declares swearing only in Romanian (5%) and only 0.6% claim that they swear only in English.

159 responses



Figure 8 Use of swearing and curse words

When motivating their choice to swear in English and/or in Romanian, we notice that the vast majority of the respondents consider that swearing in English offers a distance towards the gravity of a situation and constitutes a face-saving strategy, acting as a non-identification linguistic manoeuvre. In our respondents' answers, we identify recurrent ideas: swearing in English is less vulgar, it sounds lighter, it does not have the same weight as in Romanian, it does not sound as bad, in the mother tongue everything sounds more serious, swearing in English seems less aggressive, more interesting and appropriate to the context, swearing in Romanian sounds much too harsh, swearing in English gives you the chance that some people will not understand you, some insults in the English language have become more "socially acceptable", they do not have the same impact/level of vulgarity, kids do not understand the English swearing, using the English language seems softer, there is the tendency for some respondents to use Romanian when they are more upset and English when they are not so angry.

The second section of the survey, *Romglish: examples*, focuses on concrete examples in Romglish. We designed this section in a bi-partite manner: eliciting our respondents to select from a set of given examples that would function as incentives and to illustrate instances of Romglish that they use on a regular basis. In this way, we first activate the representations that are fixed in the linguistic data of the Romanian collective imaginary, and then we investigate linguistic facts, organised according to conceptual and cultural frameworks in

terms of space-time-technological configurations. In this sense, we established concrete linguistic representations at the level of discourse: verbs, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs and discursive markers/linking words/disjuncts. In what follows we present the incentives offered and the percentages obtained, and then we include the examples produced by our respondents. These examples are reproduced word-for-word: some of them are isolated words, while others are integrated into the Romanian matrix and some are also presented in a sentence. Accordingly, we organise them into separate categories by arranging the isolated elements in alphabetical order and by making a selection of some of the recurrent examples integrated into Romanian and those presented in a sentence.

The incentives that we gave for verbs are illustrated in Figure 9 below.

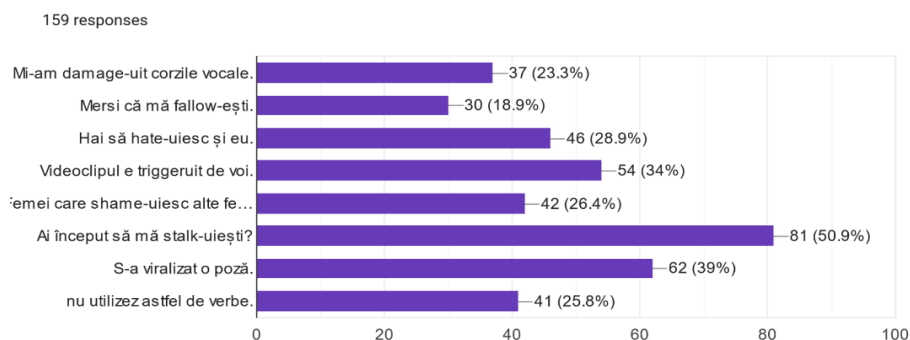


Figure 9 Verbs

The verb category inventory obtained from the respondents' answers indicates a heterogenous arena for this part of speech as there are examples in which there is no indication concerning the context of use or the form of the verb, whereas other examples illustrate different forms of the verb (indicative present, past tense, participle, etc.), sentences integrating English verbs, and various forms which are adapted to Romanian grammar. We write the examples exactly as they were written by our respondents as we came across different spellings for the same words/structures, and different graphical signs for some words/structures. We consider this to show the versatility of Romglish, its high level of flexibility, and the extent to which it is integrated into the Romanian matrix.

The verbs mentioned by our respondents include the categories below.

Long infinitives in English: *to book, to clear, to do, to research, to run, to stream, to study, to wake.*

Bare infinitives in English: *afford, block, bully, cancel, commit (used in IT context), damage, follow, give, guess, imagine, leave, love, match, manage, overthink, play, push, review, send, spend, slay, spread, stalk, start, think, try, unfriend, unsee, update, understand, upload, wish, work, write.*

Modal auxiliaries: *could, must, should, would.*

Ing forms: *loving, shaming, slaying, sourcing, stalking.*

Long infinitives containing the Romanian infinitive particle 'a' and an English verb with Romanian suffixes: *a blendui, a bullyingui, a challenge-ui, a doxui (to dox someone), a escala, a fake-ui, a te focusa, a hackui (to hack), a hate-ui, a matche-ui, a merge-ui, a posta, a share-ui, a sharui, a sherui* (different spellings are provided), *a se spauna (to spawn), a stolkări, a tăgui, a train-ui, a trigger-ui, a updata.*

Conjugated verbs with Romanian suffixes. In this case, we noticed the following subcategories:

Present tense 1st person: *bold-uiesc, cancellez, download-ez, downloadez, doxuiesc, drink-uiesc forwardez, manage-uiesc, rejectez, share-uiesc, shareuiesc, sheruiesc, stanez, switch-uiesc, updatez, upload-ez, zapez.*

Present tense 2nd and 3rd person: *forward-eaza, spam-uiesti, trigger-uieste,*

Past Participle with Romanian suffixes: *challengeuit, chase-uit, crush-uit, download-at, failuit, focusat, follow-uit, hate-uit, hug-uit, like-uit, randomizat, "share-uit", simmeruit, spawnat, stalkuit, strike-uit, tagg-uit, triggeruit, walk-uit.*

Past tense with Romanian auxiliary and suffixes: *ai downloadat; ai shareuit, ai scrolat.*

Romanian verbs that are easily combined with English nouns and form verb groups: *dau follow/like, dai pe browse in google si gasesti; a da follow, a da tweet, a face stream/live, a face research, si-a luat cancel, a te pune online.*

Examples presented in a sentence: *Îmi kill-uești timpul; Let's do it!; Go ahead!; M-am „trigăruit”.; Cine te-a „pissed-offuit”?; Are you kidding me?; I love când faci asta. Hai, let's sing!; Hai sa talk-uim.; Let's go!; Come on!; "s-a spawnat"; "l-a banat"; it is amazing (it is + adj.); f**k it; move it; f**k off.*

The incentives that we gave for nouns are illustrated in Figure 10 below.

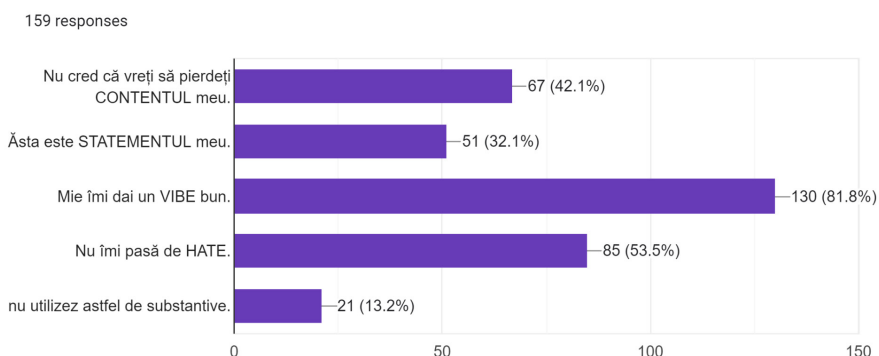


Figure 10 Nouns

The nouns mentioned by the respondents include:

Simple and compound singular nouns: *account, attachment, awareness, baby, banger, beauty, block, blush, bias, bird, boss, bot, brand, breakfast, bronzer, brother, boy, bully, business, call, cash, chat, coach, code, coffee, comment, company, computer, content, context, creep, date, death, delivery, design, desktop, digitization, dinner, discount, dog, dude, e-mail, engagement, expat, eyeshadow, fashion, fast-food, feedback, feeling, flag, flow, follow-up, follower, food, freak, friend, friendship, f***er, fun, gap, genius, glue, girl, gold-digger, grass, hate, hater, heads-up, highlight, highlighter, home, income, issue, job, judgement, knowledge, laptop, life, lifestyle, like, line-up, link, lip gloss, lipstick, look, looser, love, lunch, make-up, mall, man, manager, management, mate, match, master, milestone, mindset, moron, motherhood, mouse, movie, music, narrative, office, outfit, party, peeler, pen, photo/picture, pinkie, plot, polish, post, post-it, powerpoint, printer, my problem, quote, ramp-up, reach, relationship, reminder, review, room, sample, scam, selfie, sequel, shit, sister, skill, sleep, sleepover, smartphone, smile, song, spam, snitch, statement, stuff, story, style, sunshine, target, task, team, thing, throwback, time, toner, tracker, trainer, trigger, update, user, value, vibe, view, vlogger, voice pe WhatsApp (i.e. voice message), weekend, wireless, workshop.*

Verbal nouns: *brainstorming, learning, shaming, trending, writing.*

Plural nouns: *dislikes, facts, followers, fries, goosebumps, guys, hugs, insights, pancakes, subscribers, views.*

English nouns with the Romanian definite article: *challenge-ul, deploy-ul, makeup-ul, meetingul, release-ul, share-ul, supplier-ul, workout-ul.*

English nouns with Romanian suffixes: *chill-uială, hater-eală.*

English nouns spelled out in Romanian and phonetically adapted to the Romanian language: *folouârși, influensări.*

Collocations: *big brain, death stare, know-how, safe space, social media, working space.*

Idioms: *in the mood.*

Acronyms: *PC, PIE (public interest entities).*

False Friends: *atașament* (In Romanian, the noun *atașament* is synonym with love/affection, while the English noun *attachment* means a file that is attached to an email message).

Words originating in the English language but being integrated into the Romanian language: *postare, speakeri.*

Video games words: *blueprint, marauder, moon lord, parkour.*

The incentives that we gave for adjectives and adverbs are illustrated in Figure 11 below.

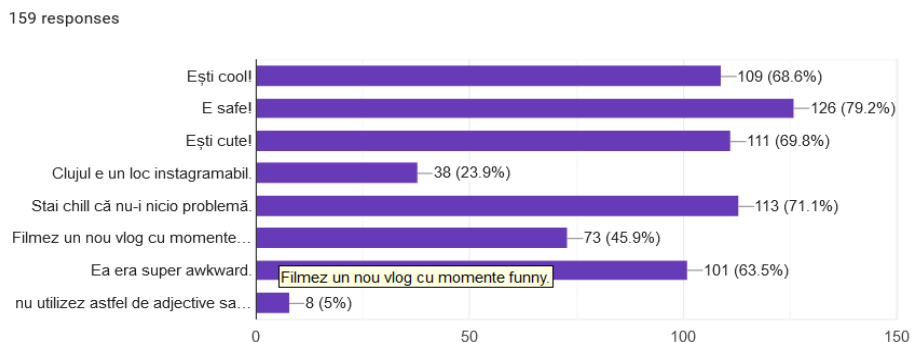


Figure 11 Adjectives and Adverbs

In the case of adjectives and adverbs, the input provided by our respondents can be divided into individual words (adjectives, adjective phrases, and adverbs), adjectives used in sentences and examples with metalinguistic comments.

Individual words: *actually, adorable, amazing, angry, average, awkward, awesome, bad, basic, basically, beautiful, best, bored, boring, brave, brilliant, busy, catchy, challenging, cheap, chill, cocky, comfy, confident, confusing, cool, crappy, crazy, creative, creepy, cringe, custom, cute, damaged, definitely, delicious, disappointing, disgusting, dizzy, dull, easy, embarrassed, excited, exhausted, expensive, fabulous, fair, fashionable, fast, flabbergasted, fortunate, frankly, freaky, free, friendly, fun, funny, full, good, gorgeous, great, happy, hardly ever, haunting, heavy weight, horror, horrible, hot, huge, icky, iconic, important, interesting, jealous, kind, lame, light weight, likely, literally, loud, lovely, loose, lousy, low, magical, maybe, meanwhile, moody, naive, nasty, next time, nice, nicely, no-fun, of course, old, open-minded, overwhelming, peachy, positive, precious, pretty, pushy, pussy, quick, quirky, random, randomly, tame, tasty, really, relaxed, sad, safe, satisfying, savage, scary, seldom, seriously, sexy, shaky, shitty, shook, silly, slay, sleepy, slow, smart, spooky, strange, strong, stupid, sure, sweet, thoughtful, tired, trending, trendy, true, ugly, uncanny, unhinged, unlikely, unusual, usually, vibey, viral, weird, wonderful, worthy, yucky.*

Adjectives used in sentences: *Stai interesting!; Proful de gramatica normativa e chill.; Ce fancy ești!; Ești fashion azi!; Ce aesthetic arată!; sunt foarte hungry; Ce beautiful ești!; Ce cool!; Este chiar reliable; , Nu mai fi fake!; Ai văzut ce messed-up lucru a făcut?.*

Examples with metalinguistic comments: *perfect (bine, asta ține de pronunție)* (here the respondent makes a comment drawing the reader's attention to the fact that the pronunciation is English), *'kinda + adj', E kinda... (kinda kind), (insta pin) worthy.*

The incentives that we offered our respondents for English discursive markers/linking words/disjuncts are mentioned in Figure 12 below.

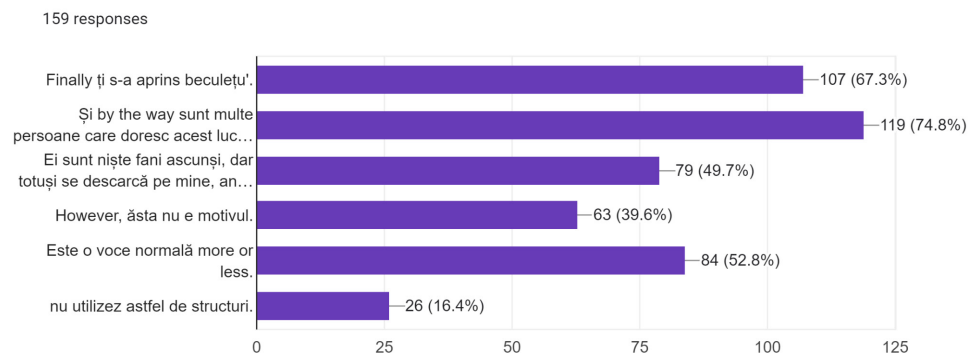


Figure 12 Discursive markers/linking words/disjuncts

The examples provided by our respondents constitute different grammatical structures (adverbs, connectives, idioms, collocations, interjections) and they are used to render different nuances of discourse that we highlight using the categories from the classification for discourse markers provided by the Cambridge dictionary. It's worth noting that there are terms and structures that, depending on the context, could fit into multiple categories.

Sounding less direct: *more or less, now and then, unlike, at least (not), whenever, usually, just in case, again.*

Linking words: *although, but, moreover, nonetheless.*

Ending a conversation: *all in all, anyway, anyways, at last, finally, in conclusion, in the end, after all, eventually, in any case.*

Organising/Ordering what we say: *firstly, first of all, on the other hand, at the same time, nevertheless, besides, anyhow, though, somehow, such as, even if, accordingly, also, therefore, even so far, as if.*

Changing the focus: *ohhh wait, out of nowhere, out of context, (but) also, meanwhile, be right back.*

Monitor what we say: *as I was saying, to be more specific, I mean, actually, so, well, still.*

Shared knowledge: *you know, obvious!, true!, For your information, by the way, like.*

Responses: *sure, for sure, and what do you think?, really, I think so, for real, come on, ok.*

Showing attitude: *apparently, basically, not gonna lie, honestly, to be honest, thank god, I'm afraid, no way, what the f**k, however, whatever, nevermind, (and I was) like + adjective/interjection/noun, etc.*

Interjections: *meh, ohhh wait, yuks.*

Informal spelling: *aaaaand, c'mon.*

CMC acronyms: *asap (as soon as possible), btw, ikr (i know right), omg.*

Examples presented in a sentence: *Era literally în sertar și tot nu l-a văzut.; Poți să iei școala de șoferi, no biggie.; obviously că nu am știut să-i răspund.; And so, noi am fost aleși.*

When asked what they think about discourses that contain Romglish elements, the vast majority of our respondents considered that these discourses are informal (61.6%), almost half of them considered these discourses to be up-to-date (45.3%) and playful (36.5%). Some of our respondents associated these discourses with attractiveness, familiarity, precision, clarity, prestige, up-to-dateness, playfulness, superiority, automatism, and habit, while others consider these discourses as being annoying, superficial, stupid, frivolous, sometimes exaggerated and embarrassing, showing indecision and bad taste, lack of respect for the Romanian language, lack of self-confidence.

Using Romglish is also a matter of how others perceive our respondents' discourses. Thus, when asked whether they had been criticised for using Romglish excessively, only 15.7% of our respondents declared that this was not the case, 45.3% declared that this had not happened to them, and 39% declared having been criticised (see Figure 13 below).

159 responses

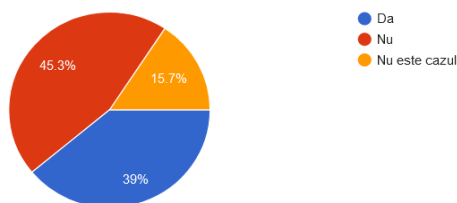


Figure 13 How others perceive our respondents' discourses

Investigating further, as can be seen in Figure 14, we notice that the people most likely to make comments regarding the excessive use of Romglish by our respondents are: someone in the family (17.6%), a friend (16.4%), an acquaintance (15.1%), a colleague (11.3%) and a superior (3.1%).

In contrast with how our respondents' discourse is perceived by other people, we also analysed the way in which our respondents perceive other people's use of Romglish elements. Our respondents' answers show that approximately half of them show impartiality towards the use of these elements (54.1%), 18.2% of the respondents do not like this mix, but they do not react verbally, and a similar percentage (26.4%) feel encouraged to use them as well when other people use them, 12.6% consider this mix to be a sign of creativity.

159 responses

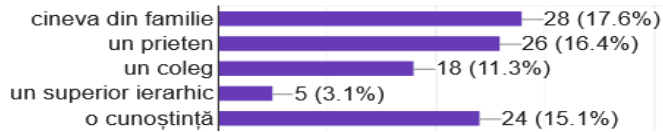


Figure 14 Who made comments regarding the excessive use of Romglish

There are also other considerations regarding our respondents' perception of Romglish elements in other people's discourse: "it depends on the situation, but I prefer to use Romanian among Romanians and English with foreigners"²⁷, "it bothers me, but I don't react verbally, it seems to me like a sign of degradation of the Romanian language"²⁸, "it seems perfectly normal to me, as long as it is not used excessively/it is not used to stand out and create a 'cool' image"²⁹, "I'd mind excessive use"³⁰, "It depends from case to case, on the correctness of the terms used and their purpose"³¹, "If there are a few words but not very frequent, I think it's ok, but if there are mixed expressions or the frequency is high, I don't like it"³², "It's something I'm trying to change in myself, but not in others"³³, "It depends on the context and on the amount of mixed terms"³⁴, "Although I still have 'slips', I believe that we should limit the use of Romglish, in order not to destroy the Romanian language"³⁵, "Sometimes I found it annoying, especially in situations in which the examples of Romglish were improper (or if I disliked the person using them)"³⁶, "I draw the interlocutor's attention in case she/he does not know English"³⁷, "It depends on the circumstances. If it is excessive and unjustified, I would draw the speaker's attention. If she/he does it sparingly and brings more meaning to the discourse by doing so, that's perfectly fine"³⁸.

²⁷ depinde de situație, dar prefer folosirea limbii române între români și a limbii engleze cu străinii

²⁸ mă deranjează, dar nu reacționez verbal, mi se pare un semn de degradare a limbii române

²⁹ mi se pare perfect normal, atata timp cat nu se folosește excesiv/nu se folosește pentru a ieși în evidența și a crea o imagine 'cool'

³⁰ M-ar deranja folosirea excesivă

³¹ Depinde de la caz la caz, de corectitudinea termenilor folosiți și de scopul lor.

³² Dacă sunt câteva cuvinte dar nu foarte frecvente mi se pare ok, dar dacă sunt expresii amestecate sau frecvența este mare nu îmi place

³³ E un lucru pe care încerc să îl schimb la mine, dar nu și la alții

³⁴ Depinde de context și de cantitatea folosirii termenilor amestecați

³⁵ Deși mai am și eu 'scăpări', consider că ar trebui să limităm folosirea romglezei, ca să nu stâlcim limba română.

³⁶ Câteodată mi s-a întâmplat să deranjeze, mai ales în situațiile în care exemplele de romgleză le-am considerat nereușite (sau dacă persoana ce le folosea îmi era antipatică).

³⁷ Îi atrag atenția în cazul în care interlocutorul lui/ei nu cunoaște limba engleză.

³⁸ Depinde de circumstanțe. Dacă este excesiv și nejustificat, i-aș atrage atenția vorbitorului. Dacă o face cu moderație și aduce un plus de sens discursului prin asta, este perfect în regulă.

Conclusions

The present study aimed at providing an overview of the current status of Romglish and its connection to the construction of a Romanian collective imaginary, while investigating the way in which the respondents of our study claim to use Romglish and how they view this code. This study is also part of a series of more complex research in which we engaged with the purpose of documenting the use of Romglish: Romglish as linguistic phenomena extracted from authentic contexts (Radu 2020), Romglish in authentic contexts as illustrated by YouTubers (Radu, Cotoc 2021). With this study, we add a new dimension to this code, by demonstrating that Romglish has become an essential part of the Romanian highly educated urban feminine group.

Our results show that Romglish is perceived by our respondents as becoming as popular in face-to-face interactions as it is in cyberspace. Moreover, this idiom has become a way of manifestation and, implicitly, of investigation and restoration of the global cultural and collective imaginary into the Romanian/local imaginary, as well as a way of (re)shaping and reconfiguring it according to the current linguistic and non-linguistic trends.

It is also the aim of this study to illustrate that Romglish is a representative facet of the collective imaginary encoded in linguistic facts and organised according to conceptual frameworks, exhibiting a high degree of universality. Correspondingly, when using this hybrid idiom, our respondents are motivated by features of Romglish such as: familiarity, precision, prestige and up-to-dateness.

The added value consists of bringing forward the internal mechanisms of linguistic creativity of Romanian native speakers who, on one hand, use Romglish in their discourse in order to mark the distance in relation to various situations, using English when including taboo words and ideas in their discourse, and, on the other hand, to mark prestige in communication and interaction and to construct complex layers of meaning in formal and informal contexts.

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BUILDING TRANSLATION COMPETENCE THROUGH DIARY STUDIES: AT THE CROSSROADS OF STUDENTS' REFLECTION AND IMAGINATION

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ABSTRACT. *Building Translation Competence through Diary Studies: at the Crossroads of Students' Reflection and Imagination.* Our paper tackles a more practical aspect of the translation training process in the context of translation competence acquisition (TCA) by focusing on a group of students of the Applied Modern Languages Programme, who were in the first year when our research was initiated. This study represents the second part of a small-scale qualitative research, which used diaries as a research instrument to investigate the strategies and tools employed by students as they tried to overcome challenges in translation and to develop good practices for their future career as translators. Participants were asked to reflect on register related issues encountered during the process of learning about and doing translation, since in our teaching experience this is one of the most prominent challenges to overcome. By employing this open-ended tool, we wanted to see

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whether diary keeping increased students' awareness of register related problems and, moreover, whether students integrated reflection as one of the strategies to develop competence in translation. As a follow-up to our initial research, participants (now graduates) were asked to reflect on their study and translation practices and instruments so as to discuss which of these they retained (compared to the first year), what strategies they make use of now both for learning and for doing translation work, and whether they have discovered any new ones that make translator training more effective.

Keywords: *translation competence (acquisition), diary studies, instruments, challenges, good practices*

REZUMAT. Formarea competenței de traducere prin studii de jurnal: la intersecția dintre reflecția și imaginația studenților. Lucrarea noastră abordează un aspect mai practic al procesului de formare în domeniul traducerii în contextul dobândirii competenței de traducere, concentrându-se asupra unui grup de studenți din programul de Limbi Moderne Aplicate, care se aflau în primul an de studiu atunci când am început cercetarea noastră. Acest studiu reprezintă a doua parte a unei cercetări calitative, la scară redusă, care a folosit jurnalul ca instrument de cercetare pentru a investiga strategiile și instrumentele utilizate de studenți în depășirea provocărilor de traducere și pentru dezvoltarea de bune practici pentru viitoarea lor carieră de traducători. Participanții au fost rugați să reflecteze asupra problemelor legate de registru întâlnite în cadrul procesului de învățare despre traducere și de realizare a acesteia, deoarece, în experiența noastră, aceasta este una dintre cele mai importante provocări ce trebuie depășite. Prin utilizarea acestui instrument deschis, am urmărit să vedem dacă ținerea unui jurnal a crescut gradul de conștientizare a studenților cu privire la problemele legate de registru și, mai mult, dacă studenții au integrat reflecția ca una dintre strategiile de dezvoltare a competențelor în domeniul traducerii. Ca o continuare a cercetării noastre inițiale, participanților (acum absolvenți) li s-a cerut să reflecteze asupra modului actual de învățare și asupra practicilor și instrumentelor de traducere folosite, astfel încât să discute pe care dintre acestea le-au păstrat (în comparație cu primul an), ce strategii folosesc acum atât pentru a învăța, cât și pentru a face traduceri și dacă au descoperit altele noi care să facă mai eficientă formarea traducătorilor.

Cuvinte-cheie: *(dobândire de) competență de traducere, studii de jurnal, instrumente, provocări, bune practici*

1. Introduction: Organisation of Research

Our research began in the academic year 2018-2019 following the first semester evaluation of first year students enrolled in the Applied Modern Languages programme at the West University of Timișoara. The evaluation for

the Introduction to Translation Theory and Practice confronted us with the predicament of a 51% pass rate, which prompted us to investigate the possible causes behind this unprecedented event, as well as to research the strategies that assist students in building and developing their translation competence. (It is important to note here that the class in question lasts for two semesters, the first of which was then taught by Andreea Șerban, while the second by Valentina Mureșan.) As a result, we invited students to participate in a small-scale research by keeping diaries in order to encourage them to reflect on their learning experience. The data collected in early 2019 from the 33 student-participants was then divided into two major parts, the former analysing the students' attitudes towards translation-competence development (cf. Șerban and Mureșan 2019, 213-230), and the latter looking at the strategies and tools that students used for doing translation work or for language learning. In the academic year 2020-2021 we added a third part, aiming to follow up on the development of this group of students, who were going to graduate with only two semesters of face to face learning and most of their BA programme unfolding in an online educational context due to the global Covid-19 pandemic.

The longitudinal research perspective was completely justified in the context of a generation who, because of external circumstances, experienced higher demands on self-regulation, had to manage distractions and academic procrastination (Melgaard et al. 2022), and whose academic success relied on their ability to develop as autonomous learners, diary keeping serving as a possible tool in this sense. Thus, a follow-up questionnaire was distributed to the same students in their third year, asking them to focus on the strategies and tools they had employed in translation work over the previous two years. In short, our purpose in this paper is, on the one hand, to look longitudinally at the learning experience and the use of reflection, and on the other hand, to draw some general conclusions regarding the strategies that future students could apply for better translation competence acquisition. Starting from the data provided by the diaries and the questionnaire we will, therefore, categorise and discuss the strategies that the research participants identified, developed, improved and retained in their training as translators so that they can be fully exploited with future generations of students.

2. Theoretical Underpinnings

Drawing on several models of translation competence acquisition such as those developed by PACTE (1998, amended in 2003), EMT (2009, amended in 2017), PETRA-E (2016), Alves and Gonçalves (2007), Gaballo (2009), Göpferich (2019), Kumpulainen (2018), Pym (2003), we define our approach as bottom-up, since we rely on the data provided by the students' diaries to formulate some micro-theories for building translation competence. Furthermore, it must be

noted that we aim to focus on “the early stages of the translation competence acquisition process in a particular translation situation, which requires task-specific knowledge” (Șerban and Mureșan 2019, 216); in other words, we plan to discuss in this paper the strategies students have developed to build translation competence with a focus on register transformations (formal/informal English) and related translations into Romanian.

In a more recent study analysing the development of translation competence at the crossroads of declarative knowledge (or “knowing what”, i.e. a more theoretical approach to TCA) and procedural knowledge (or “knowing how”, i.e. a more practical approach to TCA), Yang and Li (2021) contrast three of the most influential existing TCA models, namely the ones proposed by PACTE (2000, revised 2005), Göpferich (2019), and Alves and Gonçalves (2007), highlighting that Alves and Gonçalves’ model “diverges significantly from both the PACTE model and the Göpferich model [in that] it highlights the role of conscious meta-cognition, whereas the other two models hold that translation competence is primarily procedural knowledge featuring unconsciousness and spontaneous association” (Yang and Li 2021, 117). Meta-reflection, or “thinking about thinking”, is thus fundamental to and guides “skilled performance in translation” (Yang and Li 2021, 120-21), representing also a key issue in our own study.

It is also worth mentioning here that the Chinese researchers conclude their paper by drawing up a model of their own, a translation competence pedagogical model, which focuses on training university students in the art of translation, and which consists of “bilingual competence, transfer competence, strategic competence, pragmatic competence and profession-related competence. From a teaching perspective, [...] the first three competences should be prioritized” (Yang and Li 2021, 143) in order to help students become efficient professional translators. Unlike previous models, which regard bilingual competence as a prerequisite, Yang and Li (2021, 134) consider it a key component in developing TCA, something that our students have also pointed out when discussing their academic translation-related progress (cf. Șerban and Mureșan 2019, 224, 228).

Additionally, Viviana Gaballo’s model also requires a closer look. According to Gaballo, translation is not only a learning tool and a linguistic skill (Gaballo 2009, 46) – alongside reading, writing, speaking and listening – but also a marker of grammatical accuracy and language proficiency, which builds on such related competences as collaboration and reflection (Gaballo 2009, 48-49, 51-52). Since translation is always perfectible, it can benefit a lot from reflective and collaborative work.

As regards our choice of diary studies as a research method, we preferred it because of several reasons. Firstly, the diary has a double function of research tool and learning technique which facilitates reflection and deeper learning, while also helping students develop learner autonomy. Secondly, as a learning tool enhancing reflection, the diary is in alignment with the modern teaching-

learning principles of tertiary education, according to which learning is contextual, collaborative, constructive, self-directed, as well as the effect of teaching and assessment (cf. Devlin and Samarawickrema 2010; Hattie 2009, 2012; Hattie and Yates 2014). In addition to these principles, the four core values of collaboration, reflective thinking, involvement and entrepreneurship represent the foundation of progressive tertiary education, which the West University of Timișoara has adhered to. Thirdly, the diary responds to the current demands of the job market, which treasures such life-long learning competences of employees as adaptability, cross-cultural competence, or virtual collaboration (cf. Davies, Fidler, and Gorbis 2011). Above all, however, we must emphasise the strength of using the diary in language learning research, namely its power to uncover serendipitous findings concerning the diarists' experience of "events, feelings, views [...]" and this can render depth to the study" (Goşa 2014, 83).

3. Research Methodology

Our research, which started as a small-scale qualitative research, has developed along the lines of a longitudinal study. In a nutshell, our research relies on the ethnographic method of investigation and uses the Grounded Theory framework in data analysis. As regards instruments, our research employs both the diary and the online questionnaire, the mixed method of investigation allowing us to follow the progress of TCA and the "routinization" of reflection.

Alongside other instruments such as learning protocols, the learning diary acts as one of the instruments that favours deep learning, that "learners may use [...] to articulate difficulties with comprehending complex concepts, or they may consciously acknowledge which aspects of the learning material they have already understood well" (Nükles et al. 2004, 52). Learner diaries encourage metacognitive strategies, prompting learners to reflect upon the learning process, "to better understand their own learning behaviour and to take responsibility for their learning process", according to Nükles et al. (2004, 52). We opted for an unstructured learner diary in order to collect students' input and yield extensive data, given that this was their first experience with learner diary keeping.

In terms of participants, our research relies on the input of 33 diarists (out of a total number of 79 students enrolled in the first year of the Applied Modern Languages programme in the academic year 2018-2019), who contributed to our initial study focused on attitudes and strategies in building translation competence. For the longitudinal study, there were 25 respondents to the online questionnaire (out of 56 students enrolled in the third year of the same programme), most of whom had participated in our initial research. It is noteworthy that out of the initial 33 participants, 32 completed the Applied Modern Languages programme, with only one student having transferred to a competing programme (Languages and Literatures) within the same faculty.

Due to various constraints, only the most representative quotations from the diaries will be used to illustrate the main findings. In the diarists' responses we chose to include the occasional mistakes, both in order to preserve the authenticity of the data, and to showcase the learner's evolution from the first year of study (the diary entries) to the third year (their responses in the questionnaire), linguistic performance being one of the central sub-competences our students focused on when they discussed about translation competence building. Moreover, the most important words and phrases were italicised in order to highlight the key findings.

4. Findings and Analysis

As mentioned in the first part of the research (Șerban and Mureșan 2019, 222), the data collected was manually processed by both researchers, who analysed the content individually and established their own data-driven category system. The principal emerging categories being strategies for individual practice and group practice, further divided into subcategories for individual work and group work, emphasised in italics. They all reflect the TCA strategies students applied to a larger or smaller extent in order to cope with transferring source texts (STs) to target texts (TTs) as part of their academic tasks.

In our analysis, we understand "learning strategy" according to Mariani's definition, namely that it is "any action which you may have to take to solve a problem in learning, to help you make the most of your learning process, to speed up and optimize your cognitive, affective or social behaviour." Mariani (2002, 45) sees learning strategies as belonging to the learner, different from teaching strategies, unstandardised and discovered by the learner. By "tools"/ "instruments", we refer to any resource such as dictionaries, apps, etc. which the students make use of in their learning strategy.

4.1. Strategies for independent practice

As mentioned in our previous research (Șerban and Mureșan 2019, 222), the diarists found the class on Introduction to Translation Theory and Practice one of the most difficult in their academic experience and most of them wrote about three main types of strategies they applied: firstly, paying more attention in class; secondly, redoing exercises from class, rereading their notes and doing exercises regularly; and finally, reading formal texts in order to build parallel corpora for English and Romanian.

As regards the first strategy, a few diarists mention that *focusing more during class* facilitates the understanding of explanations and enhances performance in classroom activities, becoming very useful in the long run.

I consider that there are two main steps related to learning new things. The first one is *concentrate as much as it is possible during the courses at university*. I tried this method and *it really helped me*, making it easier to understand. (D11)

Several diarists report on *rereading the notes* taken during class and *redoing the exercises* either on the same day or at the weekend to allow for some time in between so that the new information can be absorbed and refreshed during exercise revision.

Of course, at home to make sure that I understand, *I did again the exercises*. (D12)

This semester I tried to do it differently. *Every weekend I resumed the lessons* so I would not be back when the exam arrives. (D16)

Other diarists write about *doing homework regularly*, as it helps with the acquisition of new vocabulary and the development of basic research skills such as working with dictionaries. It is significant to point out that Diarist 11 mentions the urgency of perfect timing for such additional practice, namely as soon as possible, on the day of the class.

... the homeworks helped me a lot because *I researched and looked for new words or new expressions during the homework*. (D8)

I translate almost three times a week a different types of text alone or with my group. (D10)

...the work from home, which is the second important step. *The secret is to do the extra practice right after the course*, when the information is fresh. (D11)

Still other diarists report on *memorising practices* such as learning lists of words in order to reinforce and expand the vocabulary discussed in class. Diarist 5 writes about creating a list of formal and informal synonyms and memorising it, while Diarist 18 mentions watching videos on YouTube with the new vocabulary from school and learning it by heart.

I've created my own list of words that are formal with their informal equivalence and I've learned it. (D5)

I learned a lot of new words [...] I started to repeat all these words and also I watched a video on YouTube with these words. (D18)

Concerning the third main type of strategy, some diarists write about investing in books to show their *commitment to learning*, reading books, online articles as well as formal texts in order to build parallel corpora and identify formal structures in English, which would then help with register transformation exercises.

I have never read a book in English so *I might buy one soon and, once I'm starting it, I'll definitely continue* to do it. (D2)

The first thing I did...was *reading formal texts both in english and romanian* so I could *get used with some grammatical and vocabulary specialized structures*. I usually found these types of texts online. (D3)

Other strategies applied by a limited number of diarists include actively watching videos online in order to improve their vocabulary and pronunciation in English (three diarists), using various apps (three diarists), and working with dictionaries to expand their vocabulary (two diarists).

I tried [...] of course to *watch English serials and films with Romanian subtitle*, because to be honest I didn't use to do this before I started faculty. *I can say this has helped me a lot...*in the collection of as many new words as I could and expressions. (D9)

In this week, for the first time, I had the courage to *watch a movie in English without subtitles; the words I did not know I searched for*. (D18)

I like so much *listening to Jordan Peterson's speeches on Youtube*. (D21)

In terms of applications, two diarists mention apps like Johnny G (Diarist 18) and Reverso Context, the latter of which is identified as the student's "friend" (Diarist 4), while the third (Diarist 20) refers to downloading such an application but without naming it or stating how it was further used.

I help myself with Oxford dictionary but also with *Reverso app... 'my friend' Reverso*. (D4)

I discovered an application 'Johnny G'. (D18)

As for dictionaries, two diarists write about the fact that they were not accustomed to working with such instruments before their admission to university; their investment in such instruments is acknowledged to be part of their serious, formal training as future translators.

Until then [the 1st semester], *I was not used to use dictionaries for proper translations* that would suit the best in a text. (D14)

I bought 2 dictionaries, bought some books and I downloaded an application. (D20)

In addition to these, three diarists report on still *other – customised – strategies* such as taking online tests and tutorials (Diarist 1) or doing translations via another language (Diarist 9). It should be mentioned here that Diarist 9 had lived for many years in Greece and, as she herself mentions, "Greek words came a lot easier."

Finally and most significantly, for the purpose of our research, the serendipitous finding of using diary as a research tool stems from the fact that several diarists reported on the actual activity of *diary writing*, emphasising its advantages not only for focusing better but also for keeping track of their work and progress.

The writing of this journal/diary helped me a lot. *I focused more* on what I have to do. (D18)

I liked this idea to write our own “diary” because in this way *you can see how your work is progressing* and where have you been at the beginning and where are you now. (D19)

4.2. Strategies for group practice

A number of strategies that were mentioned in the diaries referred to working in groups mostly in order to develop the students’ linguistic skills. This practice is an extremely valuable learning experience especially in the Romanian educational context, where learning with others is not a popular practice, if not prompted by teachers.

In discussing deliberate efforts to enhance their linguistic performance, two of the participants mentioned the issue of *self-selected learning environments*, using English in speaking with friends, whose first language is either Romanian, or a different one (“...I started to initiate short conversations in English with my friends.” (D1)). Another strategy mentioned by several diarists could be labelled as *study sessions* with colleagues, to focus together on completing translation tasks.

I spent some “romantic evenings” in Tucano café with a friend, working on the process of transforming texts from one language register to another. (D1)

...we decided to practice in advance and to look after the best way of translating, such as sharing the tasks for each member, according to our abilities. (D11)

Very many diarists commented on the *usefulness of certain group activities* during classwork. Such was a self-correction activity, assigned by the teacher at the beginning of the second semester, when students had to identify and explain mistakes from their own first semester exam papers.

We discussed some of the issues we’ve had and the mistranslations we’ve made in the exam...There were lots of things that I didn’t even notice were incorrect. (D2)

We analysed the mistakes from last exam. It was helpful but also very funny! The translations of some of our classmates caused laughs. (D4)

One diarist also mentioned that s/he appreciated the working method, as the teacher created many learning opportunities for group work and peer evaluation.

My favourite part this semester is that we had the possibility to work in groups with some colleagues to solve the translations. (D19)

Additionally, diarists identified some *creative solutions* for improving their translation competence, and especially their language proficiency. There was a great number of strategies that were mentioned, from seeking external help (tutors and online classes) to asking family members to quiz the learner, or doing translation work as additional language practice, or translations via another language.

The first time [I sat the exam] I used an English-Romanian dictionary but the second time I used a pretty good dictionary with detailed explanations plus an English-Greek dictionary, because knowing Greek words came a lot easier. (D9)

As I am married, I asked my husband to help me, by asking me words from informal to formal, out of order... (D4)

I started a blog. I already had one in Romanian [martiealb], so I decide to translate everything I had into English, and also to continue writing in English (D14)

One diarist also talks favourably about taking advantage of a *real life opportunity*, when her little sister had spilt water on the computer and she resorted to instructions in English in order to disassemble the keyboard (Diarist 20). Moreover, another diarist mentions a learning strategy emphasizing that, when learners were made aware of their most vulnerable competence areas, they displayed greater autonomy in regulating the situation.

I have begun to highlight them [previous mistakes] and I've been thinking about writing all errors in a notebook as I could avoid to repeat them again. (D11)

4.3. Questionnaire analysis

Moving on to the perspective of the third year student, the questionnaire mainly invited respondents to reflect on their academic evolution since the first year, the strategies and tools they discovered and developed in order to achieve greater translation competence, and to recall which of these they retained. Interestingly, when asked to evaluate and comment on their translation work in relation to their first-year experience, the majority of respondents (18 out of 25) assessed the quality of their work as four (out of a maximum five), but their brief, rather evasive comments were limited to basic declarative knowledge, only occasionally mentioning specific strategies or tools.

I learned so many things about how to translate different texts and how to apply translation Methods. (R8)

I've learned a lot of new things, how to use dictionaries and a lot of other things. (R25)

Consistent with the first part of our research, most respondents record a certain improvement – although not always to their full satisfaction – at the level of language:

For me the vocabulary is the most important because the theory that I have learned I always forget it. (R14)

I think I evolved quite a lot, but *it was possible even more*. (R16)

The quality of my translation has improved since the 1st year on a vocabulary and grammatical level. (R22)

Secondly, many students mention working with various text types and domains, and with specific terminology, writing:

Definitely, I became a better translator through the past years, because I did many translations from different types of domains. That makes me understand more about how translation works and the different approach every type of text needs. (R2)

In comparison to the first year, I encountered more and more types of texts from different areas, learned more and more terminology which helped me understand notions of translation. (R12)

Only two respondents (R7 and R25) refer to tools in the form of dictionaries, but only one respondent gives specific examples:

My translation skills have improved because at university I was advised to use really good dictionaries, like Oxford Collocation, Word Reference, Hallo, or Thesaurus, which made it easier to find equivalents and therefore to do a better translation. (R7)

Quite a few students refer to improving their work, learning techniques and “tricks” with the help or advice they received from teachers via the classes taught:

Thanks to such objects as LEC [Contemporary English Language] and The Methodology of Translation, *I've learned a lot of techniques and tricks* on how to better translate a text depending on its function and type, techniques I did not know before. (R11)

I do see an improvement on the quality of my translation given by the hours of work I've done *with the help of the teachers*. (R24)

When asked to comment on the changes in terms of learning strategies and tools used since the first year, almost half of the students refer to a certain level of language improvement, with one respondent (R18) commenting on this development as being prompted by an Erasmus+ scholarship experience. Only a few respondents mention reading more (R3, R17), doing all the assignments set by the teachers (R7), using specific online dictionaries (R13), or creating a work routine (R20):

I worked almost every day translating texts, learning new words and their meaning, and I consider that *this repetitive exercise* helped me in a measure to improve my vocabulary. (R20)

When prompted to comment on whether they retained any learning strategies or tools developed in the first year, only 72% of the respondents answered affirmatively and briefly mentioned small routines such as reading and researching (including in corpora), doing what teachers require, rewriting the context, or using reliable dictionaries:

Yes, *I have always double searched* for a word to make sure that it fits; also I have always try to find context on the internet, phrases and sentences that may contain a specific item. (R3)

I still read out loud the theoretical parts in order to understand the meaning better. (R5)

Most of the time, when I want to learn something even in English, *I rewrite the context briefly* and use highlights to evidence what is important. (R8)

For example, *I keep using a dictionary* that I discovered in an English class. (R25)

A serendipitous (albeit rather pessimistic) finding was that several students responded they did not remember using any specific strategy or tool, as if the experience had been completely erased from their memory:

I don't recall learning English through a specific strategy. (R2)

I don't really remember. (R4)

No because I don't remember any strategies. (R10)

In the following section of the questionnaire we invited participants to focus more on the TCA learning strategies and tools than on English language learning in general, and overall the majority (72%) reported an improvement in learning strategy in comparison with their first year performance. To justify this claim, some of the students mentioned that they had limited use of tools, with no variation and relied heavily on tools such as "Google translate" and "Reverso context" (R1), while in their third year they were more selective when it came to the dictionaries used, looking for "trustworthy" resources (R3, R6,

R8, R12, R13, R14, R20, R23) and employing additional ones, such as parallel texts (R8) or Trados (R14). A few students referred to the realisation that translation work implied several clear stages moving from text type identification and close reading to translation and final editing (R2, R13). However, there were a few respondents who claimed there was not much improvement (R17 – “I can't see any changes to be honest”).

Exploring in greater detail various aspects of TCA, the student participants were asked whether they used any particular strategy to organise their work as translators and, while there were five negative answers, many discussed the taught steps in translation work - such as close reading, identification of unknown words, rough translation and revision of translation (R2, R3, R4, R5). There were also some responses that showed a higher level of expertise, such as several editing stages, loud reading of the translation, or improving text layout in order to see the source text and the target text simultaneously.

I usually translate a rough draft, then I go in and keep changing the translation *until I'm satisfied*. (R4)

I read the text several times, then I find the proper terms for my translation. After it is ready, I *read it out loud* and I start correcting it. (R5)

I've recently started *to make a table with two columns*. On one column I add the source language text, on the other I add the target language text. This makes it easier to translate and to review the translation. (R7)

I always keep *both texts open*, so I can go back and forth in rereading them, I search for all the words that were difficult (which I previously underlined), I use different dictionaries and compare the results. (R22)

Asked to discuss any strategies employed concerning learning from past mistakes, half of the respondents seem not to have employed any such strategy, while the others mentioned revising notes or the teacher's feedback. A few respondents appear to have developed greater learning autonomy and discussed the salient practice of an error inventory, analysis and periodical revision, although sometimes the students do not see these actions as a “strategy” to deal with errors.

I *write down* everything I did wrong and for example I *reread* if I come across a wrongly translated term. (R16)

I *don't think so*. I *mark the parts* in which I made mistakes and *reread them and try to understand* why I made a mistake, if I do, I'll remember it. (R22)

I *write down* what kind of mistakes I've made and I try to *explain to myself* why it was a mistake while understanding the right choice and *compare* the two. (R23)

Further on, the respondents were asked to discuss whether or not they reflected on their translation work, and the majority of them (64%) answered positively, while the remaining 36% opted for “maybe”. As justification for this answer a number of very good habits emerged, such as revisiting older translations in order to improve them, or even reading the translation by putting themselves in the intended reader’s shoes (R2).

In the last part of the questionnaire we focused on an overall view of lessons learnt by the respondents concerning their translator training; the responses indicated two opposing categories: a good number of students mention practices which highlight their development towards becoming more competent translators, but there were also some practices which are evidence of no improvement.

Discussing habits formed over the course of the three-year BA programme, R12 mentioned adding synonyms next to difficult words in order to make selection easier, R17 commented on double-/ triple-checking words in the dictionary, R22 compared ST and TT, R17 translated into more languages, and R23 claimed to make glossaries/ word lists. Unfortunately, R7 reported that his/her “habits are the following: reading the text, *pasting the text in Google Translate* (if it's compatible to it), edit it, and then reviewing it.”

At a more general level, when discussing lessons learnt many of the respondents mentioned that they followed the proper steps in translation work, that they did more research, that they paid greater attention to details (R13, R8 “false friends, culturemes”, R15 “idioms and phrases”) and that they spent more time proofreading.

Finally, the students were again asked whether they had made use of a diary in their work as translators and with only one exception, they all denied it. The one affirmative answer (R16) was from someone who commented that “I write everything down in a notebook (observations, remarks),” which is evidence of record keeping practice, but this does not exactly constitute a diary.

5. Final Remarks

Although attractive and with potential benefits, the use of diaries did not become a desirable habit for our research participants. Reflection as a strategy and diaries as a learning tool may be seen as examples of good practice but they are not consistently put to use. Moreover, some students do not even remember ever using them as learning tools, probably on account of a singular use and not part of a frequent teaching/learning practice.

Overall, the respondents’ comments point to rather basic levels of both declarative and procedural knowledge, while also being more descriptive than analytical, which shows that they still lack the metalanguage to review and

discuss TCA strategies. Only half of participants seem to have internalised some working strategies such as not skipping steps in performing translation tasks, being aware of translation procedures and specific difficulties. Participants in our research still seem to regard translation as a linguistic sub-competence, or – to paraphrase Gaballo (2009) – they see translation as a fifth skill, complementing reading, writing, speaking and listening. Furthermore, although specifically designed to stimulate the respondents' reflection, the findings of the questionnaire revealed a limited usage of customised tools and strategies preserved from the first year and a greater acknowledgement of those often targeted by teaching activities throughout the BA programme. One possible reason for this is the interference of the pandemic, which kept students away from a formal learning environment and brought on difficulties that many of them could not control or cope with.

Most importantly, we believe there is a need for new research to be conducted in order to further explore the outcomes of learning diary keeping as a consistent and even standardised practice employed by several teachers. We posit that deliberate reflection as part of teaching/ learning activities will increase learner autonomy, and will consequently lead to a larger variety of learning idiosyncrasies, and implicitly the best learning outcomes.

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NUOVE COSTRUZIONI DELL'IMMAGINARIO IDENTITARIO – STUDIO DI CASO

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ABSTRACT. *Some New Constructions of the Identitary Imaginary – A Case Study.* The starting point of the present research is based mainly on the experience of working with young people of Romanian origin, more specifically, university students, who live and study abroad, and concerns their self-perception at the level of their identity and some possible characteristics of their imaginary identity. The theoretical aspect of this research can be divided in two as follows: a general part, focusing on the theory of migration, the ethnic language/heritage language and the new identity typologies resulting from the current economic and political state of affairs and a second part, structured according to the coordinates of the collective and personal imaginary. The practical aspect is based, on the one hand, on the answers these students offered to some questionnaires administered for a period of seven years and, on the other hand, on a series of compositions written by the students in the form of "open letters to Romania", as an assignment for their Romanian language course on the occasion of the National Day of Romania, collected over the last three years. I will try to analyse both the answers to the questionnaires

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and their "letters", from the perspective of the above mentioned theory, with the explicit purpose of extracting some characteristics.

Keywords: *migration, ethnic language, heritage language, imaginary identity, identity perception, identity typology, linguistic imaginary*

REZUMAT. Noi construcții ale imaginarului identitar – studiu de caz. Punctul de plecare al cercetării de față îl constituie, în principal, experiența de lucru cu tineri studenți de origine română care se află în situația de a locui, trăi și studia în afara granițelor românești, modul lor de a se autopercepe la nivel identitar și posibilele caracteristici ale imaginarului lor identitar. Aspectul teoretic al acestei cercetări este unul extrem de generos și l-aș divide într-o parte generală, având în centru teoria migrației, a limbii etnice/*heritage language* și a noilor tipologii identitare rezultate în urma unui necesar proces de re-evaluare datorat modificărilor situației politice și sociale la nivel mondial și o parte structurată pe coordonate ale imaginarului – colectiv și personal. Aspectul practic are la bază, pe de-o parte, răspunsurile acestor studenți la niște chestionare administrate lor în ultimii șapte ani și, pe de altă parte, o serie de compoziții scrise ale studenților sub forma unor „scrisori deschise către România”, redactate de către ei în cadrul cursului de limba română cu ocazia Zilei Naționale a României, în ultimii trei ani. Voi analiza atât răspunsurile la chestionare, cât și mesajele transmise prin aceste scrisori din perspectiva teoriei care face obiectul primei părți a cercetării noastre, cu finalitatea explicită de a extrage o serie de caracteristici structurante.

Cuvinte-cheie: *migrație, limbă etnică, heritage language, imaginar identitar, percepție identitară, tipologie identitară, imaginar lingvistic*

Il presente studio si inserisce in un progetto di ricerca più ampio dedicato, principalmente, agli aspetti metodologici e didattici e alle sfide dell'insegnamento della lingua romena all'estero, in una situazione abbastanza "particolare" che prevede la presenza di studenti di origine romena iscritti a corsi universitari linguistici e storico-letterari (profilo filologico), nell'ambito dei quali la lingua romena viene affrontata dall'esterno, come lingua straniera. Come sfondo, come base teorica e come elementi di relazione, questo progetto di ricerca deve ovviamente tenere conto anche di una serie di questioni di carattere extra-didattico, come quelle relative al fenomeno migratorio, al processo di lenta e graduale dissoluzione della lingua madre in una lingua etnica/ereditata (*heritage language*), insieme ad altri cambiamenti strutturali o percettivi che l'allontanamento dallo spazio di origine e dal centro produce.² Come ho sempre

² Rimando ad alcuni miei recenti lavori sullo stesso tema, lavori da cui riprendo alcune parti come base teorica anche per la presente ricerca: Neșu, N., 2022, „Variație lingvistică și identitate culturală”, în vol. *Identitate și ideologie. Limba și literatura română în paradigma*

precisato nelle varie occasioni in cui mi sono occupata di questo argomento, il quadro della mia indagine scientifica ha al suo centro il problema didattico, la ricerca di soluzioni, e metodi più adatti all'insegnamento del romeno all'estero; in questo caso, però, non si tratta di un insegnamento della lingua romena rivolto a stranieri, come lingua straniera, appunto, né a romeni in patria (nel loro contesto linguistico originario), come lingua madre, perché le condizioni linguistiche ed extralinguistiche non lo consentono. Per questa ragione vorrei sottolineare come centrale la messa a fuoco di questo aspetto e occuparmi - solo collateralmente, come sfondo teorico - degli aspetti ad esso adiacenti. Senza insistere qui, per ragioni di spazio, sul ricchissimo repertorio teorico al quale rimando in bibliografia, mi limiterò a fare alcune brevi precisazioni relative agli aspetti pratici della realtà con la quale mi confronto e da cui nascono l'idea della presente ricerca e l'interesse per questo argomento; passerò, quindi, alla presentazione della parte di ricerca applicata al gruppo di studio.

Bisogna partire da una filosofia della migrazione, da una teoria dell'abitare, dell'abitare molteplici lingue o della molteplicità dell'abitare, dell'alterità, dell'appartenenza, dell'identità nazionale e/o linguistica e culturale di un individuo, come altrettanti punti di partenza per molteplici ricerche necessariamente inter- o transdisciplinari. Nel caso della realtà specifica di cui mi occupo, il fenomeno migratorio è complementare all'abitare, è complementare all'alterità; l'abitare umano di uno spazio (identificarsi con il luogo, possederlo) si confronta con l'abitare nel linguaggio, in una lingua, e, come è noto, il linguaggio non ha sempre le stesse coordinate geografiche e temporali di quelle dello spazio abitato. Se vivere in uno spazio equivale ad *averlo*, a *possederlo*, come ho detto prima, vivere in una lingua, invece, significa, a partire da Heidegger, *essere*, *esistere*. La situazione ideale, "idilliaca", come l'ho chiamata in uno studio precedente, è quella dell'abitare contemporaneamente, in uno spazio e in una lingua che 'si appartengono' a vicenda: è il caso dell'abitare,

culturală europeană, Ofelia Ichim coord., ed. Institutul European Iași, 2022, pp. 211-221; „Note de predare a limbii române ca limbă maternă/etică în străinătate”, 2021, în vol. *Limba și literatura română – perspective didactice*, ed. Fl Sâmhăian, M. Spătaru-Prlea, Editura Universității din București, 2020, ISSN 2344-5998, ISBN 978-606-16-1235-2, pp. 91-99; „Aspecte ale predării limbii române ca limbă străină și limbă etnică în străinătate”, 2020, in vol. *Predarea, receptarea și evaluarea limbii române ca limbă străină. Actualitate și perspectivă*, coord. de I. Jieanu, L. Neteđu, P. Nanu, Universitatea din Turku, Finlanda, ISBN 978-951-29-8125-0, pp. 11-19; „Mutații în comportamentul lingvistic al emigranților. Raportul limbă maternă/limbă etnică (Studiu de caz: aspecte ale limbii române vorbite în comunitatea românească din Italia)”, 2020, in Revista SCL, Institutul de Lingvistică al Academiei Române „Iorgu Iordan – Al. Rosetti”, București, nr. 2/2020, pp. 243-253; „Noi” și ”ei” sau despre locuire în epoca migrației, 2019, în volumul colectiv ”Studii de limbă și cultură”, P. Nanu (ed.), Universitatea din Turku, Finlanda, 321 p., ISBN 978-951-29-7747-5, pp. 13-23; ”Raportul centru-periferie. Note pentru o schiță de lingvistică spațială”, 2019, revista Romania Orientale nr. 32, 2019, Sapienza University Press, ISSN 1121 – 4015, pp. 167-179.

fisicamente parlando, tra i confini di uno stato e all'interno della sua lingua, lingua storica, idioma, che è anche la sua lingua madre. Questa situazione non corrisponde affatto con quanto sperimentato nella realtà immediata, nella realtà di riferimento del presente studio. Nel nostro caso concreto, le coordinate dell'abitare dello spazio non coincidono (più), non si sovrappongono (più), né geograficamente né temporalmente, a quelle dell'abitare linguistico. L'individuo deve quindi scegliere, filosoficamente parlando, tra *avere* (abitare in uno spazio) o *essere* (abitare in una lingua). Passare dal cerchio descritto dalla lingua madre, attraverso il processo di apprendimento, a un cerchio descritto da un'altra lingua, come sosteneva Humboldt (1988, 161-64), comporta ovviamente un cambio di prospettiva: in un primo momento, il parlante in questione dovrà imparare a sottoporsi alla norma, ovvero alla tradizione della rispettiva lingua; in seguito dovrà imparare a creare, autonomamente, in quella lingua e nello spirito di quella lingua, parallelamente al tentativo, almeno in una realtà ideale, di mantenere inalterata la sua competenza nella lingua madre che, automaticamente, perderà la sua centralità nel nuovo spazio e diventerà, come specificato all'inizio, periferica, etnica, ereditata, in termini strettamente linguistici. Di conseguenza, il fenomeno della migrazione, al di là dei suoi aspetti demografici, politici o economici, ha un grande impatto sulla vita socioculturale, oltre ad avere conseguenze di natura linguistica, aspetto, quest'ultimo, particolarmente interessante. È senz'altro vero che la migrazione è occasione di contatto tra due, a volte anche più, culture, tra due lingue storiche, permettendo così "*la molteplicità dell'abitare*", "*l'abitare plurale*" sul modello di molteplici universi che ne favorirebbero la coesistenza armonica, modificando addirittura il rapporto centro-periferia per chi emigra.³ Proprio per questo, nell'ultimo periodo, si sono sviluppati nuovi indirizzi di ricerca, la linguistica della migrazione⁴, per esempio, oppure, come ramo interdisciplinare di ricerca, la sociolinguistica delle migrazioni.⁵ Quest'ultima ha come oggetto di studio, principalmente, il contatto tra lingue e il rapporto tra lingua e fenomeno migratorio, i quali comportano, da un lato, una diversificazione linguistica, e

³ Ho approfondito questi aspetti in una comunicazione tenuta all'Università di Timișoara, durante la conferenza internazionale CISR6, del 2021. L'articolo è in corso di pubblicazione sulla rivista *Romanian Studies Today* dell'Università di Bucarest.

⁴ Secondo Vincenzo Orioles, la linguistica migrazionale si occupa dei contesti migratori e dell'impatto linguistico del fenomeno migratorio e le premesse di questo nuovo campo disciplinare sarebbero da trovare nell'innovativa proposta di Krefeld 2004 che parlava di 'linguistica migratoria' (Migrationslinguistik), creando in tal modo i presupposti di una linguistica dello spazio migratorio. Vincenzo Orioles, „Verso nuove categorizzazioni dei contesti migratori. Dall'italianità all'italicità”, in Raffaella Bombi e Vincenzo Orioles (a cura di), *Essere italiani nel mondo globale oggi. Riscoprire l'appartenenza*, Udine, Forum, 2014, pp. 109-116.

⁵ Rimando soprattutto a Chambers (2003) *Sociolinguistics of Immigration* per una descrizione completa dei livelli di questa nuova disciplina.

dall'altro, la creazione di condizioni oggettive per la comparsa di nuove forme espressive nelle rispettive lingue. Si tratta, dunque, anche del rapporto estremamente complesso tra la lingua e l'identità dell'individuo nel contesto del cambiamento delle coordinate geografiche dell'abitare, come ho mostrato sopra, essendo ben noto che la lingua ha un ruolo essenziale non solo nella costituzione dell'identità di un individuo, ma anche nella sua appartenenza a una certa comunità linguistica e, quindi, nella sua percezione come tale da parte degli altri. Da un punto di vista strettamente linguistico, l'esito di questo contatto, come conseguenza del mutamento del rapporto centro-periferia, ma anche del mutamento della percezione nei suoi confronti, presenta vari aspetti: appaiono nuovi fenomeni come il mutamento linguistico, l'interferenza linguistica, il bilinguismo parziale o totale, l'acquisizione di una nuova lingua/perdita di una lingua e così via. Nel caso felice in cui la lingua madre non venga abbandonata volontariamente né persa involontariamente, essa potrà subire (non obbligatoriamente) una serie di mutamenti dovuti principalmente alla perdita della posizione centrale, dominante e all'acquisizione dello status di lingua periferica, recessiva, nel nuovo contesto sociolinguistico. Questa "nuova" realtà prende vari nomi nella letteratura specializzata, molteplici definizioni che ne rivelano, però, tutte, il carattere ibrido di "variante" della lingua madre e l'appartenenza al binomio del bilinguismo (alcune definizioni: *heritage language*, *community language*, *lingua etnica*, *family language*, *minority language* ecc). Ho provato anch'io a darne una definizione in varie occasioni, basandomi sulla mia esperienza, cercando di individuare alcune delle sue caratteristiche più importanti, definizione che riporto qui: la lingua etnica (oppure „heritage language”, nel mondo anglo-sassone) è una lingua madre all'origine che, però, finisce per essere usata in un quadro sociale più ristretto, di solito strettamente familiare, a scopo e uso prevalentemente colloquiale, in altre parole, cessa di avere un aspetto istituzionale, non rappresenta più la lingua in cui l'individuo svolge i suoi studi o la sua attività professionale, non è più lingua di contatto sociale e/o istituzionale e presenta una composizione lessicale ridotta, organizzata intorno a un vocabolario minimale (a volte regionale o addirittura dialettale), con una grammatica – fonetica, sintassi e morfologia – non sempre normativamente perfetta (Neşu 2020b, 12). Inoltre, è anche una lingua che, in gran parte e nella maggior parte dei casi, manca del contesto culturale, storico e sociale di riferimento. È una lingua che, se vogliamo usare i termini della teoria di Krashen (1982) sulle fasi dell'acquisizione di una lingua straniera, resta, nel suo sviluppo, un processo fermo alla prima fase, quella di *acquisition/*acquisizione, fase intuitiva, non assunta e non intenzionale, e non percorre affatto o quasi la seconda fase, di *learning/*apprendimento, la quale fornirebbe anche l'insieme delle regole grammaticali, comprese quelle della norma linguistica, e la competenza metalinguistica, che mancano, nel suo caso, in assoluto (Neşu 2022a, 212-13). A tutte queste caratteristiche si aggiungono,

ovviamente, come suddetto, massicci influssi "negativi", a seguito del contatto con la lingua ufficiale del paese di adozione - nel nostro caso l'italiano, una lingua molto vicina soprattutto dal punto di vista della forma e che, per questo motivo, è ancora più influente - il *code-switching*, le citazioni da una lingua all'altra, l'intonazione e l'accento modificati, la distorsione dei fonemi, gli errori di pronuncia intenzionali/non intenzionali, prestiti, calchi linguistici a livello fonetico, morfologico oppure sintattico ecc.

Il gruppo di lavoro, il gruppo di studenti che è soggetto ma anche oggetto della presenta ricerca, è composto da studenti di origine romena, nati in Romania, con entrambi i genitori di madrelingua romena. Sono i figli di famiglie emigrate intorno all'anno 2000, arrivati in Italia in età abbastanza giovane, nella stragrande maggioranza (oltre il 90%) in età prescolare; quindi, tutto il loro iter scolastico è stato svolto in italiano.⁶ Come vedremo, la lingua romena per loro è la lingua "di casa", per alcuni di loro addirittura la "lingua dei nonni" e molto spesso viene sostituita, anche in ambito familiare, dalla lingua italiana o da una commistione delle due lingue. Ecco le caratteristiche comuni ai membri del gruppo, rilevanti per la nostra analisi e ottenute dalla somministrazione di questionari alla fine di ogni anno accademico: il loro contatto con la lingua romena è sporadico, di tipo familiare e non istituzionale, la lingua romena non rappresenta in alcun modo la lingua della loro scolarizzazione, motivo per cui ci troviamo nella situazione che ho definito "paradossale" - per loro la lingua romena è una "lingua straniera", non nel senso linguistico tradizionale del termine, ma solo parzialmente, sotto certi aspetti e a certi livelli; tra di loro parlano e scrivono in italiano, raramente usano il romeno; non leggono giornali, riviste in romeno, né ascoltano o guardano canali radiofonici o televisivi romeni; non seguono la vita politica, sociale e culturale della Romania e, di conseguenza, non sono a conoscenza dei dati e dei problemi del paese, nemmeno di quelli

⁶ La comunità romena in Italia è stata oggetto di numerose ricerche. Ricordo qui che nel 2021, secondo i dati definitivi ISTAT sulla popolazione straniera, a seguito del censimento della popolazione, la comunità romena è la più numerosa, rappresentando il 20,8% del totale degli stranieri, con un numero di 1.076.412 persone, in calo rispetto all'anno 2020, quando il numero dei romeni era di 1.145.718. È interessante notare che, ogni anno, il numero di romeni che ottengono la cittadinanza italiana aumenta: nel 2020, ad esempio, si arriva a 11.449 romeni, di cui il 57,9% sono donne; gli studi dimostrano inoltre che, in media, si registrano ogni anno più di 10.000 bambini romeni nati in Italia, a cui si aggiungono anche quelli nati da coppie miste - nel 2019, ad esempio, sono 16.335 i nati con almeno un genitore romeno. Si precisa che, secondo la legge italiana, i figli di coppie miste sono cittadini italiani dalla nascita, mentre i nati da genitori con cittadinanza romena possono richiedere la cittadinanza italiana solo dopo aver compiuto i 18 anni. Per quanto riguarda il numero dei bambini romeni nelle scuole italiane, anche questo è in continuo aumento, nell'anno scolastico 2019-2020 rappresentano il 17,9% del totale degli studenti stranieri, con un numero di 156.715 studenti. I dati sono stati ripresi dallo studio „Odi et amo: l'inserimento della collettività romena in Italia”, di Antonio Ricci, dal volume *Radici a metà. Trent'anni di immigrazione romena in Italia*, pubblicato dall'Istituto di Studi politici S. Pio V e il Centro di Studi e Ricerche IDOS, Roma, 2022, pp. 40-67.

molto mediatizzati e/o di interesse generale; non conoscono la storia, la geografia, la cultura e l'arte romene in generale; non conosco le personalità della cultura tradizionale, canonica o della vita culturale romena contemporanea, né i “personaggi” come gli influencer, seguiti sui social dai giovani romeni; mostrano interesse per la storia o la geografia romena, con una spiccata tendenza a idealizzare le realtà romene; prevalgono le amicizie con altri giovani della loro età, anch'essi di origine romena, con i quali, però, parlano in italiano, ma, d'altra parte, sono anche ben inseriti nella società italiana; le abitudini culinarie sono prevalentemente romene (queste dipendono, in realtà, soprattutto dai genitori); non frequentano la Lega degli Studenti Romeni all'Estero (LSRS) se non in minima parte (1 persona su 24, nel 2020), neppure l'ambiente associativo romeno in Italia, frequentano invece in numero più alto la Chiesa Romena Ortodossa in Italia e alcune attività culturali che organizza; non hanno seguito, se non in minima parte e solo sporadicamente (2 persone), il corso di lingua, cultura e civiltà romena, LCCR, finanziato dal Ministero dell'Istruzione romeno e che è possibile frequentare gratuitamente nelle scuole italiane; mostrano un moderato interesse per eventuali studi in Romania, ma senza il desiderio di tornare in Romania dopo aver terminato gli studi; in termini di identità etnica assunta, su un totale di 21 studenti intervistati, è in calo il numero di coloro che si dichiarano “romeni” (16 nel 2015, 15 nel 2017 e 13 nel 2019, 10 nel 2021), il numero rimane costante per chi si considera “italiano” (3) e aumenta il numero di chi si definisce “europeo” (2 nel 2015, 3 nel 2017 e 5 nel 2019, 8 nel 2021). Questo, probabilmente, anche come *escamotage*, data la situazione politico-amministrativa e burocratica piuttosto pesante e complicata per l'ottenimento della cittadinanza italiana.⁷ Alla domanda sui libri di letteratura romena letti prima di studiarla all'università e al di fuori del programma di letteratura per il corso, le risposte sono state 0 in tutti i questionari, tranne una studentessa, del 2019, che ha risposto indicando poesie di Eminescu e racconti di I. Creangă; alla domanda “nomina alcune personalità della vita romena di cui hai sentito parlare” compaiono, principalmente, Dracula, Ceaușescu, Nadia Comăneci, Simona Halep, David Popovici (nei questionari più recenti), raramente Eminescu (risposte molo simili alle risposte date dagli studenti stranieri).⁸

Sempre per ragioni di spazio, non mi occuperò qui della teoria, anch'essa, estremamente produttiva, dell'immaginario, in generale e dell'immaginario linguistico, in particolare. Sarebbe, inoltre, un approccio impossibile, per la sua

⁷ Relativo al problema dell'identità nazionale versus identità europea ho presentato, durante il Convegno Internazionale CISR7, presso la Facoltà di Lettere, UBB, nell'ottobre del 2022, il lavoro con il titolo „Multiculturalism și identitate europeană – o provocare?”.

⁸ Particolarità legate a questi aspetti, come anche una serie di questionari e grafici con le risposte, possono essere consultati nello studio Neșu, N. „Variație lingvistică și identitate culturală”, nel vol. *Identitate și ideologie. Limba și literatura română în paradigma culturală europeană*, Ofelia Ichim coord., ed. Institutul European Iași, 2022, pp. 211-221.

vastità sul piano temporale e spaziale, oltre che per la moltitudine di aspetti, tutti rilevanti, per la presente ricerca. Mi limiterò, quindi, a precisare solo che premesse e conclusioni teoriche si trovano nella semiotica della cultura, nell'antropologia culturale, ma anche nell'etnopragmatica linguistica, che hanno trovato gli strumenti di base nella concezione idealistica del linguaggio e delle lingue nonché nella concezione aristotelica e, successivamente, humboldtiana, come specifica visione sul mondo o come "spirito delle nazioni", con le loro necessarie contestualizzazioni e aggiornamenti, ovviamente. L'etnopragmatica, così come la configura, ad esempio, Duranti (2007), il quale, attraverso lo studio della comunicazione e unendo i metodi etnografici a quelli dell'analisi del discorso, cerca di dimostrare i diversi modi in cui il linguaggio differenzia gli individui e rende possibile un certo tipo di socializzazione, costituisce il quadro ideale della ricerca. In più, l'etnopragmatica propone anche lo studio del linguaggio come azione sociale, analizza la forza delle parole, la forza dell'immaginario che sta dietro di esse e che varia da una nazione all'altra, da una lingua all'altra, i codici linguistici che rendono possibile questa forza, mettendo insieme la teoria del relativismo linguistico di Humboldt, la teoria degli *speech acts* di Austin e Searle o la filosofia del linguaggio di Wittgenstein ecc. A questi si aggiungono anche gli elementi della semantica cognitiva, la teoria delle metafore concettuali che sono alla base del linguaggio e che, quindi, ordinano il nostro immaginario linguistico e identitario.⁹ Secondo tale modello abbiamo cercato di organizzare il materiale che avevamo a nostra disposizione, a seguito della compilazione di alcuni questionari e sulla base di alcune lettere indirizzate alla Romania (personificata), il 1° dicembre, con l'occasione della Festa Nazionale, del 2020 e del 2021. Il gruppo di studenti di origine romena che è stato invitato a rispondere ha le caratteristiche sopra esposte e, nel caso della presente analisi, ha un numero costante di 15 partecipanti. Nel tentativo di dare una forma all'immaginario identitario, di dare forma e contenuto all'immaginario che questi studenti delineano quando si tratta del loro paese di origine, ci soffermiamo, per la presente ricerca, su due aspetti: il primo fa riferimento ad una delle richieste del questionario, cioè quello di associare alla Romania un sostantivo, un aggettivo e un verbo, e il secondo, come dicevo sopra, è rappresentato da alcuni componimenti, liberi, anonimi, in forma di lettera aperta indirizzata alla Romania, in occasione della Festa Nazionale. I risultati relativi alla prima richiesta sono i seguenti: la classe dei sostantivi associati alla Romania è stata rappresentata dalle parole: CASĂ [CASA] (7 occorrenze), DOR [MANCANZA/NOSTALGIA] (5 occorrenze), FAMILIE [FAMIGLIA] (5 occorrenze), COPILĂRIE [INFANZIA] (4 occorrenze), BUNICI [NONNI] (4

⁹ Aspetti legati all'uso delle metafore concettuali nell'insegnamento delle lingue straniere si possono ritrovare nello studio Neșu, N. „Metafore prin care (și) predăm – Metaphors We Teach By”, 2022, nel vol. *Predarea, receptarea și evaluarea limbii române ca limbă străină. Dinamică și varietate*, ed. L. Ispas, editura Pro-Universitaria, București, pp. 218-228.

occorrenze), PĂDURE [BOSCO] (3 occorrenze), SĂRBĂTORI [FESTE] (1 occorrenza), VACANȚĂ [VACANZE] (1 occorrenza); la classe degli aggettivi: FRUMOASĂ [BELLA] (10 occorrenze), LENTĂ [LENTA] (5 occorrenze), SĂLBATICĂ [SELVAGGIA] (4 occorrenze), BALCANICĂ [BALCANICA] (3 occorrenze), DRAGĂ [CARA] (3 occorrenze), ÎNTĂRZIATĂ [RETROGRADA] (2 occorrenze), ÎNDEPĂRTATĂ [LONTANA] (1 occorrenza), VESELĂ [ALLEGRA] (1 occorrenza), TOXICĂ [TOSSICA] (1 occorrenza); la classe dei verbi: A SE LUPTA [LOTTARE] (7 occorrenze), A MĂ ÎNTOARCE [RITORNARE] (6 occorrenze), A VISA [SOGNARE] (6 occorrenze), A VINDECA [GUARIRE] (4 occorrenze), A SE SCHIMBA [CAMBIARE] (3 occorrenze), A SE DEZVOLTA [SVILUPParsi] (2 occorrenze), A RECUPERA [RECUPERARE] (1 occorrenza), A ÎNAINȚA [AVANZARE] (1 occorrenza) - voglio sottolineare il fatto di aver mantenuto la forma dei verbi come è stata scritta dagli studenti. È estremamente interessante il fatto che la scelta di queste parole non faccia altro che anticipare ciò che le composizioni descrivono in dettaglio - alcune di queste parole, infatti, sono state utilizzate anche nella configurazione delle principali metafore concettuali che riteniamo possono essere considerate essenziali per la definizione di questo immaginario. Ho individuato 4 di queste metafore e, per motivi di spazio, ho scelto solo 5 frammenti per illustrare ciascuna di esse. Preciso che riprodurrò i testi così come sono stati scritti dagli studenti, senza intervenire con correzioni né dal punto di vista grammaticale né ortografico.

ROMÂNIA ESTE TRADIȚIE (ȘI/SAU OBICEIURI) [ROMANIA È TRADIZIONE (E/O USANZE)]

„Imi e dor de tine , de casa , de oameni dragi pe care i-am lasat acolo de mica, de bunici mei si verișori mei dragi. Imi e dor sa strabat iarasi meleagurile sa pot ajunge la mine acasa si sa sarbatoresc un craciun impreuna cu familia mea.”

[„Mi manchi, mi manca la casa, mi mancano le persone care che ho lasciato lì da piccola, mi mancano i miei nonni e i miei cari cugini. Mi manca attraversare ancora in lungo e in largo la mia terra per raggiungere la mia casa e festeggiare un natale insieme alla mia famiglia.”]

„Limba română este foarte frumoasă, tradițiile și obiceiurile sărbătorilor de iarna sunt minunate...mâncarea este parcă mult mai gustoasă, portul popular te lasa fără cuvinte cât este de frumos, așa ca poveștile și basmele românești”.

[“La lingua romena è molto bella, le tradizioni e le usanze delle feste invernali sono meravigliose... il cibo sembra molto più saporito, il costume tradizionale ti lascia senza parole per quanto è bello, proprio come le storie e le fiabe romene.”]

„România mea, tu ești tradițiile pe care le purtăm în noi în străinătate. Ești colindele de crăciun în familie și cu prieteni așa cum cu uratul de anul Nou”.

[Romania mia, tu sei le tradizioni che portiamo in noi all'estero. Sei "colindele de crăciun", i canti natalizi in famiglia e con gli amici, come l'abitudine di fare gli auguri a Capodanno, andando di casa in casa.]

„Ceea ce îmi lipsește cel mai mult de la tine este să simt atmosfera de Crăciun: să înpodobesc bradul cu bunici (mai ales să mănânc bonboanele pentru brad), să o ajut pe bunica să pregătească cele mai delicioase bunătăți, să stau în pat la căldură privind fulgii de nea care cad încet în afara ferestrei”.

[“Quello che mi manca di più di te è sentire l'atmosfera natalizia: addobbare l'albero di Natale con i nonni (soprattutto mangiare le caramelle da mettere sull'albero), aiutare la nonna a preparare le bontà più deliziose, restarmene a letto al caldo a guardare i fiocchi di neve che cadono lentamente fuori dalla finestra.”]

„România este Crăciunul la bunica, mersul la săniuș cu bunicul, bulgăreala cu verii mei, România este cetele de colindători din care am făcut și eu parte”.

[“La Romania è il Natale dalla nonna, andare in slitta con il nonno, la battaglia con le palle di neve con i miei cugini, la Romania è il gruppo di “colindători”, coloro che girano per il paese, cantando i canti natalizi e di cui facevo parte anch'io.”]

ROMÂNIA ESTE ACASĂ/FAMILIE/BUNICI [ROMANIA È CASA/ FAMIGLIA/NONNI]

„Pentru mine tu ești familie, iarna mirosi a lemne arse care creează o atmosferă magică pe care nu o pot compara cu nimic altceva.”

[“Per me tu sei famiglia, d'inverno profumi di legna bruciata che crea un'atmosfera magica che non posso paragonare a nient'altro.”]

„Tu ești verile la bunica din vale în curte și după-amiezile la munte cu verisorii și mătușile pe care nu-i văd tot anul.”

[“Tu sei le estati dalla nonna che abita giù nella valle, il suo cortile e i pomeriggi in montagna con i cugini e le zie che non vedo tutto l'anno.”]

„In acești șaptesprezece ani lucrul care m-a ținut cel mai mult legată de România a fost legătura cu rudele, cu care mereu eram, și încă sunt, fericită să mă reîntîlnesc”.

[“In questi diciassette anni, la cosa che mi ha tenuto maggiormente legata alla Romania è stato il legame con i miei parenti, con i quali sono sempre stata, e sono tuttora, felice di ritrovarmi.”]

„Sunt câteva lucruri care înconjoară lumea amintirilor mele din vremea când tu România mea erai acasă și pentru noi”.

[“Ci sono alcune cose che circondano il mondo dei miei ricordi del tempo in cui tu, Romania mia, significavi a casa anche per noi.”]

„Cuvântul copilărie îmi aduce aminte de tine, Românie, de poveștile bunicii, de plăcintele cu brânză și de cele cu mere, de sărbătorile la țară alături de verișorii mei, de gerul care mă însoțea spre grădiniță, dar și de lacrimile care curg pe obraji celor dragi mie când se termina așa-zisa vacanță”.

[“La parola infanzia mi ricorda te, Romania, i racconti di mia nonna, le torte farcite al formaggio e alle mele, le feste in campagna con i miei cugini, il gelo che mi accompagnava verso l'asilo, ma anche le lacrime che scendono sulle guance dei miei cari quando la cosiddetta vacanza finisce”.]

ROMÂNIA ESTE VACANȚĂ/AMINTIRI [ROMANIA È VACANZA/RICORDI]

„Tu ești verile la bunica din vale în curte și după-amiezile la munte cu verișorii și mătușile pe care nu-i văd tot anul.”

[“Tu sei le estati dalla nonna che abita giù nella valle, nel suo cortile e i pomeriggi in montagna con i cugini e le zie che non vedo tutto l'anno.”]

„Ne-am cunoscut puțin dar ai lăsat în sufletul meu foarte multe emoții și amintiri. Am plecat de lângă tine de mulți ani și de multe ori mi-a fost dor de tine. Am amintiri așa de frumoase, iarna așteptam zăpada, ne îmbrăcam toți gros și repede mergeam la săniuș”.

[“Ci siamo conosciuti solo per un po' ma hai lasciato tante emozioni e ricordi nella mia anima. Sono andato via lontano da te da molti anni e mi sei mancata molte volte. Ho dei ricordi così belli, d'inverno aspettavamo la neve, ci vestivamo tutti pesantemente e andavamo veloci a prendere lo slittino”.]

„Imi amintesc puțin de când eram mică, dar îmi amintesc doar de vremurile petrecute cu bunica mea, amintiri bune doar cu ea și cu fratele meu când mergeam să ne jucăm la râu sau când mergeam să culegem mure de-a lungul râului și în pădurea din spatele casei vechi a vecinului.”

[“Ricordo poco di quando ero piccola, ma ricordo solo del tempo trascorso con mia nonna, ho bei ricordi solo con lei e mio fratello di quando andavamo a giocare al fiume o quando andavamo a raccogliere more lungo il fiume e nel bosco dietro la casa vecchia del vicino”.]

„În sufletul meu, sunt câteva frânturi care amintesc de jocul în grădina bunicii, în căutarea cel mai frumos dovleac sau cartof.”

[“Nella mia anima ci sono dei frammenti che mi ricordano dei giochi nell'orto di mia nonna, alla ricerca della zucca o della patata più bella.”]

„Legătura a fost menținută de-a lungul anilor și datorită vacanței de vară în România, care nu a lipsit niciun an. Tot timpul m-am bucurat să merg, dar cu cât mai mult treceau anii, nu mai simteam că mergeam acasă, pentru că acasă devenise acolo unde petreceam mai mult timp, adică în Italia.”

[“Il legame è stato mantenuto durante gli anni anche grazie alle vacanze estive in Romania, che non sono mai mancate. Mi è sempre piaciuto andarci, ma col passare degli anni non mi sembrava più di tornare a casa, perché “a casa” era diventato il luogo in cui passavo più tempo, cioè l'Italia”.]

ROMÂNIA ESTE IDEALĂ/IDEALIZATĂ [LA ROMANIA È IDEALE/
IDEALIZZATA]

„Vreau să îți spun România că prețuim mult frumusețile tale naturale: Sfinxul din Bucegi, Delta Dunării, Vulcanii Noroioși și multe alte minuni naturale care ne fac să ne mândrim cu tine oriunde am fi.”

["Voglio dirti Romania che apprezziamo molto le tue bellezze naturali: la Sfinge di Bucegi, il Delta del Danubio, i Vulcani di Fango e molte altre meraviglie naturali che ci rendono orgogliosi di te ovunque ci troviamo."]

„Pentru mine nu există altă țară mai frumoasă decât tine! Ești exemplu viu de ce înseamnă frumusețe. Te iubim pentru ceea ce ești. De la tine am învățat că unirea aduce putere.”

["Per me non c'è un altro paese più bello di te! Sei un esempio vivente di cosa significhi bellezza. Ti amiamo per quello che sei. Da te ho imparato che l'unione fa la forza".]

„Eu mă identific cu tine! Au trecut anii dar tot TU rămâi locul meu preferat. Îți voi purta tradițiile oriunde în lume și te voi descrie ca fiind cea mai prețioasă țară. Te voi face frumoasă de ziua ta și îți voi dărui flori și această scrisoare.”

["Io mi identifico con te! Sono passati gli anni ma TU rimani sempre il mio posto preferito. Porterò le tue tradizioni ovunque nel mondo e ti descriverò come il paese più prezioso. Ti renderò bella per la tua festa nazionale e ti regalerò dei fiori e questa lettera".]

„Un popor care trebuie să-și arate valoare chiar dacă de multe ori se consideră inferior. Un popor legat de familie care e luată în considerare ca sinonim de putere și siguranță. Un popor care crede atât de mult în religie, pentru că dă sens vieții. Un popor respectuos dar în același timp rebel, care nu se supune cu ușurință normelor. Un popor și o țară care are calități și defecte, ca și mine, ca toți ceilalți.”

["Un popolo che deve mostrare il proprio valore anche se spesso si ritiene inferiore. Un popolo legato alla famiglia che è considerata sinonimo di forza e sicurezza. Un popolo che crede tanto nella religione, perché dà senso alla vita. Un popolo rispettoso, ma allo stesso tempo ribelle che non si sottopone facilmente alle norme. Un popolo e un Paese che ha pregi e difetti, come me, come tutti gli altri".]

„Ești nespus de frumoasă și chiar mi-ar plăcea ca înainte de a vizita lumea întreagă să mă întorc la tine și să descopăr fiecare latură a ta și fiecare colț ascuns dar plin de farmec și care merită cunoscut de lumea întreagă.”

["Sei incredibilmente bella e vorrei davvero prima di visitare il mondo intero poter tornare da te e scoprire ogni lato di te e ogni angolo nascosto ma affascinante, che merita di essere conosciuto da tutto il mondo."]

„Așa că, România, draga mea, țara mea de suflet, nu fi disperată deoarece astăzi copiii tăi sunt cu gândul la idealul nostru de națiune și sunt din ce în ce mai convinși să se întoarcă la tine, fiindcă, după cum bine știi, nicăeri nu este mai bine decât la tine acasă.”

["Pertanto, Romania, mia cara, paese della mia anima, non disperare perché oggi i tuoi figli stanno pensando al nostro ideale di nazione e sono sempre più convinti di tornare da te, perché, come ben sai, in nessun posto si sta meglio che a casa propria."]

La prospettiva dell'immaginario che emerge da questi frammenti di testi è, almeno ad una prima lettura e almeno per me, sconcertante, in netta opposizione con quanto dichiarato dagli stessi studenti nei questionari precedenti, con riguardo alla lingua che parlano in casa, alla conoscenza che essi hanno della cultura romena e della Romania in generale, all'identità sempre più europea che loro assumono e che prevale su quella nazionale ecc. Decontestualizzando, potremmo considerare questi frammenti come microtesti patriottici in puro spirito romantico, permeati da un forte sentimento nazionale, a volte anche nazionalistico, come riferimenti a una "epoca dell'oro"/"età dell'oro", a un "miraggio dell'unità" (nel pensiero e nel sentimento), con vaghi echi del "culto del salvatore" (trad.n.s.), per usare i termini di Raoul Girardet (1997) e dei suoi miti e mitologie politiche. L'idea di paese/patria/madre, filo rosso del romanticismo, del patriottismo-patriottardo si sovrappone a un'immagine identitaria completamente diversa da quella reale, della quotidianità, in palese contraddizione, come affermavo, con la loro mancanza di informazione e persino di interesse anche nei confronti della situazione attuale della Romania. Da questo punto di vista, penso che sarebbe estremamente interessante vedere e confrontare la risposta degli studenti romeni in Italia con le possibili risposte dei giovani coetanei che vivono in Romania. Certo, l'elemento chiave alla base di un simile confronto, l'elemento esplicativo, decisivo e definitorio, che viene subito a galla, è la migrazione/emigrazione/immigrazione. Dal punto di vista filosofico, la migrazione stessa non è un dato biologico, ma piuttosto un atto esistenziale e politico; il verbo intransitivo *migrare* (che non dovrebbe, secondo i filosofi, essere considerato un perfetto sinonimo del verbo *muoversi*), verbo presente, con forma simile, in tutte le lingue romanze, ma anche in inglese, deriva dal latino *migrare*, con radici sanscrite e indoeuropee, e significava *abbandonare un luogo, andar via da un certo luogo*. Quindi, sin dagli inizi, *migrare* non rappresenta un "semplice movimento, ma rinvia a uno scambio complesso, quello del luogo e si compie perciò nel paesaggio in cui si incontra lo straniero, dove si inaugura la prassi etico-politica dell'ospitalità" (Di Cesare 2017, 92). Occorre ricordare che il fenomeno della migrazione, sempre più recentemente, è associato, psicologicamente

parlando, a traumi, perdite, sofferenze.¹⁰ D'altra parte, l'etnia, la nazione come complesso simbolico e costitutivo dell'identità di un popolo, come principio per eccellenza di "aggregazione" sociale, erano definite, fino a tempi recenti, attraverso cinque coordinate essenziali, definizione e coordinate che, nella nostra opinione, andrebbero riviste alla luce del nuovo ordine e della realtà politico-sociale a livello globale: lingua comune, *logos*, le norme comuni, *ethos*, discendenza comune, *genos*, spazio comune, "patria", *topos* e mitologia delle origini comuni, *epos* (Altan 1995, 21). In questo contesto, però, il fenomeno dell'e/i/migrazione è sempre correlato con quello dell'integrazione, in un binomio già ben formato tra identitario e (trans)nazionale, in cui una parte si perde, l'altra si guadagna. L'integrazione come processo implica (anche) l'assimilazione di un insieme di regole, di una normativa specifica del paese in cui si emigra, processo che non dovrebbe portare necessariamente né ad abbandonare il bagaglio socioculturale di origine né ad appesantirlo. Sembra diverso, invece, quello che sta accadendo con l'emigrazione romena, fenomeno che viene già studiato dagli specialisti del settore: si tende alla costruzione di una "seconda Romania", sul modello di quella "di casa", si mantiene l'identificazione dell'individuo con un modello di società prevalentemente nazionalistico che enfatizza il carattere etnico-nazionale e che molto spesso viene prima di quello nazionale del paese in cui si trovano o, talvolta, anche prima di quello europeo (che, come abbiamo visto nel caso delle risposte degli studenti, può funzionare persino come *escamotage*). I ricercatori ritengono che la vera integrazione abbia anche una componente sociolinguistica e che non basta raggiungere l'integrazione a livello linguistico (che comunque è fondamentale e rappresenta il primo passo, per abbattere la barriera linguistica). Per una piena integrazione deve essere raggiunta anche l'integrazione sociolinguistica che implica "la conoscenza dei modelli sociolinguistici e comunicativi (pragmatici) della comunità di destinazione, poiché questo tipo di conoscenza è essenziale per una integrazione pienamente compiuta" (trad.ns).¹¹ In altre parole, vanno apprese le regole di un nuovo contesto sociale, insieme alle sue pratiche - l'atteggiamento verso questa situazione, così come l'atteggiamento verso i giudizi, o meglio, i pregiudizi che provengono dai romeni rimasti in Romania e/o dagli ospiti, fa reagire gli emigranti in modi diversi, da un esagerato desiderio di integrazione fino all'abbandono della lingua e dei contatti con la Romania, ad un'esaltazione dello spirito nazionalista e alla consapevolezza della "circolarità", dell'effimerità e precarietà del loro status sociale di emigrante versus la solidità e l'eternità degli elementi di identità nazionale che,

¹⁰ Molto interessanti, in questo senso, sono gli studi di Vamik D. Volkan sul tema degli emigranti e dei profughi, soprattutto *Immigrants and Refugees: Trauma, Perennial Mourning, Prejudice, and Border Psychology*, 2019, Taylor & Francis Ltd.

¹¹ Per ulteriori dettagli vedasi lo studio di Francisco Moreno Fernandez, 2009, citato e analizzato in Florin-Teodor Olariu, *Variație și varietăți în limba română. Studii de dialectologie și sociolingvistică*, ed. Institutul European Iași, 2017, pp. 139-154.

a un certo punto, assicureranno loro la stabilità e il comfort necessari al rientro in patria. Invece, quest'ultimo tipo di reazione ha effetti negativi sull'integrazione, accentuando ancor di più la diversità e isolando le persone in micro-comunità organizzate attorno a questa identità etnica, impedendo loro la partecipazione alla vita della comunità in cui vivono, il contatto e la comunicazione con il mondo circostante. Certo, c'è anche una via di mezzo, ci sono sempre più giovani che non si definiscono attraverso un'identità nazionale, ma si considerano europei, come abbiamo visto sopra, e ci sono famiglie dove in casa si parla romeno e i bambini sono bilingui ecc. In questa "seconda Romania" creata a distanza, il ruolo agglutinante è svolto principalmente dalla chiesa romena (ortodossa, cattolica, neo-protestante), ma anche dall'ambiente associativo e, in misura minore, dai partiti politici. I ricercatori che analizzano il fenomeno della migrazione romena da entrambe le prospettive, di chi parte, da un lato, e dello stato che dovrebbe accompagnarli con alcune specifiche politiche legate all'emigrazione, dall'altro, sono dell'opinione che questi atteggiamenti estremi, che questa oscillazione tra un atteggiamento rigido e definitivo e un altro, altrettanto rigido e definitivo, anche se in senso opposto, siano il risultato di un *processo di ridefinizione identitaria* che caratterizza, dall'interno, il fenomeno migratorio. La distanza o la dislocazione, l'allontanamento dal centro, come lo abbiamo chiamato in questo studio, può creare, dal punto di vista psicologico, labilità, instabilità emotiva, esacerbazione di emozioni e sentimenti - da qui la reazione talvolta esagerata a simboli e feste nazionali, ad esempio, o l'idealizzazione di una realtà che loro stessi, a un certo punto, hanno deciso di abbandonare. L'abbandono, però, è spesso giustificato dall'abbandono dello Stato in quanto tale (inteso come politica/politici, leadership), un abbandono forzato quindi, esterno, e non tanto l'abbandono del paese, della nazione, del popolo che continuano ad essere idealizzati, tanto più se l'abbandono sia stato ancor di più forzato. "Tutti i riferimenti al paese di origine e al paese di residenza avvengono attraverso questo filtro emozionale: le emozioni mediano la costruzione dell'identità. I migranti vivono tra qua e là, che è, in fondo, una solitudine" (trad.ns.).¹² L'intero processo di ricostruzione/riscoperta/ ridefinizione identitaria oscilla tra un "qui" e un "là", tra un "noi i romeni della diaspora" e "voi i romeni di casa", tra "noi i romeni emigrati" e "voi, altre nazioni di emigrati", tra "noi i romeni emigrati" e "voi che ci ospitate" e presuppone un *atto di "negoiazione" identitaria* per il recupero o la riscoperta delle radici e dell'appartenenza: "Cosa sono? Sono romeni all'estero e assumere una (nuova?) identità è una decisione personale dopo alcune negoziazioni: Quali tradizioni conservo? Quali costumi mantengo? In che lingua cresco i miei figli? Queste negoziazioni identitarie possono essere ricorrenti per la ricerca e/o il ritrovo

¹² Alina Dolea, in un'intervista pubblicata sul sito <https://teleleu.eu/>, il 29.09.2021, intervista realizzata da Elena Stancu in collaborazione con Pulitzer Center, consultato online in novembre-dicembre 2022.

delle radici" (trad.ns.).¹³ In questo contesto e su questo sfondo di un tentativo di ridefinizione e ricostruzione dell'identità mediata emotivamente, gli analisti del fenomeno mettono al centro la chiesa romena - l'unità comune attraverso la fede - che gioca un ruolo sempre più importante nella comunità migrante. Per via delle sue attività religiose, recentemente diventate accessibili anche online e sulle piattaforme dei social media, ma soprattutto attraverso quelle a carattere comunitario, in cui si organizzano eventi e attività per la diaspora, corsi di lingua romena, spettacoli folcloristici, eventi che segnano i momenti principali e le celebrazioni ecc., la chiesa arriva a svolgere persino il ruolo di mediatrice culturale all'interno della diaspora.¹⁴ Un altro tipo di spiegazione, questa volta, in chiave pragmatica, dei *cliché* e degli stereotipi, che possiamo facilmente rilevare in questi testi, può risultare da una recente analisi del motore di ricerca Google che ci dice, sul sito [economedia.ro](https://www.economedia.ro), che 9 su 10 romeni adulti della diaspora cercano e seguono contenuti medialti in romeno, ascoltando musica, guardando i canali televisivi, soprattutto il canale YouTube, leggono pubblicazioni online e frequentano i *social network* romeni.¹⁵

Questi sarebbero solo alcuni suggerimenti di "chiave di lettura" per i frammenti delle lettere degli studenti di origine romena, per provare a dare una

¹³ Alina Dolea, intervista di Ioana Nicolescu, piattaforma online <https://www.edupedu.ro/>, del 9.12. 2020, consultato online in novembre-dicembre 2022.

¹⁴ Riguardo al fenomeno della migrazione romena, analisi recenti e interessanti dei vari aspetti che essa impone appaiono sotto la firma di alcuni specialisti come Camelia Beciu, Alina E. Dolea, Felicia Dumas, Florin-Teodor Olariu, Ruxandra Trandafoiu ș.a.

¹⁵ Quali fonti di contenuto romeno usano i romeni nella diaspora? Ascoltano musica romena (57%), frequentano i social network (56%), guardano i canali televisivi romeni - via cavo o su piattaforme online (53%), leggono pubblicazioni online romene (51%) o ascoltano la radio romena (26%). YouTube è una delle piattaforme di contenuto video tra le più utilizzate dai romeni della diaspora per guardare contenuti in romeno. Quasi il 90% degli intervistati nell'ambito di questo studio afferma di guardare video in romeno su YouTube almeno una volta alla settimana. I contenuti romeni sono preferiti dalla maggior parte di loro: il 74% dei romeni della diaspora che utilizza YouTube afferma di guardare principalmente video in romeno. La musica romena è al primo posto per quanto riguarda i contenuti guardati su YouTube (63%), seguita da notizie (46%) e intrattenimento (45%), film e serie romeni (38%), programmi televisivi (37%) e ricette culinarie (32%). L'interesse della diaspora romena può essere notato nelle visualizzazioni dei canali YouTube in lingua romena. Ad esempio, una su tre visualizzazioni su YouTube TraLaLa (5,5 milioni di abbonati), con animazioni e canzoni per bambini, provengono dai romeni che si trovano all'estero. Nel caso del canale Atenție, cad mere! (1,12 milioni di abbonati), che presenta realtà interessanti sulla vita e il mondo, quasi il 30% delle visualizzazioni provengono dalla diaspora. La professoressa di fisica, Cristina Presură, oltre 160.000 di abbonati, è seguita da una percentuale pari al 25% dai romeni che vivono all'estero, un quarto dalle visualizzazioni del canale di Jamila, provengono dai romeni siti al di là del confine, e la musica di Smiley dal suo canale di YouTube (quasi 1 milione di abbonati), viene ascoltata per più del 30% dall'estero, secondo il sito <https://economedia.ro/studiu-google-9-din-10-romani-din-diaspora-urmaresc-continut-media-in-romana-cei-mai-multi-asculta-muzica-stau-pe-retele-de-socializare-urmaresc-televiziuni-romanesti-si-citesc-publicatii-online.html#.Y6GwThbMK3B>, consultato in dicembre 2022.

spiegazione di *background* (dal punto di vista psicologico e sociale), dell'immaginario che ne emerge, sottolineando, ovviamente, il fatto che la ricerca si trova solo a un punto di partenza, un punto di inizio, e sicuramente ci offrirà produttive vie di sviluppo per il futuro. Nello stesso tempo, rappresentano anche un primo passo per l'individuazione e la definizione/delineazione di un profilo socioculturale di questi ragazzi, molto utile per la scelta futura dei metodi più adatti ed efficaci di insegnamento. Partendo, quindi, dalle basi di carattere psicologico, sociologico e antropologico di analisi del fenomeno migratorio, nella sua specificità romena, correlate con i dati provenienti dalle analisi dei media, applicate ai materiali ricavati dai questionari, è possibile delineare, a grandi linee, un "marchio" di Paese, un immaginario/un'immagine della Romania così come appare all'interno del segmento diasporico di seconda generazione, nell'Italia, alla fine del 2022.

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DAS IMAGINÄRE ALS TEIL DES FREMDSPRACHENUNTERRICHTS

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ABSTRACT. *The Imaginary as the Part of the Foreign Language Education.*

Inner images (visual mental representations) undoubtedly constitute an intrinsic part of our personal world. They are independent of external visual stimuli and they are stored in the brain. Associative relations – as part of the speaker's individual lexicon in his semantic memory – are evoked in one's memory as ready-made units. Instead of a purely cognitive transfer of materials, they serve – together with visual mental representations – as a support for sensory-reflexive and imaginative-creative processing of themes. The recall of these units in the memory can be supported by works of art. It is the figurative-iconic process of storage in the memory – which takes place in the educational process in parallel with the linguistic-conceptual one – that significantly contributes to a deeper and more permanent consolidation of the learning materials. The integration of works of art into foreign language education thus not only supports the development of language competence, but also the aestheticization of the learner. The article presents new didactic procedures in teaching German as a foreign language through works of fine art.³

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Keywords: *visual mental representations, associative relations, works of art, foreign language education, aestheticization*

REZUMAT. Imaginarul ca parte a educației în limba străină. Imaginile interioare (reprezentările mentale vizuale) constituie, fără îndoială, o parte intrinsecă a lumii noastre personale. Ele sunt independente de stimulii vizuali externi și sunt stocate în creier. Relațiile asociative – ca parte a lexicului individual al vorbitorului în memoria sa semantică – sunt evocate în memoria cuiva ca unități gata făcute. În loc de un transfer pur cognitiv al materialelor, ele servesc – împreună cu reprezentările mentale vizuale – ca suport pentru procesarea senzorial-reflexivă și imaginativ-creativă a temelor. Rechemarea acestor unități în memorie poate fi susținută de opere de artă. Procesul figurativ-ionic de stocare în memorie – care are loc în procesul educațional în paralel cu cel lingvistico-conceptual – este cel care contribuie semnificativ la o consolidare mai profundă și mai permanentă a materialelor de învățare. Integrarea operelor de artă în învățământul limbilor străine sprijină astfel nu numai dezvoltarea competenței lingvistice, ci și estetizarea cursantului. Articolul prezintă noi procedee didactice în predarea limbii germane ca limbă străină prin opere de artă plastică.

Cuvinte-cheie: *reprezentări vizuale mentale, relații asociative, opere de artă, educație în limbi străine, estetizare*

Vorwort

Die Gehirn- und Kognitionsforschung erbrachte die empirisch basierte Erkenntnis, dass die Verbindung von Sprache und Emotionen die Grundlage unseres Verständnisses von Sprachenverarbeitungsprozessen darstellt. Kognitive und sprachliche Repräsentationen werden maßgeblich von emotionalen Faktoren beeinflusst (vgl. Schwarz-Friesel 2013, 16). Emotionen werden mittels Sprache in spezifischer Form repräsentiert.

Mit sprachlichen Äußerungen werden Gefühle und emotionale Einstellungen ausgedrückt und benannt, geweckt, intensiviert sowie konstituiert. (Schwarz-Friesel 2013, 365)⁴

Und vice versa, Emotionen unterstützen das Speichern von verbalen Äußerungen im Langzeitgedächtnis, d.h. das Lernen, was aus neurodidaktischer Perspektive durch die Botenstoffe (Neurotransmitter) gesteuert wird (vgl. Grein

⁴ Verbal utterances serve as vehicles through which feelings and emotional attitudes are expressed and named, aroused, intensified and constituted. (my translation)

2013, 24). Die Freisetzung der Botenstoffe wird durch Emotionen ausgelöst, welche die Kunst auch als Symbolisierung von inneren Bildern – Bildern einer emotional erlebten Wirklichkeit und des Imaginären vermitteln kann.

Zur Problematik der inneren Bilder

Vorstellungen über die soziale Welt und über die Art der Beziehungen zur äußeren sozialen Welt werden als innere Bilder und Orientierungen im Gehirn verankert (vgl. Hüther 2009, 102). Das wahrgenommene Bild muss in der inneren Vorstellungswelt verankert und zur Einbettung in die innere emotionale und physische Welt mit früher entstandenen Mustern verknüpft werden. Diese Fähigkeit, neue Wahrnehmungen zu erzeugen und neue innere Bilder in Form bestimmter Muster der synaptischen Verdrahtung im Gehirn zu verankern, ist im menschlichen Gehirn dank seiner milieuhängigen Plastizität sehr gut entwickelt. Seine Fähigkeit zur Veränderung ermöglicht, die bereits gespeicherten inneren Bilder mit neuen, über die verschiedenen Sinneskanäle⁵ ankommenden und im Gehirn erzeugten Aktivitätsmustern zu vergleichen und unsere bisherigen inneren Bilder zu verändern (vgl. Rittelmeyer 2012, 46; Hüther 2009, 82).

Die ankommenden Sinnesdaten erzeugen im Gehirn zunächst ein inneres Wahrnehmungsbild, das sich mit bereits bestehenden inneren Bildern verbindet und ein Erwartungsbild in Form eines charakteristischen Aktivierungsmusters generiert.

Wenn keinerlei Übereinstimmung zwischen dem durch eine bestimmte Wahrnehmung im Gehirn entstehenden neuen Erregungsmuster und dem generierten Erwartungsbild hergestellt werden kann, passiert nichts. [...] Wirklich interessant wird es nur dann, wenn das alte bereits vorhandene Muster und das neue, eben entstandene Aktivierungsmuster zumindest teilweise übereinstimmen und überlagerbar sind. Das im Gehirn entstandene Erwartungsbild muss dann entsprechend modifiziert werden. (Hüther 2015, 76-77)⁶

⁵ Die Sinneskanäle vermitteln Empfindungen als Reaktion auf Sinnesreize. „Empfindungen sind jedoch nicht mit Gefühlen gleichzusetzen. [...] Beide Erlebensformen sind an das zugeschaltete Bewusstsein gekoppelt. Während aber Gefühlszustände und –prozesse mit kognitiven Inhalten verknüpft sind, involvieren Empfindungen eher elementare, sensomotorische Erlebenskomponenten“ (Schwarz-Friesel 2013, 49-50).

⁶ If there is no match between the new excitation pattern created by a certain perception in the brain and the expectation image generated, nothing happens. [...] It only becomes really interesting when the old, already existing pattern and the new activation pattern, just created, match at least partially and can overlap. The expectation image created in the brain must then be modified accordingly. (my translation)

Die Veränderung bzw. Neubildung von Zellen ist von den Erfahrungen und Handlungen des Menschen abhängig. Endgültige Verschaltungsmuster entstehen während der individuellen Entwicklung. Die Bereitschaft und Offenheit zur Modifikation und Erweiterung bereits vorhandener innerer Erwartungsbilder ist während der Phase der Hirnreifung, also in der frühen Kindheit, besonders groß. Dies gilt nicht nur für die visuelle Wahrnehmung, sondern auch für die Hörwahrnehmung (akustische innere Bilder) und das damit einhergehende Verstehen und Verankern von Sprache (vgl. Hüther 2015, 77; Wangerin 2006, 5). Die neuen Wahrnehmungen werden in die Gesamtheit der vorhandenen inneren Bilder integriert, d. h. man hat etwas dazugelernt. Als Konsequenzen im didaktischen Kontext kann man feststellen:

Der fortwährende Abgleich der bereits angelegten inneren Wahrnehmungsbilder bei den Schülern mit neuen Sinnesdaten wird zu einer bedeutsamen und hilfreichen Verbesserung ihrer Wahrnehmungsfähigkeit beitragen. Dies erleichtert ihnen ebenso in ihrem weiteren Leben den Abruf und den Abgleich ihrer vorhandenen inneren Bilder. (Kolečáni Lenčová, Kováčová and Tomášková 2018, 22)⁷

Die neurobiologische Erkenntnis, dass Menschen in der Lage sind, an ihrem inneren Schatz an Bildern zu arbeiten, eröffnet auch für die Lehrer neue Wege zur Persönlichkeit der Lernenden (vgl. Stöckl 2004, 62-63). Denn auch die Fremdsprachendidaktik versucht, bei den Lernenden neue innere Bilder zu erzeugen. Spielerische und kreative Methoden in Verbindung mit Bildassoziationen, bzw. der visuellen Erfahrung sollten häufiger eingesetzt werden. Diese fördern die Visualisierungsfähigkeit, wirken entspannend, bringen viel Spaß und Freude und werden von den Schülern eher positiv wahrgenommen. Wenn wir verschiedene Methoden anwenden, müssen wir daran denken, dass innere Bilder, die schon einmal da waren, wieder abrufbar sind. Innere Bilder, die bereits vorhanden sind, können erweitert und miteinander verknüpft und kombiniert werden.

In den nächsten Kapiteln stellen wir die Miteinbeziehung der inneren Bilder in den Fremdsprachenunterricht durch die Integration von Kunstwerken in der Intention des Konzeptes des ästhetischen Lernens dar. Wir fokussieren auf die Schüler im jüngeren Schulalter (6. Lebensjahr bis 10. Lebensjahr) mit gemeinsamen Sprachniveaustufen A1 und A2. Nach dem Gemeinsamen Europäischen Referenzrahmen für Sprachen können diese

⁷ The continual comparison of the inner perception images, created by the learners, with new sensory data will contribute to a significant and useful improvement in their perception ability. This also makes it easier for the students to recall and harmonize their existing inner images in their later lives. (my translation)

Lernenden Sätze und häufig gebrauchte Ausdrücke bzw. Kollokationen verstehen, die unmittelbar mit ihrem Leben zusammenhängen (z.B. der Alltag mit der Familie, Tagesablauf, Urlaub, Hobbys, Einkaufen etc.). Sie können sich in routinemäßigen Situationen verständigen, in denen es um einen einfachen und direkten Austausch von Informationen über vertraute und geläufige Dinge geht. Die oben geschilderte Charakteristik wird im nächsten Kapitel bei der Auswahl von Kunstwerken berücksichtigt.

Im jüngeren Schulalter spielt das Lernen eine wichtige Rolle, da das Gedächtnis in dieser Zeit am flexibelsten ist und neues Wissen und Informationen aufnehmen kann (vgl. Mačňáková 2006, 14). Schüler im jüngeren Schulalter interessieren sich hauptsächlich für die Informationen, welche sie spannend und wichtig finden. In diesem Alter wird auch die Fähigkeit zum Speichern und Abrufen vom erworbenen Wissen im Gedächtnis intensiv gefördert. Dazu werden diverse Gedächtnisstrategien eingesetzt, die u.a. auch durch das multisensorische Lernen entfaltet werden⁸ (vgl. Stöckl 2004, 62). Im Sinne dieses Kriteriums kann in den Unterricht der jüngeren Schüler das ästhetische Lernen als neuer didaktischer Ansatz, welcher den Wissenserwerb durch mehrere Sinne unterstützt, integriert werden.

Ästhetisches Lernen

Das Konzept des ästhetischen Lernens untersucht die Nutzung des Kunstpotentials über den Rahmen von üblichen didaktischen Verfahren im Fremdsprachenunterricht hinaus⁹. Die Elemente des ästhetischen Lernens helfen dem Lehrer, einen schülerzentrierten Ansatz zu verfolgen, der auf Prinzipien der Einzigartigkeit jedes Schülers (Selbstaussdruck des Kindes), der Unterstützung des aktiven Lernens, der Entwicklung der Schülerautonomie und auf der gemeinsamen Entscheidungsfindung über die Unterrichtsinhalte gebildet wird.

Das ästhetische Lernen wird durch Medien gekennzeichnet, die wir aus didaktischer Perspektive je nach Art der visuellen Wahrnehmung in folgende drei Hauptgruppen unterteilen: visuelle Medien (Zeichnung, Fotografie oder Kunstreproduktion), audiovisuelle Medien (Filme) und auditive Medien (Musikaufnahmen). Für die Auswahl geeigneter Medien sind folgende Kriterien ausschlaggebend: Authentizität (Medien, die ursprünglich nicht für Unterrichtszwecke

⁸ Multisensorisches Lernen bedeutet das Lernen mit mehreren Sinnen: die Sinneskanäle des Menschen werden in Hörsinn (auditive Wahrnehmung), Sehsinn (visuelle Wahrnehmung), Geruchssinn (olfaktorische Wahrnehmung), Geschmacksinn (gustatorische Wahrnehmung) und Tastsinn (haptische und taktile Wahrnehmung) unterschieden.

⁹ Zwar werden im Fremdsprachenunterricht häufig Bilder verwendet, allzu oft verbleibt man dabei aber auf der Ebene der bloßen Deskription.

geschaffen wurden), Ausgleich zwischen ihrer Zugänglichkeit und Komplexität (sie sollen unter den Unterrichtsbedingungen akzeptiert werden, aber zugleich genug Impulse gewährleisten) und die Berücksichtigung der Zielgruppe, in unserem Fall der Lernenden im jüngeren Schulalter.

Das ästhetische Lernen wird durch folgende Attribute gekennzeichnet: Bedarf an ständiger Aktivierung der Schüler, Erstellung eigener Unterrichtsmaterialien (Integration des ästhetischen Lernens), Vorzug des Hörens und Sprechens gegenüber Schreiben und Lesen und maximale Nutzung der Visualisierung. Die Visualisierung steht im Zusammenhang mit dem Begriff von *Visual Literacy*. Das Konzept der *Visual Literacy* (visuelle Literalität) beschäftigt sich mit dem Lehren und Lernen von Wissensbeständen und Einstellungen, Fertigkeiten und Fähigkeiten, die uns ermöglichen, visuelle Kommunikation und Interaktion zu verwirklichen. Das ästhetische Lernen gestattet den visuellen Darstellungen andere Funktionen als die auf bloße Deskription verengte Rolle. Durch die Integration von Werken der bildenden Kunst, die das Lernen anhand der Kunst und mit der Kunst ermöglichen, wird dem Fremdsprachenunterricht ein komplexer Charakter zugewiesen, denn es werden die kognitiven und affektiven Faktoren verbunden (vgl. Kolečáni Lenčová 2015, 2016a, 2021; Chen 2014; Lay 2014; Schier 2014; Wangerin 2006). Dank ihrer Mehrdeutigkeit werden durch Kunstwerke die Motivation, Kreativität und Emotionalität der Lernenden gefördert. Der Wahrscheinlichkeitscharakter der Künste ermöglicht den Lernenden ästhetische Erfahrungen, bei denen sie sich selbst reflektieren und damit „lesen“, „hören“ oder „betrachten“ können, um den Weg in ihr Inneres zu finden.

Welche Kunstwerke kann man aber in den Fremdsprachenunterricht bei Kindern des jüngeren Schulalters integrieren? Es gibt keinen „Kanon“ kindgerechter Kunstwerke aus der älteren Kunst oder aus der Gegenwartskunst. Die Recherche der Publikationen für Kinder erwecken den Anschein, dass u.a. die Werke von Paul Klee, Franz Marc, Henri Matisse, Vasilij Vasiljevič Kandinskij oder Keith Haring¹⁰ für diese Altersgruppe geeignet sind. Der gemeinsame Nenner ihrer Werke ist eine deutliche Farbigkeit, klare Linien, Fantasie und verständliche Symbolsprache, was zur erfolgreichen „ästhetischen Kommunikation“ zwischen dem Kunstwerk und dem Rezipienten führen kann. Es handelt sich um eine spezifische Kommunikation in Form eines interkulturellen

¹⁰ Paul Klee (1879-1940) war einer der bedeutendsten Künstler der deutschen Avantgarde. Der deutsche Maler Franz Marc (1880-1916) gilt als Vertreter des Expressionismus. Der französische Maler Henri Matisse (1869-1954) war Begründer des Fauvismus. Vasilij Vasiljevič Kandinskij (1866-1944) war ein russischer Maler, der als einer der Wegbereiter der abstrakten Kunst gilt. Keith Haring (1958-1990) war ein US-amerikanischer Künstler, der durch seinen Malstil mit klaren Linien und Flächigkeit weltberühmt wurde. (Edited from: <https://brockhaus.at/info/>).

Dialogs, bei dem es zu einer Erlebnisbegegnung des Lernenden mit dem Kunstwerk kommt. Im Prozess des Lernens werden die Wahrnehmung und das Erlebnis zu Grundbedingungen der Selbstreflexion und -identifikation des Lernenden.

Die Forschung der Kinderpräferenzen bei der Auswahl der Kunstwerke zeigt, dass die Kinder keinen einheitlichen Kunstgeschmack haben, sondern das Spektrum der bevorzugten Kunstwerke so vielfältig ist, wie die Kinder selbst (vgl. Uhlig and Neumann 2012, 35). Kinder suchen sich die Kunstwerke nicht deshalb aus, weil sie sie schön finden, sondern weil sie – durch Material, Farbe, Figuren, Rätselhaftigkeit vermittelt – ihr Interesse erregen und dadurch ihre inneren Bilder betätigen (vgl. Tomčániová 2022, 223). Das Interesse für Kunstwerke können bei Kindern ihre Eltern, andere Verwandte, ihre Lehrer in der Schule oder in Zirkelaktivitäten, die Künstler in Diskussionen und anderen öffentlichen Veranstaltungen wecken. Darüber hinaus ist in den letzten Jahrzehnten der starke Einfluss der virtuellen Welt durch die neuen Medien zu beobachten und zu spüren. Grundlegend ist es, den Kindern verschiedene Kunstwerke anzubieten. Auch solche, die allgemein betrachtet im Sinne der Schönheit als nicht ästhetisch empfunden werden, die aber einen Gedanken oder eine Botschaft in sich tragen, durch den oder die sich die Kinder angesprochen fühlen. Es handelt sich mithin um Botschaften, welche auch Kinder im jüngeren Schulalter ausgehend von ihren Erfahrungen in ihrem Gehirn bearbeiten können. Die oben genannten Prinzipien werden im nächsten Kapitel anhand didaktischer Verfahren veranschaulicht.

Imaginationen im Fremdsprachenunterricht

Ein sorgfältig vorbereiteter und gut strukturierter Unterricht ermöglicht, den emotionellen Bestand der Lernenden durch den Kontakt mit Kunstwerken zielbewusst zu gestalten. Denn „alle Künste repräsentieren, gewissermaßen in einer Einheit von Kognition und Emotion, auch jene Bereiche, die der diskursiven Sprache nicht zugänglich sind. Als präsentative Symbolmodi reichen sie weiter als die Grenzen der Sprache“ (Wangerin 2006, 3).

Die Lernenden können eine sog. Entdeckungsreise zum Bild, zum Künstler, zu sich selbst und zu anderen Mitmenschen unternehmen. Der Kontakt mit der bildenden Kunst löst bei den Lernenden Gefühle aus, fördert ihre innere Motivation und autonomes kreatives Handeln. Motivierende Stimuli können gute Einstiegspunkte sein und dazu beitragen, dass sich die Lernenden gerne mit den Kunstwerken auseinandersetzen, die versteckten Bedeutungsebenen und deren Signale dechiffrieren und in die verbale Sprache übertragen.

Die „Entdeckungsreise“ zu den Werken der bildenden Kunst kann im DaF-Unterricht (Deutsch als Fremdsprache) folgendermaßen verwirklicht werden:

Beispiel 1: Paul Klee – Katze und Vogel, Der Goldfisch

An der Wand im Klassenraum oder an der Tafel hängen wir zwei große Plakate auf – die Reproduktionen von Paul Klees *Katze und Vogel* und *Der Goldfisch* (Bild 1, 2). Die Lernenden, welche diese Gemälde und deren Titel zuvor nicht kannten, bilden einen Sitzkreis und reden über die Werke. Sie können diesen Werken eigene Fantasietitel geben, die Farbigkeit der Werke wahrnehmen und einzelne Farben nennen, ihre Emotionen beim Betrachten der Gemälde schildern und ebenso Emotionen, die die Gemälde hervorrufen beschreiben. Es bietet sich eine aktive Auseinandersetzung mit dem Kunstwerk – eine *Fantasiereise* – an, um die Kreativität, die Vorstellungskraft und die Intuition der Lernenden zu entfalten. Am Anfang treten die Lernenden in die Gemälde ein, indem sie fragen, was sie emotional mit dem Werk verbindet und sie auf eine innere Reise zu ihren eigenen Erfahrungen, Gedanken und Erlebnissen führt (vgl. Tomčániová 2020, 105). Die *Fantasiereise* kann mit der *Identifikationsmethode* beginnen, wobei sich die Lernenden mit einer Gestalt identifizieren (z. B. mit der Katze). In der Rolle dieser Gestalt können die Lernenden einen Dialog (Katze-Vogel) oder einen inneren Monolog führen. Sie können der Fantasie freien Lauf lassen und eine Geschichte, die beide Gemälde verbindet, erfinden. In den Rollen des Goldfisches, der Katze und des Vogels können die Lernenden je nach ihren sprachlichen und visuellen Vorerfahrungen ganz unterschiedliche Gespräche führen. Die Methode der *Fantasiereisen* ermöglicht es, Aufmerksamkeit für Details und für das Verborgene zu wecken. Außerdem wird die Vorstellungskraft angeregt und durch den Perspektivwechsel werden Einfühlungsvermögen und das reflektierende und kritische Denken gefördert. Die Unterschiede in der Wahrnehmung und Rezeption ermöglichen den Lernenden zahlreiche Begegnungen, bei denen die emotionale und affektive Seite des Lernens betont wird (vgl. Kolečáni Lenčová, Kováčová and Tomášková 2018, 44).



Bild 1. Paul Klee: Katze und Vogel¹¹

¹¹https://www.moma.org/collection/works/79456?classifications=any&date_begin=Pre-1850&date_end=2023&q=Cat+and+bird&utf8=%E2%9C%93&with_images=1.

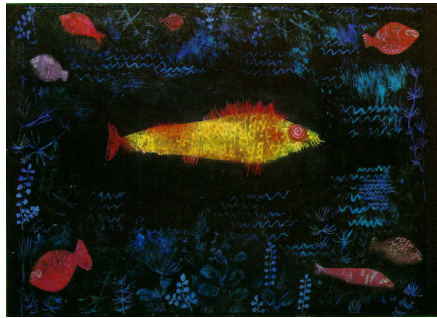


Bild 2. Paul Klee: Der Goldfisch¹²

Die folgenden zwei Beispiele zeigen, wie ein Kunstwerk als Anregung für die Projektgestaltung dienen kann.

Beispiel 2: Das Projekt *Mein Land*

Die Lernenden haben sich für eine von mehreren Kunstreproduktionen ihrem Wunsch nach entschieden. Ihre Aufgabe war es, sich in das gewählte Bild hineinzusetzen (z. B. Bild 3a) und einer/eine seiner Mitwirkenden zu werden. Sie mussten sich selbst durch Malen, Zeichnen oder Basteln darstellen. Im nächsten Schritt mussten sie ihr Selbstporträt ausschneiden und in das Bild einkleben (Abbildung 3b). Dabei war es wichtig, ein Bild zu wählen, das ihnen nahestand, und dann im Bild emotionale Bezüge zu finden, die sie zu eigenen Erfahrungen zurückführen und die somit als „Fenster“ in eine Fantasiereise dienen sollten (zur Familie, zu Freunden, ins Traumland usw.). Nachdem alle Lernenden bestimmte Aufgaben erfüllt hatten, kehrten sie durch „das Fenster“ – Kunstbild in den Klassenraum zurück. Während des sog. „Spaziergangs“ durch das Kunstbild wurden die Lernenden auf die im Bild dargestellte Situation eingestimmt (im Einklang). Anschließend beantworteten sie alle Fragen der anderen zu der gewählten Position, der selbst zugewiesenen Rolle im Bild und den selbst geschaffenen Details. Mittels dieser beiden Methoden – der Fantasiereise und des Spaziergangs – wurde nicht nur die Imagination und Kreativität stark gefördert, sondern gleichzeitig das genaue Betrachten des Bildes und die Suche nach eigenen sprachlichen Ausdrucksformen. Gerade im jüngeren Schulalter kommt es zur dynamischen Entwicklung der Imagination, die man auch durch solche Projekte wie dieses unterstützen kann.

¹² <https://online-sammlung.hamburger-kunsthalle.de/de/objekt/HK-2982>.

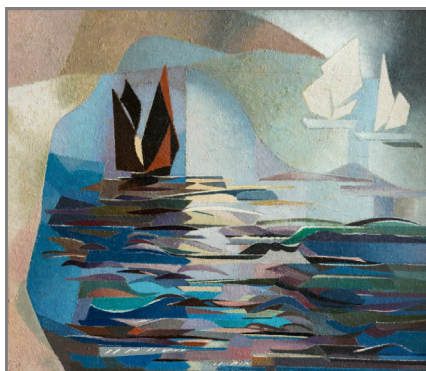


Bild 3a. Ester Šimerová Martinčeková: *Die Bucht*¹³



Bild 3b. Schülerarbeit

Beispiel 3: Das Projekt *Hüte*

Die Lernenden im Alter von 9 Jahren erhielten den Arbeitsauftrag, ein Porträt einer Lieblingsperson zu erstellen. Die Charakteristik dieser Person (Mutter, Vater, Geschwister, Oma, Opa usw.) sollte durch einen originellen Hut dargestellt werden. Waren die Lernenden fertig mit dem Bild, dann sollten sie erzählen, warum die Person gerade diesen Hut trägt. Was bedeuten die Zeichnungen und Symbole auf dem Hut? Somit wurde die Person – ihre Interessen und Charaktereigenschaften – visuell durch einen Hut dargestellt. Auf diese Weise konnte man etwas über Neigungen und Eigenschaften erfahren, aber auch über ihre Lieblingsfarben, -speisen, -geräusche oder -aktivitäten. Das Projekt *Hüte* hat in den Lernenden ein großes Interesse erweckt. Die Motivation zur Arbeit war stärker als bei der gewöhnlich verwendeten Deskription der

¹³ <https://www.nedbalka.sk/autori/ester-martincekova-simerova/#galleryxy2-1>. Ester Šimerová-Martinčeková (1909-2005) war eine weltberühmte slowakische Malerin, Künstlerin und Bühnenbildnerin, Vertreterin der Moderne.

ausgewählten Person (Bild 4a – d). Nachträglich wurden alle Bilder auf den Boden gelegt und die Lernenden sollten sich zu den abgebildeten Personen gegenseitig Fragen stellen und diese beantworten. Dieses ständige Interagieren führte zu einer regen Diskussion.

Im Prozess der Realisierung dieses Projektes wurden die Lernenden in zwei Gruppen aufgeteilt. Die erste Gruppe – die Kontrollgruppe – sollte eine Person nach freier Wahl schriftlich beschreiben (Aussehen, Eigenschaften, etc.). Der Vorgang sollte ganz gewöhnlich verlaufen. Die experimentelle Gruppe sollte hingegen eine Person durch den Hut beschreiben.

Dieser Beschreibung sollte aber zuerst eine Zeichnung vorausgehen. Der kreative Teil hat bei den Lernenden ihre Motivation zur mündlichen und danach schriftlichen Charakterisierung erhöht. Anschließend haben sie die Beschreibung als sinnvolle Ergänzung zur spannenden Aufgabe empfunden. Die schriftlichen Arbeiten beider Gruppen waren sowohl auf der morphologischen als auch auf der syntaktischen Ebene vergleichbar. Unterschiede gab es aber auf der lexikalischen Ebene, wobei die Texte in der experimentellen Gruppe über einen reicheren Wortschatz verfügten. Eine naheliegende Erklärung dafür wäre, dass sich die Lernenden in der experimentellen Gruppe, die die Person durch den Hut beschreiben sollten, aktiver mit der Aufgabe auseinandergesetzt hatten. In diesem Fall wurde die Persönlichkeit des Lernenden dadurch intensiver in den Unterrichtsprozess miteinbezogen, dass sie in der gestalterischen Phase des Projektes angehalten wurden, an ihre Lieblingsperson zu denken. In Form innerer Bilder schwebte ihnen diese Person vor, ihre Eigenschaften, Interessen und Lieblingsgegenstände. Die Lernenden waren daran höchst interessiert und motiviert, ihre Gedanken und Emotion zu versprachlichen. Die aktive Auseinandersetzung führte zum Nachschlagen neuen Wortschatzes, welcher für die Beschreibung des Hutes erforderlich war (vgl. Tomčániová 2020, 105-106).

Beim Versprachlichen der Bilder spielen, ebenso wie beim Projekt *Hüte*, im DaF-Unterricht die Kollokationen eine wichtige Rolle. Die Rolle der Kollokationen im didaktischen Kontext wird im nächsten Kapitel erläutert.



Bild 4. a – d Schülerarbeiten

Kollokationen

Die Kollokationen bilden die Grundlage zur Verbalisierung innerer Bilder. Sie bieten den Lernenden die Möglichkeit, ihre Emotionen zu kommunizieren. Kollokationen sind die Einheiten, die sich durch ihre Funktion definieren und deshalb auch als Routineformeln oder kommunikative Formeln bezeichnet werden, wie z.B. *Dann gute Nacht!* Diese Formel kann unterschiedlich pragmatisch eingesetzt werden und damit ihre Bedeutung verändern. *Dann gute Nacht!* kann die Funktion einer Verabschiedung oder eines Kommentars übernehmen. Als Kommentar wird die übertragene Bedeutung aktiviert, wenn etwas als verfrüht beendet erklärt wird (Wanzeck 2010, 110). Manche Kollokationen können zu Eigennamen werden, wie z.B. Rotes Kreuz (Busse 2009, 103).

Kollokationen sind enge Assoziationen, die unser mentales Lexikon strukturieren (Donalies 2009, 65). Sie stehen zwischen freier Syntax und teil- bzw. vollidiomatischen Phrasemen. Im Allgemeinen gilt, dass jedes Wort über bestimmte Kombinierbarkeit verfügt – von der Monokollokabilität (Kompatibilität mit einem Wort, welches meistens leicht identifizierbar ist, z.B. Zähne fletschen), über eine breitere semantische Verträglichkeit, bestimmt durch die Bedeutungsverknüpfung der Wörter (z.B. Haus-, Holz-, Fußball-, ... Tor), bis zur konventionellen lexikalischen oder idiomatischen Kollokabilität (z.B. Tor zum Himmel) (Ďurčo and Majchránková 2017, 10).

Kollokationen stellen Zwei- oder Dreiwörterverbindungen dar und sie stehen zwischen freien und idiomatischen Verbindungen (Kolečáni Lenčová 2016b, 2). Kollokationen sind assoziativ, konventionell und sie tauchen oft in mündlichen und schriftlichen Äußerungen auf. Der Begriff Kollokation ist vielschichtig in seiner Verwendung. Ganz allgemein und korpuslinguistisch werden damit Wortverbindungen jeglicher Art bezeichnet. Im Rahmen der Phraseologie werden auf diese Weise Wortverbindungen mit schwacher semantischer Veränderung benannt wie z.B. Haare waschen. Eine spezielle Gruppe von Wortverbindungen mit Kollokationscharakter bilden die pragmatischen Phraseologismen.

Zu Beginn des Fremdsprachenerwerbs wird der Grundwortschatz vermittelt. Dieser Wortschatz ermöglicht es den Lernenden, freie Wortverbindungen zu bilden, er enthält aber auch Kollokationen, die in der Fremdsprache und in der Muttersprache nicht identisch sind. Der Lernende lernt nicht nur die Bedeutung des Wortes kennen, sondern auch die Kombinierbarkeit des Wortes mit anderen Wörtern (Ďurčo, Vajičková and Tomášková 2019, 196).

Die Integration der Werke der bildenden Kunst im Fremdsprachenunterricht, die zum Konzept des ästhetischen Lernens gehört, stellt eine Möglichkeit dar, das Speichern von Kollokationen im semantischen Gedächtnis zu unterstützen. Das semantische Gedächtnis als System des Langzeitgedächtnisses wird auch Wissenssystem genannt. Es beinhaltet Fakten des allgemeinen Weltgeschehens (Brand and Markowitsch 2009, 71). Inhalte, die mit Aufmerksamkeit bedacht werden, können besser eingespeichert werden. Im Prozess der Einspeicherung werden Assoziationen zwischen den Reizen der zu lernenden Inhalte sowie jenen des Langzeitgedächtnisses hergestellt. Die Integration des ästhetischen Lernens kann die Einspeicherung und den späteren Abruf von Kollokationen erleichtern. Wenn die Informationen gespeichert und konsolidiert sind, dann sind sie im Langzeitgedächtnis abgelegt. Der Fremdsprachenunterricht fordert die Entwicklung der Kollokationskompetenz (Kolečáni Lenčová 2016b, 8). Viele Sachverhalte lassen sich nämlich nur durch Gebrauch von Kollokationen als konventionellen festen Wortverbindungen ausdrücken. Deshalb ist der Erwerb der Wortschatzkompetenz ohne ein Aneignen von Kollokationskompetenz beim Fremdsprachenlernen nicht möglich bzw. nicht vollständig (Targońska 2021).

Zur Etablierung der Kollokationsdidaktik als eines Teils der Fremdsprachendidaktik kann auch die Kunst wegen ihrer Multidimensionalität und Mehrdeutigkeit beitragen. Die Kunstwerke stellen einen visuellen Impuls zur Verbalisierung von eigenen Gedanken und inneren Strömungen bereit. Der Lernende soll die Textproduktion und die Äußerung von eigenen Gedanken anhand von Kollokationen schaffen (Ďurčo, Vajičková and Tomášková 2019, 201). Die Verbindung von Werken der bildenden Kunst und Kollokationen möchten wir anhand einer Installation¹⁴ von Andreas Slominski veranschaulichen.

Andreas Slominski – Das Imaginäre und die Kollokationen

Die Bilder der Künstler regen dazu an, neue innere Bilder zu erzeugen, und erlauben auf diese Weise, dass die inneren Bilder des Betrachters offener für den Anschluss bislang unbedachter Inhalte werden (Hüther 2015, 17). Im Unterricht dient das Kunstwerk als Input, Einstieg ins Thema, mit welchem die Kinder in verschiedenen Unterrichtsfächern arbeiten können: Ethik, Kunst, Fremdsprachenunterricht, etc.

¹⁴ Neue Formen der bildenden Kunst (Installationen, Collagen, kombinierte Techniken) versuchen das Künstlerische mit der Gegenständlichkeit zu verbinden und die Grenzen unter ihnen zu eliminieren und sie dadurch näherzubringen.



Bild 5. Andreas Slominski: Ohne Titel¹⁵

Der deutsche Gegenwartskünstler Andreas Slominski hat in seinem dreidimensionalen Kunstwerk ein altes Fahrrad voll von Plastiktüten, Taschen und anderen Dingen als eine Form der bildenden Kunst dargestellt. Das Werk evoziert innere Bilder, mit anderen Worten auch bildliche Vorstellungen oder Imaginationen. Es erlaubt viele verschiedene Interpretationen. Die Kinder können das Werk unterschiedlich empfinden: von Neugier durch Überraschung, Erstaunen, Irritieren bis zum Entsetzen, bzw. Widerstand. Diese starken Gefühle verbinden sich mit inneren Bildern, die im Gehirn gespeichert werden und bei neuen Impulsen aus der inneren Gefühlswelt abgerufen werden. In der ersten Phase der Unterrichtseinheit sollen die Lernenden frei über das Werk sprechen. Der Lehrer markiert sich die benutzten Phrasen, die man auch anhand von Kollokationen äußern kann. Die vorgeschlagenen Kollokationen werden auf die Tafel aufgeschrieben und die Lernenden schreiben die Kollokationen in die sog. Kunstmappe, in der sich auch die Reproduktionen der Kunstwerke befinden.¹⁶ Die Kinder sollen darüber nachdenken, was sie im Leben wichtig finden, sie können ihr eigenes Fahrrad mit allen für sie bedeutenden Symbolen zeichnen. Dieses Fahrrad muss aber nicht nur materielle Sachen tragen oder Menschen befördern, sondern im Sinne des

¹⁵ <https://www.frieze.com/article/andreas-slominski-0>

¹⁶ Zur Installation von Andreas Slominski eignen sich die Kinder die Ausdrücke *das Fahrrad, die Fahrräder* und folgende Kollokationen an: *Fahrrad fahren, Ich fahre mit einem Fahrrad, Ich fahre auf einem Fahrrad, Fahrrad reparieren, ein altes Fahrrad, Ich repariere ein altes Fahrrad*. Diese Kollokationen gehören zum Thema *Verkehr/Verkehrsmittel* für die Sprachniveaustufen A1+A2 und nach den typischen Verbindungen (Kollokationen) zum Wort *Fahrrad* im digitalen Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache DWDS <https://www.dwds.de/wp/Fahrrad>. Das Wort *Fahrrad* gehört zum Zertifikat Goethe-Zertifikat A1.

lateinischen Spruchs *Omnia mea mecum porto*¹⁷ auch abstrakte Dinge wie die Werte, Empfindungen oder Bildung aufnehmen. Installation von Slominski finden wir anregend, nicht nur für die Aktivierung der inneren Bilder, sondern auch für die Sprachentwicklung bei den Lernenden. Im DaF-Unterricht lässt sich der Umgang mit diesem Kunstwerk sehr gut mit der Wortschatzarbeit verbinden und die Aneignung von Kollokationen themen- und situationsbezogen vornehmen. Die Kollokationen werden spontan während des Spracherwerbs angeeignet. Die gebildeten assoziativen Relationen werden zum Bestandteil des individuellen Lexikons des Sprechers in seinem semantischen Gedächtnis und sie werden als vorgefertigte Einheiten im Gedächtnis hervorgerufen (Ďurčo and Majchránková 2017, 9). Das Auslösen dieser Einheiten im Gedächtnis können die Kunstwerke bewirken. Die Werke der bildenden Kunst unterstützen im Unterricht die bildlich-ikonische Speicherung im Gedächtnis, welche sich parallel mit der sprachlich-begrifflichen Speicherung ereignet und dadurch zur tieferen und dauerhaften Festigung des Lernstoffes führt (Kolečáni Lenčová 2012, 92). Das Werk von Andreas Slominski eignet sich zur Entwicklung des Wortschatzes, der Wortverbindungen, natürlicherweise fördert es auch die kommunikative Kompetenz und spricht den Lernenden auch durch sein starkes künstlerisches Potential an.

Nachwort

Unsere Vorstellungskraft kann durch visuelle Impulse gefördert werden. Die erzeugten inneren Bilder bieten viele Möglichkeiten, eigene innere Gespräche zu führen, sich besser kennen und verstehen zu lernen und sich infolgedessen personenbezogen und adäquater zu äußern. Deshalb ist der didaktische Ansatz des ästhetischen Lernens erforderlich – Kunst nicht traditionell nur als Objekt, sondern auch als Unterrichtsmedium wahrzunehmen, d.h. man sollte auf vorwiegend deskriptive Verfahrensweisen beim Umgang mit Kunstwerken verzichten und stattdessen die Artefakte in den Fremdsprachenunterricht systematischer und regelmäßiger einsetzen und die Lernenden durch produktiv-kreative Methoden aktivieren (z. B. Fantasiereise, Identifikation, Spaziergang).

Kunst wirkt als ein Motivator für die Lernenden, sie öffnet ihnen einen Weg zu sich selbst, um ihre innere Welt zu entdecken und zu erfahren, um zu

¹⁷ *Omnia mea mecum porto* „All meinen Besitz trage ich bei mir“. Diesen Satz soll Bias von Priene auf der Flucht aus seiner Heimatstadt ausgesprochen haben. Im übertragenen Sinne bedeutet er, dass der wahre Besitz eines Menschen in seinen Fähigkeiten und in seinen charakterlichen Eigenschaften liegt – und nicht in materiellen Dingen. (Edited from: <https://educalingo.com/de/dic-de/omnia-mea-mecum-porto>).

spüren, wie viel Potential in ihrem Inneren versteckt ist. Wenn die Lernenden die Möglichkeit haben, die Freude am Unbekannten zu erleben, indem sie mit ihren inneren Bildern interagieren, erleben sie das Lernglück und die Lernfreude. In einem so strukturierten Unterricht spielen Aspekte wie Kreativität, Eigeninitiative und Selbstreflexion, Vorstellungskraft, nonverbale Ausdrucksformen und der Ausdruck der eigenen Gefühle eine wichtige Rolle.

Die durch Kunst vermittelten Emotionen und Imaginationen sind untrennbar mit den späteren Denkprozessen verbunden. Die Integration der Werke der bildenden Kunst fokussiert nicht nur die Entwicklung der Sprachkompetenzen, sondern auch auf die Ästhetisierung¹⁸ des Lernenden. Sie lernen effektiver, wenn durch die Wissensübergabe begleitende positive Emotionen hervorgerufen werden. Zur erfolgreichen Realisierung dieser These tragen die neuesten Erkenntnisse der Neurowissenschaften und der Entwicklungspsychologie bei. Konsequenterweise ist auch das ästhetische Lernen, das die unterschiedlichen Arten der Wahrnehmung und die Individualität des Lernenden respektiert und psychologische, sensorische, emotionale, soziale und kognitive Dimensionen des Lernprozesses betont, eines der effektivsten Konzepte.

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¹⁸ Ästhetisierung ist der Prozess, bei welchem der Mensch seine Welt (Dinge, Erscheinungen, sich selbst) auf die Art und Weise gestaltet, damit diese über eine ästhetische Funktion verfügt (Edited from: Mistrík, *Estetický slovník*).

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OBJECT-ORIENTED ONTOLOGY AND NEOLIBERAL CAPITALISM: A MATERIALIST-DISCURSIVE CRITIQUE

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ABSTRACT. *Object-Oriented Ontology and Neoliberal Capitalism: A Materialist-Discursive Critique.* Object-oriented ontology [OOO], alternatively known as flat ontology or as a branch of speculative realism, has recently been developed and presented as a non-anthropocentric attempt to construct an ontology, a metaphysics, or both. In this paper, I will look at the texts of Graham Harman, probably the most vocal of all the theorists working within the framework of OOO, in order to show that the many flaws of this approach end up legitimizing a neoliberal capitalist worldview and reinforcing its contradictions. Also, one of my goals is to answer a current misunderstanding of object-oriented ontology as posthumanism; OOO is not a posthumanism because it rejects any political discourse and criticism. On the contrary, as we will see, OOO explicitly opposes the new posthumanist materialisms.

Keywords: *object-oriented ontology, posthumanism, new materialisms, neoliberal capitalism*

REZUMAT. *Ontologia orientată pe obiect și capitalismul neoliberal: o critică materialist-discursivă.* Ontologia orientată pe obiect [OOO], cunoscută și drept ontologie plană sau ca ramură a realismului speculativ, a fost dezvoltată și prezentată recent drept o tentativă non-anthropocentrică de a construi o ontologie,

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o metafizică sau ambele. În acest text, voi analiza textele lui Graham Harman, probabil cel mai vocal dintre teoreticienii care lucrează în cadrul OOO, pentru a arăta că multe probleme ale acestei abordări ajung să legitimizeze o perspectivă capitalistă neoliberală și să îi întărească contradicțiile. De asemenea, unul dintre obiectivele mele este să răspund la o neînțelegere curentă cu privire la ontologia orientată pe obiect drept postumanism; OOO nu este un postumanism deoarece respinge orice discurs politic și orice critică. Dimpotrivă, după cum vom vedea, OOO se opune explicit noilor materialisme postumaniste.

Cuvinte-cheie: *ontologie orientată pe obiect, postumanism, noi materialisme, capitalism neoliberal*

Object-oriented ontology, abbreviated OOO, is a recent development in contemporary philosophy and part of a wider non-anthropocentric shift, which also includes new materialisms, critical posthumanism, and agential realism. In this paper, I will try to outline the characteristics of object-oriented ontology in an effort to understand the deep issues that it presents, especially from the point of view of materialist and critical posthumanism. Object-oriented ontology, as conceptualized by its most famous and prolific proponent, Graham Harman, promotes a neoliberal capitalist worldview, with its focus on independent and autonomous objects and on its refusal to acknowledge the relations between things. Even if posthumanism is not a fixed concept and it can mean various things in different fields of research, from animal studies to ecology, I would like to reconnect initial critical posthumanism, which developed a critique of the modern Western concept of “human,” with the critique of capitalism from socialist and feminist standpoints in order to underscore the major differences between posthumanism and object-oriented ontology.

Objects: here, there, everywhere!

Harman’s object-oriented ontology begins with a refusal of *critique*, understood as (Leftist) criticism of social institutions of *Aufklärung* origins (Harman 2014c). Instead, Harman insists that he recuperates *philosophy*, understood as the Greek “love of wisdom” (Harman 2014a), through object-oriented ontology, which is synonymous with metaphysics (Harman 2017, 12). Together with critique, OOO also refuses any political engagement, a move derived from Harman’s underlying assumption that philosophy should more or less strive for universalization (Harman 2014b, 2017, 23), in the long run, and should not be related in any way to its context. This perspective is entirely consistent with the more detailed explanations that comprise object-oriented ontology.

As the name says, OOO is a philosophy of flatness, that is, the world is made of “objects [that are] equally objects, though not all are equally real.” (Harman 2016, 3) Thus, the “human,” an object among many others, is decentered, allowing Harman to promote this theory as non-anthropocentric; however, to make this work, he resorts to the venerable tradition of the Kantian thing-in-itself. Objects are equal and autonomous in *reality*, that is, in ontological status, but they are dependent on an observer when they are perceived. The distinction he makes between real and sensuous objects means that objects are not knowable – they are constantly withdrawing, as Harman says, so that an observer only has access to some part of them but never to objects in their entirety. For Harman, this comes to solve two issues in Western philosophy, collectively named “duomining” (Harman 2016, 7; 2017, 41-52): the first, “overmining,” refers to the practice of thinking about relations and effects, not about the objects-in-themselves; the second, “undermining,” refers to the practice of thinking about constituent parts and histories, not about the objects-in-themselves (this “duomining” is also the point of departure for Morton’s development of “hyperobjects” [2013, 14-15]). Using these tools, Harman seems to be able to accuse (and reject) both physics and materialism of not taking into account the *reality* of the object. According to Harman’s OOO, this *reality* is that objects are autonomous, independent from one another and thus from their context and historicity, always evading understanding. However, the objects of OOO range from protons to bacteria, galaxies, Ford Model T, Artificial Intelligence, Hashimoto thyroiditis, Sophocles’s Oedipus, Chairman Mao, Zen Buddhism, tetrahydrocannabinol, the President of the United States, the pancreas, the Second World War, object-oriented ontology, and everything in between, which we must admit is an exceedingly long list predicated on the claim that anything is an object.

As we have already seen, Harman explicitly refuses to include any sort of politics within his philosophy, trying to keep it pure as metaphysical ontology. At the same time, he needs to give some sort of account of relations between objects because he cannot just do away with relations altogether (unlike Bryant, who explicitly rejects any relations between objects [2011, 26], and Bogost, who mysteriously asserts that “things are independent from their constituent parts while remaining dependent on them” [2012, 23]). For Harman’s OOO, this translates into two main points. Firstly, Harman insists that objects do *sometimes* relate to one another in a meaningful way. He explicitly borrows the concept of “symbiosis” from Lynn Margulis to prove his point, citing her work in developing the theory of endosymbiosis but also mentioning that (his) symbiosis is “often non-reciprocal” (Harman 2016, 46). Thus, according to Harman, an object passes through few such major events of symbiosis during

its lifespan – symbioses exist only insofar as they “change the reality” of one of the participants (49). Secondly, and also as an attempt to make sense of relations within OOO, it seems that Harman wants to claim that objects have a certain lifespan, beginning with their “birth, ripeness, decadence, and death” (107), and that these stages of life are determined by the major events he calls symbioses. In a sense that is not always made explicit, this concept of symbiosis is a cornerstone of object-oriented ontology. A consequence of the very limited understanding of symbiosis as “few major events” that account for the transition of an object from birth to death is the fact that objects are completely detached from their context, historicity, and materiality *except* for these symbiotic moments.

Since Harmanian object-oriented ontology focuses on autonomous objects and rejects relations (outside the few “meaningful” and often unidirectional symbioses), it proposes that art should be judged autonomously in terms of beauty, once again following Kant. For Harman, not only is there no difference between metaphysics and ontology as philosophy, but there is also no difference between philosophy and aesthetics, which allows him to posit the venerable “disinterested contemplation” as a method of doing both. It is no surprise that Harman ends up reading, for instance, Dada, through the lens of one of the most influential conservative art critics of the twentieth century, Clement Greenberg, who emphasized the intrinsic or internal characteristics of a work of art completely disconnected from its context (Harman 2020, 145) and any political implications. Like Greenberg, Harman likes to look at the qualities of the autonomous work of art, not at the way, for instance, Duchamp’s *Fountain* criticized the institution of art and the bourgeois concept of “art for art’s sake.” In a similar vein, when faced with the political question, Harman begins by analyzing the traditional divide between Right and Left in terms of Power politics and Truth politics, only to advocate for a move beyond this model, towards an “object-oriented politics [...] grounded in reality” (Harman 2017, 146). As objects, political issues cannot be accessed by knowledge, so traditional political discourses are wrong in claiming primacy over reality. Object-oriented politics, on the other hand, wants to treat climate change or the refugee crises as objects, with OOO commentator Steven Shaviro actually dismissing Benjamin’s warning that fascism aestheticizes politics (Benjamin 2008, 42) in order to promote a return to Kant’s disinterested aesthetic judgment (Shaviro 2014, 13, 150-151).

The Che Guevara T-shirt & the long road to segmentarity

Harman’s object-oriented ontology has been criticized from various points of view (Galloway 2013; Wolfendale 2014; Povinelli 2016); in what follows, I would like to add a critical posthumanist and materialist perspective,

mostly because of the danger of conflating OOO with posthumanism solely based on the rejection of human exceptionalism. Non-anthropocentrism does not make any theory a branch of posthumanism. In a way, the tension between materialist posthumanism and Harman's insistence on his rejection of materialism in favor of "immaterialism" or speculative realism shows that there is a clear divide between the two. Moreover, I believe there is another way to criticize object-oriented ontology, and that is from a perspective that is more consistently posthumanist. If I were to summarize my criticism in a few words, I would say that Harman's main issues stem from his attempt to divorce critique from philosophy and give a "theory of everything," a universal metanarrative. The flatness of object-oriented ontology as equality, autonomy, and independence from relations, contexts, historicity, and materiality is an outcome of this fundamental claim.

It is always surprising that Harman never dwells or elaborates on his pretense that objects are equal, that ontology is flat. He simply takes it as a given within a certain strand of Western thought, which is also why he fails to provide a convincing argument for an object-oriented politics. Objects are never equal, but it is too dangerous not to pretend that they are. For instance, the philosophy of flatness is not interested in the relatively long history of humanism as human exceptionalism in which "human" simply means a Western, white, Christian, heterosexual, mature, able man who owns property in the form of land, things, precious metals, money, women, children, animals and so on, that is, in capitalist humanism. The ontological autonomy, singularity, and equality of objects, translated in socio-political and economic terms, smells like the neoliberal hypocrisy dubbed "equality of opportunity," used to legitimize the dissolution of society in a prescriptive Hobbesian war of all against all – generalized competition. There is no such thing as society for Harman's OOO, just as it was the case for neoliberal Prime Minister Thatcher back in the 1980s, only objects and individuals.

We have seen that Harman uses the concept of "symbiosis" to denote the relations in which objects engage but mentions that it is non-reciprocal, which is a blatant hijacking of a posthumanist concept. In 1924, Russian biologist Boris Kozo-Polyansky published a book on symbiogenesis in which he stated that a cell is a cooperative of multiple bodies (Kozo-Polyansky 2010, 109-110). In the 1960s, Lynn Sagan (Margulis) developed her theory of endosymbiosis – the fact that chloroplasts and mitochondria were bacteria working together within prokaryotic cells to construct the eukaryotic cell (Sagan 1967). After her joint work with Lovelock, the famous proponent of the Gaia theory (Lovelock 1979), Margulis concluded that Gaia is the "interweaving network of all life" on a symbiotic planet (Margulis 1999, 158) where living things, in their local

environments, constitute global patterns. Later, Haraway used the concept of symbiosis under the name of *sympoiesis* to give a political account of how “critters – human and not – become-with each other” (Haraway 2016, 97). Since Harman is not interested at all in what, how, and by whom are objects produced, his ontology had to strip all the deeply ecological and posthumanist meanings from the term “symbiosis” in order to reduce it to an oftentimes univocal relation. On the other hand, Margulis and Haraway talk about symbiosis as trans-species entanglements that actively construct the world. In this sense, “objects” are always in relation with one another, they co-exist, they co-constitute themselves permanently, not just during some isolated phases of birth, decadence, and death.

Stemming from the idea that objects are autonomous singularities with no context, Harman’s autonomous artwork and Kantian aesthetics of the beautiful revives the bourgeois tradition of modernity. At the end of chapter three of *Object-Oriented Ontology: A New Theory of Everything*, Harman mentions that object-oriented politics is against *escapism*, that is, against the practice of ignoring pressing issues, as exemplified by former U.S. President Donald J. Trump (Harman 2017, 146). At the same time and in accordance with the aesthetic theory of OOO, he defends the modern “art for art’s sake” which itself was a form of escapism, of ignoring the issues of everyday life, as it is shown by Marcuse’s critical theory of bourgeois culture (Marcuse 2007, 89-90), cited by Bürger in his explanation of art as an ideological institution of bourgeois society (Bürger 1984, 14-15; 47-49). Harman’s autonomous object is, if anything, an ideological object of capitalism and even neoliberalism, since the relations of production and consumption are not considered, which leads me to my final point: politics.

According to object-oriented ontology, a Che Guevara T-shirt is an independent, autonomous, and isolated object. But from a materialist point of view, the T-shirt is a complicated thing: it is made of cotton, which is usually harvested from the plantations of the Global South, and produced by poorly paid laborers in the underdeveloped world; cotton cultures use the largest amount of water of all crops, leading to freshwater loss (Chapagain et al 2006); cotton production involves the use of generous amounts of pesticides, affecting biodiversity and workers’ health (Ferrigno et al 2017); seventeen to twenty percent of the toxic chemicals used in the textile industry for processing and dyeing end up in local waters, contaminating them, killing fish populations, and impoverishing local communities (Rabby 2017); the working conditions in the textile factories are extremely poor, including low wages, high risks, and child labor (*Workers’ Conditions* 2014); it enters consumer culture but is quickly discarded and becomes waste, ending up in a landfill, once more, in the

underdeveloped world; it is an example of commodification of the anti-capitalist, socialist revolution, and also a testimony of capital's capacity to engulf opposing discourses. And we could similarly explain plastic bottles, transatlantic cruise ships or bacteria, because things are not as simple as the singular, individualized objects of OOO would have us believe. The point I want to make here is that this focus on separate objects is entirely consistent with something we might call segmentarity (after Deleuze & Guattari 208), not only as the capitalist practice of constructing individuals, but also the practice of fragmenting, separating and isolating environments; in the terms of Deleuze and Guattari, we may say that capitalism needs to create a "striated space" (474): collectives turn into individuals, common lands are enclosed and become private, a mountain is split into various kinds of "resources" (timber, game, metals, stone, waters), a person is divided into a medical history, an academic certificate, a bank account, genetic information, social media identities etc. Object-oriented ontology legitimizes neoliberal capitalism.

Webbed by design: domestic implements & pieces of cloth

As I have previously shown, commonplace objects are complicated things. Here, I would like to look at a few examples, some of which are familiar to cultural historians and other scholars, and one which is perhaps less known. In 1917, Marcel Duchamp submitted his famous urinal, the *Fountain*, for an exhibition of the Society of Independent Artists in New York, and a small scandal ensued over the nature of the thing as "art." Duchamp's artistic questioning and commentary on what is art, performed using everyday items (the urinal being the most notorious example, but also including a bicycle wheel and a bottle rack), was refined by Andy Warhol's Pop Art works, the Brillo boxes and Campbell soup cans, which were far less scandalous in the 1960s than Duchamp's works had been in the 1910s. In 1964, Arthur C. Danto published a short paper in which he tried to make sense of the Duchamp-Warhol developments by proposing that a theory of art, an ideology, is what allows commonplace objects to be exhibited as art (Danto 1964). Moreover, this theory of art functions within an "artworld," so that a Campbell soup can or a bicycle wheel become art only when they enter a web of deep political relations with theories, institutions, and so on. Following Danto, George Dickie elaborated these ideas in a 1969 paper, "Defining Art," where he stated that a work of art is "an artifact upon which some society or some sub-group of a society has conferred the status of candidate for appreciation" (Dickie 1969, 254), setting the stage for the institutional theory of art.

Dickie's definition raises a number of questions. For instance, what or who has the prerogative to confer the status of "artwork" to an artifact? Is this artifact the same as an object? What is "appreciation" and who wields it? The answer to the first question is, of course, Danto's concept of "artworld," very similar to Bourdieu's "artistic field" (Bourdieu 1993, 29). An artifact becomes a work of art, as Duchamp masterfully revealed, when it is accepted as such within the field of social and political relations that make up a specific part of society. Dickie's "sub-group of society" is the bourgeoisie from Bürger's definition of the Avant-garde as "self-criticism," a stage in which the complete detachment of art from real life is revealed and in which the aesthetic is "a distinctive sphere of experience" (Bürger 1984, 23). Harman, on the other hand, looks at Duchamp's readymade works by way of a rhetorical shift: within the artworld, they are "not objects at all, but merely bundles of literal qualities" (Harman 2020, 162), in keeping with his OOO position that "the existence of an artwork requires *beauty*" (Harman 2020, 140, original emphasis). In short, for Harman, the readymade is not a work of art because it lacks the supposed tension between what he refers to as "the real object" and its "sensual qualities" (Harman 2020, 140). This also answers our second question: for OOO, not all of Dickie's artifacts are objects because some of them do not qualify for Harman's definition of the beautiful. However, Danto, Dickie, and the institutional theory of art in general take the political and social aspects of the artworld very seriously. "Beauty" (even in Harman's sense) after (and probably even before) Dada is no longer relevant as a means of judging art because art is revealed to be a social relationship not only within the artworld, but also within the entire society, which brings us to our third question. "Appreciation" is actually another word for legitimacy. So, who has the power to legitimize an artifact or an object as an artwork? This is the foundational question of the institutional theory of art and Dickie's answer seems to simply be the institution conceptualized by Danto as "the artworld" (Dickie 1969, 255-256), using the rhetorical and pragmatic device of "christening" or naming something as a work of art. Consequently, an artwork is not an isolated object of beauty, it literally depends on the existence of institutional structures that legitimize its character as "art."

In societies dominated by neoliberal capitalist conditions of consumption, life presents itself as an immense accumulation of commodities. Treating these commodities as independent, isolated, and autonomous objects theoretically removes them from the webs in which they are entangled in the name of ontology and metaphysics, but this does not mean that they are no longer within those webs. One example I would like to look at here is a piece of cloth called a keffiyeh, in order to show how this removal of objects from their webs employed by OOO is a neoliberal capitalist strategy of commodification. The

relationship between clothing and politics is relatively well established within academic discourse, especially in what the Middle East is concerned. The rectangular piece of cloth, the keffiyeh, had been worn almost exclusively by the Bedouin as a handy clothing item to protect the head and the face from the elements in the harsh climate of the desert until the 1920s, when it was adopted on a larger scale to represent Palestinian nationalism (Shirazi-Mahajan 1993, 57). Made popular by Yasser Arafat after 1967, the black and white webbed keffiyeh became a symbol of Palestinian liberation. In the West, during the 1970s and the 1980s, pro-Palestine, anti-war, and anti-apartheid protesters had worn the keffiyeh, dwelling on its symbolism (Schwartz-DuPre & Scott 2015, 341). However, in recent decades, the keffiyeh has had a twisted fate: on the one hand, it is associated with terrorism “by way of anti-Arab racism” (Renfro 2017, 3-5); on the other hand, it is completely devoid of its context and its political meaning and reduced to a fashionable item (Renfro 2017, 5). Popular street clothing brands began selling the keffiyeh in the 2000s and celebrities began wearing it as part of a fashion trend, without any political connotation (Schwartz-DuPre & Scott 2015, 344). Orientalism (identifying the item using any of the dominant narratives in the West regarding the Middle East), postcolonialism (the struggle towards a Palestinian identity), geopolitics (the wider interests regarding the region), Islamophobia (especially after 9/11), globalization (fashion brands selling keffiyeh made in China, for instance), and capitalism are interweaved in a singular piece of clothing. This, just like any other object, is not autonomous, individual, and independent except in the fantasy world of neoliberal capitalist commodities and in that of object-oriented ontology. So, what is to be done?

Flux it!

As we have previously seen, the artwork and the keffiyeh are always constructed within relations in a web, in opposition to OOO’s isolationism and capitalism’s processes of commodification. In this final section, I want to question the nature of this web using critical posthumanist and materialist concepts, returning to an understanding of posthumanism that stems not only from the Western philosophical and political tradition, but also from fields such as life studies and geology.

One question from which any critical posthumanist alternative should begin is that of the *Anthropos* of the Anthropocene, or the *human* of humanism. For instance, one of the starting points is Descartes’ distinction between nature (*res extensa*) and the rational mind or the soul (*res cogitans*), a differentiation that was perpetuated in Western thought until the beginning of the twenty-first

century (Badmington 2003). Consequently, the rational and self-interested pursuit of property and wealth acquired through labor was the definition of the human in classical liberalism (Locke, Smith) and early capitalism, a kind of “mind/reason/labor over matter” ideology or, as it became known in early modern Europe, natural law. The first encounters with the indigenous peoples of the Americas and subsequent European debates on whether or not they were human (Anievas & Nişancıoğlu 2015, 124), but also the status of women, children, etc. prove that “human” was not such an all-encompassing category. The *Anthropos* (in “the Anthropocene”) is the political and philosophical heritage of humanism and capitalism; it does not refer to the entire genus *Homo*, but only to a tiny fraction of it, those few privileged ones who also bear the responsibility for the Anthropocene. It is in this context that we will find, for instance, ideas such as Haraway’s cyborg, a political feminist irony meant to construct an ontology that rejects the modern opposition between nature and the rational human (Haraway 1991). The cyborg is a declaration of the continuity between natures, animals, and technologies (hence, naturecultures) that always takes place on a local level and against a globalized capitalism, through posthuman politics of alliances, coalitions, and symbioses. While it may seem that object-oriented ontology is trying to do same, by leaving out politics and critique, it only manages to play into capital’s hands.

On these building blocks, a number of posthumanist views appeared in recent decades, most of them materialist, but also Barad’s agential realism, which is probably the most likely contender to object-oriented ontology. Reading Barad as a kind of cyborg politics (Barad 2003), one may encounter the surprising fact that she begins with a critique of representationalism, the tradition of “splitting” the object into some knowable aspect and some incomprehensible or withdrawn essence (which is what OOO does). But she goes even further, trying to construct an agential realist ontology and metaphysics of sorts, grounded in materiality *and* historicity (hence, a material-discursive approach), and proposing that there cannot be any separation between relations and the objects that participate in them (intra-action as the “*mutual constitution of entangled agencies*” [Barad 2007, 33, original emphasis]). For Barad, the world is a dynamic flux of intra-activity, an “inescapable entanglement of matters of being, knowing, and doing, of ontology, epistemology, and ethics, of fact and value” (3). The eukaryotic cell, the artwork, the Che Guevara T-shirt, and the keffiyeh are examples of how things (or objects, if one wishes to call them so) are co-constituted in this dynamic material-discursive flux (Donica 2021, 171). In the words of Coole and Frost:

Our existence depends from one moment to the next on myriad micro-organisms and diverse higher species, on our own hazily understood bodily and cellular reactions and on pitiless cosmic motions, on the material artifacts and natural stuff that populate our environment, as well as on socioeconomic structures that produce and reproduce the conditions of our everyday lives. (Coole & Frost 2010, 1)

This theory, which is consistent with symbiosis and Haraway's cyborg, influenced some of the new posthuman materialisms such as that of Bennett, vital materialism, or Alaimo's feminist materialism.

Vital materialism begins by borrowing the relational/symbiotic concepts of rhizome and assemblage from Deleuze and Guattari and insists that there is a "vibrant matter," an agency of assemblages in the sense that they (intra-)act within the flux of matter-energy and have onto-stories, that is, accounts of their material-discursivity (Bennett 2010). In a relatively similar way, Alaimo uses the concept of "trans-corporeality" (Alaimo 2016, 77) to denote the interconnections between bodies, things, and environments, much like Guattari does in his ecosophy (Guattari 2000). These materialist-posthumanist alternatives to object-oriented ontology answer the question of ecology in the Anthropocene in a far more suitable and direct way, in a manner that is completely opposed to how Harman, in doing away with relations and context, treats climate change as an object *without* ever questioning the causes and the circumstances that have led to the current ecological crises. These are only a few examples of posthumanist theories that prove beyond all doubt that object-oriented ontology is not a posthumanism, in spite of its claim of rejecting human exceptionalism. In the end, what makes good theory and good philosophy is the ability to adapt to new issues, to criticize power relations, and to come up with alternative ways of looking at the world, even from an ontological point of view. Refusing all these in favor of an illusory sense that philosophy should be universal and timeless is ultimately just another reproduction of modern contradictions. In the famous words of Marx: "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point is to *change* it." (Marx 1974 ,123, orig. emphasis).

Conclusion

We have seen that object-oriented ontology's starting point is the supposed need for philosophy to be truly universal and pure, as metaphysics. In the current context, this pretense strikes as a very Western-centric assumption, that is, based on the same tradition that invented the white Christian propertied man's exceptionalism under the guise of "human" exceptionalism and anthropocentrism. In effect, Harman's universalism, lack of social and political

nuance, and rigid focus on aesthetics conveniently simplify things to the extreme. Unfortunately, Harman's OOO cannot offer any account of major planetary disruptions such as climate change, poverty, war, pandemics, and so on because these are probably the clearest examples that the world is made of interconnected co-constituted things, and not isolated and autonomous objects. I have given here a number of examples, from the work of art to cotton T-shirts, that prove the fact that metaphysics is useless in explaining processes and flows which always have a material basis and a discursive component. Object-oriented ontology, isolating the objects from their contexts and the relations that make them, reinforces neoliberal capitalism for which working conditions in Bangladeshi textile factories are of no importance, the sterilization of workers on banana plantations in Central America due to the use of pesticides is of no importance, the children scavenging for valuable metals in the huge landfills of countries like Ghana and Nigeria are of no importance, the destruction of the Amazon rainforest and the displacement of local peoples to make way for cattle pastures and agricultural land are of no importance, and the fact that microplastics are found in the air, waters, land, and even in human blood is of no importance.

In this paper, I may have not done justice to ontology as a way of thinking with the world. For the particular flavor of posthuman discursive materialism presented here, ontology is nevertheless important, especially since its cornerstone is the refutation of Cartesian dualism. In line with Deleuze's immanence (Deleuze 1997), critical posthumanism presents an ontology that has the potential of becoming political. As we have already seen, objects are not isolated, nor autonomous; they are relational, interdependent, and co-constituted. Margulis, Lovelock, Haraway, and Barad are the founders of this new ontology, not object-oriented, but flux- and process-oriented. At the same time, this is an anti-capitalist, feminist ontology, where there are no individuals, no segmentarity, and lastly no fascism.

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“DARE TO THINK, DARE TO SPEAK, DARE TO ACT”: TRANSLATING POLITICAL SLOGANS IN MO YAN’S *FROG* FROM CHINESE INTO ROMANIAN, ITALIAN AND SPANISH

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ABSTRACT. *Dare to Think, Dare to Speak, Dare to Act*² - *Translating Political Slogans in Mo Yan’s Frog from Chinese into Romanian, Italian and Spanish.*

Slogans are some of the most typical elements of Chinese politics and a significant part of the important decisions took by the Communist Party are made known to the masses using slogans, such as “It is right to rebel!”, “Destroy the four olds!”, or “The most serious problem is to teach the peasants”. Participation in political life after the founding of the People’s Republic, in 1949, could be done only by employing slogans or formulae derived from the elite political discourse. The major impact of politics upon people’s lives has transformed the slogan from a manifestation of political authority into a manipulation tool used by people to make their counterparts react in a desired way. Mo Yan’s novel *Frog* (*Wa/Broaște/Rana/Le rane*) shows to what extent slogans can influence ordinary people’s lives, where the use of real political slogans or even make-believe slogans – discourse modeled to resemble a political slogan –, are either attempts by the characters to make their voices

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² “Dare to think, dare to speak, dare to act” (*gan xiang, gan shuo, gan zuo* 敢想敢说敢做), which later became a slogan, was initially used by Mao Zedong in his *Talks at the Wuchang Conference*, on November 23rd, 1958. Talking about eradicating superstitions, Mao said: “[T]he effects have been extremely great: [we] have dared to think, dared to speak, and dared to act.” The full Chinese text is available at <https://www.marxists.org/chinese/maozedong/mia-chinese-mao-195811.htm>. The quotation in English comes from *The Secret Speeches of Chairman Mao*, edited by Roderick MacFarquhar, Timothy Cheek, and Eugene Wu, p. 514, Harvard Contemporary China Series: 6.

heard and participate into decision making, or small acts of rebellion against the system. Considering the culture specific character of the slogans, the fact that they were created into a very particular socio-political context, the paper analyzes the translations of the slogans in Mo Yan's novel into three Romance languages, in an attempt to identify not only the techniques and the choices made by the translators, but also the possibility, or impossibility, to recreate the slogan and conserve its original impact into the target culture.

Keywords: *political slogan, ideology, translation, Cultural Revolution, Mo Yan*

REZUMAT. *Îndrăznește să gândești, îndrăznește să vorbești, îndrăznește să acționezi. Traducerea sloganelor politice în romanul Broaște de Mo Yan, din chineză în română, italiană și spaniolă.* Utilizarea sloganelor este una dintre trăsăturile definitorii ale politicii chineze, cele mai importante decizii ale partidului fiind adesea comunicate maselor sub formă de slogane, ca de exemplu celebrele „E corect să te revolți!”, „Distrugeți cele patru vechituri!” sau „Să educi țărani este o problemă foarte serioasă”. După fondarea Republicii Populare în 1949, participarea la viața politică nu se mai poate face decât prin intermediul sloganului sau a formulelor fixe derivate din discursurile elitelor partidului. Importanța majoră a factorului politic asupra vieții cotidiene a transformat sloganul dintr-o formă de manifestare a autorității într-un instrument de manipulare utilizat de omenii de rând pentru a-i determina pe receptori să acționeze în felul dorit. Romanul *Broaște*, (*Wa/Rana/Le rane*) al scriitorului chinez Mo Yan, laureatul premiului Nobel, reflectă impactul sloganului asupra vieții omului de rând. Utilizarea sloganelor reale sau a pseudo-sloganelor – organizarea discursului după modelul sloganelor politice –, de către personajele din roman sunt fie încercări de a se face auzite, de a lua parte la deciziile politice, fie mici acte de răzvrătire împotriva sistemului. Ținând cont de caracterul local al sloganelor politice, lucrarea analizează traducerea acestora în trei limbi romanice cu scopul de a identifica tehnicile de traducere folosite, alegerile pe care le-au făcut traducătorii, precum și posibilitatea sau imposibilitatea recreării în cultura gazdă a impactul unui slogan în cultura sursă.

Cuvinte-cheie: *slogan, ideologie, traducere, Revoluția Culturală, Mo Yan*

Introduction

Slogans are nothing new to Chinese politics, no matter if we talk about classical or modern China, where for thousands of years, politics has been an integrant part of people's lives. For almost two millennia, the imperial China was governed according to Confucian principles, an all-encompassing ideology

that regulated not only governance, but also family life and individual behavior. After the fall of the last dynasty in 1911, and especially after the founding of the People’s Republic in 1949, things did not change much when it came to the impact of politics upon private life, with Mao Zedong’s campaigns, or Deng Xiaoping’s demographic policies as examples.

The most important ideas which stood at the base of the regimes, no matter whether imperial or republican, have been communicated to the masses as fixed formulae or slogans, short utterances either directly clipped out of classical texts or communist speeches, or inspired by these. One of the main texts used in the imperial China to teach children to read or write was *The Three Character Classic*, (*San zi jing* 三字经)³, in which the basic features of the Confucian thinking was taught in three-character formulae, with rhyme and easy to remember. Even today, it is not uncommon to meet people, young or old, who can recite at least the beginning of the *Classic*: “Men at their birth are naturally good. Their natures are much the same; their habits become widely different.”⁴ With such a rich and text-dependent tradition, it seemed absolutely natural that the newly formed Communist party would be very much “party of the word” (Apter & Saich 1994, x). In spite of the anti-traditional rhetoric of the Communist party, most of its leading figures in the first half of the 20th century were intellectuals educated in a Confucian way, and therefore the use of slogans and slogan-like formulae came naturally to them. Of course, the fact that at the beginning, the new Communist ideology targeted mainly uneducated peasants helped a lot, because short-rhymed slogans were the easiest way to reach them.

The numerous political campaigns that characterized Chinese society during the second half of the past century meant that no aspect of private life was shielded from politics. The continuous bombardment of the people with slogans, in the newspapers, on the radio, or written on walls resulted in slogans creeping from the public discourse into the private one, reaching its climax during the Cultural Revolution (1966 – 1976), just as Yu Hua remembered in his *China in ten words*:

That was a characteristic of the Cultural Revolution era: no matter whether it was an argument between rebels or between Red Guards or simply a row between housewives, the final victor would always come out with something Mao Zedong had said, so as to crush their opponent and bring the argument to an end (Yu Hua 2011, 101-102).

³ According to *Cihai*, the text was written at the end of the Song Dynasty (960 - 1279) and it is attributed to either Wang Yinglin or Ou Shizi.

⁴ Translated into English by Herbert Giles. Full text in Chinese and English available at <https://ccontext.org/three-character-classic>.

The invasion of the slogan into the private discourse is very much present in Mo Yan's novel *Frog*. The story carries the reader through almost seventy years of recent Chinese history, from the decade before the founding of the People's Republic up to beginning of the new millennium, through *gugu's* life, the narrator's great aunt. The daughter of a Communist military doctor, *gugu* follows in her father's steps becoming a midwife and delivering thousands of babies, until her fiancé defects to Taiwan and she is accused of conspiracy. After her rehabilitation, the aunt works with even more dedication to prove her loyalty to the party, following the party's orders and becoming by the end the feared enforcer of its draconic demographic policy.

The slogan

There is nothing particularly Chinese in using slogans, they exist and have been used successfully in all cultures (Denton 1980; Lu 1999; Newsome 2002). The word itself derives from the Gaelic "slaughghairm" meaning "battle-cry" (Sharp *apud* Lu 1999).

The Chinese have always attached a significant importance to language, especially to the written word, believing that it can affect the well-being of the society. Confucians talked about "the correct naming" (正名 *zheng ming*), meaning that the relation between the name and the referent was not arbitrary, it reflected the natural order, and thus to name was to arrange the world in a certain order, to act upon it. Confucius makes this very clear in his *Analects*: "If names are not rectified, speech will not accord with reality; when speech does not accord with reality, things will not be successfully accomplished" (Confucius 2003, 139). In a speech made in 1963, in Hangzhou, Mao could not agree more: "A word can rejuvenate a country, a word can destroy a country. It is the mind changing into the material" (Mao 1968, 52).⁵ Controlling the speech and imposing on people what Schoenhals (1992) calls a "formalized language" ultimately means telling people how to think.

In China, the correct words have always been imposed upon the masses from above. In the old days, it was the duty of the Confucian scholars to explain the wisdom of the sages to the commoners and make sure they acted accordingly. The new China came with a new set of classics, the red ones, but they were as inaccessible to the people as those of the ancient times, and just as

⁵ Mao stated this in his speech in Hangzhou, in May 1963. The speech was included in one of the Read Guards' publications, *Mao Zedong sixiang wansui* (*Long live Mao Zedong thought!*), the fifth volume, containing speeches made between January 1961 and March 1968. The five volumes were published in 1968 in Wuhan as "material for internal study, not to be made public" (*neibu xuexi, bu de waizhuan* 内部学习, 不得外传).

before they needed to be explained. Reality was organized based on the knowledge the new "keepers of the truth" shared with the masses and most of the times this knowledge came encoded in shapes easy to remember.

If the use is universal, the slogans themselves are culture specific. According to Denton (1980), slogans are dynamic statements which evoke emotional non-rational responses, with persuasive functions, operating as "social symbols" shared by a community. Drawing on Hannah Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Lu (1999) considers that the continuous use of slogans in China, especially during the decades of Mao's rule, resulted in a "lack of conceptual clarity", people having troubles to think for themselves, going as far as using slogans and formulae even in private conversations. Her view echoes that McGee's (1980) who saw "ideographs"⁶ as taken by people for granted, something that never had their validity questioned, and Newsome's (2002) for whom using the slogans was an expression of consent: "Slogans can come to characterize the ideas of those who use it" (2002: 22).

However, the education level and the exposure of the subjects to other ideological systems might affect the persuasive function of a slogan, and it does not affect all the recipients equally, even if they belong to the same community. Song and Gee (2020) observe that in China, the Communist Party made slogans talking about shared values and goals "a leading form of political communication" (2020: 205). Slogans created and imposed top-down can make at least some of the people look at slogans with suspicion, because they feel that policies are imposed upon them. During the turbulent decades under Mao, people were basically forced to talk in slogans, since using the wrong word could have huge repercussions.⁷ Things changed after Mao's death; not using the formulae did not automatically make people "counterrevolutionaries", but it made it impossible for their voice to be heard. The party discourse on various aspects with direct impact upon people's life abounds in slogans or slogan-like formulae:

This does not mean that all speakers are forced to use the formulae, but the ability to demonstrate one's mastery of "ideological literacy" (Yurchak 2006) is also a matter of identity and it proves one's belonging to the dominant group, it permits the access to a community bond not necessarily by shared beliefs, but by a common language (Zlotea 2020, 327).

⁶ For McGee, "ideographs" are "the building blocks of ideology" which "signify and contains a unique ideological commitment" (1980: 7). Slogans belong to this category.

⁷ Yu Hua recalls in his *China in ten words* how two of his former classmates in the primary school were labeled "little counterrevolutionaries". One joked about Marx being a woman because he had long hair, and the other one had folded a portrait of Mao's and as a result a cross appeared on Mao's face. He also mentioned a three-year old criticized as "counterrevolutionary" because he had said "The sun went down" instead of "It's getting dark", and Mao was always compared to the sun.

In other words, content could sometimes be less important than form. As long as what you say does not overtly contradict the official policies, the way you say is likely the key to be heard. To participate in political life means to make those around you believe that what you say is what the party says and thus they will not question it. Slogans are used as justifications for actions, as Lu (1999) points out, and they are meant to persuade the members of the community that it is the only right way to act.

The Chinese slogans we are going to analyze are brief utterances either taken directly from a political speech belonging or attributed mainly to Mao Zedong, or modelled to resemble this type of discourse, and reflect principles or policies of the Communist Party. They are succinct, reflect a single policy, emphasize a certain value, use simple words so they can be easily understood by anybody regardless of their education level, are rhythmical, easy to remember and repeat. To keep them short and increase their emotional charge, slogans employ superlatives, parallelisms, syntactic or semantic ellipsis, abound in illocutionary, perlocutionary and modal verbs, and if they consist of more than one short utterance, the structure is often repetitive.

Translating slogans

Strictly speaking, slogan translation enters under the larger frame of political text translation. However, the slogans analyzed here cannot be treated as pure political discourse, since they are an integrant part of a literary text. This distinction is pertinent because, although the slogans retain their characteristics and are identified as originating in political discourse, they can be translated as literary texts, which allows the translator more freedom.

The origins of the political slogans in China, mainly speeches by the top party leaders, associate the slogan with the leader himself and bestows upon it the same aura of "holiness". This results in the slogan being treated almost as a "sacred" text, and nobody is allowed to make any changes. Cheng Zhenqiu, one of the senior English language translators responsible for supervising the translation of the collected works by Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping, mentions in one of his essays: "In political translation, we should try our best to be faithful to both the letter and the spirit of the original text" (Cheng 2002, 197). The reason behind this is not only that when doing political translation, a mistranslated word might have very serious consequences, but considering Mao's China, when the ruler was venerated as the shining sun, the mother and father of the people, the translator simply disappears, he or she must be nothing else than the tongue or the hand of the ruler and no degree of self-awareness, no matter how insignificant, is acceptable.

On the other hand, the sensitivity of a political text is not based solely on the choice of words, it is the function of the text that adds to its sensitivity, the impact it has upon its public. Interpreting the text from a certain perspective, according to a certain ideology has very much to do with the background information (Schäffner 1997). In this case, the translator must pay close attention to the function of the text in the source culture, because it can change in the target culture where the background information for decoding correctly a slogan might be missing. The functionalist approach could be the right approach to this type of text, meaning that the translator should consider the text within the much larger picture of the source culture and try to recreate it into the target culture in such a way that it maintains its original function as much as possible. Just as Nord (2018) was pointing out, literary texts use ordinary language, it is the readers who interpret them as literary. Slogans function the same way, so the translator should lead the reader in such a way that he/she can read the text as political. When translating slogans, the translator can act in a more dynamic way, in the sense that, while preserving the original message, he/she must pay additional attention to form, because it can signal the correct way of reading, making up for the reader’s limited background knowledge.

Our analysis will consider the source text to the target text both from a linguistic and a functional perspective. We will compare the slogans in Mo Yan’s *Frog* to their translation into Romanian, Italian and Spanish to identify the translation methods employed by the translators, difficulties they faced and how much of the original function could be preserved in the translated text.

While academic literature regarding the translation of political texts into and from Chinese is not at all scarce, when it comes to slogan translation, things could not be more different. The vast majority of the papers researching slogan translation stay clear of political slogans and deal exclusively with commercial ones. There are some papers which analyze the translation of slogans used by various institutions for tourism, welfare, security, etc., (Lim and Loi 2015), or include some social slogans into their wider analysis of public signs, (Wu 2006, Zhang 2009, Ko 2012). Political slogans are occasionally discussed in papers about political terms (Cui 2012, Huang 2017, Chen and Zhao 2018). We could find only one article focusing on the translation of political slogans, (Dou and Zhu 2013). In this article, Dou and Zhu list a number of Chinese scholars writing on slogans, however, these articles are either related to non-political slogans, or compare the characteristics of the slogan in Chinese and American politics. The explanation is given by the authors when mentioning Lu Xing’s study (1999): “Since the study involves ideology, a quite sensitive topic, this essay does not provide much insight to the study of this thesis” (Dou and Zhu 2013, 692).

Mo Yan's *Frog* in Romanian, Italian and Spanish

Mo Yan's novel *Frog* was first published in 2009, at the Shanghai Literature and Arts Publishing House (Shanghai wenyi chubanshe) and concentrates upon China's demographic policy, following a midwife's life, first during Mao Zedong's rule when she helped delivering babies, and later on, during Deng Xiaoping's draconic one-child policy, when she turned into one of its the most fervent supporters, doing her best to lower the birth-rate. Political slogans were widely used during these years to convince the masses to follow and support party's decisions.

Out of the three translations, the one in Spanish, *Rana*, was the first to come on the market. Published in 2011, the novel appeared at Kailas Editorial, in Madrid, translated by Li Yifan. Liu (2020) mentions that it was the first novel by Mo Yan translated into Spanish directly from Chinese and not a retranslation from English, as it had been previously done. According to the information on the copyright page, the novel was translated after a 2010 edition, probably the one published in Taiwan at Rye Field Publishing Co. (Maitian chubanshe).⁸ The Spanish translation is the only one done by a non-native speaker and, unfortunately, it is not complete either. For reasons unknown, the final chapter of the first part, (part one, chapter 15), which describes events during the Cultural Revolution and which contains the highest number of slogans in the book, was totally omitted. According to Ku (2020), Li Yifan works as a translator for the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and he is a member of the Translators Association of China.

The Italian version, *Le rane*, was published in 2013, at Einaudi in Torino and was translated by Patrizia Liberati, after the first 2009 Chinese edition. Patrizia Liberati got her Chinese Studies diploma at SOAS, in 1990, and she has been living in Beijing ever since, working in the Italian Cultural Institute. She is a prolific translator of Chinese literature in Italian.⁹

The Romanian *Broaște* appeared in 2014, at Humanitas Fiction in Bucharest, translated by Florentina Vișan. It is also based on the first 2009 Chinese edition. Florentina Vișan is an Emeritus Professor of Chinese Language and Literature at the University of Bucharest. She has translated Chinese classical poetry and philosophy, as well as Chinese modern fiction.

⁸ The novel had many editions on the mainland, but none in 2010. See https://baike.baidu.com/item/蛙/4544779#6_1 in Chinese. Liu (2020) and Ku (2020) also list the Taiwanese edition in their Bibliography.

⁹ Information available on the Officina di Traduzione Permanente website, https://officina.formazione.unimib.it/team_item/patrizia-liberati/, and Istituto Italiano di Cultura – Pechino, at https://iicpechino.esteri.it/iic_pechino/it/chi-siamo/lo-staff_1.html.

Slogans and their translation in Mo Yan’s *Frog*

From a larger perspective, there are two approaches available to the translator, either literal translation, or free translation, and there is no rule when to apply one or the other.

There are not too many instances of literal translations, meaning that the translator tried to replicate the source text into the target text with as little changes as possible, in any of the three texts analyzed. Although the translators are expected to stick very close to the source when dealing with a political text, slogans tend to resist literal translation, because their very succinct nature would make them sound unnatural, foreign, and would obscure their function.

Even so, there are a few instances of literal translation:

(1) 我们到达那里时喇叭里正播放着“语录歌”：马克思主义的道理，千头万绪，归根结底，就是一句话，造反有理——造反有理——¹⁰ (68)

Quando arrivammo, stavano trasmettendo *Il canto delle citazioni del Presidente*: «Il marxismo comprende numerosi principi che, in sintesi, si racchiudono in una frase sola: *ribellarsi è giusto... ribellarsi è giusto...*» (137)

Când am ajuns, din ele răsună *Cântecul Citatelor*: „Adevărul marxismului este complicat, dar până la urmă se poate rezuma așa: *e drept să te revolți, să te revolți e drept...*” (83)

The Song of Chairman Mao’s Quotations contains fragments of Mao’s speeches included in the famous *Red Book*. This particular line comes from one of his speeches in 1939 celebrating Stalin’s 60th birthday and it includes one of the most famous slogans of the Cultural Revolution: “To rebel is justified!”, also used by Mao in a letter sent to the Red Guards at the Tsinghua Highschool, in 1966 (Mao 1998, 87).

Example (1) comes from the 15th chapter of the first part which was not included in the Spanish version. Both the Italian and Romanian translators identified the slogan and translated it just as it is in Chinese. A short search on Italian language texts about the period also came up with the same translation of the slogan. Even if there is a different word-order between the first and the second slogan in Romanian, the first one places the subject-clause after the predicate, which is the preferred order in Romanian (Pană Dindelegan 2013, 119), while the second one places the subject-clause before the predicate with an emphatic result, the slogan is conserved and easy to recognize.

¹⁰ My emphasis, unless otherwise indicated.

(2) 这是对当时流行口号的一种图解——把阶级敌人打翻在地，再踏上一只脚... (69)

Tot spectacolul acesta însemna aplicarea unei lozinci răspândite: „Să punem la pământ dușmanii poporului și să-i călcăm în picioare”. (85)

The slogan comes from Mao's *Hunan Report* where he talks about peasants “striking the landlord down to the dust and keeping him there” (Mao 1927). The line was used during the Cultural Revolution either without an explicit verbal object (“strike [them] down and step on them”), or with a specific one, depending on the context, as in the example above where the “landlord” was replaced by “class enemies”, (translated into Romanian as “people’s enemies”). Same as above, this fragment does not exist in the Spanish translation. In Italian, it is translated as following:

[U]n'interpretazione scenica degli slogan del tempo – *che aveva gettato nella polvere il nemico di classe, se l'era messo sotto i piedi* ... (141)

In all languages, the reader is warned that what follows is a slogan, because it is introduced as such: “the performance of a popular slogan of the day”. In Chinese and Romanian, it is also marked by punctuation, a dash in Chinese, colon and quotation marks in Romanian, isolating it from the text and bringing it closer to the direct speech; the Italian translator kept the dash, but introduced it through a relative pronoun, making it an explanation of the “slogan del tempo” and including it the reported speech. The choice of verb tenses also differs in the two Romance languages – subjunctive (*conjunctiv*) in Romanian, with imperative value (Pană Dindelegan 2013, 45), and past perfect (*trepassato prossimo*) in Italian, used to describe past narratives (Maiden and Robustelli 2013, 295).

(3) 破坏计划生育就是反革命! (59)

Boicottare la pianificazione familiare è un atto controrivoluzionario! (119)

Sabotarea planificării familiale este un act contrarevoluționar! (73)

¡Negarse a la planificación familiar se puede considerar una acción antirrevolucionaria! (85)

Example (3) is not a real slogan, but it can be perceived as one. It employs a frame reminiscent of the Cultural Revolution, “violating [an official policy] is a contrarevolutionary act”, it is short, imperative and sounds very

much as coming from an official document, and the fact that it is uttered angrily by the party secretary in a diatribe against those opposing vasectomy adds to its credibility. The Italian and Romanian translators opted for a direct translation using the present tense, preserving its slogan-like character. In Spanish, the translator's choices softened the message and translated it more as a warning than a slogan. "Negarse", defined in DLE as "excusarse de hacer algo" lacks the agency of "boicotear" or "sabotear", the equivalents used in Italian and Romanian, while "poder" followed by infinitive implies possibility and, by extension, choice (Batchelor and San José 2010, 233).

Example (4) is also close to a literal translation adapted to the grammatical features of the target language.

(4) 政府提出口号：一个不少，两个正好，三个多了。(54)

Il governo lanciò lo slogan: *uno non è poco, due sono giusti, tre sono troppi*. (108)

Guvernul a lansat lozincă: „*Unul nu-i puțin, doi e potrivit, trei e depășit*”. (67)

El Gobierno elaboró un nuevo eslogan: «*Uno no es poco, dos son suficientes, tres son demasiados*». (78)

Faithful to the source text, all the three translators announced their readers that what follows after the colon is a slogan. All of them follow the original structure: three short sentences, one negative, two affirmative. The main difference are the lexical choices, especially in the second sentence. The Chinese 正好 *zheng hao* ("just right") is much closer to the Italian "giusto" and the Romanian "potrivit", than to the Spanish "suficiente". The Romanian translation also preserves the rhyme, moving it from the first two sentences (少 *shao* - 好 *hao*) to the last two (*potrivit* - *depășit*) and the rhythm coming from the same number of syllables, 4 - 4 - 4 in Chinese, 3 - 3 - 3 in Romanian, ("nu-i" is pronounced in one syllable).

Literal translation is generally not the first choice of the translators, they opting, most of the time, for a freer approach, involving amplification by adding missing information, omissions by leaving certain parts out, paraphrasing, such as in the Italian translation in example (2), or to a bigger extent in the Spanish translation example (3), repetitions, restructuring, simplifying or specifying by narrowing down the original context choosing either more general, or more specific concepts.

(5) 把“牛鬼蛇神”拉上台来！(69)

Să fie aduși pe scenă *ticăloșii* ... (84)

Portate sul palco i *demoni mucca e gli spiriti serpente!* (140)

“Cow demons and snake spirits” (牛鬼蛇神 *niu gui she shen*) was a pejorative term originating in classical Chinese poetry, first used by Mao in 1955, and later by the Politburo member Chen Boda in a 1966 article entitled “Sweeping away all the monsters and demons”, transforming it in one of the recurrent slogans of the Cultural Revolution.¹¹

Mo Yan did not use it as a slogan *per se* and placed the slogan between quotation marks. He used to characterize people who were in no way “class enemies”, such as *gugu*, the narrator’s aunt, suggesting the absurdity of the whole situation, but even so, its origins as a slogan cannot be lost on the Chinese reader. The verbs collocating with it indicate violence, the enemies are “dragged up the stage” and then, a few lines below, “sent off the stage under escort”¹², as if taken into custody, echoing the original call of “sweeping them away”. The Italian translation preserves the term, even if it does not sound very natural to the reader, but it is this very unusual nature that can signal the Italian reader its special usage; the Romanian one opts for simplification, replacing it with the more general “*ticăloși*” (villains). The fragment is totally omitted in Spanish.

(6) “破四旧”战斗队 (192)

la squadra di lotta contro i «*quattro vecchiumi*» (361)

brigada de luptă contra „*celor patru vechituri*” (214)

la Brigada de Destrucción de “*cuatro objetos históricos antiguos*” (224)

In example (6), the name of the struggle corps is a slogan, “Destroy the four olds”, again, one of the most common of the time. Used by the Red Guards, the “four olds” referred to the “old ideas, old customs, old habits and old culture”, in a word, to all that was related to the imperial Chinese tradition and needed to be destroyed, in order to build a new socialist society. None of the three translators chose to keep the slogan.¹³

¹¹ For more details, see <https://baike.baidu.com/item/牛鬼蛇神/3333436>.

¹² In Chinese, “to detain” (translated by Goldblatt in English as “sent off under escort”) (押) is homophonous with “to press” (压), *ya*, and sometimes even used instead of “to press”.

¹³ It is however preserved in Goldblatt’s English translation - “the ‘Down with the Four Olds’ struggle corps” (e-book, p. 379).

In most common translation of this slogan in Italian is “distruggere i quattro vecchi”, but here the translator chose “vecchiumi”, adding a pejorative meaning to it, and opting to replace the original verb “destroy” with the preposition “contro” (against). The same did her Romanian colleague by choosing “vechituri” and the preposition “contra”; in addition to that, the Romanian translator added a footnote explaining about the four olds. The Spanish translator omitted the noun “fight”, (which required the prepositions above), there is no “brigada de lucha (contra)”, translating the verb “destruir” as a noun, “destrucción”. However, he felt the need to explain the “four old” by adding a lot of information. Instead of “cuatro viejos” or “cuatro antiguos”, the usual rendering into Spanish, he chose to over-translate, without making the text any clearer.

Many of the slogans included in the novel are marked as such by Mo Yan. They are often preceded by “President Mao said”, followed by a colon, and end with an exclamation mark, as in examples (7) and (8).

(7) 伟大领袖毛主席教导我们：人类要控制自己，做到有计划的增长
.....(102)

Il nostro grande dirigente, il Presidente Mao, ci insegna *che l’umanità deve controllare le nascite e crescere secondo i piani...* (199)

Mărețul nostru conducător, președintele Mao, ne-a arătat că *creșterea demografică a omenirii trebuie controlată și că e bine să alegem o creștere planificată...* (120)

El grandioso Presidente Mao nos ha enseñado *que el ser humano debe controlarse a sí mismo y hacer caso de la planificación familiar...* (122)

None of the three translators felt the need to preserve the slogans, probably due to the verb 教导 *jiaodao* (to guide) translated as “to teach” in Italian and Spanish, and “to show” in Romanian. The slogans sound more as pieces of advice, a good path to follow, rather than a strong obligation. The modal verbs also allow for this reading.

Example (7) is a statement belonging to the narrator’s aunt who utters it in a grave and loud voice. It is not very clear if the lines really belong to Mao, but it is not relevant, because if the audience believe they do, they function as a slogan. As a matter of fact, example (8) which is a fragment from the dialogue between the narrator’s aunt and his mother, contains pseudo-slogans. It is an argument between the two women framed in Maoist make-believe slogans:

(8) 毛主席说：人口非控制不可！ [...] 毛主席说：人多力量大，人多好办事，人是活宝，有人有世界！ (56)

[Il Presidente] ha detto che è *imperativo limitare la crescita demografica!*

[...]

Il Presidente Mao ha anche detto: «*Piú siamo numerosi, piú siamo forti, piú siamo e meglio si lavora, il popolo è prezioso, il mondo esiste perché ci sono gli uomini!*» (111-2)

[Președintele Mao] a spus: „*Trebuie musai să controlăm creșterea populației!*

[...]

Da, dar a zis și că, *atunci când suntem mulți, avem putere și putem împlini mai bine opera noastră, că oamenii sunt o comoară vie, că atâta vreme cât sunt oameni, lumea va dăinui.* (69)

El Presidente dijo: «*No podemos dejar que la población se dispare sin medida!* [...]

—El Presidente también dijo que *la fuerza reside en los seres humanos* — replicó entonces mi madre—, *que el verdadero tesoro está escondido en la población, que los hombres construyen este mundo.* (81)

The narrator's mother and his aunt argue about the demographic policy. The mother tries to use historical and tactical reasons for a woman to have as many children as possible, arguing that in the case of a war with Taiwan, the country will need all the manpower it can get. The aunt, who was doing her best to implement the party orders and limit the number of newborns, tries to shut her up with a quotation attributed to President Mao.

The aunt slogan-like quotation is partially preserved in Romanian and Spanish. In Chinese, the object of the verb 控制 *kongzhi* (to control) is topicalized and placed at the very beginning, before the emphatic negative structure 非.....不可 *fei ... buke* (approx. without ... cannot be done) which shows obligation. The Romanian translation preserves the idea of obligation (“trebuie musai”), but changes the sentence into an affirmative one. The negation was preserved in Spanish, but it switches from obligation to impossibility by saying “We cannot allow the population to grow without measure.” The Italian version preserves the obligation (“è imperativo”), but integrates it in the larger discourse, translating it as an object-clause introduced by a relative pronoun.

The mother does not give up so easily and fights back the same way, pretending to quote from the highest authority. Her discourse is arranged in a slogan-like manner: short statements with the same subject, containing common-sense information shared by the whole community, hard to question, and emotionally charged. For the aunt, the attempt to mimic Mao's words is a sin and warns her sister-in-law that in the old times she would have had her head cut off for this.

The slogan-like character of the answer is preserved only in Italian. In Chinese, with the exception of the third utterance, all the other are logical cause-effect structures, leaving out any connectors such as "because", or "therefore". The third utterance is a strong hyperbolic statement, with people defined as "living treasures". The use of "piú" in Italian for the first two utterances preserves the Chinese structure, but it did not work for the last one, where the cause is introduced by "perché". On the other hand, the translator's choice for the Chinese subject 人 *ren* (man, human) was "il popolo" (the people), a collective noun, leaving out the central theme of "many individuals equals strengths", preserved by the Romanian "om" and the Spanish "hombre".

In Romanian and Spanish, mother's attempt to mimic political slogans was left out, the utterances being translated as arguments, lacking the authoritative force of the slogan. In Spanish, the discourse is interrupted by insertion in the middle of the narrator's comments.

Conclusions

There is no doubt that translating slogans could put any translator's skills to a test. Slogans go far beyond the words that compose them, they need to fit into particular patterns and have a very specific purpose which is generally culture-bound. At the same time, one must never forget the importance slogans have not only in Chinese politics, but also in people's daily lives. Slogans are the main tool for popularizing important state policies and decisions among ordinary people, and at the time, they are appropriated by the common folk and used to fight the very policies slogans are meant to disseminate.

Most of the slogans analyzed in this paper belong to the Cultural Revolution and originate in Mao Zedong's speeches, or, at least, the characters in the book pretend so. They are introduced by the phrase "President Mao said", visually marked as slogans by quotation marks, and finish with an exclamation mark. The time period is relevant not only due to the widespread usage of slogans in daily life, but also because it is one of the best known periods in modern Chinese history to the Western public. Chinese and Western scholars alike wrote hundreds of pages about the excesses during this decade and Mao's role, it is the historical background for many Chinese contemporary novels and movies familiar to the Western audience, and therefore the reader has at least some background knowledge. There is also the chance that the most common slogans of the time have already been translated into Italian, Romanian or Spanish.

The usage of slogans in Mo Yan's novel is not coincidental, they show how change is imposed vertically, from the top down, both upon the Chinese culture as a whole and the individual private lives. At the same time, easy to

remember and repeat, they can start promoting change horizontally. By warning their partners of dialogue that they do nothing else but follow Mao's directives faithfully, the characters use slogans or slogan-like utterances to borrow his authority and quell any opposition. The change promoted is violent – “down with...”, “opposing is counterrevolutionary”, and slogans are crucial for understanding this.

There is also the case that, by repeating the same slogans over and over again, people start believing in them, they lose their capacity of reasoning (Lu 1999), especially because the slogans they use come from the most venerated man in the country, the God-like Mao, so they are never doubted.

The choices the translators made are very diverse. Some slogans are marked as slogans, especially when it comes to the most common ones during the Cultural Revolution; others are integrated in text, simplified, restructured or paraphrased.

On the whole, though, the habit of “fighting” with slogans from Mao's speeches or make-believe slogan-like quotations was lost in translation. It might be possible that marking them as slogans could have had an adverse effect upon the target reader, making the text too foreign and excessively political for an audience not used with politics dictating private choices. But, as we keep on reading, the closer we get to the new millennium, the less slogans exist in the text, to none by the end of the book, and this is obvious because references to Mao disappear, reflecting an important change in China, its transition from a heavily politicized society to one in which the “redness” was replaced by materialistic interests driven not necessarily by political forces, but by the market ones. Slogan frequency might not be the only key available to the reader to understand this change, but not having it deprives the reader of a better understanding of the Chinese society. Reshaping the make-believe slogans in characters' dialogue, translating them as subordinate clauses, part of the narrative line, is also unadvisable, because it makes the reader miss out on the rebellion of the characters, as well as, the depth slogans penetrated into the society.

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LA FIGURE DE L'INTERPRÈTE CHEZ SHUMONA SINHA ENTRE « COGITO TACITE » ET « COGITO PARLÉ »

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ABSTRACT. *The Interpreter's Portrait as Represented by Shumona Sinha between « cogito tacite » and « cogito parlé ».* This work aims to analyse the relation between *cogito tacite* and *cogito parlé* in *Assomons les pauvres!* by Shumona Sinha. It is possible to understand the particularities of a disarticulated speech which has meaning only when there is barely any sonority left? Or the effort required to incorporate the self during exile, when there is no access to a language of one's own? In her book, Shumona Sinha successfully exposes the deceptive reality of political asylum requests, using corporality and language as her main tools. Furtherly, the novel focuses on how the future colonists were forced to leave behind their original bodies, politically insignificant, through a mechanism of depersonalisation. Their only purpose became to forge stories and colonize people who will never be their own, nor will belong to them, but will offer, though shortly, an ontological narrative. Hence, the colonists soon transformed into puppets always in a vain existential search.

Keywords: *cogito, body, (performative) language, interpreter, Shumona Sinha*

REZUMAT. *Figura interpretului văzută de Shumona Sinha între « cogito tacit » și « cogito vorbit ».* Lucrarea de față își propune să examineze raportul dintre *cogito tacit* și *cogito vorbit* în cartea *Assomons les pauvres!* de Shumona Sinha. Putem oare să înțelegem particularitățile unui limbaj detractat care se ivește numai atunci când sonoritatea acestuia este pe punctul de a dispărea? Sau în ce anume constă demersul încorporării eu-ului aflat în exil, dacă acestuia nici măcar nu i se oferă accesul la un limbaj propriu, al său? În acest roman, meritul Shumonei Sinha este de a expune realitatea amăgitoare a solicitării

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azilului politic prin intermediul corporalității și a limbajului. Scopul acestei lucrări este de a analiza modul în care personajele sunt nevoite să renunțe la corpul lor original (mecanism al de-subiectivizării), insignifiant din punct de vedere politic, cu scopul de inventa povești și de a „coloniza” vieți pe care nu și le pot însuși, căci nu le aparțin, dar care pentru o scurtă perioadă de timp le conferă o ontologie naratologică și le transformă în niște personaje de hârtie, supuse unei zadarnice căutări de natură ontică.

Cuvinte-cheie: *cogito, corp, limbaj (performativ), interpret, Shumona Sinha*

Imaginons le cogito comme la prise de vue photographique : il focalise l'objectif sur l'être (l'image latente), pour qu'il soit éclairé dans le monde (image obtenue), mais la différence consiste d'un point de vue philosophique dans le fait qu'il n'y a aucun intermédiaire (aucun appareil photo) entre le sujet perçant et l'objet regardé. C'est ainsi que la conscience se constitue en objet d'elle-même, parce que, pour elle, l'apparaître devient l'être et vice-versa, c'est ce qu'on appelle une intersubjectivité. Le cogito cartésien s'énonce en tant qu'acte de pensée qui décèle l'entité telle qu'elle est, mais « elle est » (cette pensée elle-même qui se sait exister) tant qu'il est performé par le cogito. Le pronom « je » de l'énoncé de Descartes : « je pense, donc je suis » est une sorte de figure mythique de Protée qui accompagne toute cette cohorte de représentations de la pensée et concerne surtout la réalité du langage, car l'idée de penser chez lui dépend toujours de la dénomination par le mot. Le sujet pensant, qui ne peut pas se servir des mots parce qu'il ne peut pas les verbaliser, a besoin du sujet du langage qui perçoit les données sensibles et qui emploie ces vocables pour désigner les impressions sensorielles. Cependant, chez Merleau-Ponty, on ne peut pas éviter le hiatus entre le moi qui dissèque la perception, à savoir la conscience, et le moi percevant, le corps graphié par l'expérience. Il ne s'agit plus d'un sujet détaché qui envisage de loin le monde, comme chez Descartes, mais on fait engager le corps dans le monde en tant qu'*être-au-monde*. C'est le corps qui confère un sens à l'expérience vécue et qui recueille, à son tour, le sens du monde, si bien que l'expérience qu'on a du monde se fait monde pour nous.

Le roman *Assommons les pauvres !* est écrit par Shumona Sinha, écrivaine d'origine indienne, émigrée à Paris. La protagoniste est une femme-interprète qui travaille auprès des demandeurs d'asile politique, locuteurs de la langue de Kâli, c'est-à-dire le bengali – déesse de la destruction du mal, sous toutes ses configurations, dans la mythologie hindoue, même si cela implique inévitablement la ruine d'un pays, l'exode d'un peuple. Par son métier, elle apprend les histoires des immigrants, tout en s'efforçant de rester objective. Cette distanciation

impossible la plonge dans un malaise existentiel qui, à la fin fulmine, dans un acte de violence – un soir, dans le métro, elle assomme un immigré avec une bouteille de vin, ce qui l'amène à passer la nuit au poste de police et à subir des interrogatoires multiples : « la question à laquelle elle, son enquêteur et le récit cherchent une réponse n'est pas la raison pour laquelle elle a rompu le contrat social tacite de non-violence envers son semblable, ni pourquoi elle a franchi la frontière entre la violence verbale et celle physique, mais plutôt, pourquoi elle a transgressé cette limite avec tant de véhémence »², effectués par un certain Monsieur K., afin de déchiffrer les raisons, plutôt inconscientes, qui l'ont conduite à son accès de colère et de violence. Le livre se présente comme une mosaïque de récits en exil faits par des inconnus, dont la trame narrative bifurque la temporalité dans un va-et-vient entre le présent qui l'enferme dans une cellule et le passé qui déroule la fresque de portraits des demandeurs d'asile déshumanisés rendus à l'anonymat. Tourbillon de questions existentielles, introspection incisive sur son statut de femme en exil qui l'oblige à réfléchir aussi sur la culpabilité d'avoir trouvé sa place parmi les privilégiés – ceux qui ont réussi à s'intégrer sans peine. Le fil narratif immortalise les rouages d'une angoisse permanente, enfoncée dans les murs d'un système dysfonctionnel, qui, d'une part, étouffe la vérité – dans le cas des requérants, et, d'autre part, expose les peurs.

Notre analyse, dont le cadre théorique repose uniquement sur Merleau-Ponty, s'intéressera au rapport dialectique entre deux concepts phénoménologiques : *le cogito tacite* qui signifie le monde en tant que perception corporelle sans pouvoir être signifié ou cristallisé qu'à travers *le cogito parlé* – le langage qui devient son expression. On va démontrer, d'une part, comment l'instance linguistique, par le biais de la traduction, est une action rétrospective dirigée vers un Moi originaire (le cogito tacite), le fondement même de l'expérience d'une culture en exil, et d'autre part, comment la mise en mots d'un autre idiome (performativité de la traduction) devient la mise à mort du soi et comment l'acte de violence (discours du silence) accompli à la fin du livre devient à la fois : la performativité de la pulsion de la mort et une consécration du Soi.

1. Cogito(ologie)

Le cogito dans la *Phénoménologie de la perception* de Merleau-Ponty est la dialectique construite autour de la double articulation : d'une part du champ

² Lee, Mark. 2019. « Crossing Boundaries External & Internal: The Writing Imaginary of Shumona Sinha. » in *Women's Writing in French in the Twenty-First Century, Crossways Journal*, nr. 3.1, p. 3: « the pressing question she, her interrogator and the narrative seek to answer is not merely why she broke the tacit social contract of non-aggression against one's fellow-man, nor why she crossed the boundary from verbal to physical violence, but rather why did she cross that boundary with such vehemence? » (Notre traduction).

phénoménal de la perception. Ainsi, le corps d'origine de l'immigrant enregistre et transporte toutes ces expériences d'un pays fracturé, sans la possibilité de se rendre visible tout seul :

Leur fardeau, leurs bagages n'étaient pas seulement dans la soute de l'avion, mais sont aussi sur leurs épaules. Invisibles, lourds, sales. Ou dans leur ventre, comme un fœtus tardif, dont l'accouchement serait douloureux, sanglant, raté. [...] Toujours dans le ventre, donnant envie de vomir. Si seulement on pouvait vomir toute l'histoire ancienne ! (Sinha 2008, 14)

D'un autre côté, du champ transcendantal de la conscience, une sorte de camera qui manipule la vision et l'histoire à son gré, fait le montage des images, omet les détails qui pourraient compromettre l'aspect véridique de l'expérience, pour que le produit final devienne non pas un artefact, mais la réalité même : « C'était comme si une seule et unique histoire était racontée par des centaines d'hommes, et la mythologie était devenue la vérité. Un seul conte et de multiples crimes [...] Les gens apprenaient [les phrases] par cœur et les vomissaient devant l'écran de l'ordinateur » (Sinha 2008, 8).

Le cogito peut passer du champ phénoménal au champ transcendantal dès l'instant où le cogito tacite (le corps historique de l'immigrant) n'est plus saisi en tant que contenu même de l'expérience (incapable de voir cette expérience à distance, de se détacher de ses souffrances et de son identité nationale, culturelle, linguistique), mais comme cogito parlé, devenu corps de l'altérité qui signifie le cogito tacite et lui révèle son monde informulé, en le rendant à la fois transparent, à travers la parole, et dissimulé :

Les droits de l'homme ne signifient pas le droit de survivre à la misère. D'ailleurs on n'avait pas le droit de prononcer le mot misère. Il fallait une raison plus noble, celle qui justifierait l'asile politique. Ni la misère ni la nature vengeresse qui dévastait leur pays ne pourraient justifier leur exil, leur fol espoir de survie. Aucune loi ne leur permettrait d'entrer ici dans ce pays d'Europe s'ils n'invoquaient des raisons politiques, ou encore, religieuses, s'ils ne démontraient de graves séquelles dues aux persécutions (Sinha 2008, 8).

Le cogito tacite est une conscience préréflexive – l'évènement perceptif n'a pas encore jailli dans la conscience – être absent, figure latente qui perfore le coquillage du monde au moment où le cogito tacite est révélé par le langage (le cogito parlé). Il y a une sorte d'opacité imposée au vécu immédiat d'un peuple en exil, car « ils sont d'une terre qui s'est détachée du continent comme

un membre gangrené. Ils sont d'une terre qui a été scindée par le coup de hache des politiques » (Sinha 2008, 25). Enfermés en eux-mêmes, se voulant sans voix, le silence devient pour les immigrants la meilleure façon de faire connaître la vérité, car il porte en soi toutes les significations inconscientes d'une histoire persécutrice – « la suie recouvrait des pays entiers et étouffait tout le reste, puisque la misère comme la beauté, comme la vie et la vérité, est à étouffer, à enterrer, puisque la misère est un secret d'État » (Sinha 2008, 73). « Chacun est un monde en soi. Chacun porte en soi un monde entier, un monde en désordre » (Sinha 2008, 14), mais la phrase intérieure ne vaut rien, s'ils ne la pensent pas et s'ils ne la disent pas à haute voix. Et, paradoxalement, d'une part, s'ils pensent, alors ils ne *sont* pas, car là où la pensée s'ajoute à eux, eux, en tant que moi, peuvent se soustraire de l'être – soit d'être ce moi, soit le moi se détache de l'être. D'autre part, s'ils demandent à tout prix secours au langage, le tribut qu'ils vont payer, c'est la disparition, parce que, ce qui est mis en mots n'existe plus, « [ils] parl[ent] pour combler ce qui manque fondamentalement » (66). Le cogito tacite « ne se pense pas encore et a besoin d'être révélé » (Merleau-Ponty 1945, 462), mais s'il arrive à être parlé, il sera toujours séparé de la vie vécue, par la vie présente, dans un pays hostile et ignorant envers tous ces vivants décentrés par le deuil (du pays) – « dans ce pays tous sont orphelins » (Sinha 2008, 34-35). Le cogito tacite voit le jour d'une manière défigurée, comme le rêve qui ne revient à la conscience qu'en subissant les distorsions carnavalesques infléchies par la censure intérieure, en tant qu'individu en manque de toute forme d'expression.

D'ailleurs, le cogito parlé illustre une conscience réflexive constituée dans et par le langage, qui, comme le tournesol, s'entraîne dans un héliotropisme par rapport à la conscience de la signification, à savoir l'expérience vécue par la conscience. L'immigrant, dans le cas du roman de Shumona Sinha est une subjectivité dépendante du pays d'accueil, la France, parce qu'il est transmuté de son pays originaire et engrenée dans un processus de dé-subjectivisation – devenir des immigrants européens, mais sans s'affranchir du statut des marginaux, des « métèque[s] [...] présent[s] dans la ville mais sans accès à la cité, c'est-à-dire sans droits » (Agier 2013, 92). L'être de la langue, comme chez Merleau-Ponty, transparaît dans le langage de l'autre. D'une part, le cogito tacite manifestait une opacité qui barrait l'accès au vécu immédiat – causée par le besoin de donner voix au silence, sinon il serait insignifié, le silence d'un peuple persécuté politiquement et religieusement, trahi, agressé par les autorités, des squelettes vivants, un peuple à la misère, à l'éradication de leur patrie et qui « s'enracin[er] dans une terre qu'ils n'aimaient pas mais qu'ils désiraient » (Sinha 2008, 18). D'autre part, le cogito parlé signale la même insuffisance, la même opacité : « les mots [seulement] s'ajoutaient aux mots »

(Sinha 2008, 26), à savoir qu'aussi longtemps qu'il est « articulé » d'une manière verbale, il n'est pas capable de rendre le langage transparent :

Nous parlons et nous nous rendons compte qu'en aucune manière nous ne pouvons nous comprendre. En aucune manière, ils ne comprendront ce qui m'arrive. Nous parlons pour surmonter nos peurs. Le temps trop long est planté comme un couteau entre nous. Le temps a coupé le cordon. Il ne nous reste que de minables fils disparates où nous accrocher. Lambeaux de mots, d'anecdotes, [...] ils découvrent eux aussi que je ne comprends plus ce qui leur arrive (Sinha 2008, 67).

En fait, en nommant les choses, les mots les « dé-présentent », c'est un déroberement de la présence, parce que les seules choses qui se disent sont celles qui sont absentes de ce que nous tenons à dire, tandis que « [la] présence [corporelle] est le signe de la rupture de [leur] lien » (Sinha 2008, 66). Si le langage révèle, en mettant assidûment en évidence, l'absence de toute chose qu'il s'estime capable de dire, alors le discours de cette femme-interprète, qui est un second langage, car il ne lui appartient pas, doit se purger, c'est-à-dire devenir la « voix-blanche », dont le rôle est de dépersonnaliser, jusqu'à l'effacement, un degré zéro ontologique et langagier – « Mon rôle était de m'effacer » (Sinha 2008, 88) – se faire oublier à l'intention de la chose dite et faire transparaître le sens par la matérialité de l'expression.

1.1 Métensomatose de l'être du mot

Si l'acte de traduire oblige l'interprète à « disparaître » en tant que personne pour accéder autant que possible au langage transparent de l'autre, la traduction reste toutefois une convention, de telle sorte que la protagoniste interprète s'y engage avec son corps, elle s'enfonce avec sa corporéité vivante dans les textures étrangères des mots, ou se colle auprès des silhouettes verbales. Ainsi assiste-t-on à une transsubstantiation – le corps voue au vocable *être* son être. Le mot, devenu expression de l'essence du monde, vise, à travers l'expérience du corps de l'interprète, « l'être phénoménal du langage », parce que le corps ne se fait pas interstice entre moi et l'autre en tant qu'objet, il se trouve parmi les choses, « parmi les [autres] corps entassés » (Sinha 2008, 63), dit le personnage de Shumona Sinha. Traduire un mot, c'est s'apercevoir de l'univers, non seulement linguistique, qu'il prend en charge – « j'étais obligée de [...], m'incliner vers ses phrases démembrées, disloquées, pêcher ses mots disparates et les rassembler, [...] pour leur donner une allure cohérente » (Sinha 2008, 17). Orfèvrerie de la perte, car une bonne partie des postulants pour l'asile sont refusés, leurs histoires de vie n'entrent pas dans la liste agréée par la France, la traduction

gage toujours sur l'impossibilité de transposer le sens intégral du mot de la langue du requérant dans la langue d'accueil, « puisque notre corps appartient à un seul monde dans lequel il a pu s'élever » (Daneshmand, Shairi, Letafati and Nezamizadeh 2019, 4).

La traduction est un acte performatif de métamorphose – séparation de son propre corps linguistique d'abord, afin de se ressaisir dans le corps de l'autre et de se retourner à soi en tant qu'Autre, « c'est sortir de moi et aller vers l'Autre » (Sinha 2008, 94). Si chaque mot englobe en soi tous les mots, alors ils sont tous captifs par leur impuissance de (s')énoncer, mais si l'expérience du corps peut se faire un nouveau monde dès qu'il télescope un mot-immigré, comme une sorte de métensomatose, alors cela correspond au fait que le moi en exil et le moi-interprète se donne la peine de se (re)construire avec et par le langage, « il[s] s'efforçai[ent] de reconstituer les évènements » (Sinha 2008, 10).

La traduction est comme un processus de mimesis vocale, par lequel une voix mimée « s'esquive » d'une voix qui mime, dont la figuration des échos phonétiques, par l'acte d'interprétation, n'est pas suffisante pour réitérer une présence corporelle de l'expérience vécue, ni ne parvient à transmuier le sens du monde dans le monde du sens, puisque vivre, c'est demeurer aux franges du dicible, se lancer en deçà du langage, où le dit n'est jamais totalement dit. Alors, la traduction s'entraîne dans une sorte de métensomatose - du corps du monde en corps de langage – le dernier n'incarne qu'une parole en creux, un discours troué par les atolls in-explicites, des données vécues, qui peuplent la parole qui se dévoile.

1.2 L'autoscopie. De l'être à l'étant, de l'étant à l'être.

Il nous revient d'expliquer pourquoi dans la *Phénoménologie de la perception* la notion du schéma corporel « est implicitement une théorie de la perception » (Merleau-Ponty 1945, 239) – envisagée dans le roman de Shumona Sinha comme la transition d'une géographie réelle qui délocalise l'immigrant, vers un autre type de spatialité linguistique qui lui donne un lieu temporaire dans l'imaginaire. Son schéma corporel se mo(n)difie en interaction avec les changements de l'histoire et du langage, en se créant en tant que corps de mots, tandis que l'expression corporelle de la femme interprète se forme et se déforme en rapport avec les autres demandeurs d'asile jusqu'à ce que le corps de mots, mis au monde par l'acte de traduction, déflagre dans un silence sensitif. Ainsi, le moment où le personnage frappe son congénère, elle découpe une brèche dans son histoire personnelle laissée en arrière et se retourne ou retrouve son « Moi » originaire. Faisons un parallèle avec ce que, dans la psychanalyse lacanienne, s'appelle le « stade du miroir » d'autant plus qu'à différents moments,

la protagoniste se regarde dans la glace. Le miroir instaure une relation entre le corps – en tant que sensibilité proprioceptive, c'est-à-dire sa visibilité dans le monde, et le corps – en tant qu'image visuelle dans le miroir. En se regardant dans la glace, le sujet se soustrait à la réalité immédiate et se dirige vers « ce qu'[il] se voit ou vers ce qu'[il] s'imagine être » (1935-1951, 204). Pour Merleau-Ponty, cette praxis devant le miroir n'est pas seulement un processus d'auto-reconnaissance, comme chez Lacan, mais une constitution de « rapports d'être avec le monde, avec autrui » (1935-1951, 204), à savoir que l'espace qu'on fréquente à travers le corps devient perceptible et accessible à autrui, de la même manière que l'espace qu'il habite nous est également appropriable.

Il y a deux moments d'autoscopie de l'instance du moi dans le roman *Assommons les pauvres !* : la décentration, par le stade-miroir, du « je » de l'interprète en rapport avec les images moïques des immigrés, et la centration, par le miroir truqué, de l'échange du « je » de la femme interprète devenu moi à travers l'acte de violence. Dès l'instant où elle frappe l'immigrant dans la rame du métro avec la bouteille de vin, elle ressemble à l'autre, elle n'existe plus en tant que sujet individuel, interprète et européenne, mais elle est arrêtée et interrogée, comme les immigrants l'étaient.

Le stade du miroir n'amplifie pas la subjectivité du personnage qui se perçoit et est perçu autoscopiquement, par l'autre-soi. En échange, le regard décentre, l'aliène et le dépossède du monde de la réalité immédiate, afin de se rapporter, dès maintenant, à cet être-image (multiple-nous) reflété par le miroir – « Mais qui suis-je après tout pour parler d'eux ? Je suis en train de voler leurs histoires. Je les sublime dans la misère et dans la laideur. Je suis un narcopirate » (88). Le « je » qui s'amorce dans le mécanisme spéculaire éclate en un faisceau de particules virtuelles, d'*imagos* en exil.

Le stade du miroir « truqué » désindividualise le personnage, en le rendant semblable à l'autre – « je le regarde furtivement et la ressemblance défigurée de nos corps me frappe, comme si je nous voyais dans un miroir truqué » (Sinha 2008, 86-87). Destitué de son propre corps, de sa propre histoire individuelle, le regard maternel de l'altérité, à travers lequel un pays lointain est transposé sur la rétine, se cristallise comme (dans) un premier miroir, où le visage de la patrie-mère fait que le personnage-enfant se perçoive comme existant, se sente exister. Le sujet de l'acte de violence, c'est le corps qui traduit son sens en propulsant son intention au monde. Ainsi le sens invisible d'un moi percevant qui accumule toutes ces corporéités en souffrance – « emportant en moi tant d'histoires, tant de cris... » (Sinha 2008, 52) est signifié à travers la forme visible du geste – « moi qui ai attrapé la bouteille sans la regarder, [...] puis j'ai visé la tête, [...] et j'ai frappé » (Sinha 2008, 7). Le geste corporel – langage (cogito parlé) d'un langage perceptif (cogito tacite) qui se

laisse transfigurer en geste incarné : « mon désir subit d'avoir frappé l'homme » (Sinha 2008, 7) – est comme une pensée pré-réflexive, une expression du sens capté par le corps. Et cette façon de s'exprimer, qui est en soi un évènement corporel, renvoie l'être du langage à une « régression » qui reconnecte l'individu à son soi originel, en tant qu'expérience primordiale de son télescopage avec le monde.

1.3 Le clivage de la conscience : entre a priori et a posteriori

L'être du langage dérive du macrocosme sensible, c'est-à-dire le monde naturel du schéma corporel où la conscience intentionnelle de l'interprète, braquée sur le discours-objet des autres, n'arrive pas à phénoménaliser le langage par la traduction du langage-exilé (impuissance de la conceptualisation du sens de ses vécus) et cherche sa voix dans l'évènement du figural à travers le geste, en tant que phénoménalité du langage, à savoir le moment où le sens de ses vécus s'exprime.

L'anthropomorphisation ratée du monde survient par la structure du corps de la protagoniste, qu'on appelle le schéma corporel, de sorte que l'être des immigrants ne se donne pas comme un « être-pour-le-sujet-pensant » qui valide les immigrants en tant que descendance généalogique du même peuple, mais comme un « être-pour-le-regard » rencontré sous un certain aspect dans la patrie-mère et ne le reconnaît plus dans le pays de l'autre : « Je ne m'y reconnais plus. Je ne les reconnais plus, mes parents » (Sinha 2008, 67). On assiste aussi à un clivage du corps: d'une part, les corporités d'un pays déserté, dont l'a – priorité, le *Gestalt* de son propre corps – « le pays, corps unique, fut mutilé » (Sinha 2008, 30) renvoie à un pacte originaire, il s'agit d'une sorte de connaissance partielle du monde qui se révèle lors d'une expérience non-réfléchie, des acquis historiques et contingents. D'autre part, le corps est traversé par une conscience dédoublée : a priori et a posteriori – subjectivité transcendantale de l'interprète qui se détache de l'objet extérieur à soi, dans ce cas, de l'immigrant – « mon corps avec moi démentait l'image larmoyante de mon pays » (Sinha 2008, 79) et qui se rattache à lui en tant que compatriote, puisqu'elle a l'aptitude de saisir le sens tacite (le cogito tacite) et de le mettre en mots (le cogito parlé).

Et alors, si « le corps est le véhicule de l'être au monde » (Merleau-Ponty 1945, 97), le langage des immigrants n'actualise rien, il crée seulement des moi narratifs qui ne convainquent pas, « ils essayaient de se glisser dans la peau de personnages fabriqués par les marchands d'hommes, leurs compatriotes » (Sinha 2008, 26), puisque de toute façon : « la certitude que tout demandeur d'asile est potentiellement un menteur, permet aux pays hôtes de refouler de nombreux réfugiés "en toute bonne conscience" » (Agier, Madeira 2017, 14), et dont l'accès au « Moi » originaire reste pour toujours fermé. Mais si les gens

abandonnent leur corps-historiques en arrière, « il[s] [deviennent] l'idée d'[eux]-même[s] ») (Sinha 2008, 26) – des consciences errantes qui cherchent une corporalité, une histoire à eux, s'ils renoncent à leur a priorité culturelle, alors « ils n'existent plus » (Sinha 2008, 26), parce que le jaillissement de la parole a besoin d'un réceptacle.

1.4 L'ontologie d'un corps qui s'absente pour que le langage soit mo(n)difié

Le monde culturel de la traduction – sédimenté d'innombrables significations issues, d'une part, d'expériences linguistiques ou des lois du langage – relation entre les mots et les phrases, d'autre part, sociales et historiques : lois interculturelles – transpositions des sens – arrive à être rejeté par les immigrants qui perçoivent l'acte d'interprétation comme un pseudo-langage, parce que les fables de l'arrière-scène, les coulisses où ils mémorisent leurs récits, ne deviennent pas sur la scène, à savoir lors de l'interrogatoire, des histoires véritables à travers la traduction, car celles-ci ne peuvent transfigurer le mensonge en réalité :

lorsqu'ils mentaient et savaient qu'ils mentaient, ils piquaient alors une colère sournoise et hurlaient qu'on ne comprenait pas leur langue. Ils hurlaient que moi je ne traduisais pas ce qu'ils disaient. Ils hurlaient que je ne connaissais pas leur langue, que ce n'était pas ma langue (Sinha 2008, 17).

Les immigrants se voient expurgés de leur propre réalité et se perpétuent à l'écart d'eux-mêmes, comme si toute expression verbale était la capture (photo) en négatif de ce membre-fantôme, le pays, qui leur rappelle sans désespérer qu'il faut incorporer le manque et vivre avec lui jusqu'à l'anéantissement. Ces sujets-hors-sujet, désertés de la « vie vivante », que personne ne discerne « les hommes défilaient sans fin. On ne distinguait plus leur visage ou leur corps ») (Sinha 2008, 26), paraissent si transparents qu'aucune histoire réelle ne les traverse, ils sont à l'extérieur de tout évènement : « la vie entière soudain coupée à la racine » (Sinha 2008, 30), traqués par l'impuissance de se localiser dans le monde et déchirés par l'effroi d'être dépouillés de leur propre corporalité. Ils n'aboutissent pas à se localiser dans une histoire, puisqu' « ils étaient obligés de mentir, de raconter une tout autre histoire que la leur pour obtenir l'asile politique » (Sinha 2008, 26), ou à se faire remarquer dans la narration, car « ce n'était encore qu'un de ces assauts des corps anonymes » (Sinha 2008, 85). Leur récit devient ontologie, c'est-à-dire lutte pour survivre et manière de définir leur vie.

Le peuple exilé se traîne sur la trajectoire de l'indistinction, des « être[s] réduit[s] à la pénombre » (Sinha 2008, 66) – saut raté qui empêche le trapèze de se déployer vers « quelqu'un », de permettre de récupérer une identité, et fait sombrer l'immigrant dans la masse floue de cet être moins « l'être » : « ils endossaient le fardeau d'une vie qui leur était totalement étrangère » (Sinha 2008, 26) – ayant la sensation qu'ils sont à la fois « personne » et « quelqu'un ». S'incarner, pour eux, c'est récidiver dans un autre corps, se calquer corporellement dans l'altérité, s'y glisser, s'énucléer de l'ellipse, élision perpétuelle de soi à soi, dans laquelle demeure leur propre corps, afin de s'engager dans l'enjeu de l'incarnation où réside l'histoire, la vie, mais jamais la leur – « il leur fallait donc cacher, oublier, désapprendre la vérité et en inventer une nouvelle » (Sinha 2008, 8). Ce qu'ils réclament, c'est substituer leur corporéité par une autre, qui constituerait l'avant-propos de leur récit de l'appartenance au macrocosme.

Traduire devient ainsi l'antichambre d'un corps extirpé, comme s'il était énoncé, parce que le corps n'y est pas, et alors, comment le verbe peut se faire chair, si le langage se *mondifie*, c'est-à-dire qu'il devient monde, seulement quand les corps sonores s'évanouissent ? Ou à quoi bon se corporiser – prendre une pauvre forme, s'il n'est pas donné aux immigrants un langage qui puisse prendre corps ?

L'avenir est dans la main des mots, dans le creux du récit. Il faut savoir peindre le paysage avec des couleurs vives. Il faut savoir ranimer le théâtre immobilisé aux fils des mots marionnettistes. [...] Il revient dans la course avec une nouvelle série d'histoires. Il veut insérer encore et encore sa parole, son conte, sa vie, à la façon d'un couturier maladroit qui brode à l'excès son tissu par peur du manque (Sinha 2008, 8).

Le corps ne fait plus corps avec l'individu, il a de la peine à en devenir un. Le corps, ce n'est pas encore eux, puisqu'ils n'ont pas revendiqué leur histoire. Eux, qui ne demeurent qu'en tant que porte-parole de leurs corps, qui ne savent pas habiter autrement la parole qu'en se laissant « destitués » de leur propre cogito tacite – « en train d'inventer un nouveau pays, une nouvelle nation, des guerres inconnues, des génocides cachés » (Sinha 2008, 39-40). Ces gens doivent regarder loin d'eux, observer comment le corps est expulsé hors de soi, voir aussi le corps des autres qui n'ont pas besoin de fabriquer des histoires pour se sauver, pour s'instituer dans le corps social, dont la parole démarre déjà, depuis longtemps, comme une revendication du corporel. La voix est le seul organe qui « prend corps », car elle s'articule là où elle n'y est même pas – vestige d'un lieu qu'ils croyaient être décisif : la patrie-mère. Tout s'apparente à une pérégrination onctive entre ce qui est et ce qui n'est pas,

poursuite d'un corps fictionnel par les effluves et les sonorités de l'être du langage, au moment où la traduction devient palpable dans l'amplitude sonore du mot d'ombre (le corps) transfiguré en phrase (chair). Mais, toutefois, le langage qui ne parle pas sa propre histoire, ne parvient pas à remplacer un corps par un autre, à se l'approprier, car il est impossible de s'oublier en tant que soi afin d'accéder à un moi narratif qui ne lui appartient pas pour obtenir l'asile politique, la parole qui se tait et devient pseudo-parole fait du corps un organisme sans vie : « Ni la misère ni la nature vengeresse qui dévastait leur pays ne pourraient justifier leur exil, leur fol espoir de survie. Aucune loi ne leur permettrait d'entrer ici dans ce pays d'Europe s'ils n'invoquaient des raisons politiques » (Sinha 2008, 8).

L'interprète est « un funambule oscillant entre deux lois : la législation du pays (avec sa casuistique souvent arbitraire) et le désir de survie du miséreux, son exigence redoutable » (Picard 2015, 14) ; l'émissaire du vide, de ce voltage mesuré en distance, circuit polarisé en cathodes – le soi rivé à son actualité, saupoudré en instants, ici, et en anodes – le soi-hors-(de)-soi, projeté vers l'ailleurs, image virtuelle d'un corps vidé de vie dans laquelle l'immigrant se voit dé-subjectivisé et dont seul le langage semble chuchoter la phrase-écran d'une étincelle fugace qu'est la réminiscence – « Ils n'ont que des bribes de souvenirs. Et le présent les empêche de s'y accrocher » (Sinha 2008, 66). Le souvenir ramène au passé la contingence, en rendant inachevé ce qui est survenu et achevé ce qui ne l'a pas été. Ce mécanisme de se rappeler figure une manière de faire exister l'émigrant, autrement, ailleurs, à travers le langage. La traduction met ensemble les corps des lettres d'une communauté proscrite – « d'une terre qui s'est détachée du continent comme un membre gangrené. Ils sont d'une terre qui a été scindée par le coup de hache des politiques » (Sinha 2008, 25), d'isolés à isolés, sentinelles du nulle part, chacun initié dans l'expérience du vide, prisonniers de la décorporalisation, déployés sans fin par la vue du néant, par les étendues jonchées où les squelettes se mirent dans leur propre calcination.

Le langage est comme un point de fuite dans lequel se tord et s'agglomère les corpuscules de l'être en train de s'éviscérer, le corps devenu une extension organique sans organes que le chagrin ne dissèque plus, mais qui se laisse découper en corps de papier – destinataires des histoires fabriquées. Néanmoins, l'immigrant ne peut pas avoir deux images corporelles, alors il décide d'immoler l'ancien corps, celui qui porte déjà sur la poitrine les marques symptomatiques d'un pays déserté, de ce « pays-poubelle » (Zimmermann 2015, 98) – « ils portaient en eux leur terre, leur patrie, leur religion. Ils étaient les terres dispersées d'une nation qui continuait à exister grâce à eux » (Sinha 2008, 78).

Il veut ainsi se mettre au monde comme *sans organes*, comme un double du réel, parce qu'il n'envisage aucun état existant, dans l'organisme vivant sacrifié par lui. La vacuité du corps se glisse définitivement sur la surface vidée et le vide dédoublé se retourne à soi en tant qu'autre.

Le personnage qui parle est toujours un personnage parlé, puisque pour l'immigrant parlant, c'est comme s'il était saisi par une force vivante; sa propre parole l'habite en le transfigurant dans le coquillage d'une autre parole. Le vocable s'articule et fait écran à l'expression. La phrase est comme un corps qui se veut disloqué, afin de se restructurer, par une ribambelle d'anagrammes qui ne prend jamais fin. Les mots nous séparent, nous éloignent et même « ne pouvaient convaincre personne » (Sinha 2008, 26). Le langage des masques-miroirs retire les faux-semblants du miroir et ils se retrouve face à eux-mêmes sans aucun signifié ou densité, ils ne sont plus personne. C'est la perte dans le corps d'un signifiant abandonné quelque part.

À la fin, le personnage-interprète n'est qu'une existence-schisme qui oscille toujours entre l'instantanéité du corps vécu dans un monde en exil (cogito tacite de l'expérience) et le langage comme une description de ce vécu (cogito parlé de la traduction), qui désindividualise le corps, le fabrique en tant qu'autre, dans le carnaval des signes linguistiques : « on devient un autre, sur la route, on se déguise, on a une nouvelle peau, on se cache sous le nouveau masque » (Sinha 2008, 94).

2. Entre performativité ontique du langage et ontogénie charnelle

La psychanalyse lacanienne trace la distinction entre une mort structurelle et une mort réelle, en empruntant le concept freudien de « pulsion de la mort ». Toute tension est engrenée dans une sorte de dynamisme régressif, qui concerne la reprise d'un état antérieur. Afin que la pulsion de la mort s'insinue dans le tréfonds du sujet et dans sa corporalité, il doit subir une perte d'existence, puisque la désintégration devient cause de l'intégration, à savoir la mort structurelle. Par ailleurs, le Réel de la mort, qui est non-symbolisable et « non imagina(ris)able » et qu'on ne peut pas apercevoir qu'en s'y télescopant, fulmine dans la dissolution de toute parole. Le logos doit se taire.

Dans le livre *Quand dire c'est faire*, la théorie de la performativité de John Austin renvoie à l'émergence du réel simultanément avec l'acte d'énonciation, à savoir que si les mots agissent sur le monde, s'ils deviennent « plasmateurs » du signifiable à travers le « dire », alors le langage est un acte performatif. Si on comprend les vocables articulés par chaque personnage comme des éléments

constituants d'une performance qui se développe tout au long de la traduction-texte devenu une théâtralisation du « vrai », le roman *Assommons les pauvres !* est signifié en tant que performativité. La chair ne se fait pas verbe, mais le fabrique, parce que toute l'(id)entité du personnage se fonde dans le discours qu'il profère. Tant qu'il est parlé, plutôt que parlant, le héros anodin est susceptible de prétendre à l'existence, mais la mise en mots dans une langue étrangère (marchand ambulant d'identités), c'est une mise à mort du Soi. La protagoniste-interprète ne peut pas se verbaliser sans être fractionnée, sans expatrier du moi parlant cette parcelle moiïque qui est autre. Elle devient l'altérité en se disant. Elle n'existe uniquement qu'à partir du moment où elle est transitée d'une parole à une autre, si bien qu'elle se fait médiateur entre la fiction et le réel.

L'interprète se rattache au langage, mais celui-ci ne lui appartient pas. Elle est tentée de se soustraire à l'être langagier, de s'énucléer de la parole qui est l'artefact même de la présence, hypnotisée par l'inexprimable – au-delà du « dit » et de la performance qui la maintient en vie. En dehors du Logos, rien. Transpercer le non-dit, c'est dissoudre un moi et, sous l'effet de la pulsion mortifère, elle découvre la dépossession de soi. Si l'interprétation est performative, le discours du silence supprime la performance et sa production qui ne dure qu'autant qu'elle ne produit. La phrase sans mots donne un sens à la parole, mais le sens est une fin, il met un terme.

Le corps-orée (ontogénie et épiphanie de la pensée) devient le dernier arrêt avant que le signifié ne soit intronisé. Le cogito tacite autorise et fonde la performativité linguistique du cogito parlé. Le personnage dérobé de son statut ontologique d'interprète veut se verbaliser, mais il n'a rien à dire, le formulé devient in-formulable. Cette femme n'a plus une corporéité, toutefois elle retrouve son fondement ontique par et dans la colère de l'immigrant. La pulsion de la mort (l'acte de violence) doit être perçue comme l'opportunité du corps, vecteur de la parole, de régner sur tout l'existant, le moment où le sens se laisse traduire dans le discours d'un corps qui exige à tout dire et qui ne consent à aucune réponse.

Détruire encore une fois le cogito cartésien, de sorte que si les personnages existent dans ce livre, ce n'est pas parce qu'ils pensent, mais seulement parce qu'ils parlent, sans réfléchir, de façon mécanique – invitation à se désarticuler, en tant que cogito tacite, afin de s'articuler, par le cogito parlé, dans « la parole de la parole » – ce dehors où le sujet parlant s'éclipse. Le personnage beckettien Estragon disait : « On trouve toujours quelque chose pour nous donner l'impression d'exister » (Beckett 1952, 94). On parle, donc on existe. Le personnage-interprète subsiste et reste vivant tant qu'il parle, aussi longtemps qu'il interprète les mots des autres.

Conclusion

L'acte de traduire d'une langue à l'autre, se faisant si banal à notre époque, nous a permis donc de radiographier l'instance de l'entre-deux d'un moi survolant entre les expériences vécues du cogito tacite, incapable de se faire connaître autrement qu'à travers le langage, et le cogito parlé, réceptacle d'une parole qui promet la réappropriation d'un état corporel originaire. Toujours en retard, la parole ne s'énonce qu'en tant qu'actualisation d'une opacité – éliision entre moi et soi, entre moi et l'autre-comme-moi. Le sujet percevant subit, à travers l'acte de traduire, la décentration qui est une forme d'aliénation, puisque le monde perçu fulmine dans le spectacle pyrotechnique d'imagos en exil, mais au moment où la parole incarne la sublimation du geste, à savoir le passage du cogito parlé au cogito tacite, le sujet percevant devient le monde perçu par un processus de centration – la de-corporisation (perte du soi) va déclencher une sorte de régression qui branche le moi à son soi primordial.

L'acte du langage instigue ainsi les immigrants, ces « pauvres » du titre, à abandonner leur histoire corporelle pour se glisser dans un corps plus vaste qui pourrait les sauver, les enraciner temporairement dans les entrailles d'une patrie-mère de substitution. Le peuple des exilés se sait être un corps, car ils se procurent toutes sortes d'histoires-subterfuges, sans y être vraiment, parce que la confession restaure la filiation avec la première patrie, mais dissèque toutes les artères qui pourraient les greffer à une seconde patrie. La femme-interprète – l'être congloméré de mots, dont *la chair s'est faite verbe*, énonce d'une part la performativité de la vie, puisqu'on ne peut pas prétendre à l'existence sans se dire, et, d'autre part, la parole évoque le cortège des pulsions mortifères qui « assomment », pareille à Hécate, dans la mythologie, de sorte que le non-dit et l'interdit, c'est-à-dire l'acte de violence, tue la performativité langagière, mais le sens tacite demeure foncièrement attaché à l'absence ontique du langage.

Le roman *Assommons les pauvres !* est une « ontogenèse charnelle » qui fait de la conscience une fenêtre ouverte vers le monde, mais aussi une ontologie narratologique pour tous ces héros cadavériques à la recherche d'un corps historique qui les accueillent.

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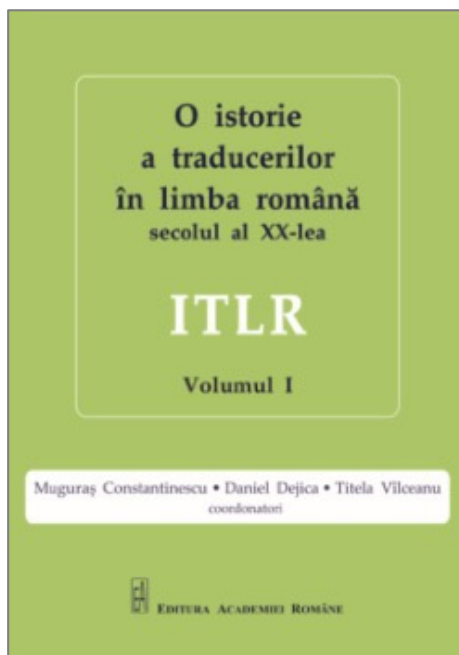
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BOOKS

**Muguraș Constantinescu, Daniel Dejica, Titela Vilceanu (eds.),
*O istorie a traducerilor în limba română în secolul al XX-lea (ITLR),
vol. I, București: Editura Academiei Române, 2021, 1445 p.***

The history of translations is comparable to the translator's status. As Muguraș Constantinescu and Rodica Nagy explain (p. 36), histories of numerous sciences and humanities have existed for a while, yet the documenting of translation, and specifically translation into the Romanian language, has been lacking. In a similar manner, one might effortlessly name writers, artists, and scientists, despite not showing interest in any of

these areas, but struggle to name any translator, even though they have benefitted from a translator's work before. In this context, *A History of Translations into the Romanian Language (HTRL)* seeks to resolve these discrepancies and provide an insight into the Romanian translations of the 20th century, with three other volumes completing the project: a second volume for the 20th century, one for the



19th century, and another volume covering the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries.

This first volume concerning the 20th century is coordinated by Muguraș Constantinescu, Daniel Dejica, and Titela Vilceanu, spanning six chapters of both literary and non-literary translation aspects. Chapter I focuses on context, be it linguistic, literary, historical, geopolitical, social, or cultural, including subjects such as censorship during the

communist regime and literatures of the minorities. The object of Chapter II is the translator's status and condition in Romanian society, ranging from legal aspects concerning translators and interpreters, to cultural institutions which supported translation into the Romanian language, portraits of translators into Romanian, and so on. In Chapter III, the focus shifts to publishers, collections, and

magazines as they shape—and are shaped by—translations. Throughout Chapter IV, different perspectives on translation are explored, the central element being traductology. Chapter V offers an insight into the translation of works belonging to the Antiquity and the Middle Ages, in the Romanian cultural landscape of the 20th century. Chapter VI is split into two parts, both of which delve into the translation of poetry. The first part concerns the poetry of numerous cultural spaces, exploring Italian, French, Norwegian, American, Hungarian, Dutch, German, Japanese, Nordic, and Hispanic poetry, as well as contemporary ideas about the translation of poetry, and even the situation of poets who were also translators, such as Lucian Blaga. The second part deals with the translation of poetic discourse and examples of such translators.

Translating French: An Overview

Due to the historical, cultural, and linguistic proximity of Romania and France, the number of contributions regarding works translated from French into Romanian is significant. Beginning with the context, Alina Pelea and Andreea Bugiac present the translation of French literature under communist censorship, offering details about the situation and explaining that many authors could not write as they wished because of the censorship, so they turned to translation—which, unfortunately, was also influenced by the political agenda.

Concerning the cultural institutions which supported translations into Romanian, Mariana Șovea develops the subject by presenting the contributions

of Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie, Institut français, and Centre national du livre. Subsequently, she presents several dictionaries and other related works, with regard to the translator's instruments.

As for the translations of medieval French literature into Romanian, Brîndușa Grigoriu illustrates the case of *La chanson de Roland* and that of *Tristan et Iseut*, Liliana Anghel offers a perspective on, Chrétien de Troyes and his translators, and Diana Rinciog investigates the translations of *Le Roman de Renart* and *Le Roman de la Rose* respectively.

Andreea Bugiac explores the case of French poetry from the perspective of translations and retranslations of works created in the previous centuries, completed by Ana-Maria Antonesei's specific contribution on the case of Charles Baudelaire. Andreea Bugiac depicts, once again in an exquisite style, the translation of modern and contemporary French poetry. The last pillar of French literary translations in this volume, Andrei Lazar explores Belgian poetry from a dual perspective, taking into account the predominantly bilingual French-Dutch environment.

The Politics of Translation

While its impact is undeniable, the Francophone space was not the only one to have a major effect on Romanian culture. This volume beautifully showcases the efforts made on the Anglophone side as well. However, just like with French, this effort was not merely cultural, considering the permanent involvement of the political element in translation. As

such, the next part of this review will focus on the ways in which the state involves itself in these matters, using the translation of works from English to Romanian as concrete examples.

To start, in her study, "Translations from English", Silvia Blanca Irimiea looks at the progression of both translation and translator through time, noting the emergence of non-literary translations as well as the influence that the political regime tends to have on these activities. Its ability to bridge different cultures is highlighted as the main reason for the special care that each political regime takes in either encouraging or suppressing translation.

Further, in spite of the regime's tendency to demonise it, the West was not totally inaccessible to the Romanian public during communism. In the study "Translating English Literature under Communist Censorship", Ana-Maria Păcleanu discusses the ways in which this limited interaction with foreign literature took place. In translation, censorship does not remain a simple tool for suppressing dangerous ideas but is also used in order to highlight the merits of the accepted values.

Another perspective is found in the quantitative analysis carried out by Andi Sâsâiac in *Translating the British and American Novel: A Quantitative Approach*, which regards a transitional period in the history of Romanian translations. The study puts to the forefront an explosion in the number of translations that coincides with the advent of consumerism, but also with the propagation of the American dream of freedom in a country still under the shadow of communism's oppression.

Objectively, hard as any individual might try, such a cultural transfer cannot be achieved efficiently without institutional

support. In the biography of *British Council Romania*, Carina Brânzilă highlights the role this institution has played not just in allowing the circulation of ideas and a modicum of interaction between Romanian and British scholars in communist history, but also how much it facilitates cooperation today.

On the individual level, in the study "Leon D. Levițchi. A Guide for Translators from English into Romanian", Luminița-Elena Turcu looks at one of the most prolific translators of the communist era and his work, an articulation of the knowledge he gained throughout his career. The author emphasises the way in which Levițchi's ideas restructured how translation was seen in general, as well as the translator's role in a society closed off to external values.

A further instance of individual action is highlighted by Sanda Berce's use of the example of Virgil Stanciu in her eponymous study to demonstrate how translation allows two completely different societies to be brought closer together. Moreover, translation often ends up making evident some of the similarities between them, despite their distance, be it physical or cultural. Translation becomes both the method to gain new perspectives and a way to share your own with what would otherwise be considered alterity.

Finally, as positive as the cultural interaction facilitated by translation might be, translation itself remains a tool like any other and, as such, if used with less pure intentions, it can have the opposite effect. This is perfectly exemplified in Cătălina Iliescu-Gheorghiu's study "The Romanian Review: Translation as an Instrument of Cultural Propaganda in Communist Romania". The article demonstrates that selective translation and the focus on

the political agenda in the *Romanian Review* led to a limited interest in Romanian authors from Anglophone readers.

The Culture Shock: An Overview of English and Universal Literature Translations into Romanian

Continuing the showcasing of Anglophone literature, the following part of the review aims at presenting the people who made literature accessible to all readers, collapsing language barriers and allowing cultures to intercommunicate and blend. Writers are given a voice and speak a language they might have never known, thanks to the efforts of translators, writers in their own right. Furthermore, this section approaches the eternal dilemma of meaning that is lost in translation, a history of important moments of the translation of English literature for the Romanian public, and shaping one of Romania's most inclusive and impressive collections of world literature.

We start with the "murderous", treacherous, incorrect translations that are the pillars on which today's translated works of the famous author of *The Raven* rest, as Liviu Cotrău shows in "American Poetry—Edgar Allan Poe". The article presents the reception dynamics of Poe's Gothic poems in Romanian literature, highlighting the effort made by Romanian critics and writers to legitimise his prestige among the vastly more popular French authors of the 19th century, as well as to solve the problem of translation itself, which should provide an accurate picture of the emotions, rhythm, and rhyme of the original poems.

Now we arrive at the poems of Irish author W. B. Yeats, who became

known in Romanian culture under rather specific circumstances, heavily influenced by the events that created and shaped the historical backdrop of the time. His poems had been translated, says Rodica Albu in "Case Study: Translating W. B. Yeats", before the end of World War II, after 1965, and at key moments in the author's life such as the acceptance of the Nobel Prize, his death, and the celebration of 100 years since his birth. Furthermore, the article provides an overview of the author's reception in Romanian culture via translations of his works and emphasises the important role of education as well as the historical context for successful cultural transference.

Moving on to one of the most recognizable figures in world literature, according to Dan Nicolae Popescu's study on "William Shakespeare's Sonnets and Their Translation into Romanian—The Canonical Quadrilateral P. Rezuş—I. Frunzetti—N. Chirica—Gh. Tomozei", the reasons why the genius of the English bard has become a landmark in Romanian culture include the "labyrinthine" ingenuity of his writings, their "intrinsic" beauty and complicated structure. However, since all of these features are by definition averse to translation, Popescu claims we should recognise in equal measure both the well-nigh indomitable challenge of conveying Shakespeare's intricate conceits into a language other than English and the all-the-more "praiseworthy" results of the four translators who have endeavoured to acquaint the Romanian readership with his poetic work.

Furthermore, the idea of the importance of translations is raised by Georgiana Dilă in her article "Translating American Poetry—The 20th Century".

Dilă builds an association between that infamous fascination with the freedom and ambition of American culture and the horizons that translations can offer their readers. Translating writers such as Hemingway, Bukowski, Pound, and many other renowned authors from the "Land of All Possibilities," Georgiana Dilă says, can be a serious challenge, but the outcome should therefore be all the more satisfying.

On a more abstract level, one may come to ask, "What does translating mean?" Adapting not just a language, but an entire culture. Conquering what is not meant to be conquered, what resists being passed on to those who do not understand its nuances. Starting from these assumptions concerning translation as an act of ferrying meaning across cultural and linguistic chasms, Mihaela Gavrilă offers in her article "Translating British Poetry—The 20th Century" an overview of what British literature represents for Romanian culture.

If, metaphorically speaking, translation can be seen as a bridge between two cultures, then anthologies of translations can be seen as highways towards a cross-cultural perspective. Alice Ionescu, in the study "Anthologies of Translations from World Literature", highlights the way in which literary anthologies have contributed to a better understanding of foreign literature by the public and how they have served as starting points in academic research.

Stepping into broader swathes of literature, Orpheus, the mythological character, has crossed over from the realm of Greek lyricism into ours and given his name to an impressive collection of translations from world literature presented by Muguraș Constantinescu and Maria-

Cristina Pîrvu in "The "Orpheus" Collection of World Poetry in Translation". The article covers the impact exerted on Romanian culture by translations of English and French poetic texts authored not just by prominent writers, but also by poets outside the literary canon, all of these resounding as important voices that demand to be heard across cultural barriers.

Finally, having answered what translation means, a new question with a new answer arises. A spokesperson—that is what the translator represents for the reader, because literature, through the cultural ideas and horizons it conveys, belongs to everyone. Guided by this premise, Rodica Lascu-Pop presents in her article "Petre Solomon, Portrait in a Rear-view Mirror" one of the most important Jewish-Romanian translators who, in her words, has "built bridges across cultures."

Throughout the volume, the information is presented in an efficient manner, covering a multitude of topics in the sphere of translations. The structure is clear, and despite the great number of contributors, the skilfully written work maintains its coherence in a language that remains accessible even for the general public, as there is no abuse of jargon. Moreover, despite the initial statement that this history of translations does not seek to be exhaustive (p. 33), it certainly covers a considerable share of the subject. A vast array of aspects come together to trace the evolution of translation into the Romanian language in the 20th century: contexts of all types, the situation of the translator, publishing aspects, traductology topics, the translation of classical and medieval literature, as well as the translation of poetry. Such is the manner

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in which *A History of Translations into the Romanian Language* benefits not only the academic community, but also the general public who may, after reading this

work, finally have an easier time naming translators, and perhaps pay greater attention to the translator's name before beginning their next read.

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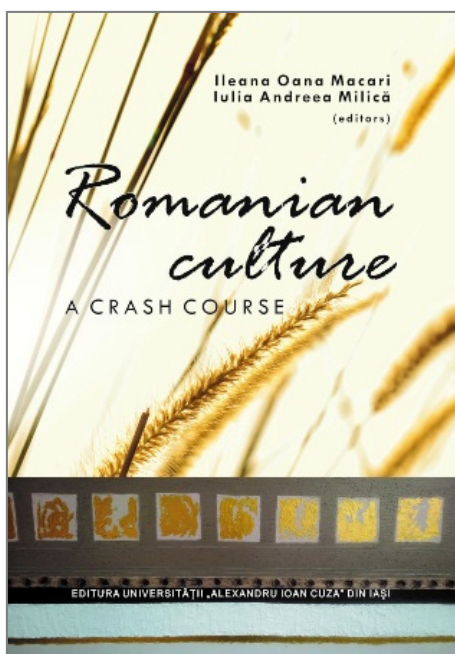
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Ileana Oana Macari, Iulia Andreea Milică (eds.), *Romanian Culture – A Crash Course / Cultura română – o prezentare succintă. Iași: Editura Universității "Alexandru Ioan Cuza", 2021, 205 p.*

In the light of the European intercultural language policies, as first reflected in *The Common European Framework for Languages* (2001), and the interest of Cultural Studies in the foreign-language teaching in the last decades, *Romanian Culture – A Crash Course*, edited by Ileana Oana Macari and Iulia Andreea Milică, is an initiative more than needed today in the field of Romanian as a second language, mostly because it targets an area that is insufficiently explored, that of culture study in second language acquisition, and also because it synthesizes the main topics that a course of such nature should include. The volume brings together researchers and teachers from various domains of interest, such as history, business administration, geography, philosophy, language teaching etc., not only in carrying out a well-documented insight into Romanian



culture, but also in showing that language and culture are two phenomena that cannot be separated.

When talking about the formation of the Romanian language, Alexandru Arnold Francisc Gafton, for instance, states that when communities "reach a certain stage of their cultural-intellectual and scientific development", they "feel the need to develop a linguistic tool capable of fulfilling various demands related to clear, accurate, nuanced and unequivocal conveyance of complex conceptual contents and, possibly, in refined aesthetic ways". The same interdependence between culture – also understood as civilization in Gafton's paper – and language is to be noted in Ana-Maria Ștefan's chapter. Her approach is the converse to that of Gafton and she analyses the kinship network in Romania based on the messages that the proverbs convey: "the woodchip

doesn't bounce far from the trunk" [a chip off the old block] (*așchia nu sare departe de trunchi*) is an example of a proverb which talks not only about a nuclear family as understood in the past, but also about a contemporary Romanian society that Ștefan sees as being child-centered. "Blood doesn't turn into water" [blood is thicker than water] (*sângele apă nu se face*) is a proverb that not only informs the relevance of consanguinity as "the basis of the kinship network", but also talks about the equal relevance of paternal and maternal relatives both in the past and now: "like most of the Europeans, the Romanian have cognatic bilateral descent, which means that relatives on the father's and respectively mother's family sides are considered equally important to the individual, from a social and emotional point of view". One of the sociocultural consequences of *blood being thicker than water* is that when it comes to inheritance, there is a hierarchy given by the degree of kinship, and not by discrimination based on birth or gender.

There are two temporalities we must consider when it comes to the study of culture: on the one hand, the *new* and *now* of the present, as practiced by Cultural Studies, and on the other, the past and the history of a given society. When *The Common European Framework for Languages* (2001) states that language and skills in a second language are to be learned along with "the cultural context in which the language is set", it leaves out neither the present in motion, nor the self-contained past. With few exceptions, such as Lucian Bălanuță's final pages, that take into account the local media during the pandemic, Iulia Andreea Milică's exhaustive paper on culinary habits or Adrian Crupa's final remarks on Covid

and Romanian mentalities, *Romanian Culture – A Crash Course* prefers a chronological approach that goes deep into history rather than the contemporary manifestations of Romanian culture.

This is why we can see it as being complementary to the other (very) few cultural approaches to the study of Romanian, that are more into bringing basic cultural knowledge to an up-to-date linguistic and theoretical context. We mention here Anca Ursa and Nora Mărcean's paper in *Developing Intercultural Communication Competence in Foreign Students Attending Medical Schools in Romania*, Elena Platon's theoretical synthesis in *Româna ca limbă străină (RLS). Elemente de metadidactică [Romanian as a foreign language (RLS). Elements of metadidactic]* and the didactic texts written by Elena Platon, Cristina Gogăță, Lavinia-Iunia Vasiliu and Anca Ursa in *România în 50 de povești. Limba română ca limbă străină (RLS). Texte gradate A1-A2 [Romania in 50 stories. Romanian language as a foreign language (RLS). Leveled tests A1-A2]*. Deploying the focus from multiculturalism, that is restrictive, to interculturalism, much more inclined towards cultural relativity, Elena Platon carefully notes: "we deduce that suggesting to the student to carefully observe the other's culture should not only be done to improve his/her linguistic competence, by virtue of one language - one culture, but also to learn to communicate with cultural alterity" (*Româna ca limbă străină (RLS). Elemente de metadidactică*). Culture is then a means by which students get to know better both the others and themselves, while improving the linguistic skills. The purpose of cultural oriented language teaching is not to infuse the student with cultural facts and nuances of the language

acquired, but to help him discern the similarities and differences between the targeted language culture and other cultures, including one's own.

Romanian Culture – A Crash Course covers a wide area of topics, from the formation of Romanian language, pronunciation, consanguinity to arts, education system, culinary habits, tourism etc. and, when needed, it shows the relativity and vagueness of the term *culture*, by implying from time to time that almost everything we relate to ourselves and to our culture could be easily associated to other forms of co-habitation outside our familial and national circle. Iulia Andreea Milică sees Romanian gastronomy both regionally and historically – as dependent on flavours and dishes coming from empires that exercised a political and economic influence over the Romanian regions throughout history – and in a more general framework of a unifying category, that can be read as a cultural attitude: "Romanian food is less spicy than other international variants and Romanian[s] tend to diminish [decrease] the quantity of exotic, hot spices even from international dishes. However, this [does] not mean that the traditional dishes are unsavory, since Romanian[s] prefer spices carefully selected for various types of food".

Overall, the collection is more interested in knowledge, that is historical, than in cultural attitudes that the inhabitants of Romania manifest in relation to the various topics covered by the papers. The volume is opened by Roxana-Gabriela Curcă's synthesis of the origins of Romania and the Romanians, that covers the timeline from the 1st century BC to the modern age. Roxana Vieru begins her paper on forms of writing with some tablets

dated c. 5300 BC and found in Tărtăria, Romania and moves along throughout the centuries, until present times, when "we broadly write as we pronounce in Romanian". Adrian Crupa talks about a topic often avoided in second language pluricultural classes, that is religion. He connects the diffuse concept of mentality to that of religion, with insights into a *now* and *then* built – as the volume overall – on the basis of Communism.

Despite the editors' intent to address the collection mainly at "the international community of our university, that is the Erasmus students, the foreign lecturers, and the Visiting Professors or other foreign guests", we think that the collection could be used at maximum potential as an instrument by teachers of Romanian as a second language. The collection provides not only a vast array of topics and multiple perspectives given in an interdisciplinary approach, but also many facts, data and sociolinguistic aspects that would offer a large corpus for any teacher interested in elaborating courses that would improve the students' both cultural and intercultural competencies.

Although it confirms the main function of a crash course, by providing considerable information about Romanian culture in two hundred pages, the collection provides knowledge that should be paired with both cultural attitudes of the present and more intercultural references in order for it to be usable as a handbook in specialized training in second language culture. The intercultural skills needed for a student to deal with cultural aspects are to be developed not only in relation to the knowledge acquired through a well-documented volume as *Romanian Culture – A Crash Course*,

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but in a broader framework, where texts such as those found in *România în 50 de povești. Limba română ca limbă străină (RLS). Teste gradate A1-A2 [Romania in 50 stories. Romanian language as a foreign language (RLS). Leveled tests A1-A2]* are to be put in relation to the historical

knowledge provided by the collection edited by Ileana Oana Macari and Iulia Andreea Milică in order to raise the cultural awareness of the student by means of all four basic activities according to *CECR*: speaking, listening, reading and writing.

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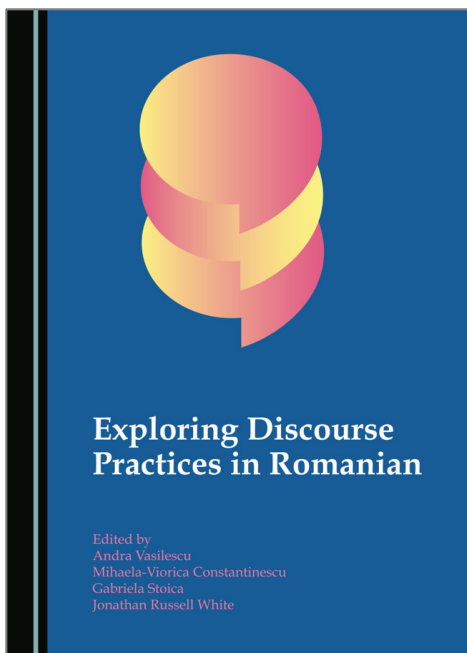
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BOOKS

**Andra Vasilescu, Mihaela-Viorica Constantinescu, Gabriela Stoica,
Jonathan Russell White (eds.) *Exploring Discourse Practices
in Romanian*. Newcastle upon Tyne:
Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2020, 460 p.**

Published in 2020 at Cambridge Scholars Publishing, *Exploring Discourse Practices in Romanian*, edited by Andra Vasilescu, Mihaela-Viorica Constantinescu, Gabriela Stoica, and Johnathan Russell White, gathers in a collective volume contributions written in English by Romanian scholars who specialize in pragmatics and discourse analysis. This noteworthy initiative serves



the important purpose, in our opinion, of giving an international visibility to Romanian linguistic research that may otherwise find itself confined to the frontiers of the Romanian language. The papers included in this volume are signed by well-established researchers, such as Andra Vasilescu, Ariadna Ștefănescu, Liana Pop or Margareta Manu Magda, but also by linguists belonging to what

we might call “the younger generation” of Romanian pragmatists and discourse analysis scholars.

The introduction, signed by the renowned linguist Liliana Ionescu-Ruxăndoiu, makes a general overview of the paradigm changes in current linguistic research and addresses three key trends: the definition and the conceptual system of pragmatics, the growing interest for historical pragmatics, the redefini-

tion of politeness. The introduction concludes with a few remarks on the Romanian contributions to the field, highlighting the switch from an initial interest in conversation analysis to recent interest in various theories developed by Anglophone scholars, such as (im)politeness studies. The following fifteen chapters of the volume are organized in five main parts, *Negotiating Identities, Staging*

Voices, Textualization of Attitudes and Emotions, Conceptual Metaphors across Genres, and Grammaticalization of Context and Mismatches.

The first part of the volume investigates identity construction in political and scientific discourse. Răzvan Săftoiu's paper focuses on festive political discourse and conducts a rigorous analysis of the address forms used by the four democratically elected Romanian presidents, in their attempt to create a bond with the voters, identifying a preferred discursive strategy in each case: identification with the people (Ion Iliescu), the creation of a sense of loyalty (Emil Constantinescu), the use of emotions (Traian Băsescu), and the president as an institutional symbol (Klaus Iohannis). Carmen-Ioana Radu is interested in the conflictive nature of the political discourse, focusing on the interaction in a corpus of fifteen transcripts of TV talk-shows (2006-2018), in terms of aggressiveness, assertiveness, and argumentation. She shows that interlocutors prefer aggressiveness over assertiveness or argumentation; this choice may also contribute to the shaping of the interlocutors' discursive identities. Andra Vasilescu analyses mitigation strategies in scientific discourse, namely in a corpus of transcripts of conferences at the Romanian Academy, national conferences of linguistics, PhD defences, etc., and identifies twelve types of hedges, ranging from prosodic to pragmatic. Building on Grice's theory of conversational maxims, Vasilescu proposes a supermaxim of Prudence that integrates cooperation and politeness and might explain the abundance of mitigation strategies in Romanian scientific discourse.

The second part of the volume includes papers that investigate online

press and memoirs. In her paper, Margareta Manu Magda conducts a detailed analysis of the hyperbole in online press headlines and describes three main attributes of this figure of speech: figure of intensification with specific lexical and morpho-syntactic features, hyperbole as part of other tropes, such as comparisons, metaphors, stereotypes, and, at a macro level, hyperbolic discourse dependent on the nature of its contexts. Overall, the study shows that hyperbole is a dominant figure in the current Romanian journalistic language, as online media creators seek to capture the attention of the audience. Cezar Bălășoiu tackles free indirect speech in two well-known memoirs which remember life in Romanian communist prisons, *Journal of Happiness* by Nicolae Steinhardt and *The Silent Escape: Three Thousand Days in Romanian Prisons* by Lena Constante. In his study, Bălășoiu discovers that free indirect speech is used by Steinhardt and Constante, on the one hand, to engage in an interdiscursive dialogue with other texts, such as Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago* or the case files of communist show trials and, on the other hand, to simulate an interlocutive dialogue with the readers.

Attitudes and emotions are the focus of the third part of the volume. In "A pragmatic analysis of political cartoons", Stanca Măda investigates the complex relationship between text and image in conveying meaning and humour. The pragmatic lens allows Măda to single out several mechanisms used by cartoonists: the suspension of conversational maxims, the use of vague language, humour as a mitigation strategy, etc. In the following study, Mihaela-Viorica Constantinescu focuses on paratext in the humoristic press of the mid- and late nineteenth century

and the early twentieth century: titles, administrative sequences, rubrics, authorship. The corpus reveals that both affiliative and aggressive humour are used in humoristic publications. Moreover, self-deprecating humour seems to be preferred over time, while aggressive humour tends to be less common in the publications from the early twentieth century. In-group and out-group stereotypes are also used especially when publications want to create an image of themselves or of other types of press. Gabriela Stoica analyses *pathos* in authentic love letters from the first half or the twentieth century and in epistolary templates published in two etiquette manuals written at the end of the nineteenth century. As expected, both corpora showed the prevalence of the pathetic dimension, as feelings and emotions are abundantly described, analysed and reiterated throughout the texts. Nonetheless, differences may appear as far as the metaphorical conceptualization is concerned LOVE IS FIRE VS LOVE IS INSANITY, LOVE IS DRUNKENNESS. Common conceptualization strategies used in both corpora are the idealisation (or even the deification) of the loved one, love as the only source of happiness or the only reason to live. Oana Chelaru-Murăruş investigates self-deprecation and self-directed insults in Romanian a corpus of personally recorded short interactions. Self-deprecation and self-directed insults are used as the 1st or the 2nd conversational turn and are classified according three main patterns: exclamatory, interrogative, and assertive. This detailed study show that these acts have various illocutionary values, being correlated with the expression of (im)politeness, the emotions expressed by the speaker, strategies of counterattack, etc.

The fourth part of the volume is dedicated to conceptual metaphors. Ariadna Ștefănescu focuses on philosophical discourse (Andrei Pleșu's *Minima moralia*) in an attempt to identify its intricate metaphorical structure: conceptual metaphors as developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), but also the metaphor clusters, metaphorical patterns and metaphor scenarios, more comprehensive tools of analysis that can be identified at discursive level. The paper highlights the role of bridge-terms throughout the conceptual patterns identified in this type of discourse and suggests further comparisons with theological and pedagogical discourse, as they might reveal similarities in the process of conceptualization of ethics. Liliana Hoinărescu investigates the Romanian media political discourse, through the lens of cognitive semantics and critical discourse analysis and identifies several metaphors used in the corpus (the body metaphor, the family metaphor, the building metaphor, the war/conflict metaphor, the sports metaphor, etc.) in the configuration of *us vs them* the dichotomy. She also points out that a few source domains (such as family and nautical terms) can no longer be used in Romanian political discourse, given their cultural interpretation. The next paper, signed by Teodora Popescu, tackles Romanian and British business communication and analyses a corpus of financial media, identifying several metaphors used for the conceptualization of companies: systems of change, living organisms, machines, instruments of domination, political systems, etc. Although there are not significant differences between the Romanian and the British corpus, the frequency of some metaphors may vary (for instance, the machine metaphor is more frequent in the Romanian corpus).

The fifth part of the volume includes papers that investigate deictics, interjections, and the pragmatic competence in Romanian as L2. Liana Pop analyses “fuzzy deictics” in a corpus of oral texts, concluding that the derived meanings of deictics are more frequent in spoken language and that deictics are frequently used as discourse markers: approximation markers, narrative markers, comment markers, etc. Gabriela Biriş conducts an analysis of interjections as discourse markers in face-to-face interactions and discovers that they acquire discursive values and lose their prototypical meaning in the process. For instance, *ei!* has twelve different meanings in this corpus, depending on the context of its use. Last but not least, Gabriela Biriş, Carmen Mîrzea Vasile and Irina Nicula Paraschiv examines errors in learning Romanian as L2, with a focus on the pragmatic competence. The twelve findings of this study show that linguistic phenomena such as performative verbs, address terms, politeness pronouns are not obvious for L2 learners, even at more advanced levels, such as B2.s

To sum up, the collective volume *Exploring Discourse Practices in Romanian* is a remarkable contribution that

shows the maturity of the Romanian linguistic research. We had the pleasure of reading in this eclectic volume studies that focus on political, journalistic, literary, philosophical, professional, colloquial, and epistolary discourse and on the acquisition of Romanian as second language. It is noteworthy that the research in the acquisition Romanian as L2 is gaining more terrain, as the field has been traditionally neglected. Moreover, the variety of the contributions demonstrate that Romanian linguists are connected to the main trends in current research in pragmatics and discourse analysis: politeness theories, diachronic pragmatics, critical discourse analysis, cognitive semantics. As Ionescu-Ruxăndoiu stated in her introduction, Romanian linguists tend to be “followers”, in the sense that they use modern theoretical frameworks to analyse linguistic phenomena of their mother tongue. It is true for most of this collective volume. However, we dare to state that the quality of these contributions shows that Romanian linguists have clear potential to assume a bolder role, that is, of developing original models of analysis.

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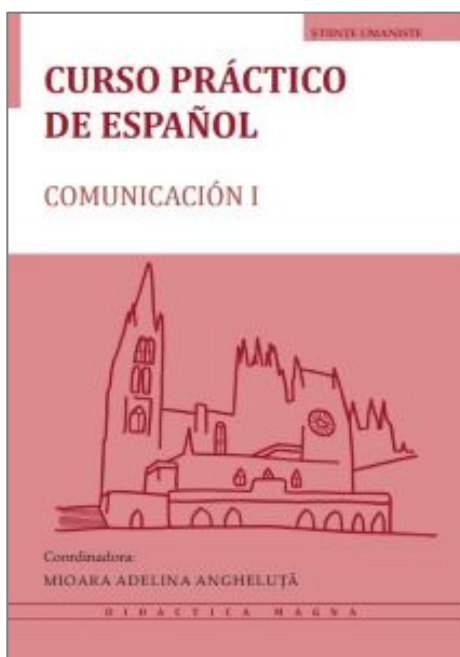
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BOOKS

Mioara Adelina Angheluță (coord.), *Curso práctico de español. Comunicación I*, București: Editura Universității din București, 2021, 346 p.

Publicado por la prestigiosa Editorial de la Universidad de Bucarest y coordinado por la docente Mioara Adelina Angheluță de la Facultad de Lenguas y Literaturas Extranjeras de la Universidad de Bucarest, el manual titulado *Curso práctico de español. Comunicación I* es extremadamente útil, al mismo tiempo, para el trabajo dentro y fuera del aula, para discentes principiantes o que ostentan un nivel intermedio o avanzado de español, para docentes o cualquier persona interesada en el estudio de este idioma.

Existe ya una tradición entre los docentes de esta facultad en la redacción de manuales universitarios, ya que, hace más de una década se publicaron tres tomos con el título *Limba spaniolă: I. Gramatică și comunicare* (2010); *II. Gramatică, lectură și comunicare* (2011); *III. Lecturi, redactări, gramatică, traduceri și retroversuni* (2012), bajo la coordinación de Mianda Cioba y Mircea-Doru Brânză



(los primeros dos volúmenes) y solo Mircea-Doru Brânză (el tercero).

El *Curso práctico de español* es el resultado de un trabajo de equipo, debido a la colaboración de la mayoría de los docentes del Departamento de Lenguas y Literaturas Románicas, Clásicas y Griego Moderno: Răzvan Bran, Aura Bunoro, Carmen Burcea, Mihaela Ciobanu, Mihai Enăchescu, Carolina Hernando Carrera, Joan Llinàs Suau, Víctor Peña

Irles, Sorina Simion, Melania Stancu, Silvia Ștefan, Simona Țigrîș; y del Departamento de Lenguas Modernas, Monica Manolachi.

Aunque se ideó como manual universitario, no se limita a este ámbito, ya que el público meta no lo constituyen exclusivamente los estudiantes de la carrera de filología hispánica de nivel inicial, sino que se dirige a todos los que deseen mejorar su nivel de lengua en lo que se refiere a gramática, vocabulario,

conocimientos de cultura y civilización hispánicas.

Las veinticuatro unidades del manual se estructuran del mismo modo, a saber: *Comprensión lectora 1 y 2*, *Expresión oral*, *Comprensión auditiva*, *Expresión escrita 1 y 2*, *Gramática y vocabulario*, *Cuadro de cultura y civilización española*, *Cajón de lenguaje coloquial* y *Rincón hispanoamericano*. La diferencia entre las secciones *Comprensión lectora 1 y 2* es la siguiente: si la primera incluye textos sobre diversos temas, que escribieron los profesores que participaron en la elaboración del volumen, la segunda contiene textos literarios o periodísticos adaptados sobre el mismo tema de la primera sección.

Los capítulos se centran en las cuatro destrezas que se deben adquirir con el fin de poder desenvolverse en una lengua extranjera: comprensión de lectura, comprensión auditiva, expresión escrita e interacción oral. Existen también dos secciones de Repaso y refuerzo y la Clave de los ejercicios, en la cual se incluyen las respuestas correctas de los ejercicios de gramática, vocabulario y comprensión auditiva. El primer capítulo de Repaso se encuentra después de las primeras doce unidades y el segundo, después del último capítulo.

Los temas que se proponen para el estudio son acordes con el Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas; desde la presentación personal, que se estudia en el nivel A1, pasando por temas específicos a los demás niveles, se llega a hablar sobre el cuidado del planeta, las ciencias o los inventos, que son propios de niveles avanzados de la lengua.

Los textos de comprensión auditiva son auténticos y para cada ejercicio se hace referencia al enlace de Youtube que los estudiantes deben ver y escuchar

para poder resolver correctamente los ejercicios relacionados con el contenido del vídeo.

Existe un amplio abanico de ejercicios: de rellenar oraciones con formas correctas de todas las categorías gramaticales; de verdadero o falso; de relacionar elementos de dos columnas con el objetivo de hacer pares de sinónimos o antónimos, formar oraciones o unir palabras o expresiones con sus definiciones; de respuesta a preguntas relacionadas con el contenido de los textos escritos o de los de comprensión auditiva; de formar oraciones a partir de elementos que están mezclados; de buscar el intruso en una serie de conceptos que pertenecen al mismo campo semántico; de ordenar diálogos; de elección múltiple; de traducción; de redacción; sopa de letras; de subrayar formas; de explicar el uso de los modos y tiempos verbales. Por consiguiente, los ejercicios reflejan tanto el método tradicional de adquisición de una lengua extranjera (ejercicios de traducción del rumano al español y del español al rumano), como los métodos actuales: el comunicativo y el enfoque por tareas, a través de las actividades individuales o grupales.

Consideramos que el componente cultural hispánico queda bien definido y, además, es muy sugestivo y práctico. A ello se suma la presentación de algunas diferencias lingüísticas entre el español peninsular y las variedades que se hablan en los países hispanoamericanos, ya que es importante que los aprendices conozcan estas informaciones a fin de evitar los malentendidos culturales. Asimismo, enriquecen sus conocimientos acerca de los datos más relevantes de la historia de España, de algunos de sus símbolos en el mercado laboral (la historia del Corte Inglés, de la Lotería navideña, la aparición

del Tren de Alta Velocidad etc.). Se describen también brevemente las fiestas españolas e hispanoamericanas más conocidas.

Los apartados dedicados al lenguaje coloquial abarcan expresiones usuales del habla corriente para las que se ofrecen sinónimos o explicaciones y que, además, aparecen contextualizadas en oraciones (por ejemplo: *pegársele los ojos a alguien* – adormecerse, quedarse dormido: *Hoy se me pegan los ojos porque con tantos exámenes duermo muy poco.*, p. 65).

El manual se publicó en condiciones gráficas excelentes y es fácil de manejar. En cada unidad se encuentran imágenes sugestivas en blanco y negro, que bien acompañan los textos incluidos en el apartado de comprensión de lectura, bien los demás ejercicios.

Hay que resaltar que este manual se elaboró en tándem con el *Curso práctico de español. Gramática I* (coordinado por Mihai Enăchescu y Răzvan Bran del mismo departamento), en el que se comienza con el estudio del alfabeto y los sonidos del español, la pronunciación, pasando por todas las categorías gramaticales, con enfoque especial en las particularidades del verbo español.

En suma, la aparición de este manual es valiosísima y es un complemento necesario en el aula de español como lengua extranjera, para los docentes, para los estudiantes y, desde luego, para todos los que estén interesados en estudiar este idioma o en perfeccionar sus conocimientos.

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BOOKS

Elena Platon (coord.), *Enciclopedia imaginariilor din România. Volumul II. Patrimoniul și imaginar lingvistic / The Encyclopedia of Romanian Imaginaries. Volume II. Linguistic Patrimony and Imaginary*, Iași: Polirom, 2020, 486 p.

The Encyclopedia of Romanian Imaginaries. Historical Patrimony and Cultural-Linguistic Identities (ROMIMAG) was one of the most recent and ambitious projects of the Romanian academic environment. The studies on cultural identity and spiritual heritage, carried out within the framework of this project, were materialized in 5 volumes: *The Literary Imaginary, Linguistic Patrimony and Imaginary, Historical Imaginary, Religious Imaginary and Imaginary and Artistic Patrimony*.

For the second volume, the one dedicated to language, researchers from three of the most prestigious institutions in Romania came together (Babeș-Bolyai University, University of Bucharest and the Institute of Linguistics and Literary History "Sextil Pușcariu" - Cluj-Napoca). Under the guidance of Elena Platon, these



20 researchers tried to define and describe the linguistic imaginary, without, however, proposing an exhaustive presentation of it.

The volume begins with a brief description of the authors and with an introductory study carried out by the coordinator, a study in which the key notions of the book are defined - linguistic patrimony (LP) and linguistic imaginary (LIM) - and in which the interdependence of the two concepts is explained. It continues with the researchers' studies and it ends with the bibliography, name index and thematic index sections.

The volume focuses on the idea that language and national identity are closely related, considering that language is one of the most important human phenomena, if not the most important. Seen from a linguistic perspective, this identity rests both

on the historical cultural context, associated with the classical interpretations of language, and on the new ways of analyzing language, much more open to interdisciplinarity and to people - as a singularity and as an essential part of a community.

In other words, the past, the present and the future, the main landmarks of a culture, take shape in language in the form of the LP and the LIM. Through the introductory study of the volume, *Lingua volat, lingua manet*, Platon aims to explain the unity between the stability of the patrimony and the dynamism of the imaginary, demonstrating that the two should not be viewed separately when talking about language, but in complementarity. At the same time, the study is meant to remove prejudices, and change the skeptics' vision, placing the patrimony and the imaginary on the same level of language analysis.

According to Platon, language as a patrimony is rooted in classical approaches, which see language as a coherent and homogeneous system, but slightly rigid, with a high degree of stability. Language belongs to people and transcends time and space, it belongs to everyone and to each one at the same time, uniting them and encouraging them to use it even more. Language is a common good, an immaterial patrimony, but also an object of this patrimony, for having a written character.

But language is not only patrimony, because it is a living instrument. Language is also a dynamic tool, which produces changes in representations about language and which configures new meanings. Language is not only to describe reality, but also to create new realities, parallel or converging to the one unanimously accepted by the speakers.

The reason why Platon, in the introductory study, opts for equality regarding the status of the two concepts is the fact that language cannot be depicted without one of the two components. Moreover, the author's attitude is noticeable from the title, which, reminding of the famous Latin saying, *Verba volant, scripta manent*, demonstrates the speaker's inherent need to create and recreate.

Also in the introductory study, the three major theories of LIM are presented: the metalinguistic, the ethnolinguistic and the cognitivist one. The only theory currently accepted by the linguists' community is the first one, the one that focuses on the object of the imaginative act, that is, on language itself. The second perspective no longer considers language as an object of the imaginary, but as a means of expressing it, respectively as a carrier of a collective imaginary. Cognitive linguistics associates LIM with the internal mechanisms of linguistic creativity. Cognitivists talk about a type of collective imaginary, encoded in facts of language and organized according to conceptual schemes, often of a metaphorical nature, with a high degree of universality, specific not only to language, but to human thought in general.

Although she approaches LIM from an ethnolinguistic perspective, Platon supports the unification of the three perspectives in a single, by no means definitive theory, which would encourage researchers to explore even more the concept and which would lead to new forms of its manifestation.

Another proof that Platon talks about the importance of LIM is the inventory of expressions about the world, in her article dedicated to the universe of folklore. In Romanian folklore, world-making plays a fundamental role, being one

of the most prolific linguistic fields. At the same time, it demonstrates the interdependence between LP and LIM, because Romanian songs, proverbs and stories describe not only the seen, physical, real world, but also the unseen one, be it of the body, mind or soul. Without realizing it, the simple man solves the 'conflict' between LP and LIM and restores the unity of the language. The numerous examples given by Platon in her article illustrate that man perceives the world as a whole, delimiting it only in order to encompass it.

Platon opens the discussions through an anthropological work, being oriented towards the individual and his experiences. The same direction is noticeable in other studies, even if they opt for approaches focused on the modern man. And, because they cannot all be analyzed in this review, I will focus on the ones written by Anca Ursa and Anamaria Radu.

Anca Ursa dedicates her study to the Romanians' identity projections, realizing both the profile of the language and the country, as well as the people's. For Romanians, the language is a treasure, an element of national cohesion and identity space (LP), but also a mirror of the people and a bridge to the people (LIM). The country is the hearth, the national spirit, the family. When it comes to perceiving himself, the Romanian is, first of all, a Man, then part of his people. The difference between the individual and the society he belongs to is often lost in their perception, because Romanians value inclusion. Last but not least, Anca Ursa states that one of the most important identity projections is that the Romanian is born a poet, proving, just like Platon, how natural and harmonious the connection between LP and LIM is.

Anamaria Radu chooses to analyze language from a modern, up-to-date perspective, talking about the language of the Internet. Although the approach is more metalinguistic, unlike that of Platon and Ursa, the fundamental idea of the study is that the emergence of a new type of language is due to people's need to describe a reality completely different from the one they knew. Although she describes all the abbreviations, anagrams, symbols and linguistic interferences that characterize the current language of the virtual environment, Radu tries to demonstrate that the efforts to restructure and transform reality through language belong to people's imagination.

The title of the volume is *Patrimony and Linguistic Imaginary*, which means that not only the linguistic imaginary is important for this work, but also the patrimony. In this direction, the articles of Chivu, Chircu and Harhătă stand out.

Gheorghe Chivu, the volume's scientific consultant, talks about the Latin heritage and the Latin-Romance influence in the modern language, proving the complementarity of the two key notions of the book. Associating the background inherited from Latin with LP and the neological Latin-Romance lexicon with LMI, Chivu demonstrates that creating the language of culture, therefore the identity, was achieved in accordance with our Latin 'nature' and our modern 'genius'.

Adrian Chircu and Bogdan Harhătă, writing about the Thraco-Dacian substratum, respectively about the Hungarian and German adstratum, complete the 'genealogical chart' made by Chivu and bring additional meanings to the idea of linguistic heritage. At the same time, the direction of the two articles, namely the individuality of the Romanian language (either

among Romance-sister languages, or among other European languages), suggests that the metalinguistic approach is still relevant, demonstrating its place among the major theories of LIM.

The volume's studies, both those presented and those not discussed, have a strong metalinguistic or ethnolinguistic influence, the cognitivist representation

not being very discussed. I believe that several studies on LP and LIM would be necessary from this perspective as well, in order to have an overview of all the directions that represent the basis of the unified theory proposed by Platon in the introductory study. Also, it would be interesting to observe if reality's changes and, implicitly, the simultaneous evolution of language, will bring new models for understanding the linguistic imaginary.

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BOOKS

Ioan Chirilă (coord.), *Enciclopedia imaginariilor din România. Volumul IV: Imaginar religios/The Encyclopaedia of the Imaginary from Romanian Space. Volume IV: Religious Imaginary.* Iași: Polirom, 2020, 383 p.

Man, as a being created for and out of communion, cannot define himself outside his relationship with God The Creator, with otherness and with the whole universe. However heavy the layer of dust that lies between the human person and these three aspects of the alter ego, and however fierce the struggle against this origin, the whole of man's being betrays, consciously or unconsciously, his origin beyond matter. At the same time, man is not only defined by reason, and this is not the only trait that distinguishes him from other creatures, but, beyond relating to the world through sensations and feelings, the human being has been given the capacity to create symbols for realities that transcend the tangible. Interestingly, these representations become specific to a smaller or larger collectivity



or even to a certain period of time, forming a true collective imaginary.

Trying to break through the first-hand reality and reach the intangible of the phantasm, more than a hundred specialists from Babeş-Bolyai University and the Cluj branch of the Romanian Academy have come together to create, for the first time in the Romanian cultural space, an Encyclopaedia of Imaginaries in Romania (2020). Bringing together five volumes, under the general coordination of Professor Corin Braga, one of the founders of the Phantasma Imaginary Research Centre (2002), the series of volumes proposes an incursion into the literary, linguistic, historical, religious and artistic worlds alike.

Entering through the gate that the Religious Imaginary opens in its pages,

we distance ourselves from the phantasms behind language, literature, history or art, to discover the dynamics of the Romanian religious imaginary, as it is perceived at home and abroad. Thus, the fourth volume of the series brings together twenty studies of the most diverse themes, but which have at their centre the same pillar: the sacred.

The deepest depths of the sacred in Romania conceal an essential chapter in our evolution. The presentiment of an all-powerful and all-knowing Demiurge and the need to "contract" Him (p. 43) have accompanied man throughout his existence here. Whether it is a personified version of the cult of the sun or of other deities, as in the Bronze Age (see Florin Gogâltan), or whether we raise the cult of Zamolxis in its various forms of manifestation on the pedestal of archaeology (see Daniela-Luminița Ivanovici), the step-by-step approach to Christianity occurred naturally on the territory of ancient Dacia, in the so-called Paleochristian stage. For example, in the study of Pr. Cosmin Cosmuta, we can find, since the first centuries, a series of evidence confirming the spread of Christianity on the territory of ancient Dacia, starting from the first centuries: "The first contacts that the inhabitants of the current territory of Romania had with Christian teaching can be identified in Scythia Minor (Dobrogea) since the apostolic era [...]. Christianity had already become an irreversible process, which would take a long time" (p. 79).

Once adopted by our ancestors, Christianity became a coagulating factor of Christians and the community living in the same geographical area: 'A religious symbol that is assumed by a group of people has a much stronger impact in terms of achieving unity/communion among those

people than a symbol that has no religious connotation' (Resane 2019, 4895). Pr. Stelian Pașca-Tușa (p. 80-95) comes to complete this hypothesis, by presenting in detail various Christian symbols (the fish, the dove, the peacock, the rooster, the dolphin, the pelican, the pilgrim's plosque with the image of St. Mina). The presentation of the symbols is supplemented by scriptural symbols (the Tree of Life, the prophet Jonah, the cross, the cryptographic monogram of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ) and Gnostic religious symbols (abraxas, gryllos-type fantasy animals).

Reading and rereading places of worship as a book of Christian symbolism and understanding it as such (see Sorin Marțian, Mircea-Gheorghe Abrudan), icons on glass, stained-glass windows, symbols and texts accompanying liturgical life can only be pages and chapters of this book. Closely linked to religious manifestations, all these symbols have written the specificity of Christianity on the territory of our country (cf. Elena Dana Prioteasa, Marcel-Gheorghe Muntean, Elena Onețiu, Ioana Alexandra Orlich, Teodora-Ilinca Mureșanu, Dávid Diósi, Olga Lukács). Without these visual manifestations, the religious content would have lost its form of expression: "Religious behaviour cannot be fully understood without an in-depth study of the universe of visual artistic expressions of each era. The place of worship, with all that it entails in architectural, symbolic, historical and cultural terms, is a true mirror in which one can see the evolution of religious beliefs and sensibilities over time" (p. 110).

It is worth mentioning the distinction that Ioan Popa-Bota wishes to emphasise in the pages of his study, namely the existence of three related but irreplaceable concepts: imaginary, imaginal and imagination (pp. 145-159):

The mutual influence between religion and society in different times and places is undeniable, the chronology of the one often being dictated by the successes or failures of the other (see Sarolta Püsök, László Holló, Ioan Vik, József Marton). A diachronic map of the evolution of the religious factor in present-day Romania cannot, of course, be made without social or political information.

Not departing from the already outlined contours of the symbolism of religion, but bringing together all of the above, Cristian Barta concludes the series of studies with a wide-ranging plea on eschatology and the various forms in which it has been represented in the Christian imagination.

The desire of all these specialists to cast the net deeper is seen in the skill with which the studies are anchored both in diachrony and synchrony, making a virtual tour through the entire Romanian area, collecting images of the religious from the four confessional directions at the level of studies at the University of Babeş-Bolyai: Orthodox, Greek-Catholic and two others, on the Hungarian line, Roman-Catholic and Reformed Theology, in a true "symphony of identities" (p. 15).

Far from falling prey to the imagination, a trap that Pr. Ioan Chirilă makes us aware of it right from the first paragraphs of the introductory study (p. 16), the encyclopaedia of the religious imagination transgresses that "quicksand" of fantasy: "Imagination represents a danger to the spiritual life, being often consi-

dered one of the means by which temptation creeps into the mind. [...] The imaginary transcends the realm of illusion, of himeres, of ontological emptiness" (p. 16). One of the criteria that outweighs the imaginary over the imagination is, first of all, the reality of the representations, as stated in the introductory word: "Although the elements designated by the imaginary have an external presence, they can be said to have a psychological reality, a reality supported by images and representations" (p. 16).

Through the boldness with which the coordinator of the volume, Fr. Ioan Chirilă, has guided the whole work, the present anthology was based on the coagulation of authors of different training, with specific areas of interest. It is precisely this plurality of perspectives that made it possible to polish as many facets of the symbolism of the religious imaginary as possible, whose common denominator was the so-called "homo religiosus", under the ages.

Regardless of the face through which man has made God visible to himself, religiosity has remained one of the most striking features of man since ancient times, a fact which has been amply described from various angles in the pages of the fourth volume of the encyclopaedic series: *The Religious Imaginary*.

To whom are these almost 400 pages addressed? To all those who, driven by an impulse to search for their own self or their own origins, want to delve into this "imaginary basin" of religion.

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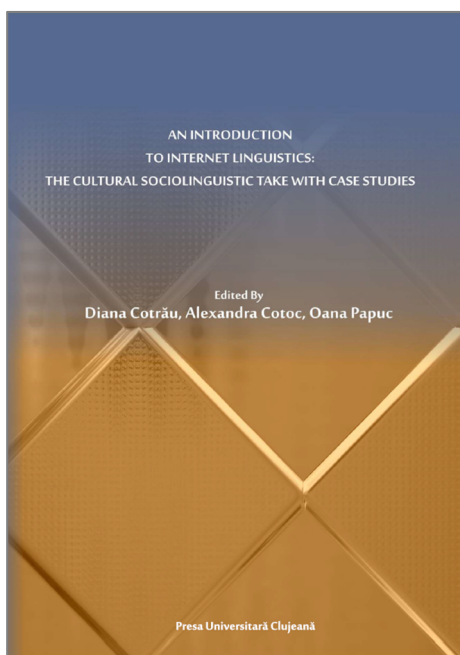
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BOOKS

Diana Cotrău, Alexandra Cotoc and Oana Papuc (eds.) *An Introduction to Internet Linguistics: The Cultural Sociolinguistic Take with Case Studies*. Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2021, 191 p.

The prevalence of digital communication has made it imperative to study the linguistic practices and patterns unique to these digital spaces. As becomes apparent in *An Introduction to Internet Linguistics*, the impact of the internet on language use is far-reaching. Digital arenas have not only influenced the way individuals communicate but also engendered new ways of constructing identities and interacting with others. As such, Internet Linguistics has become an increasingly popular area of study for linguists of various academic backgrounds and fields.

As posited in the Foreword of *An Introduction to Internet Linguistics*, the volume attempts to shed light on the interdisciplinary ways language and communication are changing in response to the digital age, by drawing upon frameworks from established theoretical fields



such as sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and semiotics. In order to achieve this, the volume has been organized into three main sections: an introductory theoretical study designed as an overall guideline and introduction to the field of Internet linguistics, a compilation of invited papers from established academics and a case-study section comprised of contributions from both graduate as well as doctoral students.

The introductory study “A Pledge for the Cultural Sociolinguistic Approach to the Domain of Internet Linguistics” discusses topics such as computer-mediated discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, and the role of identity in the digital medium. It is in this section that the editors build a comprehensive argument in favour of understanding the complex and dynamic nature of language use in digital environments. To achieve this,

the authors reference notable contributions that have helped shape the academic discourse regarding internet linguistic practices – among these Jenkins' theorization of sociocultural identities, Blommaert, Bakhtin, and the nexus analytical approach proposed by Scollon. The nexus analysis methodology focuses on how digital identities are constructed and enacted online in a multimodal, multiseMIotic, and multilingual pattern. Ultimately, the text makes a compelling case for the adoption of a Cultural Sociolinguistic approach to the study of internet language use, arguing that it offers a rich and nuanced perspective on the dynamic and ever-evolving nature of language use in digital contexts.

The first contribution is a study of the metalinguistic activities of internet users, particularly the comments posted on various aspects of language. Liana Pop's "Leçons de «p'tits profs» sur la Toile" identifies and examines emerging folk-genres in the virtual space, which have been produced by non-linguist writers. The study investigates the emergence of new metalinguistic and metadiscursive genres in the digital space, with particular focus on word choice, register, grammatical rules, and coherence of user-posted content. The research shows that these new genres are a reflection of the mental representations of language that users hold and highlights the rich material they offer for cognitive linguistics to study language imaginaries.

"Forumurile de discuții profesionale. Construirea identităților discursive" is a contribution that examines the typical discursive features of professional online forums in Romanian. In an attempt to provide insight into forms of communica-

tion in digital spaces *other* than those engendered by social media platforms, Cristina Varga argues that the discourse of individuals on Romanian online forums subverts the expected behavioural patterns: despite their lack of professional knowledge, the user soliciting assistance takes a position of authority and places the competent person in a secondary position as an assistant. Varga claims, thus, that the intention of communicative exchanges on such professional forums has shifted from seeking knowledge and understanding the issue and its causes, to seeking simple, pragmatic solutions that require no intellectual effort.

Raluca Pop's contribution is a study on the potential of virtual exchange and simulation projects to further develop multimodal and disciplinary skills with regard to pre-service teachers. The study was carried out using an online survey to collect data from pre-service teachers. The teachers' responses were analysed to determine the impact of the project on the participants' development of pedagogical content knowledge, intercultural communicative competence, and digital skills. The main findings suggest that such projects can be a valuable addition to pre-service teacher training programs and can help to prepare teachers for diverse and globalized classrooms.

The contribution that concludes the section of invited papers is provided by Anamaria Radu and Alexandra Cotoc in the form of "Irony as Venting Negative Feelings in Online Discourse. Romanian Users and Glocal Identity." The purpose of this study is to analyse the use of irony in the online discourse of Romanian netizens during the COVID-19 pandemic. The theoretical framework of this contri-

bution was underpinned by Kreuz's conceptualization of verbal irony, which defines irony as a reversal of meaning or expectation. As such, the authors analysed a corpus of Facebook and YouTube posts produced by Romanian users between February and April 2021, and identified several types of irony, such as sarcasm, hyperbole, and historical irony. The authors concluded that the content produced by the Romanian online community through irony reflects a specific Romanian glocal identity, characterized by ridiculing severe situations, and adopting a distanced stance and manner of rendering major problems and concerns in Romania. Furthermore, the use of irony in Romanian online discourse also serves as a way to challenge dominant narratives and power structures, as it allows for critical reflections on societal norms and expectations.

The next section of the volume includes the productions of five graduate students with a keen interest on Computer Mediated Communication and a doctoral student. In this respect, the first contribution is provided by Laura Oana-Herțanu, who discusses the phenomenon of live-streaming on Twitch.tv, with a focus on the type of online identity assumed by streamers in this context. The author highlights the unique features of Twitch.tv, such as its slogan "Don't just watch, join in" and the concept of prosumerism, where users can both consume and produce content. The main argument presented in the article is that streamers assume an open-source identity in the context of live-streaming. The open-source identity refers to the identity that is constructed and performed by the streamer but is also co-created by the audience through their interactions and

engagement with the streamer. This identity is open to interpretation and can evolve over time, as the streamer's performance and the audience's responses shift and change. The concept of open-source identity highlights the dynamic and collaborative nature of live-streaming, where both the streamer and the audience play active roles in shaping the experience and constructing the narrative.

This section continues with a contribution on the use of hashtags, where Mihaela Buzec explores how hashtags have evolved from a tool for sorting and filtering information on social media to a device for metacommunication (particularly on Twitter). The article focuses on the use of hashtags to convey irony, sarcasm, and calls to action, and discusses the challenges of studying social media data, such as creating a corpus for analysis, privacy concerns, and the rapid evolution of language and meme culture. The author concludes that while hashtags are still a useful device for conveying meta-communicative cues, they may be losing popularity to visual-based expressions such as emojis and GIFs. The author suggests that future research could explore the power of hashtags to convey irony and sarcasm using specific algorithms and sentiment analysis software.

Just as insightful is Cioacă Marina's analysis of YouTube comments, where the author applies Goffman's theory of face-work and face-threatening acts as well as Brown and Levinson's distinction between positive and negative face to understand how power and solidarity are shaped in online communication. Cioacă argues that YouTube comments mirror real social interactions and are used to display social superior-

ity or community membership. The article notes that social media is split between these two components (positive and negative face), with platforms like Instagram focusing on the power component through the creation of a virtual social hierarchy based on the number of followers. In contrast, solidarity is based on social equality and similarity and is often expressed through name-giving such as 'dude.' Cioacă also highlights the importance of context in online communication, particularly in terms of self-disclosure. While self-disclosure is a face-threatening act, social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook encourage users to share intimate details about themselves with others.

The next contribution is provided by Martina Lončeková and tackles the subject matter of the discursive practices engendered by the intersection of social media platforms and cancel culture. The author aims to analyse the language used by social media users who engage in cancel culture and identify patterns in their linguistic choices. This study focuses on analysing the language used in tweets related to the cancellation of two public figures, Shane Dawson and Ellen DeGeneres, who both experienced significant backlash in 2020. The language used in these tweets is characterized by profanity, expressive punctuation, hashtags, mocking, and the use of emojis. Hashtags, in particular, are a crucial element of online communication, allowing users to express their interests and beliefs and assert membership to a particular online community. The language used in tweets related to cancel culture also reveals a preoccupation with self, community, belonging, and beliefs, reflecting a desire to build ties within these online communities.

"Face-threatening Acts and Facebook Comments" continues this section by providing an analysis of the use of face-threatening acts in the comment sections of Facebook. The paper is based on the theory of Face and Politeness developed by Brown and Levinson (1987), which suggests that people universally follow certain guidelines when communicating with others. Positive face-threatening acts, such as compliments and agreements, were more prevalent in the comments section, while negative face-threatening acts, such as criticisms and disagreements, were less frequent. The analysis also suggests that people tend to prefer polite and respectful conversations on social media, just as they do in real-life situations.

The contribution concluding both this section and the volume is provided by Mădălina Andreea Pop, whose article investigates the nature and strategies of trolling as an online discursive phenomenon. Trolling is a phenomenon that occurs on the internet and involves negative and disruptive behaviour exhibited by individuals who seek to deceive or manipulate others with malicious intentions. The anonymity provided by the internet enables 'trolls' to act in ways that they would not in real life, with trolling being seen as a form of recreation, boredom, or an exercise of power that would be inaccessible in offline contexts. The findings of the study suggest that trolls use good grammar and spelling to make their comments more persuasive, use questions to incite sensitive topics, and avoid using modality words to make their trolling less obvious. Trolls also tend to bring up sensitive topics such as racism, political views, health, and religion. The study found that there are differences in how trolling manifests on different social media platforms, with

YouTube users creating controversy but rarely replying, TikTok users engaging in prolonged back-and-forth exchanges, and Reddit users creating longer comments that can appear more credible.

Although the editors have designed the contents of this volume as partly an exercise of academic publishing, and partly as a bibliographical reference for a Computer Media Communication course within a master's programme, the volume far exceeds such qualifications as it successfully explores a wide array of linguistic practices and patterns unique

to digital communication. Moreover, while the volume may primarily be designed to appeal to graduate readers with an interest in applied linguistics and to provide a comprehensive overview of current research in the field of Internet Linguistics, one might find that it is accessible to readers pertaining to all kinds of theoretical or non-theoretical backgrounds, as these practices are not only a reflection of individual identities but also of the broader cultural and social contexts in which they exist.

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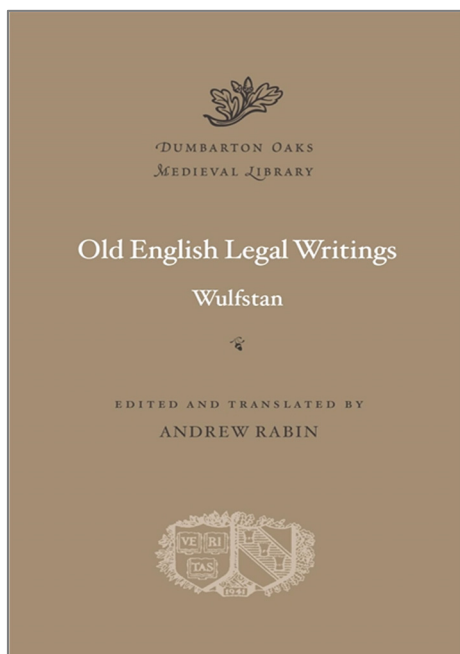
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BOOKS

**Wulfstan, *Old English Legal Writings*, ed. and trans. Andrew Rabin.
(Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library 66.) Cambridge, MA:
Harvard University Press, 2020. Pp. xxxix, 439.**

Perhaps the best documented fact about Archbishop Wulfstan of York is that he is not sufficiently documented at all. Second perhaps only to Ælfric of Eynsham in his theological endeavours, Wulfstan (d. 1023) was also the foremost statesman of his age, as advisor to kings Æthelred (978 – 1013) and Cnut (1016–1035). Moreover, during his lifetime, he served in three of England's most influential ecclesiastical offices: the bishoprics of London and Worcester, and the archbishopric of York, holding the latter two in plurality until 1016. Little is known about his life before he was created bishop of London, though we may safely assume that he had deep ties with the Benedictine reform and was a monk or even an abbot before his ascension to the episcopate.

Wulfstan was a prolific author: he wrote legislation, political tracts, homilies and sermons. Andrew Rabin brings



Wulfstan's political tracts and law codes together in a very efficient and handy edition, which places the Old English text and the Modern English translation on facing pages. It thus offers the scholarly and general public a more accessible introduction to Wulfstan than Felix Lierbermann's stately yet somewhat outdated *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen* (1903). The volume itself is quite comprehensive. It divides Wulfstan's work into three main

categories: political tracts, ecclesiastical law codes, and royal legislation. There are also two useful appendices: Appendix 1 contains works of uncertain provenance which have been questionably attributed to the archbishop, such as "The Northumbrian Priests' Law" and "The Obligations of Individuals and Reeves". Appendix 2 contains various texts revised and reworked by the archbishop, most probably for his personal use, though it is possible

he also intended them for wider circulation: I Athelstan, I Edmund, 2 Edgar and 3 Edgar. “Notes to the Text”, as well as “Notes to the Translations” are provided, alongside an index and bibliography. The deliberate lack of extensive commentary on the texts in the Dumbarton Oaks series can be overlooked, because a more in-depth discussion can be found in Rabin’s *The Political Writings of Archbishop Wulfstan of York* (2015).

The translation itself is concise and easy to read. Rabin follows the texts closely but manages to avoid the constraints of Old English syntax. The result is a text that is both easy to read and faithful to the source material. For example, *se mæne aþ* (238), “the wicked oath”, is rightfully and more efficiently translated as *perjury*. 2 *Cnut* uses terms such as *fyrdwite* (260), a “fyrd-fine”, which Rabin aptly translates as a fine for neglecting military duties. Phrases such as *and ne nime nan man nane næme* (262) are adapted into an easier “no one shall execute a legal repossession”. Rabin avoids renaming texts and confusing readers, and uses the consecrated titles of the various texts: Liebermann’s titling for the legislation, Thorpe’s now universally accepted *Institutes of Polity* and so on.

Perhaps the most noteworthy aspect of this work is that it allows the reader to clearly visualize the road map of Wulfstan’s legislative career. For example, Wulfstan mentions payments of tithes and dues that stem from *EGu* 6-6.4. as follows: *V Atr* 11, 11.1, *VI Atr* 16-20, *VIIa Atr* 2.2, 5, *VII Atr* 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, *VIII Atr* 6-14, *1018 Cnut* 13-14, *I Cnut* 8-14. However, it is only in *I* and *II Cnut* that we are presented with a particularly mixed tone of both severity and mercy. *II Cnut* punished counterfeiting with the loss of hands

(8.1), which could be tied to the economic straits in which the country found itself after the collapse of Æthelred’s reign. In such a context, counterfeiting and overall corruption would have been perceived as greater offences. All the while, *II Cnut* 30.1-5 goes to great lengths to avoid killing or violence altogether. If someone was deemed untrustworthy by the hundred, and was *swa ungetrywe þam hundrede and swa tihþysig* (270), one had to undergo the threefold ordeal. In case of a first proof of guilt, he was to pay twice the fine to the accuser, and his wer-gild to his lord. In case of a second offence, mutilation was prescribed without recourse to payment: either hands or feet would be cut off. Moreover, if this persisted a third time, the eyes would be gouged and the nose, ears and upper lip cut off, or the scalp taken off. The brutality of these punishments notwithstanding, these provisions are made in order to avoid capital punishment. *EGu* 2 presents the wording *be þam þe seo dæd sy* (2), “according to the nature of the crime”, in the case of heathen worship or failure to uphold Christian duties. Punishment matching the severity of the crime is a point Wulfstan brings up many times in his later codes. It can be found in *V Atr* 31, regarding the obstruction of the legal prerogatives of the Church by the king; in *VII Atr* 5, where bishops are given authority to mete out punishment as they see fit in the case of slave trafficking; in *VIII Atr* 4, concerning the violation of church sanctuary; in *VIII Atr* 29, concerning the transgressions of priests (here too punishment must be commensurate with the gravity of the offence); *VIII Atr* 34, where conspiring against the property or life of a cleric or stranger must be punished according to the nature of the crime committed. *1018*

Cnut mentions that punishment has to be *for worlde aberendlic* (212), “acceptable to the community”, and therefore implies considerable flexibility; *1 Cnut* 3 deals with violation of church sanctuary without loss of life, and calls for appropriate punishment depending of the gravity of the transgression, while *2 Cnut* 61.1 states that compensation for lesser crimes is to be decided *be þam þe seo dæd sy*. This indicates Wulfstan’s growing awareness of the need for a more flexible legislative system. Even without extensive discussion, this volume does a wonderful job at showcasing the changes in the archbishop’s and, by extension, the country’s priorities and needs.

In any case, what has been sacrificed is ultimately of importance only to

experts, and it deducts nothing from the achievement of this volume: a wonderfully concise showcase of how Wulfstan’s works evolved during his position as late Anglo-Saxon England’s chief legislator, and how his attempts to reform the Church and save the English people translated into his codes of laws and political tracts. Wulfstan struggled his entire career to redefine the relation between the two spheres, secular and ecclesiastical, especially when it came to matters of procedure and jurisdiction. This endeavour is present in his *Institutes of Polity*, and is showcased through the tripartite organization of the state, as well as the laws of Æthelred and Cnut. A fascinating part of the struggles of late Anglo-Saxon England is now accessible to readers.

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