

Lucian Blaga – Magical Thought – the dramaturgical dimension

Mirabela MOROȘANU¹

Abstract: *The cultural act represents, from Lucian Blaga's perspective, the most significant expression of the anxieties of human knowledge around a threshold that was inconceivable, unimportant. Even though any effort toward knowledge is doomed to failure, this unstoppable charge of the spirit towards truth, this continual effort towards an impossible objective is the engine of evolution.*

The universe of Lucian Blaga's dramaturgy encompasses themes that go beyond the mundane, with the theatre plays created by him aiming for a world other than the real world, his characters being in search of more mysterious answers than the world itself could offer in its timeless. It is about aspiration, the desire for superior access to the essence of the universe, the suggestion of the possibilities of attaining the miraculous but never fully accomplished.

Key-words: *Cultural acts, Knowledge, Human Being.*

The theatrical universe created by Lucian Blaga does not touch the terrible vastness of his philosophical creation, but with the flashing lights of this expressive vehicle, secondary and inferior to the rigor and meditative discipline of philosophical argumentation, it contains the kernel of Blaga's metaphysics. The shores of the archipelago, which is the literary creation of Lucian Blaga, are bathed by the waters of its metaphysics, the horizon to which the arrow of speculative thought is sent, leaving a forbidden space for the reader who embarks on a purely continental exploration. Lucian Blaga's philosophy decays into his literary creation. The cultural act is, in the opinion of the great Romanian thinker, the most powerful expression of humanity, but also a fruit of its creative destiny, a gift that is apparently hostile to transcendent censorship denying him access to existential mysteries, but instead offering to exchange indulgence, perpetual search, and ultimately pacified integration into mystery. That is why Lucian Blaga's metaphysics contains, through the rapport established between individual knowledge and the mysteries that are denied, the major meaning of culture.

An interpretation of Lucian Blaga's poetic opera or dramaturgy, in the absence of this philosophical key, offers nothing more than what Blaga calls a "concealed revelation". "Individual knowledge - in possession of a concealed revelation –gives us the realisation that this "revelation" is not everything, that beyond it there is room for others, in this revelation and beyond there are shortcomings or hiatuses."² Lucian Blaga's literary creation maintains such a close connection with his metaphysical vision of the universe that in his apparent and seductive aesthetic isolation, he thinks between the even hospitable walls of his artistic expression, without the fecund ramifications of its philosophical horizon, is to take away the soil from which it is born and the sky toward which it grows, haunted by the thought of the

¹ Assistant lecturer, Faculty of Arts, University Ovidius from Constanta

² Blaga, Lucian - *Cenzura transcendentă*, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2003, p. 25.

Great Anonymous guarding its mysteries, dissimulating them to the relentless attempts of human thinking to penetrate and explain them.

The philosophical system thought by Lucian Blaga implies the existence of the Great Anonymous, the "central metaphysical factor", which

for reasons of existential equilibrium, defends itself and all the mysteries that derive from the aspirations of any individual knowledge, creating between it and the existential mysteries a network of isolating factors. This network of isolation put between existential mysteries and individual knowledge is manifested in a special form of censorship.³

The human being is capable of different types of knowledge, none designed to break the timeless censorship. There exist various types of human thinking. The paradisiac, empirical, pursues and achieves the accumulation of information, the dissection of an object under analysis, its objectification into concepts that prevent access to the true nature of the world without the preconceived mysteries that inevitably escape it. The scientist is the exponent of this type of knowledge, lacking the courage to take a "naked leap", centred on the perpetuation of the civilization that unites in opposition to the phenomenon of culture.

Drink refused by heaven, the scientific gastropod sticks to the land on which it moves. The land, as an enviable field of support, is for him the first and the last element. Raised in the atmosphere of less earthly virtues, the metaphysician moves on a certain ground - only for it to betray him. The land is for the metaphysician a tragic shore of a naked leap.⁴

Luciferic knowledge is of a superior type, being the threshold that the spirit moves for the recognition of such mysteries. "Individual knowledge has only two great possibilities: either to dissipate existential mysteries or to install plurality in such mysteries."⁵ This multidimensional spatial imposition determines an ontological mutation of the human being, which surpasses the heavenly desire of comfort, of concreteness, to fit into the horizon of the secret feeling, to attain the mystery, to understand it and to reveal it. And this is, in the perspective of Lucian Blaga, the moment when a cultural phenomenon is born. This artistic knowledge represents the speculations of individual thought around the great truths that it intuits but cannot touch, meaning a farewell to the addressed material, immediately, to the concrete that it does not bear.

The cultural act represents, from Lucian Blaga's perspective, the most significant expression of the anxieties of human knowledge around a threshold that was inconceivable, unimportant. Even though any effort toward knowledge is doomed to failure, this unstoppable charge of the spirit towards truth, this continual effort towards an impossible objective is the engine of evolution. "Individual knowledge, in the whole assembly of its modes, means ontologically an infinite apologist of existential mysteries."⁶ In this new horizon, which surpasses the luciferic, the creative valor of the human spirit will manifest.

But why does the Great Anonymous refuse human knowledge access to the existential mysteries? For the reason that these revelations would disturb the existential balance, because once these last truths were in possession, the human spirit would enter into an eternal process of stagnation, would harden in their design, become motionless, which makes the regulated

³ Idem, p. 28.

⁴ Idem, p. 8.

⁵ Idem, p. 32.

⁶ Ibidem.

limit the boundaries of The Great Anonymous as precisely the boundaries of becoming, thus necessitating the need for their violation.

From the point of view of dramaturgy, Lucian Blaga categorically opposed the naturalist theatre, denouncing its confining itself to imitation, a reproduction of the real world, its placidity, without the essentials of the daily, without transfiguring it, assuming simply the role of a mirror. Lucian Blaga does not consider that an artistic product must be judged according to its ability to reproduce real fragments, that the recording of events in their logical sequence is not and cannot be sufficient for a creative approach to have intrinsic artistic value. On the contrary, in the opinion of the great Romanian thinker, the transformation of man into a creative being is based on the antinomy that is solved by escaping from the logic of things, their apparent inevitability, the capacity of the creative spirit to transcend reality, the outer world to reach the essence, at depths that seem undetectable at first sight. In art, according to Expressionist Lucian Blaga, the artist's attempt to transfigure reality, take it over and modify it according to aesthetic principles that spring from the potentiation of what surrounds us, from the feeling that beyond the material of the daily, beyond the paradisiacal installation in the world there is a substance that is not accessible to us and which a profound optical Luciferic makes it invisible, the limitations of human knowledge cannot be defeated, but have potential. Perhaps for this very reason, Lucian Blaga has a softer attitude to Impressionism, even though it is also oriented towards the outside world, to nature, to the world.

It is another glance at the nature of one who does not propose an exclusive and dingy overview of what already exists in the petrified museum of the real. Lucian Blaga's appreciation of the impressionist stream comes from the search for this fluid approach of the world, moving and made fecund by the emphasis on the perpetual impression of the artistic vision.

Lucian Blaga's "spirit of time" is dominated by expressionism. Art separates itself as part of this world-wide avant-garde trend as the object of passive contemplation. The universe is internalized, it is passed through the filter of fantasy and artistic thinking, becoming an extension of the creative soul, "it gives no play", according to the German artist Herwarth Walden. The distortions of natural forms, the enhancement of expression, the search for the essence in the background of the concrete, the pursuit of another horizon are all traits of Expressionism, which has a militant, social dimension rooted in a skeptical and pessimistic view of the modern times in which Man is given to live and create. And theatre is not lacking in the sphere of influence that this current occupies in the European space.

Under the same stylistic dome, there is the new anti-naturalist theatre, in which several innovative directions are taken. Claudel and Werfel spiritualize the dramatic art: their characters live "moments of ecstatic lifting", "mysterious acts of conversion," and the conflict unfolds with "a gesture to another world." Strindberg and Wedekind scrutinize the depths of human nature, "the animal, the vampire, the raw, impersonal voice, the instinct." G. Kaiser renounces the anecdotal and evokes the "dynamics of unleashed energies" in "ideological conflicts"; Shaw and Pirandello develop dialectical dialogue, apt for expressing "the issues of modern life." In short, the new theatre moves the emphasis "from the detailed to the essential, from concrete to abstract, from immediate to transcendent, of the given problem."⁷

The universe of Lucian Blaga's dramaturgy encompasses themes that go beyond the mundane, the theatre plays created by him aim for a world other than the real world, his

⁷ *Studii și cercetări istorico-artistice* - Teatru, Muzică, Cinematografie, serie nouă, București, 2008, p. 66.

characters being in search of more mysterious answers than the world itself could offer by configuration of its timeliness. It is about aspiration, the desire for superior access to the essence of the universe, the suggestion of the miraculous possibility which is never fully accomplished. Lucian Blaga's plays:

Emanate a magical atmosphere, born from the poetry of ancient indigenous peoples and / or from the Christian sacredness; The language is metaphorical and charming, of a lyrical beauty more reminiscent of Claudel than of the syncopated, bold, with hard accents of Kaiser or Toller, the main representatives of expressionism. It must also be remembered that Expressionist dramas were born from a grim vision of the modern world, developing themes related to the crushing of human individuality and using an arsenal from which there are missing the notes of the macabre or grotesque. Lucian Blaga has most often focused his attention on a mythical universe; Even when the action of the piece is dated (Avram Iancu), things seem to happen outside of history, in a time that makes the miraculous possible.⁸

There is no lack of psychoanalysis in Blaga's theater. His readings from Freud helped Lucian Blaga to come to a crystallization of the theory of the unconscious, trying in some of his plays to explore what he is missing out of the consciousness. "There are light concealings of the soul as shadows, they disappear as soon as you try to enlighten them,"⁹ Lucian Blaga said, referring to the mysteries of the human soul running away from the sunlight, too rich to create "light effects".

A great lover of Romanian culture, an eternal seeker of the essence of this people, of the "Romanian stylistic matrix", Lucian Blaga could not remain indifferent to the creation of I.L. Caragiale.

"We could have expected Lucian Blaga to be a part of the second category, exasperated by the eternal Caragialean zeal (which is but the expression of full intellectual freedom, doubled with a sharp lucidity). But not so. Blaga nurtured a deep admiration for Caragiale, seeing him as an ambassador of Romanian culture, whose works were urgently requested for translation. Unlike Eugen Lovinescu, who feared the perishability of Caragiale's creations, Blaga gave a verdict that has been confirmed recently: Caragiale did not set up human types and transient social states; On the contrary, we are linked by atavism to his characters. Let us mention, as a humorous curiosity, that the philosopher had great difficulty in fitting Caragiale into the Romanian stylistic matrix, the components of which are indicated by them in the mythical space: the indefinite undulating horizon, the swinging advance of time, the sentimental frustration of destiny, fatalism "under the sway" and moderate trust in the "powers of nature or destiny", the orientation towards "geometric and spontaneously occurring shapes", tainted by love for the organic.¹⁰

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⁸ *Studii și cercetări istorico-artistice* - Teatru, Muzică, Cinematografie, serie nouă, București, 2008, p. 67.

⁹ Blaga, Lucian – *Opere*, vol. 7, Ed. Minerva, 1987, p. 265.

¹⁰ *Studii și cercetări istorico-artistice* - Teatru, Muzică, Cinematografie, serie nouă, București, 2008, p. 71.