

Conceptualization of the literary-pictorial expression - in the original art works of Victor Brauner

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Abstract: *In the course of this study I have been following the way through the visual- language interact with the literary discourse on the one hand, and on the other hand I showed how important is the knowledge of the all original work of the painter Victor Brauner. For Victor Brauner, the inclination towards reading and writing meant a few precise and important things: maintaining and enhancing the artistic imagination, affirming and clarifying ideas, completing and explaining the plastic works, conceptualizing the pictorial expression. Sometimes programmatically, but often due to a "super-realistic" necessity, painter Brauner began writing. Reading of the books of initiation in esotericism and occultism was doubled with the same passion of reading poetry. The authorship assessment of art works represents one of the most complex and delicate problems. In this study also shows artist's youth works, which after the expertise has been demonstrated to be original.*

Key-words: *visual- language; literary-discourse; expertise; original; art-works.*

1. Introduction. Avangardism as an expression of the paradigm change.

In this study we start from the premise that avangardism is not only a sign of the "profound crisis" that modernity undergoes at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the 20th century, but rather the absolutely necessary result of a fundamental mutation is happening at the level of cultural codes, thus implying a reformulation of the knowledge horizon and the re-positioning of the subject and its involvement in the real world. It is sufficient to think of the major deconstruction approaches of the rationalistic epistemology barely installed at the center of the discourse of knowledge, somewhere in the mid-nineteenth century, such as the emergence of Freudian psychoanalysis (with all its consequences in the destructuring of the subject) maintained in the artistic field of impressionism and symbolism (which problematic, almost simultaneously in painting and literature, the principles of representation), not to mention the epistemological overthrow of the theory of relativity, in order to conclude that we are in fact in front of a completely changed horizon of knowledge, of another paradigm (Kuhn, 2012, 264), which the subject involved in the real must somehow manifest, in other words to express it.

To this finding must, of course, be added the consequences that the rationalistic-positivist epistemic brings to the immediate plan, if we only think of the effects of industrialization and more of the mechanization of production processes, which involves, on the one hand, the transformation of the subject into function of the system (economic, social, cultural), causing them to be alienated or dehumanized - through the famous path of the Kafkian "metamorphosis" or, in painting, by the "munchian" outcry.

The period about we are talking, the end of the 19th century - the beginning of the 20th century, is a crisis because the moment itself is a paradigm change, deviant tendencies in relation to the old horizon of knowledge, but which contributes to the redefinition and reconstruction of the new paradigm. It happens, as I said, a radical semiotic change in the cultural codes that attempts to approximate the subject's situation in the new context by the

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double pulsation of the code restructuring and resettlement - that is, through a specific approach to avant-garde, it is simply that, in this perspective, avant-garde is not only a "sign of the crisis of modernity" (or a "face" of it, as Matei Călinescu), but even the utmost expression of the tension of paradigm shift and epistemological updating.

In addition, this tension also explains the effervescence of the avant-garde phenomenon, if we only think of the fact that, after the Einstein's epistemic reformulation, we are actually, in just a few years, actually transplanted into a new universe (in comparison, the Newtonian mechanics needed for hundreds of years to replace the old episteme), which imparts modernity to a rhythm -speed perhaps best expressed by the avant-garde movements. Indeed, the incredibly rapid succession of various manifestations, programs, statements, and so on, of Cubists, Futurists, Dadaists, Constructivists, Surrealists and other avant-garde groups, for less than twenty years, seems simply to play in the low speed with which the knowledge paradigm itself changes.



Fig. 1 Victor Brauner, *The Knight*, 1923

2. Methods. Restructuring artistic sign functions

After double approach of symbolism and impressionism, which initially targeted the destruction of the principles of representation, expressionism (initially through the work of Van Gogh, Toulouse-Lautrec, Gauguin or Edvard Munch, then his literary manifestation at the beginning of the 20th century, the German space - where it knows, a phenomenon specific to avant-garde movements, both an "active" and an "aesthetic" form) seems to first become aware of the problematic and alienating situation of the subject, and directs its efforts towards a first attempt to redefine it. After Expressionism, which (as noted) still does not totally resemble avant-garde, the avant-garde movements are accelerating, which underlines their innovative or "experimental" tension and, moreover, that the process of restructuring the semiotic, paradigm shift, reaches its maximum point, being further accentuated by the deployment of the First World War. Thus, in autumn 1908 Cubism appears (name is given in jest by Henry Matisse, but the text of Apollinaire's 1913 cubist painting can be considered the manifestation of this movement), in 1909 the futurism (the first manifesto signed by

Marinetti) 1914, in various parts of Europe, abstractionism (Wassily Kandinsky, whose name is linked to abstractionism, public in 1911 his famous study *About the Spirit in Art*), in 1915 in Petersburg supremacy (manifesto signed by Kasimir Malevici, his literary form contributed and Vladimir Maiakovski), in 1916 dadaism (the first appearance in public at the Cabaret Voltaire in Zürich, the first Dada manifesto signed by Tristan Tzara appears in 1918), in 1918 De Stijl (the first manifestation of Dutch constructivism signed by Theo van Doesburg, Robert Van't Hoff, Vilmos Huszar, Antony Kok, Piet Mondrian, Georges Vantongerloo, Jan Wils), then in 1920 in Moscow constructivism (manifesto of realism, signed by the brothers Naum Gabo and Anton Pevsner, to delimit his aesthetic constructivism, that of Tatlin's, of a practical nature), and finally in 1925 in Paris surrealism (the first manifesto signed by André Breton) - without to refer, therefore, only to the "historical" avant-garde, before the Second World War.

This first synopsis of the avant-garde trends is a first finding that within an interval of less than twenty years - between the birth of Cubism (1908) and Surrealism (1925) - an impressive number of avant-garde movements revolutionizing the ensemble of cultural codes, even by questioning the concept of "art."



Fig. 2. Victor Brauner, *The Worker*, 1923

3. Results and Discussions. "Inter-media" areas in the Romanian avant-garde magazines. Study case VICTOR BRAUNER.

A brief enumeration of the most important Romanian avant-garde magazines is necessary: *Contimporanul* - 1922-1932, *75 HP* - 1924, *Point* - 1924-1925, *Integral* - 1925-1926, and *one* - 1928-1932, which presents the interferences between literature and the fine arts. A first explanation is required: in relation to European gender magazines, they appear to be "late" (Cernat, 2007, 24) of the vanguards of Central Europe (Passuth, 1988, 54). This is justified by the author by the conjunction of two factors, the first being the individual manifestation of the Romanian avant-garde artists, especially abroad (it is enough to think that two of them, Tristan Tzara and Marcel Iancu, founded in 1916 in Zurich Dadaism, or to the two founding myths of the Romanian avant-garde, Urmuz and Constantin Brâncuși,

personalities of individual excellence that overcome in many ways the European avant-garde).

Finally, the case study dedicated to Victor Brauner attempted to sketch the complex profile of an artist in whose creation plastic art and writing blended in often surprising ways, and which still retains an unaltered freshness to see to what extent the confluences between literature and painting have been felt at European level.

In October 1924, Ilarie Voronca, Stephan Roll, Mihai Cosma (Claude Sernet) and Victor Brauner edited the 75 HP magazine.

For Victor Brauner, the inclination towards reading and writing meant a few precise and important things: maintaining and enhancing the artistic imagination, affirming and clarifying ideas, completing and explaining the plastic works, conceptualizing the pictorial expression. Sometimes programmatically, but often due to a "super-realistic" necessity, painter Brauner began writing. And no wonder there were so many poets among his friends. This is how the reading of the books of initiation in esotericism and occultism was doubled with the same passion of reading poetry. The long line of illustrations / graphic interpretations of the poetry books of some friends began in 1923, with Restore them to Ilarie Voronca. The graphic comment given by Victor Brauner, over a year Ilarie Voronca responded by a chronicle to the first exhibition, opened at the Mozart Hall in Bucharest: "From all stages of evolution, Expressionism, Cubism and especially that of trace, superior and abstract order - constructivism - Mr. Brauner's personality is distinguished by metallic shades, with safe stiletto stops. Besides, any comment would be superfluous. Mr Brauner's work must be seen entirely, without sinuosity, as a torrent break. Among the many, well-established canvases, painter Victor Brauner appears as a true creative artist, with rare elements of invention. Mr. Victor Brauner is the breed of the great innovators. A fertile race, in front of which the gates of intelligence and subconscious crumble. They are the great publishers of the centuries. Their word, before being crafted, is passion, their step bloody scratches the bark of the age. [...] It is a race of sacrifice most of the time, at least until the moment of accepting a formula adopted by all. It's a conviction: Victor Brauner will never wear academies. In attitude and look, in line and color, Mr. Brauner beats lightning. By his work, imbeciles will have to approach lightning. "

These lines appeared in the 75 HP magazine in October 1924. A few pages later, Ilarie Voronca specified, under the pseudonym Alex. Kernat: "The world must be reinvented. Always new. That's why the invention of Mr. Victor Brauner and Ilarie Voronca PICTOPOEZIA appears in response to an immediate need. PICTOPOEZIA is the synthesis of new art, and it could alone be the justification of the 75 HP group. "

In spite of numerous searches, leaving and then returning to the autonomous space of painting, Victor Brauner did not give up the idea of painting. But first, it must be said that he never gave up poetry in the broad sense of the term.

It seems that Brauner followed his phobic episodes with obstinacy, realizing the remarkable Ultratableau biosensible in March 1948, before retiring to Switzerland

Like any plastic artist, Victor Brauner also used the drawing as a preparatory tool. But it has always gone beyond this point, drawing as a parallel commentary or a final image development. Drawing and word. In this frenzy of graphic notation, Jacques Beaufret identifies a "pictorial automatism" which, in his opinion, would come out of a recommendation by André Breton: "To blacken the paper with a praiseworthy contemplation of what might follow from a literary point of view..." (Breton, 1973, 96). It is worth remembering association with literature as a medium of textual coagulation.

A text by Victor Brauner, which we produce, proves the literary talent of the painter: - WRITTEN NOTICE written in 1964, we transcribe only one fragment: "I take this void in me I don't know when the time itself, contaminated by disintegration, wearing my body weak

and hard with which I don't know what to do. On the other hand, there is an illusion that looks like an exciting adventure that will send me a new pulse to the heart of this state of inactivity... There is certainly somewhere a stimulus, but this world where I was forced to live and I systematically rejected it only to protect what I had subjectively and sensitively in me, it now seems to me like a bunch of ashes where I can't take the call, because it suffocated, total and real, my whole being...".

In the books of the Brauner Fund at the National Museum of Modern Art in Paris there are a lot of literary notations gathered over several decades. A raw material from which at least one volume could be removed. An undemanding poem of the painter is enlightening in this sense: "The hunter, to get better, closes the left eye for a moment. / The soldier, to shoot better, closes the left eye." The player, when he targets, closes the left eye to send the ball or the arrow as close to the center of the target. /... I never closed the left eye; probably it was taken by chance to see more better the center of my life". It is understood that this is the accident that marked him definitively and which he interpreted as the result of a premonition. What did not prevent him from seeing the "center of life" and marking it through his "pictopoetic" deconstructant starting at 75 HP, the entire European avant-garde.

The Tulcea Art Museum has a collection of works by the painter Victor Brauner, particularly important in an overview of his work. Some of the works have been the subject of a wide - ranging investigation by classical methods: stylistic and historiographic analysis, but especially focused on modern, innovative scientific methods of physical - chemical analysis. The research was conceived, comparing two different periods of Victor Brauner's creation in the sense of its authentication. Thus, the "stylistically" Antim Church (signed) and "Balcic" (unsigned) stylistically attributed to the early period of Victor Brauner (until 1930 when he settled in Paris) was studied in comparison with the rest of his work in the Museum Collection Tulcea. He also analyzed the work, apparently abandoned by the author, entitled "The Knight" on the back of the signed "The Worker", entered into the museum circuit as belonging to Victor Brauner.

Through this research, we have obtained as much information as possible for this collection both in terms of its authentication and in the sense of the evolution of the pictorial-poetic style of the artist.

The material structure of a work, its condition, its additions and restorations in general can only be determined by a rigorous method by applying systematic scientific research methods. The more the scientific method is applied and there is a larger number of comparative data, the more obvious its utility will be.

4. Conclusions

All over to this study we could follow the way which shows how the visual arts interact with the literary discourse in the pages of the Romanian avant-garde magazines, which imply the radical destruction of both languages (in 75 HP), ending with the entire paint-poetics career of an exponential artist such as Victor Brauner. Our main hypothesis is that the radical mutation that the functions of the artistic sign know are the natural consequence of a paradigm change that European avant-garde sees first and the most acute. The avant-garde magazines experience the interaction of the various discursive mechanisms of several artistic languages ("pictopoesia" / "pictophone" of Brauner and various forms of "visual poetry"). The interference between the arts is therefore not an isolated consequence of the theoretical positions specific to some of the avant-garde trends, but a constant of all avant-gardes, which signifies precisely the engagement in the double process of restructuring and redefining the artistic sign, capable of leading to a language able to express modernity. Some artists evolve independently on the same trajectory, as is the case with Victor Brauner (who passes his

"pictopoet" passport), but in both his case and others, the conclusion we can draw from this interaction analysis, among the arts, we believe this: their interference is one of the signs of a paradigmatic change that the avant-garde sees in a radical way, and which, through complex developments, leads to the formation of inter-media languages which then become specific to the postmodern society - otherwise said that the phenomenon of artistic interference in the modern period is one of the signs that announce the postmodern paradigm.

In parallel with the research on the plan of becoming a painter-poet, his evolution was followed at the beginning of his career in Romania, the testimonies being investigated by scientific, physical and chemical methods, exhibited at the Museum of Art in Tulcea, for his art works authentication.

From the few examples presented, it can be deduced how valuable is Brauner's work, how important is the mission of this study and how complicated are the problems of determining the author.

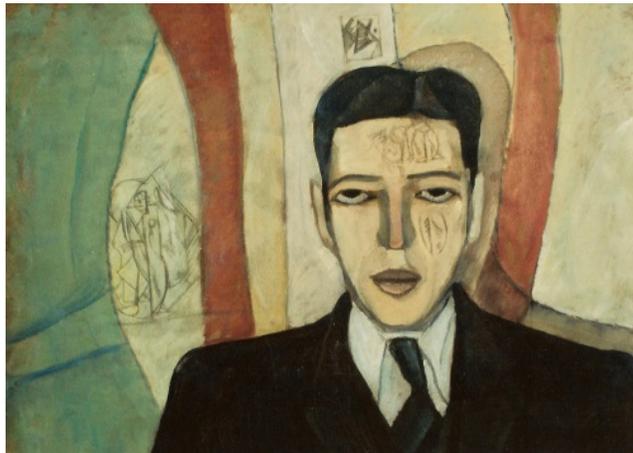


Fig. 3. Victor Brauner, *The portrait of Ilarie Voronca*, 1929

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