

Lucian Blaga – *Synthesis between Philosophy, Poetry and Dramaturgy*

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Abstract: *This article examines the work of Lucian Blaga (1895–1961) in its thematic and stylistic entirety, emphasizing the organic unity that underlies his philosophical, poetic, and dramatic writings. Starting from the conceptual framework of luciferic knowledge and the notion of mystery as an ontological principle, the study investigates the ways in which Blaga's vision is consistently articulated across different forms of artistic and theoretical expression. Particular attention is given to the concept of the mioritic space as a defining cultural matrix, to the symbolic richness of Blaga's lyric poetry, and to the metaphysical dimension of his dramaturgy. The article concludes by highlighting the enduring relevance of Blaga's work within a contemporary cultural landscape increasingly shaped by technical rationalism and by the tendency to reduce the unknown to categories that can be fully explained and controlled.*

Keywords: *Lucian Blaga, luciferic knowledge, mioritic space, symbolic dramaturgy, ontological mystery;*

Introduction

The figure of Lucian Blaga (1895–1961) occupies a unique and distinguished place within the landscape of Romanian culture, both through the remarkable complexity of his work and through the organic coherence that permeates it in its entirety. Born in the village of Lancrăm, in Alba County—a space deeply imbued with tradition, archaic spirituality, and ancestral symbolism—Blaga shaped his entire creative universe around an intimate relationship with mystery, the sacred, and the deepest dimensions of human destiny. From his earliest writings, he emerged as an exceptional artistic and philosophical personality for whom the act of knowledge was not merely an intellectual or rational undertaking, but rather a totalizing experience involving sensitivity, intuition, and creative expression as privileged means of accessing reality.

Blaga is neither simply a poet of emotion nor an austere philosopher concerned with isolated concepts. Above all, he is a system-builder in the most profound sense of the term. His entire body of work—from lyric poetry of extraordinary metaphysical depth to symbolic drama and philosophical treatises—is founded upon a coherent and unified vision of the world, at the center of which mystery functions as the fundamental principle of existence. This vision cannot be reduced to abstract theoretical reflection; rather, it manifests itself organically through diverse artistic forms, each contributing to the construction of a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the human condition.

In an age marked by the triumph of rationalism and by the persistent tendency to explain, control, and instrumentalize reality, Blaga advances a radically different perspective—one in which mystery is not to be eliminated but protected, deepened, and intensified through the creative act. This conviction finds one of its most concise and eloquent formulations in a well-known aphorism that encapsulates the essence of his philosophical and aesthetic thought: „*Man must be a creator of mysteries, not their destroyer.*”²

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² Lucian Blaga. 1985. *Aphorisms and Reflections*, in *Works*, vol.11 [Aforisme și cugetări, în *Opere*, vol. 11]. București: Editura Minerva, p. 47.

Far from being a mere poetic intuition, this statement condenses a genuine philosophical and aesthetic programme, a creative principle that permeates and unifies Blaga's entire body of work. Any analysis of his intellectual and artistic legacy must therefore begin with the recognition of its profound unity: philosophy, poetry, and dramaturgy are not separate or compartmentalized domains, but complementary and interdependent expressions of the same coherent vision of the world and of the human condition.

Lucian Blaga's philosophy is structured as a vast and coherent system, articulated through his celebrated trilogies: *The Trilogy of Knowledge*, *The Trilogy of Culture*, and *The Cosmological Trilogy*. At the core of this philosophical construction lies the conviction that universal existence is governed by mystery and that human beings can never attain complete access to absolute truth. Rather than regarding mystery as a limitation of knowledge, Blaga understands it as the very horizon within which authentic knowledge becomes possible and meaningful.³

Blaga distances himself both from rationalist positivism and from strictly materialist conceptions of existence. In his view, authentic knowledge does not consist in the elimination of the unknown, but rather in its deepening through sensitivity, intuition, and spiritual creation. It is within this framework that he introduces the distinction between *paradisiacal knowledge* and *luciferic knowledge*, one of the most original contributions of his philosophical system. The former belongs to the sphere of scientific inquiry and operates through reason, analysis, and logical explanation, whereas the latter is characteristic of the artist and the philosopher, whose task is not to diminish the mystery of the world but to deepen and enrich it. Through luciferic knowledge, mystery becomes not an obstacle to understanding, but a privileged horizon of spiritual and creative exploration.⁴

1. Paradisiacal Knowledge and Luciferic Knowledge.

The concept of *luciferic knowledge* represents one of Blaga's most original contributions to the European philosophy of culture. He argues that the creative individual should not seek to reduce the universe to exhaustive rational explanations, since mystery constitutes the very essence of existence itself. From this perspective, art becomes an act of spiritual revelation, a privileged mode of engaging with the hidden dimensions of reality.

Another fundamental concept in Blaga's philosophical system is that of the *Great Anonymous*, the supreme metaphysical principle that safeguards the equilibrium of existence by restricting human access to absolute truth. Through this limitation, the Great Anonymous preserves the ontological mystery of the universe, ensuring that reality remains only partially accessible to human knowledge.⁵ Human beings are driven by a constant aspiration toward total knowledge; however, the *transcendent censorship* imposed by the Great Anonymous prevents them from transcending the limits of the human condition. This tension between aspiration and limitation defines the metaphysical drama of modern humanity and constitutes one of the fundamental themes that permeate Blaga's entire body of work.

In *Mioritic Space*, Blaga develops the theory of the *stylistic matrix*, arguing that every culture is shaped by a particular spatial and spiritual horizon. Romanian culture, he maintains, has been profoundly influenced by the undulating structure of the Carpathian landscape. The rhythmic alternation of hills and valleys, of ascent and descent, generates a distinctive sensibility that lies at the very core of Romanian spirituality. In this way, geography becomes more than a physical reality; it emerges as a formative force shaping culture, collective

³ Lucian Blaga. 2013. *The Trilogy of Knowledge* [*Trilogia cunoașterii*]. București: Editura Humanitas, p. 38.

⁴ Lucian Blaga. 2020. *Luciferian knowledge* [*Cunoașterea luciferică*]. București: Editura Humanitas, p. 52.

⁵ Lucian Blaga. 2017. *Divine Differentials* [*Diferențialele divine*]. București: Editura Humanitas, p. 91.

imagination, and artistic expression.⁶ Thus, geography is elevated from a mere physical reality to a determining force in the formation of culture and the collective imagination.

The literary critic and philosopher Marta Petreu argues that Blaga's philosophical system "seeks to offer a totalizing interpretation of the human condition within the universe while preserving the sacred and mysterious dimensions of existence."⁷ It is precisely this effort to reconcile rational inquiry with the irreducible mystery of existence that constitutes one of the most original features of Blaga's philosophical vision.

If philosophy provides the conceptual framework of Blaga's work, poetry constitutes the privileged domain in which concepts are transformed into images, symbols, and emotional resonances, becoming accessible not to abstract reason alone, but to the reader's full sensibility. Lucian Blaga's poetry represents the most direct artistic expression of his philosophical vision. Volumes such as *Poems of Light*, *The Prophet's Steps*, *In the Great Passing*, and *In Praise of Sleep*, develop a lyrical universe permeated by mystery, cosmic awareness, and the spiritualization of existence.⁸

From the very beginning of his poetic career, Blaga advanced a new vision regarding the role of art and the creator. His programmatic poem *I Do Not Crush the World's Corolla of Wonders* (*Eu nu strivesc corola de minuni a lumii*) stands as a genuine modern *ars poetica*, encapsulating his conception of *luciferic knowledge*: "With my own light I increase the world's mystery."⁹

1.1. Poetry as Spiritual Revelation

This verse expresses the fundamental idea that poetry does not seek to explain the world through rational means; rather, it intensifies and enriches its mysterious dimension. The poet thus becomes a mediator between humanity and the universe, while the artistic act acquires an ontological function. Blaga's lyric poetry is profoundly expressionist, both through the vastness of its cosmic imagery and through the metaphysical tension that permeates poetic discourse. Nature is not perceived in descriptive terms, but symbolically. Light, silence, night, stars, springs, and mountains become symbols of transcendence and of the relationship between the finite and the infinite.¹⁰

Furthermore, Blaga's poetry is distinguished by the central role it assigns to metaphor. In *The Genesis of Metaphor and the Meaning of Culture* (*Geneza metaforei și sensul culturii*), he argues that authentic metaphor possesses both a revelatory and a cognitive function. Far from serving as a mere stylistic ornament, metaphor becomes an essential instrument of knowledge, enabling access to dimensions of reality that remain beyond the reach of conceptual and rational discourse.¹¹ Metaphor is not merely a stylistic device or ornamental figure of speech; rather, it serves as a privileged mode of access to the hidden dimensions of existence and to the deeper layers of reality.

Eugen Simion regards Blaga's lyric poetry as "one of the most profound attempts at the poetic spiritualization of the universe in Romanian literature."¹² Such a perspective highlights the distinctive character of Blaga's poetic vision, in which the act of creation

⁶ Lucian Blaga. 2021. *The idyllic countryside* [*Spațiul mioritic*]. București: Editura Humanitas, p. 118.

⁷ Marta Petreu. 2023. *Blaga's Philosophy* [*Filosofia lui Blaga*]. Iași: Editura Polirom, p. 74.

⁸ Ion Pop. 2019. *The Poetry of Lucian Blaga* [*Poezia lui Lucian Blaga*]. Cluj-Napoca: Editura Școala Ardeleană, p. 63.

⁹ Lucian Blaga. 2018. *Poems of Light* [*Poemele luminii*]. București: Editura Humanitas, p. 11.

¹⁰ Corin Braga. 2022. *Lucian Blaga. The Genesis of Possible Worlds* [*Lucian Blaga. Geneza lumilor posibile*]. Iași: Editura Polirom, p. 137.

¹¹ Lucian Blaga. 2019. *The Origin of Metaphor and the Meaning of Culture* [*Geneza metaforei și sensul culturii*]. București: Editura Humanitas, p. 33.

¹² Eugen Simion. 2020. *Contemporary Romanian Writers, vol.1* [*Scriitori români de azi, vol. I*]. București: Editura Cartea Românească, p. 219.

transcends aesthetic expression and becomes a form of spiritual inquiry. Poetry thus emerges as a mode of meditation on human destiny and on the mystery of the cosmos, inviting the reader to contemplate the deeper meanings that lie beyond the visible world.

Lucian Blaga's dramaturgy extends the major themes of his philosophy and poetry into a dramatic form shaped by symbol, myth, and spiritual tension. Plays such as *Zamolxe*, *The Disturbance of the Waters (Tulburarea apelor)*, *Avram Iancu*, *The Children's Crusade (Cruciada copiilor)*, and *Master Manole (Meșterul Manole)* transform theatre into a space of metaphysical reflection and of confrontation between the individual and destiny.¹³

In Blaga's dramatic universe, conflict is not constructed solely upon social or psychological relationships, but upon fundamental existential questions. The characters become embodiments of ideas, values, and symbols, while the stage itself is transformed into a space of spiritual revelation. Consequently, dramatic action acquires a philosophical dimension, inviting the audience to engage not only with the external events of the plot but also with the deeper mysteries of human existence.

Master Manole represents one of the most significant modern reinterpretations of the myth of creative sacrifice. Ana's immurement is no longer presented merely as a folkloric motif; rather, it becomes the expression of a profound philosophical idea: that every authentic act of creation entails sacrifice, suffering, and renunciation. Through this reinterpretation, Blaga transforms a traditional legend into a meditation on the condition of the creator and on the price that must be paid for artistic permanence and spiritual fulfillment.¹⁴

1.2. *The Dialectic of Creation and Sacrifice*

Through this philosophical reinterpretation of myth, Blaga brings Romanian theatre into dialogue with the major currents of European Expressionism. The drama of the creator becomes a symbol of the human condition itself, embodying humanity's perpetual aspiration toward the absolute. In this perspective, artistic creation transcends its aesthetic function and emerges as a profound existential experience, marked by sacrifice, suffering, and the pursuit of transcendence.

In *Zamolxe*, the sacred and mythical dimensions dominate the dramatic structure. The conflict between spirituality and power, between knowledge and destiny, gives expression to the author's fundamental metaphysical concerns. Through this tension, Blaga explores the relationship between the human and the transcendent, transforming dramatic action into a profound meditation on existence and spiritual fulfillment.¹⁵ The lyrical texture of the dramatic discourse, together with the symbolic characterization of its protagonists, situates Blaga's theatre within the broader tradition of modern European poetic drama.

According to literary critic George Gană, Blaga's dramaturgy "does not aim at traditional stage realism; instead, it strives to construct a spiritual atmosphere in which philosophical ideas acquire the force of dramatic tension."¹⁶ It is precisely this characteristic that accounts for the originality and singularity of Blaga's theatre within the broader context of Romanian interwar dramaturgy.

The originality of Lucian Blaga's work resides in the organic unity that binds together all forms of his artistic and philosophical expression. Philosophy, poetry, and dramaturgy do not function as separate domains; rather, they complement and illuminate one another within a coherent system for interpreting existence.

¹³ George Gană. 2021. *Lucian Blaga's Theater [Teatrul lui Lucian Blaga]*. Cluj-Napoca: Editura Școala Ardeleană, p. 86.

¹⁴ Lucian Blaga. 2016. *Master Manole [Meșterul Manole]*. București: Editura Humanitas, p. 94.

¹⁵ Mircea Vaida. 2018. *Myth and Revelation in Blaga's Theater [Mit și revelație în teatrul lui Blaga]*. Cluj-Napoca: Editura Casa Cărții de Știință, p. 122.

¹⁶ George Gană, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

The same fundamental themes permeate his entire body of work:

- the mystery of existence;
- the relationship between humanity and the absolute;
- the destiny of the creator;
- knowledge;
- myth;
- Romanian spirituality.

Philosophy articulates the theoretical concepts, poetry transfigures them into images and symbols, while dramaturgy embodies them on stage through conflict and inner tension. As a result, Blaga's oeuvre may be understood as a vast and unified spiritual edifice in which philosophical thought and artistic expression merge into a coherent interpretation of human existence.¹⁷ Blaga demonstrates that literature and philosophy are not opposing modes of understanding reality, but complementary forms of knowledge that can coexist harmoniously within a unified work, capable of expressing the complexity of the human condition and humanity's enduring relationship with the mystery of the universe.

In a world increasingly governed by the imperatives of efficiency, optimization, and total transparency, Blaga's vision offers a cultural and spiritual alternative of enduring value: a form of knowledge that respects the limits of the human condition and regards the unknown not as a deficiency to be eliminated, but as a richness to be cultivated and deepened through the creative act. With an insistence that has lost none of its urgency, Blaga invites us to acknowledge that not everything can be explained exhaustively and that the beauty and dignity of human existence reside precisely in this constitutive openness to mystery.

From this perspective, Blaga's work is not merely a monument of Romanian literature and philosophy; it is also a lesson in thought, sensibility, and cultural responsibility, possessing a formative and orienting value that transcends the national context in which it emerged. In this sense, Blaga remains one of our essential contemporaries—a necessary interlocutor in an age that, perhaps more than ever, calls for the recovery of the poetic and mysterious dimensions of existence.

2. Conclusion

Through the breadth and coherence of his work, Lucian Blaga remains one of the most complex and fascinating figures of modern Romanian culture. His significance lies not in the isolated excellence of his lyrical, dramatic, or philosophical achievements, but in their profound and organic synthesis, in his rare ability to transform a vision of the world into a living system of interdependent artistic and conceptual forms.

The central idea that animates and unifies Blaga's entire oeuvre—that mystery constitutes not an obstacle, but rather the supreme condition and ultimate purpose of authentic knowledge—has lost none of its relevance or intellectual force in the contemporary world. Through his work, Blaga teaches us that genuine knowledge does not consist in eliminating the unknown, but in lucidly embracing it and deepening it through creative activity. He offers us not a closed and self-sufficient system, but a permanent invitation to reflection, sensitivity, and a form of existential courage: the courage to live and create in the presence of mystery without yielding to the temptation of dispelling it. Blaga's originality resides in his ability to combine metaphysical reflection, poetic expressionism, and the mythical dimension of

¹⁷ Corin Braga. 2020. *Lucian Blaga and the Poetic Imagination [Lucian Blaga și imaginarul poetic]*. Iași: Editura Polirom, p. 201.

dramaturgy into a coherent spiritual system that is profoundly Romanian and, at the same time, universal.

I contend that the organic unity of philosophy, poetry, and dramaturgy is not merely a defining trait of Blaga's oeuvre, but the fundamental mechanism through which he formulates a cultural and spiritual response to the limitations of modern rationalism.

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