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FOREWORD

The School of Languages and Translation Studies at the University of Turku has undertaken this year a novel initiative in the field of Romanian studies: the publication of an academic journal – a unique attempt until now in Finnish academic milieu. The Finnish Journal for Romanian Studies (FJRS) focuses on different aspects of Romanian culture, mainly as reflected outside Romania, while researchers from around the world are invited to publish, the interdisciplinary dialogue between researchers in the field being heartily encouraged.

The first issue of FJRS brings together research articles from different areas of Romanian studies – literature, society, politics and art, which analyse and revisit the development of concepts, theories and paradigms as offered by specialists from different centres of research. Our aim is to approach the concept of Romanian identities from a double perspective i.e. that of old concepts and theories which are challenged under the new epistemological developments, and that of the new identity paradigms that challenge in their turn the old establishments and canons in all areas of research mentioned above. We thus express our sincerest thanks to the contributors of the current issue for their novel perspectives brought to the field of Romanian studies as well as to the reviewers of the articles.

The Editors

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CHALLENGING IDENTITIES

THE ART OF SOREL ETROG AND HIS ROMANIAN BACKGROUND

■ Robert J. Belton
■ University of British Columbia
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ABSTRACT

The work of the late Romanian-Canadian sculptor Sorel Etrog is often discussed relative to how it relates to formal innovations made by more famous artists elsewhere in the world. This currently unfashionable approach does him a disservice in two ways: It devalues his work by making it seem no more than a provincial reflection of others, and it empties his work of any personal significance. This paper endeavors to place his work back into his original context and thus to restore some value to his reputation.

KEYWORDS

Sculpture, modernism, pogrom, existentialism, background

During the postmodern era of self-referential irony, artworks that seemed primarily to be formal experiments became unfashionable and outmoded. This led to a decline in the reputation of Sorel Etrog (1933–2014) from a high point in 1966, when he represented Canada at the Venice Biennale, to academic and curatorial disinterest in the early part of the twenty-first century. However, he never disappeared from the commercial market, and he enjoyed a retrospective exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto in 2013. Despite this seeming approbation, very little advanced criticism paid much attention, largely because he was still associated with abstraction and formalism and not with meaningful personal experiences, reflections on the human condition, or current critical theory. It wasn't until his death in February of 2014 that a handful of journalistic articles and websites even acknowledged the artist's content. One of the latter, an obituary in *Canadian Art*, declared that a solo show in 2000 'seemed to gesture towards some of his Holocaust-survivor experiences' ('Canadian Modernist', 2014),

but that was it. There was no attempt to go beyond that observation to place his works into their larger historical and personal contexts.

This critical indifference is disappointing because Etrog himself believed that an artist's central concept is more important than the means used to express it. The clearer a *concept* is, he said, the more satisfactory will be the relationship between the concept and its formal vehicle (Belton, 1983: 115–136). Despite this, criticism of his work is almost entirely directed towards his artistic means, not his poetic ends. This paper argues that such approaches fail to note the influence of Etrog's diasporic experience, which he generalized into visual metaphors of the human condition in the post-war world. Like other twentieth-century artists with roots in small 'e', post-war expressionism and an existentialist attitude, Etrog transformed his own experiences so that viewers of all backgrounds could read them as expressions of life's crises and contradictions.

It is fair to say that different phases of Etrog's career saw him preoccupied by very different formal approaches. His early works fall within the orbit of eastern European geometrical abstraction. *String Quartet (Bartók)* (1955)¹ incorporates interpenetrating planes of colour reminiscent of late geometrical works by Wassily Kandinsky and Paul Klee, the latter of whom Etrog identified as his main inspiration of the period. In contrast, his works of his early years in New York reveal a growing interest in biomorphic abstraction informed by European predecessors and studies of non-western artifacts. Later works of his mature period reveal a more or less Surrealist approach in which human faces and figures are expressionistically transformed by the application of an entirely idiosyncratic motif - the 'link'. *Henry Moore* is a striking example (1974)². Still later works are very much more geometrical again, albeit with an entirely different motivation behind them. The austere simplicity of 1980's *Magic Box*³ could never justifiably be placed into the same stylistic category as the more exuberant *String Quartet (Bartók)*.

Stylistic taxonomy is a reflection of an impulse to categorize the history of modern art in terms of easily grasped pigeonholes, but the 'fit' of Etrog's works is never compelling. For instance, Etrog met the celebrated Jacques Lipchitz in 1959, leading earlier writers to identify how the latter's work influenced Etrog's style. A case in point is the latter's *Complexes of a Young Lady* (1960–62)⁴, which exhibits a clustering of forms that is not unlike some of Lipchitz's works (for example, *Prometheus Strangling the Vulture*, 1944–53)⁵. However, where the Lipchitz is blocky and horizontal, the Etrog is refined and elegantly arranged in a vertical crescendo. Indeed, Etrog's large-scale works are informed by an organic vitality and a sense of

¹ <http://www.ago.net/assets/images/555/2181.jpg>

² <http://www.ago.net/assets/images/555/108583.jpg>

³ <http://www.ago.net/assets/images/555/119114.jpg>

⁴ https://c2.staticflickr.com/8/7020/6790534183_79821aed3b.jpg

⁵ <http://www.tfaoi.org/cm/1cm/1cm654.jpg>

smooth, linear excitement that is foreign to Cubist and expressionist sculptures in general.

As often as not, Etrog was less inspired by modernist predecessors in the form of the great international sculptors than he was by non-western artifacts and, later, as we shall see, by painters, poets and cultural thinkers. For example, *Pregnant Woman* (1957)⁶ certainly recalls some of Henry Moore's abstracted organic silhouettes and swelling forms, but Etrog's inspiration came from African fertility figurines, not Moore's work. Similarly, Etrog's sculptures of the early 1960s - for example, *Sunbird II* (1960–62)⁷ - have been described as reflections of Lipchitz, but contemporary drawings very clearly show he was responding to Etruscan artifacts. In any case, Etrog's work is easily distinguishable from that of other members of the international community, indicating that he was a contributing member of that community rather than merely a late borrower of its motifs. Clearly, in order to fully understand the man and his work, we need to put him into his own context.

The artist was born Eserick Etrog in 1933 at Iași (Jassy), in the Moldavian plains of Romania, not far from the northeastern border. Although this was during the period now called Greater Romania, during which significant agricultural reforms would lead to swift economic growth, there was significant social unrest and political instability ('The Holocaust'). Romania joined the Axis with Hungary and Slovakia in 1940, and Iași, being so close to the Soviet border, was seen as a centre of Jewish support for Bolshevism and anti-Romanian sentiment. During a brutal pogrom ordered by military dictator Ion Antonescu in 1941, the Nazis took the lives of more than thirteen thousand Romanian Jews in about eight days (29 June to 6 July), and they displaced many more. The pretext for this ethnic cleansing was the idea that Jews were placing lights in their chimneys to guide Soviet aircraft in attacking Romania. In May 1944, portions of Iași were destroyed during battles against the advancing Soviet Red Army, which eventually took the city in August. These events profoundly affected the boy, who spent these years partly in hiding, partly in flight. Despite war-crimes trials in 1946, things did not improve after the war. The Paris Peace Treaties of 1947 legitimized the Soviets' presence in Romania, and all Jewish organizations were outlawed in 1948. The only advantage was that Jews were allowed to emigrate to the new state of Israel in exchange for the latter's economic aid. The Etrog family made their escape in 1950, when they joined a resettlement camp at Rishon le Zion.

Instead of a formal education in these early years, Etrog's mother provided the best environment she could, taking him to the library, art lessons, and the occasional concert. He became a delivery boy for a medical supply house primarily to visit Tel-Aviv for its exhibitions and concerts. When he was twenty, Etrog began his compulsory period of military service. Although he was placed in the

⁶ http://www.miriamshiell.com/art.asp?Stock_Id=6974

⁷ <http://www.artnet.com/artists/sorel-etrog/sunbird-ii-NKIpb3ZsGoyrj9cOyIQR5A2>

medical corps, his superiors were aware of his personal interests and arranged an army scholarship to the then-new Israeli Institute of Painting and Sculpture in Tel-Aviv. He began attending evening classes, and the teacher that most inspired him was the internationally known Marcel Janco (Marcel Hermann Iancu, 1895–1984), an earlier displaced Romanian whose mother was also from Moldavia.

Janco had been one of the principal figures in the Zurich Dada movement from its inception at the Cabaret Voltaire in February 1916. He had created a sensation there with grotesque masks, but by the time Etrog met him Janco had moved through a potpourri of modern styles: Cubism, Futurism - even a kind of Abstract Expressionism (Mendelson, 1962: 92–120). His principle influence on Etrog was to open the younger man's eyes to the rapidly expanding horizons of modern art. Through his contact with Janco and lectures on the history of art at a Tel-Aviv museum, Etrog came to know the works of Paul Klee, Joan Miró, Pablo Picasso and Marc Chagall.

The young student's works of the time were all, generally speaking, painted wall-reliefs in a style that could be described as a playful version of international geometrical abstraction. This playfulness seems to have been inspired in part by the fancifully organic biomorphism of works like Miró's *Hirondelle/Amour* (1933–34)⁸, especially in colour choices for areas defined by the progress of a wandering line crossing itself, a motif indebted to the works of Paul Klee, as can be seen in the latter's *Chosen Site* (1940)⁹. However, Etrog's works differ in that the lines are often determined by strips of wood organized like *cloisons*, as in *String Quartet (Bartók)*.

Etrog's painted constructions illustrate more than these modernist borrowings, however. They are based on objects in the real world that had a particular, personal significance. *White Scaffolding* (1958)¹⁰, for instance, is ultimately derived from an earlier study of a petrol lamp (Heinrich, 1968: 24), which was itself derived from sketches in which he rearranged a lamp's parts until they approached abstraction. That lamp was something really in his possession in the resettlement camp of Rishon le Zion, where refugee conditions prevailed. Etrog had lived in a basement, reading and sketching by half-light (Ferry, 1965: 24). *White Scaffolding* inherits the lamp as a symbol of desperate times and converts it into international style geometrical abstraction.

Etrog began to participate in group exhibitions of young Israeli artists in 1956, and his works were occasionally reproduced in local reviews (Engel, 1958: n.p.). In the same year, the artist's studies of international art began in earnest, despite the temporary distraction of another term of military service during the Suez Crisis. His curiosity was satisfied for the duration by pictures in books, although Etrog

⁸ <http://www.moma.org/collection/works/80315>

⁹ <http://www.wikiart.org/en/paul-klee/chosen-site-1940>

¹⁰ <http://www.ago.net/assets/images/555/2183.jpg>

later claimed that the real impact was seeing the works face-to-face, which finally happened in 1958. Etrog's student success had been so great that he held his first one-man exhibition in Tel-Aviv in late July and August, and he was granted a scholarship to study at the Brooklyn Museum Art School in America. The experience was a revelation. He was so excited and inspired by what could be seen there - particularly the African carvings and Etruscan antiquities - that he did not mind living in poverty in a cold-water flat.

Inspired by the creative freedom of the non-Western arts, Etrog began to explore sculpture in the round. The first batch of these new works primarily extended the principles of the painted constructions into three dimensions, but two other series broke into new territory. The first of these consisted of organic forms, inspired by pregnant African female figures, gradually leading to sweeping vertical abstractions based on human forms, as in *Pregnant Woman*. The second reveals a tighter relationship between form and personal metaphorical content, as in *Hasidic Head* (1959).¹¹ Here, the interpenetrating forms have an explicit symbolism. Etrog once described the long, narrow wedge seen in a contemporary sculpture, *War Remembrance* (1960–61)¹² as inspired by the memory of a bayonet blade piercing a dead soldier's cheek. In the *Hasidic Head* similar forms simultaneously help to create and to disrupt the features of a *Hasid* Jew preparing for prayer. The small, box-like form at the centre is not an eye; it is a phylactery - the small prayer box affixed to the forehead of the devout. (Etrog had begun to explore this theme even earlier in drawings.) *Hasidic Head* thus represents the Romanian Jewish community under siege.

Around this time, Etrog's fortunes began to change as the result of a chance encounter. In Rose Fried's New York Gallery, while he was trying to interest the uncommitted owner in showing his painted constructions, he met the Toronto-based collector Samuel J. Zacks. On the spot, Zacks bought *White Scaffolding*, and he agreed to follow the artist to his modest studio in an unused fish shop. Etrog's desperate need led the collector to invite the young artist to visit the Zacks family home in Toronto. During that visit, Samuel and his wife Ayala offered Etrog a large woodworking shop in a plywood factory at Southampton, Ontario, for the summer. As well as being a matter of financial and moral support, Etrog's relationship with the Zacks was also a major artistic influence. Their impressive collection of modern works of art was his most immediate, intimate exposure to major art developments. Their holdings of non-Western artifacts reinforced his interest in African, Oceanic and Pre-Columbian carving, stimulating a renewed vigor in his studies at the Brooklyn Museum when he returned there in the autumn.

¹¹ <https://www.mayberryfineart.com/artwork/AW26024>

¹² http://www.justabovesunset.com/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderpictures/ucla_s_war.jpg

Madonna (1963–66)¹³ features an almost complete bilateral symmetry, suggesting a new ease in the artist. This *Madonna* is not a conventional mother and child, however, for Etrog's contemporary variations of that theme display elaborate, twisting arms, much clearer references to anatomy and even, perhaps, spiritual nimbuses. This *Madonna* is entirely secular - even pagan in its evocation of a female form as the source of growth and of abundance. It seems likely that this is an oblique reference to his contemporary 'salvation' at the hands of Ayala Zacks. Certainly, the work has been read as a tribute to her (Amaya, 1971: 94) - and one casting of it *is* dedicated to her on the base. In any case, the calm frontality of the piece implies a direct, human engagement between the artist and his mother/muse.

Similar motifs appear in *Sunbird II*, which Etrog worked on from 1962–64, a period interrupted in 1963 by a visit to Italy to explore foundries and study Etruscan art (Withrow, 1967: 38). *Sunbird II* ambiguously contains elements of both destruction and sustenance. The wheel-like form at the bottom of the work can be seen as the disc of the sun or as a highly abstracted female pelvis (Withrow, 1967: 44). On the other hand, the cobra-like hood is like those on war-horses and mythical beasts depicted on Etrusco-Corinthian vases, where battle-horses charge and vultures hover over casualties of war. In one of the latter, a bird is shown diving onto a body from the disc of the sun. In juxtaposing such images of birth and death, Etrog meditated upon the conflict between sustenance and decay that underlies everyday existence.

During this period, as if to express his joy at having escaped Europe, Etrog began to produce a series of 'calligraphic', ribbon-like sculptures that spun up from slender bases to twist themselves into knots, folds and convolutions that spread a profoundly energetic line upwards and outwards. This spiraliform tendency acknowledges an internal, sculptural evolution from the figure in motion to a study of movement rather than anatomy. In *Ritual Dancer* (1962)¹⁴, for instance, an organic line spirals about the central axis of the figure, leading the eye around the work.

That these works were more than just formal experiments became clear when one of them was explicitly linked to his joy at becoming a Canadian citizen in 1966. A mammoth version of *Flight*¹⁵ was selected for display in front of the Canadian Pavilion at Expo '67 (a 'category one' world's fair) in Montreal. Like a horizontally extended variation on the *Ritual Dancer*, *Flight* leaps upwards and outwards with an abstracted gesture of ecstatic abandonment. Its two dancers' heads are linked together at the top, and the swinging limbs become a wide wingspan evocative of

¹³ <http://www.artnet.com/artists/sorel-etrog/the-madonna-e4LnBk6JcvukvVIuCMzeqA2>

¹⁴ http://www.christies.com/lotfinderimages/d57927/sorel_etrog_ritual_dancer_d5792720h.jpg

¹⁵ <http://www.lareau-law.ca/Etrog.Sorel.jpg>

delight and relief at having finally ‘landed’ someplace, as if Etrog were finally free from the constraints and anxieties of his Romanian past. In this mature work, Etrog’s personal context coincided brilliantly with his new nation’s need to celebrate its own Centennial. In it, both expressed their exuberance in joyful movement.

The most expressive and succinct symbol that Etrog developed to signify the ambiguous duality of life and death, freedom and bondage was the ‘link’. This motif first appeared in 1962 but only emerged with regularity after his trip to Italy. The link represents both a phase in Etrog’s career (c. 1964–1970) and a key to his underlying attitudes. A link represents restraints but also a certain mobility or freedom to act within boundaries. We saw such a link in *Flight*, but a more existentially powerful application can be found in a work entitled *Dancer Twist* (1965)¹⁶ in which mutual interdependency is vividly rendered as a series of linkages within and across two bodies becoming one. ‘I have always been concerned with duality in my work’, wrote Etrog, ‘two lines coming together - or the life of two forms interacting, like human beings - a duality of life’ (Etrog, 1967: n.p.) As playwright Eugène Ionesco (one of his many influential and celebrated friends) put it, movement is a metaphor of life itself: ‘a synthesis between liberty and discipline, or liberty and the law, expressed by forms at once bound together, yet unbound, in a dynamic equilibrium between dependence and independence, servitude and freedom’ (Ionesco, 1970: n.p.). The notion of two becoming one also represents Etrog’s Romanian background fusing with his new Canadian one.

Although 1967 represented a high point in Etrog’s career, it was also the year in which he experienced a disastrous setback. He was involved in a serious car accident in Florence, breaking both feet and smashing a hand, provoking a series of aggressive studies of hands and feet and an enormous sculpture of a mangled hand in downtown Toronto (1972)¹⁷ (Rosshandler, 1971: 20-22). He became increasingly interested in absurdist, existential literature in the plays of Samuel Beckett, and even his portraits of close personal friends like Samuel Zacks¹⁸ began to take on a nightmarish quality, deploying links as symbols of internal stresses. To judge by the title of a contemporary work, *Survivors Are Not Heroes* (1967)¹⁹, he was clearly thinking of suffering and mortality at the time.

In 1968 Etrog was commissioned to create the Canadian film award known since 1980 as the Genie (Academy of Canadian Television, 2013). However, from about 1968-71 Etrog spent as much time painting and drawing as sculpting. A significant number of these works, exhibited at the Dunkelman Gallery, were directly inspired by famous works of art of the past, ranging from the early nineteenth century

¹⁶ <http://tinyurl.com/zzzmulm>

¹⁷ http://www.dittwald.com/torontosculpture/gallery/full/Etrog_hand13.jpg

¹⁸ <http://www.ago.net/assets/images/555/99336.jpg>

¹⁹ https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Survivors_Are_Not_Heroes_Sorel_Etrog.JPG

neoclassicism of Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres to the mid-century modernism of Pablo Picasso. Etrog managed to translate these into idiosyncratic, existentially stressful works²⁰.

During this same period, Etrog was engaged in drafting several plays as a series of *tableaux* rather than conventional narratives. One of these pieces was re-titled *Hinges* in 1975, when media theorist Marshall McLuhan wrote an introduction for it. It deals with the cycle of life: first a solitary man goes about his daily routines while watching television. Later he is joined by a wife and child, each with their own televisions. Eventually the family goes to a cemetery, where the father climbs into a coffin, still with his television. In the second act, a man makes love at one moment and is a corpse at the next. The third act features a paratrooper who discovers himself trapped in a small circle of dirt in a minefield. Paradoxically, children play about him. A nearby tomato plant turns out to consist of wire. He uses some to repair a radio, but it receives without sending. In this play Etrog summarized many of the different aspects of the human condition that had concerned him over the years. For example, it includes references to Jewish traditions - mourners wearing black socks, the compulsory clothing of the Jewish Shiva ritual, witness the lovemaking corpse segment in the second act. Images of alienation abound: each family member is glued to a television; the soldier can listen but not speak. Etrog juggled all the complex elements by sketching the sequences on paper in a filmmaker's storyboard format.

While these plays were never performed as such, Etrog used the same method in the making of a film entitled *Spiral*, portions of which were published in book form (Etrog, 1986). It opens with two ambulances racing on a labyrinth of city streets. One ambulance contains a newborn in an incubator, the other an old man undergoing open-heart surgery. In another sequence, a voluptuous nude spreads her legs to reveal a large clock, but the clock does not signify a particular time. It is, rather, a sign of something perpetually *about* to happen, as in *Waiting for Godot*. In one of his poems Etrog called it 'recollecting things to come' (Etrog, 1981: n.p.). In another scene worms work their way through a mass of nuts and bolts. The imagery conjures a vision of the artist's continuing preoccupation with existentialist metaphors of birth/death, joy/sorrow, and muteness.

The film's mass of nuts and bolts was due to two chance events of 1971, which led Etrog to another radical visual change. The first was a purchase of hardware items (Trowell, 1973: 13-15), and the second was a game the artist played on an airplane, which involved doodling over items in a gift pamphlet (Amaya, 1972: 66-67). By the time he arrived at his Florence studio, he was totally absorbed by the possibilities of using nuts, bolts, and screw eyes as a new means of expressing the increasing mechanization of humanity. The results have been described as Etrog's

²⁰ Several of these are reproduced in Restany, 2001: 7.

answer to Pop Art, although they have a decidedly more classical aloofness and serenity (Mikotajuk, 1972: 68). At first glance, the interpenetrating shafts of *Samburu*²¹, whose open heads recall those in *Flight*, seem to lend themselves to a Freudian interpretation. However, the curve of the larger element recalls that in *Pregnant Woman*, implying that the sculpture is a highly stylized version of a Madonna and Child (particularly a *Hodegetria*, in which the child is held at the Virgin's side, projecting from her silhouette, as the second element does here). The title, by the way, alludes to the Samburu people of north-central Kenya, cementing our impression of the artist's continuing fascination with Africa. Arresting works like this enjoyed success as public art, but Etrog tired of them as quickly and abruptly as he began them, opting instead to seek new metaphorical possibilities in thematically related but visually different works based on hinges.

The transition from the bolt sculptures to the hinge sculptures of the mid-1970s is clear in *Steptease* (1976)²², which has a screw-eye head and tubular components like *Samburu*. The striding position of the legs, however, derives from a contemporary interest in dance, but the general metaphorical tendency of the hinge works becomes increasingly a matter of 'movement' that can only open inwardly, as it were. Some earlier link works foreshadow this development, especially where there is only a single figure experiencing solely internal linkages. As the idea is gradually transformed into the hinge works, the idea of a hinge (which of course is made to move) is constrained by being placed in situations where its movement is checked by other elements. This motif has a particularly compelling expressive force in a monumental work entitled *Antitête* after a literary work of 1933 by Tristan Tzara, a fellow Romanian avant-garde artist who had been closely associated with the absurdist Dada movement and with Etrog's mentor Marcel Janco in Zurich. Here, and in other monumental works like *Headoors* (1976)²³, the hinges are illogical, presenting the possibility of movement but simultaneously denying it, unless we imagine the hinges moving only internally, towards the mind's eye. This appeal to the interiority of the human psyche is what caused critic James Purdie to allude to the infinite number of possibilities, extensions and choices that can be exploited if man 'will only cross the threshold from fear of his own tools to the chambers of possibility at the other side of human experience' (Purdie, 1976: 38).

As the 1980s advanced, the hinge alone could no longer restrain Etrog's urge to express the existential human condition, no matter what form it took. In 1982, for instance, he published *Dream Chamber*²⁴, a poetic experiment in typography with one foot in Dada and the other in James Joyce (Etrog, 1982). Two years later he 'performed' a poem/painting/installation to celebrate the birthday of his friend

²¹ <http://www.mayberryfineart.com/artwork/AW26314>

²² <http://www.ago.net/assets/images/555/99332a02.jpg>

²³ <http://www.ago.net/assets/images/555/99330a01.jpg>

²⁴ <http://tinyurl.com/jfb3k98>

and collaborator Samuel Beckett. *The Kite* consisted of wall-sized poems accompanied by stylized skeletal figures. In their published form (as *The Kite on Friday April the Thirteenth*), the poems reveal a preoccupation with monotony, routine and constraint, recalling the themes in *Spiral*:

at the intersection.
the same old intersection
womb, skull meet

And elsewhere:

the kite ready.
the same kite.
waiting. airborne.
the same. tower control
for undisclosed reason
for the same
undisclosed reason
prevents departure. (Etrog, 1984; n.p.)

The Kite poetically evokes life and death (womb and skull), while the prevented departure speaks of continuing existential frustration.

Despite a change in the 1990s to bright colour reminiscent of the early painted constructions, restraint and frustration remain central. The biomorphic abstraction of earlier works is replaced by hard geometry, readymade artifacts and seemingly whimsical elements in works like *Composite No. 18* (1996–97)²⁵. Compression faucet handles protrude below a shuttered window, and spirals dance in the sky like the whorls in Vincent Van Gogh's *Starry Night*. However, we quickly realize that the window, revealing a celestial form behind, is shuttered and the view unattainable (Dault, 2000: n.p.). Even the sky is behind bars. Tower control, to reiterate the frustration of *The Kite*, 'prevents departure'.

The origins of Etrog's views can be traced to the difficult circumstances of his early life in Romania, while his introspective and philosophical inclinations reinforced his core message that life is essentially absurd. It was once observed that Etrog's contribution to Canadian modernism was a matter of introducing Constructivism (that is, geometric abstraction) to an unfamiliar public (Rosshandler, 1971: 43), but surely his contribution goes well beyond that. He introduced a note of internationalism into a still fairly parochial culture in the 1960s, and his philosophical bent expanded the narrow, nationalistic concerns of the Canadian Centennial era into speculations of the larger significance of being

²⁵ <http://www.ago.net/assets/images/555/99334.jpg>

human. His position in art history simply cannot be assessed as the succession of the stylistic 'isms' in which he worked.

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POWER AND BEAUTY IN SALLA TYKKÄ'S *GIANT*

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ABSTRACT

Cultural imagery subsumes elusive signs of power, which affect the way we perceive the world. This article approaches the subtle workings of visual significations by offering a reading of the power relations involved in the pursuit of beauty and perfection, addressed by Finnish artist Salla Tykkä in her video *Giant* (2014). In its elegant shots, we encounter young Romanian practitioners of artistic gymnastics and the milieus of modernist sports architecture of the communist era, providing a stage for girls' highly trained skills. By briefly discussing what Michel Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* (1975) conceived as 'docile bodies', my analysis will focus on the idea of power imposed upon the operations of the body. According to Foucault, the mechanisms of power regulate the body by moulding and training it, in order to increase its capacities, strength and obedience. Physical training and sports assumed a central role in the building of communist societies as well. With these insights, my aim is to suggest that Tykkä's film, with its constant interplay between the imagery of the past and the present, illustrates the intertwining of bodies and power.

KEYWORDS

Salla Tykkä, Video Art, Gymnastics, Body, Power.

The close-ups display the slim, muscular legs of young gymnasts entering into acrobatic moves on the balance beam, and focus on the strong grip of their hands while their bodies swing and circle around the bar. Slow motion highlights the impeccable beauty of their skillful movements. This article approaches the single channel film *Giant* (2014) by Finnish visual artist Salla Tykkä (b. 1973), a short film depicting the prominent young practitioners of artistic gymnastics at the celebrated boarding school of Deva in Romania. *Giant* also completes the film trilogy *The*

*Palace*¹, and could, in certain respects, be considered a key that ties the parts together into a body of work elegantly pointing towards the entanglements of bodies and power.

Tykkä has worked with film and photography since the mid-1990s. The female body and gender roles, power structures and popular culture have been recurring themes in her oeuvre, which she has worked through topics such as sports, celebrities and genre cinema. Her films often involve psychologically charged audiovisual narration and can also be characterised by an oneiric style, referred to, for example, by Antti Alanen as their dreamlike quality or even hallucinatory mode comparable to the films by Fritz Lang, Luis Buñuel, Alfred Hitchcock or David Lynch (Alanen, s.a.: 5). In *The Palace* the resemblance to dreams might be ascribed to the hypnotic scenery in slow motion amplified by the temporal distortion of natural sounds. In the following, however, I will not go in-depth into the aesthetic aspects of the film, but will rather approach, given the pervasiveness of the critical insights in Tykkä's earlier works, the fabric of political allusions at work in the trilogy.

The Palace could be regarded as echoing what Hal Foster in 2004 defined as the 'archival impulse' in contemporary art, a tendency to inventory, sample or share historical information by means of art in order to disturb the canonised truths or to produce alternative knowledge or counter-memory (Foster, 2004: 3–4). In Tykkä's trilogy the urge to revisit the common past becomes most evident in *Giant*, combining archival footage with the material filmed by the artist herself. Approaching the film alongside historical studies on physical culture and education, allows one to read it while alluding to the power regulating the bodies. As a whole, Tykkä's trilogy seems to address power structures played out in the pursuit of beauty and perfection. To point out these connections, I will describe the first two films of the trilogy, *Victoria* (2008) and *Airs Above the Ground* (2010), before taking a closer look at the *Giant*.

THE SUBTLETY OF THE SIGNS

The 'palace' in the trilogy's title, a residence that has for centuries housed royalties, dignitaries and heads of states, can be read as a metaphor for the privileged and the powerful. Tykkä's trilogy indeed seems to offer a scene for celebrities of their own kind: talented bodies of the to become Romanian Olympic gymnastics team, a giant water lily, the world famous star of the botanic world, and the gallantly moving Lipizzaner, show horses famous from the Spanish Riding School of Vienna. However disparate in subject three films seem to be, they all share a story

¹ Tykkä has used a trilogy as a form or as a method of working in her other oeuvre as well. As in the *Cave* trilogy (2000–2003), the parts can be considered either separately or as a series (Gordon Nesbitt, 2002; McGee, 2004: 70–71; Haapala, 2011: 116–119; for a detailed description of the *Cave*, see Torp, 2004).

of growth; a lifetime commitment to attaining perfection and beauty. Considering the allusive and connotational potential of the subjects depicted, *The Palace* stages elusive signs of power.

Victoria, the first film in the trilogy, was shot at the Kaisaniemi Botanic Garden, where the artist captured the annual blossoming of the giant water lily *Victoria cruziana* at the peak of its beauty. The peculiar tropical water platter, blooming for two nights only, is the protagonist of the film, which highlights the striking moment of its reaching perfection in its life cycle. Recorded in time-lapse, the film follows the silent dance of the foreign plant as its flower quietly bends over the water and changes in hue before closing. The encounter is constructed theatrically. Employing a reverent distance, like that of an admiring spectator, Tykkä's camerawork records its sophisticated ballet. With the musical score of Gustav Mahler's fifth symphony, she turns the filmed document into a dance film starring the exotic Other.

Beginning with a botanical classification by John Lindley from 1837, Tykkä's film enters into a dialogue with history. Unlike its famous precedents in art history, the homely water lilies in Monet's impressionistic paintings, the gigantic water platter in Tykkä's film originates from South America. The British explorers of the Victorian era collected the first specimens to bring to Europe in the 19th century, causing a craze among collectors (Vadon, 2008: 80–81). Since then its tamed beauty has been admired in the botanic gardens of the world. Named after Queen Victoria, this queen of the water lilies has expanded the spirit of her reign, just as the coins in Ancient Rome carried the portraits of its rulers to the margins of the empire. Behind the marvel and beauty of the blooming giant reverberates the imperial privileges and the power relations of the colonial past.

Refined symbolical allusions, likewise, are involved in the second film, *Airs Above the Ground*, which fills the screen with the trained bodies of the Lipizzaner, a horse breed developed by the Habsburg dynasty, the rulers of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. These light and fast horses served the military needs as well as the purposes of classical riding, reviving among the European nobles during the Renaissance. The exceptional skills of the Lipizzaners have been made famous particularly by the dancing white stallions performing at the Spanish Riding School, situated in the imposing milieu of the Imperial Palace in Vienna.

In Tykkä's film, the images of young stallions running free are juxtaposed with others depicting horses being trained in the movements of the classical dressage. 'Airs above the ground' are extremely difficult exercises the Lipizzaners are still physically capable of performing. Perceived in the matrix of beauty arising from the excellence of their motility, the origins of dressage in warfare become easily forgotten. The dressage movements were first aimed at increasing the competency of the war horses' behaviour on the battlefield.

In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975), Michel Foucault described a new 'political anatomy' discovered in the classical age, in which the body held a special place in the mechanisms of regulation. Understood as the object of power, the body was cultivated by manipulating, shaping and training it, in order to make it skilful, strong, responding and obedient, in other words, productive and serviceable. A 'docile body', in his account, can be subjected, used, transformed and improved by means of discipline. He maintained that coercions exercised upon the body, no longer treated as an indissociable unity, were subtle practices affecting the body at the level of movement, gesture and posture. (Foucault, 1995 [1975]: 136—139)

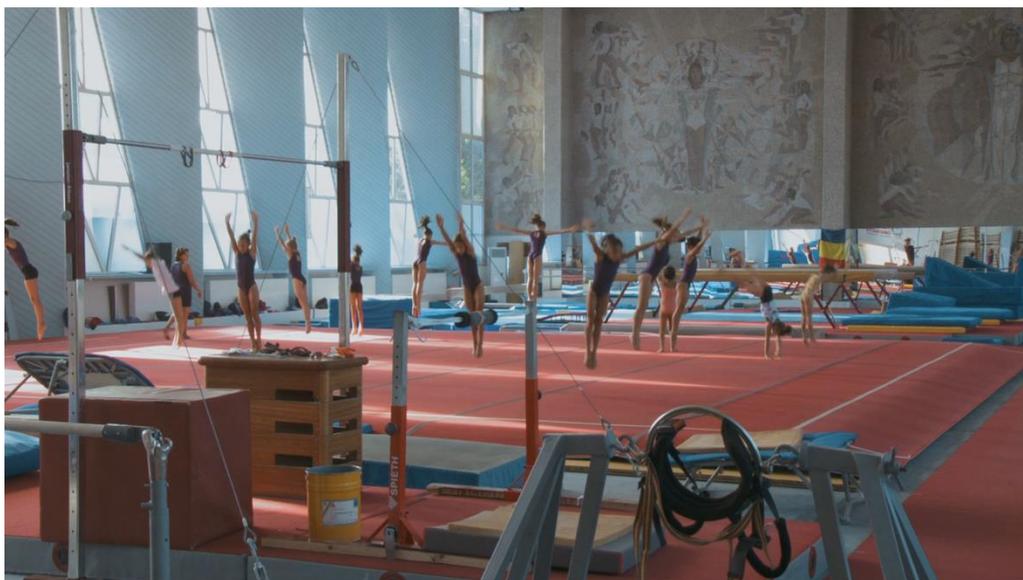
Undoubtedly, the movements of high school dressage, such as the Levade, the Courbette and the Capriole, requiring a great amount of strength and skills, also gave valuable support to the might and grandeur of the sovereigns. Like the embodied conduct of ideal soldiers of the 17th century in Foucault's description (Foucault, 1995 [1975]: 135–136), the movements and posture of the horses, too, could be supposed to have played a part in the bodily rhetoric of honour; bodies that were recognisable from afar, bearing signs of their strength and valour. Similar visual significations have evolved, over the centuries, in the theatrical events revolving around equestrian warfare, such as tournaments or carrousels, or in the brawny and graceful horses time and again encountered in art history's equestrian statues or ruler portraiture.

Both *Victoria* and *Airs Above the Ground* stage an enduring play of power veiled behind the pursuit of beauty. The protagonists, bred and moulded into the mirror images of power, accentuate rulers' authority with their dashing figures. The following chapters focus on the third film, *Giant*, which has in common with the previous ones the power imposed upon the operations of the body, as well as the endless quest for perfection.

THE BODY AND THE HEROIC

A careful choice of architectural settings has been argued to play an important role in Tykkä's works. This is the case with *Giant* as well, in which the training halls of the communist era provide a stage for young girls' highly trained skills. *Giant* starts by introducing with archival footage and texts two Romanian schools specialised in artistic gymnastics, a boarding school that opened in Onești in 1969 and the Romanian Gymnastics School that opened in Deva in 1978. The school in Deva was a long-term base for the national gymnastics team, and is still the place where the junior squad trains. The school building dates back to the 18th century, when it served as a military barracks, and during the 20th century it also housed art and engineering schools. In 1978 it was turned into the General School no. 7, 'the medal factory' where many of the greatest Romanian gymnasts were trained and educated.

In *Giant*, the austerity of the modernist architecture of the training halls in Onești, built during the 1960s, and of the Olympic centre in Deva, inaugurated at the end of the 1970s, resembles the discipline practised on bodies during the communist regime. The colours in the gymnasium's interior repeat the colours of the Romanian flag, and the posters on the walls celebrate the previous victories of Romanian gymnasts; seemingly innocent, yet contagious, means of orienting the behaviour and aims of the actions performed inside these walls. The achievements in artistic gymnastics were also admired worldwide, particularly after the brilliant success Nadia Comăneci achieved in the 1976 Summer Olympics in Montreal. This incomparable series of successes was followed by the achievements of gymnasts such as Ecaterina Szabo, Daniela Silivas, Aurelia Dobre, Camelia Voinea and many others².



Salla Tykkä: *Giant*, video (2013-2014)

The accomplishments in sports by communist countries provided competition with the former West, in the end symbolising the confrontation between communism and capitalism (See, e.g. Itkonen; Ilmanen, 2008: 19, 21). In an article on the relations between communist policies and sport, James Riordan points out the central role physical training (in rus. *fizitšeskaja kultura*) assumed in the building of communist societies. Along with the symbolical values involved in gaining international recognition and prestige, physical training was employed for utilitarian aims in a modernising community: to advance health and hygiene, to improve labour productivity, to serve the needs of national defence and to ease the

² Romania had achieved its first medals in the European and World Artistic Gymnastics Championships during the 1950s, so by the 1970s the country already had a long tradition at the top level of gymnastics.

integration of variety ethnicities into a unified nation. (Riordan, 1999: 48–49.) It could well be presumed that in Romania as well, gymnastics favoured the aims of the party by raising patriotic feelings and increasing solidarity in a country inhabited by many ethnicities and historically influenced by a variety of cultures.

Giant displays among its very first shots a monumental painting reminiscent of these ideological aims. The heroic representation, echoing the official style of soviet realism, of the bodies of a male and a female athlete dominate the interior of one of the training halls, as if still encouraging the ideal of the strong and healthy body of the ‘new man’, a labourer constantly ready to work and defend. The emphasis on physical culture in the communist states could be regarded as a form of what Foucault defined as ‘biopower’: the regulation of the subjects by disciplining the body, optimising its capabilities, extorting its force, increasing its usefulness and docility, and integrating it into systems of economic control. This was maintained with the mechanisms of power that characterised the ‘anatomopolitics’ of the human body. The power exercised by institutions such as schools and the army subjugated the body by controlling its actions. (Foucault, 1990 [1976]: 139–140.)³

According to Simona Petracovschi the Marxist-Leninist concepts of improving physical education to advance the workers’ interests were applied also in Romania, where the educational system from 1948 to 1989 was subsumed by communist ideology and the model offered by the Soviet Union. Physical activities pervaded education beyond sports, and the body was also controlled and moulded through exercises in unproductive times during teaching. Sport events were a central part of life beyond education. (Petracovschi, 2015: 105–106.) Gymnastics held a special place in the education system, which devoted, as the gymnastics chief coach Adrian Goreac explained in a documentary filmed in the late 1980, specific hours to training every day (*The Romanian Dream*, 1987).

In *Giant* the girls at times appear in matching leotards, marching and stretching in groups, counting out loud to keep the rhythmic integrity of the warming up process. Curiously, as in *Airs Above the Ground*, the actions played out in *Giant* have a historical relation to military training, a connotation unarticulated in the films themselves, but hardly insignificant for the readings they allow. According to Petracovschi, physical education in communist Romania assumed ideological and military characteristics, including the authority of the teacher and the comprehension of the student groups as a place to learn commands and the ability

³ It is, of course, to be remarked, that in outlining his notion of biopower, Foucault traced the changes that had occurred in the western world during the modern age at the dawn of capitalism, and applying the concept in an analysis of other times and contexts might deviate from the scheme. Yet, it also provides a more general conception of the political and cultural construction of the body within different discourses of utility, which has been widely applied as an analytical model.

to react. Like other state institutions, schooling prepared students for national defence and for the military style of orders and discipline. The relationship of the teacher and students became equated with that of the officer and troops (Petracovschi, 2015: 102-103, 105-106; on the militarisation of sports, see also Riordan, 1999: 51-52).

At the individual level, engaging in sport and physical training with the aim of national defence meant maintaining a physically capable, strong body (Itkonen; Ilmanen, 2008: 19). As in *Airs Above the Ground*, the movements performed in *Giant* require extreme bodily agility. Both titles refer to exercises that call for plenty of strength and ability. ‘Giant’, in gymnastics means the circling skill of rotating fully extended around the bar, and was chosen by the artist as the subject of another film, *The Palace* (2015), also shot in Romania. Attaining such skill is a matter of devotion and determination, even pain and sacrifice, as illustrated by documentaries such as Anca Miruna Lazarescu’s *The Secret of Deva* (2007), which unveils the harsh reality of the everyday life of the small girls who are carrying out their families’ ambitions in the strenuous training programs that select a few lucky ones reaching the top level of the Olympic team.

Without a definite narrative, *Giant* concentrates on illustrating the strong, docile bodies of the girls performing the exercises, reaching the limits of bodily agility, and repeating the embodied routines to attain perfection. The images of gymnasts alternate with frames emphasising their surroundings. Perhaps the most well-known conception in *Discipline and Punish* is the account of how the behaviour and actions of individual bodies were managed by regulating the organisation of space and time (see Foucault, 1995/1975: 141–151). In *Giant*, the graceful movements of the able-bodied gymnasts are portrayed together with the architecture they are surrounded by, spaces designed to produce new champions, or with the blocks, boulevards and medieval ruins of Deva, the city famous for medallists.



Salla Tykkä: *Giant*, video (2013-2014)

PARALLEL WORLDS

The inclusion of archival materials and interviews further affiliates *Giant* with the 'archival impulse' in contemporary art. Juxtaposed with the historical film clips and found footage from an old feature film *Campioana* (1990) by Elisabeta Bostan, the material shot by Tykkä in 2013 triggers an interplay between the past and the present. In an interview she explained that one of her aims in *Giant* was to explore gymnastics as a cultural relic surviving from the communist past to the present day, as 'an icon that remains through images and creates new ones' (Travis, 2013). With the elaborate cuts, the images depicting past generations training in the same severe halls as the young girls more than two decades later, carrying out the same exercises, seem to suggest continuities and parallel worlds, rather than change and adjustment.

With this temporal structure, the constant shift between 'now' and 'then', *Giant* undertakes the task of unveiling power structures in a manner similar to *Victoria* and *Airs above the ground*. Presenting the historical information in an indeterminate fashion that Foster characterised as 'promissory notes for further elaboration' or 'prompts for future scenarios' (Foster, 2004: 5), it calls out for interpretation. Yet the persistence of the past does not simply arise from the archival footage, but resonates in the editing as well.

The interviews, which make up part of the soundscape, entwine the life stories, memories and dreams of the young gymnasts with the narration of the film. Unlike many of Tykkä's preceding films (See, e.g. Haapala, 2011: 16), *Giant* does not seem to evoke the inner states of the characters, but depicts the girls from a distance. Neither the acousmatic sound of the interviews; the off-screen voiceover of the childish voices of the girls narrating their congruous life stories, nor the visual aspect of the film allow much space for personal style. Instead, the girls appear blurred in backgrounds and in mirror reflections, or become represented from behind. There are frequent cuts to close-ups of body parts, framing out their faces, and focusing on the details, the limbs and the performed movements or poses, rather than the individuals themselves. Despite the certain fragility of their vocal presence in the film, the girls in the images remain inaccessible, silently concentrating on their rehearsals, almost never paying attention to the gaze of the camera.

The manner in which the young gymnasts are portrayed in *Giant*, occupies the blurred boundary between strength and frailty, between maturity and childhood and between power and powerlessness. The aestheticised, dream-like visions of *Giant* provokingly create a contrast with the tough and demanding quotidian life of the young girls enrolled on the disciplined training programs, easily idealised, as in the film by Bostan. Only occasionally, the taped muscles, wrists and ankles allude to the more laborious side. The lightness and ease of performing the acrobatic routines, conversely pretends to negate the very corporeality of gymnastics. The

pain and physical effort become concealed behind the excellence, beauty and perfection.

Considered as a whole, Tykkä's trilogy is suggestive of the subtlety by which power and politics are spread out among cultural imagery. In the three films we encounter attenuated allusions, implied significances or more straightforward cultural imagery; a variety of visual signs of power that mirror the might, in this case of the Victorian empire, the Habsburg monarchy or the Communist regime. Prevalent in each film, in my view, is the exercising of power on bodies, which has been my intention to indicate in this text. James Rondeau has pointed out the awareness of physicality expressed by Tykkä's early works (Rondeau, 2002: 11). Inside the sophisticated halls of *The Palace*, this interest in corporeality still seems alive.

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MYSTERY AND SPACE TRANSLATING THE POETRY OF LUCIAN BLAGA

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ABSTRACT

The present article describes the process of translation of a selection of the poems of Lucian Blaga into English, and investigates some of the challenges that this task presents the translator. The discussion begins in generic terms, and includes some remarks on the character of the Romanian language, as perceived by the translator, continuing then with a more detailed analysis of lines and verses from sample texts. All texts are quoted from *Blaga Opere 1. Poezii* (Blaga, 2012a). Other works by Lucian Blaga that contributed to my understanding of his work are included in the bibliography.

The stimulus to translate the poetry of Lucian Blaga can be formulated simply as follows: Romanian literature is largely unknown in the English-speaking world. It is an immensely rich tradition, comparable with other great European traditions, German, French, Italian and English. A knowledge of it is desirable to arrive at a more complete understanding of European civilisation and culture. Insight into rural life and into human existence beyond the urban space is particularly rich in Romanian tradition, and a knowledge of the Romanian literary tradition grants us access into a world seldom depicted in other European traditions, this being the world of a people who derive their living from the earth.

The sample poems and translations in this article lend themselves to five categories; the monastic world, folk culture and Christianity, the rural space, poems of the night, and *ars poetica*. Within these categories, we find lexical items that occur repeatedly in Blaga's work, and on which he builds the edifice of his lyric world. Several examples from this lexicon are discussed.

KEYWORDS

Mythological space, vernacular, core lexicon, rural, mystery.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS, FRAMEWORK AND CONTEXT

Having discovered the poetry of Lucian Blaga in 2009 while working at Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland, I began reading his work in French translation (*Les Poèmes de la Lumière*, Éditions Minerva, Bucharest 1978), and discussing it with members of the Department of Romanian in Poznań, Poland. I thus became aware of the cultural resonance in the poems, a resonance that prompted me to visit Romania in an effort to learn more about the source of the poems, and the context in which they were written.

Attending the Lucian Blaga International Literary Festival in Alba Iulia three times between 2009 and 2013 enabled me to discover the heritage associated with Lucian Blaga both locally and nationally in Romania. Exchanges with others at the festival, at the University in Alba Iulia, and in other Romanian-speaking environments, brought me closer to a position from which I could begin to translate the work with confidence.

Having established the above, we proceed to consider the Romanian language, the idiom in which Lucian Blaga wrote, and to become acquainted with the character of this language.

Romanian is essentially a popular language, a vernacular that developed organically over time with little prescriptive or institutional interference. The language absorbs the lexicon of the linguistic communities that co-exist and succeed one another over time, Slavic, Hungarian, Greek, German and Turkish¹. Although Romanian in the 20th century adopts swathes of idiom from French, these innumerable Gallicisms, prevalent in the spheres of politics and journalism, for example, make little impact on the poetry of Lucian Blaga.

While many 20th century scholars in Romania enjoyed an education in Latin and or Greek², the language itself, unlike other literary idioms in Europe, is largely uninfluenced by the Hellenism and classicism that was prevalent in literary circles in Europe in the 18th century. Also, the influence of 19th century romanticism on Romanian, while palpable, is an influence less profound than on European writing in general³. Because of these things, the experience of reading Romanian is closer, in its immediacy at least, to the experience of reading Shakespearean English, for example, an idiom still young and vigorous, richly figurative, and not yet touched

¹ The idea of lexical purity is reflected in language policy in several European cultures since the emergence of the idea of the nation-state. French, German and Irish are three cases in point.

² This remark reflects the impression given by senior academics whom I have met in Romania and whose level of classical education is comparable to level in other European countries two or three generations ago.

³ Cf. Mihai Zamfir, *Scurtă istorie – Panorama alternativă literaturii române*, Volumul 1, Editura Polirom, Iași, 2012.

by abstraction, or to reading Welsh or Gaelic⁴, the major Celtic languages, from various periods before the 20th century. Also, the hand of the state and of state bureaucracy weighs relatively lightly on the Romanian literary idiom, in a way more reminiscent of Europe before the 1800s. Long unchained to a standardising apparatus, words in Romanian seem to retain their vitality and elemental force in a way atypical of the major state-dominated languages in Europe over the last century.

APPRECIATING THE LYRIC WORLD OF RURAL ROMANIA

To appreciate the world of Lucian Blaga on its own terms, we must discard ways of thinking associated with our own cultural space, insular and western European in the case of the present author, and learn to see the world as Blaga did. To do so, we enter into a mythological space still vibrant in Romania in the 20th century. This space stands in contrast with the largely post-mythological space of Western Europe and contemporary Britain. To live in the mythological space is to be part of a world animated by symbols and tradition, and to share with other forms of life. Time here is not linear, not a hostile force that exhausts human life (Eliade, 1969). It is cyclical, and being cyclical is benign. Emanating from within this mythological space, the poetry of Lucian Blaga is an expression of the things human culture was built on during the centuries and millennia that precede the mechanisation and industrialisation that characterises our era. This mechanisation and industrialisation is one of the catalysts in the demythologisation of the modern world.

In the older world, the animate world, all things were an expression of the intrinsic vitality of things that constantly renewed themselves, a process man too was part of, and a thing he celebrated with rite and ritual. Mechanisation and industrialisation changes this state of affairs profoundly. The natural rhythms of growth, decay and rebirth are replaced with ideas of progress and acceleration. The natural balance that enables the world to renew its vitality is soon overwhelmed by ideas of exploitation and productivity.

In this way, the latent meaning of things is replaced by a material value assigned to them. And the latent significance of objects that occur in the world is replaced by the idea of an aesthetic value attributed to them. Latency of meaning and significance in the mythological space is replaced in this way by the blatant material and aesthetic value of things in the post-mythological space. The poetry of Lucian Blaga is an expression of the former.

⁴ Cf. Dafydd Glyn Jones(ed.) *Canu Twm o'r Nan' Deilen Newydd*, Bangor, 2010; E. O'Connell, S. Ó Tuama, *An Clóchomhar Tta* (eds.) *Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoghaire*, Dublin 1999.

THE MONASTIC WORLD

The great cathedrals of England, France and Germany epitomise a view of the world as held by the medieval Christian mind in Western Europe. These edifices reach out to the sky in longing. They cast huge shadows and humble the beholder. Their message is clear: feet rooted to the earth, man is a lesser being than the all things celestial and high. Such cathedrals do not exist in Romania. Here, as elsewhere in the Balkans and the Orthodox world, there are other models; the low-roofed monastery, for example, a place where the faithful wait with dignity for divine grace to descend amongst them. In the poetry of Lucian Blaga, we meet some of the inhabitants of this Orthodox monastic world. Here, rupture between the medieval and modern epochs is of no major significance. The Orthodox world retains much of its early resonance. It has not undergone the fragmentation that causes the *malaise* of the west.

Sample Text 1

From *Călugărul bătrân îmi șoptește din prag*, (Blaga, 2012a: 103)

On the Threshold the Agèd Monk Speaks to me in a Whisper.

The monastery is the scene of *Călugărul bătrân îmi șoptește din prag*. Three simple lines from this poem serve to illustrate how the tension in the Romanian can easily be lost in English.

- i) Vreau să-mi dau sufletul
- ii) Viața mea a fost tot ce vrei
- iii) Umbra lumii îmi trece peste inimă.

Literal translations of these three examples yield:

- i) I wish to give up my soul.
- ii) My life has been everything you wish.
- iii) The shadow of the world passes over my heart.

To honour in translation the tension and tenor of the original lines, we suggest the following:

- i) I wish to relinquish my soul.
- ii) My life has been all you might wish to call it.
- iii) Over my heart, the shadow of the world now passes.

FOLK CULTURE AND CHRISTIANITY

Inhabiting the margins of the human in the poetry of Lucian Blaga, we find shapes and shadows, figments of the subconscious perhaps, not spirits as such but simply

other beings. These are not always hostile to their mortal neighbours, but seem to represent some danger, at least to the innocent.

Sample Text 2

Fiiica pământului joacă | Earth-Daughter Dances, (Blaga, 2012a: 114)

We take the first couplet of *Fiiica pământului joacă* to illustrate ways of arranging the order of ideas in the original to create increased resonance or greater tension in the translation:

Spre diminețile tale râd
soare vechi, soare nou.
Through your mornings I laugh
Old sun, new sun.

Or:

Sun of old, sun risen anew
For your every morning I will laugh.

THE RURAL SPACE

A reading of European poetry, from romantic to modern, enables us to discern four views of the rural space: the view of the native metropolitan poet for whom the rural space is distant, and alien to varying degrees; the view of the metropolitan poet who migrates to the rural space, spends some time there, enjoys inspiration there, but remains a stranger to the human society there; the view of the rural poet who migrates to the metropole and writes there of his native place as he remembers or chooses to remember it; the view of the rural poet who remains in his native environment poetically, and writes of the experience of living there (Johnson, 2013: 137-152). Lucian Blaga is a voice who expresses this fourth view.

Sample Text 3

Pluguri | Ploughs (Blaga, 2012a: 98)

The opening verse of *Ploughs* illustrates how the Romanian, if translated literally, often falls short of exciting the imagination. English expects its poetry to harbour several dimensions, while the Romanian, in Blaga's case, for example, is confident in the clarity and therefore in the transparent nature of the style it adopts. *Pluguri* begins:

Prietene crescute la oraș
fără milă, ca florile în fereastră,
prietene care încă niciodată n-ai văzut
câmp și soare jucând subțiri înfloriți
vreau să te iau de mână,
vino, să-ți arăt brazdele veacului.

First, we translate directly:

Friend raised in the town
Without affection, like the flowers in a window,
Friend who have never yet seen
Field and sun dancing under flowering pear trees,
I wish to take your hand
Come that I may show you the furrows of the age.

In a further draft, the tension is increased:

You, my friend, child of the unendearing city,
Friend, raised like the flowers in a window box
Who have not yet seen field and sun cavort underneath the flowering pear trees,
Let me take you by the hand
And show to you the age-old furrows.

Sample Text 4

Sufletul satului | Spirit of a Country Place, (Blaga, 2012a: 108)

Continuing with poems where Blaga writes of the rural space, we come to *Sufletul satului*. The opening lines read:

Copilo, pune-ți mânila pe genunchii mei.
Eu cred că veșnicia s-a născut la sat
Aici orice gând e mai încet,
și inima-ți zvâcnește mai rar,
ca și cum nu ți-ar bate în piept,
ci adânc în pământ undeva.

A direct translation would yield:

Child, place your hands on my knees
I believe that eternity was born in the village
Here somehow thought is slower
And your heart beats slower
As if it were beating not in your breast
But somewhere deep in the earth.

A further draft brings us closer to a translation worthy of the original:

Place your hands upon my knees, my child,
Eternity was born I think into a country place
All thought seems slower there
Slower too the beating of the heart

As though the breast were not its source
But a place deeper within the earth.

Sample Text 5

9 Mai 1895 | May the 9th 1895, (Blaga, 2012a: 218)

May the 9th 1895 is Blaga's date of birth, and in a text so entitled, he sings of his village, Lancrăm, whose name resembles the Romanian word for 'tears'.

Sat al meu, ce porți în nume
sunetele lacrimii,
la chemări adânci de mume
în cea noapte te-am ales
ca prag de lume
și potecă patimei.

Here, the issue of rhyme arises, in two ways, neither forced nor artificial; between the substantives 'nume', 'mume', and 'lume' in the first instance, and between two genitive forms in the second, 'lacrimii' and 'patimei'. In translation, the rhyme is discarded, and the key-phrase 'te-am ales' is deferred to create a sense of culmination:

You, my village,
Whose name evokes the sound of tears
This was the night on which,
Heedful of the deepest mother-callings,
As threshold to the world, as passion's causeway,
You are the one I chose.

POEMS OF THE NIGHT

An affinity with the hours of darkness is a theme that occurs repeatedly in the poetry of Lucian Blaga, and this is reflected in the choice of poems that feature in the samples presented in this paper.

Sample Text 6

Pleiadă | Constellations, (Blaga, 2012a: 223)

Gazing at the sky in wonder, as a child, the poet finds the following couplet, naive as suits the scene, reminiscent too of light-hearted rhyme in popular culture, and weightless, despite the reference to the cross:

Vânt le iscă, vânt le duce
cineva le pune-n cruce

This couplet might be translated literally as follows:

The wind causes them to appear, the wind carries them away
Someone has formed a cross with them.

Here, none of the character of the Romanian couplet has been preserved. Given the limitations within which the translator finds himself working, and the better to set the lines in motion in English, we suggest the following:

The wind sets them spinning, then sweeps them away,
A hand, unknown, forms with them a cross.

However, ‘to form a cross’ in the original Romanian expression is to be taken not so much literally as figuratively, and means ‘to consider something dead’, ‘to make the sign of cross as on a dead body’, or ‘to accept that something is gone’.

We amend the translation in an effort to preserve both the literary and figurative meanings:

‘The wind sets them spinning, then sweeps them away,
Somebody thumbs the sign of the cross on their forehead.’

Sample Text 7

Mi-aștept amurgul, | I Await the Dimming of the Light (Blaga, 2012a: 21).

The question of literary cliché, obsolete forms, archaisms and outdated lexicon comes to the fore when translating the poetry of Lucian Blaga into English. In *Mi-aștept amurgul* (Blaga, 2012a: 21), the opening lines read:

În bolta înstelată-mi scald privirea
și știu că și eu port
în suflet stele multe multe
și căi lactee,
minunile-ntunericului.

The first phrase might be translated by ‘celestial vault’. This is unsuitable, placing Blaga and his poem in an earlier century, the 18th or 19th, and creating a misleading impression of his thinking. The translation must be more neutral, and modern. We find ourselves considering ‘starry pool’. Also, the phrase ‘stele multe multe’, ‘many many stars’, we translate with ‘innumerable stars and galaxies’, thus giving Blaga’s text an educated feel in English, rather than an unsophisticated one.

ARS POETICA

Four poems from the work of Lucian Blaga that we have translated into English and that express a vision of the world in the form of an *ars poetica* are *Biography* (*Biografie*, Blaga, 2012a: 127), *The Wonders of this World are a Crown of Petals I will not*

Crush (*Eu nu strivesc corola de minuni a lumii*, Blaga, 2012a: 9), *From the Sky There Comes the Singing of a Swan* (*Din cer a venit un cântec de lebădă*, (Blaga, 2012a:107), and *A Moment from the Great Passage of Time* (*În marea trecere*, (Blaga, 2012a: 96). To translate these poems well is to recreate the poetic world of Lucian Blaga in a language, English, in which such a world has never existed.

To construct his world in these four poems, and others like them, Blaga draws on a number of key-words that echo through his work and form the core lexicon on which he builds his edifice. In *Biografie* these include ‘lumină’ (light), ‘umbră’ (shadow), ‘cântare’ (singing), ‘străin’ (strange, foreign), ‘mirare’ (wonder), ‘taine’ (secrets, mysteries), ‘strămoșii’ (ancestors), ‘poveste’ (story), and ‘somn’ (sleep).

In *Eu nu strivesc corola de minuni a lumii*, these items of thematic vocabulary that occur in *Biografie* are repeated, notably ‘taine’, a word that occurs three times in the poem. Other words from Blaga’s poetic lexicon we find in *Eu nu strivesc corola de minuni a lumii* include ‘sfânt’ (holy), and ‘mormânt’ (graveyard). In *Din cer a venit un cântec de lebădă*, ‘taine’ (mysteries) occur again, and we find the familiar terms ‘cântec’ (song), ‘călugării’ (monks), and ‘pământ’ (earth). The poem *În marea trecere* includes ‘umbră’ (shadow), ‘poveste’ (story), ‘pământ’ (earth), and also ‘adânc’ (deep), ‘sânge’ (blood), and a form of ‘tăcere’ (to refrain from speaking).

None of these words are problematic so far as a direct translation is concerned. Two points need to be made however. Firstly, unlike Romanian, where the repetition of a lexical item in a text seems not to cause its impact to be weakened, English is a language in which the use of several synonyms for a given idea is often desirable for stylistic and aesthetic reasons. Secondly, Blaga’s core poetic vocabulary does not distant his texts from the vernacular language, but takes the vernacular Romanian of the people of his village, and hundreds of similar villages, and elevates and intensifies the meaning of its words. Regarding the first point, repetition and synonyms, the translator is faced with an apparent dilemma: translating the Romanian word with the same English word each time, and weakening the word each time, or introducing synonyms that give the impression that the original text is lexically far more complex than is the case.

We take the word ‘taine’ as a case in point, and return first to *Eu nu strivesc corola de minuni a lumii*. Lines 2 to 3 in the original read: ‘și nu ucid cu mintea tainele, ce lentănesc în calea mea’. A direct translation yields: ‘and do not kill with my mind the mysteries I find along my way’. We suggest: ‘and never will my mind bring death to the mysteries I discover along my way’. In line 10 we read: ‘eu cu lumina mea sporesc a lumii taină’, ‘With a light of my own I lend grandeur to the mystery of the world’. In line 13 we find ‘taina nopții’, ‘the mystery of the night’. We note in line 15 the romance equivalent of ‘taină’, a word of Slavic origin, in the phrase ‘sfânt mister’ i.e. ‘holy mystery’, where here the adjective is Slavic in origin.

Returning now to *Biografie*, we quote line 13: ‘fac schimb de taine cu strămoșii’, ‘I exchange mysteries with my ancestors’. Before spending time in a village in Gorj,

Oltenia, I thought I had understood this line. The translation I had made was correct, but, unknown to me, as I sat in the library, the original line hides a layer of meaning that was revealed only a result of immersion in an environment similar to that in which Lucian Blaga spent his childhood, a traditional village, ‘sat’ in Romanian. After the midday meal, on a warm afternoon in autumn, a group of neighbours gathered together in the village where I was staying to talk and exchange memories. ‘Hai să stăm la taină’, one of them said, ‘let’s sit and talk together [about the things we share, past and present]’. In *Biografie*, I now realised, Blaga sits with his ancestors, as with his living family and neighbours, exchanging with them memories of things that bind them together, and thus rejuvenating them.

The second word from Blaga’s poetic lexicon we wish to comment on briefly is ‘poveste’. Like ‘taină’, ‘mystery’, ‘poveste’ is Slavic in origin, and means ‘story, tale, narrative’. However, none of the English words available to us resonate as the Romanian does. ‘Story’ in English is a label on a broad category, and invites further explanation. The word is sometimes associated with children, sometimes with news reporting, sometimes with things vaguely covert. It is not a word on which a poet can build his edifice. ‘Tale’ in English is associated with the culture of a former day, may imply an element of fantasy, and is removed from present-day preoccupations, inhabiting the margins of the contemporary world. ‘Narrative’ today is a term in vogue, and one on the verge of redundancy through overuse: in no way can it accommodate the things imply by Blaga’s ‘poveste’. Translating ‘poveste’ will result inevitably in compromise.

Lines 5-6 of *În marea trecere* read: ‘Frunzare se boltesc adânci / peste o-întregă poveste’. We suggest the following translation: ‘Leafy branches throw a steep arch / Over this undivided scene’.

Line 17 of *Biografie* reads: ‘poveștile sângelui uitat de mult’. Here, Blaga speaks of things forgotten, and thus the word ‘tale’ is appropriate in this instance. We suggest: ‘Tales of my kin, long since forgotten’.

We mentioned the word ‘sat’ above. Along with ‘taină’ and ‘poveste’, ‘sat’ is one of the key-words in Blaga’s poetic lexicon that defies the English-language translator. Its simple equivalent is ‘village’. However, ‘village’ in British culture means something quite different to ‘sat’. Whereas in Britain, the village often implies a nucleus towards which things gravitate, and assume importance the closer they may be to the nucleus, the Romanian ‘sat’ is a linear development, a series of small-holdings, often lining a valley. To use ‘hamlet’ in English would create confusion in other ways, ‘hamlet’ being quaint, a word evoking idyllic paintings and peaceful rural scenes from pre-industrial times. ‘Sat’ requires the translator to use ‘village’ on occasion. We suggest ‘a country place’, as in ‘Spirit of a Country Place’ (*Sufletul satului*, (Blaga, 2012a:108)

We conclude these remarks on translating the poetry of Lucian Blaga with the closing lines from the poem *Cuvântul din urmă* (Final Words), (Blaga, 2012a: 121):

Cu cânele și săgețile ce mi-au rămas
Mă-ngrop,
la rădăcinele tale mă-ngrop,
Dumnezeule, pom blestemat.

A direct translation yields:

With the dogs and the arrows that are left to me
I bury myself
In your roots I bury myself
O God, cursèd tree.

While acceptable in several ways, this translation seems unsatisfactory due simply to its brevity. This brevity in itself is not a fault, but the consequence of brevity here is that the lines have been uttered, or read, before they have time to create their effect. This may be due in part to the fact that ‘tree’, the last word in the translated poem, is monosyllabic, whereas, in the original, ‘blestemat’ has three syllables. Also, ‘blestemat’, the adjective, or past participle of the verb, carries the meaning in the original, a disturbing, dark and complex meaning, whereas ‘cursèd’ in the translation precedes the substantive and is partially eclipsed by it.

We now consider the following solution:

With my remaining dogs and unspent arrows
I shall lay down in the grave,
Underneath your very root, O God,
I shall bury myself under your cursèd tree.

Grammatically, the English here does not go quite as far the original, where ‘pom blestemat’ qualifies the vocative ‘Dumnezeule’. The effect of the suggested English translation is however similar to the effect the original has on the reader. Another possible avenue is to restructure the verse as follows:

With my remaining dogs and unspent arrows
I shall lay down in the grave
[And] underneath your very root
I shall bury myself, O God, you cursèd tree.

To conclude these remarks on translating the poetry of Lucian Blaga from Romanian into English, we can now state and restate the following:

Translation of this work involves the issues a translator will face when translating lyric work in general. These issues are linguistic, but also cultural. Therefore, as

well as the questions of the relative frequency and infrequency with which lexical items tend to occur in the original and in the target language, of register, and of the secondary meanings of words that will affect the resonance of the text, translating Blaga into English also involves accommodating a Balkan view of the world married to an intellect steeped in German philosophy (Blaga, 2012: 109). Furthermore, experience of life in the milieu from which Blaga derives his poetry, the traditional Romanian village, is requisite for a fuller understanding of the poet's world and therefore of his work.

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THE ROMANIAN PUBLIC DISCOURSE ON TRANS-FORMING/ DE-FORMING/ RE-FORMING/ CON-FORMING (TO) EUROPE

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ABSTRACT

Long ago, Europe ceased to be just an objective geographic notion; it has been covering for centuries cultural, ideological, political or economic realities. From Renaissance to Post-Communism, in the Romanian public discourse, Europe legitimized or de-legitimized different aspirations, desires or utopias. The present lecture aims at analysing the idea of Europe in the Romanian cultural space; its main purpose is trying to catch a glimpse of the way Romanians perceive Europe. The premise I start from is that certain paradigms, such as tolerance or multiculturalism are understood differently in Occident and Orient, that is in West and East, based on some historical moments when Romanian culture, alongside with some other Balkan cultures, seems to drift apart from the cultural realities of what we nowadays consider the core of Europe. Moreover, analysing the discourses on identity, one needs to oppose two concepts which are, at the same time, interdependent: identity vs. alterity. The present paper will discuss the idea of Europe on two different levels. Firstly, a brief introduction to Romanian history is absolutely necessary. Secondly, having the objective facts on the table, one needs to try to make the necessary connections between history, culture and collective mentality. At the end, the result should be a better understanding of how and, more importantly, why discourses on integrating into Europe remain challenging and polemic in the Romanian culture even today

KEYWORDS

Romanian culture, Europe, discourse on identity, alterity, history

To speak about discourses on identity seems to be rather a process of opposing different identities hoping to define one of them. For me, the supreme irony here is that, we define our cultures, our values the only way we can, and that means to

place them so that they face other cultures or values. Consequently, the existence of an alterity, of an otherness, is absolutely necessary in order to determine and strengthen one identity. Identity in itself can be defined as what remains after a struggle with an alterity, an otherness which challenges it in a precise moment in history. Ego, the concept itself is doomed to be conflictual. For a more graphic image, allow me to picture the struggle like this: a certain identity and a certain alterity collide in a certain moment in time; they mingle in a melting pot and then, they end up by being influenced one by the other, but never to that point to become one. The conflict still exists inside the melting pot, although 'in times of war, we forget how much we owe to our enemies' (Bond, 2008: 87). In the end, no pure identity and no pure alterity will arise from the melting pot; nevertheless, any discourse on identity will emphasize, at one point or another, the idea of 'purity'. *I am pure, The Other is impure*. In his book entitled *Pure and Impure*, the French philosopher Vladimir Jankelevitch says: 'Once fallen into History, what is pure, is doomed to become impure, even if it were to remain alone in the world' (Jankelevitch, 2004: 27, our translation). History is here a metaphor for the human interaction throughout time. By interacting permanently, humans share their ideas and values in such an indistinct way that it is impossible, at one moment in history, to state precisely that one's identity is completely unaltered by these continuous interactions. The idea of purity degenerates in nationalism and violence precisely because those who consider themselves pure feel the desire to defend their purity at any cost.

What does it mean for a 21st century Romanian citizen to be European? It depends, of course, on the citizen we discuss about but, at the same time, more disturbingly, it depends on what kind of space and time this European identity faces. On the streets of Tel Aviv, one can have a different sense of being European than on the boulevards of Paris or Berlin. For an Eastern European, the paradigm is even more confusing. For almost half a century, inside the Iron Curtain, the Easterner had a distinct feeling of being thrown out of Europe, the feeling of not belonging to a type of society upon which he/she had projected dreams, wishes and images. In order to describe this sense of awkwardness an Eastern European felt after the fall of Communism when being in a Western country, allow me to quote a Georgian writer, Lasha Bugadze, who said in his novel *The Literature Express*: 'I guess the Europeans don't suspect such complexes exist. One has to come from the former Soviet Union or be a survivor of the '80s in order to understand these fears. The fear of making a mistake. The fear of misdemeanour. The fear of pissing in Vienna airport toilet design for handicapped and being obliged to pay the fine out of the miserable amount you managed to save for your trip abroad. *Why have you urinated in the toilet for handicapped, citizen?*' (Bugadze, 2012: 16). Therefore, the title I chose for my article. '50 Shades of Europe' is a metaphor covering the idea of Europe as an escape from a world of prejudices, conformism and lack of freedom

and prosperity. Throughout my article I will use the terms Occident and Orient, as an alternative for the commonly used East and West precisely because this terminology is closer to the Romanian cultural realities about which I will try to discuss.

After centuries of being in the Ottoman sphere of influence and, much recently, under the Russian influence, the way Romanians perceive Europe is significantly different from the way a Westerner does. Apparently, we all speak about the European identity; in reality we just use the same concept which covers completely different, and sometimes antagonistic, realities. Precisely because of this unavoidable dialectic, allow me, at the beginning of my study to draw some red lines on which I would like to focus on. Firstly, I would like to introduce a brief history of the idea of Europe in the Romanian culture starting with the Romanian Renaissance, moving through Enlightenment, then to the dawn of the Romanian state (19th century), the interwar period, the Communist era and, finally the spectacular change of paradigm which began at the Fall of Communism, in December 1989. Secondly, after stating the obvious, meaning East and West have different views and approaches on the same European concepts, I will try to identify the moments in history when Romanian culture, alongside with some other Balkan cultures, seemed to drift apart from what is today the core of Europe. My conjecture is that we need to focus mainly on the 15th and 16th centuries and on the 20th Century. I think we will find fascinating premises there.

As opposed to the Dark Ages, Renaissance (14th – 17th century) detached from the idea that the human being was being reduced to just a creation of a Divine force by stating that Man was defined by free will, freedom and the ability of evolving on his own. Europe rediscovered the Latin and Greek Antiquity not exclusively through the filter of religion, as it had been before. For Moldavian and Wallachian intellectuals (two separate Principalities which, centuries later, would form Romania), the stake was even higher.

In spite of the generous Renaissance ideas, it is precisely the religious paradigm that was to fuel up the discourse about a common European identity during the 15th and the 16th centuries when the Ottoman Empire reached its peak. At the end of the 14th century, the Balkan Peninsula falls under the influence of the Ottomans; in 1453, after the Conquest of Constantinople, Europe felt the constant threat of an alien identity which produced soon enough a retaliation, an exacerbation of a common European discourse whose core was the idea of defending Christianity.

The Myth of the never-ending fight of the Medieval Moldavian and Wallachian rulers to protect the Christian Europe is one of the strongest ideas which is still extant in the Romanian collective mentality and excites it even today. Facing a common opponent, the Renaissance intellectuals from Moldavia and Walachia discovered the Latin roots of their language, portraying the struggle against the Ottoman Empire as a resistance of a Christian world against an Islamic one. The

Moldavian historians Grigore Ureche and Ion Neculce of the 17th century attempted to create a feeling of belonging by emphasizing the ideas of Moldavians being the ancestors of Romans. In his chronicle covering the history of Moldavia between 1359-1594 (allegedly written between 1642-1647), Grigore Ureche provides us with a relevant depiction of the Ottomans, emphasizing the paradigm Islam vs. Christianity: ‘This kind of people which we call Turks, who were, in the beginning, but a hand of criminals spread so much that they cover two parts of the world, Asia and Africa, and they are attempting now to conquer the third part, Europe; they [seem to be] allowed by God to fight the Christians and spread horror on all their neighbours’ (Ureche, 2004: 73, our translation) . With Russia not playing yet a major role in the European game of power and not having a common border with any of the later Romanian territories, with the Ottomans shaking the gates of Europe, there were not too many options left. The immediate consequence of Romanians’ perceiving and presenting themselves as the inheritors of Roman ancestors was to give birth later to the Romanian national conscience. At that time Europe was a euphemism for the Christian world. As a consequence, Christianity remained until later on a defining idea of the major discourses on European identity.

With the Enlightenment (17th – 19th century), the history of Europe seems to evade the religious paradigm. The *new religion* of Enlightenment will be the concept of the social contract and, later, the notion of the Nation State. With the decline of the common enemy, the Islamic world, (The Ottoman Empire will collapse in 19th century), there was enough room for the new enemy. The old paradigm Christianity vs. Islam was temporarily downgraded and replaced by the new one, The Empires vs The Nation States. The alterity was now not the Non-European, but the foreigner from within, from inside the continent. On the stage of the history of ideas, the Transylvanian Romanian intellectuals emerged. After 170 years of independence, Transylvania was part of the Austrian Empire from 1699 till 1867. From 1867, the province fell under the influence of the Hungarian side of the newly created Austro-Hungarian Empire. Although, throughout the years, the numbers have been used ideologically, according to a census organised by the Austrians at the beginning of the 18th Century, 34% of the total population of Transylvania were Romanians. Poorly educated and having no civil rights, Romanians, as many other minorities incorporated in the dualist Austro-Hungarian Empire, were fascinated with the ideas of the French Revolution. The Transylvanian Enlightenment (‘Școala Ardeleană’ i.e. The Transylvanian School) developed at the end of the 18th century. Samuil Micu, Gheorghe Șincai and Petru Maior, following the Enlightenment tradition in Western Europe, strive to make knowledge available to people in their own language that is Romanian. They translate, publish dictionaries and set up schools, disseminating the idea of the Latinity of the Romanian language. Their cultural option for the Western Europe

is defined in opposition to what they perceived to be the Hungarian oppression. In an official document sent to the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Leopold II, was written 'The Romanian nation is the oldest amongst all the nations in Transylvania, because it is well known and proved, by historical documents, which testify of a [Romanian] tradition never interrupted, of the language, customs and folkways all proving that that the Romanian nation originates in the Roman colonies set up at the beginning of the 2nd century by the Roman Emperor Trajan, who repeatedly sent large numbers of veteran soldiers to defend the Province Dacia' (*Supplex Libellus Valachorum Transsilvaniae*).

Perhaps now there is the right moment to introduce in this stream of thought one of the strongest inner contradictions which defines Romanian culture even today; the vast majority of the Romanians are Greek Orthodox, but the language they speak is Latin rooted, Latin being the liturgical language of Catholicism. Moreover, the relation between State and Church, the perception of the state in the collective mentality derives from Byzantium; even today we have European aspirations, but Byzantine expectations. Precisely this contradiction was and still is the source of many cultural conflicts and a possible explanation for the superfluous and superficial understanding the Romanian society has of some European concepts such as tolerance, multiculturalism, plurality or globalization.

With the creation of the first Romanian state, a never-ending debate starts: where are we, the Romanians, culturally placed? In the shade of Orient, in the shade of Occident or, if of neither, are we a bridge between Orient and Occident, and what exactly does this mean and imply?! Never before the late 19th century did this debate seem to be more prolific. Not having a state, struggling to create one, while the Ottoman Empire was haunting the continent and sending cold shivers to the Christians, the option for the Romanian intellectual elite seemed to be clear: we have the Latin language, we belong to a Christian Europe, we have to keep our eyes opened to the West... In the second half of the 19th century, the matrix is much more complicated. When a nation needs to create a state, its elite faces many challenges, and the first question which arises is: on what kind of values, on what kind of institutions, on what kind of foundations should this new state be built? Above all, a newly created nation needs heroes. Nicolae Bălcescu, a Romanian revolutionary of 1848, created one of the most important Romanian heroes, the medieval ruler Mihai Viteazul (Michael the Brave), in his book *The Romanians under Michael the Brave* (allegedly written in 1846). For Bălcescu, Europe should be grateful to the Romanians for their fight against the Ottomans. 'If our neighbours had been making the same sacrifices as we were or, at least, if they had had supported us more, if the Germans had not been so soft in the war and so unreliable in their promises, if the Polish had not stopped us [...], then the Turks, these cruel enemies of civilization, whose cruelty have been delaying the enlightenment and the freedom of the world for centuries, would have been

thrown away to their Asian deserts, and Oriental Europe would have had a different fate' (Bălcescu, 2008: 32, our translation).

In 1859, Moldavia and Wallachia became unified under a single ruler, Alexandru Ioan Cuza, forming The Romanian Principalities. A series of reforms follow soon; a national system of education was conceived, the Latin alphabet replaced the Cyrillic one (1862), the estate of the Church was nationalized and given to people. The Orient and the Occident were still disputing their pre-eminence; centuries of being under the Ottoman influence shaped the mind of people in a way that was incompatible with the ideas of the French Revolution. On the streets of Bucharest and Iași, the two capitals of the young state, one could easily catch a glimpse of this puzzling reality by paying attention to the way people used to dress. If, by any chance, one of us were to get teleported in the late 19th century Romania, maybe the most striking image would be that of an amount of Romanians wearing the old Oriental clothes while the other amount dressed according to the fashion of Paris and Wien. The dressing code is primarily a significant, relevant metaphor for these two cultural options which the Romanians faced. The most important Romanian play writer, I.L. Caragiale, in his comedy *A Lost Letter* (1883), creates a character (Nae Cațavencu, a demagogic politician) who summarizes, in a comic way, the confusing attitude towards Europe: 'I do not wish to know, my dear honourable man, about your Europe, I want to know about my Romania and only about my Romania. The progress, my dear honourable man, the progress! In vain do you come with lies and antipatriotic inventions, with Europe, to deceit the public opinion [...] Europe should mind its own business. Are we interfering with its business? No, we are not!... Consequently, Europe does not have the right to interfere with ours...' (Caragiale. 2007: 42, our translation).

With the first king of Romanians, Carol I, who comes to power in 1866, the option for Europe, for West, seems to be clear, strong and irreversible. Ruling for 48 years, the King gave his country a Constitution, inspired by the Belgian Constitution, created democratic institutions, while the political parties played a certain role in governing the country. But the state itself, young and vulnerable, remained corrupt and venal. Authoritarian, the King, coming from the Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen family, has the merit to have accomplished a major achievement and that achievement was that of turning the country face to the West, and of removing it out of the Ottoman sphere of influence. But, we are now at the dawn of the 20th century, when the European paradigm became even more complicated and when the West itself could not be defined anymore as just the land of Enlightenment and culture. The time when the Ottomans were the only alterity is long gone. In 1918, Transylvania became part of Romania. In the field of culture, the old debate was soon to be returned to: the Orient vs. the Occident, the East vs. the West. This time, with the rise of Russia, the cardinal points which

catch the intellectual's attention are much more diverse. Two major cultural trends were being disputed on the Romanian stage of ideas in the interwar period: Modernism vs. Traditionalism. While traditionalists considered Western Europe as being the otherness, Modernists, on the contrary, saw in the West the Lighting House. Nichifor Crainic published, in 1929, an article entitled 'The meaning of Tradition'. He wrote the following: 'If the purpose of the Romanian people is to create a culture of its own, this also implies an orientation towards something. Those who seek an orientation towards the Occident, state a non-sense. The Orientation has in itself the word 'Orient', and means looking in the direction of the Orient. The religious altars are built facing the Orient, the religious icons are placed on the walls facing the Orient; the peasant, when making the sign of cross on the fields, turns to the Orient. An old saying says the light comes from the Orient. And, because we are geographically placed in the Orient and, through our Orthodox religion, we possess the truth of the Eastern light, our orientation cannot be elsewhere but towards the Orient, towards ourselves, towards what we are through the heritage we are proud of. We inherited an Eastern land, and we are the inheritors of our Christian forefathers – our fate is all contained within these geo-anthropological data. [...] Occidentalizing ourselves would mean denying our Oriental side; the European nihilism means the denial of our creative potential' (Crainic, 1929, 23, our translation). Unfortunately, this view, not at all singular, will be the root of Romanian nationalism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia.

On the other hand, Eugen Lovinescu, the promoter of Modernism, elaborated his well-known theory of synchronicity. For him, the Romanian culture should try to keep an eye open for the Occident, the place where the main philosophical, political and cultural ideas were spreading from country to country, shaping a strong cultural identity. In his monumental three volume work, *The History of the Modern Romanian Civilization*, published between 1924-1926, Lovinescu proved that the modernization of the Romanian culture was based on European ideas. While for traditionalists, the Greek Orthodox religion was the natural expression of the Romanian spirituality, a cardinal point which should guide the Romanian culture, Lovinescu had the remarkable intuition of seeing inside the Romanian society the clash between an Eastern religion and a western based culture. He also argued that the Slavonic language having been imposed as the liturgical language delayed the appearance of the first documents written in Romanian. Moreover, he equated Capitalism with the modernization of the Romanian state. Lovinescu also spoke about the spirit of the time (*zeitgeist*), a concept used, in various contexts, by Hegel or Herder. Each century, each specific historical moment has its own spirit, is defined by a set of values and norms which cross borders and contaminate cultures. For Lovinescu, this was of extreme importance for a culture, to be connected to the spirit of the time, to evolve and manifest itself while being aware of the existence of the spirit of the time. In the particular case of the Romanian culture, connecting to the spirit of the time means connecting to Occident. The main challenge his theory had to face was the accusation that, by accepting the

Occidental cultural influence, the Romanian culture would be doomed to remain a minor one, imitating and not producing original works. To this accusation, Lovinescu replied with the same theory of synchronicity; to him, any process of synchronizing a culture with certain cultural models would eventually lead to integration and finally, originality. As a consequence of his ideas, a new generation of Romanian writers were born. Writers such as Camil Petrescu, Hortensia-Papadat Bengescu, Anton Holban, Ion Barbu, reading their texts in Lovinescu's literary circle held in his own house, being guided and influenced by his aesthetic views and theories, produced a type literature partly synchronized with the new aesthetic ideas which animated the Occidental literatures.

Unfortunately, those were not auspicious times for ideas and debates. Nationalism, fascism, anti-Semitism and Communism arose; ideas were silenced by the noise of arms. After the Second World War, Europe was split, Romania falling under the influence of USSR. On February, 1945, in Ialta, Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill divided Europe into two spheres of influence. Eastern Europe was supposed to follow the Communist ideology while the West went on the Capitalist path with more than financial help from the USA. For more than four decades, the Iron Curtain (the term was used with its nowadays meaning by Churchill) fell over Europe, blocking any kind of cultural exchange between The Occident and Romania. Poverty, provincialism, propaganda, political cleansing were mutilating the Romanian society. Although having a theoretical international agenda, Communism imposed an aggressive nationalism under Nicolae Ceaușescu, the last Romanian Communist president. Not only was synchronicity as envisioned by Lovinescu not possible anymore, but also Capitalism and the Occident, the entire world outside the Iron Curtain became, in the official propaganda, a demon, an euphemism for exploitation. In the field of culture, the Romanian Communist Party encouraged writers to reflect on their works the great achievements of Communism, idealizing the status of the workers. Those who would fit in the new ideology were promoted and published, the others were constantly marginalized and banned. Everything was rigorously controlled by the Party-State that is the Party which was the State; the censorship and propaganda were functioning precisely like in Orwell's novel *1984*. For Romanians, Orwell's novel was not a Utopia or fiction, but the reality itself. During Communism, the Romanian collective mentality perceived Europe as a forbidden land. The borders, so strictly monitored, prevented the Romanians from travelling abroad, giving them the feeling that they were, in fact, outside Europe.

Immediately after the Bolshevik coup d'état, in 1917, a new political ideology was to be created. According to it, art was supposed to reflect the struggle and the triumphs of two social classes: workers (proletarians) and peasants. In Romanian literature, this trend artificially imposed by the Communist Party was later on

called 'proletcultism' (effective between 1945 and 1960). The word derives from two Russian words 'proletarnaia kultura' (the culture of the proletariat). For the new ideology, the artist was supposed to come down from his ivory tower, to go to factories, to speak with the workers and to reflect the contribution of the latter to the creation of the Communist State. Although several remarkable novels were written and published, the general view one has of the culture under Communism is that of a culture ideologically oriented. The crisis of the Communist system, more than obvious in the late seventies, contributed to the idealization of Western Europe. The more propaganda would say Capitalism was the absolute evil, the more powerful was the fascination towards it. Europe ended up by being seen in opposition to the Communist world. More than relevant is the fact that by saying the word 'Europe' in Romania, everyone understood exclusively 'Western Europe'.

With the fall of Communism, the full proportions of the disaster appeared in front of our eyes. Everything seemed to be collapsing; one by one, the old illusions so carefully and nicely presented by Communist propaganda were falling apart. For more than forty years, Western Europe was moving in a different direction. The art of dissimulating, a common practice for the Romanians, where everyone had to live in a schizophrenic universe, with bright official political speeches and dark realities, was easily transferred to the field of culture. An entire mythology so aggressively promoted by Romanian Communism became effective. Europe, for so long a forbidden place, was poorly understood in its values and ideas. The tolerance for sexual, religious or ethnic minorities, freedom of speech or the commitment against death penalty were ideas built during centuries in Western Europe. They grew up gradually and were internally assimilated while in Romania, there was never a real debate on any of them in the public space. Before joining E.U, in 2007, being forced to adjust the legislative system in such a way as to become compatible with the E.U standards, Romanians did not have the time to fully understand and commit to any of the values which define E.U. today. Whenever tough decisions had to be made, Romanian politicians would blame E.U for trying to impose them on Romania. Although Euroscepticism was initially marginal, after Romania's joining E.U, the faith in Europe dramatically decreased. After so many dreams, after so many unreasonable expectations, the tendency was nothing but normal. The desire to be part of E.U was exclusively based on the idea of being part of a richer world. Often, Europe was seen as an aggressor to the Romanian national specificity. On April 2013, a pole on Romanian Euroscepticism revealed the following data: 58% of the respondents considered their life had been changed for worse after joining E.U. 53% of them did not know anything about the European institutions and their role.

On the other hand, after empathizing with the Romanian revolution (December, 1989), several waves of Romanian emigrants severely reduced the sympathy the Occident had for this Eastern country so highly regarded for its struggle to get rid of Communism and embrace democracy. While separated by the Iron Curtain,

East and West, Occident and Orient, were idealizing each other. When, finally Romanians were not only a geographical, abstract reality, but a real presence on the streets of Madrid, London, Paris or Rome, it was impossible to ignore anymore a simple fact; for more than four centuries, East and West were speaking different languages, were raised to believe in different values. The tolerant Western Europe, facing an economic crisis and meeting easterners whose minds had been shaped by decades of Communism, rediscovered an early 20th century discourse, nationalistic and hatred-centred. All the illusions, all the expectations regarding a unifying Europe seem to fade away today.

Now, after having briefly covered some centuries of Romanian history and culture, centuries where the idea of Europe changed under ideological pressure, there come, perhaps, the time to try to give a possible answer to the question I raised at the beginning of my study. When exactly in history, did Romanian culture drift apart from the West, ending up being embedded in a different cultural paradigm? I suggest we focus on two crucial moments. The first one takes place in the early 15th century and is referred to as The Age of Discovery. Westerners, pushed forward by economic necessities, were discovering and colonizing exotic spaces. For them, this was the alterity, the otherness. From the 15th century onwards, the mind of the Westerner was shaped around two concepts which have remained unknown for the Easterner: colonialism and post-colonialism. While these two topics are merely subjects of academic interest in the East, they had become important parts of the everyday life in the West. For Romanians, the 15th century alterity was the Ottoman Empire. While the West was arguably imposing its own values on faraway territories, the East was preoccupied with accommodating itself to the values and desires of the Ottoman Empire. For centuries after, the East and the West were playing these two different games. In spite of the fact that the ideas of the French revolution penetrated the cultural Romanian space in the 19th century, the seeds were falling on a completely different ground. An Oriental one.

Secondly, for the Romanian collective mentality, the date of 30th of December 1947 was a crucial one. It came precisely when the gap between the Orient and the Occident was slowly closing. The Romanian king was deposed by Communists. What initially seemed to be but a mere sinister joke that is the Romanian Communist Party having only few members at that moment, became a reality which was to shape the Romanian cultural space for almost half a Century. The gap was dramatically widening. It is of extreme importance to state that in the whole Romanian history, the period between 1990 till present is the longest time of uninterrupted democracy. And, as we all know, democratic mechanisms need time to impose themselves, nations need time to assimilate them, and people need to continually exercise democracy, freedom of speech, freedom of vote, equality of opportunity a.s.o in order to profoundly understand how they function.

At the end of my paper, allow me to indulge in a speculative attempt to picture the future of the Romanian's relations to Europe. It is merely an exercise of imagination, plus an important dosage of wishful thinking. The key to closing the gaps between West and Romania might be... time. More than two and a half millennia ago, the Chinese general, Sun Tzu, in his well-known *Art of War*, said: 'If you wait by the river long enough, the bodies of your enemies will float by'. Provincialism, ethnocentrism, nationalism, xenophobia can be, sooner or later, alien concepts for the new generations travelling from country to country, meeting people having different ethnic origins, sexual or religious options. The sense of belonging, for so long defined in a violent opposition to the Other will, perhaps, step aside from the path of violence. The body of the enemy, which is the ignorance and the exacerbation of several forms of cultural autism, will float by the river if we wait long enough and, while waiting, we find ways of allowing young generations to travel and find the Other, speak to him about things we share. The Bogeyman, portrayed as a dark and devilish monster, might be, when met directly, just a human being who perhaps thinks differently, behaves differently, speaks differently but has the same desire of stating his difference in a calm voice, using arguments and ideas... I am the first to admit there are not too many signs to justify such a bright view today. But, no one can reasonably predict the way our world will be in, let us say, 2090. The grownups who will populate the Earth in 2090 are not even born, and the beauty of it is that, under the circumstances, everything is possible.

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EUROPEAN IDENTITY CHALLENGED ROMANIAN POLITICIANS DISCUSSING FREE MOVEMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF KINSHIP-BASED MORALITY

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ABSTRACT

In this article, I will analyse how Romanian Presidents and Prime Ministers from 2004 to 2014 discussed the right to free movement in terms of the Romanian state and identity. The Romanian statements were collected from the official website of the President of Romania, from the Prime Minister's website as well from the archives of the Romanian Government. I have divided the arguments into duty-based and result-based moral approaches to free movement, while focusing especially on identity-related questions of free movement. The analysis reveals that the right to free movement was discussed in connection with the Romanian community, and the same right should apply to Moldovan citizens, who are of the same ethnic origin and have the same official language. Romania has also granted Romanian citizenship for many Moldovans, thus granting them the right to free movement in the European Union. I will first introduce the material and the theoretical framework used in the analysis, and present the background of my doctoral dissertation from which the results have been drawn. The empirical part of the article will be divided in two parts, the former considering the duty-based community feelings between Romanians and Moldovans in terms of free movement, while the latter discusses solidarity-related comments about free movement. Finally, I will draw my conclusions relying on the sections concerning kinship-based questions related to free movement in the Romanian discourse. I will argue that there was not much kinship felt towards the European Union in the free movement discourse, but Romania and Moldova were considered to consist of the same people, and free movement should thus be granted to Moldovans, too. To a certain extent, this has also occurred in granting the citizenship to many Moldovan citizens.

KEYWORDS

Romania, free movement, European Union, Moldova, identity

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this article is to analyse how Romanian political leaders discuss the relation between free movement and kinship-related morality. Since Romania has a semi-presidential political system, the analysed statements include both those made by the Romanian Presidents and the Prime ministers from 2005 to 2015. The President of Romania officially represents Romania in the European Council. However, the previous Prime Minister Victor Ponta questioned this practice, and although it had been decided in the Romanian Constitutional Court that the President should attend, Ponta participated in the Council meetings anyway, and at the end of 2012 when there was a constitutional crisis involving protests, they signed an agreement of cohabitation.

The Romanian Prime Minister at the end of 2004 was Călin Popescu-Tăriceanu, appointed by the president of the time, Traian Băsescu, who served two terms until 2014. Băsescu represented the Democratic Party (*Partidul Democrat*, PD), while Popescu-Tăriceanu represented the National Liberal Party (*Partidul Național Liberal*, PNL), which together constituted a centre-right electoral alliance called Justice and Truth Alliance (*Alianța Dreptate și Adevăr*). In 2008, Emil Boc was appointed as Prime Minister, representing the Democratic Liberal Party (*Partidul Democrat-Liberal*, PDL), which was merged from Băsescu's Democratic Party (PD) and the Liberal Democratic Party (*Partidul Liberal Democrat*, PLD). After Boc, Mihai Răzvan Ungureanu held the post of Prime Minister for a few months, but his term would be ignored for its short duration, and ended due to a lack of confidence.

In addition, the statements of the previous Prime Minister, Victor Ponta, who entered the office in May 2012 and resigned in November 2015, will be analysed. He represented the Social Democratic Party (*Partidul Social Democrat*, PSD), and had been the opposition leader until he was appointed as Prime Minister. Taken into account the confusion of the Romanian political parties, Ponta could be considered the only leftist Prime Minister during the period covered in this article.¹ In the presidential elections of 2014, Klaus Iohannis was elected as the new President, and he represents the Christian Liberal Alliance consisting of the National Liberal Party (PNL) and the Liberal Democratic Party (PLD), which was later merged into the PNL.

Although the party system appears rather confusing, PSD (PM Ponta), PDL (President Băsescu and PM Boc) and PNL (PM Popescu-Tăriceanu and President Iohannis) have dominated the political system during the last decades, although the names of the parties have changed. During the post-communist era, PSD has been

¹ Victor Ponta has been accused for corruption and will stand trial for fraud, tax evasion and money laundering. He resigned in November 2015 after an accident in a Romanian nightclub, in which tens of people were killed.

the largest party and a successor communist party, PDL has been the second-largest party, and PNL the third largest, which formed a winning alliance in the 2012 parliamentary elections with the PSD (Gherghina; Volintiru, 2015: 11). Although the PSD usually receives approximately third of the votes, the period analysed in this article is dominated by the second largest party, represented for ten years by President Băsescu and four years by PM Boc.

The question of free movement in the Romanian political discourse is significant, Romania being the EU Member State with most citizens residing in other states. The number of Romanians abroad is noteworthy, and already in 2010, the number of Romanian migrants outside Romania was 2.77 million, which represents 13 % of the total population (Stan; Erne, 2014). This illustrates that it is not a question of a minor phenomenon. In 2014, the number of Romanian citizens in Italy was almost 1.1 million, and in Spain 728,000, according to Eurostat. To compare with, in Germany the number was only 245,000 and 136,000 in the UK. Moreover, the average wage in Romania at the time of the European Union accession was about one tenth of the European average, which has also provided them an incentive to move elsewhere (Recchi, 2013: 142). The rise of the wage level and living standards in the new Member States may, however, result in Eastern Europe becoming more powerful in the EU. For example, Spain had much lower wages than rest of the community, and was thus subject to transitional restrictions when it joined the European Community in 1986. However, it has been able to rise to the European elite, and has much power in the Union matters today.

In contrast, the study by Stan and Erne shows that the question of Romanian migration cannot be accounted for by the sheer difference in the development level in Romania and other European Union countries. Instead, they argue that the growing level of Romanians emigrating from the country is largely due to the privatization of social and health care services, flexibilisation of labour market and the resulting low-cost employment, which inclines people to move west (Stan; Erne, 2014). Therefore, although the Romanian politicians reiterate the need to make educated people stay in Romania, as we will later observe, that might not always be even the real target if the country has enough people willing to work on the wage level they can afford.

Although Romania is not a country of immigration, it is also interesting that Romania has rather strict requirements for obtaining the Romanian citizenship. For example, requirements include 8 years of residence in Romania, complemented with the availability of means of subsistence, but the residence period is halved for internationally famous personalities, citizens of EU Member States and persons who have invested at least EUR 1,000,000 in Romania (Strumia, 2013: 77). Therefore, although Romanian politicians talk about equal rights, as evidenced later, the conditions for naturalization imply that citizenship is easier to acquire not only by EU citizens but by rich or famous people.

As can be observed, all four attitudes of Table 3 can be used in arguments both for and against the right to free movement. In addition to justificatory arguments, free movement can also be considered a threat to the society (e.g. Huysmans, 2000; Huysmans, 2006: 115-117). However, the application of this four-fold categorization of moral attitudes provides a novel and systematic framework for analysing moral approaches.

Table 1. Methodological framework.

	Duty	
	AGREEMENT Duty to maintain the agreed right to free movement vs. Duty to protect the security of the citizens	COMMUNITY Duty to maintain free movement as central to the community vs. Duty to maintain the exclusive community
Rationality	Kinship	
	UTILITY Freedom of movement employed instrumentally for more integration vs. Welfare threat	SOLIDARITY Free movement creates solidarity in our enlarging Union vs. Threat of segregation
	Result	

Whereas normative ethical discussion in philosophy is generally divided into duty-based and consequence-based theories (see e.g. Mackie, 1984), this division is also central in this article. I will focus on the right-hand cells of the table, where ‘kinship’ refers to an attitude based on shared we-feeling. On the normative ethical vertical axis of Table 1, ‘duty’ refers to morality based on pre-existing duties, while ‘result’ requires that morals are grounded on assessing the expected consequences. The methodological framework can be employed to study different types of institutional arguments, but in this article, my focus is on how the Romanian politicians argue about the right to free movement and kinship-based morality. While the discussion on duty versus result is part of normative ethics, the debate on rationality is a meta-ethical approach. This approach revolves around the method of finding the right moral principles and originates from Immanuel Kant (morality as a matter of reason) and David Hume (morality as a matter of sentiment) (Hume, 1896: 470-476; Kant, 1999; cf. Rorty, 1999). Simply put, kinship here refers to separating between ‘us’ and ‘others’, while rationality refers to impartial rational deliberation and will be ignored for the purposes of this article.

As can be observed, all four attitudes of Table 1 can be used in arguments both for and against the right to free movement, as there are several threats involved (see also Huysmans, 2006: 69). Each aspect depicts a different moral stance and provides a fresh perspective to the study of the right to free movement. The community dimension, as seen in the top-right cell, is based on the right to free movement either as a communal duty or as a duty to protect the community from others. In the bottom-right cell, solidary identification is the basis for solidarity, which aims at creating solidarity by extending the sense of ‘us’ and identifying with others. However, solidarity can be viewed as both the solidarity of the entire European community or of a smaller community. In this article, I will thus concentrate on the kinship-based dimensions, that is, the attitudes related to community and solidarity.

In the Romanian case, there is little divergence between the political parties, as visible in the table below. There appears to be a strong consensus on the freedom of movement as worth pursuing, since the Romanian politicians refer mostly to EU agreements. Although community and solidarity dimensions were less visible in the argumentation, the arguments provide interesting insights, as we will later observe. While the small number of such statements reveals that free movement is connected to kinship-based morality in approximately every third statement, the arguments are important in illustrating the relation between free movement and European and national identities.

Table 2. Romanian attitudes to free movement. N=46.

Speaker	Term	Agreement	Utility	Community	Solidarity	Analysed N	Total N
PM Popescu-Tăriceanu (PNL)	2004–2008	3	0	1	0	4	185
President Băsescu (PDL)	2004–2014	10	8	6	4	28	1467
PM Boc (PDL)	2008–2012	1	1	1	0	3	115
PM Ponta (PSD)	2012–	6	1	1	0	8	322
President Iohannis (PNL)	2014–	2	1	0	0	3	15
Sum		22	11	9	4	46	2104

Romanian President Băseșcu is the politician that discussed free movement the most, which is understandable given his ten-year presidential term, and therefore most of the comments reflected his approach to the issue. An interesting issue to note is that the politicians insisted on having equal right to free movement (the transitional restrictions ended only in January 2014), even though they were equally worried that the educated Romanian workers would go to work to other Member States. However, they considered the problem to be something the state was supposed to solve, and were not willing to compromise the right to free movement. Still, it is interesting that references to free movement as part of the European community were rare, while the politicians were more concerned about ethnic Romanians in Moldova and those residing in other EU states.

MORAL IMPERATIVES IN THE COMMUNITY DIMENSION: WE SHOULD GET WHAT THE CITIZENS NEED

In this section, arguments that present free movement in terms of duties towards the community will be examined, and the Romanian approach could be depicted with a moral imperative directed at the Romanians themselves: get what the citizens need. Therefore, community arguments were mainly targeted at the community of Romanian and Moldovan citizens who should be entitled to the right to free movement. This article will thus analyse the question of free movement as us-them division, originating from the discussion on communitarianism, where morality is always particular to a certain community (see e.g. Taylor, 1999). Often, the tone of different politicians is different or even the same politicians might employ different rhetoric in different times. Communitarian theory can also be used as a pretext for exclusion, since some communitarians have argued that immigrants may threaten the distinctiveness of communities (Walzer, 1983: 39). Therefore, what we can observe in this analysis is moral argumentation between the European right to free movement and the common values of the Romanian society. While in the subsequent solidarity section, free movement is connected to creating a European community, here the view is that the community already exists and has created the duty to uphold free movement for all members of the community.

In this section, I will trace the existence of community-related comments on free movement, and analyse them. The categorization is based on discussing free movement in a duty-based manner that focuses on common identities rather than formal agreements. For example, discourse on the necessity of free movement in terms of future generations, European heritage or identity-related national duties are categorized in this group.

Romania joined the European Union only in 2007, and the access of Romanian workers to other Member States was limited until 2014, when the restrictions had

to be ended. Moreover, Romania has still not been accepted in the Schengen Area as corruption at the external borders remains a serious concern (Papadimitriou; Phinnemore, 2008: 140), which may contribute to the grudge held against the other Member States. This may be one of the reasons why the references to the European community were few, and the sense of unity presented by the politicians focused on ethnic Romanians at home and abroad, as I am about to show. Romania is often connected to Roma people and it is thought that Roma people coming from other Member States are Romanians, which may further deteriorate the attitudes toward the country and vice versa. For example, in the UK, the Eastern European migrants often suffer from the negative othering, ‘surrounding perceived economic worth and contribution’ (Tonkiss, 2013b: 151). Although the Romanian state was eager to join the Union, the discourse was not always very pro-European in statements concerning free movement.

Instead, national interest was emphasized, and a special attention was paid to the community of Romanians and Moldovans, which President Băsescu even wanted to unite. It is understandable that the Romanian politicians feel closer to a country with the same official language and common roots, while they do not feel that much unity with the European Union, with some countries that do not even welcome Romanian people. The unification of Romania and Moldova was already on the political agenda after Moldova declared its independence in 1991; although Romania was the first to recognize the country’s independence, Romanian leaders hoped for eventual unification similar to the German model. Still, the Romanian public did not have the same objective, and it did not remain an important policy goal (Roper, 2000: 126-127).

The ‘Romania-Moldova’ case is interesting when considered in community terms. Moldova consists of two parts: an autonomous Transnistria region, which is Russian-speaking, and the rest of Moldova, which is Romanian-speaking (although the language is called Moldovan, but regarded by the Constitutional Court of Moldova to be the same as the Romanian language, see Curtea Constituțională 2013). Therefore, the country is divided into two very different parts with different political ambitions. Whereas Transnistria would like to join Russia, the rest of Moldova is not very eager in joining Romania, although Moldovan citizens have been keen in applying for the Romanian passports based on Romanian ethnicity, which provides them access to the entire European Union. Moldova is not likely to join the European Union any time soon, but many of them already have the right to free movement, and perhaps that is the most important issue to pursue. Still, even the Romanian politicians do not regard Moldovans as part of the European community as the country is not part of the European Union.

The Romanian politicians appeared to fear that they were not in the same position as the other EU Member States, while they would prefer to be treated as a fully-fledged Member State with free movement and open borders. It is also interesting that Romania focuses on Moldova in the community arguments, while discussion

on Roma is rarer, and non-existent with regard to ethnic Hungarians, also numerous in the country.

In Romania, there has only been a small political fraction emphasizing nationalistic policy, while the Romanian leading politicians have considered EU accession as their priority since the beginning of 1990s. In 1995, a survey about whether Romanians would vote yes or no in a referendum on EU membership showed the highest figure in Eastern Europe, 97% (Roper, 2000: 117-119). In a manner, the approach of Romanians seem to be based on practical cooperation and the idea of minimum convergence on common norms, while there is not much unity felt with the rest of the EU. It has also been argued that the Romanian elite and public want to be recognized as good Europeans (Sedelmeier, 2014: 115). In the Romanian discourse, there is more antagonism than sense of community towards other European countries, although in the solidarity dimension, some kinship -type statements were also found.

For example, in 2006 the President revealed that he had proposed the Moldovan Prime Minister that Moldova could join the EU already in 2007 as part of Romania. According to him, ‘Este însă opțiunea autorităților de la Chișinău și a poporului Republicii Moldova ce vor dori să facă.’ (Băsescu, 2006)² In the same speech, he emphasized the common history and language of the two countries, which also came up in many other statements of the Romanian political leaders. In 2013, President Băsescu declared in a television programme that: ‘Sunt convins că, dacă în Republica Moldova va exista un curent unionist, România va spune ‘da’ fără să ezite. Proiectul de țară pentru România, următorul proiect de țară este ‘Vrem să ne întregim țara!’ (Băsescu, 2013)³ This project appears to have existed in the country’s agenda at least until the end of Băsescu’s term. The President thus thought that these countries should belong to the same state, but apparently such unionist tendency has been lacking in Moldova, since the state project has not progressed. This illustrates the feeling of community between Romania and Moldova, which, however, was not considered rival to the European integration, but it is interesting that the community relations with Moldova were much more emphasized also in the context of free movement. Whereas Moldovans were thus considered the same as Romanians, Europe was rather presented as something where Romanians can go and work, but it is not felt as a community Romania belongs to.

² ‘It is, however, an option of the leaders of Chișinău and of the people of the Republic of Moldova, if they want to do that’ (our translation).

³ ‘I am convinced that, if there is a unionist tendency in Moldova, Romania will say ‘yes’ without hesitation. State project for Romania, the next state project is ‘We want to make the country whole again!’ (our translation).

However, a different type of argumentation was present at a meeting in 2006 with MEP Emma Nicholson, who co-chaired the High Level Group for Romania's Children with the Romanian Prime Minister. Instead, Premier Popescu-Tăriceanu stated that the adoption of the free movement shall not be made at the expense of children: 'Nu putem să ne prevalăm de libertatea de circulație a mărfurilor, bunurilor, mașinilor sau angajaților, să facem o paralelă cu copiii și să spunem, pe baza aceluiași principiu de liberă circulație, că reluăm adopțiile'. (Popescu-Tăriceanu, 2006)⁴ The comment was made before Romania joined the European Union, and although the venue of the speech affects the contents, he did not specify how these rights contradict. Is it against children's rights to take them to another country? This is the only voice towards free movement where the principle was subordinated by another right, and not very strongly. However, since the commitment to Romanian children was presented prevailing with regard to the right to free movement, the community of Romanians was presented as the primary point of reference. The importance of community was thus visible before the accession in the Prime Minister's discourse, directed at the national level.

There were also some arguments that presented free movement as a duty stemming from the European integration. In 2007, President Traian Băsescu declared that: 'În primul rând specificul construcției Uniunii Europene generează o nevoie sporită de mobilitate transcontinentală și de relocalizare a cetățenilor și a activităților, cu deosebire datorată celor patru libertăți referitoare la circulația persoanelor, bunurilor, serviciilor și capitalului pe piața internă a Uniunii.' (Băsescu, 2007)⁵ The argument was not a very strong appeal to the European community, and it was not specified where the need for such mobility originates. The statement implied that mobility is an important part of the European community and of the European Union construction, since there is need for it.

Although Moldova was often present in the Romanian discourse, the Moldovan politicians have not been that eager in uniting with Romania, and they only allowed dual citizenship in 2003, but banned the entry of dual citizenship holders in public offices, which the European Court of Human Rights later judged as disproportionate⁶ (Roper, 2005). In 2009, President Băsescu stated that Romania would continue to acknowledge the ethnic Romanians in Moldova: 'Vom continua

⁴ 'We cannot allow the free movement of goods, properties, cars or workers prevail, and consider it all parallel to children, and say, relying on the same principle of free movement, that we will allow adoptions to be made again.' (our translation).

⁵ 'In the first place, the specific construction of the European Union creates an increased need for transcontinental mobility and the relocation of citizens and activities, with the difference made between the four liberties referred to as the movement of persons, goods, services and capital in the internal market of the Union' (our translation).

⁶ ECHR *Tănase vs. Moldova* 27.4.2010: 'In the light of these considerations, the Court found the provisions preventing elected MPs with multiple nationalities from taking seats in Parliament to be disproportionate and unanimously held that there had been a violation of Article 3 of Protocol No. 1.'

să acordăm sprijin persoanelor din Republica Moldova care se consideră români și simt românește, pentru a-și păstra identitatea. Nu putem accepta ca românii de peste Prut să fie izolați de restul Europei. Nu putem accepta ca, în special generația tânără, să nu aibă șansa de a circula liber și de a-și face studiile în țara noastră sau în restul țărilor europene'. (Băsescu, 2009)⁷ He referred to the fact that Romania grants citizenships for ethnic Romanians in Moldova, which also allows them to move freely in the EU. This community argument refers to ethnic Romanians, who should all have the right to free movement.

In 2009, Romanian associations in Italy illustrated that there were dysfunctions with the legal rights of Romanian citizens with regard to the free movement of labour. Italy provided free movement for Romanian workers only in 2012, and the associations had reported some problems with regard to that, as informed by the Prime Minister's office: 'Reprezentanții asociațiilor de români din Italia au semnalat, de asemenea, unele disfuncționalități în ceea ce privește asigurarea serviciilor consulare de calitate și obținerea cardului european de sănătate, precum și aspecte legate de drepturile cetățenilor români în ceea ce privește libertatea circulației muncii. Primul-ministru a precizat că aceste probleme vor fi analizate pentru a fi identificate soluțiile care se impun și a transmis românilor care trăiesc în străinătate că „mai devreme sau mai târziu locul fiecăruia dintre noi este acasă în România'. (Boc, 2009)⁸

Prime Minister Boc's statement was the only comment that directly disapproved of Romanians' moving permanently abroad, or at least illustrated a hope that they might return home. This community argument retains that Romanians create a community and they should and not leave for other countries. This shows that although the premier wanted to solve the problems related to the free movement of people, he did not consider it a duty of the European community but mainly a right of the Romanian citizens to visit and work in other countries.

An interesting dimension in the Romanian discussion is thus the level of unity towards Moldovans. Although close kinship was not observed towards other European countries, – instead, it was frustrating for Romanians not to have the

⁷ 'We will continue to provide our support for persons from the Republic of Moldova who consider themselves Romanians and are Romanians, for them to maintain their identity. We cannot accept that Romanians on the other side of the river Prut be isolated from the rest of Europe. We cannot accept that especially the young generation would not have the chance to move freely and study in our country and in the rest of Europe' (our translation).

⁸ 'The representatives of the Romanian associations in Italy have also signalled certain dysfunctions as regards good consular services and obtaining European health insurance cards, and in aspects related to the rights of Romanian citizens as regards the free movement of workers. The Prime Minister specified that these problems would be analysed in order to identify solutions to enforce these, and he informed the Romanians who lived abroad that 'sooner or later, the place of each of us is at home in Romania' (our translation).

same rights – there was a strong feeling of unity with the Moldovans. For example, in 2010, President Băsescu stated that: ‘Oamenii din Republica Moldova sunt la fel de îndreptățiți, consider eu, ca și oamenii din România, să circule liber în Europa, să circule liber în România, să circule liber acolo unde poate circula orice european.’ (Băsescu, 2010a)⁹ Therefore, Moldovans were considered morally equal in the sense of being entitled to similar rights. In addition, Papadimitrou and Phinnemore have argued that Romania would not even have strengthened the border with Moldova before EU accession ‘without the external leverage of the EU’ (Papadimitriou; Phinnemore, 2008: 141).

In addition to the commitment towards Moldovans, the duty towards Romanians abroad was also visible in several comments. In 2011, Băsescu mentioned free movement and the free access to the European labour market as the most important issue in the diplomacy of Romania, positioned first in the list. According to him, ‘Libera circulație, liberalizarea accesului pe piața europeană a muncii, consolidarea identității etnice, culturale, lingvistice și spirituale și, în general, întărirea legăturii cu țara a românilor, oriunde s-ar afla ei, vor fi liniile de forță ale diplomației române în 2011.’ (Băsescu, 2011)¹⁰ The duty of the president towards the Romanian community is evident already in that connections to Romanians abroad should be maintained. In addition, the reinforcement of such relations underlines the significance of national commitments in terms of European integration.

A marked tendency in the Romanian argumentation was thus the emphasis on Romanians abroad. Indeed, the worry about the Romanians abroad was visible in the above comment and in the following statement made by President Băsescu in 2014: ‘Și, în sfârșit, aș aborda o ultimă problemă, legată de diaspora, încă facem prea puțin pentru românii din diaspora, nu mă refer la cei din jurul frontierelor, problemă pe care am abordat-o, ci la românii care, după liberalizarea circulației și pentru noi, după liberalizarea pieței forței de muncă, se află în Italia, în Spania, în Franța, în Germania, în Marea Britanie, în Irlanda, în Statele Unite chiar.’ (Băsescu 2014)¹¹

⁹ ‘The people of the Republic of Moldova are equally entitled, in my opinion, as the Romanian people are, to move freely in Europe, to move freely in Romania and to move freely wherever any European can’ (our translation).

¹⁰ ‘Free movement, free access to the European labour market, consolidation of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and spiritual identities, and in general, reinforcement of the relation of Romanians to the country, wherever they are, will be the focal points of Romanian diplomacy in 2011’ (our translation).

¹¹ ‘And finally, I would like to address the last problem related to diaspora, at the moment we do too little for the Romanians in diaspora, I am not only referring to those around our borders, a problem that I have already addressed, but the Romanians who, after our freedom of movement, after the free labour market, are located in Italy, Spain, France, Germany, the UK, Ireland and even the United States’ (our translation).

This community argument is addressed exclusively towards Romanians in other EU countries. While Romanian politicians insist on having free movement, they are also worried over people leaving the country. The above comment does not question free movement, but it shows that there are problems when so many Romanians live abroad. In this regard, there is some perplexity in the argumentation. Perhaps the Romanian leaders would want Romanian citizens to have full rights to move freely, but they would like to have more control over who actually leaves the country.

The emphasis on Moldovans in the free movement discourse is peculiar in the sense that Romanian leaders considered accession in the European Union more important than maintaining an open border with Moldova. Instead, half a million Romanian citizenship applications were made by Moldovans in 2007 as Romania joined the Union, which gave them the right to free movement in the Union (Papadimitriou; Phinnemore, 2008: 138). The incumbent Prime Minister Victor Ponta is the only one representing a left-wing (social democratic) party in this article, but the differences in statements related to free movement are not observed. Like the other political leaders, Ponta also lent his support for Moldova for its integration into the European Union. In 2012, he stated that ‘Vom continua să pledăm pentru o perspectivă europeană clară și vom promova cu prioritate toate proiectele care vizează dezvoltarea societății din Republica Moldova în spiritul valorilor democratice, creșterea bunăstării și libera circulație a cetățenilor în spațiul Uniunii Europene.’ (Ponta, 2012)¹² This again shows the community approach towards Moldovans, where promoting the Moldovans’ free movement is considered a duty to the community. Still, free movement was only one issue in a list of several duties, but it is revealing in terms that free movement is not always encouraged for (educated) Romanians, but the Romanian politicians want to provide free movement for Moldovans, in the communitarian vein.

Overall, duty-based approach towards the European Union in terms of free movement is not very strong in the Romanian discourse, but Romanian politicians mainly argued that the Romanian state had duties towards both Romanian citizens abroad and towards Moldovans. The Romanian comments may also reflect a subordinate position in the Union, where the country is mainly considered having rights to be claimed from the Union, not duties towards it. For Romania, free movement is something that should be enlarged to cover the entire Romanian community, i.e. also the Moldovans. To put it simply, these views support the idea of the European Union consisting of several communities that do not have

¹² ‘We will promote with priority all the projects that aim at the development of the society of the Republic of Moldova in the spirit of democratic values, increasing well-being and the free movement of the citizens in the area of the European Union’ (our translation).

identical values. Instead, the imminent community is the most important one, and the Union is farther.

In the following section, I will focus on solidarity arguments on free movement made by the Romanian politicians. Those are more result-oriented than the community arguments analysed in this section. However, they reveal how the political leaders utter that solidarity within the European Union could be enhanced with free movement. Still, as argued in this section, the sense of community inside the European Union is lacking.

MORAL IMPERATIVES WITH REGARD TO SOLIDARITY: EU, ENHANCE SOLIDARITY BY REMOVING BORDERS

In this section, the focus will be on arguments that frame present movement as a symbol strengthening European unification and integration. The Romanian approach could be depicted with an imperative addressed at the EU: enhance solidarity by removing borders. More specifically, the European Union should be a borderless area where everyone could participate in the construction of the European future and minorities were integrated.

The solidarity dimension is based on Richard Rorty's ideas about enlarging solidarity and by trying to make people previously thought of as 'them' becoming part of 'us' (Rorty, 1989). However, this may be too thick a demand, since people should be able to feel kinship with everyone, instead of e.g. the unity being created with legal rights. An example of a pursuit for European solidarity could be considered the European citizenship, a measure with which to socialize Europeans to the same identity, but this excludes the people who do not have the citizenship (Strumia, 2013: 133). The idea of citizenship is of course also a legal concept, but one that is much more sentiment-based than other supranational agreements. In a similar manner, free movement, constituting the core of European citizenship, could serve as a symbol of European unification.

While the community dimension discussed in the previous section was more based on a stable community identity, in this section, the focus is on constructing the Union and deeper integration through solidarity. For example, when solidarity is employed in explaining European enlargement, the result is important, as the 'Other' becomes part of 'us' (Fierke; Wiener, 2001). In addition, while the European Union has been already created, the task of the politicians and other elites would be to construct a European sense of 'us'. Therefore, the view of solidarity in this section is precisely on the aspect of how free movement as a European Union institutional norm could be able to change identities and approaches in Europe in order to make the 'Others', disappear, both with regard to European citizens and non-European citizens.

Solidarity and community are closely related features, but I have wanted to keep them separate in order to trace the difference between duty-oriented and result-

oriented approaches. This is an important division in moral philosophy, and reveals something about the moral thinking in general: whether the actions we do should be based on something that has been determined before or whether we should focus on what happens in the future. To some extent, they are also intertwined, since the norms we determine beforehand are also related to what is expected to occur when the norms are applied. Still, there is a difference in whether the community creates norms as communal duties or whether norms are constructively created to increase the solidarity of the community. Moreover, whereas the duty-based idea treats free movement as having intrinsic value, in result-based thinking it is rather an instrument to develop the sense of community.

The idea of creating a thick identity at the European level has also been called regional nationalism, which considers that a thick collective identity is something positive, which would mean creating a new Euro-nation to subsume national identities. However, it is a problematic concept, since it is based on the idea of immovable common values and some external other against which this identity is formed. It is also contradictory to pursue the creation of a new nation by criticizing the existence of the current national identities (Tonkiss, 2013b: 52-55).

In the previous section, I discussed Romania's community-based arguments mainly related to Moldova and Romanians abroad, which aroused more community feeling among Romanian politicians than the European Union. Still, although the Romanian politicians do not appear to maintain a sense of European unity, they are still interested in creating that, particularly through free movement, as demonstrated in this section. Indeed, the sentiment-focused approach of the Romanian leaders was mainly targeted towards ethnic Romanians, but the European unification is considered a positive matter in Romania, and something that can be brought forward with free movement.

At this point, my view is that there is no unified concept of European identity that would prevail, and the Romanian situation is peculiar in the sense that the Romanian accession to the EU has further weakened nationalist tendencies such as the nationalist Greater Romania Party (*Partidul România Mare*, PRM) that was the second largest party still in the 2000 parliamentary elections (Cinpoes, 2010: 191), but currently holds no parliamentary seats. Therefore, while the European Union may have resulted in a sort of post-national dilemma in some Member States where nationalist tendencies have risen (Tonkiss, 2013a), in Romania no similar phenomenon has been observed. However, the post-national dilemma is mainly connected to the migrants that come to a particular country, and since Romania is not a country of immigration, there is not a new internal 'Other' entering the country. For example, according to Eurostat, there were only 73,000 foreign citizens in Romania in 2014, of which only 20,000 were EU citizens, and that in a country with a population of almost 20 million.

Radu Cinpoes also argues that the question of nationalist parties in Romania has been very difficult since the country has expressed almost unanimous support for integration in the European Union, and thus the nationalist parties have been forced to immerse the idea of integrating Romania and its values in Europe (Cinpoes, 2010: 197). Therefore, although the nationalist PRM party has cooperated e.g. with the French *Front National*, due to the lack of anti-European tendencies in the country, it has not been able to influence the leading politicians' rhetoric. As stated before, Romanian public still holds a very positive image of the European Union, with the highest percentage of respondents (62 %) in the spring 2015 Eurobarometer survey reporting a positive image of the European Union (Eurobarometer 2015).

Although the discussion concerning the European Union is generally positive, some problems related to free movement were also discussed. In 2008, President Băsescu referred to Roma people, difficulties of which have been highlighted in the application of free movement: 'Aplicarea libertății de circulație a cetățenilor europeni a pus în evidență și unele dificultăți specifice cu care se confruntă anumite grupuri dezavantajate social. Mă refer cu precădere la etnia Roma, o minoritate transnațională răspândită, în proporții diferite, în toate statele Uniunii. Dimensiunea europeană a problematicii integrării sociale a romilor reclamă, pe lângă politici naționale sistematice de incluziune, și o strategie europeană pentru concertarea politicilor relevante la nivel UE – strategie care se va bucura de tot sprijinul nostru' (Băsescu, 2008a).¹³

Here, free movement was implied to decrease European solidarity and create the need for more coordination. Therefore, the national and the EU level were intertwined in this comment; there must be a national policy but a European strategy. In addition, President Băsescu argued being in favour of all the integration measures with regard to the Roma question, which shows commitment to European cooperation. However, if we only consider the role of free movement in this, the focus was on revealing the 'difficulties' with regard to Roma people. Depending on the perspective, this can be considered either a positive or a negative issue.

A type of solidarity attitude was also present in some other statements, and more in the pro-European tone. For example, on the European Day reception in 2008, Băsescu stated that 'Voi ați avut șansa să creșteți și să vă formați în valorile europene. Oportunitățile de care puteți beneficia sunt uriașe și nu mă refer doar la libertatea de a circula în cadrul Uniunii sau de a studia oriunde pe teritoriul acesteia.

¹³ 'Applying free movement to European citizens has also demonstrated some specific difficulties with which certain socially challenged groups are confronted. I am referring especially to the ethnic Roma, a minority that has been transnationally spread in different proportions in every Union country. The European dimension of the social integration problems of Roma people requires systematic national policy of inclusion, and a European strategy to concentrate relevant policies at the EU level – strategies that will enjoy all our support' (our translation).

Mă refer la șansa extraordinară de a participa efectiv la construcția viitorului Europei.’ (Bănescu 2008b)¹⁴ This quotation highlights the importance of European solidarity and reveals a devotion based on solidarity, where freedom of movement is one part of the construction of the European project. In other words, the focus is on the results the European cooperation (including free movement) could bring forth. At the same time, free movement was presented as a result of integration and as an instrument in bringing forth more integration. In such integration discourse, free movement was employed as a symbol of European unity that may socialize people in this project. President Bănescu also discussed European values in the comment, which implies a more community-related approach to the European Union, but free movement was not presented as one of the values, but rather as a benefit derived from the membership in the Union.

The discourse on free movement and European unity is thus more related to future than pre-existing duties, which is understandable in the sense that the transitional arrangements for Romanian workers were only ended in 2014 and the country is still not part of the Schengen Area. Therefore, free movement is something to be attained and not a duty the state should guarantee, since there are few European citizens entering Romania (20,000 residing in 2014). Still, while talking to the Romanian Parliament in 2010, President Bănescu recalled that entering the Schengen area and having free movement is the wish of ‘us all’: ‘Ne-am dorit libera circulație. O putem avea pe deplin, odată cu intrarea definitivă în spațiul european fără granițe.’ (Bănescu 2010b)¹⁵ In this case, entry into the European borderless area was something to be pursued, symbolizing the Romanian desire to be a full-fledged European state. Therefore, free movement can be considered a symbol of European solidarity and the dream of a borderless Europe.

Overall, the Romanian argumentation included few references to solidarity, and they were not very strong ones. Although President Bănescu discussed European future and an area without borders, they are not especially strong claims for free movement being an instrument for European solidarity and inclusion. Instead, free movement was presented as something belonging to the European project, but also revealing concerns over the integration of Roma people. In contrast, as free movement was presented as a crucial part of European integration, Romania was presented as not able to fully join this group, since it is not part of the Schengen

¹⁴ ‘You have had the chance to be raised and educated within the European values. The opportunities you can benefit from are enormous, and I am not only referring to the freedom of movement in the Union or the freedom of studying anywhere in the area. I am referring to the extraordinary chance to participate effectively to the construction of the European future.’ (our translation)

¹⁵ ‘We have wanted free movement. We can have it completely, the moment we totally join the borderless European area.’ (our translation)

area. In other words, free movement is rather something that Romanian politicians want in order to be able to participate in the construction of the European future. Still, it is unclear what the political objectives of Romania in the European Union are. Even when Romania joined the Union in 2007, the only clear objectives were ‘the promotion of increased engagement with the Black Sea and Moldova’ (Papadimitriou; Phinnemore, 2008: 89). This is also the objective that can be observed in this article, and in the following concluding section, a summary of the arguments presented in this article will be provided.

CONCLUSION

The Romanian case is interesting in the sense that the Romanian community feelings seemed to be directed towards both Romanians abroad and towards Moldovans, who share the same language and history. Instead, such comments were few with regard to the European Union, but Moldovans were considered to be entitled to same rights as Romanian citizens. The Romanian Presidents, for example, have also shown great interest in uniting Moldova in Romania, but the issue has not progressed. Still, Romanian politicians emphasized that the EU free movement was something that should also be guaranteed for Moldovans, since the ethnic Romanians should not be deprived of the rights received by those living in Romania.

The Romanian argumentation thus closely relates to the Romanian state and the Moldovan people with regard to free movement. Therefore, although Romania is a member of the European Union, the discussion revolved around the regional level while the community feeling towards the European Union was lacking. Overall, this article illustrates that Romania has a closer relationship to Moldovans and a more distant one to the rest of the European Union, at least in the discussion on free movement. If the European Union is a family, it is not a very close one. The closest relative to Romania is obviously Moldova, while the other members of the European family have not accepted Romania in the area of open doors.

While Romania presented more nation-centred community argumentation, in the solidarity dimension, the politicians made EU-centred sentiment-oriented arguments, which may reveal that the Romanian leaders feel they have more duties to the imminent community, while European solidarity is something worth pursuing. The Romanian President Băseșcu discussed free movement both as an opportunity for the citizens to participate in constructing the European future and as something that reveals the problems related to ethnic minorities. The analogue of the European Union as a school system could depict the context of the Romanian argumentation, at least in the sense that the Romanian President Băseșcu is trying to purport to the citizens the sense of Europeanness in terms of free movement. However, there are problems with regard to the rights of Romanian pupils, since their border-crossing is controlled and Moldovan citizens are not provided with the same rights. Still, the European school system is

something that Romania wants to be part of, in order to be able to influence its future.

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Saila Heinikoski

European Identity Challenged.

Romanian Politicians Discussing Free Movement from the Perspective of Kinship-based Morality

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ROMANIAN COMPLEXES AND IDENTITY CRISES

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ABSTRACT:

With the purpose of acquiring its own cultural identity, each country makes great spiritual efforts. Romanian culture has prepared, during the last centuries, the ground for an adequate reception of the linguistic characteristics of Romanian language, and its unique system of values. Romania has, in time, suffered because of complexes which are more or less justifiable from an ideological, political, and cultural point of view. In an attempt to diagnose the identity crises that characterize this Romanian cultural phenomenon, Mircea Martin, in his book, *Călinescu și complexele literaturii române* (George Călinescu and the Complexes of Romanian Literature), published in Bucharest in 1981, with a second edition in 2002 is emphasizing the Romanian cultural pathologies by cataloguing its 'constitutive complexes': the one of 'provincial isolation or marginality', of 'European and universal ignorance', 'humble origins', 'a delay or a discontinuity from other European cultures', 'rurality', 'imitation', and of 'the absence of headliners'. Another work we have mentioned on this occasion is Adrian Marino's *Pentru Europa. Integrarea României. Aspecte ideologice și culturale* (For Europe. Romania's Integration. Ideological and Cultural Aspects). Both Martin's and Marino's texts set personal points of view on this controversial issue of the Romanian complexes and identity crises. This paper attempts to be a short description of these complexes which have entered in a general metabolism of the Romanian aesthetics, thought and perception, causing it damage.

KEYWORDS

Romanian culture, complexes, crises, Mircea Martin, Adrian Marino

In one of the future responses concerning Romania's place and its type of relations and kinship with Europe, one will not look passed the fact that, compared to other countries in central and western Europe, the landmarks of its cultural and political

identity have been drawn up differently. In this framework, one welcomes a re-evaluation of those particularities which have accompanied Romania's general historic evolution. Under the pressure of this demonstrative necessity, the literary critic, Mircea Martin, undertook, in 1981, a serious investigation. The book that resulted from this is one of the most provocative and most exciting works published in post-war Romania, talking about a set of constitutive 'complexes' for literature, as well as for Romanian culture in general (Martin, 1981, 2012). The complexes enumerated by Martin are those of a small, marginal culture, suffering from countless historical misfortunes. The listed complexes are dialectical: of closure and/or openness, of individuality and/or integration. As the title suggests (*Călinescu și complexele literaturii române*), the book looks like a eulogy brought to a unique critical consciousness in Romanian literature. It concerns the writer George Călinescu (1899-1965), author of the study *Istoria literaturii române de la origini până în prezent* (The History of Romanian Literature from Its Beginnings up to the Present, 1941). A certain affinity to the canonical and a hubristic, projective compensation of an absent cultural heritage are reproached to him throughout the book. The title of the book is, in the end, a critical trap. Martin's work does not talk about the Romanian literary critique Călinescu, but about the complexes that characterize Romanian culture in its whole. As far as the political context in which Mircea Martin published his book is concerned (1981 – Romania was under the most severe communist censorship and under the pressure of the protochronist, nationalist and egotistical model), it was completely unfavourable, the first edition lacking several important fragments which had been censored. The second edition, with the same title, *Călinescu și complexele literaturii române* (2002), was not revised by the author. The reasons for this work's second publishing are still exciting: 'I've had – and shall continue to have – other priorities and, while waiting, I've decided to republish the 1981 version – as some type of wager with today's readers and, first and foremost, with those born over twenty years ago, as was this hereby book' (Martin, 2002: 5, our translation). On the one hand, we have an older message for a new public, on the other, we read in this venture a long-term bet the author made with himself, implying the necessity to revise the text, to press it against the present. The book is not one of 'the psychology of the Romanian people' or of psychoanalysis (even though one can recognise a psychoanalytic 'patent' after the model of the archetypes. Thus Martin proposes an original and singular method of analysis for the complexes of Romanian creativity. Each complex is followed from its first manifestations to its maturity, dissolutions and/or deformations, to the identity crises which it has generated and whose source it was.

The relevance is, according to the author, the plural perspective, because at least now, at the brink of the new millennium, Europe's unity should happen in both directions: from East to West, but also from West to East (Martin, 2002). The book takes reference from the national culture, the creating destiny of the Romanian people, from the obstacles it has encountered while creating its national

specificity. In a recent statement (2014), Mircea Martin returned to the theme, discussing with a detached eloquence about the identity and (still current) complexes of Romanian literature (and culture). ‘It will not be easy to renounce our complexes and I fear that they are passed on from generation to generation, I fear that they shall be tackled differently as the generations change, but the complexes linger on! The complex of marginality is difficult to overcome, it has an objective component which is unsurpassable even with imagination. The complex of the continuous beginning is still very vivid, even aggressive, encouraged by the political atmosphere, as well as the political moments we live through; in a more general term, this autochthonous Adam-ism, the idea that real things commence with us, the incapacity of many, including that of some people of our generation, to insert ourselves in a becoming, in a cultural series, without having this complex of irreducibility, of personal ego! I believe that this complex still has influence, unfortunately (...) Our integration in an Euro-Atlantic world does not lack importance, even if it is still only a political and military integration, but not a cultural one, as it should be... Unfortunately, even though we have many more opportunities than our forefathers to affirm ourselves outside the borders of our country, outside the borders of our language, we do not use them to the fullest! It would be wonderful if we were to use them, and it would be a modality intellectuals would somehow use to balance our country’s – to call it on its name or not – despicable image abroad and, implicitly, that of our culture... Certainly, all that has been mentioned so far is still debatable.’(Motroc, 2014). It would seem that these complexes have entered within the general metabolism of aesthetic and ethical Romanian perception and thinking, in the manner in which we react and live daily.

A work rather similar to Mircea Martin’s one is that of the critic Adrian Marino, entitled *Pentru Europa. Integrarea Romaniei. Aspecte ideologice si culturale* (For Europe. Romania’s Integration. Ideological and Cultural Aspects). This work uses the author’s older texts, published in Romanian and foreign magazines between 1968 and 1994. As its author states in the *Foreword*, the book is intended to methodically discuss the ‘European idea’, in its triple dimension: cultural-literal, ideological and political, as it is reflected in the present Romanian culture and realities. Some main ideas are restated, others nuance and accurately specify the author’s opinions on the identity complexes and crises of the Romanian people. The first complex that generates otherness and crises, a complex analysed both by Martin and by Marino in their books, is that of *encasing* (a retractile, traditionalist, anti-European complex which characterises Romanian culture in some of the important stages in its evolution) and the opposing complex, that of *openness* to the European, to modernity. The most important confrontation, brutal and not at all utopic in this sense, took place in Romanian culture and literature in the first half of the 20th century. Another one had been previously announced by Maiorescu through the acute conflict between ‘shapes’ (Western) and ‘content’ (autochthonous). Between

the World Wars, Romania was dominated at the same time, to offer a suggestive example, by the traditionalist approach represented by Nichifor Crainic, Dobrogeanu-Gherea, Garabet Ibrăileanu and by a modernist approach as well. The traditionalists were searching for models for Romania's development in its endemic past, believing that Romanian civilization is mainly rural, so that cultural imports of the urbanized West do not suit our national specificity. Eugen Lovinescu was the founder of Romanian modernism, defining the principle of synchronism through imitations, through the Europeanising of Romanian literature. He expressed, with visionary touches, the famous phrase: '*Ex occidente lux*'. 'Imitation is the basis of synchronism. [...] The unique factor of *imitation*, in which sociologists like Tarde have seen the forming principle of all societies is at the basis of the mechanism of our material life's contemporaneity. The social group is thus regarded as a gathering of individuals who mimic one another. The existence of imitation also involves the existence of the object to be mimicked itself; imitation thus presupposes *invention*. An inventor and an individual act are the origin or every invention (in language, art, science, faith)' (Lovinescu, 1934: 71, our translation).

On the other hand, according to Adrian Marino, modern Romanian culture, starting with the 18th and 19th century, is itself the process of a fast Western synchronisation. At the same time, the historical, traditional part, of the late Middle Ages, remains particularly strong. Hence, a characteristic situation: 'at the convergence of two cultural spheres, without any real affinities, profound among themselves, modern Romanian culture will be full of interferences, ambiguities and even of unavoidable conflicts. With one face towards the West and another towards the East and the Balkans, it will agglutinate the most diverse of influences.' (Marino, 1995: 69, our translation). The many influences coming from the two parts have created ambivalences which could be found in the same national idea – and this is a remarkable fact. The author continues by claiming that perhaps the most important, or in any event, dominant for Romanian culture is the complex of the Western 'canon'. Western culture is canonical, paradigmatic and symbolic for the entire world culture, starting with the eastern one. Fortunately, this melange of influences and doctrines has contributed, as far as Romania is concerned, to the genesis of very valuable literary works, of a culture of identity with a creative calling. The international career in poetry and plastic arts of Tristan Tzara (co-founder of the Dadaist cultural movement which led to a major revolution in the plastic arts and European literature), of the sculptor Constantin Brâncuși between 1920-1940, are just several convincing examples in this direction.

In either case, being in this fragile and imponderable in-between-worlds situation, Romanian culture always had to rewrite itself in the frame of a great adaptability in order to survive. It left to be understood that it took what was necessary from the complicated mechanism of interferences; actually it took from other cultures only

that which suited it. That is why Titu Maiorescu's¹ urge from over one hundred years ago is still actual: 'we are in a clear, substantial progress when it comes to poetic literature: we have major authors, subsequently their influence will spread extensively among the young generations of Romanians and even if they will be recognised abroad, their recognition at home will expand.' (Maiorescu, 1989: 296, our translation).

The complex of the cultural time lapse (to which the two authors are adding *the complex of an international language*) represents another point of interest in their writings. Romanians have always been judged, and have judged themselves according to their progress related to the grand productions of western cultures. The fact that Romanian people did not have a Romanian Renaissance or a Romanian Baroque encompassing distinct artistic periods it has become one of the main complexes. The pressure of history was not to be trifled with. On the contrary, there still are complexes and they are activated by the consciousness of this time-gap. With the exception of a few important writers such as Eminescu, not many authors can be pinned in the Romanian Literature to one particular literary movement. As a continuance of evolution, in the last decades of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century, Romanian authors were affirmed through the same batch of texts pertaining to late romanticism, realism, naturalism or symbolism. The writers Rebreanu and Sadoveanu had been late in their affirmation, while modernists such as Camil Petrescu and Urmuz were early. Literary movements themselves can only be defined through texts and not through their authors. But gaining a head-start from the others, doing rapidly, in a febrile cultural time what others have done calmly, seems to be a *pro domo sua* statement.

Another complex mentioned by Marino, susceptible of being the source of identity otherness and conflicts is the one of 'entering' Europe. In the chapter entitled 'Romanian literature 'enters' Europe', the author talks about the necessity to transform the presenting of Romanian literature in systematic acts of knowing and diffusing. He presents the massive *Histoire de la littérature européenne. Lettres européennes*, work written by a team of 150 university professors from all over the European continent, coordinated by Annik Benoit-Dusauso and Guy Fontaine (1992). Marino noticed that this work poses 'in full, the entire problem of our European literary presence' (Marino, 1995: 81, our translation), Romanian literature appearing merely in the period of the Baroque' (Marino, 1995: 81). An important moment of the export and importance of Romanian culture was pinpointed by Miron Costin (1633-1691). *The Chronicle of Moldavia and Wallachia*, written in Polish, was made for the voivode Ioan Guinski, to whom it was offered in 1677. In the prestigious volume, it is said that Miron Costin 'privileges the

¹ Titu Liviu Maiorescu (1840–1917) was a Romanian literary critic and politician, founder of the *Junimea* Society. Contemporary with the great Finnish professor, essayist and aesthete Eliel Aspelin-Haapkylä (1847-1917), Maiorescu helped to the development of the Romanian culture in the second half of the 19th century.

existential dimension of history' (Marino, 1995: 83, our translation). In 1714, Dimitrie Cantemir was elected a member of the Royal Academy of Berlin. Cantemir wrote the first monograph of Moldavia, *Descriptio Moldaviae*. He also wrote, in Latin, the first scientific history of the Ottoman Empire, *The History of the Growth and Decay of the Ottoman Empire*, translated in English (1734, 1736), in French (1743) and in German (1745). Even though they appear in the index, the writings of chronicler Ion Neculce (1672-1745), our first story teller, are not, unfortunately, discussed in the volume, according to Adrian Marino. In any case, these were following a different direction – that of gradual laicisation of the thinking of the first half of the 18th century, where the cult element was reigning over the eidetic image of byzantine tradition. Maintaining the lead of the same process, the monopole of the ecclesial book nearly ceases, Romanian printings maintain their religious frameworks, thus defining a mentality with features that surpassed the confessional frame. The natural evolution of Romanian literature, chronologically corresponding to the Enlightenment with its Eastern-European values, marked a period of fruitful connections with the western rationalism. Romanians were fighting for their political statement in the space of a Habsburg Transylvania, where in 1791, the petition *Supplex Libellus Valachorum* was being written and where the entire program of the *Transylvanian School* remodels in a national meaning the Latinist idea. In Wallachia and Moldavia a battle was fought for political independence from Turkey – the movements of social and national emancipation illustrated by Tudor Vladimirescu's revolution (1821) being supported by an intellectuality open to the West, also important founders of Romanian schools. The Moldavian and Wallachian revolutionists of 1848 envisaged a European synchronism, perhaps with as much critical spirit impregnated by scepticism. In Romania, Vasile Alecsandri sets the foundations of Romanian modern poetry with the ballad *Miorița*, states rather ambiguously the text of the Belgian authors. Mihai Eminescu remains an important poet of that time. I. L. Caragiale finds a small place in *Le Théâtre réaliste*. The compartments for the 20th century are somewhat more generous. In the first decade, Alexandru Macedonski introduces symbolism in Romania while Ovid Densusișanu becomes the theorist of the new movement. The highly modernist orientation constituted within the Romanian culture in the beginning of the 20th century is visible in Blaga's expressionism, in Ion Barbu's and Tristan Tzara's poetry, in the plays of the absurd written by Eugen Ionescu. The last ones, Tzara and Ionescu were raised in an atmosphere of emulation of avant-garde, illustrated by certain magazines: *Contemporanul*, *Unu*, *Integral*. Ion Pillat and Ion Minulescu mix neo-romantic traits with symbolist trends. The idea of being European and at the same time aware of one's own value was always profoundly constructive and up-to-date. Regarding the contemporary Romanian prose, the valuable work created by Marin Preda is notable. The author of *Viața ca o pradă* (Life as Prey) is situated in this work between a Bulgarian novelist (Blaga Dimitrova) and a Greek one (Dimitris Hatzis) (Marino, 1995: 83-85). Moromete's

Iocan's smithy emphasizes an acute identity crisis of the present-day Romanian society which marks not only the politic, but also the cultural plans (Benoit-Dusausoy; Fontaine, 1992: 890). The crisis of Romanian society rises from the major 'complexes': the complex of a small culture, forced to integrate to an a-chronologic rhythm of development and Europe's complex which brings about the necessity of globalisation and the acceptance of an expanded supra-nationalism.

Following the line of history, two trends in Romanian culture appeared in the literature of the '60s: one, official, dogmatic, that glorified the regime without judgement and another, which tried to impose authentic values, adapting the writing according to the circumstances to avoid censorship. The first one lacked durable cultural qualities, while the second imposed, particularly after the passing of the first decade of Stalinist Communism, numerous valuable works. Unfortunately, unlike other countries of the communist block such as Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, where contesting the regime was done publicly, starting from the intellectuals, in Romania things developed extremely slowly. During this time, the most representative personalities were Nicolae Breban, Alexandru Ivasiuc and Sorin Titel, as well as the poets Nichita Stănescu, Marin Sorescu, Ana Blandiana and Ștefan Bănuțescu, the critics Ion Negoitescu, Edgar Papu, Matei Călinescu, Nicolae Manolescu and others. Most of the dissidents who chose not to emigrate or who did not manage to exile themselves abroad lived under the watchful eye of the regime's agent in house arrest or in a 'forced domicile'. Some chose the path of retreat in the solitude of monasteries. Among the most notable names of philosophers we have Constantin Noica, Petre Țuțea and Nicolae Steinhardt. Many of their uncensored works, published after 1989 have been translated in numerous foreign languages. As far as the export of Romanian culture abroad is concerned, Alexandru Paleologu's words seem to have a sense of prophecy: 'Romanian culture is starting to be known. This can be our advantage, shredding the impermeable curtain that separates us from a real audience in the world.' (Paleologu, 1980: 239, our translation).

Another complex Marino noticed is that of 'bringing Europe home, no matter the cost. At our place. In Romania. In other words: to create in Romanian values of circulation – at least virtual, potentially European. In the same time, to found Romanian and European cultural institutions (foundations, magazines, publishing houses, etc.) in our country can represent the landmark of a most recent synchronisation with Europe's cultural productions.' (Marino, 1995: 110, our translation). A last complex, *of continuous beginning* seems to double those identity crises that have given an aspect of permanent improvisation to Romanian culture, involving the acceptance and surpassing one's own complexes and prejudices. Torn between the obsession of the beginning and that of a monumentality which is unthinkable, but through a new beginning, Romanian culture is maintained in a certain temporariness which is contradicted by the accomplishments, but moreover

the major availabilities (Martin, 2002). There is another common denominator in the two above-mentioned books: the eulogy to the critic spirit (Martin, 2002). It is uncovered in each of the pages dedicated, throughout time, to the morphology and physiology of the various autochthonous historical-literary constructions, as in the book on George Călinescu.

CONCLUSIONS

Consistent efforts, lasting for centuries, have been made in Romanian culture to create a practical connection to the rhythms of Western and universal culture. But Romania has opened the world's eyes to its own values and contributions. The idea that Romania has always had complexes of inferiority towards the cultures of its surrounding countries is not new and not arbitrary. Nonetheless, it has assimilated foreign models not to its own demise, but to its purposeful use. There have been creative assimilations coming from the most various spheres of influence: Byzantine, South-Slavic, Turkish, Russian, Austrian, German and French. These foreign influences have helped Romanian culture in creating a unique profile, rich and kaleidoscopic. A profile of synthesis. On the other hand, the complexes, once manifested, have degenerated in identity crises. The latter have yet turned more acute as the pressure of the model has turned stronger and the socio-historic conditions more severe.

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BOOK REVIEWS

ROMANIAN NEW WAVE CINEMA. AN INTRODUCTION (DORU POP, 2014)

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Finland

Doru Pop's book *Romanian New Wave Cinema. An Introduction* (2014) is exactly what it promises to be: an introduction to the modern Romanian filmmaking. Between 2001 and 2011, promising young Romanian filmmakers such as Cristi Puiu with his *The Death of Mr. Lazarescu* (2005), Cristian Mungiu with his *4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days* (2007), Radu Muntean with *Tuesday, After Christmas* (2010) and Cătălin Mitulescu with *The Way I Spent the End of the World* (2006) emerged as important members of the European cinema. Pop, an associate professor in the Faculty of Theater and Television at Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj, Romania, identifies also a second New Wave in Romanian present day cinema represented by Tudor Giurgiu and *Of Snails and Men* (2012), Florin Șerban and *If I Want to Whistle, I Whistle* (2010), Corneliu Porumboiu with *12:08 East of Bucharest* (2006) and last but not least the tragic Cristian Nemescu and his unfinished *California Dreamin* (2007).

In his book, divided into eight chapters, Pop tries to find answers to what made the phenomenon of the Romanian new wave cinema possible, what were the causes for its late development. The author also presents what he calls the 'cinematic grammar' of this generation of Romanian film makers, i.e. the main features which glue together the above mentioned films in terms of specific themes, motifs and narratives of the philosophy of this generation. The common subjects of these films are the interest in communism and the Romanian revolution, or the ironic treatment of daily situations. Pop identifies a few major themes: the presence of marginal characters and antiheroes, the use of dark humor, the picturing of troubled father-son relationships, and the rise of feminine issues. Each chapter is accompanied by a thorough theoretical background of the classical approaches in cinema theory be it semiotic, ideological or psychoanalytic methods. This helps a novice in the cinematic art such as the writer of this book review to better understand the miracle of the millennium in Romanian cinema. Yet reading the theoretical background proved at times challenging, nevertheless, for the untrained eye and reader in the field.

The first two chapters of the book deal with formal aspects of what made this Romanian miracle possible, comparing it to what Pop calls ‘the old guard’, i.e. the degeneration of directors during the communist time such as Lucian Pintilie, Radu Gabrea, and the dominant figure of the time Sergiu Nicolaescu with his historical films such as *The Dacians* (1967) and *Michael the Brave* (1971). Pop also mentions the attempts made in early 90’s by directors such as Nae Caranfil with his *Philanthropy* (2002), but claims that the young directors such as Puiu and Mungiu had to rebuild the Romanian film industry from scratch with no father figures and as independent filmmakers. The second chapter of the book identifies Cristi Puiu as the founding father of the Romanian New Wave. The author considers Puiu’s *Stuff and Dough* (2001), otherwise a film without international prizes, but widely discussed in the foreign media, the founding brick of this phenomenon. The third chapter explores one of the major themes of the recent Romanian film industry such as immigration and the typology of characters it generates, the anti-heroes. One such example would be the mother figure in Florin Șerban’s *If I Want to Whistle, I Whistle* (2010), who abandons her children in search for work abroad. The fourth chapter discusses the troubled relationship between fathers and sons and the issue of authority. A suitable example that supports the views expressed in this chapter is Calin Peter Netzer’s *Medal of Honour* (2009), which deals with a father who has no own identity and lacks authority in front of his wife and son. The fifth chapter concentrates on visual stereotypes of these films, such as the depiction of the grey and depressing communist-era blocks of flats, as a reflection of the inner state of mind of the characters or the cold hospital environment in Cristi Puiu’s *The Death of Mr. Lăzărescu* (2005), as a picture of the impotence of the Romanian medical system. The following chapter takes a look at the way the young Romanian directors make use of dark humor. Pop identifies the influence of the Romanian play writers Caragiale and Ionesco in the technique used by the directors. Pop mentions in this chapter Porumboiu’s film *12:08 East of Bucharest* (2006), and its comical twists in tragic situations. By far the most interesting chapter of the book is the one dealing with the rise of female cinema. The chapter mentions the names of young Romanian female directors such as Adina Pintilie and Anca Damian, but also points out important themes such as abortion depicted for instance in Mungiu’s *4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days* (2007). Pop points out the emergence of remarkable female characters and actresses, such as Luminița Gheorghiu, a darling of this new generation of directors. The final chapter tries to identify the causes of the lack of popularity box office wise of the otherwise internationally acclaimed films. This young generation of Romanian directors made clear their affiliation to the European cinema with influences from the Italian neorealism, British new wave cinema, or the French Nouvelle Vague and thus their refusal of Hollywood influences. Quality must prevail over commercial success. Pop nevertheless sees a slight improvement in the number of Romanian viewers of these new cinema. The cause of the lack of success of such films could partly be explained by the very

themes they approach, which deal with the daily gloomy aspects of Romanian reality. Perhaps the viewer wants to escape this reality and that is why he or she prefers watching more commercial films such as the comedy *Garvea and the Oltenians* (2001).

I found Doru Pop's book about the Romanian New Wave a good example of an introduction to a subject one does not know much about. The book is easy to read, but at times the otherwise necessary theoretical background in cinema theory with allusions to Romanian literature and literature theory concepts demands an extra effort from the reader. As a film goer and as a person who grew up during the time of the 'old guard' as Pop calls it, I would not be as quick as Pop in dismissing such series as *Miscellaneous brigade* (*Brigada diverse*) or *Ship Aboy* (*Toate pânzele sus!*) of the 70's. Most Romanians such as me watch these series, mostly due to their great actors. At least *Miscellaneous brigade* (*Brigada diverse*) is filled with irony towards the communist Romanian militia, in my opinion. All in all Pop's book is a great excuse for watching Romanian films both old and especially new.

REFERENCES

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FOR A NEW THEORY ON SPACE AND PLACE
A REVIEW OF *PRZESTRZEŃ I MIEJSCE WE WSPÓŁCZESNYCH
TEORIACH I PRAKTYKACH LITERACKICH*
(SPACE AND PLACE IN CONTEMPORARY LITERARY
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Przestrzeń i miejsce we współczesnych teoriach i praktykach literackich (Space and Place in Contemporary Literary Theories and Practices) by Elżbieta Rybicka was published in Polish in year 2014 by Universitas Publishing House in Krakow, Poland. It represents a very extensive and thorough study on well-known theories on space and place which are re-visited and re-organised in such a way as to justify this novel method of geopoetics as an investigating and analysing method of research to be applied in the study of literature.

One of the most important features of the book refers to the interdisciplinary approach the author chooses to undertake in her research, thus aiming at four major aspects of geopoetical criticism: poetological, geographical, anthropological and performative. All four aspects involve both the writer, the reader, the work of art and consequently, in each situation, the relation between man and space/place in an active, poetological manner.

The book is structured in six parts, each further divided into subchapters, and a section of annexes which contains additional studies on research topics related to geopoetics. Amongst these are garden tropes, the myth of *Mittelenropa* or Czesław Miłosz' *Homo Geographicus* as he appears in his topographies or auto/biographies. The six parts have the following titles: *From Poetics of Space to Politics of Place*, *Topographic Turns in Literary Studies*; *Geopoetics as a Scientific Approach*; *Literature, Geography: Towards a Mutual Glossary*; *Anthropology of Place*; *Topographies of History: Place, Memory, Literature and New Regionalism and Local Narratives*.

The first chapter has a rather historical approach, revisiting different space and place theories such as those belonging to Marc Augé, Tim Endensor or E. W. Soja.

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For a New Theory on Space and Place. A Review of Przestrzeń i miejsce we współczesnych teoriach i praktykach literackich (Space and Place in Contemporary Literary Theories and Practices, Elżbieta Rybicka, 2014)

Yet too little attention is paid here to the concept of *heterotopia* of Michel Foucault, a concept which any researcher of space and place would actually consider pioneering and a basis in the development of further theories. The chapter dedicated to an establishment of a glossary raises a certain amount of interest, nonetheless the structure of the chapter lacks construction as does the glossary aspect itself. Even though some key-concepts are discussed in relation either with certain theories or fictional works relevant for their meaning and function, such as *integrative geography, map and critical or literary cartography, mismapping, place, imagination*, etc. the structure of the chapter is rather loose, and sometimes incoherent, underlining the need for methodology and clear theoretical instruments.

The part *Geopoetics as a Scientific Approach*, dedicated to geopoetics as research method to link literature and space/place is both convincing and well-argued as such method would benefit from its interdisciplinary intrinsic feature as well as from unifying the tools necessary in such an attempt. Moreover the chapter *Topographies of History: Place, Memory, Literature* is of certain originality as it illustrates both the relation between man, literature, space/place and memory as a productive, creative factor in this relation. This part of the book is relevant especially for the fictional contemporary revisitations of history in which micro-history becomes stronger than macro-history, as well as the types of writings such as memoirs and (auto-)biographies in which memory becomes the direct intermediate between the two. Moreover, from the point of view of the recent histories revealed after the traumas of the 20th century – the Holocaust or the regimes in the former Communist countries. Thus, as the author puts it, memory, as an interdisciplinary category becomes a wonderful bridge between the historic discourse and the literary one, while literature becomes, through memory, a very personal discourse. Furthermore, because of the interdisciplinary and thus very ample character, memory has never been a strictly literary category *stricto sensu*, and thus remains so in Rybicka's study. Here the author also develops and analyses the meaning of 'memoryscape' – a landscape of memory in the present cultural frames, a key-word in geopoetical analyses.

The last chapter *New Regionalism and Local Narratives*, which focuses on the new regionalism in literature theorises and analyses rather Polish theories, texts and regions, failing unfortunately to integrate the concept of 'new regionalisms' into a wider European perspective so much present in European and world literature nowadays, and which would perfectly fit the newly emerging regional identities. Furthermore, the author does not manage to offer a sustainable explanation for the choice to include the articles in the annexes in the study, as they would easily find a place in the broader perspective the author chose for the main body of the study.

The book *Przestrzeń i miejsce we współczesnych teoriach i praktykach literackich* (Space and Place in Contemporary Literary Theories and Practices) by Elżbieta Rybicka is a complex, challenging and erudite study on the relation between literature and space/place, pleading very convincingly on the introduction and developing of geopoetics as a new research method in literary and cultural studies. In spite of its sometimes overloaded information, not always very well organised, and in spite of the multitude of ideas not always adequately structured, the book will remain an important study in its domain both within Poland and beyond its borders.