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A PSYCHOANALYTIC COMPLACENCY OF THE TEXT: TWO ROMANIAN CULTURAL CASES OF THE NARRATIVE FETISH

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Abstract

The present study will approach some analytical and applicative levels regarding: *a psychoanalytic pattern: representation / symbol/ fetishism;*; *the consecrated models and their psychoanalytic exhaustion*, establishing that beyond what we usually call, tolerant to the external theoretical influences, a *signs pragmatic*, the idea of an *infinite semiosis* provides for a imperative which emits *that something is a sign only if it is interpreted as a sign for something by an interpreter*. The triad *sign – type – occurrence* or the relation *sign – icon – index – symbol* establishes, pragmatically, a signification relation marked as *sign -interpreter- object*. Far from being a primitive form, fetishism appeals to successive strokes, through (re)adjustments and corrections, disputing its analytical route with the *symbolic pattern*; it renounces to "speak" about the object, awkwardly moving towards representation as a common difficulty of analysis. Fetishism expresses the way in which *knowing the other* is made as *assimilation*. *To assimilate* corresponds in this case with *transforming, metabolizing the other, identifying him and finally, removing his alterity*.

Keywords. Identity, Alterity, Representation, Symbol, Fetishism, Cultural Press

Introduction

A psychoanalytic pattern: representation / symbol/ fetishism

Beyond what we usually call, tolerant to the external theoretical influences, a “signs pragmatic”, the idea of an “infinite semiosis” provides for a imperative which emits that “something is a sign only if it is interpreted as a sign for something by an interpreter” (ECO, 1984). The triad *sign – type – occurrence* (PIERCE) or the relation *sign – icon – index – symbol* (SAUSSURE) establishes, pragmatically, a signification relation marked as *sign -interpreter- object*.

I hold forth for an analyze out of the accent from of the semiotic conventions into a crosscheck of what it is called “the act of interpreting the text by a cooperating lecturer” (ECO, 1986). This imperative

gets an insight into the text's regularity obstruction, into the formal experiences' memories, intercession into the persual act, into the optimum organization of the text. Any semiotics practice maintains a semiozic exercise! From the point of view of a political diagnosis, the semiotics seems an active intercession upon the semiozic product which identify itself with society.

Far from being a primitive form, fetishism appeals to successive strokes, through (re)adjustments and corrections, disputing its analytical route with the *symbolic pattern*. In a durkheim-ian way, fetishism renounces to "speak" about the object, awkwardly moving towards representation as a common difficulty of analysis. This inequality prints a different rhythm of conceptual life, meaning that fetishism expresses the way in which *knowing the other* is made as *assimilation*. *To assimilate* corresponds in this case with *transforming, metabolizing the other, identifying him and finally, removing his alterity*¹.

With the necessary mention that the fetishism's pulsionary - irrational arbitrary, comes from the fact that nothing is intellectual in fetishism: no thought, no judgment. It results from a blind process, impulsive, emotional, expressing passions, needs, fears, but never any discernment. Addressing to the thing (not the idea about things) fetishism is organized as a direct cult: *it excludes any basic symbolism, any representation that might put in the place of other representations*.

Exhuming the "verbal ax" as an exchange with significance value, C.Levi-Strauss places the fetishism into a subjective relationship with the *symbolic thinking*. We are, therefore, placed inside the perimeter of a "conscious expression of semantic functions" as "subjective reflection of the requirement of uncollected totality."

The *vague signifier* translates, verbally, a network of uncertain signifiers, contradictory in excess, which, according to Levi-Strauss, appeal to meaningless words, but whose sole function is to bridge the gap between *signifier* and *signified*. Such a pattern requires a particular clarification of the concept of *effervescent community*, as a random/ intentionally group whose (symbolical, cultural, philosophic –political) priorities exalt the function of creating and / or (re)creating the social.

The version used by the Post communist Romanian cultural press is that of the "clan" entering the effervescence and creating its own totems, into a blurry and indistinct texture. It is, in fact, an over estimated imagine, that reverse the route of Durkheim theory.

If Durkheim's theory places the *effervescent group* at the intersection of the natural state with the social one, post-Revolution Romanian patterns of "evaluation" of a vernacular socio-cultural phenomenon, propose some cuttings (articles, editorials, talk-shows, cultural programs etc.) in order to (re)symbolize the effervescent group **from** the *social-cultural status* **towards** the *natural one*.

Using the *symbol*, Durkheim configures it as a rhetoric figure, engaged in the "representing" and "expressing" act, having as attachments figures, pictures, with emotional and imaginative mobilization capacity.

To this conception of symbol as a rhetoric figure, Durkheim attaches another - a *clinical* model, borrowed from medical semiology. The *sign* or the *symbol* becomes *symptom*, subject to certain determinism. The *sign - symbol* theory is enunciated in accordance with the rhetoric option of *sign - figure*, confirming the *symbol- condensation*, a finale version which involves those insights and thinking (pre) feelings, in fact, very obscure, which, therefore, print an immediate (a) perception – the linguistic expression expressing, in this case, *coercion, concession*. It is easy to locate, in this context, the evidence that the basic idea of structuralism, active also in the Romanian space in its neo- post (communist)

¹ If Camille Tarot's study (*De la Durkheim la Mauss, inventarea simbolicului - From Durkheim to Mauss, The invention of symbolic*, Amarcord Publishing House, Timișoara, 2001) proposes a less Durkheimian version, but very Mauss-ian of the "indigenous". The *indigene* is predisposed to the demonstration methods. For him, the "method" is not a definitively mechanism, but it outlines a preference for disorder, language or intuition. This profile involves a transgression of the disciplinary cuttings which includes sealed compartments and prematurely interrupted analysis. The message's "facts" require a blended collage that juxtaposes the material reality to the mental one. The idea of collective (re) presentations is maintained without revealing the spectrum of a common consciousness. That's why one should analyze the mythical structures of the images and behaviors, imposed by the mass-media effects on collectivities.

versions, was that no language, no formulation, no discourse are innocent: all attempt to hide or to complicate their primary structure, in fact very simple, descriptive by binary oppositions. Behind all forms of discourse one might look for a symptom and a verbal structure, the whole culture's show possessing a *particular narrativity*.

According to J.F. Lyotard², we would be placed in the presence of a diluted distinction which operates (as it can be observed in abundance in the media language!) between the areas of application of the code language and the areas where the symbols are registered. We refer to the fact that the new operational trend regarding the language's codes and symbols invents the idea of intensity, which far from fixing to a productive (cultural!) body, is determining it. This *patchwork* diagnosed in the Romanian media, can be perceived first of all as a *trail of intention* (a travel which already has a memory of its intensities), as a *capitalization*. This variable indicates that there is *caput*, an *area of registration*, a *register* in which there is no positive regions, and in which the *multiple*, often, corresponds to a choleric, nostalgic, perfidious, always nihilistic "why".

Rudeness signs, the singularities of crossing affects, capture in the signifier's on a side and beyond movement, a mass-media diagnosis which supports and delays a without reference theatricality or, in Lyotard's terms, a "mapping, a statement, a record of refinement efforts, an organization, a party of the refined, a refinement of the permanent device. Permanence in question is not something that persists over an identical duration meaning acquisitions, earnings, experiences and results, but an intensity knowledge".

The rapport which is established between the spectator and actor, on the one hand, and between knowledge and action area, on the other hand, is governed, according to Jean Baudouin³, but the "paradox of belonging and withdrawing." Placed in this analytical context, fetishism is nothing else but a message / support, a sequence of encoded elements through which meaning is postponed, expands.

Inside the seriality proposed by the Romanian cultural press, the printed text doesn't matter anymore, only as a relationship, as a rapport of the terms. Applying this dissimulation to the analysis of a segment from *Old Dilemma Review*⁴, we could convene about the fact that there exists a disjunctive equation: *Text vs. castrated Sign!* Such a mapping takes into account the transformation [passing through the influx pathways] of the *text* (inside the spaces of the cultural media) into *sign*, as a tensor extinction⁵.

The present study proposes, therefore, to recover *images, stereotypes, signs* made to signify/ release a cultural printed code, trying simultaneously to restore it and / or to simulate it, following the imperative of a device in which image and sign converge towards the text's traces, in order to launch the premise that, inside the Romanian post-Revolution cultural press, the language simply allows the searches of the conditions for the cultural legitimacy.

The psychoanalytic complacent of the text

Old Dilemma has proposed an *ensamble set* marked up by *minimal units* scored placed in the association of *expression (text)* and *content (explanation - psychoanalysis)*. The articulation of the expression on the content makes is conditioning the differential deviations, building *binary categories*.

According to Mary Carpov, *Introduction to the semiology of literature*⁶, the very small number of semice categories generate (using the combinatorial) a number of semantic units called *sememe*.

² J.F. Lyotard, *Economia libidinală (Libidinal Economy)*, Pandora Publishing House, Pitești, 2001.

³ Jean Baudouin, *Introducere în Sociologia Politică (Introduction in the Political Sociology)*, Amarcord Publishing House, Timișoara, 1999.

⁴ *Old Dilemma* (her first name as *Dilemma*) is a weekly cultural Romanian review founded in January 1993 and specialized in thematic issues. After 1989, it is the only Romanian review with an original format that emphasizes essay, debate ideas and literary journalism.

⁵ Viorella Manolache, *Ipostaze ale feteșului în presa culturală românească (Hypostasis of the Fetishism in the Romanian Cultural Press)*, University „Lucian Blaga” Publishing House, Sibiu, 2006.

⁶ Mariei Carpov, *Introducere la semiologia literaturii (Introduction to the Semiology of Literature)*, Univers Publishing House, Bucharest, 1978.

For example, number 47 (First year, 3-9 December 2004) of *Old Dilemma* appeals to such *sememe* in building a small body of fundamental concepts, identifying and defining essential *minimum units*, placed in an explicit psychoanalysis "need". Such an approach is (sub) summarized to a theoretical and explanatory reflection, starting from the *minimal meaning unit* in order to describe and organize the largest assemblies of significance ("Who needs psychoanalysis?"- "On the sofa" "Psychoanalysis in today Romania"; "Who can benefit from psychoanalysis in Romania?"; "The trial of psychoanalysis"; "For an Eastern European psychoanalysis"- Freudian Scholastic"; "Poetry and psychoanalysis"). This identification facilitates a *structural- relationadescription* which establishes a *semantic axis*. According to this requirement each *term - object* is a carrier of an item of significance!

The article of H.R. Patapievici - "How much will we indulged?" - provides both, a disjunctive and / or connective possibility of an *interrogative sense*: politics invades through its "emissaries" (whether, party members or independent journalists) "everything which moves in this country", "throwing us into a kind of institutional disease, impossible to be healed by the European Union or EU legislation." The political level and the personal involvement is neither isomorphic nor echidimensional. The articulation variants of meaning can be (re) found in the permanent existence of a semantic invariant. This is the outcome of combinatorial rules established in a body cast of sense: "Why nobody cries that the emperor is naked? Probably because everyone hopes that the king will end noticing them. "

The act of a figure of significance contained / in a given format produces particular *sememe*, appealing to *isotopes*. From a psychoanalytic point of view, this means that the discursive sign is attaching operational figures - cutouts : "(...) I think that the current Romanian psychoanalysis vitality should have a kinship with this need for freedom. Totalitarian mentality gives back. But it was replaced by a kind of brutal anarchy. The single tyrant dissappeared, through explosion and scattering; he was replaced by thousands of domestic and public tyrants, thousands of petty pride, by a megalomania of the boulevard. The human being is no longer an over-invested by a monstrous tyran, but he is watched by small dictators who can break and destroy him, by grinding. I believe that psychoanalysis is, in this regard "politics". Is called to create an individual able to internal withstand and to love freedom. I do not see psychoanalysis in Romania as one of "great father-" a kind and normalizing psychoanalysis"(Ion Vianu -" For an Eastern Europe psychoanalysis", *Old Dilemma*, Year I, no. 47, 3 -9 December 2004).

Old Dilemma's repliс is oriented towards a facilitating approach of the invariants which target the *declared subject*⁷. Such a testing demarche is justified by appealing to *stimulus* that have a tendency to get satisfaction. The circuit *crisis-stimulus- tendency* is oriented to satisfy the reader / client, using dialectic of the dominating psychological laws⁸. As the excitement comes from / by blocking regularity, the memory of the formal experiences proposes expectations / predictions of settlement / formal refiguration of a resolution of the inhibited tendency.

The analyzed numbers of *Old Dilemma* (No. 39, 47/2004 and nr.60/2005) are discursive oriented (in) to outline the *object* and to clarify the *transitional object*. *Object A* loses its designation set out psychoanalytic, just by permanently appealing to discourse-fetish, charged pulsory and releasing desire!

From this point of view, one could establish that the *Old Dilemma* opts for a fundamental character of perception resulting from a process understood as fluctuating (but) permanently exchange between the *disposal of the subject* and the (stable / unstable) *configurations of the object* (according to Mihail Neamtu's article - "Phenomenology of the gift and the complex of lucidity"- *Old Dilemma*, Year I, no. 47, 3-9 December 2004 – the gift is inobiectival and the absolutely gift has the appearance of a creation ex nihilo." The gift is born of untying its own unconditioning. Marion defines the pure gift

⁷ Frederic de Scitivaux (*Psychoanalysis Lexicon*) clarifies terminologically, the concept of *object*, *object A*, *partial object* and *transitional object*. The object represents the thing towards is oriented the need, compulsion, love or the desire of the subject. Psychoanalytic, the notion of desire establishes that the *object* is naturally a *lost object* a shortage that will include the *replacement objects*.

⁸ Umberto Eco, *Opera deschisă (The Open Work)*, Editura Pentru Literatură Universală Publishing House, Bucharest, 1969.

donation as an absolute autodonation (...) the affective correlation of the pure gifting is suffering or joy - in any case an intermediate state, marked by impurities").

The affirmation of an admitted optical justified by the discontinuity of the acquired experience as convention, calls (from politic to an intimate confession!) for the excitations of a "shape / better formula" – placed nearby some "pulsionare incidents".

According to Umberto Eco⁹ the (re)activation of the textual references would lead to a cleavage: textual use vs. interpretative stimulation. With a statement: what Roland Barthes called as the *pleasure text* could be (re) invested with stimulating nuances that exceed the free dialectical status of an opened text. What happens is, in fact, the transfer of the reader / client towards a textual simulated object, through the mechanism of its disposition in explanatory variables.

Beyond a simple "perversion" of the terms, the relational operation of what one could call the *porn-logos* demarche, presupposes, by extrapolation, to voluntarily eliminate the classic textologically groups: the *implicit* with its double value - concealment and control – assumes the textual decisive role!
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Systematically, Jauss¹¹ invites to remove the opposition between the passive consumption and the active understanding, following a constitutive experience, a referential aesthetics of reception. Psychoanalytic, the thematic numbers from Old Dilemma, (com) like in establishing some *textual connectors*, which far of explaining establishes a link with the sequence sense! The revocation of the symbol / language restricts, synchronously, the explanatory area, opting for a prevalence of the diachronic explanation (be it even a psychoanalytic one!).

The consecrated models and their psychoanalytic exhaustion

To a first "flyover" of analysis, the cultural approach of the Romanian Review *Old Dilemma*- that of placing, paralogic, two discourses (porno and psychoanalytic!) into a common equation- seems unique, primarily through the "courage" of investing such the fetish with an exclusively cultural value.

The initiative does not justify its "novelty" (nothing shocking, improper or vulgar!) as far as trying to (re)find a common cultural "recipe", we turned to an analysis of Sibiu's the cultural press. We had analyzed a "serious", local alternative away from the pressure of postmodern "time", predisposed to continuous erotization, (*Literary Province Review*¹², I, No.7-8 (April-May), 1933 and, II year, no.1-2 - Jan.-Feb., 1934), as an analytical approach of porn fetish and / or psychoanalytic analysis! The cut section targeted an unfairly ignored cultural local model (years 1933-1934) that of the constant need to establish a recessive rapport between central and peripheral areas (provincial), the last ones considered far too often "impenetrable" or far too "distant".

Therefore, the choice of a "strong literature", exhibitionistic can be (sub) summed finding that" the purpose of every phenomenon – along with its genesis - does not belonging exclusively to itself, but is a part of the genesis and purpose of the whole structure are phenomena which enter the component "[*Literary Province*, year II, no.1-2 (Jan.-Feb.), 1934].

Dr. I.Popescu's article – "Our Literature's Pornography" (*Literary Province*, year II, no.1-2, January-February) proposes to establish some aesthetic – ethic-social/ moral educational thesis, in order

⁹ Umberto Eco, *Lector in fabula*, Univers Publishing House, Bucharest, 1991.

¹⁰ Carmen Vlad, *Textul aisberg (The Aisberg Text)*, Editura Casa Cărții de Știință Publishing House, Cluj, 2000.

¹¹ Jauss, *Pentru o estetică a receptării (For an Esthetics of Reception)*, Gallimard, 1978.

¹² *The Literary Province Review* (published in the '30s) had in view a *programmatic, axiological, teleological project*, assumed as a *recessive* relationship between the *periphery* and the *nuclear*. More limited and heavily contoured around the idea of literary realism, *The Literary Province Review*, has proposed a *cultural project* focused on cultural models with a dual side, from the socio-historical, philosophical goal toward a social, practical, useful one, pleading for raising the *ethical* over the *aesthetic*.

to discuss the eternal problem of the aesthetic norms, of morality in art, literature and the educational power of art, of "sick or healthy writing."

If the article seems to remain stuck in a certain Junimist thesis, it proposes a common assumption (politics - literature!) of a certain imported *fetish* - diagnosed as "vulgar, frivolous and trivial, that of the Italian peripheries, and of brutal English "erotic demon", not a literary aspiration but a refutations of the anonymous uncertainties.

Placed under a pathological and erotic nervosas, such a "tolerant" discourse does nothing more than to opt for a "ghetto secretion", meaning that such an initiative is more a "literary excretion than a creation one."

Such a fear, coupled with nostalgia ("remove the "lemon blossom", modesty, common sense, etc, "all ethnic values and social consolidation of those who failed in politics and have found their salvation in literature, it failed in politics ") is natural, to the extent that (even today!) it exists initiatives of justifying what it can be considered" a rhythm of time, "decadent, good for all, ideal for experiencing hot "new forms"! The argument given by the *Literary Province* is that the *printed fetish* requires a register, a problematization of "circulation" and reading: "The public demands such a literature. Leaving aside the alleged contradiction between freedom and social considerations in art, over the justification of modern literary genre, such a theory claims that the public always require sensualist, called and asked for pornography. But there are limits beyond an organic and moral conventionalism of form. Those meant to protect the social values, distracted by political, economic, theoretical considerations, do not notice the seriously problem of the generation to which all have one good word and an act of exploitation. "

The psychoanalytic replica proposed by *Literary Province* concerns the explanatory attack to the extent that the cultural act must be disposed in a presentation of the fully life, attaching it a spiritual and biological perspective. This calls for a "turbulent dynamics" which implies a mutual interference and determination, finding that any manifestation embodied in gesture, mimicry, speech, in writing, automatic actions, spontaneous, reflective, creative, has some multiple, heterogeneous sources, arising from the dynamic biophysical and social life. *Literary Province*, I, No.7-8 (April-May), 1933, places, therefore, on an analysis line of some parts that separate / appropriate the human functions with distinct destination.

Approaching a brave half - century leap, if *Old Dilemma* proposes a (com) pleasure in some active patterns, the psychoanalytic perspective of *Literary Province* did nothing else but to find inside the phenomenon, "all the cognitive or derived trends as antisocial, establishing that all the childhood memories, desires, instincts with social investment, cannot spill into a social satisfaction; all are placed into unconscious, because the emotional life has its own laws quite different from those of intelligence, and their obscure mechanisms form the essential part of our self. "

The article "Psychoanalysis in Literature" (Dr.I.Popescu, *Literary Province*, I, No. 7, April 8-May 1933) sets into the textual level, the anticipatory response to number 47 (Year I, 3-9 December 2004) of *Old Dilemma*, which asked "who needs psychoanalysis?". The retrospective power of the psychoanalytic response is related to a register oriented towards the action, activating a concrete achievement by overcoming a pure synthetic phase. This outbreak arises from conflict, as an inevitable consequence of the psychosocial antinomy. Placed on a metasocial route, the variant of porno- discourse is diagnosed as trace, as a polymorph and multiple responses. We need psychoanalysis, as far as the Romanian cultural press uses the fetish as a temperamental way of direction.

Such a perspective confirms (since 1933!) that the fetish is linked by the " psychoanalysis justification, as a literary (and artistic) investigation method of focusing on the sexual and schizoid conflict, first expressing a primitive and fundamental factor of the common structural and dynamic human spirit, the second one considering it as a vital attitude of the individual towards the environment. It's not about the cheap eroticism or about the madness- confusions that have created invective and tendentious critics".

In conclusion, the local, provincial model, confirms (using the same apparent complacency!) the "old" analytical dimension – of superposing the narrative landmarks to a psychoanalytic demarche! What *Old Dilemma* has proposed is nothing but the (re) activation of a cultural segment already exhausted by clarification and analysis!

