

**“THE DREAM AS A
PARADIGM”
THE AESTHETICS OF THE
ONEIRIC GROUP
= DOCTORAL THESIS =
*ABSTRACT***

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Școala Doctorală de Studii Filologice

ANUNȚ

La data de 20.09.2022, ora 12:00, în Amfiteatrul "G. Ibrăileanu" (III.12) dna. LIȚĂ D. ADINA CĂȘ. CĂȘUNEANU va susține, în ședință publică, teza de doctorat cu titlul "VISUL CA PARADIGMĂ". ESTETICA GRUPULUI ONIRIC, în vederea obținerii titlului științific de doctor în domeniul Filologie.

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Teza poate fi consultată la Biblioteca Facultății de Litere.

Data,
30.08.2022

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The research I have conducted is called **“The Dream as a Paradigm”**. **Aesthetics of the Oneiric Group** and is about the literary movement crystallized in 1964 around the nucleus formed by Dumitru Țepeneag and Leonid Dimov. The work includes an analysis of the theories and works of four writers: Leonid Dimov, Dumitru Țepeneag, Emil Brumaru and Mircea Ivănescu whose selection was determined by the fact that the first two are the fathers of the movement and have strived to put into practice the ideology built, and the other two poets represent unique voices in Romanian literature, distinguished by the originality of their vision of the world. For an approach in line with our aim, we have considered only the pre-December 1989 creations for two reasons: on the one hand, the subversive nature of the movement (which led to censorship, the banning of their works and the political asylum of Țepeneag in Paris), and on the other hand, the fact that the authors moved slightly towards postmodernism, Țepeneag himself admitting that he was faithful to oneriest principles only in his early writings.

The thesis is structured in ten chapters, including argument and conclusions. In order to understand aesthetic oneirism from a diachronic perspective, I have presented the relationship of man and the creator with the dream at different moments in the evolution of culture. Albert Beguin in his work **"The Romantic Soul and the Dream"** argued that any epoch of

human thought could be defined with enough depth by the relations it establishes between the dream and the waking state. Thus, we referred to Greek antiquity and to the great religions considered to be the cradles of modern civilization. We have noted the position of ancient sages, mostly philosophers, on the role of dreams, as well as different approaches from a religious perspective, for example Christianity decries those who proclaim the premonitory power of dreams, accepting that such transcendental communication is intended only for the chosen, while Judaism is much more permissive, considering the dream a second existence. A sub-chapter I have devoted to the *Onirocritics* of Artemidoros, to highlight the intense preoccupation with this phenomenon which the author himself confessed to having studied at length.

Starting with the third chapter, I have moved the analysis to a strictly literary level, dealing with the dreamlike topos specific to Romanian Romanticism: life as a dream, the forest, the mirror, deduplication, uranic flight, magic, fantasy, occultism. The patriotic character of Romanian pre-Romanticism was manifested by a tempering of creative energies, representatives such as Alecsandri, Bolintineanu, Grigore Alexandrescu, Heliade Rădulescu cultivated diurnal valences of the dream: melancholy, reverie. Eminescu's stage marks the

maturation of the oneiric imagination, which has become an expression of access to liberation.

Chapter IV presents the dream from the perspective of the Surrealists, who consider it the only way of knowing man's fundamental aspirations and immediate needs. The sub-chapters are dedicated to the representatives of Romanian Surrealism: Gellu Naum, Sașa Pană, Ilarie Voronca, Geo Bogza, as well as to the publications that supported this movement, a choice motivated by the deeply theoretical character of the movement, developed in the pages of these publications. We have also captured the dream perspective in the work of Max Blecher, an author close to the Surrealist doctrine, who proves to be a modern Jonah who lives through dreams the perspective of an infinity of closed worlds.

Chapter V, **The Aesthetics of the Oneiric Group**, synthesizes the principles developed in studies and articles by oneiric writers, especially Dumitru Țepeneag and Leonid Dimov. The oneiric image they propose represents a reality analogous to concrete reality. They do not consider the nocturnal dream as a psycho-analyzable biological phenomenon, but a reality that is dreamed. The writer is perfectly lucid, transferring the mechanisms of the dream into literature. The writer is no longer an intermediary between the world and the text, the text itself mediates between worlds.

The following chapters were dedicated to the four representatives of the movement: Dumitru Țepeneag Leonid Dimov, Emil Brumaru and Mircea Ivănescu. Țepeneag's early writings are characterized by objectivity and anti-psychologism, proposing elements of recurrent props in his later creations. The concern for compositional balance and the undermining of referentiality, through the combination of isolated narrative mini-narratives articulated in a specific poetic formula, from a playful and solemn perspective, stands out. It consists of some thematic ghosts, the man with a top hat, the approved, the cyclist, the soldier, the militiaman, the man with wings, the aviator. The writer's wardrobe includes the animal-man, the lion, the eagle, the roosters, the parrots, the sheep, the snail. They all undergo a process of semantic stripping, either by cancelling their specific attributes or by exaggerating them. Other constants of the artistic imagery are the great exodus, the wandering, the green meadow, the sordid nest, the presence of several suns in the sky.

The obsessively cultivated states are *expectation* (with two forms: bliss and the tension caused by the constant search for something nameless) and *angelicness* (the angel appears in the works in various poses in which its primary meanings are cancelled out, which is a tragic cry). Țepeneag's oneiric world is constructed by insisting on looking at objects, beings, and gestures. The instrument of literary creation is the dream, which

proves more important than the word itself - the gaze constructs meaning, while the word is merely a sign that conveys immateriality. The oneiric is sustained not only in terms of content, but also by the directorial freedom of the narrator. The debut volumes are dictated by a discursive diffraction, also identified in the later volumes. The I/He narrative play is meant to underline the splits of the being, the alienation, but also the slippage into specular worlds.

In the chapter **Leonid Dimov or pure oneirism**, I have tried to clarify the labels given to the poet or his work: barbianism, arghezianism, ludic, gratuitous, balkanism, mannerism, barochistic, tragic. Dimov's poems capture suspended events, marked by the abandonment of causality. From the very beginning, a thematic horizon is established to which Dimov will remain faithful: the carnival, the dream, the feast, eros, the status of the creator. Bulimia and sexuality make the transition from a function of fulfilment to the uncanny and grotesque. And they establish a state of expectation, reminiscent of Țepeneag.

Corin Braga considers that the poet conceives an anarchic literature, since he concentrates elements that seem anarchic, but which in the end are shattered, annihilated. By Dimovian mannerism, Marin Mincu meant an interminable verbal feast that builds an order of disorder.

The main hypostases of the ego are the spectator and the traveler. The world as a spectacle determines an initiatory journey, an adventure of knowledge. The jester, the acrobat, the juggler illustrate the tragic condition of the creator, the isolation, the degradation of his social image. From the volume **Book of Dreams** onwards, the poet seems to be lost in a labyrinth, in constant metamorphosis. The created universe seems depopulated, dominated by objects designed to create terror. The tragedy of Dimov's work derives from the carnivalesque, for behind the laughter, merriment, bustle, pleasure, lurks metaphysical sadness, existential emptiness, the thanatic feeling, the anguish caused by the contingent, love reduced to sexuality. Another element that distinguishes Dimov is his lexical richness, materialized in terms from biology, higher mathematics, maritime navigation, bookish elements and by inventiveness (feminized masculine nouns and proper nouns with plural forms).

The next chapter is dedicated to Emil Brumaru, a poet who does not allow himself to be tempted by the esoteric areas, by the apodictic tone, giving primacy to the miniature universe, the domestic, the banal. The main mood his texts inspire is serenity. It is not the objects that matter, but their power to generate another reality, to resurrect a mythology of the derisory. Brumaru constructs an idyllic space in which life is celebrated, in a lavish and innocent ceremony at the same time as the world is

different, and also the way it is seen. A quasi-erotic tension is created, people and things being subjected to it. Small and banal objects become projections of the self that acutely feels melancholy in front of a fabulous-sweet world. Through reverie, the poet establishes a connection with the essence and intimacy of things, the whole of reality being sensually reflected. Alexandru Cistelecan identifies a world imbued with paneroticism in which objects devoid of any natural connection are in total harmony. However, the poetry thus generated reveals the perspective of a shy person who assumes naive scenarios. The poet is also fascinated by the exquisite or strong aromas and tastes that are associated with states of trance, of bliss, in the vicinity of dreams. The world imagined by Brumaru is dominated by several hypostases of masculinity and femininity. From the series of masculine ones, we recall the knight, the storyteller, Detective Arthur, Julien the Hospitaller, the lover. The feminine hypostases are Dulcinea, the aphrodisiac woman, the maiden, Lolita (a mixture of innocence and voluptuousness), Jnapanca (the body of pleasure, an oxymoronic presence between sweetness and fear), Cruela (illustrating capricious love, she is slippery, unfaithful, promiscuous).

In the chapter **Mircea Ivănescu and the Discretion of Poetry** we have captured the fact that, despite the association with aesthetic oneirism, the poet is rather a postmodernist *avant la*

lettre through: the disappearance of metaphor, the elimination of solemn language, abstraction, playful and ironic spirit, the exploitation of bookish elements, intertextuality, metatextual echo, cultural allusion, pastiche, the only accepted reality being the text itself. He brings a new vision to Romanian poetry in which the everyday, the bookish, the discreet prevail. However, unlike the postmodernists who place their poetics in the contingent, Ivănescu filters reality through an inner lens. His biography is not about reproducing essential events, but about the authenticity of experiences, of the memories they trigger. The poet starts from an aspect of reality that triggers a memory, which in turn leads to another memory and so on. He resembles Brumaru in his lack of serious, solemn, oracular notes.

One notices the tendency towards nostalgia, reverie, meditation, through which a reorganization of the world is achieved. Texts without beginning and without end seemingly flow from one another and retrieve events subjectively, randomly. The poet is trapped outside and therefore seeks freedom within. Ivănescu imposes an emblematic character, Mopete, a character with autobiographical hints but also a parody of works by poets he admired. The poet does not cultivate lucid dreaming, but combines reverie with the bookish and the everyday, immersing himself in a permanent state of melancholy. The parallelism created between the real world and the created world,

reconstructed on the basis of memories, is reminiscent of the ideology of the Onyrist. Recalling the same aspects again and again creates the impression of recovering some original gesture, which generates the mythical dimension of Eminescu's poetry.

In the last chapter, **Conclusions**, we have summarized the results of our approach.

Dreamers aim to create, through the specific mechanisms of dreams, a reality analogous to the real world. They do not have in mind the nocturnal dream, but a reality that is dreamed. The dream is a logical construction, not a hazard. The dreamers do not dream, they create the dream, the text is created as it is written.