

THE MELANCHOLY ROMANIAN SONG - METAPHYSICAL PARADIGME OF THE ROMANIAN SPACE IN BLAGA'S WORK

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Abstract: *Blaga has not reduced the national feature to a value, quality, disposition, skill etc or a group of such elements, but was preoccupied mainly to evaluate the creative potential of the Romanian people, determined by the stylistic matrix expressed by it. He considers that from the whole cultural creations of a people, the musical ones express the best the abyss of the unconscious, being thus the most loyal to the matrix of those elements. Referring to the spatial horizon of the Romanian cultural creativity, established by the Romanian space, the melancholy song has, of course, a significance that has never been highlighted according to its importance.*

Key words: *melancholy song, stylistic matrix, mioritic space.*

1. Introduction

Poet and philosopher with a great vocation, essayer, thinker, writer, loyal folklore loving person, Lucian Blaga is one of the most important creators in the history of the national culture, *the first Romanian thinker of universal status*; he had an outstanding contribution to the development of the Romanian poetry and in the completion of the self consciousness of our people, founding the philosophy of the cultural styles, crowned with an original metaphysical vision. Convinced that our tradition is confronted with creative artistic potentials, the philosopher „inferred a possibility to address the depths of the Romanian mentality, building

himself what he nostalgically imagined for a visionary of the spirit: «a thinking system, a vision of the world in the spirit of the folklore superstitions” [1].

„*Lucian Blaga is the first to have tried to build an entire philosophical system, with walls, with a dome and to give this philosophy an application to the Romanian reality. His credit is beyond discussion. However puzzled the university philosophy professors might look at it, the true Romanian thinking starts here*” [2]. For the accreditation of this valuable thinking, George Călinescu makes use the fact that Lucian Blaga has established not only the most complex, but the most united Romanian philosophical system in which all the great fields and problems of the

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philosophical thinking are mentioned, suggesting an impressive number of original solutions; then, the observation that this philosophy is the carrier of a national belief that results from the constant and passionate interest manifested during its existence, compared to the creative potential of the Romanian people.

2. Coordinates of Blaga's philosophical system

On the other hand, Blaga's thinking has a certain universal vocation, being integrated in one of the most prestigious tendencies in the evolution of the European philosophy of culture during the first half of the 20th century, the culture morphology. The most important representatives of this orientation: Alois Riegl, Leo Frobenius, Oswald Spengler, Wilhelm Wioninger etc. have been preoccupied mainly with the problem of the style and that of the unity of style in culture. They have connected the cultural creativity of peoples to various feelings of the space, which can explain the great variety of cultural styles.

Lucian Blaga considers that the feeling of the space is indeed an important coordinate of the cultural creativity, but that alone, it cannot generate a phenomenon of such a complexity as the style. Consistent to this full-sized vision on the cultural style, Blaga will decipher, in the first book of the „Trilogy of culture” – *Horizon and style* the main determiners of the style, which will establish together the stylistic matrix. These are:

- The spatial horizon - (the infinite, the space - colonnade, the plan, the Romanian territory, the alveolar, successive space etc.)
- The temporal horizon (time - fountain, time - waterfall, time - river);
- The axiological accents (statement and negation);

- The anabasic and catabasic attitude (or neutral)
- The formative expectation (the individual, the typical, the element).

This is not the place to characterise each, we would not do anything but repeat Blaga's endeavour, without being able to render its expressivity, which is impoverished by every interpretation. We will only remember their common trait and, consequently, defining: all things emerge from the unconscious. It is immediately necessary to mention that Blaga's theory on the unconscious is explicitly and absolutely delimited from the psycho-analytical one, grounded by Freud, to which one can give credit only for exploring – although with uncertain results – „the other realm” (the unconscious), which was loomed, a long time ago, from the metaphysical perspective of romantic movement.

For Blaga, the unconscious is not a sort of "a basement of the consciousness" in which suppressed elements originated in the consciousness are kept, as the psychoanalysts used to think, but a mental reality, „cosmetic", superior even at the organizational, complex and functional level to consciousness.

Nevertheless, the unconscious is not isolated from the conscious but apparently. It permanently exercises influences on it (but not reciprocal), giving it, by means of the „sound", depth and infinite modulations. This continuous „pressure" of the unconscious on the consciousness is manifested mainly in the cultural creation process. Thus implanted, the stylistic matrix is „like a bundle of categories which are imprinted, from the unconscious, to all human creation and even to life as it can be modelled by the spirit" [3].

The stylistic structure of the creations of an individual or a community – Blaga notices – bears the stamp of the decisive complex of the stylistic matrix, thus

ensuring the vision unit of a people or a nation, when it is expressed at this level: „*the stylistic matrix can be, at least by means of the essential factors, similar or even equivalent for more individuals, for an entire people or for a part of the humankind in the same era. The existence of an unconscious stylistic matrix alone stands for an impressive fact such as is undoubtedly the stylistic consistency of some creations*” [4]

The stylistic matrix ensures the creation, it makes it possible, but, at the same time, it is also an organ used for the breaking of the creative impulses, maintaining the creative destiny of the human and by means of it, ensuring the ontological singularity of the human being in the universe.

In the Romanian culture, analysing from the point of view of the philosophy of style has its roots extended to a larger cultural matrix than the national territory, but where the differences characteristic to the Romanians are striking. In the south – east European territory and especially in the Balkan space, the pilasters of the culture formed and developed during history are, mainly speaking, similar enough, and the matrixes formed within this space, according to the historical territories and the different psychological – spiritual peoples, are characterised by their own predicable. Once formed, a cultural matrix maintains its category place for a long time, influenced by a stylistic unit.

Throughout history, within any cultural matrix there were other matrixes, whose specific features depend on the traits of the cultural sub-areas in which they are formed. The old Romanian historical cultures, reconstituted thought the considerable efforts of the specialists, prove, apart from the Romanian continuity of their territories, the existence of some different cultural centres within the same Romanian cultural areas. At present, such Romanian regional stylistic matrixes identifiable as being

around 80 only in the context of the people culture prove, among others, the stylistic unit of the Romanian people.

3. The melancholy song and the theory of the mioritic space

In the second volume of the Trilogy of culture – The Romanian territory - Lucian Blaga will make the effort to identify the parameters of the stylistic matrix that controls the cultural creativity of the Romanian people. Unlike the majority of Romanian thinkers who approached the problem of the national feature in the interwar period, Blaga understood the Romanian feature as a "stylistic heritage", which could influence, from the unconscious, the individual and the collective cultural creations: „*Above and beyond the mystery of the blood, the Romanian feature is a stylistic heritage made partly from determiners that belong to it exclusively, and partly from an intimate relationship of national and proportional type of some determiners that surpass it.*” [5].

Consequently, Blaga has not reduced the national feature to a value, quality, disposition, skill, etc or a group of such elements, but was preoccupied mainly to evaluate the creative potential of the Romanian people, determined by the stylistic matrix expressed by it: „First of all, there is a certain spatial horizon, the Romanian one and also a time swaying advance horizon. They form the coordinates of the spirituality. First of all, a feeling of the destiny functions together with these horizons, a feeling of the destiny lived as an undulation, as an alternative of climbings and descents, as a passage into a sidereal country, where the hills of trust and the valleys of resignation are followed. About this horizon we keep somewhere in a corner of the heart full of tears, even when we swam, of a life full of

rain, a vague heavenly record: At the edge of a realm, / On a heaven's mouth ". The chain of the following determiners follows: a preference shown for the categories of the organic, of the world and the tendency of Sofiane transformation of the reality.

The formative expectation appears and is active especially as an orientation towards geometrical forms and elements, reduced in an organic manner. We then add to the bundle an invincible love for the picturesque and also a clear feeling for the measure of the entire.

One of Lucian Blaga's greatest merits is that, by means of the mioritic space theory he integrated our culture into the wider and deeper framework of the philosophy of culture.

Lucian Blaga considers that from the whole cultural creations of a people, the musical ones express the best the abyss of the unconscious, being thus the most loyal to the matrix of those elements. Referring to the spatial horizon of the Romanian cultural creativity, established by the Romanian space, the melancholy song has, of course, a significance that has never been highlighted according to its importance.

Indeed, the melancholy song: „*is presented to us like a product of a total transparency: behind it we can guess the existence of a matrix - space, or of a very different spatial horizon. (...)* the melancholy is expressed, which is neither too difficult or too easy, of a soul that climbs and descends, on a non-defined undulated space, farther and farther, again and again, ... [6].

The consonance between the musical line of the melancholy song and the abyss disposition of the Romanian soul that influences its cultural creations, seems perfect to Lucian Blaga: „*in it, it is expressed the melancholy, not too difficult, not too easy, of a soul that climbs and descends, on a non-defined undulated*

space, farther and farther, again and again, or the longing of a soul that wants to cross the hill as an obstacle of destiny and which will forever have to cross another hill and another one, or the affection of a soul that moves under the signs of a destiny that has its climb and descent, its increase or decrease in level, in a repeated, monotonous and continuous tempo". [7]

The inclination towards modulation and discretion of the Romanian soul has also, according to Blaga, the correspondent transferred into the melancholy song, in the people's music in general: „*In the Romanian people's song, in the melancholy song, in the dance song, in lamentations, the sound material formed mainly of intermediary, imprecise tones, of an insistent "modulation" of the feelings. Our people's song moves with an impressive certainty on the line of these intermediate tones, so unstable in themselves, and which the ear could so easily disintegrate, pushing them towards positions without ambiguity of the staves. What a variety of modulations in apparent monotony of ensemble in the people's song.*" [8].

The focus on the melancholy song, the detachment of the interpreter from all that surrounds him/her, because of introspection in the bottom of the soul, leads to a disconnection from the spatial perspective and entering the pure temporality area (the melancholy song causing the sensation of temporal relaxation, or even the feeling of time caught in the lines of force of the emotional field).

The people's melody which has found its most beautiful form of expression in the melancholy song was the attraction point for many folklorists, literates and philosophers. As a result of the research in the music folklore, it was noticed that the melancholy song represents a musical style with its own stylistic and formal features, a

chant which is continuously improvised in an endless variation based on some traditional formulas and procedures.

Béla Bartók thinks that an important clue for the oldness of the melancholy song in Maramureş is the existence of a unique melody or form of expression as carrier of the entire melody, poetic, lyric and epical repertoire. Research in the areas of Bucovina, Oltenia, at the edge of the mountains, and Transilvania has led to the conclusion of the existence of a generalised phenomenon on the territory of our country in the far past, "a phenomenon which shows a stage of an undoubted oldness of the local musical folklore, an undoubted Romanian common ground and an undoubted unity and evolution in time and genres in the rhythm and form of expression connected or not to the occasion" [9].

Moreover the folklore researcher Tiberiu Alexandru considers as well that the melancholy song was the unique melody to sing the lyrical or epical lines, the same as for ritual or ceremonial texts. The supporter of the origin of the people's song in the old music of the Thracians, consider the melancholy song, this song of the shepherd, as a relevant entity of lonely melancholy, *„the song that comes from the shepherd's soul and seems to fill all that is between the earth and the sky. It is a long cry that develops and does not let anything in the atmosphere not to be touched by its emotion. And together with the shepherd's melancholy song, which does not reveal its love, in the note of his song is the love song, the calling song, the lamentation song, the song of that which is called in Romanian longing. Longing is in fact the pain, but a pain originated in the love that has gone away, that one searches thinking to have found it or, that which one knows for sure to have lost forever"* [10].

By saying that *„the melancholy song is no a loan"*, Constantin Brăiloiu suggests

the hypothesis of the oriental origin of the style, he shows its area of spreading and its frequency in a few isolated points, both in the occasional field and in the non-occasional one, and Ilarion Cocişiu proves the unity of this style on the entire Romanian territory: *„a Romanian spiritual unit always existed...and this unity is old like the flood itself.. A musical folklore atlas, together with a linguistic one, would highlight the truth that history (and other auxiliary sciences) cannot sufficiently point out"* [11].

Emil Riegler-Dinu compares the style of the melancholy song with the Persian – Arabic makam and tries to explain its spreading area in comparison with the economical and historical conditions in the development of people, as well as its mental structure [12].

No matter how comprehensive the „mioritic space" might be, it must be completed with the spatial influence that the notion of longing implies, the fundamental particularity of the Romanian feeling, the most frequently sung in our folklore poetry, which Blaga also analyzes, illustrating the inclination towards modulation and discretion of the Romanian people, which has its correspondent in the folklore song: *„In the Romanian folklore song, in the melancholy song, in dances, in lamentation, the sound substance is greatly made out of medium, imprecise notes, with an intense „modulation" of the moods. Our folklore songs move with an amazing certainty on the line of these medium, unstable notes which the ear could very happily disintegrate, forcing them towards the unequivocal positions of the staves. What a variety of modulations in the apparent monotony of the folklore song"* [13]. Together with the archetypes and the existential symbols of our culture: the myth of the water (the Danube being the ideal prototype), the myth of the mountain,

of the forest, of the supernatural sheep, of the earth, there is also the longing.

Longing is so overwhelmingly present in the melancholy song that, if we consider this type as being the most proper to the Romanians, we can say that existence means longing for the Romanians. In the same spirit, Constantin Noica proves the prototype and archetype feature of the word longing, searching the etymology, the formation and the sense of the word, capable of hiding „a history, a drama and a richness of thought that amaze us”, and Ovidiu Bârlea considers longing as a tyrannical and ambiguous feeling at the same time, surpassing all obstacles.

4. Conclusions

The melancholy song has a special expressive content, imposing itself by a wide and generous melody line, by a wide touch, by the warmth of the feeling, by the depth of the thought and the variety of expression means. The typical features of this music style are built from a complex of fixed, traditional elements, partly different of the song proper and from the improvisation elements, reflecting in images of a high artistic level the entire universe of the heart of the people, its manner of feeling and thinking, its attitude towards nature, life and their own feelings.

Lucian Blaga felt constantly attracted by the living spring of the people's creation exactly because it keeps or it has kept until now its authenticity, a guarantor in the order of the culture, of its value. Consequently, Blaga's philosophy wants to be and it really is a philosophy of the person, an anthropology in a wide sense.

His system is a universe in expansion that cannot be measured nor defined beforehand. It is a growing miracle here, a miracle that no detail error, no episodic weakness can annul. The Romanian space shows us the fulfilment and the positive

feature that there is in our thinking, it is the book of our Romanian fall, but, what have we fallen to? We have fallen to great honour, says Blaga.

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