

THE ARCHETYPE–GENERATING ELEMENT OF THE FOLKLORE CREATION

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Abstract: *Any folklore creation is subject to influences, borrowings but it is based on a series of common factors, that surpass, apparently with inexplicable ease, the differences in language, race, type of culture, geographical area, or historical period. In the folklore musical field, because of the existence of an attitude towards society, history, world and universe, as well as of a well articulated anthropological conception, the traditional community only promotes the creations that it considers valuable, it gives up the practices and the ceremonials that have become obsolete, by using archetypal syntagms and paradigms full of symbols and metaphors, that meet their regeneration and recovery necessities.*

Keywords: *archetype, folklore creation, stylistic factors, variation.*

1. Introduction

The archetype is a visual or energetic symbol of the subconscious recordings that exist in every human's mind. Some are easy to understand, while others send subliminal messages in our being, that help us to remember the meaning of our life on earth and what lies behind the illusion of reality. Archetypes can often send messages that verbal or written information cannot transmit.

An archetype is a generic, idealized model of a person, object or concept from which many circumstances are generated or emulated. In psychology, an archetype is a model of a person's personality or behavior.

From the linguistic point of view, an archetype is a defining example of a personality type. The value of using archetypal characters in fiction derives from the fact that a large group of people are able to unconsciously recognize an archetype, but also the motivations that stand beyond the behavioral types.

Archetypes are everywhere - because their symbols make up the language of the mind, corresponding to different frequencies of thought and being connected together by the subconscious, the unconscious and the group.

One can become aware of the archetypes in the meditative state, in the experiences outside the physical body, in artistic representations, in jewelry, hieroglyphs, logos etc. The reality is, in fact, a series of

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metaphors which are triggered by the synchronicity of the archetypes that we experience.

Archetypes are not formed during one's life, but they are pre-existing, inherited forms, they represent "the primordial images", "the collective representations", "the archaic residue", the innate cultural heritage of mankind, with a universal feature, being present in all humans. Consequently, archetypes are archaic types, universal image which have existed since the ancient times.

Countless repetitions of life experiences in human history have imprinted these experiences in our mental constitution, not necessarily in the form of imaging content, but almost as forms without content, representing only the possibility of a certain type of approach or action.

Archetypes are unconscious, but they may suffer conscious processing, they may take metaphorical forms and appear in myths, fairy tales or they are transmitted in the form of esoteric teaching. They are manifested directly in dreams and visions, this time being unique and hardly understandable. The awareness and the perception of the archetype modify it according to the individual consciousness in which it occurs, the conscious prejudices and the limitations of the individual.

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2. Objectives

In this study we intended to remain at the abstract, general level of the presentation of archetypes and not to find equivalent symbols, preferring the metaphorical

expressions, all in favour of the idea that any creation process is based on archetypes and it merges with them in such a way that, in any case, a considerable effort must be made in order to distract with precision the unique event of typical circumstance.

Although we did not intend on developing the following idea, we will limit ourselves only to mention that a classification of the most frequent archetypes met in the archaic strata of the Romanian folklore can be made, as follows: natural resonance, modality, repetition, accompaniment, monody, heterophony, the giusto silabic and parlando rubato rhythms, the temporal archetypes that aim at the relation between musical time and sound space, the formal archetypes that include the idea of form, the continuous variation, as well as the timbrous archetypes, by using the archaic instruments.

3. Theories and concepts about archetypes

Carl Gustav Jung's theory on the collective unconscious archetypes, although based on the coordinates of the human psychic, can represent a starting point for the study of musical archetypes. Without getting into details, we have to mention that the points of view on the archetypes have also been formulated by the „psycho-analysis classics”: Freud, Adler, Jung as well as by their successors and through the wide perspectives that they offer, they can be applied in other fields as well.

Lucian Blaga contributes to „*the approach of the unconscious mind as a new subject of philosophy*” [1], being separated not only from the morphological theory of culture, but also from Jung's psycho-analytical theory on the collective unconscious mind, of the archetype, the space and time level of the unconscious mind having totally other meanings for him. Nevertheless, between Carl Gustav

Jung's and Lucian Blaga's theory of the unconscious mind there is one similar aspect: they both describe a collective unconscious mind, with a hereditary existence.

If for Jung the unconscious mind is a psychic field, full of „archetypes” (categories of the imaginary), for Blaga, it is a constructive matrix full of stylistic, „abyssal categories”. Moreover, if for Jung, the archetypes, which are usually latent (which are „*in a repose state*”), are projected in myths, religious representations, as well as other different symbolical acts called *patterns of behaviour*, for the theorist of the *Romanian space*, „the abyssal categories” determine „the style” of all human spiritual creations, from myths, religions, philosophical and artistic creations, to the style of the political and military actions.

In his study „*Anthropological aspects*”, Blaga demonstrates that the abyssal archetypes and categories (stylistic factors) are totally heterogeneous, irreducible, unmistakable dimensions, enumerating on two columns six of the major differences that can be signaled between the two concepts. He considers that, if the archetypes are innate, hereditary, the abyssal categories are not, but they belong to the human being by their nature, as a cultural being, as a historical being. He notices further on that, for the human being, the archetypes and the abyssal categories coexist; the first are nucleuses around which most of the cultural creations are formed, and „*they always appear as being shaped according to stylistic moulds, being dominated by them*” [2]. Although both the archetypes, and the stylistic factors form the content of a collective unconscious mind, the first, being innate, are stereotypes, while the latter are variable, defining for the human as a being capable to create culture and history.

If the archetypes represent the human general level of the collective unconscious mind, the factors change not only from an era to another, but also according to the ethnic collectivity and even according to the individual. The archetypes belong to all humans – as a means of universal communication and comprehension, and the universality of archetypes statement, as Eliade proves „*finds its support in the mythologies of all peoples*”.

Existing in a latent form, the archetypes would be updated in artistic expressions; they are transmitted, more probably by means of the socio-cultural heredity than by biological heredity and they contribute to the specialization of some groups or communities: „the members of an ethnologic community have archetypes as a common factor and they are connected through them. The constant of folklore, language and legends, the action and knowledge schemes form a specific background by means of which what A. Kardiner calls a basic personality, characteristic to a certain community, is achieved”.

Blaga considers that the archetypes, like any unconscious content, is manifested in culture, but being rhapsodic, not forming a coherent structure, they never determine the stylistic unit of a culture, as is the case of the stylistic factors.

Through his theory about the unconscious stylistic factors that make a stylistic matrix, Blaga has made a contribution not only to the enrichment of the abyssal thinking, but also to the rethinking of some traditional conceptions of the philosophical anthropology.

According to the classification suggested by Gilbert Durand, we should take into account four distinct concepts, which constitute a proper soil of manifestation in the connotative structure of the myth: *the arbitrary sign*, without intrinsic motivation, *the simple symbol*, almost

synonymous with the sign, *the complex symbol*, intrinsically motivated and *the archetype*, mono-valent and psychologically motivated. He identifies the complex archetypes, resulted from the quality of the symbols „to organize themselves in webs, in which more dominants can be combined”[3]. In other words, „the symbols resemble a constellation, because they are a development of an identical archetypal topic, they are variations on an archetype”[4]. It is, in fact, also the opinion of Mircea Eliade who notes that „by becoming symbols, that is signs of a transcendental reality, the object representations cancel their limits, they stop being some isolated fragments and they integrate into a system”[5]; consequently, we can talk about archetypes and elements or integrated archetypal components.

Corneliu Dan Georgescu operates this nuance, observing that „an element of musical structure, isolated (for example, a harmonic relation, o melodic formula, etc.) can be integrated simultaneously in more musical archetypes” [6];, case in which we have to deal with real archetypal complexes.

George Breazul considers that an essential condition of the traditional folklore music is the existence of the melodic and rhythmical formulas (archetypes) that characterize the musical nature of the people, which are produced and acquired as common spiritual goods and as means of recognition, communication and understanding; they are transmitted either orally, either by means of popular musical instruments, the hearing and the musical memory being the necessary conditions for keeping and maintaining the tradition. The area features and the features of some regions are organically related to the temperament and to the character of the natives, to their social, political, economical and cultural conditions of the region.

Regarding the creation process, the performer’s imagination does not get lost randomly, but it is connected to prototypes, original images or „active stylistic factors, that put their undoubted seal on the products of our ethnical genius” [7]. The original patterns, the incarnate aesthetic essences of the archetypal art resonate instantaneously with the correspondent matrixes, situated in the unconscious psychological structure of each individual.

The anonymous creator, appealing to the cultural memory services, uses the procedures and expressions of the inexhaustible „fountain”, inherited and acquired by the folklore art. This is not done at random, because if it didn’t align to the compositional syntax imposed by the system, the fruit of its creation would risk remaining unaccepted by the human community to which it is destined. At the same time, the anonymous creator, in order to be accepted by the community, is forced to align equally to the syntax, but also to the signification of the folklore culture.

Nevertheless, subordination to the traditional discourse system does not annul to the performer the possibility and the initiative to inoculate some new meanings in the massively formalized folklore texture; this is how one can explain why in the folklore tradition creation there is a subtle conflictual state between the values transmitted and the ones which are about to be made.

In the folklore, there is no dichotomy between creator and receiver, because in the rural community, he is confounded with the performer, who does not get lost as a result of the invasion of the social, the traditional and consequently the conventional, and does not become a simple, purely mechanical recording means of the creation, repeating it stereotypically, like a phonograph, like a magnetophone or like a cassette player.

The singer is a living resonator, characterized by will, talent and self initiative, equipped with a creative personality and personal taste, and the potential song, passing on this pathway, receives the characteristic notes of this personality, which are reflected in the different variants of the text in question.

In any interpretation – even in the one with a purely reproductive intention – the singer benefits from a certain freedom in selecting and combining the constitutive elements of the song, which is proved by the fact that no performance is identical to another one. Consequently, variation and creation are the visible sides of this game of limited options, each bringing his/her renewal contribution, by means of which they foreshadow the later evolution of the tradition.

The ethno-musicologist Constantin Brăiloiu states that: „we never choose a song, but only the variants; the pattern remains not as an abstract, volatile, whose reconstruction we can make synthetically, the way the chemist reconstitutes the perfume of flowers” [8]; but the same as in Plato’s philosophy, the archetype is the concept that expresses an original, ideal and eternal pattern, that can be translated by the indefinite formulas, more or less real: „in the singer’s mind there is a latent life, an ideal archetype, out of which s/he offers us transient representations. We are interested in finding the essential properties of this archetype, which is not only one, if we were allowed to simultaneously disguise all its elements” [9]; and he goes on by stating that the pillars of the structure - the archetypes – will not be influenced by the improvisation, not altering any of the basic traits, which help us recognize the abstract pattern. Consequently, the recognition of the archetypes can be made only by analyzing the variants and the variations, and by comparing the different

performances of the same song, one can notice the various individual contribution, also according to the environment, the human category, the era, the spiritual state, and the various circumstances and from a musical genre to the other.

At the level of the final moment, the one of the reception of the folklore creation, the creator’s personality must merge, overlap with the one of the receiver, – in the case of a complete, ideal reception, – both of them „resonating” by means of some archetypes that surpass the physical and psychological personality (the ego, the individual self), joining them in the same common creation. The secret of the archetypical art creation, the same author goes on, „consists of diving anew in the original state of the spirit; this is how one can explain the fact that, a work, being at the same time objective and impersonal, impresses us in the most profound corners of our souls, being a supra-personal creation in this case.” [10]. The archetypical creation thus expresses the aim to obtain a maximum psychical effect, also supported by the belief that art in general, not only expresses this intimate human bond, but it also influences it.

In fact, both the creation process and the reception one occur at the same time, the singer actually creating during the performance and taking the advantages of the creative suggestions that come from the public in the act of creation, so that the singer acquires all the stimuli that come from the public.

The recollection of an event of a folklore creation in the folklore memory is not preserved more than two or three hundred years because it functions on archetypes, instead of events, categories or characters. The cultural memory is marked as being a receptacle that registers and classifies from the point of view of the value essential, archetypical information, on which one can add, by adapting, the historical aspects of

existence, and the elements that do not submit to the pattern from the idea point of view, are not received, passing to oblivion.

The aim of the archetypal art to transfer the archetypes from the abyss of the unconscious mind to the surface, towards the area of the conscious mind, this being actually their specific area of existence, involves first of all, the use of an adequate language, formed of archetypal syntaxes and paradigms full of symbols and metaphors, capable of answering to „*the regeneration needs, to recover the profound meaning of art*” [11]. This language which is formed, from the point of view of certain grammatical categories and elements of vocabulary, generated by principles, rules, patterns of construction and syntaxes with archetypal functionality, does not mean a return to primitiveness or simplicity as a full accessibility, but implies the recovering of the primordial essences of music, finding that equilibrium, the point of perfect harmony between what is natural and what is cultural, in which „*culture is achieved by means of the natural laws*”, and what is natural comes to light from its profundity towards the semantic level of the musical work [12].

René Guénon believes that the true traditional spirit, „*whatever the form it may take, is everywhere and always the same; the various forms, specially adapted to some mental conditions, to some time and place circumstances, are not expressions of the same truth; but one must have the capacity to place oneself to the level of pure intellectuality in order to discover this fundamental unit under the apparent multiplicity of forms*” [13].

The need to recover the archetypes as „*original patterns of order under their double dimension, of permanence and essence*” [14] has manifested as a constant trait of evolution of the Romanian creation of our century, although its existence was not taken into account as it is or even theorized.

Once taken into account, this tendency has taken the form of a current in which Octavian Nemescu distinguishes two parts of the evolution: a) the approach to the archetypes from the point of view of the sound heights; b) the part of the total archetypal process, by approaching the archetypes from the point of view of rhythm, timbre and musical form.

In a few of his theoretical studies on archetypes, the musician develops a theory of a type of initiating music, whose aim would be „*the rediscovery of the Primordial Tradition before the Babel Tower. Such a music type allows the resuscitation of the ancient musical functions: reopening of the communication channels by means of the sound between human being and the Secret nature*” [15]. Within this kind of music, the composer gives up the position of protagonist of the creation act, becoming a modest but initiated participant in the ritual that brings together the musician and the cosmic energies, the musical creation being at the same time an offering, but also a means of purification, and the composing act is considered to be „*a psycho – mental - acoustic experiment in the field of the artistic*” [16].

Irinel Anghel sees in the idea of archetype „*a radical change of artistic mentality, a dialogue at a large temporal scale, [...]. Consequently, the archetypal doctrine opposes the dimension of permanence and stability, that of change, instability of the successive revolutions of disasters and as a result the relativity of modern doctrine*” [17].

4. Conclusions

These theories cannot be applied mechanically in the folklore musical field, whose similarity to an archetypal area of creation cannot be contested, maybe because of the nature of the „unconscious

mind product” and of the fact that each traditional community inherits from the primordial background a lot of archetypical structures, which it adapts to its own psychology and history. Because of the existence of an attitude towards society, history, world and universe, as well as of a well articulated anthropological conception, the traditional community only promotes the creations that it considers valuable, it gives up the practices and the ceremonials that have become obsolete, by using archetypical syntagms and paradigms full of symbols and metaphors, that meet their regeneration and recovery necessities.

In order to reject the assertion of some researchers regarding the arbitrary of people’s art, we will formulate the idea that, being a keeper of some ancestral experiences that become intrinsic, innate to him, the popular creator is the beneficiary of some accumulation funds (archetypes), experiences, feelings that are part of the entire community, and which inevitably and unconsciously he will transpose in the artistic level. This transposition is made by various techniques that act on numerous and various raw materials, each of them reacting in a different manner.

By giving examples, one could talk about the same melody sung by different instruments, sometimes with lyrics or tonalities and rhythms which are different. Consequently, we can say that it is about an apperceptive social and collective fund which, together and in parallel with some imperative techniques, as well as together with talent and inventiveness, spontaneity and fantasy of the creator, constitute the fund and the premises of the artistic creation process.

If we stop at the ballad of Miorița, whose path towards what it is today does not represent an epical accumulation, because it had a complete narrative structure in the hypostasis of the mythical archetype, we

will notice that its evolution is semantic in nature, and pursuing it involves decoding the primary patterns and mostly, the modifications in significance to which an archetype is subjected. From this point of view, Miorița is entirely an archetype that does not change too much its epical formula, being the expression of an irreducible perfection, essence and geometry. In ‘The Ewe’ there is an exceptional concentration of essential christian symbols, or, better said, of archetypes of the christian symbology: the shepherd, the ewe, the mother in search of her son and the wedding. Nevertheless, I believe we can consider that the extraordinary artistic creation of ‘The Ewe’ is entirely an archetype that cannot change its epic formula very deeply, being the expression of an irreducible, essential and geometrical perfection.

By means of the archetype, the act of communication is completed both horizontally, from the creator to the performer and then to the receiver, and vertically, chronologically, from generation to generation, or from the deepest past to the present [18].

In conclusion, the archetype in the folklore is a sublimed repetition, but also a sublimation of the model, and because of its universal feature, it has a high degree of generalisation and abstatization that can trigger a lot of connections in the mind and in the imagination of the listener or of the viewer.

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18. Jung has shown on various occasions that the archetypes are not representable sau exprimabile în essence and they do not evolve, but can be only suggested by means of the symbols and metaphors, their evolution being connected to the image it takes within the musical creation or within a culture.