The Two Faces of Deity in the 16th century Calvinist *Book of Songs*

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La concepción de la 'divinidad' y la naturaleza divina han sido cuestiones oscuras y generadoras de disensión aun desde la época de Cicerón. El presente estudio intenta discutir algunos aspectos de la imagen de deidad tal como ella aparece a través de la historia de la humanidad, respectivamente tal como se presenta en el ***Libro de canciones*** *protestante del siglo XVI, escrito en rumano [cf.* ***Cartea de cîntece****].*
Por un lado, según el principio dialéctico, todas las cosas del universo se mantienen en armonía por la tensión de los contrarios. Tal dialéctica presenta la imagen de la divinidad que conoce "dos caras" diferentes en sus principios que corresponden a las dos grandes epocas históricas de la vida religiosa: la epoca ante cristiana y la era cristiana.
Por otro lado, la idea de las "dos caras" se puede invocar, esta vez con referencia particular al texto analizado, también en el caso en que proponemos a inventariar los atributos conceptualizados o percibidos de la divinidad que se colocan en una trayectoria entre dos extremos: el polo positivo y el otro negativo. Por lo tanto, un otro objetivo del presente estudio es ver la manera en que dichos atributos son verbalizados por medio de técnicas de argumentación retórica.

Palabras-clave: imago dei, canciónes protestantes, retórica, argumentación y persuasión

1. 'Deity' – a philosophical and religious concept

The genesis of any new concept calls forth a distinction between a "before" and an "after" state. With respect to the long-standing conception of deity, this dividing line is most certainly represented by Christianity, laically viewed as "the form which religious belief had taken from the moment mankind actually discovered God" (Petrovici 1940: 130).

The notion of 'deity' and the nature of the divine being(s) were regarded as "obscure" and divisive issues even in the time of Cicero (cf. *De natura deorum*, I, I-II, p. 2-7) and, we believe, things have remained just as equivocal as before, despite all progress made ever since by mankind[1]. Even before a however relative and incomplete definition of the notion 'deity'[2] was given, certain conceptions of

[1] Naturally, we do not refer here to the believer's point of view, for whom this concept is relatively well-defined and clarified, although a bit different from one Confession to the other, but rather to the philosophical enquiry which features vivid disputes. We also shall point out that, generally speaking, where belief starts, science comes to a halt and vice versa, though we do not see an irreconcilable antinomy between these two.

[2] Perhaps the best way to define *sacrality* is to oppose it to *profanity* or *secularity* (cf. Eliade 1995: 13).

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its nature may be identified in the various images or representations of deity found at different times and within various groups of people.

Thus, even before Christianity, there existed an image or, in fact, several images of divinity which Christianity had overwritten or reshaped. Christian symbols usually have correspondents in the common heritage of mankind, thus the revelation brought by religious belief did not entirely erase all pre-Christian insignia but rather it gave them new values or significance (Eliade 2005: 104). Thus, the symbols of primitive people, such as the heavens, water, Mother Earth etc. are charged with new meanings in Christian ideology, forming the basis on which it creates an *imago dei* of its own.

Whether it is exclusively or almost exclusively built upon intuition and imagination or it is based on thinking and reasoning, the imagery of deity, shaped quite differently throughout the history of mankind, cannot be truly understood except if studied from an interdisciplinary point of view, since the deep understanding of reality cannot be reached by the formal isolation, functional independence or self-sufficiency of a particular research field (cf. Gafton 2015: 20).

In this regard, philosophical thinking and theological – religious reasoning are entwined with each other, at least in the Western world (cf. Morley, n.d., online source), where the conception of deity may be included within a larger framework of a certain theism. For instance, in the theoretical cognizance of Antiquity "there existed an inherent conflict between the *monotheist* tendencies of Ionian philosophy and science which explained reality based on one prime principle alone and the *polytheist* thinking and explanation of reality provided by traditional Greek religion and mythology which evoked several different deities for the very same reasons" (Muscă 1999: 63). However, except for this discrepancy and other slight differences, the majority of ancient and modern philosophers conceive 'deity' (often synonymous with the term *God*[3] or *Logos*) as a metaphysical principle of reality, as a "substance" or "that which is in itself and is conceived through itself, in other words, that of which a conception can be formed independently of any other conception" (Spinoza 1981: 5, under I, def. 3), as a cosmic ordering being "in contrast with the great illusion of manifestation" (Anton 1943: 76). In other words, He cannot be perceived "by means of senses which put us in touch only with finite, changing and ephemeral things; the truth of the Supreme Being reveals itself solely to reason" (Aristotel, *Metafizica,* p. 391). The theological-religious perspective completes this definition given to the omnipotent, omniscient and ubiquitous supernatural force, i.e. deity, with new attributes. Thus, the creator and ruler of the universe is associated in Christian belief with holiness, fairness, benevolence etc. establishing the image of an entity towards which we move not by walking but by

[3] Viewed as "a Being distinct from its creation [...] which takes care of mankind and communicates with men, in turn, men owe Him complete obedience and boundless veneration" (Flew 1996, s.v.).

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loving, as the famous saying of St. Augustine goes (cf. *non ambulando, sed amando*).

2. The representations of Demiurge: the two faces of deity

According to the principle of dialectics, all things in universe are preserved in harmony by the tension of opposing forces which may be pictorially represented as the faces of Janus. The imagery of deity also shows some sort of dialectics since it may be described in terms of two fundamentally different "faces" which correspond to the two major historical epochs of religious life: the pre-Christian era and the time of Christianity. In this respect, we could distinguish two epochs of the existence of deity: in the first period, before discovering God, men invent their deity, whereas in the second period men actually discover God (cf. Petrovici 1940: 130; Feuerbach 1961: 118). Each of these two ages has developed a relatively distinct image of deity.

2.1. *The image of invented deities*. "Men have always been in need of a God but till they managed to find Him they had to invent Him" (Petrovici 1940: 130). Thus, the conceptualization of deity follows a pattern which is the exact opposite of scientific thinking since "in science first comes discovery and afterwards invention unlike religion which starts from invention and then reaches discovery" (*ibid.*, p. 130). In other words, in the first epoch of religious life, it was not God who created man in His own image but, on the contrary, it was man who created God in his own image (Feuerbach 1961: 118). In this respect, deity is nothing but the reflection of human nature, a resized copy of human condition. Thus, "the sentiment of living power, and of conscience, which he felt in himself, inspired man with the first idea of the divine" (Coulanges 2001: 99) merged with the awareness of man's relativity in contrast with his surrounding immensity. In this way, besides the deities took from the physical world, this epoch is characterized by the anthropomorphism of deities who are forged including with moral flaws and weaknesses (cf. Cicero, *De natura deorum*, I, XV-XVI, p. 43-44). Nevertheless, the shaping of deity's imagery in accordance with man's nature and the conception of flesh and blood deities, which dominate ancient thinking and which mainly derive from ancient poetics (see Homer), were refuted in the very same period by philosophical reflection which often expresses scepticism towards myths to which critical, rational and analytical approaches are opposed. Such critical attitude shows, for instance, the Greek philosopher Xenophanes who was the first to observe in Western culture that religious representations are socio-culturally conditioned: "Ethiopians say that their gods are snub-nosed and black; Thracians that theirs are blue-eyed and red-haired" (fragm. B16, cf. Lesher 2014, online source; cf. also Muscă 1999: 63). Therefore, in pre-Christian times there was no deity who belonged to all mankind but primitive deities were rather poliadic, local or even domestic who pertained only to a certain group of people (tribe, city etc.) or to one family alone. As a matter of fact, it was impossible for primitive people to conceive the idea of a *one and only God* who rules the universe in the first place since primitives had yet no idea of the

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'universe' *per se*. They did not know that the earth, the sun and the stars are all parts of one same body and, thus, the thought that they might all be ruled by the same Being did not occur to them. Consequently, "on the one hand, man attached the divine attribute to the invisible principle, to the intelligence, to what he perceived of the soul, to what of the sacred he felt in himself. On the other hand, he applied his ideas of the divine to the external object which he saw, which he loved or feared; to physical agents that were the masters of his happiness and of his life" (Coulanges 2001: 100).

As might be expected, the naturalized and/or anthropomorphic deities with miraculous powers have been equalled and even exceeded by humans' progress, as science gradually takes the place and role of mythology. Thus, in (nowadays) Christian mentality, these deities are viewed as pure inventions of the pagan polytheism, as mere products of imagination (though very useful in their times!) which are all but the transcendent[4] deity.

2.2. *The image of revelation*. Christian God is not invented but He is found, discovered through revelation. Therefore, the image of this deity does not reflect human nature as it is but rather "the tendency of human nature to exceed itself" (Petrovici 1940: 130). He is not only the image of disinterested human ideals but also the support of these ideals or the condition of their existence within us. He is no longer mistook – by means of metamorphosis – for mortal humans but He is placed above all of them as an unequalled model which stands beyond them, as a unique and universal Being.

It may seem paradoxical but, in fact, Christian imagery is not so radically different from the one established in pre-Christian times as it appears to be at first sight. Christian imagery preserves certain elements of the pre-Christian cosmic epiphanies since there are certain attributes[5] of the Deity which may be associated with particular forms and phenomena of nature. This is quite understandable since religious man intuitively perceives the "supernatural" by means of the "natural" features of the world (Eliade 2005: 89). Thus, sacrality appears through the very structures of the world. The skies are hence associated with deity and *almightiness* or *elevation* becomes an attribute of divinity. The latter one, in its turn, entails

[4] There is also a transitionary image of deity which absorbs both the visible (material) and the invisible (spiritual, ineffable) side of deity. In this regard, the Stoics, for instance, seem to prepare the ground for the coming of the Christian God.

[5] "The most accurate way of representing an object or a process is the very object or process itself. The difficulty raised by self-representation may be overcome by deducting the object or process from its specific manifestations, i.e. from their symptoms, but the accuracy of the result is merely satisfactory since, instead of reality, there stays only a handful of its attributes [...] Here stands the real reason for which man himself and, in fact, all the other entities of reality – including the immaterial Deity which has the possibility of some sort of embodiment– are known and recognized by their attributes" (Gafton & Gafton 2015: 10). "Although these attributes contribute altogether to signal the given reality, the fact that they may exist independently of each other [...] and that they may have different intensities, i.e. different capacities to impress, leads to the emergence and activation of their selection process" (*ibid.*, p. 10).

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other attributes, such as: absolute, infinite, eternal, eminence (*majestas*), Supreme Being. Since deity created the skies and all the other elements, He is the Creator, the Almighty, the Lord, the Father, and the Master of the Universe. Once He created the world, the Deity withdrew Himself into the Heavens giving His creation to mankind. The transcendent is invoked, thus, in moments of "crisis", since He is the only one who can save (physically and spiritually) His creation (the universe and man), fact which makes Him the Redeemer, the Saviour.

Another association with pre-Christian imagery may be made based on the symbolism of water which stands for the universal congress of potentialities representing the *fons et origo*, the source of all possible ways of existence which preceeds all forms and sustains all creation (Eliade 2005: 98-99). Likewise, Christian God is the Beginning and the End. He is the one who can wash away all iniquities and cleanse people from their sins just like waters which entail in their symbolism not only death but also rebirth, purification and regeneration.

However we look at it, on the whole, deity's imagery is characterized by duality or ambivalence. Regardless of the hypostases which He embodies and the names He is given, in the common mindset of mankind, there is an oscillation between transcendent divinity (apart from the world and independent of it) and immanent deity (which pervades and dwells in the world or is identified in a way or another with it)[6], between positive and negative attributes etc. Although there is much more to say about this issue, we shall now come to a halt bearing in mind the ideas discussed above and turn our attention, in what follows, to the imagery of the Deity in the text chosen for our analysis.

3. The imagery of the Deity in the *Book of Songs* (1571-1575)

The *Book of Songs* (1571-1575), also known as the *Todorescu Fragment*, named after its first owner, is a fragment of a book which contains Protestant songs printed for the use of those Romanians, mainly from Banat-Hunedoara, who have recently embraced the Reformation[7]. This fragment includes ten Romanian songs written in verses of 2-4 lines each. These songs were translated from Hungarian (Calvinist and/or Unitarian)[8] songs. The great majority of these texts are songs of supplication and exaltation which were sang by the chorus of believers during the services in Protestant churches. Actually, most of the Protestant songs composed in

[6] This duality may already be found in ancient discourse (cf. Cicero, *De natura deorum*, I, I-II, p. 2-4). Epicurus, for instance, speaks of a plethora of deities who are not in motion and lack in effort. The deities of Epicurus exist in free spaces in-between worlds (*intermundia*) and they show no interest in the fate of the Universe or of people since they do not intervene at all in the course of events (cf. Căldare *et al*. 1999: 121).

[7] The length of the fragment is relatively small (4 sheets, 8 pages). These songs appear together with other seven texts attached in 1601. This fragment is the oldest Romanian text written with Latin alphabet and Hungarian orthography (cf. Gheție 1982*:* 261-262).

[8] Each Romanian song has a title made up of the first few words which the songs in the Hungarian version begin with. These title-words are meant to allow the reader to identify the melody according to which these songs had to be intonated or sang (cf. Gheție 1982*:* 262).

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the 16th century by Calvinist or Unitarian Hungarians – gathered in collections or books of songs or in *Graduals* – are imitations or free adaptations of the psalms (cf. Gheție 1982*:* 262)[9].

The imagery of the Deity in these Calvinist songs seems to be constructed according to a *practical and/or pragmatic principle*, i.e. it is adapted to certain specific needs of the believers, to actual situations and moments of their religious life. In terms of their thematic content, these ten songs may be grouped into three categories: 1. adaptations of psalms (songs no. III, VI, VIII, IX, X), 2. praises of God (songs no. II, IV, V, VII) and 3. funeral songs (song no. I) (cf. also Gheție 1982: 263). Each of these songs describes a predominant feature of divinity but they also contain certain interpenetrations or recurrent images.

For instance, the funeral song focuses, as it may be expected, on the image of the Redeemer in which believers may find their peace and consolation while facing the eternal rest, since the Deity bestows on their souls everlasting life: "Aceștia-i *lasă în odihnă*, *tremete să vie<d>ze* și lasă acolo *viselind*, cum să aibă *tot binele*" (I, 1r/7-8); "Mare-i noauă veselie, cîndu ne vom îngrupare, că iară vom fi într-una, cu Domnezeu vom lăcui" (I, 1r/19-20). The same idea of consolation is expressed in the rethorical question: "ce plîngem, cînd casa lui [a mortului] este-n părăția domnului?" (I, 1r/22-23). On the other hand, however, the very same song depicts God as being severe, wrathful, as the one who punishes those who disobey Him: "Că mînia lu Domnezeu toată tărime purcegînd, pre oamenii despre pămînt pogori-va giudecata / Cu care aleniș<ii> săi pierde-le-va strîmbătate, ce va ține oamenii săi, că s-au în el usbăitu" (I, 1r/13-16).

Unlike this song, the adaptations of psalms[10] are built around the idea of a caring God who helps His believers: "Nu-i fără Domnezeu izbavă și agiutor" (III, 1v/18-19), "Pre lesne dă Domnezeu de tot acelora carii lui usbăiesc și lui i se roagă" (III, 1v/26-27), "cum agiutorul de unde să aștept, ce eu n-am aflat alt fără Domnezeu" (VIII, 3v/24-25), "Că numai însuși el, noauă agiutor" (VIII, 3v/26); of a protective and sheltering God: "că poartă grijă domnul pre tine" (VIII, 3v/30), "că el <nu> dormi, ce ne preveghie și însuși va el pre noi să pădzească" (VIII, 4r/2-3), "că te pădzește Domnezeul tău și sufletul tău de rău slobozește" (VIII, 4r/8-9), "În tot lucrul tău pădzească tine cel mare domnul [...] și te ferească acmu și-n vecie"

[9] In literature, the terms *psalm* and (Protestant) *song*, which denote musical religious genres, are often mistaken for each other or they are used as synonyms. As a matter of fact, the present text is also known by the title *Psalm of Pavel Tordași* (cf. also Gheție 1982: 262). However, the mere fact that some of these songs are adaptations of psalms does not justifiy the idea, expressed by O. Densusianu (1961, p. 8) and N. Drăganu (1924-1926, p. 87), that this fragment would be a part of a Psalter. For the differences between these two genres see also Caraman 2012.

[10] The IIIrd song even quotes from a particular psalm: "Scriadză svînt David în carte Joltarului, o sută doauodzeci <și> șase de cîntece: *nu-i fără Domnăzeu izbavă și agiutor*" (III, 2r/1-3). Another reference to the psalms of David is made in the song no. VI: "Dojenește pre noi David cel svîntu proroc în cart[e] Joltarului în acesta chipu [...]" (VI, 2v/29-30). Likewise, the song no. VIII contains a brief account of the psalms' moral: "Svînt David scrie în joltaru<l> lui, în nevoia lui cunoscînd pre domnul și așa dede mar<e> har domnului, *învățînd pre noi să dăm har domnului*" (VIII, 4r/13-15).

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(VIII, 4^{r}/10-12); of a merciful God: "că pre noi se adevereadză *meserere* lui" (VI, 3^{r}/1), "Întrece-va tot lucrulu *meserere lui*, toate păcatele va întrece bogătate lui" (VI, 3^{r}/7-8), "Că ne-au în har slobozitu den darulu său și ne alesese feții săi pren *miloste sa*" (VI, 3^{r}/11-12), "doamne milostivnic" (VI, 3^{r}/24); of a fair God: "rămâne în vecie *dereptate* lui" (VI, 3^{r}/1-2), "Dereptu-i și vernicu domnul Domnezeu în cuvente-și, elu-i stătut ce-au el făgăduit" (VI, 3^{r}/3-4), "Ni, să pomenim noi toți creștinii despre binele lu mare Domnezeu, că numai însuși el bine face, în cer, pre pământ el *îndereptător*" (VIII, 3^{v}/20-22); and of a forgiving God: "De aicea vom înțelege iertăciune lui" (VI, 3^{r}/9).

Finally, similarly to the latter ones, the songs of praise concentrate on positive attributes, such as mercy: "Den *meserere ta* iartă-ne păcatele, dezleagă pre noi den greșele grele, miluiește-ne" (IV, 2^{r}/10-11), "tu tinde *cu milă* către noi svîntă mîna ta" (VI, 3v/11-12), which appears in contrast with the image of God who hands down punishments: "Ia de pre noi, tu doamne, *mînia ta* și cele *grele pedepse a tale*, nu grăbi pre noi tu *să ne giudeci*" (VII, 3^{r}/30-31), "Să vei fi platnic după vina noastră, nu va rămîne nime înnaintea ta, nu va suferi nece ceastă lume *pedepsitura ta*" (VI, 3^{v}/1-3). Thus, these songs depict, in most of the cases, the image of a loving God and the prayer is aimed at winning His goodwill and love: "Dentr-inimă rugăm dragoste ta" (IV, 2^{r}/18). Another attribute given to the Deity, as a form of praise, is His absolute power as the Creator: "tu ești roditor lumiei, pînă-n vecie" (VII, 3v/17-18) and as a supreme force against evil: "Dracul hitleanul [...] a cui putere toată ai zdrobitu" (IV, 2^{r}/24-25). Additionally, in these songs the figure of Jesus is often invoked and a recurrent idea is the unity of the Trinity[11]: "Usbăimu-<n>tr *un Domnezeu*, carile îl credem *în trei obraze*: tatăl, fiu<l> și duhul svînt, svîntă troiță deplină" (V, 2^{v}/7-8), "el *în unăciune este, trei în obraze* să-l cestimu" (V, 2^{v}/15-16), "Ceasta fă tatăl, fiul și duhul svînt, Domnezeu, derept ce, *trei în obradze*" (VII, 3^{v}/16-17), each of the hypostases being well-defined and having their own purpose.

4. (Neo)rhetoric elements in the *Book of Songs* (1571-1575)

In terms of rhetoric, these 16th century Calvinist songs constitute invocations of the Deity, representing asymmetrical[12], monologic discourses with a suspended response. As argumentative-persuasive texts, the songs included in the *Todorescu Fragment* (1571-1575) are constructed in accordance with

[11] As a matter of fact, the first Christian theologians had a great difficulty (including in terms of terminology) in clarifying the idea of *unity in Trinity* (cf. also Pâclișeanu 1937: 113-121).

[12] In these cases, communication is established between two ontologically different entities and two different discoursive instances respectively: the profane and the sacred world. The asymmetry is due not only to the ontic gap between the two poles of the communicative act but also to the different nature of the message coming from the two communicative instances: "the believer communicates by means of verbal, gestural and attitudinal signs, whereas the response he awaits from the sacred receiver is translinguistic, existential - revelatory" (Moisuc 2009: 313).

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the structure of prayers and they employ the requisite characteristic for the rhetoric of prayers.

Thus, the majority of the songs – regardless of their thematic content – contain in their structure elements which pertain to the realm of praise and request (directives), of promises (commissives) and of gratitude (expressives) ordered differently from one song to the other[13] but all denoting the confidence of the utterer in the effectiveness of the performed (speech) act.

The dominant rhetoric figure (or *pragmatic* figure since it aims at the interpreter) in these songs is obviously *invocation* addressed to the Deity. On the whole, invocation takes many forms including mere approach, praise, murmur but also outcry and complaint. In terms of linguistic rendering, the formal register of the direct address is expressed by using words in the vocative case sometimes accompanied by interjections: "Pleacă-ți, *Domnezeu,* urechile tale pre rugăciune creștinilor tăi, ia-le la tine rugăciune loru, slugilor tale" (IV, 2^{r}/5-6), "Den naltul cerului caltă pre noi, *doamne,* cuventelor tale dă-le luminare" (IV, 2^{r}/7-8), "*Tu, Iesus Cristus*, lumină dereaptă [...] dentr-inimă rugăm dragoste ta" (IV, 2^{r}/15-18), "alduit fi<i>, *tată doamne,* dulce roditor" (VI, 3^{r}/23), "*O, duhul svînt,* fericadză-te într-unăciune" (VI, 3^{r}/27), "Ia de pre noi, *tu doamne,* mînia ta" (VII, 3^{r}/30), "Acmu, *Domnezeu*, cătră tine strigăm în amarul nostru" (IX, 4^{r}/17-18), "numai pre tine aruncăm ochii, *milostivnic Domnezeu*" (IX, 4^{v}/2-3). In most of the cases, the invoker, *homo religiosus* by definition, hopes for the assistance of the Deity which he tries to achieve by means of praise and showing humility. In certain cases, however, we may also find small traces of rebellion expressed in the form of rhetoric questions, like in the following lines: "Că ce, doamne, noi ca nește viermi, așa ne tare pedepseș<ti> în [lu]me, cînd noi cum tu vedzi simte<m> ca o umbră și prah de pre pămînt" (VII, 3v/4-6).

Unlike prayers, however, these 16th century Calvinist songs contain not only invocations of God but also direct addresses to fellow believers which appear either as warnings[14] or as behavioural guidances: "*credzuții miei*, întrați luntru, porțile vă încunați, puținelu închideți, să nu între mînia me" (I, 1^{r}/9-10), "*Ome*, pomenește-te despre cea moarte tristă" (II, 1^{r}/ 29-30), "pomenește-te, *om crișținu,* că vei acmușu muri" (II, 1^{v}/ 2-3), "*toți crișțin<ii>* ascultați și bine învățați" (III, 1^{v}/17), "*Ni,* să pomenim noi toți creștinii despre binele lu mare Domnezeu" (VIII, 3^{v}/20-21), "*Iacă, creștine,* ce mare avem veselie" (VIII, 4^{r}/1).

But whether they are addressed to the Deity or they are directed mainly at the believers, these songs are built upon *argumentative* (*rhetoric*) reasoning, though in this case the domain of the arguable is relatively restricted, since the discourse is

[13] The fact that these songs are structurally similar to prayers is also illustrated by the ending formula of some of these texts, i.e. "for ever and ever" (cf. Rom. "pînă în vecie"), and by the names of the Father – the Son – and the Holy Spirit placed at the end of certain songs. Additionally, the song no. X, for instance, ends with the word Rom. *Amen* 'so be it'.

[14] The IInd song, for instance, is entirely built on the idea *memento mori* which appears as a leitmotif at the end of each verse.

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based on certain pre-concepts – such as the belief in the existence of God and in His supreme power – whose truth does not need to be proven by the audience. The reasoning is open, nonetheless, as the argumentation may be resumed any time without resulting superfluous truisms. On the other hand, the *addressed* nature of this kind of reasoning provides its intrinsic argumentative value and persuasive power.

In cases in which the illocution and perlocution aim at the Deity, persuasion is based on the technique of *captatio benevolentiae*. Most often this is achieved by counterpointing the features attributed to the realm of the divine, expressed in a solemn register using encomiastic words, to the clearly inferior features of the humans.

The persuasive force is also found in cases in which the message is meant for the believers in form of a direct address of the one who officiates at the service or, in any event, of the voice which conveys the collective conscience to the other members of the same confessional community. In this case, however, what it is pursued by persuasion is to determine the interlocutor to adopt a moral code which is considered to be exemplary. For instance, in the funeral song, persuasion is built around the main idea which could be briefly expressed by the proverbial sentence[15] "like deed, like reward", probably of biblical origin too[16]. In accordance with this sentence, God offers His believers eternal life and believers, in their turn, owe Him obedience, submission and worship: "domnului-i va odihni carii mor în credința lui" (I, 1^{r}/2), "cu sine-i va rădica sus care <c>u el adevereadză" (I, 1^{r}/3), "morții săi îi va învia și sus în cer îi va duce" (I, 1^{r}/4) – in return, "aceasta o face să-l fericăm, binele lui să nu-l uităm, ce mai tare să-l lăudăm" (I, 1^{r}/5-6). The promised reward, however, is not only the well deserved eternal rest but also the Last Judgement.

Besides invocation and syllogistic argumentation which are meant to provide the efficiency of persuasion, these songs register other rhetorical and/or stylistic

[15] Protestant songs often are inspired by folklore and their melody frequently corresponds to folk song's melody. As a matter of fact, any form of religion is based on a folk nucleus. It may constitute an "object of contempt and aversion for each religion which does not directly derive from it but it always influences it and, frankly speaking, religion can only live in symbiosis with folk tradition. Religion does not acknowledge it and it often doesn't even realizes it but it lets itself pervaded – more or less profoundly– by its influence, it assimilates a great part of its substance and, thus, it unwillingly contributes to the survival of this nucleus" (Guignebert 2015: 16). This is understandable since "people, and especially those from villages, never make a *tabula rasa* out of their beliefs and rites. They spontaneously adapt them to the new religion which is imposed on them or, if the new religion rejected these beliefs or rites, they would repress them so that they would remain deep inside the unconscious where they persist as active superstitions" (*ibidem*, p.15). In this regard, it is only natural that Protestantism did not eliminate the folk fundament which was common to all Romanians regardless of their confession nor did it replace it but it only reshaped or restructured it in accordance with its own doctrine.

[16] The formulae which discuss the proportionality of an action to its reaction in terms of a cause-effect relation (see "an eye for an eye…"), in other words, the idea that all deeds have their consequences corresponding to a certain ethical, moral and religious set of principles is quite widespread in the *Bible*. Therefore, we tend to believe that the sentence "like deed, like reward" might have entered the collective mentality by bookish means, i.e. through the *Bible*.

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devices too. As a matter of fact, any linguistic unit, or at least any lexeme, virtually entails the possibility for it to function as a rhetorical element. This is true since "in fact, this is how language works: it selects those elements which derive from sensory experience or reasoning, it creates words which capture and render parts of the perceived or conceptualized reality and afterwards, by means of intense usage, it frees itself from many of the entailed features, gradually obtaining a conventionalized nucleus. Nevertheless, truly *neutral* terms do not exist because no matter how substantial this filtering process is, language always retains certain traces of the creation process through which words are impregnated with impressions, thoughts, perspectives and usage, whereas the referential, cogitational and linguistic contexts gradually modulate them" (Gafton & Gafton 2015: 15). However, for economy reasons, in what follows we shall focus only on a few representative rhetorical figures, their classification being made in terms of the tradition established by the Group μ (1974; see also Genette 1978, Todorov 1983, Plett 1983, Barthes 1987; cf. also Ducrot, Oswald & Schaeffer, Jean-Marie 1996, Dragomirescu 1995, Mihai 1998; cf. also DSL).

Thus, among the metaplasms attained by repetitive adjunction we could mention the *echo rhyme* found in: "Tatăl, domnul zeu, noi credem că-i noauă *roditoru* / și-ncă în toate *agiutoru*, / meserernicu *grijitor*. // Iesus Cristus *ispăsitor* / și de pag<u>bă *slobozitor* / și meserernicu *feritor*, / la tatăl svîntu *grăitor*. // Duhul svîntu-i *învățător*, / pre izbavă *îndereptător*, / triștilor *veselitor*, / în suflete *hrăboritor*" (V, 2^{v}/9-14). We should not forget, though, that these texts are essentially meant for singing. Thus, the pragmatic function which is associated with this type of religious creations (i.e. texts composed with the precise purpose of being perfomed within a liturgical framework, during church services) is responsible for a certain kind of structural design and adjustment which consists, among other things, of using constructions with mnemonic role. Rhymes, anaphoric repetitions – like in songs no. II and III where each verse is followed by the refrains "Pomenește-te, om crișținu, că vei acmușu muri" and "Nu-i fără" – syntactic parallelisms etc. represent hence strategies meant to facilitate the memorization and reproduction of these songs and they are ultimately "the expression of a particular *rhythmic melodiousness* which could be defined as a «mnemonic catalyst»" (Teleoacă 2013: 129).

Another rhetorical figure employed in the text is *amplification*. As a figure of construction based on digression - addition, amplification is found not only on the level of smaller passages but also on the level of the discourse itself regarded as a whole. For this reason it could be included in both metataxes and metalogisms. The diverse repetition of the very same idea which takes the form of successive enumeration based on antithesis may be observed, for instance, in: "Cui voia a ispăsi, *viața sa să o îmbune*, credința svîntă să o învețe și *poamele-i să le arate*. / Fără doauă că va peri cine *viața nu-și îmbună* și credința nu va ține, *să poamele-i nu-i va arăta*" (V, 2^{r}/31-2^{v}/1-2). A similar function may fulfil the *polyptoton* too since, in this case, the repetition of the same word in different inflection, in its turn,

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serves amplification, resulting even a hyperbolic construction like in: "să putem vede fața lui pînă în *vecia veacului*" (I, 1^{r}/27).

The songs of *Todorescu Fragment* also record a series of *inversions*. Some of these may be explained by the influence of the Hungarian source-text or by the syntactic mannerism originated in the authors' desire to avoid current ways of expression. In the latter case, certain inversions may derive, in their turn, from the influence of Hungarian language which the Romanian translators were familiar with. However, in many cases, the inversion of the word order is due to other reasons than relating to the original text or the influence of Hungarian language on the Romanian translators. Such an example constitutes the dislocation of the auxiliary placed distantly from the participle or the infinitive in case of the compound tenses: "ce-au el făgăduit" (3^{r}/4), "s-au în el usbăitu" (1^{r}/16), "Că ne-au în har slobozitu" (3^{r}/11), "vei acmușu muri" (1^{r}/31) etc. Other inversions are found in: "însuși va el pre noi să pădzească" (4^{r}/2-3), "ce mare avem veselie noi" (4^{r}/1) or in: "Și ne pre noi slobozi" (3^{r}/13), where the direct object Rom. *pre noi*, anticipated by the pronoun Rom. *ne,* preceeds the predicate instead of following it, as it usually would be. Many of these inversions alternate in the texts with constructions where the proper word order is used: "vei acmușu muri" (1^{r}/31), cf. "acmușu te vei schimba" (1^{v}/5).

Just like any other old Romanian text, the present fragment of Calvinist songs include various *anacolutha*, like in: "Cui fie cinste mare, fericat pînă-n vecie, de la el noauă pace bună și meserere tatălui svînt" (2^{v}/26-27). In this case, although the pronoun Rom. *cine* cumulates the functions of indirect object, in the first sentence, and of subject, within the second sentence (with no predicate expressed), grammatically only the first function is marked, since the pronoun is in dative case. Another example of anacoluthon is found in the case of the substitution of the mood and person of the verb in: "Fericăciune fie tatălui de veacu, fericăciune fie ție, fiului lui, ce cu duhul svînt iată *împărățesc* pînă în vecie" (2^{r}/27-29), which is grammatically unjustified since the verb should be at senond person singular or plural. Nonetheless, it is quite difficult to determine whether these phenomena are deliberately introduced or they are merely due to the translators' inattention and, as such, they have no rhetorical purposes.

On the level of metasemems, the songs provide a few examples of *synecdoche*, like in: "Ni, să pomenim noi toți creștinii despre *binele* lu mare Domnezeu" (VIII, 3^{v}/20-21), "*binele lui* să nu-l uităm" (I, 1^{r}/5-6), "cum să aibă tot *binele*" (I, 1^{r}/8), "Fericatu-i *sufletul* întărit cu credență, că tot alențigul lesni-l va învinge" (III, 1^{v}/30) (=omul).

The songs also record a few *comparisons*, like in: "Omul se schimbă *ca și floare câmpului*: demineața înflorește, iară seara ea seacă" (II, 1^{v}/1-2), "*Cumu-s săgețile în mînă de puternic,* așa-s credzuții tari în Domnezeu" (III, 1v/28-29), "Tu ești Domnezeu, pre tine cinstim *ca cel tată dulce*" (IX, 4^{r}/20-21).

There are also cases in which a signified is attributed to a signifier which usually denotes another idea. Thus, the word Rom. *odihnă* 'rest' represents a

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recurrent *metaphor* of death (or, on the contrary, of the eternal life hereafter), like in: "Aceștia-i lasă *în odihnă*" (I, 1^{r}/7), "tot acolo *odihniți*" (I, 1^{r}/12). Furthermore, the hypostases of the Deity are also indicated by means of metaphorical expressions, like in: "Cristus este viața, elu-i și sculătura" (II, 1^{v}/11), "Tu, Iesus Cristus, lumină dereaptă, viața noastră, veselie mare" (IV, 2^{r}/15-16), "Iesus Cristus, meșterul nostru [...] dulce scumpărător" (VI, 3^{r}/25-26) etc.

There are a few cases in which a word becomes semantically empty, like in: "*Lucrul* nostru-i de cîștigă, *lucrul* lui de veselie" (I, 1^{r}/24), where the term rom. *lucru* 'thing' has lost its full meaning after suppressing and replacing all the sememes entailed in the word or words which it stands for. In this case, the given word needs disambiguation by explicitation, which, in the quoted passage, is missing. Thus, its meaning may be recovered from the previously uttered context. Another similar example is noted in: "În tot *lucrul* tău pădzească tine cel mare domnul" (VIII, 4^{r}/10).

Regarding the domain of metalogisms, the entire discourse is based on *antithesis.* It is found on the conceptual level where the profane world and, implicitly, ephemerality is opposed to the sacred world and eternity. Antithesis also constitutes a means by which the morals of religious life are constructed. Thus, the desired and expected moral behaviour is opposed to the one considered to be unworthy of a true believer. Antithesis is most often expressed, on the syntactic level, by adversative syntagmas and/or sentences, like in: "alenișii săi pierde-le-va strîmbătate, *ce* va ține oamenii săi" (I, 1^{r}/15-16), "Mai mult pămîntul sîngele nu-i va ascunde trupul lui, *ce* Domnezeu viața lui rădica-va pre vecie" (I, 1^{r}/17-18), "Nime aceea nu ști iunde va fi să moară, nice ceasul, nice timpul nime nu poate ști [...] *Însă* vă prevegheați, cum au Cristus noauă dzis, că noi nu știm să demineața au seara va veni" (II, 1^{v}/7-10).

Finally, *intertextuality*, which appears in the form of quotes, paraphrases or references to the Holy Scripture or to the psalms, is meant to legitimize the truths conveyed in the songs: "*La Esaias prorocul* tuturora au scris lăsat că domnulu-i va odihni carii mor în credința lui" (I, 1^{r}/1-2), "Scriadză svînt *David în carte Joltarului*" (III, 2^{r}/1), "Dojenește pre noi *David cel svîntu proroc în carte Joltarului*" (VI, 2^{v}/29-30), "Svînt *David scrie în joltaru<l>* lui" (VIII, 4^{r}/13), "Așa se mîlcui Iosafat crai" (IX, 4^{v}/4).

5. Instead of conclusions

No matter how rational humans would be, they still need to bow to something superior to themselves as the sense of their littleness and relativity prevents them to proclaim humanity as an absolute reality. Under these circumstances, the invocation of the Deity often constitutes a form of defence against the dreadful desert of nothingness.

The fragmentary nature of the text analyzed within the present study does not allow us to formulate general conclusions on the imagery of the Deity in the Calvinist songs of the 16th century. Hence, our statements refer only to those ten

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songs which were preserved and gathered under the title *Book of Songs* or *Todorescu Fragment* (1571-1575). In these songs, the image of the Deity does not differ essentially from the general Christian imagery, except perhaps for the emphasis placed upon certain features attributed to the divine being. The imagery designed in these ten songs is mainly based on the New Testament, rooted in the morals of Christ. It is preserved from the Old Testament the idea of 'wrath' with which God punishes the sinners and which could as well be a pre-Christian reminiscence. The Deity is configured here as a being who has an ideal, supernatural and transcendent nature but which appears combined with a more or less human side. The features attributed to the Deity may be placed on a trajectory between two extremities: on the positive pole we may place the merciful, caring, protective God, whereas on the negative pole there is the superior instance of retribution, whence the "two faces" of the Deity.

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