ASPECTS OF THE POETICAL EGO AS A CHARACTER IN MINULESCU'S POETRY

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Abstract*: Considering Minulescu's poetry, the study intends to present some of the multiple characters that the poetic voice embodies. It is known the fact that modern influences are found in Minulescu's lyricism, which have given him the possibility to approach in a different manner so that the poetical ego should express feelings as many distinct characters.*

Key words*:* Minulescu, poetry, lyrical-self, character.

Minulescu's poetry is full of life and dynamic experience of the exposed feeling. The humour is a quality that accompanies he is poetry since his debut. Even when facing serious situations he is lyrics keeps its joviality. The symbolist approach is not a traditional one, but rather a personal one, that goes beyond the imposed patterns.

The lyrical-ego is a definite entity in his poetry so the changes in the framework, scenery or the transitions from a state of mind to another lead to a self transformation of the poetical-ego, making it a perfectly adapted character according to any given context.

The constant association of the lyrical-ego with the crazy mime is not a random one, because madness is the only state of mind that can access to spiritual inspiration. At the same time, madness can justify the repeated transpositions in different characters: ``Să hoinăresc cu tine, prin bîlciuri,/ Travestit/ În măscăriciul Pepi,/ Nebun după Pepita,/ Și-n gând cu-aceeași teamă ridiculă și veche/ Ca orice om ce trece drept <<om într-o ureche>>`` (*Solilocul măscăriciului*).

In fact, the originality of his works is generated by these changes: denying its ordinary human nature and embracing the madness; then the mime's self portrait is presented with the notes dark and gloomy of death: ``Povestea mea e-așa de scurtă/ Și-așa de tristă că ades/ Deși am trăit-o pe de-a-ntregul/ Îmi pare-un ce făr de înțeles.../ Un fluturat ușor de mână/ Și-a atâta tot... Când am plecat``. (*Povestea mea*).

The breakaways and the returns are specific to a theatrical play whose heroes belong to a changing decor.

The most important feature of the poetical ego is the amazing capacity of transformation and adaptation. So, the beginnings of minulescianism prove some chameleonic characteristics through the pre-Parisian poetry that fit perfectly in the symbolistic poetry of the era.

Lidia Bote appreciates this versatility as the first quality of Minulescu's style anticipating the easiness with which he can transform all the masks of his lyrical character. The minulescian humour is a side of the minulescian mime which represent the osmotic capacity between ludic and boem.

The themes preferred in the age are easily assimilated by him, except for its debut period, Minulescu prefers to give an original vision from a larger perspective.

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The minulescian *adaptability* is a live dialogue between the poetical ego and the reader to whom it is addressed, because the semanthical charge is tense in two ways: reproduction- originality or acceptance-adaptation.

The minulescian ego is a chameleonic character which transposes perfectly to the context, being a combination between born instinct and lyrical theatricality.

So, the poet simply becomes an intermediary of the creation theme to the *narrator-ego*, leaving it the possibility to choose its own interpretation.

In this way, the lyrical-character is a state of mind generated by the poet which imposes two phases: reception and interpretation, the minulescian mimesis needs a dose of spontaneous creation.

The poet being "an interpret or an intermediary between canvassing and invention"(S. Dănciulescu, 1986:74).

It can be mentioned the debut period in which the minulescianism is not distinguished as a distinct feature, mark of the originality. So the transfiguration of the lyrical-ego does not manifest in this period, but more the ego is an impersonal narrator of some romantic or historic facts. Similar to the eminescian style, which he imitates, I. Minulescu keeps intact some dialogues objectively introduced by the narrator-ego: ``O clipă pedestrașul privi la ea tăcut/ Și-apoi:/ - L-aștepți zadarnic, căci chiar de la-nceput/ I-a ridicat viața o lance-nveninată". (*Din vremea Romei*).

The lyrical subjectivity is refused even in a love poem, symbolic adaptation of *Luceafărul*, as it has been considered by the critics, *Zâna lacului* does not show the minulescian originality, keeping an imitative form, showing a lyrical disposal impersonal and direct: ``El plângea/ Și c-o năframă își ștergea/ Un șir de lacrimi argintii/ - Căci mîine-n zori va trebui/ Să plec departe în război/ Să-nfrunt primejdii și nevoi/ Și poate-acolo vei muri-.../ De-odată brațele ei goale/ Căzură-n jos – Plângea nebună..." (*Zâna lacului*).

These epigonic writings are characterized by a looseness of the natural that shows transpositions resembling to his contemporaries. But, in a close analysis, "*Zana Lacului*" shows fairytale elements disposed in a rhythm similar to the later romances. So his affinity for these creations is manifestly expressed since the debut period.

As in the eminescian writings, nature comes to life twitching with the narrator-ego: ``Azi dragostea ni-i moartă, și banca-i părăsită,/ De vântu rece-al toamnei pădurea-i desfrunzită/ Copacii-și clatin vârful și crengile își frâng/ Și eu și ea-mbrăca-vom de-acum haina cernită/ Pădurea-și plânge frunza și eu dragostea mi-o plâng". (*Plâns*).

The state of the lover-ego cannot be compared to that of the eminescian lover, because Minulescu has a more earthly feeling, a direct and practical spirit, giving up exaggerated romantism and looking at a more accessible and sensual form of love: ``Și amândoi atunci vrăjiți/ De-acea poveste minunată/ Ascunși sub merii înfloriți,/ Ne-am sărutat întâia dată/.../ Din nou să ne vrăjească iar/ Aceleași vorbe din trecut.../ Ce trist mi-e traiul și amar!/ Ce mult aș da să mai sărut!..." (*Sub meri*).

In this period of the minulescian creation, it is done an easy detachment from the eminescian inspiration lyric: as concerning the lover-ego the hesitation and melancholy, specific to Eminescu, are surperseded. So, the minulescian lover hypostasis is a pragmatic one, and the tangibility of the couple is real: ``De-ai ști tu ce farmec dulce/ E sub teiul singuratic!/ Vino, crângu-o să ne culce/ Pe-al lui pat de flori, sălbatic./ Si-ochii tăi ca doi

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luceferi/ Să-i lumine ca-n trecut/ Să te văd cum o să-i aperi,/ Dacă-oi vrea să ți-i sărut." (*Ce faci tu?*).

The detachment from the eminescian style can also be seen in the placement of the natural decor: the linden, the blue flower only as part of the nature, but not as signs of the poetical feeling of the character-ego. The aspirations of this state of the lover-ego indicate a fulfilled love, this type of eros becoming a specific feature of the minulescian lyric.

Another substratum of the lyrical creation of Minulescu is the character of a chanter lyrical-ego. The embracement of the romance as a lyrical cogitation represents the first original characteristic of the minulescianism.

Going beyond the limits imposed by Eminescu in his romantic poetry, the mime-ego mocks the eminescian sobriety. Minulescu's debut poetry are only apparently eminescian, their essence keeps the jovial spirit, sometimes superficial of a romance sang in an urban bazaar: "Din goluri reci de haos/ O pace-adâncă se desprinde/ Și peste toate se întinde/ Treptat al nopților repaos/ Din depărtări răsare blând/ Luceafărul străjer bătrân/ Nemărginirilor stăpân... "(*Zâna lacului*)

The poet is focusing over a semnificative detail, which he points out in a modernist-expressionist way. The theatrical features of the minulescian poetry are constant since the beginnings, mostly they are based on an interpretation of the lyrical-ego, who transposes multiple characters in a folkloric decor, giving the impression of a mask repository.

The appearances of the lyrical-ego are very dynamic, the changes that come along with a different state of mind represent the accession to a vaguely spiritualized image. The minulescian ego shows its feelings by a direct exposure to the sensorial experiences, being a watchful witness to the whole show of nature, naming exactly the interior atmosphere: "Și o aștept... dar nu știu... O să-mi vină?/ Mi-e dor de ea... Mi-e dor de luna plină/ A nopților din vremile de alt'dată" (*Sonet*)

So, it is revealed the inclination of the poet for the theatrical arts, the most important element of this range of symbols is the construction of the decor. The feelings of the lyrical-ego come to perfection only through exterior expression: "Dar într-o noapte eroina mea/ Mă părăsea de daruri încărcată/ Și, luându-mi martori stelele și luna/ Jura că pleacă pentru totdeauna/ Și n-are să mai vină niciodată/ Mărturisire, vai... adevărată!" (*Poveste scurtă*)

The moon and the stars represent an association of the actor-ego with the natural elements, giving them a perceptible reality, making them active characters of the poems. The pictorial dynamic of the eminescian scene is gradually changed: from light and bright colours when fulfilling love, to the starry night-sky, which denies seeing the lyrical-ego when love disappears.

This vision of the changing character is an individualized reaction of the minulescianism, to which the change represents vital energy: "A fost destul ca să răsară/ După furtuna blândul soare/ Și pustiile ogoare/ Cu mult mai mîndre re-nviară/ Odată m-ai oprit în cale/ Și-o clipă de ajuns mi-a fost/ Ca-n tremurul privirii tale/ Să pot pricepe-al vieții rost..." (*În fericire*)

One of the main attributes of the portrayed character is the presence or absence of love, so the minulescian ego likes the position of a lover to whom the relish for pleasure

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prevails. This donjuanesque state of mind is favored by the lyrical-ego who is in love: "Când vei vedea 'ntre geamuri la fereastră/ O cupă de cristal/ Și-n cupa de cristal o floare-albastră/ Simbolul unui <<rendez-vous>> banal,/ Ori cine ai fi să intri fără teamă,/ Căci gura mea te-așteaptă/ Și trupul meu te cheamă!.../ /Necunoscut, sau prieten vechi/ Nu-mi pasă!...(*Romanța ei*)

Ignoring the poetical traditions of his century, Minulescu adopts an individualist position keeping his originality beyond the symbolist influences promoted by Macedonski and the Eminescian romanticism previous to his period. Thus, it can be observed that the lyrical instance of his predecessors is fixed, immobile having very definite characteristics: romantic, absent, meditative...

Concerning the minulescian lyric, the critics do not classify categorically, but mostly they point out an amalgam of features and feelings: "Poetry of instinct and culture, conceived on huge stave, from a temperamental romance to a absurd game, Minulescu's poetry is not a strictly classified work, but it is still awaiting its critical commentary from now on. It must be seen exactly what it is symbolist and what it is not symbolist in the minulescian lyrical work." (E. Manu, 1981: 185).

Leaving aside the theme of love, the minulescian poetry has an undiscovered influence. The lyrical-ego is able to address a spontaneous affectivity as the troubadour-character, in which the feeling is blurred by the instinctual: "Îți mulțumesc!/ Dar cum?... ce s-a întâmplat?.../ Ce suflet caritabil te-a păstrat?/ În lipsa mea,/ În lipsa ei,/ În lipsa noastră?.../ Ce demon alb,/ Ce pasăre albastră/ Ți-a stat de veghe atâta timp/ Ce faci și te-a-ngrijit/ De nu te-ai spart/ Și nu te-ai prăfuit?... (*Romanță fără ecou*).

The embodiment of the lyrical-ego is personified in a skillful character that can easily dissimulate, so the sobriety and the gravity of the feeling that his predecessors were imbueing to some themes, are now changed into irony in Minulescu's poetry. This slight irony temporary postpones the strain of the substance and emphasizes an original and rational style.

In the same way, it is subdued the chronological sense of the lyrical-character, mostly he feels a stranger in a depressing past; this lack of onesty for historicization makes the poet very adaptable to the new stated current, the symbolism: "Și-ale zorilor aripe/ Fluturatu-mi-au grăbite/ Ca și clipele trăite/ Pe-albul treptelor sonore/.../Și pe cea din urmă treaptă/ Am îngenuncheat/ Și-am plâns/ Căci pe cea din urmă treaptă,/ Ca-ntr-o carte înțeleaptă,/ Am cetit în fundul cupei/ Naufragiul ce m-așteaptă" (*Romanța cheii*)

The present time is a compulsion of the narrator-ego, that most of the time adopts an appreciative position regarding the historical truth of the past, but also an unconfident position regarding an illusory future.

If when facing the past the lyrical-ego becomes narrator-character, when facing the future he becomes the mad-mime, being the only one able to accept and adopt the changes of life: "Dar se opri odată-n cale/ și-o visătoare îndrăgit/ Urâtului vieții sale/ Să pună-odată un sfârșit/.../ În urmă cea mai fost-anume/ Sfârșitul nu pot să vin spun/ Decât că tot stingher în lume/ O cată și-astăzi: Un nebun" (*Poveste*)

As being a comedian lyrical-ego, the poet is telling the poem in a theatrical way, with a rhetorical tone transmitting the sentimental state of an urban troubadour, who does not take life seriously and puts a jovial tone in every aspect of life: "A murit dresorul de

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sticleți!.../ Bine c-a murit la timp și el-/ Căci era bătrân,/ Bețiv/ Și chel.../ Dar la drept-vorbind era <<dresor>>/ Fiindcă, după moartea lui, sticleții/ Când au încercat din nou să cânte/ Numai după capul lor.../ Au dat <<kix>> cu toții" (*Moartea dresorului de sticleți*)

But the urban-hero does not seek the futile amusement, more it seeks a semi-dramatized atmosphere in which it can be pointed out a pretentious attitude and a self-irony. The role of the lyrical-ego in the phase of a comedian is a sensitive state of mind that the poet never associated with the lyrical humour, so: "Some literary historics discover even gratuitousness and intellectual game in the romances" (M. Tomuș, 1966: 7).

Surpassing this sphere, it is apprehended the emergence of an expositor-lyrical ego favored by the epigrammatic minulescian writings, that have some confused influences, both gloomy and amusing: "Cântă-mi, lautare, doina/ Celor ce pornesc departe/.../ Și sub braț vioara-și strânge: -îmi ceri doina care în viață/ Nu se cântă, ci se plânge!/ Plânge-mi dar atuncea cântul/ Celor care nu mai vin/.../ Dar bătrânul mă privește/ Cu ochii mari și plin de pace: -îmi ceri cântul care-n viață/ Nu se plânge, ci se tace" (*Cântă-mi lăutare*).
This duplicated lyrical dialogue is specific for the minulescian style and it allows the poet to have multiple visions, in different manners on the same theme.

The state of a character-ego is mainly restrained by a conscious digression from the subject, through self-mockery and self-irony: "Trec vagabonzii,/ Trec stăpânii grădinilor fără stăpâni/ Trec antipozii fericirii patriarhilor bătrâni/ Trec anonimii omenirii/ Trec corifeii poeziei și preistoriciii gândirii/ Trec regii primului dezastru și-învinșii primului regret/ Trec vagabonzii-/ Parodia nedumeririi lui Hamlet. (*Trec vagabonzii*).

Most of the time the lyrical-ego as a mime swings between two extreme conditions: the aspiration to perfection and the flatness line in which the poet displays his lyrical embodiments: "Inimă- ciutură goală-/ Cine te spoi cu smoală/ Și te-ascunse în ogradă/.../ Ca să-ți mai cerșească apă/ Când de sete gura-i crapă/ Inimă- ciutura mea/ Dă-mi să beau, dar altceva,/ C-apa ți-au golit-o/ Toți cei care ți-au sorbit-o/ Dă-mi ce mi-ai păstrat doar mie/ Dă-mi un strop de apă vie" (*Romanța inimii*)

The embodiments of the lyrical-ego as a character in fact reveals deeply an interior self-degradation, the poet cannot have a stable and permanent form, so he wants the reader to believe that the main purpose of the poetry is in fact this oscillation: "Zadarnic vă mințiți că fericirea/ N-așteaptă decât să vă bată-n geam,/ Când știți că toți sunteți copiii lui Adam/ Și nimănui nu-i va surâde nemurirea!" (*Romanța zădărniciei*).

In this way, the minulescian mime is unable to detach from the mask that he is wearing, giving the poetry a sad and tragic aspect of a misfit destiny: "The exuberance and versatility of the mime is unrecognisable: the mask has swallowed his face, making it one with what is to be bantered, with the empty, carnivalesque forms" (S. Dănciulescu, 1986:92)

The multiple aspects taken by the minulescian lyrical-ego suggest the poet's complex personality, which abounds in feeling and consciousness that can creatively fructify distinct states of mind on the same self.

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