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'ACADEMIA CATAVENCU': A CHALLENGE FOR DISCOURSE ANALYSTS

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Abstract: *This paper is meant as an attempt to show the way in which by analysing the discourse of a newspaper article, we may uncover a certain culture in a specific period of its historical development. To this aim I have chosen an article from a Romanian satirical newspaper, Academia Catavencu[1], which I found particularly interesting in that it poses a number of problems for the analysis. In my attempt I shall rely on the analytical framework introduced by Brown and Yule (1989) and I will focus on two key issues, namely staging and coherence. Hopefully, the analysis will bring evidence in favour of the idea that a text can be regarded as an interaction between writer and reader.*

Keywords: *discourse analysis, staging, coherence, thematisation, thematic structure.*

1. Introduction

Discourse can be approached from a number of perspectives, each of them addressing some important issues bearing on the production and interpretation of utterances as both linguistic and social practice. Schiffrin (1994) presents in details six such approaches, namely the speech act theory, interactional linguistics, the ethnography of communication, pragmatics, conversational analysis and variation analysis. Though apparently there are clear-cut borders among these approaches, they all, nevertheless share a number of issues, such as the 'relationship between structure and function, text and context, utterances and communication' (Schiffrin, p.337).

My attempt at analysing the discourse of a newspaper article could be classified as a pragmatic approach which focuses on the speaker meaning at the level of utterances situated in a context. In certain circumstances, there seems to be a lack of obvious connection between the utterances/sentences of a text which nevertheless will not prevent the receiver from understanding the message. The speaker's intended meaning is understood by the receiver due to the fact that the latter is willing to cooperate in the process of communication by supplementing the 'missing link' and also by supplementing the literal meaning of the utterances/sentences 'with an assumption of human rationality and cooperation' (Schiffrin, p. 9). Thus, what the pragmatic approach to discourse analysis suggests is that human beings work with very minimal assumptions about one another and that they use these assumptions as a basis from which to draw specific inferences about one another's intended meanings.

In what follows I shall adopt Widdowson's (1979) (quoted in Brown & Yule, 1989, p.24) view of **discourse-as-process**, in that I will consider the words,

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phrases and sentences that appear in a text to be the elements necessary for a producer to communicate his message to a recipient. I am particularly interested in the interaction between producer and the recipient, more exactly in the way in which the recipient understands the producer's intended message in a particular circumstance, and in the way the requirements of the particular recipients determine the organization of the producer's discourse. The analysis will focus on two key elements of discourse, namely staging and the representation of discourse and coherence in the interpretation of discourse. Hopefully, some cultural issues will emerge from the analysis.

3. STAGING and the representation of discourse structure

When structuring the discourse, any writer has to choose a beginning point which 'will influence the reader's interpretation of everything that follows in the discourse since it will constitute the initial textual context for everything that follows' (Brown and Yule, 1989, p.125). On the basis of this beginning point the reader will then draw implicatures which are constrained by the context of what is said and also by his expectations based on previous experience.

Thus, the beginning point in our article represented by the sentence: *Good things come/are always in a number of three,* might leave the reader with the feeling that the article covers some positive facts/events (the addressees might think of the Trinity). But by reading it further, he will draw the relevant implicatures, namely that the article is about negative aspects of the activity within Romanian Television, which are a small-scale reflection of the negative aspects of life in Romania, in general. If the writer had started his article in a pessimistic way, the reader might not have been motivated to continue the reading of the text.

3.1. Thematisation

The point of departure is not present only at the macro-level (the level of discourse), but also at the micro-level, i.e. the sentence level. Sentences are formally divided into ***theme***, the left-most constituent or the starting point of a sentence, and a ***rheme***, representing everything else that follows in the sentence, i.e. what the writer/speaker states in connection to the starting point, i.e. the theme.

Very frequently the theme of a sentence corresponds to its grammatical subject. This is illustrated by the first sentence of our article:

1. *Lucrurile bune sint intotdeauna in numar de trei.*

'Good things always come in a number of three.'

But it might also be the case that the left-most element of a declarative sentence may precede the grammatical subject as in the following examples taken from the article:

2. *De asemenea*, damele bine… -**adverb**

'Also/at the same time, the good dames ..'

3. *Că-s trei Graţii, că-s tot atitea Furii,* puţin importă.

'Whether there are three Graces, or whether there are equally many Furies is of little importance' - **subject clause**

4. *Important este că în Televiziunea Română…* - **wh-cleft**

'What is important is that in Romanian Television …'

These sentences express the same propositional content as their ordinary equivalents:

2.' *Damele bine, de asemenea, tot atitea sint.* 'The good dames, (too), are also in a number of three.'

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3.' *Puțin importă că-s trei Grații, că-s trei Furii*. 'It is of little importance/ it is not at all important whether there are three Graces or three Furies.'
4.' *Este important ca in Televiziunea Romana….* 'It is important that in Romanian Television…..'

If we compare the two sets of sentences, we will see that the sentences in the second set are *neutral*, while the ones in the first set are *marked*. Alice Davidson (1980) (quoted in Brown and Yule, p. 127) suggests that 'the more marked the construction, the more likely that an implicated meaning will be that which the utterance is intended to convey'.

Our task is to consider the effect of the sentential forms in the first set rather than those in the second set in the context of the discourse. A writer using these particular sentential forms (sentences 2 – 4 above) will have certain assumptions about the state of knowledge of his hearer. These assumptions will be different from the ones the writer makes about the hearer's state of knowledge when using the second set of sentences. Let us analyze the differences.

In (2) above the adverb is thematised, showing that there is a direct link between what has been said before and what is asserted in the clause beginning with the adverb. This relationship is, then, *adverbially expressed*. In (3) we have a subject clause which is thematised, i.e. it appears in initial position in the sentence, preceding the auxiliary verb. We may say that the thematised constituent is 'what the sentence is about', i.e. a characterisation of the three persons under discussion on the basis of comparisons with the three sister goddesses in the Greek mythology, who are the givers of charm and beauty, on the one hand, and with the Furies, the avenging spirits in classical mythology, on the other hand.

The use of this particular type of sentential form by the writer makes the reader focus his attention on the characterisation of the heroines in terms of features pertaining to Greek mythology. But then, the writer comes to deny the importance of such a characterisation. In terms of the co-operative principle governing any act of communication, the sentence would represent a breaching of the maxim of relevance, but having in mind a certain type of reader, namely one with whom to share some (basic) historical knowledge and some experience (i.e. having seen the three ladies), the writer assumes that this would draw the appropriate implicature, namely that the persons in question are very plain (ugly) and very vengeful.

This sentence is to be interpreted in connection with the following sentence (S 4.)
S.4. *Important este că….* vs. S.4' *Este important că…*
'Important is that…' vs. 'It is important that...'

In S4 we have an inversion of the auxiliary 'to be' with the predicative complement 'important', i.e. the sentence starts with the predicative complement, since there is special emphasis on it. This construction is equivalent to the English wh-cleft, the content of which is presupposed information. In our particular case, this type of sentential form is preferred to the other forms (S.4': it-cleft) because it indicates explicit contrast:
S 3+4: *Că-s trei Grații, că-s tot atîtea Furii, puțin importă. Important este ca in Televiziunea Română (…) le avem în ordine strict alfabetică pe: Lucia Hossu-Longin, Alina Mungiu-Pippidi şi Anca Toader.* 'Whether there are three Graces or whether there are as many Furies is not at all important. What is important is that in Romanian Television (…) we have them in a strictly alphabetical order: L.H-L., A.M.-P. and A.T.'

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By using this sentential form the writer emphasizes the importance of presenting the ladies in an alphabetical order. In this way he flouts the main maxim of co-operative communication, namely that of **relevance**, since the information he provides the reader with by means of this sentence is not relevant to the topic of the discourse. But he does this, because he relies on the reader's capacity of understanding this 'trick' and of drawing the correct implicature, namely that the alphabetical order in which the three women are introduced to the reader is the least important (more important being their characterisation in terms of "Furies"). Thus, the reader can sense the writer's irony behind this sentence meaning.

Following Daneš (1974) (quoted in Brown and Yule, p. 133), we may say that thematisation in S.2 and S.4 has the function of connecting back and linking to the previous discourse, maintaining a coherent point of view, while in S.3 it serves as a point of departure for the further development of the discourse.

3.2. Staging

The term 'staging', just like 'thematisation', refers to the linear organisation of texts, but in comparison with 'thematisation' it is more general, in that it also includes the latter. There are different views with respect to staging. Among the outstanding analysts dealing with this issue, one can mention Grimes (1975) who focussed on the way in which the linear organisation of discourse can be manipulated in such a way as to give some items and events greater prominence than to others. His idea was taken over by Clements (1979) (quoted in Brown and Yule, p.134) who defined **staging** as "a dimension of prose structure which identifies the relative prominence given to various segments of prose discourse'. Clements underlines the fact that this relative prominence is the result of the use of various phenomena, such as lexical selection, rhyme, repetition, metaphor, markers of emphasis, etc.

If we analyze our newspaper article in the light of the things mentioned above we will identify the following:

(1) the fact that the number of characters under discussion equals the number of good things is given prominence by means of thematisation of the adverb *de asemenea* ('also') (sentence 2);

(2) the characterisation of the heroines in terms of features of Greek mythology is given prominence by the use of **alliteration:** *Că-s trei Grații, că-s tot atîtea Furii (…)* (Whether there are three Graces, whether there are as many Furies (…))

(3) **markers of emphasis**, such as **it-clefts** or equivalents of **wh-clefts** are also encountered :

- sentence 5 in the original text emphasizes L.H.-Longin's hate of her two opponents by means of an it-cleft: *E drept că nici doamna Lucica nu le suportă (…) pe cele două infante*…' It is true that neither does Misses Lucica stand the two infantes…'
- sentence 8 in the text brings to the fore the 'innocence' of Misses Lucica by means of a wh-cleft: *Dreptu-i că nici tanti Luci nu-i chiar uşă de biserică.* 'What is also true is that Missis Luci is not completely innocent (word-for-word translation: Missis Luci is not a church door either).'

These two sentences seem to be related, in that in both some truth about Mrs. Lucia Hossu-Longin is asserted. By repeating the structure in sentence 5, but this time changed into a wh-cleft, the second truth (in sentence 8) is given more prominence than the first one, making it relevant to the analysis of the discourse.

(4) some facts are given prominence by means of **repetition:**

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-sentences 9+10. (….) *domnia-sa este cunoscuta in TVR pentru excesul de (…)sensibilitate. Un excess care face ca …..*
'Her highness is known within RTV for the excess of sensitivity. An excess that makes…..'

In some other instances, prominence is given to the referent of a sentence, turning it into the central subject of the discourse. This would lead to the **foregrounding** of a referent, as described by Chafe (1972) (quoted in Brown and Yule, p135), 'whereby a particular referent is established in the foreground of consciousness while other discourse referents remain in the background'. This foregrounding of a referent (which involves placing the main referent in subject position) may be carried out by a variety of different formal expressions.

In our example, the thematised referents are expressed as follows:
S.2: *damele bine* ('the good dames'): this term covers all three referents: Lucia Hossu-Longin, Alina Mungiu-Pippidi and Anca Toader.
S.4 *Ultimele (…) doua doamne n-o inghit deloc pe prima.*
'The last two ladies (i.*e.* A.M.-P. & A.T.) do not stand the first (i.e. L.H.-L.) at all'
S.4 *Anca si Alina….* The referents are referred to by their first names.
S.8 *tanti Luci* ('Ma'am Luci')
S.9 *domnia sa* ('her highness i.e. L.H.-L.')
S.11 *năbădăioasele de la DEI* ('the wicked women of DIP') (i.e. Anca Toader & Alina Mungiu-Pippidi).
S.15 *Trei doamne (…)* ('three ladies')

For the referents exemplified above Brown and Yule use the term writer's/speaker's **topic entity**. In our text, we have, nevertheless, two topic entities (i.e. the two enemy parties) and throughout the article there is a continuous shift from one topic entity to the other. These topic entities can be encountered even in the title of the article, though in the form of a hybrid: *Azi si miine**: Alina Toader-Longin.*** In our title the topic entities have been thematised. 'When we found the name of an individual thematised in the title of the text, we expected that individual to be the topic entity. This expectation-creating aspect of thematisation, especially in the form of a title, means that thematised elements provide not only a starting point around which what follows in the discourse is structured, but also a starting point which constrains our interpretation of what follows' (Brown and Yule, 1989, p. 139).

Thus, the topic–entity of our article is *'three dames'* and, because of the thematised expression in the title, we can read the text with the interpretation that Alina/Toader/Mungiu are the persons under consideration. An interesting thing related to this is the fact that already the title indicates the two **topic entities: Alina** (Mungiu-Pippidi) & (Anca) **Toader**, on the one hand and (Lucia Hossu-) **Longin**, on the other. The inference the reader can make on the basis of the title is that the first two referents are somewhat different from the third one, or that the first two are against the third.

3.3. Thematic Structure

It is assumed that events and facts are structured in a particular way in order to give the discourse a certain framework on the basis of which a topic area can be identified. In some types of discourse (e.g. narratives) sentences are ordered on the basis of the succession of events in time. In some other types (e.g. travel brochures), the different geographical locations which are realised in thematic position will form the framework of the discourse. Van Dijk (1977) (quoted in Brown and Yule, p.145) suggests that 'descriptions of states of

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affairs will be determined by perceptual salience so that the more salient entity will be mentioned first.' He suggests that 'normal ordering' will conform to the following pattern:

General-particular
Including – included
Whole-part/component
Large –small
Set-subject-element
Outside –inside
Possessor - possessed

Let us apply Van Dijk patterns to our text. For reasons of space, the reader is kindly asked to have a look at the first part of the text in the appendix. The first sentences describe the *general* (three ladies, three Graces, three Furies, unfriendly attitude among them)*, whole, large, outside.* The further we read, the more will we move in the direction of *particular* (two infantes, the last two dames, Alina Mungiu-Pippidi & Anca Toader, the first one, Lucia Hossu-Longin) conflict of pinciples, intrigue, swearing, strin-pulling), *part, small, inside* (within Romanian Television). So, we may say that in this article the constraints proposed by Van Dijk are adhered to.

4. Coherence in the Interpretation of Discourse

When confronted with decoding (interpreting) a message, be it spoken or written, we rely on the lexical items contained in it and also on their syntactic structuring. But in addition to the knowledge of the meaning of lexical items and of sentential structure, we also have knowledge of other formats in which information is conveyed which will contribute to the interpretation of the message. In our endeavour to decode the message we will also rely on some principles according to which, although there may not be any formal linguistic links connecting contiguous linguistic strings, their contiguity leads the hearer/reader to interpret them as being connected, filling in any connection which is required. This phenomenon is known as **coherence** and it refers to the perceived continuity of meaning.

Brown and Yule (1989:.224) underline the fact that 'the assumption of coherence will only produce one particular interpretation in which the elements of the message are seen to be connected, with or without overt linguistic connections between those elements'. In other words, when formulating such a message, the addressor has a certain *intended meaning* in mind, which the addressee has to make an effort (make inferences and draw inplicatures) to grasp.

In interpreting the addressor's *intended meaning* the reader will make use:

►of the clues provided by the discourse:
- assumption of coherence;
- the principle of analogy;
- the principle of local interpretation;
- the features of context (the context will limit the range of possible interpretations and at the same time will support the intended interpretation);
- the regularities of discourse structure
- the regularities of information structure;

►of the socio-cultural knowledge & highly specific local knowledge. This latter type of knowledge will enable the hearer/reader to make inferences that may go beyond the intended meaning of the message producer. In order to restrict the range of possible inferences made by readers when interpreting a message (i.e. to avoid as much as possible the inferences which are not relevant), Brown and Yule have suggested three aspects of the process of interpreting the addressor's intended meaning in a discourse. These are:

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4.1. Computing the Communicative Function (how to *take* the message)

When producing a particular text in a particular context, the speaker/writer does not convey only propositional, but also social meaning, since the first function of language is to enable social interaction. Having this in mind, we may say that the communicative function of the newspaper article which is the topic of our analysis is not to inform the reader about a certain event, but rather, on the basis of this event, to comment on the numerous negative aspects of Romanian society, such as intrigue, manipulation of the people by means of mass-media, sycophantism, trade on one's influence, etc.

4.2. Using General Socio-cultural Knowledge (knowledge of the world)

The general knowledge about the world will pin down our interpretation both of the discourse and of almost every aspect of our experience. As de Beaugrande (1980:30) (quoted in Brown and Yule, 1989, p. 233) puts it: 'the question of how people know what is going on in a text is a special case of the question of how people know what is going on in the world at all'.

Thus, if we do not know what happened in the Romanian Television in the period shortly preceding the publication of the article, we (as readers) would encounter difficulties in making the necessary inferences to arrive at the writer's intended meaning. Knowing the events, the reader's effort will be reduced to the level at which the reading of the article is an enjoyable task. What the writer means by producing the article is not to inform the reader about events, but to **confirm** his own findings about Romanian society, to sympathize with the reader, and, if possible, to cheer him up.

What we have to underline again is the fact that the writer and the reader must share this knowledge of the world, otherwise the interactive function of the language will be considerably diminished.

4.3. Determining the Inferences to be made

In order to arrive at the writer's intended meaning, the reader has to make inferences. The term **inference** is used 'to describe that process which the reader (hearer) must go through to get from the literal meaning of what is written (or said) to what the writer (speaker) intended to convey' (Brown and Yule, 1989, p. 256). Inferences can be thought of either as providing a **missing link** necessary to make an explicit connection between two propositions, or as **filling in gaps** in interpretation. In our article we can find examples of both types of inferences:

►inferences as missing link:

5. a) *A. & A. (…) i-au organizat coanei Lucica o dare-n gît ca la carte*. 'A. & A (…) have organized a perfect denounciation of Madam Lucica'.
   b) *(Cursul de demascare rapidă, Moscova)* 'The short course of denunciation, Moscow)

-**missing link**: the denunciation was carried out according to the short course of denunciation, published in Moscow.

-**gap filling**: if the two ladies "studied thoroughly" the above-mentioned course, it means that they worked for the Security or they served the late president of Romania.

6. a) *De asemenea, damele bine (…) tot atîtea sînt*. 'The good dames (…) happen to be in the same number.'
   b) *Că-s trei Gratii, că-s tot atîtea Furii, puțin importă.* 'Whether there are three Graces, or whether there are three Furies is of little importance.'

-**missing link**: the good dames can be either Graces or Furies (on the basis of the

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background knowledge and of the context, the reader is prone to infer that the heroines of the article are Furies).

7. a) *Pe lîngă faptul că i-a sedus în mod neaşteptat pe nişte haidamaci din PDSR…* 'Besides the fact that she surprisingly seduced some loafers of the PSDR…'

b) *domnia-sa este cunoscută în TVR pentru excesul de sensibilitate.* 'She is known among the people of RTV for her excess of sensitivity'

- **missing link**: apart from the excess of sensibility, she must also have an excess of political power (since she couldn't have 'charmed' the loafers of the respective parties with her graces, as she is one of the ugly Furies).

►inference as filling in gaps:

8. *Important este că în Televiziunea Română (cum are veni postul național, plătiti din banii noştri, ai contribuabililor), le avem în ordine strict alfabetică:(…)* 'What is important is that in the Romanian Television (as it were the national station, paid for from our own money, the money of the tax payers) we have them in strictly alphabetical order: (…)'

- gap: since we pay taxes in order to watch the programs of the national station, we would like to see interesting things, not vendettas.

9. *Problemele reformei sau situația din Kosovo au apărut ca insignifiante conflicte locale în comparație cu războiul celor trei mimoze de la TVR.* 'The problems posed by the Reform and the situation in Kosovo seemed insignificant local conflicts in comparison with the war of the three mimosas in RTV'

-gap: the conflict of principles turned into a war which is far more dangerous than the one in Kosovo or the one in Britain, centuries ago.

20. *Dreptu-i că nici tanti Luci nu-i uşă de biserică.* 'It's true that neither is Ma'am Luci completely innocent.'

-gap: Luci must have done something nasty, which triggered her denunciation by her opponents.

The last (elliptical) sentence of the article (Trei doamne si toate trei!) deserves particular attention since it represents the 'feminine' adaptation of the title of a poem by a famous Romanian poet, George Coşbuc. The poem is entitled "Trei, Doamne şi toți trei" (Three, Lord, and All Three) and it describes the sorrow and pain of a father who lost all his three sons in war. The elliptical sentence in the title is also the last sentence of the poem, coming as the father's final lament. Since the words ***doamne*** (ladies, fem. Nom. or. Acc.), and ***doamne*** (Lord, God, vocative) are homographs in Romanian, the writer of the article has successfully exploited this relationship in a pun. On the basis of the previously mentioned/inferred information (i.e. the war in Kosovo, the war of the two roses) and on the basis of the knowledge of Romanian poetry the reader is assumed to possess, he may infer that any war leaves behind it pain, sorrow and victims. And in the case of the war of the three mimosas the victims were the mimosas themselves (since 'the two infantes' handed in their resignation, while Ma'am Lucica' did not dare run for the elections anymore).

5. In lieu of conclusions

What I have tried to do in this paper was to identify and analyze, on the basis of a newspaper article, some of the ingredients which are necessary in any account of the way people use language as a means of interaction. Thus, we have seen that the linear organisation both at sentential level and at discourse level will influence the reader's interpretation of the discourse. When organising the discourse in a

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particular way, the writer may be motivated by an intention to create suspense, to shock or to surprise the reader.

In order to be able to derive appropriate inferences about the writer's message, we need to combine linguistic meaning with context. Identifying the communicative content of a sentence is important because it can help us understand coherence relations across the sentences making up the text of the newspaper article.

Azi si miine: Alina Toader-Longin

1) Lucrurile bune sint intotdeauna in numar de trei. 2) De asemenea, damele bine tot atitea sint. 3) Ca-s trei Gratii, ca-s tot atitea Furii, putin importa. 4) Important este ca in Televiziunea Romana (cum ar veni postul national, platit din banii nostri, ai contribuabililor) le avem, in ordine strict alfabetica, pe: Lucia Hossu-Longin, Alina Mungiu-Pippidi si Anca Toader. 5) Ultimele (dar deloc cele din urma) doua doamne n-o inghit deloc pe prima. 6) E drept ca nici doamna Lucica nu le suporta citusi de putin pe cele doua infante, ca sa nu zicem sicofante, ale coanei Zoe de la Cotroceni. 7) Acest conflict de principii – concretizat pina mai ieri prin mici birfe, intrigi, lucraturi, otravuri, urlete si pizduieli aruncate pe culoare sau in birouri – vai, a izbucnit plenar saptamina trecuta. 8) Anca si Alina, cele doua piricioase mici, i-au organizat coanei Lucica o dare-n git ca la carte (Cursul scurt de demascare, Moscova 1952), cu gindul de a bloca alegerea dinsei in fruntea CA al TVR. 9) Dreptu-i ca nici tanti Luci nu-i chiar usa de biserica. 10) Pe linga faptul ca i-a sedus in mod neasteptat pe niste haidamaci din PDSR, PUNR si PRM, domnia-sa este cunoscuta in TVR pentru excesul de – sa-i spunem astfel – sensibilitate. 11) Un excess care face ca sedintele de consiliu sa se transforme, zau, in mini-sedinte de psihoterapie in grup. 12) Probabil tocmai d-aia, de groaza, cunoscind-o bine, nabadaioasele de la DEI si-au ridicat poalele-n cap, pe postul public national de le-a vazut o tara-ntreaga deontologia. 13) Iar ce-a urmat a fost prapad. 14) Toata mass-media si intreg spectrul politic n-au pregetat sa ia atitudine, sa comenteze si sa dezbata situatia. 15) Problemele reformei sau situatia din Kosovo au aparut ca insignifiante conflicte locale in comparatie cu razboiul celor trei mimoze de la TVR. 16) Trei doamne si toate trei!

(**Academia Catavencu**, 13 – 19 octombrie 1998)

Today and tomorrow: **Alina Toader-Longin**

1) Good things come /are always in a number of three. 2) Also the good - the extremely good – dames happen to be in the same number. 3) Whether there are three Graces or whether there are three Furies, is of little importance. 4) What is important is that in the Romanian Television (as it were, the national corporation paid for from our (the tax payers') money, we have, in strictly alphabetical order: Lucia Hossu-Longin, Alina Mungiu-Pippidi and Anca Toader. 5) The last (but not at all the least) two ladies do not stand the first one at all. 6) It is true that neither can Misses Lucica stand the two infantes, not to call them sycophants, of ma'am Zoe of Cotroceni. 7) This conflict of principles - manifested until recently as little gossip, intrigue, string-pulling, poison, shouting and swearing in the corridors or in the offices - dear me - , burst out in plenary last week. 8) Anca and Alina, the two little denouncers, organized a perfect denunciation of Misses Lucica (**The Short**

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Course of denunciation, Moscow, 1952) meant to hinder her election as Chief of the Administration Council of Romanian Television. 9) The truth is that Missis Luci is not exactly innocent, either. 10) Besides the fact that she surprisingly seduced some loafers of the Social Democratic Party of Romania, the Party of National Union of Romania and The Great Romania Party, her Highness is known among the people of RTV for the excess of - let us call it – sensitivity. 11) An excess which makes the council meetings she participates in turn into mini-meetings of group psychotherapy. 12) It must have been out of fear, knowing her too well, that the peppery women of the Information Program Department threw their caps over the windmills on the public national station, so that a whole country could see their deontology. 13) And what followed was a complete disaster. 14) The entire mass-media and the whole political spectrum have not hesitated to take attitude, to comment on and to discuss the situation. 15) The problems posed by the reform or the situation in Kosovo seemed unimportant local conflicts in comparison to the war of the three. 16) Three ladies and all three!

(**Academia Catavencu**, 13 – 19 October 1998)

Notes

[1] The article is to be found in the appendix, both in the original and in the English translation.

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