LITERARY COMMUNICATION AND EXISTENTIAL FORMULA IN EPIC ADDRESSING

Ștefan VLĂDUȚESCU
University of Craiova

Abstract: The study is circumscribed to theory of literary communication and highlights the fact that there are different dedicated formulas of epic addressing. The existential formula joints in epic addressing are examined. As an example, we use Gabriel Chifu's novel, "Story of my Death". First, it appears that this novel belongs to a thematic topology whose axes are are also found in books by Lev Tolstoy, AP Chekhov, J. L. Borges or F. Kafka. Later it is made visible that the differentiating contribution of Gabriel Chifu's epic work lies in making clear from death an event of life and to show that, whenever it occurs, death captures as the ultimate existential event, catching the man, however, unprepared. Existential formula in epic addressing consists of understanding that the stake of death is the assumed life as unique experience.

Keywords: communication, intercultural communication, literary communication, epic addresssing, existential formula

1. Introduction

In critical geography of Romanian literature, on contemporary literary Oltenia's map, as the first visible milestone marked appears the writer Gabriel Chifu. Confirming the "Critical History of Romanian Literature" (2008), Nicolae Manolescu grants him a meritorious space (pp. 1313-1316), stating that "Chifu's novels have imposed (...) to attention of critics'. Like previous writings, and remarkable novel (in our opinion) "Story of my death" ("Relatare despre moartea mea", 2007) has risen in the register of our critics welcome lively debate. The book is remarkable in at least three elements:

a) by registering as a landmark in epic diachronic focused on the theme of death;

b) by the complex epic-narrative procedure;

c) by grounding a theme that aesthetic derived experience from domestic existence of Romanians of last 20 years made it element of reflection and problem of existential formulation: the theme of the misfit emigrant, metamorphoses and identity aporias in the process of the emigration identity commensuration with identity of immigration within interculturalism.

Even the title, if we trust him, are set two coordinates that ensure the environment and assure the space of Romania novelistic narrative development: narrative and multiple existential experience (of intercultural and identity crisis, blocking, returning to himself and death). The narrative is a matter of rhetoric, and experience is a matter of life (and death), death itself is a matter of life.

The storyline achieved by the novel can be modeled, simplified and reduced to its epic essential lines. A native of Craiova, Ana-Cristina Stanescu (born on 19 May 1965) decides to run away the country in 1988, arriving after traumatic events, in Canada. Through her culture she seduces wealthy man Adam Wellington (who could be a grandfather) and marries him. She gives up the name, language and past, considering that she gained a new identity, an intercultural one. In 2004 she receives an email from an unknown and finds out that she did not forget Romanian that she was not isolated by the name Ana-Cristina and the past that she

BDD-A22262 © 2015 Arhipelag XXI Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 06:05:04 UTC)

believed out of her life has deep roots. She returned to Romania to find the unknown (who is writing the novel "Story of my death") and to come out of the Canadian blockage. She dies / suicide, atoning her loneliness through faith, after trying the same thing with love and fiction.

2. The theme of death

Voluntarily, Gabriel Chifu enrolls on epic direction which "makes literature of death narrative of a person" (as stated in an article in "Luceafărul" no. 8/2008). His choice circumscribes with evidence to that component of an artistic project that the novelist designate it as "literary art explicitly presented" ("Ramuri, no. 3/2008). So, the "Story of my death" belongs to a thematic of whom axes consist of books by Lev Tolstoy, A. P. Chekhov, J. L. Borges or F. Kafka. The differentiating contribution of the current work lies in making clear of death an event of life and to show that, whenever it occurs, death captures as the ultimate existential event, catching the man, however, unprepared. Existential formula in epic addressing consists of understanding that the stake of death is the assumed life as unique experience.

The narrative technology of the novel, Gabriel Chifu introduces a narrative spirit that gathers the testimonies of some characters and writes the guiding chapters. He makes use of both the author coincidence appearance with the narrator, and the legitimate narrators technique, but uncredited, besides which the narrative instance takes away: ideological, philosophical, moral, poetic; deliberately undermines, regarding authorization, the relativity of the events truth. The presence or absence of the narrator, his identification or split of authorship, investing the characters in choosing represents, it is known, rhetorical procedures, strategies. Always someone describes and narrates, possibly appreciates or notes in novel. Through the chapter titles, the narrative spirit directs us, showing that narrative production has a command center. The sections order it is also a way to give clues about the presence of narrative strategies.

Regarding the act of narration, it is assigned either the narrative spirit (in neutral and impersonal chapters, where the narrator merges with the omniscient author), or a character. Thinking the act of narration in terms of what is called also voice, it can be said that voice receives few characters: Patricia (Chapter VII), Adam (Chapter III), T. Naumescu (Chapters I and V) and A. Fornea (Chapter XIII).

Regarding the outlook, the novel rhetoric notes that the narrative instance report with the exposure (with the fiction world, the characters and action) is called also the point of view (Norman Friedman, "Point of View in Fiction", 1955). The perspective (point of view) refers to the location of whom is answering the question "who sees". Connected and extensively, Nicolae Manolescu grafted on this idea, noting: " Today it is assumed that there are two ways to depict the action or characters of a novel, two strategies that they appear to the reader: one, direct, consisting of "story", narrative or speech, and other indirect, consisting of presentation or staging" ("Noah's Ark", 1980); in a later book, instead of presenting, the critic will talk about representation: the novel "developed the representation, narrowing that one of the narrative" ("A door just half-open", 1986). As it emerges from the "Averroes' searches" by J. L. Borges (2004), "one speaker may narrate everything". The narrative is made either the first person, or the third person. In the novel we have a group of "speakers". Nor the presentation is missing: the authorial chapters (Chapters II, IV, VI, IX, X, XI, XII).

The characters remain in zone of a natural logic, logic of a weak thinking, as says G. Vattimo, a logical of confusion, vague, the amphiboly, the unclear and fallacious, in the latest incident, a logic of paradox. Anne has even the consciousness of the process: "My narrative for you, Patricia lacks some important nuances". Anne Wellington appreciates the received e-mail from Romania, as a "strange story".

BDD-A22262 © 2015 Arhipelag XXI Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 06:05:04 UTC)

The narrations intersect, generating new questions. The characters invalidate each other the stories. Moreover, they revoke each other the privilege of narrative instance. The generated uncertainty by narrations intersections make that the positions to show to be fixed by conjectures and assumptions, by allegations and suspicions, and not by assertion, assumption, assumed existential statements. Observing that only the latter can start the implementation in practice of a strict happening logic, it results that the narrations intersection merely mobilizes new resources of confused and to supply a fascinating development of perspectives. The characters feel the functioning of confusion logic that they take part. They feel it as an absence of a sustainable logic. While they think confused, moreover, they "think confuse" because they should think logically. Patricia notes about Anne: "She begins go crazy! (...) powerful, elegant, logical, perfect Anne, who has always been the person-who-saves".

Intercultural adaptation failure

Beyond the theme of death, the novel presents a failure of intercultural adaptation. It is about the failure of that one able to abandon his own country, cultural homeland; it is the failure to analyze him willingly, generosity and detachment and to find him after a profound and disturbing intercultural experience. Even the fact of returning home, the expatriate leaves the habitant position of a country and take a confused identity. The returned one from exile does not retrieve himself as the left one, but as another. In terms of identity self-perception, the returning to previous self is unfair. The big issue of the expatriate is the identity, especially its cultural component. To leave means to die a little. But, coming back does not mean to recover the lost life. Returning home is not even returning to the old identity, but only approximation of reentrance during ignored identity. Returning of the waster son home is not a coming back to self. Coming back, says V. Tonoiu, "So you can evaluate yourself and appreciate foreign cultures with the same combination of proximity and distance" (”Înțelepciune și filosofie” - "Wisdom vs. philosophy", Bucharest, Publishing House, 2007, p. 9). We carry everywhere with us original home, homeland and hometown.

Man is inseparable from a native; it is inextricably linked to reminiscence. The native is no eradicable and non-remitting. The contact with a new culture is above all experience of the spirit, of conscience. It is about an experience of decentration, of confrontation with other traditions, customs, rituals, symbols and values. Geert Hofstede ("Management of intercultural structures", Bucharest Publishing House, 1996, pp. 239-240) shows that a stranger arrived in a country traverses a process of cultural adaptation: starts with a phase of euphoria, followed by a second phase, cultural shock, a third phase is integration, and the fourth is a stable state of mind. From this point of view, Ana did not cross than the first two phases, because before integration and stable state, she blocks and falls into disarray, which, somehow, will ultimately cause death. Her experience therefore has three components: the euphoria of arrival, a shock and a blockage. Foreignness Euphoria writes fascination that exerts on her culture and Western civilization. Anne's identity issue lies, beyond the foreign name, ignoring the silence of Adam and Patricia. Arriving in a new culture, Canadian, Ana-Cristina abandons her name (becomes Anne); renounces to speak Romanian and isolates herself of her own country and of the memories that originate here.

Ana-Cristina’s Canadian existential formula is actually an illusion. Basically, what she considers to be her new identity represents only a bottleneck in functioning of her unique identity. Old or last identity is "a part of our identity", is just part because identity is unique. When Anne receives e-mail from T. Naumescu her beliefs as she departs the past clothes, the language, natal, they shock. On the other hand, the second her huge failure has represented the attempt to escape from her Romanian past, changing her name and denying of "her being of sometimes as you depart a decrepit coat."Romanian identity does not dissipate in a new

BDD-A22262 © 2015 Arhipelag XXI Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 06:05:04 UTC)

different cultural identity. The illusion of being someone else than Ana-Cristina Stanescu was defused in introspection. Subsequently, it appears that "her Romanian roots had not perished there" as she had imagined.

3. The theme of loneliness

Without name, past and profound identity, Anne finds his solitude. Cogitative, Ana-Cristina discovers the intercultural as an identity impasse, as a failure and throwing-away. On the affective dimension the impasse is projected as loneliness and no communication. Since she cannot control intellectual the situation, the heroine tries to fix it on the emotional coordinate. She has the representation that of the loneliness that can come out through fiction, love and faith. She makes of all three a practice. Love is Adam (husband), Patricia (lesbian lover) and Pierre (lover). Faith as the last rescue is the last fiasco. The belief that the projection of concrete evil , everyday, in the major evil as being the true religion faith and then faith retention as salutary solution proves to be a bluff. Lived fictions are constructed fiction by Naumescu and fictions made by Anne to Adam. In this sense, "One Thousand and One Nights" enjoys prototypical: to delay the death, Scheherazade raises fictions. In her case, fiction secures her. She will live as long as she will be capable of fiction: fiction prolongs life. Scheherazade's epic is, on the one hand, the "story" against death, and on the other, atonement that forgiveness is conditioned by generation of fiction. Storyteller lives because she is forgiven. The atonement and forgiveness are performed simultaneously. "Story of my death" does not seem to respect the rule of Scheherazade, does not conform to postulate that, ultimately, the aesthetic postpones the death.

Death is atoned living. Any atonement is the one. Not the others forgive frees us, but the fact of requesting wit humbly the forgiveness. Never salvation comes from the refusal of forgiveness of other and self. In this sense, "Story of my death" is a story about atonement. By the narration are atoned things that if you've lost they and they become also irretrievable, then those things not worth it. Life does not cease where the fiction begins, because we are what we are and in measure to perceive reality from fiction or fiction from reality.

Ana-Cristina Stanescu can remain in the history of literature as a character-type for situation of tragic loser immigration, misfit intercultural immigrant type. In his chronicle of "România literară" ("Literary Romania") (2008), Tudorel Urian retains the book as "genuine novel, in the center of which is one of the most well-drawn female characters in Romanian literature of recent years". She shows how false consciousness of implantation in a new culture and a failure to realize that the past belongs to present world can lead to destruction. Arriving in another country, Ana creates a temporary ego that she sees as the foundation of her new world of belonging. In fact, this ego is illusory and does not belong to world of this exile, but the world of captivity.

4. Conclusion

In spite of what Nicolae Manolescu says the novel would not have a "clear idea" preserved as evidenced the clear idea of failure that brings the mistake to emigrate and live your immigration as a life completely new, free and secured of pre-emigrant past. In positive terms, the idea is that the immigrant must take emigration only as a new chapter of a consistent life as existential formula, and not as a totally new life, retreaded, reconditioned. "Story of my death" is seen, a remarkable novel: the emigration novel as existential intercultural issue.

References

Boldea, I. (2011). *De la modernism la postmodernism*. Tîrgu-Mureș, Editura Universității.

BDD-A22262 © 2015 Arhipelag XXI Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 06:05:04 UTC)

Boldea, I. (2011). *Romanian Literary Perspectives and European Confluences*. Éd. Asymetria.

Borges, J. L. (2004). *Averroës' search. The Aleph and Other Stories.* New York: Penguin Books.

Buda, D. M., Grigore, R., & Boldea, I. (2011). Cu cărţile pe masă. *Revista Literară Vatra*, (01), 69-77.

Budică, I., Bușu, O. V., Dumitru, A., & Purcaru, M.-L. (2015). Waste Management as Commitment and Duty of Citizens. *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 11(1), 7-16.

Chifu, G. (2007). *Relatare despre moartea mea*. Iași: Editura Polirom.

Chifu, G. (2008). Autorul și criticii săi. *Ramuri*, 3, 3.

Chifu, G. (2008). Un mecanism cu două viteze simultane. *Luceafărul*, 8, 26.

Danciulescu, D., & Colhon, M. (2014). Splitting the structured paths in stratified graphs. Application in Natural Language Generation. *Analele Stiintifice ale Universitatii Ovidius Constanta-Seria Matematica*, *22*(2), 57-67.

Friedman, N. (1955). Point of view in fiction: The development of a critical concept. *Publications of the Modern language Association of America*, 1160-1184.

Grabara, J. (2014). Paradoxes of Sustainable Development within European Integration. *EIRP Proceedings*, *9*.

Grabara, J., & Dima, I. C. (2014). Logistic paradigm for industrial solid waste treatment processes. *Social Sciences and Education Research Review*, *1*(1), 18-28.

Hofstede, G. (1996). *Managementul structurilor organizaţionale*. Bucureşti: Editura Economică.

Manolescu, N. (1980). *Arca lui Noe: eseu despre romanul românesc* (Vol. 2). Minerva.

Manolescu, N. (2008). *Istoria critică a literaturii române: 5 secole de literatură*. Ed. Paralela 45.

Manolescu, N. (2011). *Teme*. MintRight Inc.

Nedelea, G. (2013). Două modele de lectură. *Revista Transilvania*, (3).

Negrea, X. (2014). Credibility-an Honest Claim in the Current Romanian Press. *Social Sciences and Education Research Review*, *1*(2), 45-51.

Negrici, E. (2011). *Iluziile literaturii române*. MintRight Inc.

Sandu, A., & Usurelu, S. (2012). Postmodernism and Constructionism. Seeing Truth through Different Eyes. *Revista Românească pentru Educaţie Multidimensională*, (IV/2), 27-43.

Smarandache, F. (2015). Neutrosophic Social Structures Specificities. *Social Sciences and Education Research Review, 2(1)*.

Smarandache, F., Gîfu, D., & Teodorescu, M. (2015). Neutrosophic elements in discourse. *Social Sciences and Education Research Review, 2(1)*.

Stan, N. R. (2008). *The relation between human dignity and human rights in the Orthodox perspective*. Institut oecuménique.

Unguru, E., & Sandu, A. (2014). A Socio-Legal Approach of Probation in Light of the New Penal Code. Restorative Justice versus Retributive Justice. *European Journal of Law and Public Administration*, (1), 37-68.

Urian, T. (2008). Manual de supraviețuire. *România literară*, 5.

Voinea, D. V. (2014). A demographic portrait of Romanian immigrants in California. *Social Sciences and Education Research Review*, *1*(1), 63-70.

Voinea, D. V., Bușu, O. V., Opran, E. R., & Vlăduțescu, Ș. (2015). Embarrassments in Managerial Communication. *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 11(2), 171-180.

BDD-A22262 © 2015 Arhipelag XXI Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 06:05:04 UTC)