SEMANTICS OF INTER-DIMENSIONAL CROSSINGS IN LUCIAN BLAGA'S POETRY

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Abstract

In the universe of Lucian Blaga's poetry, nature is endowed with several spiritual dimensions which are accessible through intuition for the human being and by passing through which this latter is enabled to sense the presence of a willingly concealed divinity. The modalities of crossing these co-existing dimensions are vital within Blaga's poetical universe, and the present paper studies a few among the semantic variations through which such crossings are revealed to the receptive reader. These movements are studied, especially in the terms and perspective established in her work by Professor Angela Bidu-Vrănceanu, through some examples.

Key words: *poetry, semantics, universe, dimensions, crossing*

Résumé

Dans l'univers établi par la poésie de Blaga, la nature, telle qu'elle est saisie par l'être humain, est nantie de plusieurs dimensions d'ordre spirituel qui, par le biais de l'intuition, en viennent à être accessibles à celui-ci. En faisant la traversée de ces dimensions entrelacées, l'être humain devient à même de saisir, indirectement, la présence diffuse d'une divinité qui, à bon escient, ne se laisse point apercevoir de par les yeux humains. Les modalités par lesquelles nous puissions traverser ces dimensions co-existantes sont d'une importance vitale dans l'univers poétique créé par Blaga. Le présent article analyse quelques-unes parmi les variations sémantiques par l'intermédiaire desquelles de pareilles traversées sont possibles, pour un lecteur bienveillant à l'égard de l'oeuvre de Blaga. Nous étudions des exemples de tels mouvements, surtout depuis les perspectives et approches établies par M-me le Professeur Angela Bidu-Vrănceanu.

Mots-clés: *poésie, sémantique, univers, dimensions, traversée*

In Blaga's view, the poet (understood as an archetype, a character which has survived ever since the deepest Antiquity to our own times) is seen as an earthly bounded human being, but the spirit of whom is yet essentially free to travel and to seize the unknown dimensions it might pass through. Human reason is not always able to empirically describe and evaluate these realms, but their presence is sensible to the poet through intuition. For Blaga, poetry is life itself, meant as the paramount of human knowledge. Our purpose is to identify some of the linguistic tools through which Blaga unveils the mysteries related to the journey within and throughout such domains of reality, considered by the poet as in-betweens enabling him to communicate (indirectly, but yet in deepest intimacy) with a Divinity who does not reveal itself. Down to earth speaking, Blaga endows his poems with three important assets, able to provide a suitable and large enough space for his audacious hypothesis:

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1. His poems are usually brief, sometimes kindred to the Japanese *haiku*, anyway a lot shorter than the ones of the other poets within his generation; **2.**The words he makes use of are simple and belong to common use and knowledge, while rhetoric is absolutely absent; gossip might even assert that Blaga's vocabulary is not as "rich" as it could (and it should) be; **3.** Blaga's poems usually describe a physical nature which is deeply peaceful, intensely alive, of course, yet majestic within its quasi-stillness. The poet does instaurate this carefully elaborated *mise-en-scène* so that he could unfold his real intentions, within a landscape of multiple dimensions and universal extent. Here comes the fourth but yet unique asset of Blaga's poetry, which indicates him as a genuine creator: while the described nature spots seem to be deliciously peaceful, the spiritual endeavour generated by them in the poet's spirit (this latter consisting in a symbiosis between an acutely refined rational intellect and a romantically-shaped intuition hankering to caress by its presence the whole Universe) does rise to the dimensions of a permanent, in time, and infinite, in space, quest and, simultaneously, to the intensity of a painful and tormenting struggle. In the terms used by Professor A. Bidu-Vrănceanu, the "movement verbs" are the semantic tools employed by the poet so that he could edify his own powerful (and how mysterious) universe. Should we paraphrase again Professor Vrănceanu, "between words and senses" Blaga does create and maintain on purpose a distance and, simultaneously, a tension, both of universal dimensions; yet they continue with no failure at all to be parts of a *sui generis* aggregate which seems incessantly upon the edge of disintegrating itself due to inside acting forces; under these circumstances, the communicating paths enabling the poet (and us with him) to travel among the various dynamic dimensions of this universe (upon which the poet's character has, apparently, no control at all) become of vital importance. The purpose of the present paper is to illustrate some of these such paths, the ones of a semantic nature, since Blaga endows his chosen to be, raw-like vocabulary with an insuperable semantic potential, which, indeed, pertains to magic, created through the vanished difference that exists between the pauper means employed and the astounding atmosphere they come to generate, to a cosmic extent. We may say that the Universe is for the poet Prometheus' torment rock. Let us provide a few examples from Blaga's creative journey. **I.** *şi nu ucid/cu mintea, tainele ce le-ntâlnesc* (Blaga, 1982: 9)[1]. Ecclesiastes says that "knowledge is pain" (for the human being). Blaga reverses this statement, providing a new sense to the verb *ucid*; the secrets become autonomous characters, the essential asset of which is to be (and remain) unrevealed. Should the human mind elucidate them, they would cease to exist, having become pointless. The intellectual (and Cartesian) investigation is a pernicious action for the realm of nature which is by far more complex than what we objectively see, yet the human being has the power to disbalance it through an spiritual (thus abstract) involvement only. Blaga contradicts *Ecclesiastes* on this his own field. **II.** *şi tot ce-i ne-nțeles/ se schimbă-n ne-nțelesuri şi mai mari/ sub ochii mei* (Blaga, 1982: 9) – To be unrevealed in the Cartesian sense is the right status for the present aggregate of nature itself. Its frontiers are not only physical and the best thing a human could do is to help them in remaining secretive. *Ne-nțeles* means "unelucidated", while the verb *se schimbă* signifies an intrinsic mutation that improves nature's quality but which is

[1] The analyzed verses from Lucian Blaga's creation (*Eu nu strivesc corola de minuni a lumii*, *Lumina*, *Vreau sã joc*!, *Pãmântul*, *Gorunul*, *Mugurii* are cited from: Lucian Blaga, *Poezii* Bucureşti, 1982.

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caused precisely by the existence itself of the human perspective upon it. For Blaga, "love" is the human will and action aiming to ease for the loved entity the access to the paramount status of the latter. **III.** (...) *şi dat-a/ un semn Nepătrunsul* (1982: 10): Here the verb *a da*, in view of its situation, is not only a "movement verb" but it impersonates the *Logos* itself. The same status is valid for the noun *semn* which, here, does transcend semantics, as it carries on the (more or less) biblical significance. For Blaga, the inner asset of Divinity is not the one of being almighty, or good, or bad or even in-between: it is the one of being unrevealed to the humans (and the poet does not wish to disturb this status). **IV.** *O mare/ şi-un vifor nebun de lumină/ făcutu-s-a-n clipă* (Blaga, 1982: 10) – for Blaga's Divinity, time and space are the raw materials used to construct the universal aggregate – we might even say that the verb *a face* points out towards the Big Bang theory. **V.** *o sete era* (Blaga, 1982: 10) – the verb *a fi* (*to be*) illustrates now an exponential movement of increase for intensity pseudonymed as "thirst", highly spectacular yet luringly obscure. Contrary to the *Bible*, this cosmic and instantaneous *essor* is vowed to the simplest and most natural human feelings and actions, including even lust. **VI.** *Lumina, ce-o simt năvălindu-mi în piept când te văd-minunato* (Blaga, 1982: 10): The erotic pulsion is endowed by Blaga with a contradictory origin: divine through light and, simultaneously, earthly through lust. It is important to remark that, for Blaga, the biblical concept of *sin* does not exist, but the human being imagined by Blaga senses to be much closer to this unknown Divinity than the distance traditionally imposed by the biblical and severe God. On the other hand, the mechanical movement verb *a năvăli* describes the phenomenon of earthly love at a much higher level than the American "butterflies in the stomach". **VII.** *şi-aprins în valuri de lumină/ să joc/ strălfulgerat de-avânturi nemaipomenite* (Blaga, 1982: 11) – it seems that light is, for the poet, the form through which the Divinity acts most directly upon the human being, leading him towards a state of dancing grace consisting in a paroxysm of movement simultaneous with a spiritual effervescence he could have reached in no way otherwise; both nouns and adjectives suggest an *excelsior* point, while the verbs do institute a Dionysiac pulsion about which we are not able to discern if, ultimately, it might be or not...dangerous for its subject, since its acts are instantaneously intense, physically exhausting and occur in a rapid succession. Here, the simple accumulation of superlative comparison degrees brings a change of quality. **VIII.** *şi pe sub glii ți-am auzit/ a inimei bătaie zgomotoasă./ Pământul răspundea* (Blaga, 1982: 12) – the balanced equivalence between the two verbs, *a auzi* and *a răspunde*, though they do not signify spectacular actions, does mean that, in Blaga's universe, the silence itself, if existing within a natural frame, is a possible path for communicating among dimensions; it also proves that the slightest human feelings have their own unrevealed places and unknown purposes in the infinite aggregate of the universe, which appears to us in the welcoming but mysterious form of the surrounding nature. The main illustrated sense is, here, the universal equilibrium, which is constantly maintained, even if little beings like the humans are never aware of it. **IX.** *îmi pare/că stropi de linişte îmi curg prin vine, nu de sânge* (Blaga, 1982: 12) – there are also discrete movements, the efficiency of which depends precisely upon the fact of not being show-like visible; but their importance resides in their infinite continuity; the verb *a curge* reflects this permanent action, as well as the fact that the human physical body itself, seen as a functioning mechanism, is a part of nature, thus influenced by it, consequently acting upon human thoughts in a direct way. Of course,

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"silence" anticipates death, but this latter is not seen as a danger, since it becomes, for Blaga, the ultimate oasis of a comfortable quietude: **X.** *ascult cum creşte-n trupul tău sicriul/ sicriul meu/ cu fiecare clipă care trece* (Blaga, 1982: 13) – the two verbs *a asculta* and *a creşte* represent the equilibrium which exists in a dimension that is frighteningly silent, but terribly effective. Its inclusion in the everlasting run of nature renders it, however, acceptable and, should we ask the poet about it, even likeable. **XI.** *O, cine stie*? *Poate că* (Blaga, 1982: 12) – Blaga defines, through semantic means, "his own" Divinity, synthesizing it as the vortex of infinite potentiality, the core where all possibilities exist simultaneously, either seized or not by the insignificant human being; it is a semantic, functional and exhaustive description simultaneously. As for the word *semn* before, the poet gathers here the greatest possible density of a significant. Yet, this vortex is not submitted to the human timeline but, on the contrary, it rules over it. **XII.** *şi cald din temelii tresar/ de-amarul tinerelor mele patimi* (Blaga, 1982: 13) – the verb *tresar* signifies the submission to erotism (a little and enjoyable cataclysm), while the noun *amarul* reflects the burden of conscience, the awareness of a human being's own personal nothingness. Not even the youth of age could ever suppress this intuition. It is this virtuously balanced duality between joy and sorrow, always mingled together, which constitutes Blaga's distinctive harmony, always easy to identify.

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