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DISCURSIVE STRATEGIES IN AUREL PANTEA'S POETRY

Abstract: Through confession, an expressionist type of approach which provides the poetic text with authenticity and self-reflexivity, entailing an understanding of the world through its own perspective combined with subversive strategies of Neo-Expressionist and Postmodernist sort (such as intertextuality, processuality, the configuration of the real through écriture and textualization, re-semantization as a form of dialogue with one's own past), otherness will always be inside when it comes to Aurel Pantea's poetry: an inner otherness.

Keywords: subversive strategies, neo-Expressionism, Postmodernism, intertextuality, processuality, textualization, resemantization.

Behind the acute feeling of leaving "patria inflamată de mesaje" ("the home-land inflated with messages"), Aurel Pantea lets himself be "born" (how many times?) by poetry, his only legitimate "stăpână" ("mistress"). Acknowledging the shortcomings in its biography "tu n-ai biografie,/ nici bios n-ai şi nici scriitura biosului", the writer fully allows the poetical feeling, atrocious, elemental even, to transfer events from his own biography into poetry (he only lets go to some obsessive parts – contempt, love, revenge, indignation, the (i)mediated languages of the *Destroyer*) Even if the effect of the confessional "substitution" will be uncertain, for one may never who devours who (the poet? poetry?) – " senină̆tatea sulfurică,/ ea îmi mănâncă poemul" – the reader is given the alternative of the poetical reading. First of all, despite not having fully agreed to Postmodernity (and insisting especially on Neo-Expressionism), by textualizing existences, the poet finds „text-existences"[1], Cărtărescu's formula explaining the text's unification with existence: thus, text and the real become one, they affirm and deny each other alternatively: "devenim una cu parola neagră[…]/ un pământ ondulat ca emoţia/ ne spune adevăratul nume". At the same time, he shapes an Expressionist attitude and, moreover, stays loyal to this "angajament teribil" ("terrible commitment") (*ars poetica*), as expressed in one interview: "[…] Toţi marii poeţi transilvăneni […] au, aproape fără excepţie, sensul suferinţei. Nu iau existenţa în derâdere" („All great Transylvanian poets […] have, almost without exception, the sense of suffering. They see existence as no laughing matter.") (interview).

Sitting at the crossroads for the poem reception, depending on the selected poetical material, the critic has the competence (and the authority) to classify the literary work as belonging to a certain literary movement, either to Neo-Expressionism, according to Al. Cistelecan, or to Postmodernism, according to Virgil Podoabă. More or less critic, the reader chooses the poet's "confession" as guilty of rendering the text discursive (powered by negation), sharing the poetical "existents", since, all of a sudden, the reader has to step in as locutor in the provoking dialogue of poetical voices: "subiectul liric şi subiectul existenţial

[1] Passing of the body into letter. The textualization refers to an anthropocentric definition of the being within the framework of a deep dissociation from its predecessors, closely connected to the concept of authenticity. On the one hand, the concept emphasizes deconstruction and interpretation, and on the other hand, it highlights the somatographic pact, writing with one's own body or the writing which becomes the writer's body.

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vorbesc în piaţa identităţii". The meeting between the textualized writing self and the empirical self is programmed.

The undermining of the distinction between *persona* and *person* is seen in the insertion of biographical data in the poetical text, in the poet's being disseminated in his own poetry, both style and *signature*[2]. Thus, the plurality of selves sometimes present as biographical person – "Biografii ejaculate, / voci ieşite dintr-o gură prăbuşită, stau în propria-mi vârstă/ ca într-un ştreang", a sum of attitudes, hobbies, observations, some other times as textual repetition choosing dissimulation and parody or identified through the passion for writing and poetical communication: a nostalgic self, kind, passionate, frivolous, stupid, sometimes even depressive, attitudes that alternate with the ludic spirit, irony, humor, an inclination towards the gnome, the dictum (in the last part of the poem, lines translated into Latin by Marcela Ciotea).

"Fondul meu e melancolic, confesses the Poet, dar e o melancolie din aceea plină de umor, care este invadată de propriile umori lăuntrice, care parazitează toată viziunea senină asupra existenţei. Natura mea este extrem de înclinată spre voluptate, spre plăcerile intense, mari, până la dezechilibru" ("My inner core is melancholic, confesses the Poet, but it is a melancholy of those kinds full with comic, invaded by its own inner humors, infecting the entire serene view on existence. My nature is very much inclined towards sensuousness, towards intense pleasures, great pleasures, to unbalance"[3], a "fatal fate", motivated by Dumitru-Mircea Buda in "exorcizarea obsesiei […] care îşi cere, cumva implacabil, descărcarea narativă " ("the exorcism of the obsession […] which demands, somewhat adamant, a narrative discharge")[4]. We are now referring to the novella *Blanca* (Arhipelag XXI Publishing House, 2014)[5], "un fel de jurnal ficţionalizat, stilizat cu rafinament şi încărcat la voltaj livresc, […] un text exorcizant, care se ţese, involuntar, delirant, iraţional, himeric din developarea interioară a unei traume" ("a sort of fictionalized diary, stylized with refinement and charged with bookish power, […] an exorcising text, that weaves itself, involuntarily, raving, irrational, by the inner development of a trauma"), where "dorinţa pasională, atracţia erotică fatală [e] ca o chemare implacabilă a neantului" ("the passionate desire, the fatal erotic desire [is] like an adamant call of the nothingness.")[6]

Through its kind nature, generosity toward to other in the search for answers to (in)confirm the truths about life, about the being and, moreover, about the Self, "*The Destroyer*", Aurel Pantea's latest volume of poems, but not the last poetical project, published by Limes Publishing House, in 2012, seems to be (unless it really is) "the slot-poem" between "poetical generations": the generation of the 80s poetry and that of the 2000s poetry. The statement may be confirmed especially by the nostalgic approach to the "later" Nichita Stănescu, even if only by an allusion to confession: if, for the former, "the work is the poet's biography", for the later, his biography is Poetry – "a vorbi despre alţii [decât despre sine] e o scriitură fadă", and *The Destroyer*[7] proposes the poem about poetry: „Vii dreaptă în sperietura mea ca un stol, […] şi n-ai biografie,/ deci nu se pune în cazul tău problema morţii,/ n-ai bios

[2] Signature refers to the ambivalent function of language: despite the absence from the text of the person who signs, the signature indicates a "transcendent form of being present" (apud Derrida, *Signature*).
[3] Pantea, Aurel, "Aş vrea ca ultimele cărţi pe care le scriu să fie cărţi de rugăciune" ("I wish the last books that I write to be books of prayer"), interview by Dia Radu for *Formula AS*, nr. 998/ 2011.
[4] Dumitru-Mircea Buda, "Poetul în infernul memoriei" ("The Poet in the Hell of Memory"), in *Cultura*, nr. 471/ 12 iunie 2014.
[5] *Blanca. Fragmente din însemnările unui resentimentar*, Arhipelag XXI, Tg. Mureş, 2014 – the projection of Aurel Pantea's romantic nature, which prefers contemplative moments to any conflictive state caused by the worldly inadequacies, hence his coming back to feeling: "contempt, love, revenge" – as the poet declares.
[6] Dumitru-Mircea Buda, quoted article.
[7] "The key" for reading Aurel Pantea's poetical work, taking into account the unity of the poetical subject, lies in the level of the "unitary" poem/ volume.

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şi n-ai nici scriitura biosului, tu nu vei muri,/ tu vii dreaptă în sperietura mea şi toată lumea va şti/ că ai trecut pe acest loc precar, toate semantismele/ umblă cu cuţite mari, să suprime locul precar."- ... poetry, just like man's existence, is "precarious". The metapoetical language, essential for Postmodern writing, talks for itself: "tu [trup poetic] vii şi treci, puţin îţi pasă, eşti un simplu abis semantic", where "limbajul se întâlneşte cu sine şi înnebuneşte" (parody of modern poetry).

Aurel Pantea's poem is a confession – "For me, writing is a confession […]" (interview)[8]-, choosing exploration (as modernist poetry) from the perspective of rhyzomatic subjectivity[9], intentionally distorted in order to catch the events to be transposed in the readers' collective memory, with an emphasis on gemination, pluralism and a Bovary-like predisposition: a series of " pante(a)morfoze", understood as a dramatic search of corporality activated by avatars, present in isotopes of experiences and prayer, of love, and of time. They all argue in favor of the poetical logos and of poetry. Thus, the poetical space bears the function of a confessional for the confession of the poet and the reader alike. For Pantea, poetry is a believable space, since he argues for a "complete confession" developed in the present: "Actul expresiei poetice este acesta: tu mă provoci la o confesiune şi eu o mărturisesc acum – deci actul expresiei poetice este momentul confesiunii totale, încercare de a ajunge la confesiunea totală.[…] Scrisul fiecărui poem e un angajament total al fiinţei, necunoscut niciodată până la capăt. " ("The act of the poetical expression is this: you challenge me to a confession and I confess it now – so the act of poetical expression is the moment of complete confession, an attempt to get to a complete confession. […] The writing of every poem is a full commitment of the being, forever unknown until its end.") [10]

The parodic and dissimulation are joined by confession – by talking explicitly about himself, the poet creates textual alter-egos, by assuming a plurality of bodies and egos, instances melted into one: the spectral body. By confession, an expressionist approach, consumed into a autarchic speech[11], au autonomous, original, unique and irrevocable speech, whose reference is "a personal secrete mythology of the author", a speech that asks for a "hypo-physics of the word" – a descent into the poetical word; hence, the apology of poetical language, pleading with persistence for "un infralimbaj, care se elaborează la limita dintre lume şi trup" ("an infra-language, elaborated at the border between the world and the body")[12]: "La fiecare mişcare a nimicitorului, lumea nu devine/ mai încăpătoare, dar apare/ un 0 (zero) urât şi larg, nimeni nu şi-l asumă,/ nimeni nu semnează pe el."

Confession renders authenticity and self-reflexivity to the poetical text, leading to an understanding of the world from the poet's own perspective, combined with subversive Neo-Expressionist and Postmodern strategies, such as: intertextuality, processuality, configuration of the real through writing and the text, re-semantization and a form of the dialogue with one's own past, acknowledging that "literature is nothing else but a writing of the self" (Foucault).

The subversive strategies have to be considered as techniques of "Self" production; hence, the relation between the self – a plurality of selves, poetry offering "compensation" techniques.

In Pantea's poem, otherness will always be on the inside: an inner otherness (*mise en abyme*), as the identities - avatar will be editions of the repression of the writer's artistic conscience, a writer overlooked by the feeling of death: "Doamne, sunt îngropat, din lăuntrul

[8] Pantea, Aurel, "Aş vrea ca ultimele cărţi …", *quoted interview.*
[9] Rhyzomatic subjectivity refers to the reiteration of the intersection points where the events associated to feelings meet words, the poetical language.
[10] Aurel Pantea, interview.
[11] Roland Barthes, *Gradul zero al scriiturii,* translation by Al. Cistelecan, *Cartier*, Chişinău, 2012.
[12] *Ibidem*.

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meu urcă spre ceruri/ bestia învingătoare" or "Cade adânc în noi grăuntele conştiinţei morţii,/ tu şi eu suntem tare departe şi privim/ lanurile întinse şi secerătorii,/ în moartea mare, creşte desfrânarea,/ floarea prăduitoare."

Moreover, we are surprised by the Bovary-like attitude – I let myself being swallowed by my own self, by my own poetry that gives birth to me, I observe myself as otherness, I create within me: "Stăpâna mea îmi cere supunere cu glas/ de iubită părăsită, de ce nu mă mai iubeşti, sunt maica ta,/ tu îmi vorbeşti limba, mă mişc printr-un limbaj moale[…]/[…]maica mea îmi spune/ ai grijă de cuvântul lăcuit[…]/iubeşte-mă, mai spune stăpâna,/ te voi naşte din nou[…]"

The journey in the realm of poetry is done by reference to the self, to feeling, by the introspection asked by an (acutely) perceptive poetical conscience: "dacă am putea […] am privi cu pielea." A paradigm of the silence is required, as a germination state, but also as a refuge of the language that speaks, while the poet watches: consequently, "cea din urmă strategie de evadare din captivitatea limbajului, este că poetica vorbirii se vede substituită prin poetica privirii." ("the last strategy to escape from the captivity of language is that the poetics of speech is replaced by the poetics of sight.")[13]

In this poem of the *Destroyer* in the underground of the heart, the poet declines the competence of the expert in "curgerea ofidiană a simţurilor", contemplating the man on the outside vs. the man on the inside through a ludic change between underground and backgrounds that set forward biographic sequences of the narrator corresponding to the lyrical masks, the travesty that hides "incognito" identities, bearing the print of the *Destroyer*.

Thus, one of the first references is the daily life: "Oameni pe stradă, cum îi simţi, ca o pastă,/ secretaţi de un puls fără nivel, depărtaţi şi teribil de inumani,/ cu glasurile răzbind dintr-o deplorabilă stare/ a imaginaţiei[…]/ cu simţurile multă vreme neexersate" – a shapeless daily life, monotonous, diagnosed as "ca stare deplorabilă": "ei sunt sfârşitul, ziua moartă, realitatea fără apeluri,/ făcută din lucruri de pe afară" – "omul rest."

The other reference, his own body, "propria-mi vârstă" and the flashes from the underground of existence, "viziuni <<întrerupte>>, secvenţiale, punctiforme" ("interrupted visions, in sequence manner, point-like")[14], make up the poetical body: "Stăpâna mea îmi cere supunere cu glas/ de iubită părăsită, de ce nu mă mai iubeşti[…]/ iubeşte-mă, spune stăpâna, te voi naşte din nou." In order to regain the lost corporality, the poet uses dystopia (or heterotopia), accessing both Postmodernist meanings: both the imaginal meaning or the anthropocentric one, through which the letter/ poetical language is an anagram of the body, where the writing functions as "an adventure in the search of the body" (see Crăciun), and the ludic and parodic meanings, where the body is read on multiple levels, a reading influenced by the referential ambiguity that consists in transforming the body into a letter: a "transparent body" (see Kristeva), present in the text in the undefined ambiguous "you", a "you" balancing between the character listening to the story-teller, where the poet is a "beyond" of sentences, of phrases and poetical communication.

Aurel Pantea's poems get the pulse of life and set forward an autoscopy directed towards original speech: "ne întoarcem în materia pură, fără buze,/ cu pământ în gură şi cu propoziţii/ devenim una cu parola neagră, […]acolo/ un pământ ondulat ca emoţia/ ne spune adevăratul nostru nume." It follows that the avatars of the "poetical subject" will be the dumb, dumbness, the language turned to itself: "împing limbajul, […]am fost şters, am atins mutul"[15] or "îmbată-te/ şi lasă muţenia să muşte" – "o puşcărie a muţeniei,/ închide gura,

[13] Andrei Terian, "*Negru pe negru" ("Black on Black"),* in *Ziarul Financiar - Ziarul de Duminică,* 19 Aug. 2013.
[14] Al. Cistelecan, *Diacritice*, Curtea Veche, Bucureşti, 2007, p. 158.
[15] Dumbness corresponds to a state where words germinate, in order to reveal poetical meanings: "Tăcerea este un timp poetic omogen care strânge ca o menghine între două straturi şi face să se despice cuvântul, nu atât ca un

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închide-te, verbele aruncă din ele/ acţiunile ca pe nişte morţi, limbajul meu e un lung tunel/ spre linişti închise ca pupele…" – a case worm, precarious space, but protecting the poetical otherness. As if flirting with poetry, he barely lets himself be re-born: "şi eu nu mă voi naşte,/ e o zi ceţoasă şi un domn îşi plimbă câinele, veneţia sau aiurea."

If dumbness has the role of an eschatological promise, silence and the secrecy are what the lyrical self seems to wait for, hoping for a redemption coinciding with penitence or the spiritual exercise. The dumbness suggested in the poems like a feverish state of inspiration is none other than the accelerated crepuscular time of the vision, where ecstasy and containment blend together: "îmbată-te, creşte din firidele timpului mugurul chipului ce va distruge,/ îmbată-te, cineva se roagă pentru tine, îmbată-te,/ şi lasă muţenia să muşte"; the poet is excited by the lyrical drunkenness, close to a "burţi de nu", an imaginative latency that bites from a safe territory, valuable, completely ruled by poetry.

In the poems-prayers, the seeds of dumbness are attributed to the *Destroyer*, an entity generating nothingness, reducing the self to a state of silenced sweetness: thus, the self isolates itself as in asceticism, where the true "face" of poetry is revealed. The choice for dumbness also comes from the saturation of a repetitive poetical discourse, an eloquence that destroys the excessive corporality in Pantea's poetry: "Am vorbit, Doamne, şi am scris, până m-am înnegrit/ cu totul, am crescut, Doamne, în vorbele mele, iar vorbele/ mele au crescut în mine şi mi-au pus trupul în hău,/ stau în trupul meu ca într-un abis, fiecare cuvânt îl adânceşte,/ că văd mişcând timpul şi moartea, mâinile mele sânt întunecate,/ Doamne, de vorbărie, îmi port trupul ca şi cum propria-mi groapă/ aş purta-o, în el, limbajul se întâlneşte cu sine şi înnebuneşte" – consequently, the fatigue, the exhaustion as effects of the writing-building an excessive subjectivity, isolating the poet in a maze of his own language, whereas being into the body suggests the threat of time and death, a seal of languages in a hole bore as a seal of the inner exile, contaminated by the morbid latent shivers of death. The poetical body, itself a spectral body, a huge screen of scriptural and oral projections, is attacked by the letter living in its own abysmal structures, whereas the meeting with language, the turning, within this context, of language against itself induces an incurable sickness and an insanity that grinds the interiority and poetical sensitivity. The language turns against the language sedimented in the poet's body, which built a fortress against communication, and the poem becomes a collage of notes "negru pe negru."

The uprising against age "şterge în om o cifră bătrână", the uprising against the time of being: "stau în propria-mi vârstă/ ca într-un şreang, şreanguri sunt venele mele şi propoziţiilor […]" is given to poetry in order for it to extract concrete existences, Pantea's fragments, during the process of revelation (in accordance with an euphoric psyche, sometimes seen in/through gnome accents), telling about events with/about the poet: "Se instalează în mine un om bătrân, […]/ deocamdată convieţuim, avem aceleaşi vicii, ne plac aceleaşi femei,/ dar el creşte din lucrurile la care renunţ, în anumite momente,/ când limbajul însuşi are umbră, aud răsuflări obosite/ şi atunci spun:/ Dumnezeul meu mă digeră, Dumnezeului meu îi e foame,/ […] e un ins direct[…], limbajele lui imediate sunt/ dispreţul, dragostea şi răzbunarea[…]"

Monologue of feelings built on rhetorical interrogations, reflection bringing into present states consumed excessively, the poetical discourse, poly-isotope textual space, is actually a meta-text, with symptoms planned by the poetical instance when poetry becomes the body of authentic feelings: "Azi m-a văzut cel cu totul altcineva,/ mi s-a părut că aşa este

fragment de criptogramă, cât mai ales ca o lumină, un vid, o crimă, o eliberare." ("Silence is like a homogeneous poetical time that presses the word between two layers, like a vice, and makes it split, not s much as a fragment from a cryptogram, but more like a light, a void, a murder, a release") (Roland Barthes, *op.cit.*).

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el: îmbătrâneşte, curând nu se va opune, va fi o tristeţe să-l învingă…" or: « Nimicitorul are rădăcini în vieţile ce nu se mai întorc"

During the entire existential itinerary dominated by an acute artistic conscience, the lyrical self will relate to the atmosphere, he will feel around the experienced events for at least two reasons: the journey in simultaneous worlds still needs as itinerary a real world, essential, basic, to which the other built worlds will relate. They will be "intertextual worlds", a type of matrix verifying the new gnosis in order to impose it among the possible worlds. Then, he will return to the familiar, ordinary worlds, to check the functionality of his reasoning in the view of the prospective intention. The poet is destined to give birth to concrete worlds. And, maybe not by accident, we notice about Pantea's love poems the dynamics of a semiotics of passion filtered by the expression of existential feelings, meant to salvage the self from any anxieties and to exorcise it in a committed discourse, randomly overlapping the landmarks of a full adventurous love life: "Patimă atroce, de parcă lumina/ dinspre tine ar rămâne grea şi te-ar lăsa,/ iar tu ai veni, te-ai apropia./ Mergem unul spre altul,/ încet, pe şoptite,/ două abisuri logodite."

Pantea's poem will not simply be a calking of worlds familiar to the self, but their re-ordering from the perspective of the authorial attitude: "Azi, mi-am văzut inima, bătea de tare departe,/ parcă nu era inima mea, alături, lângă un aparat sofisticat,/ doctoria cu ochi albaştri m-a lăsat să ascult o clipă/ ritmurile ei, am auzit mari şuvoaie şi un şuier,/ se zbătea timpul în fluvii mari, chiar aşa ar fi,/ a spus doctoriţa, dacă ne-am afla în mijlocul ei,/ de s-ar întoarce fiecare în inima lui, ar vedea subteranele/ de unde vine nimicitorul". Pantea's poetical discourse is relevant for the play of the allegorical: a tensed access to the intelligible, another launch of the dynamic leading to speech, to "feel to the opening force of the poem", as the poet emphasis in the interview. A formal inversion may be noticed in the discourse, where it finds the origins of its authority and strength. The allegorical, an aesthetic-semantic process conditioning the reduction of the discourse to the power of actuality, of the real, is "representative" twice, because it represents (as imitation) something in the world, re-presenting (presenting again) the shape of language.

In this artificial space, the created or the real are "un plus de memorie", which will be deposited in a collective memory through poetical speech: the visions of the real bring an additional memory – the memory of the present. It follows naturally, after the existential itinerary in the familiar spaces with a "joie de vivre" of duplicating the essential facts, a meaning covering the bookish as well, that the perceptive conscience will add, paradoxically, a future universe: the Logos, the Poetry. "Scrisul înseamnă intuiţie, noted Pantea. Şi intuiţia este acea dimensiune a spiritului nostru care totalizează fiinţa, adică intuiţia este integratoare. […] vreau să trăiesc intuiţia ca pe o totalizare a fiinţei mele care presupune clipa de aici, clipa de acum, clipa posibilă, presupune nopţile mele, percepţiile mele, gândirea mea, memoria şi imaginea mea. Tot." ("Writing means intuition, noted Pantea. And intuition is that dimension of our spirit that sums up the being, that is, intuition is integrating. […] I want to experience intuition as a summing up of my being assuming the present moment, the moment right now, the possible moment, assuming my nights, my perceptions, my thought, my memory and my image. Everything.")

The novelty of Pantea's poetry lies in the obsessive monologue of the conscience in assuming the responsibility of writing: "A scrie poezie presupune o maximă responsabilitate existenţială" ("To write poetry means a maximum existential responsibility") (interview), since "inteligenţa ce îşi proclamă propriul om responsabil" ("the intelligence proclaims its own responsible man") (Schiller, 1989). Moreover, "poetul are o responsabilitate ontologică" ("the poet has an ontological responsibility") (Pantea, interview). The allegory of the existential poetical itinerary no longer respects the linear classical construction, and the referential structure of the text is solidary with the auctorial intention: the familiar spaces

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remain in place and closed. "Înclinaţia spre excesele trăirii şi voluptăţii dă şi o sugestie de pustiu. Pentru că, dincolo de voluptate, e nimicul, e neantul" ("The propensity towards the excesses of living and sensuousness also hints to the emptiness. For, beyond sensuousness, there is nothing, the void") – confesses the poet.

He closes the book of poetry with a poem-prayer (there are three "prayers" in the volume: three poems, a choice made by Aurel Pantea due the experiences lived in his latest books and, at the same time, the attitude of a good Christian: "Natura creştină care mă determină spune că există un singur adevăr. Iar calea spre acest adevăr e cea a rugăciunilor canonice sau necanonice. […] Aş vrea ca poezia mea să atingă sensul rugăciunii. Ce am trăit eu în ultimele două, trei cărţi, este o experienţă a traversării infernului, o expiere a răului, la capătul căreia nu-mi rămâne decât să mă rog" ("The Christian nature that characterizes me says there is only one truth. And the path to this truth is that of canonical or non-canonical prayers. […] I wish my poetry could reach the meaning of prayer. What I have lived in my previous two, three books is an experience of passing through hell, of atonement of the evil, at whose end I can only pray": "Nu mai ştiu, Doamne, de unde să încep, ce pot să-ţi spun,/ mesaje ştiute, păcate, n-am proiecte, Doamne, am păcate/ am proiecte inverse, nu ăsta e păcatul, Doamne, nu ăsta e răul,/ Doamne, uită-te la mine şi râzi, sunt rezident într-o patrie inflamată de mesaje,/ din guri deschise nu mai învie decât propoziţiile […]/ Doamne, sunt îngropat, din lăuntrul meu urcă spre ceruri/ bestia învingătoare."

The desire to write poems-prayers, that would allow the poet to confess, is shaped as a*rs poetica*: "Aş vrea ca ultimele cărţi pe care le scriu să fie cărţi de rugăciune"[16] ("I wish the last books that I write to be books of prayer"). And here is one of the best poem-prayer, which, next to Nichita Stănescu's *Oda în nici un fel de metru*, may be seen as an answer to Eminescu's *Oda*: „Ca să pot muri liniştit, pe mine/ Mie redă-mă!"(Eminescu)// „Supuşi cuvântului de verb mă rog, / du-mă odată din groaza vieţii, / du-mă, du-mă, / şi nu mă mai pedepsi,/ şi mie nu mă mai redă-mă*"* (Stănescu)// Doamne, sunt aproape bătrân/ şi încă n-am învăţat să mor,/ arta asta nu e niciodată desăvârşită" (Pantea).

The hermeneutics of this last poem in the volume offers the key for the reading of the entire book: the certainty with which the beast approaches, for which he writes a paradoxical "praise": "Moartea pentru Tine, Doamne Isuse Hristoase,/ e o chestiune clasată, face parte din inventarul problemelor/ rezolvate. Înainte de a cunoaşte febrele ei, sudoarea de sânge,/ pe care Tu ai cunoscut-o, eu Te iubesc, Doamne,/ şi cu partea din mine ce va muri, cu stratul gros de umanitate,/ cu omul din mine care se va sfârşi. Sunt sediul Tău precar,/ Mântuitorule, păcatul a construit în mine multe/ fortăreţe, în fiecare din acestea eu sunt soldat împotriva Ta,/ în fiecare, voi muri luptându-mă cu Tine, nu întreb,/ dar îmi pun problema nimicirii, ce se va întâmpla, Doamne,/ cu partea din mine, care Te iubeşte şi va cunoaşte nimicirea,/ şi totul mi-e foarte aproape/ Doamne, sunt aproape bătrân/ şi încă n-am învăţat să mor,/ arta asta nu e niciodată desăvârşită". The poem-prayer is a meditative discourse on the body, a taboo subject in Pantea's poetry, body – "frail siege" of a God of love that offers, in return, "the destruction", a process adored by the Destroyer. The poetical conscience threatened by the imminence of death, of an indeterminable departure, will ignore it, and will set itself free, insisting on an art of death: to live under/ with the fears and spasms inside the being. Aurel Pantea's poetry becomes religious, with new poetical phrases, guaranteeing that there still is an anchor holding the poet ashore, safe from the nothingness of the deceptive sea of sensuousness and fatal instincts

Death is the realm of captivity. The objective pathetic phrase pushes the borders of temporality to replication and reduction: "Şi timpul nu va mai durea, şi se va despărţi/ de sine,

[16] Pantea, Aurel, "Aş vrea ca ultimele cărţi …", *Interviu citat*.

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şi va rămâne sinele său, şi acolo se va urla/ într-o imagine mare,/ acum, el stă cu sinele său, ca o femeie care, în cele din urmă,/ acceptă, stă cu sinele său încărcat de sâni." Subject to time, the *Destroyer* will increase his adversity and will grimly try to shatter the last remains of an existence beaten by vices and old age, having as last effect the substitution: "Din nervi încâlciţi ies feţe neterminate,/ o stea umedă le împinge. Fără concesie/ suntem înlocuiţi" – the metaphor of "steaua umeda" ("the humid star"), suggesting the fecundity of death on the world, committing the crime and undeniably making the "replacement".

The feeling of death is animal, reaching the verge of obsession: the *Destroyer* and "urmele bestiei" – "Dumnezeul meu face zi de zi/ exerciţii de moarte şi înviere pe pielea mea, ia eu îl iubesc de nu mai pot […] / el ştie că nimicul meu/ e sămânţa nimicitorului care vrea să mă ştie mut."

The *Destroyer* seems to have the secret of escaping death, but the price of this triumph is compromised, because the sacrifice entails giving up the poetry that belongs to him, giving up his own body that is born again in the text. As a supreme request, the poet has as a consolation the prophetic promise of the after-life made by Katia, understood as a cancelation of the objective time and a collaboration in the view of the last eschatological return: the last sentence is the redemption, a return to the original meanings of the word: "Şi timpul nu va mai fi, nu va mai fi, va rămâne/ doar această propoziţie şi un câmp mare, vorbirea ultimă/ pe un mare câmp, vorbirea ultimă, străduindu-se,/ vom lucra, vom povesti despre ce a fost, ne vom odihni,/ vom lucra, spune Katia, precum Sonia din limbajul ultim,/ vom lucra, ne vom odihni."

The poet's attitude is romantic! The spirit continues its existential adventure. Here is the poetical focusing on the *Destroyer*, who satisfies his existential hunger by devouring himself: "După întâlnirile cu nimicitorul nu mai ai chip,/ porţi doar un nume şi te transformi cu totul/ într-o limbă necunoscută,/ o limbă vorbită de razele uraniului,/ nimicitorul aplaudă, moare de râs în propriile lui aplauze,/ se uită la inima mea, asta face mereu, se uită la inima mea/ cu razele uraniului."

Aurel Pantea's poetical body thus receives two connotations: on the one hand, the writing itself, as an act creating poetry and hence, the paradoxical poetical writing in the sense modern poets relate fearfully to such an instance. The violence of the dislocation brings the coherent existence of words in the claws of agraphic destruction. On the other hand, we have the obsession of poetry's becoming corporal, a poetry that becomes the very poet's body, the objectivation of poetry in the poet's body, somatography. Both instances are possible variances of Aurel Pantea's obsessive poetical body, because writing and the imputation of writing are two balancing circumstances, an oscillation between life and death, between poetry and reality.

His poetical imagery is based on lyrical tensions coming from three different areas of exploration of the poetical reality: on a well controlled bookish background, the resentful (-man) and the poet, fighting for the first place, cancelling themselves in a continuous replica: the Poet and Poetry. In this literature-devouring discourse, where poetry becomes a text eating the being and turning into a transparent effervescent poetical speech, the variables are likewise three, relating to the dominating instances identified by Iulian Boldea as generating the lyrical tension in Pantea's poetry: "o instanţă a fiziologiei, a corporalităţii şi visceralităţii, o instanţă a apelului la divinitate, la sacru şi o instanţă a textului, bazată pe instinctul autoreferenţial" ("an instance of physiology, of corporality and of the visceral, an instance reaching for divinity, the sacred and an instance of the text, based on the self-referential instinct")[17].

[17] Iulian Boldea, „Argument" in *Aurel Pantea. Ultimul taliban (Poetica neantului)*, Arhipelag XXI, Târgu-Mureş, 2014, p. 11.

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Aurel Pantea is a poet of the concrete, presenting in an objective vision a state of mind. Neither the fact that he turns his poetry into prayer, nor the fact that he alludes that love is the only possibility for escape from the hell he is locked in do not make him more metaphysical, more spiritual. The hell or the magmatic abysm that he feels inside the being reveals to him all the inadvertences of humanity in details that emphasize the nothingness and gives birth to the *Destroyer*. His image is a very concrete one although, for Pantea, the *Destroyer* is all that he is not and should be, the lost, the abandon, the absence, the nothingness in place of all that should be, and the poet's prayer is thus the last discourse of beings separated from spirituality.

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