Literature

THE BODILY COMMUNITY. THE GESTURE AND THE RHYTHM AS MANNERS OF THE LIVING-TOGETHER IN THE MEMOIRS OF *VIAȚA ROMÂNEASCĂ* CENACLE

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Abstract: *The present article explores the collective imaginary of the cenacle, referring to the case of* Viața românească *literary group from Iași, focussing on the bodily community and its representations in the common space, understood as space-in-common. This approach shifts the interest from the ideological component that is the 'poporanism', as promoted by* Viața românească *revue, to the ethical and social aspects of the community. This does not mean that the bodily community is "more real" than the ideological community, or that it translates with fidelity the common practices of the cenacle; the bodily community is in fact another form of representation, a phantasm of the living-together, analysed through Roland Barthes's theory as the space where solitude and sociability coexist. The corporal representations of the community, always engaged in an ethical debate, is further discussed through two manners of the living-together: the gesture and the rhythm. The theoretical reference of this analysis is Marielle Macé's book* Styles. Critique de nos formes de vie, *which proposes a formal approach of life, concentrating on the ethical implications. The issues derived from this sort of reading state the relation between the body and the environment, the vicinities and the somatic interactions between the members of the cenacle, the adjustment of distances, and the maintenance of solitude inside the community. The gestures, attitudes, behaviour, verbal and non-verbal tics, clothing, the manners of speech or the rhythm of doing certain things are seen not as marks of personal identity that positions itself inside the spaces of power, but as collective signs, as form of encounter and interaction, of exposure to the others but also responsiveness of the others, of expropriation as well as appropriation, of affirmation as well as alteration of the forms of life.*
Key-words: bodily community; *space-in-common*; gesture; rhythm; *Viața românească*;

The cenacle is defined by Anthony Glinoer and Vincent Laisnay as a community of three superposed realities: form of sociability, literary

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institution, and imaginary construct (Glinoer, Laisnay, 2013). To elaborate, the cenacle as a particular form of sociability refers to the relationship built up between the members of the group which can be formulated as "literary camaraderie" in the name of which the writers are supported, stimulated, and promoted, the notion of literary institution encapsulates the means the cenacle uses to legitimate itself in the "literary field", while the imaginary construct depicts the modalities of representation.[1] The present study focusses on the last aspect of the cenacle, that is the self-representation, and, particularly, on the bodily representations of the literary community, having as a reference points the case of *Viața românească* cenacle. The reason I opt for the self-representation against other forms of representation (fictional cenacles, parodies, mass-media images of the outsiders), namely for the discourse of the cenacle instead of the discourse about the cenacle, is to emphasize the reflexive dimension of the collective imaginary. In this way, the discourse is anchored in the direct collective experience, the communication moves on both vertical and horizontal axes, on the one hand, by symbolizing the community into images, mental forms, narrative topics, emblematic spaces, and, on the other hand, by pursuing the peripheral, private, and singular forms and practices that focus more on the presence than the absence of community. In addition, the self-representation is not reduced to the "statements" about community only, which are visible and aware efforts, but it also conceals an internal functionality and a secret mechanics, or what Glinoer and Laisney refers to as a "blind" representation. This means that the self-representations also take into consideration the functions and the usages of the imaginary, the ways the community employs the constructed images. Also, the representation of the embodied community favours a particular understanding of the cenacle as it has a performative implication, meaning that the simple presence of the bodies in a single space and at a certain time already states, before any kind of articulated statements, the idea of the community[2]. Along with the public or posthumous

[1] These distinctions are not to be considered separately, because, as Guillaume Pinson and Michel Lacroix convincingly posit, there is a communication between the social practice and the collective representations of a particular group. In this perspective, the declarations of the community do not compose a "stenography of the real" (*une sténographie du réel*), but a "poetics of sociability" (*poétique de la sociabilité*) that projects an image of the community, an image that is able to create, in a sort of *tour-retour* effect, forms of sociability and social practices (Lacroix, Pinson 2006: 5–17).

[2] This idea is developed by Judith Butler in a short study from a collective book entitled *What Is a People?*, which analyses the performativity of the utterance *we, the people*. What notices the researcher is the fact that the respective utterance does not need to become an act of speech for it to be activated requiring the mere presence of the bodies that enact it without speaking. Therefore, *the embodied people* merge the linguistic performativity with the

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representations, the community manufactures the phantasm of the living-together that translates into the feeling of participation of each individual to the constitution and sense of the group, a phantasm that is less connected to the ideological commitment and more likely to some forms of life such as the gesture and the rhythm. Therefore, what I have in mind is a superposition between the collective ethos and the corporal representation: the cenacle is no longer abstractly understood as affiliation to a literary direction, movement, school, or poetics (*Viața românească* cenacle has been constantly analysed in correlation with the ideology of 'poporanism' the revue promoted), but as concrete presence in a common space or, to put this differently, in a medium of life.

To illustrate this relation between space and community, between body and collectiveness, I will refer in the next paragraphs to the memoirs of "Viața românească" literary circle: Ionel Teodoreanu's *Masa umbrelor* (1946), Mihail Sevastos's *Amintiri de la „Viața românească"* (first published in 1956, and rewritten in 1966), and Demostene Botez's *Memorii II* (1970). Although published at a considerable distance in time, all the texts taken into consideration refer to the same timeframe: the period between 1906, the year *Viața românească* revue is first published in Iași, and 1930, the year the revue moves to Bucharest under the direction of Mihai Ralea and G. Călinescu. The revue's activity in Iași coincide with the existence of the cenacle that meet at the *Viața românească* editorial office or at Ibrăileanu's house; after the revue is transferred to the capital, followed by Ibrăileanu's illness and death (1936), the practices that define the cenacle disappear and are reduced to the aspects of the editorial board. In addition to the memoirs of *Viața românească* cenacle analysed here, there are other sources that fall into self-representation category such as the correspondence or the revue, but the reason I choose to focus on memoirs only is because they depict that material concrete *space-in-common* that reveals the bodily community in comparison to the epistolary communication that describes a literary community beyond the limits of the physical space bringing to attention the relationship between the actual members and the aspiring contributors, and to the mediated representations that are responsible for the public image of the group, an image outside its intimate spaces and secrete practices. Placed at the intersection of literary history and cultural studies, the present article uses pluriperspectivism, multifocalization, and heterogeneity as methods in order to decentralise the univocal discourse that is concentrated on individual authors, and to touch upon other forms of relating to art and the artistic products, integrating the problems of creativity into the social and collective

physical performativity, as *we, the people* implies the existence of this embodied community that is "visible, audible, tangible, exposed, persistent, and interdependent" (Butler 2016: 49).

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domain. The interest for communities begins to stimulate the Romanian literary studies in a variety of directions: the relation between literary groups and the spaces of power, as in Loredana Cuzmici's study, *Generația Albatros – o nouă avangardă* (2015), or Daniel Puia-Dumitrescu's book, *O istorie a Cenaclului de Luni* (2015); the constitution of national community and the power of literature to create "textual communities", as in Doris Mironescu's approach in *Un secol al memoriei. Literatură și conștiință comunitară în epoca romantică* (2016); *Dacoromania litteraria* revue from 2016, coordinated by Laura Pavel and Ligia Tudurachi, debates the idea of the community as usage, reflecting on the concept of "interpretative community" as in Stanley Fish's theory and that of "collaborative community" derived from Victor Turner's *communitas*. A pioneer researcher in the field is Ligia Tudurachi, whose articles on *Sburatorul* cenacle reflect upon the vicinities and corporal touches (2017), upon the relation between sociability and creativity (2015), between sociability and emotion (2018), as a result of the living-together. Nevertheless, little research has been published in Romania on the idea that literary communities are capable to sustain a particular manner of being, and none that reconsiders *Viața românească* group as a form of sociability rather than ideological affinity.

Space is an important factor to be taken into consideration when discussing the bodily community. Glinoer and Laisney analyse the topographical aspects of the cenacle as the location inside the city, the size of the apartments and houses, the interior design, showing that the main feature of such a space is intimacy and isolation from the outer space. This intimacy specific to the cenacle (it is not proper to saloons or cafes) encourages a particular interaction between the bodies: the members come to know each other's gestures and to react according to them, the space is sometimes insufficient for the assembly, hence the physical proximity and contact, the frequency of certain manners and practices lead to a process of ritualization. The memoirs also shape a spatial imaginary representing the space as *space-in-common*, meaning that, on the one hand, it is infused with the group's images, and, on the other hand, it is a cohesive element, with a particular identity. The interior of the room, the manner the objects are arranged, the intimate "corners" that tacitly belong to some members of the community are correlated to the collective imaginary, and produced by the group's relationships and affect. Concurrently, the space is also a producer of structure and sense, a stimulator of behaviour, gestures, and attitudes. The space generates the living-together, constraints in a positive way by driving the individuals together, "forcing" them to interact and expose to each other. Analysing the particularities of the small groups, as opposed to the forms of seclusion, on the one hand, and to the macro-structures, on the other hand, Roland Barthes asserts that community is the result of living in the same

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place (*vivre dans un même lieu*). Different from the spaces of power, the space of the living-together (*le Vivre-Ensemble*) is characterized by marginality, permeability, and mobility, sharing an ethics and a physics of distance that is explained by Roland Barthes in the terms of "suspended solitude in a regulated manner" (Barthes 2002: 37). This means that the space of *Vivre-Ensemble* is shared and individual space at the same time, the members of the community interact while they are alone, preserving their personal territory ("the signs of my space"). To sum up, the bodily community is understood as physical presence in space, presupposing a plural composition that permits the bodies to exhibit their similarities and differences, their particular gestures and rhythms escaping a synchronized movement.

To analyse the collective implications of the gesture and the rhythm, I propose as theoretical reference Marielle Macé's study, *Styles. Critique de nos formes de vie*. The French researcher defines the gesture as a "moment of individuation"[3], meaning it is not an individual biographical label that creates positions engaged in battles of supremacy, distinctive signs, aestheticized forms of life, or staged "postures" (Meizoz)[4], but singularity, because it focusses on the relations, interactions, appropriation and expropriation, affirmation and alteration of the forms of life. Therefore, the gesture, rephrased as collective, and not individual mark, from an ethically engaged point of view, is regarded, on the one hand, as a "practice of attention" (*une pratique de l'attention*), and, on the other hand, as a manner of situating inside the community ("insertion in a medium of life"). Pursuing Aby Warburg's idea on the "intensified gestures", Macé thinks that the "gestural singularities" are the result of a "physical and perceptive capacity" to see and to be seen which drives to an ethics of attention apprehended as "power to be affected" [5]. The second function of the gesture is the insertion in a medium of

[3] "L'individuation n'encourage pas à penser des identités (un être «soi»), mais des singularités (un être «tel», un être «comme ça»). Singularités anonymes, moments fragiles d'un individu, qui impliquent avant tout une non-superposition, une tension, un débat entre les êtres et les styles qui les traversent, qui les animent sans les définir en propre, et qui peuvent aussi bien les quitter." (Macé 2016: 205)

[4] For Jérôme Meizoz, the "posture" responds to a current biographic and sociological demand of the literary study by seeking to redefine the concept of author. Hence, the author as posture refers to the modalities of the self-presentation and self-positioning in the literary field, the way the writer's image is publically promoted and negotiated by means of discourse (stylistic choices, culture, moral physiognomy), on the one hand, and by means of non-verbal elements (looks, gestures, behaviour, habits), on the other hand (Meizoz 2007).

[5] In this perspective, the oblivion is not at all an innocent neglijence but a lack of moral responsability, because it confiscates the forms of life: "C'est une vie dont le "comment" serait imposé, mutilé, inerte; mais aussi une vie dont le "comment" serait traité sans justesse, sans scrupule, lorsque les discours (les nôtres) en rendent mal compte, passent trop vite, confondent, croient reconnaître, ou négligent de douter de leurs propres opérations de

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life which is, in this particular case, the community, demanding a constant education of the diverse manners of life. In the next paragraph, I highlight some repetitive gestures in the memoirs of *Viața românească* group, that are analysed not to trace individual portraits but as a marker of the common, as discussed above. Rather than classifying the gestures according to typologies and functions, the aim of this paper is to set up a schematic scene of the gestural diversity. My interest consists in the reconstruction of the group's image, and the gesture, as posited by Marielle Macé, implies a dynamic engagement in a medium of life, it contains a collective predisposition, and not an individual imposition.

Due to their frequency and redundancy, the gestures become rituals, having significance only inside the cenacle while outside they cannot be recognized (see also Glinoer, Laisnay, 2013: 369). In fact, the writer feels solidary with the cenacle less in the ideas it promotes through the revue and rather in a certain familiarity with the other bodies, with their gestures, clothing or mimics. It is a fact that the gesture has a social component, that it develops particular bodily techniques that are specific to a certain culture, society, or group (Mauss, 2002). Therefore, the cenacle is capable to educate the bodies, to shape corporal schemes which are specific. Gestures call for other gesture, developing a somatic network that is activated only by the group and only in its meeting spaces:

> When Sadoveanu entered massively in the editorial room, with one shoulder forward, through the narrow door with two leaves, one of which was eternally fixed, after hanging his coat in the wall hanger, all the faces lightened; and Ibrăileanu even forgot to burn the paper of the cigarette. Sadoveanu fished out some small sheets from the pocket, on which were stringing microscopic letters like flees, and started reading. [...] After the reading of such a piece in *Viața românească* editorial, the comrades were astonished, mute... Only Ibrăileanu's eyes were trembling restlessly. (Sevastos 2015: 176 – 177)[6]

> One day the father Gala Galaction, white as Tolstoy and Santa Claus, made his appearance on the threshold of the daily vigils. He blessed us standing in the frame door, and making a priest like entrance. Some kissed his hand, others only faked kissing it, and the last bowed their foreheads as if at the liturgy. (Teodoreanu, 1947: 27)

catégorisation; dans tous ces cas c'est la dimension éthique du vivre qui est maltraitée" (Macé 2016: 292). This means that there are no lives without style but only lives that are "inadequately treated", "inadequately qualified".

[6] All translations from Romanian into English are completed by the author of this paper.

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The gesture materializes the reactions to the environment, meaning it represents possibilities to adapt to the gestural demands of the other. In this case, the gesture is not only recognition but also acceptance and apprehension. When Sadoveanu points his hand at the pocket of his coat in order to draw a manuscript, and Gala Galaction makes a priest like entrance, the peers respond, are engaged by the other person's gesture: they get ready to listen (Ibrăileanu forgetting to burn his cigarette!), are emotionally affected by the reading, and play along with the latter by making pious gestures. The cenacle models a participative "us" that acts and reacts, engages and responds, having value only through and for the respective community. Outside the editorial office, Sadoveanu and Galaction's gestures are incomprehensible, being emptied by the interpersonal significance they have inside.

The gestures, as mentioned before, become rituals, meaning they are universalizable, they encode a certain manner of life which is, in this case, the vocation of being a writer. This happens mostly due to a feeling of admiration towards some members of the cenacle, as in the case of Ibrăileanu, the "charismatic leader" (Glinoer, Laisney, 2013) of the group (although the cenacle escapes any hierarchy, being characterized by "literary camaraderie", the admiration for some peers act as a sort of ranking). In all the memoirs discussed here, Ibrăileanu's gestures, clothing, tics or actions are registered thoroughly, merging them into a fascinating figure. Here are a couple of examples from many others: "When vexed, he would pull the flat brim of the hat on his forehead. [...] He would grab the manuscript and bring it closer to the eyes, knit his eyebrows, and his dark pupils would start glowing row after row." (Sevastos, 2015: 19). Or: "Sometimes he found a catastrophic error in one of the printed sheets. Then he would get very angry, poke his hat with the finger down to his neck, like pushing it away. He would then knock at a little window carved in the right wall directed towards the printing office." (Botez, 1970: 338–339). Or: "The cape fell off his shoulders. He was sitting on the chair only temporarily. Every torrent of ideas, either indignation or enthusiasm, would make him stand up in a Faustian metamorphosis." (Teodoreanu, 1947: 71). After being noticed, the gesture is also registered, which means it impresses the receiver, becoming "intensified gesture", but also it fascinates, seduces, becoming an aesthetical code of life. Ibrăileanu's gestures are, for the members of the cenacle, the expressive instrument of his aesthetic experiences and feelings, hence they fall out the category of the normal behaviour, configuring a regime of exceptionality: "Sometimes he remained astonished, as if listening to the silence of the room likewise Irena who watched the struggle of a butterfly's wings between the blinds and the glass; and other times he pressed his cheek against the back of his hand like the heroine who reposed her blushing face on a marble stone."

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(Sevastos, 2015: 60). It is not the only example in which Ibrăileanu is described as fascinated or even in love with Turgenev and Tolstoy's heroines and the fact is explicable as Ibrăileanu himself proposes a philosophy of the reading stating that literature is an experience of life being capable to shape attitudes. In this perspective, the gestures of the "charismatic leader" translate into embodied images the idea the cenacle has about art and vocation in literature.

Further on, I will focus on the rhythm, as another way to interact inside the cenacle. The rhythm has an important place in Roland Barthes's theory of the community, defined as physics and ethics of the distance. According to Barthes the living-together, *le vivre-ensemble*, is (or at least should be) the result of what he calls "idiorrhythmy", understood as "manner in which the subject inserts itself in a social (or natural) code" (Barthes, 2002: 39)[7], but without obeying a controlling process as the rhythm is also "suspended solitude" and "communism of the distances". To put it otherwise, the issue raised by Roland Barthes refers to the manner in which the individuals accord or discord their "personal rhythm" to the common life, the way in which they insert discontinuities into the collective movement. Marielle Macé rephrases the complex and subtle problematic proposed by Barthes's thinking: "For Barthes the living-together represents the infinite accord of the rhythm; not the unanimous regulation in the same *tempo*, but the accord of the nuances that is able to generate differences: to individuate and to allow individuation, to protect, at the same time, the chances of sociability and the chances of solitude." (Macé, 2016: 259)[8]. In dialogue with authors such as Barthes, Meschonnic, Michaux or Baudelaire, the French researcher considers that the rhythm, as manner of being in the community, is not a simple acceptance of common rules, or conformity to the common needs, but disequilibrium, a perpetual struggle of an "infinite accommodation". In a common environment, the discords, the discontinuities, the individual rhythms are agreeing, as the community is always an encounter with other forms of life, with other rhythms, wherefrom the creative dimension of the discord: "to imagine other lives apart from your own."[9]

[7] See also the anthropology of André Leroi-Gourhan for whom the rhythm, present in the basic processes (such as muscle contractions or hand usages) as well as in the development of language and technology, is, on the one hand, the manner in which the human being inserts in the world, and, on the other hand, the origin of society. (Leroi-Gourhan 1983).

[8] Translation mine: "Car vivre ensemble, pour Barthes, c'était accorder indéfiniment des rythmes; non pas se régler unanimement sur un même *tempo*, mais accorder des allures qui devaient pouvoir demeurer différentes: s'individuer et laisser individuer, protéger à la fois les chances de socialité et les chances de solitude."

[9] Imagination has a crucial role in Marielle Macé's thinking, being no longer understood as a weakness of the mind, an escape from reality or the poets' privilege, but as a social, ethical and political practice, that enlightens our relationship with the time, space, group, nation,

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The Table of Shadows is a good example to illustrate the rhythmic manner of the community, since the members of the cenacle are recalled not in individual portraits, but positioned in the common space. This location "around the table" articulates a collective form of life: each writer intervenes in the common space with his gestures, mimics, clothing, becoming engaged and noticeable for the others:

> At the top of the table (on Ibrăileanu's side, meaning the farthest point from the door) was sitting Mihail Sevastos, shy, silent, with thick velvet eyebrows, sensual red lips, plump cheeks as if painted, black vanilla hair and eyelashes of an odalisque. [...] When talking, he used a single comprehensive say: "*one thing*". That thing could be a literary issue, a jar of cucumbers, a hunt, a strike or a war. [...] Professor Ibrăileanu entered pale (as if faded, lunar), with insomnia dark circles, shaggy, self-absorbed and taciturn. The light seemed to bother him, like the owls: made him turn away from it. He was sinking inward, as in a den, far from all and everything, hardly speaking with his smoky tobacco burned lips. Only after a bunch of cigarettes and discussions (of the others), he came to life, got fired up, gesticulated, jumped off the chair, weighed in with arguments, paced nervously. [...] And suddenly he would collapse into the armchair, exhausted, afraid for his health, of germs and drafts. [...] Facing professor Ibrăileanu, at the other drawer with manuscripts of the long table, right from Sevastos, was Topîrceanu. In his high school uniform (he was fifty back then) he was the embodiment of Voltaire's sharpness in his angular ugliness. A wagtail-like rhythm put Topîrceanu in a provisory state even when he seemed to stay. He only seemed, as I said. Because he never actually sat. He was always swinging, sometimes imperceptibly, but he never really stopped [...]. When Sir Mihai (Sadoveanu) entered, the floor groaned and the chair wondered about its existence. *He was* as the moonrise in one of his landscapes, overwhelming and yet astral, telluric and yet ineffable. I didn't understand him back then (as my today illusion thinks). But I was grasping him with a feminine attention (in my eye's tail), gathering the myriads of his apparent monotony. The pal Frunză (Axinte), with his redingote from the prehistory of the redingote, hid his smile in the curly beard (Russian as much as Greek), so absent that only at the end of the meeting you remembered: he was also there [...].

nature or our own body. Therefore, the imagination becomes a form of responsibility towards the environment and towards other forms of life, because it traces paths to the possibility of the being, apprehends the differences, the discords, preserving them as such with no desire for uniformity. The social harmony, already a brand in our globalized era, is not at all the response to social and political problems, as it sacrifices the alternative forms and generate totalitarian systems, while the creative disequilibrium, the imagination, is the foundation of democratic regimes as a mutual agreement for the right to disagree.

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> Sometimes Pătrășcanu showed up from Bucharest, with pointed beard and bold nose, having the colour and the vivacity of a squirrel. [...] Octav Botez, having the features of a bourgeois musketeer after twenty (sweet) years, with soft scarf, rubbers instead of spurs and (permanent) umbrella instead of sword, was living in a sort of ecstasy, as the teenagers in love. He made his entrance in a hurry, greeted, stripped out (from coats, scarves, umbrellas, rubbers) and stand among the others but also apart from them. He tried to listen and weigh in but succeed only in a fragmented superficial manner. I think that the editorial office was mostly the place where he encountered himself [...]. Doctor Cazacu got the effervescent romanticism of the civil disobedience. Just entered, he could be seen sewing the air and trumpeting. He sat on a chair but on the edge, as if temporarily, and protested something against the governance, smoking a giant cigarette from a giant cigarette holder, and, unable to keep still, flared up as conquering the Bastille once again. Doctor Cazacu was an explosion: an idealistic one. On the contrary, Mihai Carp (my former Romanian language teacher) looked like a church fresco that was only by chance dressed up with modern cloths. Handsome and pale, as the saints (and somehow Byzantine, slender), he was neatly dressed, having a fine predilection for the ties: always changing them. [...] Păstorel was coming every now and then: sometimes epigrammatically biting (what alerted Topîrceanu who was less spontaneous than Păstorel, slower), and other times showing the serious side of his speech, earnest to pedantry. As opposed to Ionel (who sceptically remained silent, being dressed in a blue silky shirt), Păstorel talked eloquently, having a ring on his finger, a tie needle, starched collar and faultless haircut. (Teodoreanu, 1947: 20 – 34)

The excerpt, which I quoted extendedly to capture the interactions between the members of *Viața românească* cenacle, is not a mere sequence of portraits, but, as anticipated, an imaginary performance of the rhythmic life of the community, consisted of accords and discords, of particular nuances and individual pulses. Each member is a participant to the common space by creating a self-image (*faire image* as postulated by Macé) from gestures, tics, clothing, phobias, behaviour, attitudes, manners of speech, each of them calling a special form of attention from the others, but these rhythmic singularities escape to adapt to a predetermined common motion (for Macé, *faire image* always comes with *faire avec*, that refers to the superposition of the self-image and the alternative images of the others). Reading Teodoreanu's text, we may re-imagine this rhythmic community that values, at the same time, the distance and the living-together: the insomniac Ibrăileanu who sinks into his armchair and jumps into discussion with large gestures and unusual verve only after smoking a few cigarettes, the restless

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Topîrceanu, always careful with his looks and taking the freedom to adjust his aspect in front of the others, Octav Botez who measures the room and looks over his friends' shoulders, the shy Sevastos who starts the conversation with same word, Sadoveanu who makes his entrance in silence, probably interrupting the on-going discussion, D. D. Pătrășcanu coming from Bucharest with news and anecdotes, the surprising Al. O. Teodoreanu, feared by Topîrceanu for his spontaneous jokes, but also eloquent and serious. The portraits of doctor Cazacu and Mihai Carp, comparatively depicted by Ionel Teodoreanu ("On the contrary, Mihai Carp…"), are also relevant, because the author is not preoccupied to institute oppositions or to delineate identities that exclude each other as much as to accentuate the possibility of consensus, the "conflict of nuances", in Macé's words: in the small communities, the extraverted doctor Cazacu, with his plain effervescent gesture may peacefully coexist with the introverted Mihai Carp and his extravagant looks. All these "manners of life" cannot be understood independently; they cohabit, communicate, and adapt to each other or, to put this differently, adjust their rhythm. Another important key-aspect is the preservation of the solitude inside the community, of the "idiorrhythmy", confronted by Barthes with the communitarian integralism that forces the rhythmic uniformity on the singularities (for Barthes, the power means the imposition of an incompatible rhythms on the others): for Octav Botez, for example, the friendly reunion of *Viața românească* cenacle is "the place where he better encountered himself", Topîrceanu takes time to adjust his tie or his hair strand, Ibrăileanu retreats in his armchair distancing himself from the conversation, Axinte Frunză assist in silence at the discussions of the others, Sadoveanu also prefers to listen than to weigh in. In addition, Teodoreanu's memoirs is a good example for the ethics of attention discussed above. In this sense, I partially resume Sadoveanu's portrait: "I didn't understand him back then (as my today illusion thinks). But I was grasping him with a feminine attention (in my eye's tail), gathering the myriads of his apparent monotony." Three consequences may be derived from here: firstly, the human being is seen as a singularity expressed in nuances and different manners of living, and not as a well-defined identical entity; secondly, these accents and properties are to be "grasped" by the attention of the other, implying, as Macé shows, an accommodation with the differences, an exercise of imagination that unbalances the individual by positioning him face to face with the altery ("imagine other lives apart from your own"); lastly, Teodoreanu emphasizes that this accommodation with the other is infinite, because it is only an illusion to think that life might be defined and classified, when it calls for a

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perpetual attention, being a continuous process of adjustment and negotiation.[10]

The living-together implies a confrontation with other forms of life, with other singular rhythms, preserving both solitude and sociability. The fundamental issue of the bodily community is the degree to which an individual is able to participate to the common life, a matter of dosage between the particular and the collective. In the end, I would like to bring into the discussion the manner in which the representation of the bodily community, analysed as rhythmic insertion in the *space-in-common*, is translated in the everyday practice of the community. As explained at the beginning of the article, the representations have a social function, they produce a social imaginary and carve figures of identity, meaning they are used and instrumented by the members of the community. To serve this purpose, I will refer once more to Teodoreanu's *The Table of Shadows*. The author records in his memoirs one of C. Stere's visit at the cenacle: "Today the monastic table of *Viața românească* was full, chair by chair, man by man, mountain of aches by mountain of ashes, clouds of smoke by clouds of smoke." (Teodoreanu, 1947: 43). In the mechanics of the writer's body, smoking is more than a mere vice, and rather a style of the artistic life, because it stimulates the contemplation that anticipates the writing process or, contrarily, it excites the sense and intensifies the emotions leading to existential obsessions. In small groups, on the other hand, smoking becomes a form of sociability that comes along with reading and conversation. Undoubtedly, those who share a cigar tend to neglect the discipline in the favour of a *laissez faire*, making conversation without predetermined rules (in comparison to saloons' *causerie*), regulated only by the lightening of the match and the exhaust of the smoke in the air (just think about the pause in the conversation the smoker takes to lighten the cigarette). Comparing different memoirs on *Viața românească* cenacle, it becomes easy to notice the attention for this collective vice, almost present in every portrait of the members. Ibrăileanu, for example, smokes a lot, with long pauses between cigarettes due to a personal ritual: being afraid of germs, he first burns the paper with the match until it carbonizes and his fingers start hurting. When appreciating a manuscript or an idea, Ibrăileanu lightens a cigarette as sign of pleasure and, on occasion, forgets even to burn it. Topîrceanu smokes cigarette after cigarette, in an accelerated tempo, especially when writing an article. Constantin Botez lightens cigarette after cigarette until coughing and choking. Always on the go, Ion Botez smokes a thick havana in the American

[10] In fact, Marielle Macé considers that the classification of the forms of life is a confiscation by the discourses of self-performances (dandyism, asceticism, mass-media). On the contrary, the style of life is a permanent task (*tâche*), because it has no predetermined value, but is always pending, always "to be made".

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style, covered in dense smothering smoke. Stere enjoys the cigar, doctor Cazacu is in the possession of a giant holder cut out for his giant cigarette, and Mihai Codreanu, always elegant and dressed up, prefers the pipe. Therefore, each member of the community smokes in a particular manner, with different kinds of items (cigarette, cigar, havana, pipe) and lightening their cigarettes in a particular moment of their activity (conversation, reading, writing). To sum up, there are different and singular manners to do the same thing. Rewinding to the episode captured by Ionel Teodoreanu, I try to imagine the scene: all the eyes are focussed on Stere who fascinates them with his Siberian stories, a great vicinity of the bodies due to the crowded space, possible only among friends, the lightening of the cigarette, gesture that probably incited the others to lighten theirs, each in his rhythm, but still together, in which case it is presumably they borrowed the gestures of their partners, and finally, the rising smoke intertwined with the neighbour's, generating a uniform mass that diffuses the personal frontiers and reunites the individuals into a collective image.

The community, therefore, may be analysed as participation and not only as belonging, which makes possible the configuration of collective forms of life leading to some difficult ethical problems such as the modalities of insertion in a medium of life, the adjustment of distances, or the maintenance of solitude inside the community. The gestures, clothing, tics, behaviour, rhythm are forms of exposure and participation to the world, the connection between the individual and the community, the surface where individuals interact and also keep their solitude without damaging the common life. However, this sort of approach does not exclude the problem of belonging to the community. A further analysis of other forms of self-representation such as the correspondence, the articles, the polemics, the dedications, the parodies would open the discussion on the complex mechanisms of legitimation, positioning, verification, and recognition inside and outside the community.

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