FELIX ADERCA THE PUBLICIST

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Abstract: *My choice for Felix Aderca's work and personality was based on the intention of trying to re-evaluate them in the new context of the post-revolutionary cultural era, marked by their re-discovery, by editing and re-editing of his most representative works*.

Key-words: *writer, publisher, judgement*

From the beginning I have encountered an aspect that makes a "case", or better said a paradox observed by his newer and older critics that still continues to excite.

This "case" consists of his prolific and multiple trained personality, his capacity to be a self teaching with vast and various lectures in French, German, English and Italian languages known since his adolescence.

Felix Aderca was found in the fertile and tumultuous years between the two World Wars, in the center of all major debates regarding the process of our literature's modernization.

He was an active and listened protagonist of this process who was fighting on many fields (as a poet, prose and drama writer, publisher and mostly as literature critic).

He became too early the most wanted target of the attacks of the leaders and his rivals, defenders of the traditionalism in its' most eloquent currents, the "samanatorism" and "poporanism".

Advocate of the symbolism and later, frequent user at theoretical level of the European vanguard movements, he developed a permanent and committed publishing activity for the support of their offers.

He did not ignore the perennial values and experiences of the universal culture and spirituality, from the Greek and Latin classics, running through Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, Dostoievski, up to Baudelaire, Taine, Valery, Proust, Ibsen, B.Show, Pirandello or Gides.

He revealed their diverse and captivating work to the Romanian readers and sometimes even to his writing fellows.

"Prodigious and restless, modern insurgent up to spectacular rebellion and in the era of imitations, irrational temptations, abusive sufficiency, authentic, independent, irritating, with the greatness of those who punish the imposition, the futility of the empty words, the malformations contaminated by the arbitrary, Felix Aderca" says Z. Ornea, in a praising article issued due to the writer's birthday centenary, "appears to me today the creative spirit which deserves to talk to".

H. Zalis. who is one of the most listened exegete and above all, the main publisher of Felix Aderca's work, says :

"It is very hard to concentrate in a definitive formula now, when we are sketching the most important data about Felix Aderca's personality, the dominating part of his writing. Poet of epigone fineness in the beginning, prose writer, biographer, permissive critical spirit to the becoming talents – at a time and simultaneously – and finally drama writer, to remind some of the directions in which we engaged his writing, Felix Aderca has a complexity that excludes the uniqueness. Rather from the mixture of

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epic and lyrical, of gentle grace and massive exclusivity, of styling and conformation, of penetrating wisdom and unsatisfied curiosity, the excess and surfeit are speciously cancelled ".

His personality offered him prestige and authority, but determined his work's critics to dissociate frequently between his calls. That's how is explained the fact that against some certain accomplishments in the novels or short-stories (at least "The He-Goat" and the stories from "The Woman With White Skin", even the articulated "1916") , in journalism and critique ("The Testimony Of A Generation") is just an example. But testimonies are also the essays included now in the two massive tomes of "The Critical Contributions". All of them were well appreciated by the era's famous critics.

Felix Aderca remained always in the waiting status of a definitive recognition that failed to come.

The prodigious critic from " Sburatorul " that Lovinescu didn't hesitate to ask his opinions, noted as young fellow's flair in finding a new talent or a value of a critical work read there. He left us a vast literary legacy.

Looking down to this, in older or newer editions, as well as in manuscripts preserved at the Romanian Academy Library, represented an effort.

I hope I answered this effort made to measure the stake that I assumed.

This consists of revisiting his work in order to re-confirm or to reveal the weakness of the critical judgments, or to formulate new ones when required, scattered through the lots of publications and collections from the war period.

The effort was no so easy, not because of the thousands of pages that I had to run my eyes through, but because of the need to systemize the literary material scattered through them.

I outlined in this manner, the essential lines of a vast and self dispelled activity and outlining this way the writer's profile in its' most significant aspects.

The major difficulty of my approach was the extent of the author's work and especially, its' distribution in old editions, some of them being rare, in many of that time's periodicals, some of them nearly forgotten, as well as in manuscripts fortunately preserved till nowadays at the Romanian Academy Library.

I mention that for many of them I managed to get through and read them at the source. Some other I read through the notes of the critics' editions for example the excellent couple of volumes of "Critical Contributions" in the care of Margareta Feraru, or by indirect means.

The forewords signed by the literary critic and historian H. Zalis were of real help. These forewords accompany its' editions of the writer's main novels.

A precious guidebook, indispensable instrument for fixing and, mainly, understanding the most significant and partially disputed events in Felix Aderca's biography, was the manuscript that has the provisional title "Autobiography", which I was able to consult at the Romanian Academy Library.

I avoided as much as possible the contamination from the pathetic shade of his confessions included in the "Autobiography".

As journalist, Felix Aderca was one of the prophets of "the absolute evil" that will embody the Nazism in Europe's last century 30's and 40's.

Without establishing an immediate conditioning between the constant attitude of rejection regarding the Nazi horror and his ethnical background – because himself avoided as much as possible not to do it, the writer is first of all a Romanian, as he defined himself since the Parisian period.

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I reached to the conclusion – also underlined by some, but few and relatively late commentators of his work – that some pages from his novels (especially "1916" and "The Rebellion") cannot be entirely put in historical context, but perhaps even aesthetic, without those details from his own biography.

There are very interesting his anti-traditional arguments, his attempts of constraint to some of his personal aesthetic ideas, his great battles carried for the recognition and ccknowledgement of the new and great values of the literature beginning with Tudor Arghezi, "a new Eminescu" as he entitled him, George Bacovia , Liviu Rebreanu, Hortensia Papadat-Bengescu, Camil Petrescu, Lucian Blaga, Mihail Sadoveanu, Anton Holban, Mircea Eliade or the youngest Eugen Jebeleanu, Maria Banus, Zaharia Stancu which he proposed to Tudor Arghezi and promoted mostly in the pages of "The Parrot Tickets magazine".

I could not miss of course, his approaches, many dedicated to a modern, flexible, coherent essay work, to the advantage of writers and artists which marked the universal art and literature, such as Marcel Proust (Felix Aderca has harshly defended his "absolute priority" by introducing the French prose writer to the Romanian public), Baudelaire, Mallarmé , Valéry, Dostoyevsky, Ibsen.

I'm mentioning also his popularization articles of the European historical vanguard movement (first of all the expressionism, then the Italian futurism).

His prose was also very interesting. Thus, from the "Suburb" seen as place alienation, from his first novels, then passing through the erotic "myth" (of "he-goat", as the "The Dionysiac Ecstasy Of Flesh" , passing through the "bovarysm" of some of the heroines (especially Alina from "The God of Love: The He-Goat") and the excellent stories from "The Gardeners" to the acceptance of realism with the help of satire from "The Adventures of Mr. Ionel Lacusta Termidor", or to the vast picture of war from "1916", up to "the resigned rebellion" and "the judiciary absurd" from his latest important novel "Revolts".

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