POSTMODERN SCENOGRAPHIES: ALEXANDRU MUŞINA

Author of several volumes of poetry that were well received by literary critics (*Strada Castelului* 104, *Lucrurile pe care le-am văzut*, *Aleea Mimozei nr.3*, *Tomografia şi alte explorări*, *Personae*) Alexandru Muşina stood out among the writers of his generation due to the manner in which he knew how to render the grotesque and precariousness of existence in the vivid colors of a sarcasm hardly softened by an irony that subtly distinguishes appearance from essence, fake from authentic, reality from illusion. The suggestion of the terrifying and anomia as features of a disjointed reality persists, subsidiarily, behind apparently calm poetic forms and images, hence the sometimes unsettling air of the poems of Alexandru Musina, an aspect mentioned by Romulus Bucur, for example: "Between *Experienţe* and *Ode* there are, on the one hand, common notes, on the other hand, a shift of focus. Vocabulary betrays the interest in the area where chemistry and biology, as symbols of human insignificance, interfere. Imagination is manifested mainly at a visual level, and shares something of the disquieting character of the imaginary of de Chirico and Dali. A sorcerer apprentice plays in a monstrous way with living forms, the main difference between *Experienţe* and *Ode* consisting in the fact that in the former, the poet is placed in the center, in the position of a guinea pig, while in the latter he manages to reach a degree of objectification ". The "foggy Romanticism" that Radu G. Ţeposu spoke about is rather a matter of temperament than of method, provided one looks at these romantic touches while considering the maximum lucidity used in articulating them and while considering their continuous ironical and self-ironical relativism. Always refusing poetic abstractization, the visions of Alexandru Musina are rather bent on the concrete; they feed on the fibers of the most acutely phenomenal reality. The call to the direct perception of the world is intertwined in many poems with the exposure of being to the translucent regime of dream, through which the elements of reality lose their everyday weight, are transferred to another ontic mode, of levitation, of the separation from the terrestrial, and of the ecstasy of living, as in the poem *Podul Cotroceni* (*Cotroceni Bridge*), where the concrete world, with its banality and precariousness is reflected in the steamy, utopian mirrors of erotic illusion: "În apa galbenă a Dâmboviţei m-am privit./ Era, cred,

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toamnă şi mă credeam student./ Credeam că te iubesc, că eşti nebună/ De mine/ Eram aşa cum sunt: gălbui nedefinit./ Oraşul tot se urinează-n mine/ Dar nu îmi pasă.// Ai vrut să mori. Am vrut/ Să simt cum mâna/ Mi se desprinde şi pluteşte peste case. Şi că rămâne/ O mână galbenă la loc.// În apa Dâmboviţei m-am privit./ Ce dacă era toamnă! Ce dacă aveam frunze/ De soc şi de arţar pe faţă!".

An exploration of the biological entrails of being, of the secret geography of blood and lymph of the human body can be found in *Ode*, poems in which the calligraphy of rarified emotion meets the naturalistic-ironic vision of subliminal existence as in *Oda a X-a. Osmotica*, a radiography of body's fears and of the chiaroscuro of instinctual life. The lyrical picture is, to a greater extent than elsewhere, dominated by a misleading imagery with surreal echoes in which disparate things and notions come together in fragile and yet distinct lines, of a precise poetic impact and effect: "În înotătoarea rechinului vom găsi/ Bila de cristal a ultimului rege, în spaima copilului/ Otrăvuri venind prin cordoane de sânge, în după-amiezile noastre/ Suspinul umed al celui murind.// Nimic nu iese din plasa subţire a atomilor,/ Nici măcar acest gând atât de amăgitor/ Încât se prăbuşeşte în sine, nimic/ Nu arde dincolo de gardul sfios/ Al celulelor – nici măcar/ Corpul tău desenat pe rulouri fine de ametist.// Sorbind aerul camerei el continuă/ Să plângă-n plămâni, sorbind carnea tare/ A trupului tău ea continuă să plângă/ În vinele mele, sorbind/ Ceaiul de mentă-al acestei amintiri ea continuă/ Să-mi ardă pântecul întocmai/ Înotătoarei vinete a rechinului encefal". Many of the poems of Alexandru Musina appear to us in the ambivalent guise of paintings where, besides the reliability of prosaic objects and situations we find the fantastic thrill, the play of Apollonian appearances and of terrifying suggestions that intersect one another in varying proportions; referentiality, self-referentiality and symbolic valences are the instances that rule supreme over this poetry that is attracted by phenomenality, but also by the visionary, metaphysical perspective alike. Obviously, to all this can be added the ironical instinct of the poet, which oversees with due attention the performance of language and vision.

A poetry of contrasts is thus configured, as highlighted by N. Manolescu, a poetry composed of inconsistencies and contrasts, between expectation and result, cause and effect, or between the illusion caused by the feeling of love and the contingent, with its shadows and precariousness.

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Revealing, in this respect, I find *Întâmplare XXI*, a poem in which the epic the form, the arrangement of vision in several sequences, does not prevent the articulation of a poetic atmosphere dominated by the contrast between the real and the symbolic, between ostentation and the camouflage of meaning: “Eu sosisem cu marfarul de 4,50/ Îmbrăcat în hainele albe, de gală./ Ea mă întâmpinase cu inima/ Plină de îndoieli ca un cornet cu seminţe./«Tu, neprihănită, i-am zis, ce mai faci/ Liliecii necomunicabili şi sofisticaţi/ Ai grădinilor tale»/ Ea mă privi cu un fel de reproş/ Mirată că nu îi sărut mâna sau nu îi arăt/ Bucuria de a o revedea;/ Apoi îmi desprinse de pe umărul drept/ Un gândac auriu, şi, fără să spună nimic,/ Coborî încet treptele tocite/ Ale centenarei noastre catedrale”. Referring to the structure and themes of the poetry of Alexandru Musina, Mircea A. Diaconu noted in *Poezia postmodernă*: "serious issues are not absent from this poetry. But how language is structured and how these issues are approached is different from modern approaches. For moderns, such a mixture of speeches, with "tribal" insertions in a solemn context, with hilarious and grotesque parodies, with decentered message, would not have been possible. Important is that the motivation behind the distinctive marks of Alexandru Muşina's poetry is not polemical: one does not see here a reaction against modern poets but a new attitude towards existence.” There are also a few poems in which reflexivity turns into self-reflexivity, the poet leans over his tools, seeking to reveal the dimensions and meanings specific to poetic craft, to lyrical landscape, to its history, flora and fauna („Aerul poeziei e blând./ Acţiunea ei începe primăvara: se deschid/ Câteva ferestre şi ies fecioare şi arlechini, se aude/ Un sunet îndepărtat de corn.// Sărbătoarea poate porni: cu inorogi, prapuri, roşii mandoline,/ Cu priviri şi semne tainice. Dacă ziua e lungă/ Vom vedea şi o vânătoare de mistreţi.Dacă nu,/ La amurg vom schimba inele şi jurăminte,// Pe sub pământ, gnomii caută aur./ Pe câmp, ţăranul aruncă grâul./ Pe casă berzele îşi fac cuibul şi se iubesc: un dans/ Caraghios şi plin de gingăşie.// Aerul poeziei e blând. Cândva/ Şi noi am locuit acolo şi am cântat”). Poet of the real, of the mediocrity and precariousness of everyday life, Alexandru Musina perceives, on the other hand, the universe, but also cultural history with an ironic and parodic eyes; the eclecticism of his poems reveals, beyond the mixture of sober notation and joyful play of the imaginary, a recessive gene of challenging and disillusioned/disillusioning sarcasm. A purely cerebral poet, who knows how to skillfully manipulate his own emotions, the

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revelations of bookish memory and lexical modulations, Alexandru Musina is more than a " poet of the real " (Eugene Simon); he is rather a poet of the dramas and cracks caused in the conscience by reality, a reality that is aggressive, polymorphic, obnoxious and often decentered in terms of ontic significance. And Alexandru Musina adheres, through vision, style, means and expression, to the "Poetry of Daily Occurrence", transcribing, without a shadow of illusion, without any mythicizing aura, slices of life, revealing details, crude gestures, faces and facts of immediate reality, all that in an apparently neutral writing, disengaged and unbiased, but in fact marked by skepticism and even by a wave of gnosiological cynicism.

Lecţiile deschise ale profesorului de limba franceză A. M., initially published in the collective volume *Cinci*, then republished in *Strada Castelului 104* (1984) fully illustrate such a poetic and gnosiological posture. These are poems that seem stuck to the epidermis of reality, in which things and people, stories and gestures, decompose and recompose to form together an image of commuting that is parodic and serious but also sarcastic and serious at the same time. Ion Bogdan Lefter considered that "*Lecţiile deschise*... are a collection of small tableaux (seven in number) of great freshness, moving through the authenticity of "described" or suggested feelings, funny through ironic verve, offensive through their often conspicuous sarcasm, full of nerve and crafted with the finesse of a jeweler. There is no contradiction between the profession of everyday realism, registered as such, and careful drafting of the text, mastered to the point of calophile stylistic performance. This is tantamount to removing confusion between authenticity proper and the authenticity effect, between real truth and literary verisimilitude (...). The illusion of closeness to reality (Aristotle once said) can only be obtained by building it with literary skill. Musina's *Lecţiile* build such effects using a linguistic mechanism assembled and tuned exclusively for them." *Lecţia a şasea. În clasă* extracts from amorphous existence the meaning of the French lesson, during which the teacher and students play a grotesque comedy of learning, with language and didactic thinking stereotypes, but also with discrepancies or even gaps between teacher expectations and poor linguistic reflexes of learners. The most overwhelming pressure carried by these lines is that of clichés, of fetishized conventions or rigid habits, in an absurd atmosphere in which real communication is replaced by farce of inert and alienating dialogue:

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„instrument multilateral cu grijă lipesc/ cartea alb-gălbuie de catalog etamină motive populare/ copiii ăştia au nişte părinţi minunaţi artizanatul local/ exportă în japonia sua germania etc e drept/ îi cam bat îi pun la rînit la cartofi nu-i lasă/ la şcoală îi fac uneori la beţie nu-i nimic/ aceasta-i sarcina mea ce sigur sună blachiul/ pe betonul proaspăt spălat nobila misiune / pluteşte ca o aureolă pe fruntea tot mai înaltă bonjour mes élèves/ bonjour camarade professeur ia te uită iar nu au cretă".

Repressive teaching methods, the parody of communication and education, suggest the standardization of thought and speech, in a scenario which, beyond the precise details of representation of reality, seems to be the result of a terrifying imagination: "stai cuminte şi jap instrument indispensabil alb-gălbui deschideţi/ cartea la pagina 13 jap ha ha cum mă iubesc/ instrucţie şi educaţie zicea grasul ăla terorizant jap/ cam demagog dar avea jap dreptate pedagogia avem/ o datorie de onoare tourner/ a întoarce a învîrti jap a se învîrti dragul meu pune mîna pe carte/ şi nu te rînji la mine jap ha ha nu scrie în frunte/ cum se citeşte ai stai jos bine trei jap au revoir mes élèves/ au revoir camarade professeur uaeiiiii ce entuziaşti/ sînt tinerii ăştia cîtă energie blachiul sună/ cristalin pe betonul proaspăt spălat precis". The last part of the poem shifts the emphasis on the prosaic reflexes of the life of teachers, the author faithfully recording their speech and psychology in sober, neutral, efficient notations intimately connected to the referential universe: "iar nu au adus ăştia de sus banii birocraţi/ nu ştiu ce-i munca proşti domnule proşti proşti proşti/ trîntesc catalogul las să cadă/ instrumentul indispensabil alb-gălbui în gura ştirbă şi neagră/ a servietei diplomat 314 la munte sau la mare în orice-împrejurare". *Lecţia a şasea. În clasă* is not, in fact, but a tragic-comic and sarcastic scene of the comedy of commuting teacher AM's life; it is craftily cut out, with care to details, but also with a touch of ironic parody that can not be missed.

A poem of a completely different structure and vision is *Cele simple*. An almost bucolic air is present here, an atmosphere of calm, freedom, a candor of writing and atmosphere in which past gestures and events are projected on the retina of the poem. Time seems to have stood still somewhere in the darkroom of memory, where the moments of the past are captured, with all their load of life and emotion. *Cele simple* is, in fact, an elegy on the theme of passing, with a simplified physiognomy transcribed in minor tonality, in which things can be perceived with clarity; in their

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crystalline brilliance, the poet discerns smooth meanings and iridescences and a seraphic peace descends on consciousness: Cine îşi mai aminteşte de noi? Şi de ce/ Şi-ar mai aminti? Vara e cald, pe Dealul Taberii pasc/ Caii oamenilor. Pe o cocoaşă verde/ Liberi sînt caii. Şi sub buştenii din gară/ Rîmele întemeiază noi colonii.// Un vînt adie dinspre rîu. Miroase/ A flori de munte, a fîn uscîndu-se la soare, a brad./ Păstrăvii-şi amintesc vremuri mai bune,/ Ape mai clare. Dar supravieţuiesc, dar se bucură/ De scurta vară de-acum". From this typical scene where the present seems to freeze in crystal shape of verse, the poet is shifting to the past, a past populated with events and ceremonial-ritual gestures, in which details are evoked with disturbing concreteness and events have fresh reverberations in the mirror of the present: "Cîndva ne-am tolănit amîndoi la soare într-o poiană./ Trunchiul pinilor era roşu, al mestecenilor negru cu alb./ Într-o fustă albastră erai îmbrăcată. Am povestit/ Despre adolescenţă, despre studenţie. Vorbele încercau/ Apa cu talpa lor mică, sfioasă, triunghiulară. – Am privit/ Printr-un ciob afumat eclipsa. Tu ai văzut/ Păsări, fiare, reptile. Un curcubeu.// Cîndva am ieşit cu toţii la plajă. La rîu./ Fetele nu aveau costume de baie. – Am rămas/ Şi noi îmbrăcaţi. Ne-am suflecat pantalonii/ Şi ne-am răcorit picioarele-n apă./ Erau ca nişte pietre. Rozalii. Ca nişte/ Melci de apă dulce. Ca nişte raci/ Scoşi din platoşa lor. Sub un capac de sticlă, subţire".

Alexandru Musina is, in this text, a poet of essences that hardly allow themselves to be guessed under the surface of things. Events and gestures that evoke them, even the seemingly mundane and without symbolic dimensions, have a barely perceptible aura of mystery, have the reflexes of a complicated emotion, passed through bookish lenses. Oscillation between past and present is, in some way, also evidence of a gnoseologic indecision that the poet implicitly confesses, an indecision caused by time's tyranny, which blurs the outlines of things, abolishes the identity of beings, disfigures physiognomies. The last sequence of the poem amounts to a return to the present time, to the rhythm of basic and immediate life: "Cine-şi va mai aminti? Leul roşu/ A trecut departe de cer. Leul verde/ A adormit lîngă calea ferată./ E vară acum, totul în ordine:/ Respirăm, funcţionăm, existăm. La ce bun/ Şi-ar mai aminti?" The style of Alexandru Musina's poetry is, above all, one of simplicity and expressive austerity. The clarity of drawing, the elegiac tone, the sketchy but so expressive notations, are the primary qualities of his lyrical text. *Budila-Expres* is perhaps the most

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widely read and most quoted poem by Alexandru Musina. It is an ample poem, divided into several tableaux, a programmatic poem, and also illustrative for the poetry of the 1980s generation. Referring to this poem, Mircea A. Diaconu wrote: "Indeed, *Budila-Expres* - text consisting of six distinct sequences, each building around a poetic attitude, of a particular 'motif'- is, eventually, a 'sarcastic elegy.' We are dealing here with a sensitivity outraged and charmed by the concrete, seduced, at the same time, by intertextual solutions, with an appetite for all inclusive totality, in which everything - contradictory states, distinct perspectives - merge. The poem, a build-up one, requires the existence of different levels of reading; simplicity is only apparent, but only the whole reveals the poetic substrate engaged in the exposure of absurd but at the same time playful daily life and in the construction of meanings to match it."

The sequences of the poetic text are nothing but stages of an initiatory journey, as has been said, within the perimeter of a small scale reality, where the ridiculous, banality, the lack of ontic significance and the anonymity of gestures and physiognomies are prevalent. In *Introducere* the poet proposes a kind of elegy of alienation and existential isolation, using the tools of sarcasm and relativizing irony. Human existence, regarded as subversion, the real seen as a place of damnation and reclusion, put face to face with the precarious escapist solutions, are the primordial elements of the poetic imaginary at stake here: "Cei care m-au iubit au murit înainte de vreme,/ Cei care m-au înţeles/ Au fost loviţi pe la spate şi înmormîntaţi în grabă, cei/ Care mi-au tras la xerox programul genetic au înnebunit/ Şi-şi plimbă în soarele amiezii/ Privirea tumefiată, creierul mirosind a cloroform.// După o iarnă lungă a venit vara caldă,/ Fructele noastre nu au avut timp să se trezească,/ Fructele celorlalţi se vînd la suprapreţ. Dimineaţa/ Ne primeşte totuşi cu braţele deschise, totuşi lumina/ Mai bate în epiderma fanată, totuşi vîntul/ Nu mai aeriseşte orbitele duhnind de amintiri.// Am pierdut totul. Portarii hotelurilor/ Ne-au uitat, femeile fragede şi aristocrate/ Ne-au uitat, hamalii din gări ne-au uitat şi liftierii,/ Vînzătoarele de flori şi negustorii de nestemate,/ Ne-au uitat străzile, ne-au uitat casele albe/ Pe care urca iedera ruginie a vechii «la bella estate».// Am pierdut totul./ În paradis, în clipa cea repede, în metalul închipuirii/ Nimic din noi n-a rămas. Un avort/ Rapid, aseptic, elegant". The second part of the poem, *Senzaţie*,, translates into a disturbing picture of concreteness, with quickly juxtaposed remarks and private oneiric suggestions of a higher

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sense, a twisted, alienating and proliferating reality, endlessly multiplying its forms and facets in a delirious germinative will. One cannot also overlook the bookish elements, which somehow represent a fictional counterpoint to filthy, ridiculous, anonymizing reality: “Din cînd în cînd trompeta îngerului/ Scoate sunete de fanfară. Din cînd în cînd ne aşezăm la masă / Ciocnim ouă roşii sau pahare de vin, conversăm./ Din cînd în cînd/ Dansăm în semiîntuneric cu femei/ Proaspăt spălate şi mereu stînjenite, din cînd în cînd/ Ieşim în spatele casei, la munte, din cînd în cînd/ Stingem lumina şi transpirăm.// Sau se sparge conducta, vecina ţipă / După poştaşul întîrziat cu pensia, beţivii urinează/ Pe zidul caselor de vizavi, o salvare/Trece uşor pe deasupra inimii şi duce departe/ Cîte un corp solid familiar.// Din cînd în cînd se aude trompeta,/ Maşini greoaie ca nişte hipopotami stropesc/ Pavajul încins, vînzătoarele din cofetării/ Fac strip-tease şi, goale, se bat cu frişcă, din cînd în cînd/ Cîte-un director se umflă ca un balon, se înalţă/ Apoi se sparge, dispărînd din Univers, din cînd în cînd/ Cîte-un afiş/ Multicolor ne promite Noul Ierusalim/În schimbul a treizeci de bani sau al tăcerii.// Sau traversăm zidul putrezit al Grădinii şi culegem / Globuri de aur cu care îmblînzim viitorul, sau deschidem/ Nasturii aerului şi posedăm furioşi/ Trupul cald încă al iluziei.// Din cînd în cînd ne amintim de Gondwana,/ De pelasgii mîncători de scoici, de Cung-Fu,/ Ne amintim de sarea-n bucate, de Rosamunda,/ De vasele din Micene, de sandaua/ Filozofului, din cînd în cînd pomenim/ Nume fără sens, însă dulci/ Inimii noastre: Herbert Read, Marcuse,/ McLuhan, John Berryman, Platon, Eminescu, din cînd în cînd/ Vindem pielea ursului din pădure şi ne/ Cumpărăm jucării”. *Context*, the third sequence of the poem, is, in fact, a shift from the diurnal regime, of the alienating concreteness, to the sphere of the artistic, of liberating but at the same time, mystifying fiction. Several definitions of poetry, drafted in a parodic and ironic tone, are present in this sequence: “Şi apoi mă întîlnesc cu păianjenul blond,/ Cu arlechinul domesticit, cu domnişoara de silicon, / Cu ursuleţul Yoghi, cu marele gagicar./ Toţi mă întreabă despre poezii, toţi mă întreabă/ Cum e noua mea viaţă.// Nu sînt trişti, dar nici veseli. Trăiesc/ Într-un aer de celofan, aşteaptă clipa/ În mare linişte, gata împachetaţi.// Ei mă întreabă despre poezie, acea trebuinţă/ Ţîfnoasă şi plină de ruşine a adolescenţei,/ Despre poezie, precupeaţă grasă şi care/ Ne-a luat pe nimic inimile de puştani şi le-a pus pe aţă,/ Despre poezie, cuvînt plicticos,/ Pe care dicţionarele-l mai pomenesc/ Din conformism şi vocaţie inerţială.// Despre noua mea viaţă în

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ţinuturile boreale,/ Dincolo de sciţii cei îmbrăcaţi în blănuri,/ Şi, bineînţeles, despre Budila-Express".

In *Defulare*, the fourth part of the poem, we deal with a descent into the inferno of reality, into a world of promiscuity and everyday banality where things lose any transcendental thrill, retrieving their contours in the most pure immanence, in their everyday inertia. An Arcadia with broken meanings is described here, in somber, almost apocalyptical colors, and the feeling of nude referentiality is all the more acute as the statements giving shape to the lyrical tableau are equidistant, notations are neutral, the drawing is clear and emotionally disengaged: „Şi noi am călătorit cu Budila-Express,/ Şi noi am văzut feţele stoarse, ca nişte cîrpe ajunse/ La gradul zero al folosirii, ale junelor navetiste,/ Şi noi am simţit fluidul neîncrederii oarbe/ Coborînd ca acidul sulfuric în oase, şi noi am văzut/ Banchetele jumulite de vinilinul/ Din care aborigenii îşi fac portmonee, şi noi / Am descoperit cultul secret/ Al stomacului, sexului şi capului aplecat, şi noi/ Am pătruns în catacombele realităţii,/ În subsolul paginii de ziar şi mai jos de subsol,/ Acolo unde nu mai există decît/ Carnea şi timpul, senzorul obosit.// Şi noi am cules laurii de staniol/ Ai după-amiezelor petrecute-n şedinţe, şi noi/ Am luptat în întuneric cu diverşi/ Dumnezei judeţeni, şi noi am stat / Pe malul fluviului şi am plîns, şi noi am căzut/ Sub mesele negeluite ale cazinoului Paupasse-Oul, am răcnit,/ am expectorat Sofistica rîncedă a acceptării, şi noi/ Am auzit şuierul glonţului pe lîngă urechi/ În Budila-Express." Part Five, *Filtru*, includes elements of the most corrosive rebellion against a world adrift, against a compelling reality in which liberty of conscience was unacceptable and unthinkable. The description of the factors of evil, of an order that abolishes freedom and human essence itself, is revealing and disturbing, through the expressiveness of dark colors and vitriolizing ecstasy („Atunci au năvălit, izbucnit, explodat:/ fofilatorii şi scatoscotocitorii pontatorii şi antemergătorii/ lingecuriştii şi drogheriştii femeile de cauciuc şi cele evidenţiate/ eşanjiştii şi stahanoviştii alchimiştii şi verslibriştii/ lucrătorii cu gura şi cu despicătura cu mapa şi sapa/ secretarele şi debarasatoarele recţii şi erecţii/ matroanele şi prefecţii balena albă şi pajii/ coafezele şi dormezele brodeuzele şi vibromaseuzele/ liniştitorii şi concasorii puţopalmiştii/ verbali şi funcţionarii municipali contribuabilii/ şi subcontabilii vacile domnului şi seminariştii ac/ tiviştii şi pasiviştii comutatoarele şi prezentatoarele/ mamele patriei şi taţii burduhănoşi cititorii/ de manuale şi

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meşterii de zăbale animatorii/ şi picolii soioşi scopiţii şi neofiţii scrobiţii/ şi neofaliţii soldaţii de plumb şi poliţaii de carbid/ cu amintirea copilăriei conservată în heliu lichid/ c) Ei mi-au spus, sugerat, ordonat: / TREBUIE E NECESAR SE CERE/ TREBUIE E NECESAR SE CERE/ TREBUIE E NECESAR SE CERE/ TREBUIE (dar eu...jap!) mi-au spus/ E NECE (dar real... buf!) SAR/ Ei/ TREBUIE! mi-au ordonat./ d) „O.K." am zis./ Şi am îmbătrînit"). The end of the poem traces the contours of a world dominated by posters and advertisements, an picture of reality in idyllic colors, generally idealized. Of course, there is in this framing of reality in advertising utopia, a vague self-ironic inflection, as sarcasm, irony and the parodic instinct of the author disfigures the terror of everyday life by bestowing upon it a disquieting relativizing posture ("Afişe imense. Color. Peisage./ În prim-plan, o frumuseţe locală/ Cu basma roz, autentică, şi dinţii/ Întregi şi proaspăt spălaţi. În fundal o fanfară de îngeri/ În costume naţionale"). An ironic and self-ironic journey into a degraded reality, sometimes regarded with revulsion, some other times with detachment, but also with a despair barely disguised as sarcasm, *Budila-Expres* is a poem of the refuge in the text, in fictionality, in the subversiveness of the word that preserves its negating availability.

The *Lykianos* poem is part of the volume *Personae* (2001), a book of epigrams where we find some of Martial's sarcastic verve and where contemporary reality is treated in corrosive colors, but also in ironic braces. Critic Alexandru Cistelecan considers that Alexandru Musina "is not a satirist. He does not have the incisive pedagogy of the satirical and does not want to reform or to correct manners. His characterology lives on gratuitous, skeptical observation, on the show as such of the 'masks,' more focused on the humor of situations and temperaments than on the 'teachings' that should be drawn from them. Musina is a spectator, not a teacher. He takes here the Latin form of the epigram and, by an operation of caustic craftsmanship, brings it to contemporaneousness, operating selections among the heroes of the day. Like Martial, he too uses fictitious but transparent "names," pseudonyms being obviously referential. 'Characters' are made to parade, on the other hand, in an ancient, Greco-Roman cultural referentiality, this anachronism allowing a refined bookish exercise in classicism." *Lykianos* is one of the most representative epigrams in what this type of expression of Alexandru Musina is concerned. Obviously, the character targeted by the epigram is easily recognized

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through the references that the author provides the reader. But the referentiality implied by the species of the epigram is not the one that supports the artistic mechanism but rather the leap into metareferentiality, that occurs at a certain moment in time, which has been noted by Al. Cistelecan.

A feature of this epigram is the subtle play between appearance and essence, the moralizing suggestion hidden in the text and the continuous sliding between the strictly contemporary referent and its disguise in ancient extra: "Mai mult negustor decît filosof,/ Lykianos a înălţat un altar/ Măruntului retor Neokides, numindu-l/ Zeu al gîndirii. Şi cere/ Fiecăruia obol: cît aur poate să dea, sau pămînt,/ Sau vite. Sau, cel puţin,/ Să-l asculte şi să-l admire numai pe el: preot şi singur urmaş". Stylistically, Alexandru Musina's epigram enjoys all the expressive benefits of the genre. We find here the lapidary drafting of moral drawing, the sober notation, the accurate capturing of specific characteristics, the quick emphasis on the revealing detail, and also the asceticism of notation. Moral judgment is not exposed ostentatiously, but rather suggested, allusively exposed in an expression retrenched in itself. Irony and calophile spirit, bookish echoes and the play between fiction and reality are just some of the expressive qualities of this text of indisputable stylistic refinement.

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