

Miracle of Poetic Creations

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Abstract: “Nature is a temple in which living pillars/ Sometimes give voice to confused words;/ Man passes there through forests of symbols/ Which look at him with understanding eyes”. These are the thoughts written down by the French poet Charle Baudelaire. At present it can be certainly reaffirmed that namely the symbol constitutes the key to the spiritual universe insight. In this context, I will remark the following: same to the great Danube, that has been being sung from the oldest times in folklore creations, represents a symbol. For Eminescu the Danube symbolizes the force of resistance of the Romanian nation on the invaders way. While Marin Sorescu, named the Danube “Its Majesty”, as this river expresses the glory of the nation, as well as the Romanian greatness and dignity. The present generations are very considerate as well to this river that flows along Europe, since, while referring to the Danube, we speak of the dialogue, of the indispensable reciprocity as the commercial relations have been kept on the Danube from ancient times.

Keywords: symbol; spiritual universe; relations; dialogue; Danube

From the earliest times the Danube has been being sung in folk creations, eulogized in the most representative literary writings.

Like that, the contemporary generations are concerned as well about the river that flows along Europe, it being the second dimension after Volga. This is understandable, for, when referring to the Danube we should think of the dialogue, of reciprocity, because on the Danube people have been trading in all times.

And it is not by chance that Marin Sorescu used to name the Danube “Its Majesty”. Whereas for our great genius, Mihai Eminescu, the Danube symbolizes the force of resistance of the Romanian nation on the conquerors’ way.

In this regard we’ll make a reference as well to the literary writing by Nichifor Crainic “The Danube’s song” – a creation with an evident character of a doina, that

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merges thoughts and sentiments the roots of which can be found in our folklore and traditions:

“Danube, Danube, cradled way,
Dustless way and timeless way
Lead to the Mediterranean waters
The longing of springs for the oceans.”

By this verse N. Crainic expresses the wish of our nation to fraternize with the whole humanity.

Whereas in the verse “generations and generations by the wave and the wind... We live with doina and with the land” there is expressed the steadiness of the forefathers and the followers on our homelands; maintaining our national particularity, in spite of thunderstorms and hardtimes that we had to face.

In this context we set the objective to present in the following lines the miracle of poetic creations by Romanian authors as well as by the authors from other countries.

“Man passes through forests of symbols in this life” - the thoughts written down by the French poet Charle Baudelaire.

Indeed, we can affirm with certainty at the present stage as well that namely the symbol forms the comprehension key of the spiritual universe.

A confirmation in this regard are the poems written by Grigore Vieru that represent through creation the symbol of mother, of Motherland and of the native language.

Therefore, the symbol of mother in the writings by the dear departed poet is warmth, sensitivity, love, childhood, longing. In this regard, the poems by Vieru are persuasive: “Mother’s icon”, “To mother”, “Mother’s lips”, “Mother’s eyes”, “Mother’s hands”, “Mother’s nights” and many, many others.

It is the case to make reference to some passages from Vieru’s poem for illustrating the above thoughts:

“When I was born, on my forehead I
Had a royal – crown:
My mother’s parental hand,
My mother’s parental hand...” (*Mother’s hands*)

It is not by chance that G. Vieru's creation is appreciated at the highest level by the experts in the subject field. "Vieru is the poet of his time. I consider that any nation having him as a son, would be proud of him" (Vieru, 2008, p. 670), this is the conviction of Ghivi Alhazışvili, one of the worshippers of Vieru's literary art from Georgia.

Another poet who is considered by the contemporaries with righteousness to be a symbol of the national renaissance movement from Basarabia, is Dumitru Matcovschi. Love for the forefathers' language, for mother have an important place in the poetry, prose, dramaturgy, publicistica of this martyr of our nation.

That's why, for good reason, one of the literary critics – Vitalie Raileanu – wishes to emphasise that D. Matcovchi's poetry is full of lyricism, is the one of the most sung, this is a poetry learnt by heart, a poetry that is whispered by love, an admirable poetry, a poetry that kneels before history. To these appreciations we can add that symbols in D. Matcovschi's lyric hide a deep meaning, cultivating this way the most noble features to the reader. The following verse illustrates our conception:

"...Nowhere in the world a stone warms up

Just homeland stone grows a blade of grass

Nowhere an ant is so baby-like,

Nowhere you feel like beside your mother's heart"

(Nowhere in the world)

On the basis of passages from the mentioned poets' creations we can see that symbolist poetry is exclusively a creation of a pure sensitivity. Whereas the subject of the symbolist lyric is formed by unexplained heart feelings, they will be expressed just by means of suggestions, for they don't undergo clear formulation. So, there are plenty of means through which there is attained the expressive suggestion.

However we should focus our attention on other particularities of the symbolist poetry as well and namely the pursuit of the exterior musicality, that is attained not just due to perfect rhymes and rhythms, but especially due to constant repetition of certain vowel sounds or of certain words. But in the free verse there are expressed by the symbolist poets the intimate motions of the poetic sentiment for rendering better the essence, by breaking prosody rigours.

In this context, the world – famous scientist Ovidiu Drâmba affirms the following statement: "The symbolists were the first who theorized the free verse, reaching

sometimes up to the stage where they used to prescribe a certain technique, for attaining a real “suggestive orchestra”, of a poem”. (Drâmba, 1993, p. 203).

If we make reference to concrete names of the poets who join this literary movement, we’ll see that they belong, predominantly, to the French symbolism. And it is not by chance. Symbolism is a literary movement that started in France at the end of the XIX century. And the name of the movement comes from the title of a famous article – manifest – *Le Symbolisme (The Symbolism)* that was signed by the poet Jean Moréas in 1886 – the period when a group was formed and who called themselves symbolists, being led by the poet Stéphane Mallarmé.

On the other hand, it is necessary to emphasise the fact that symbolism creates a radical transformation not just of the French poetry, but of the concept about poetry, as a whole, determining a series of characteristics of the modern poetry.

Although, the beginning of this radical turning was produced much before the official constitution of the movement and of its theoretic foundation. In this context, the statement by the expert in the domain Sergiu Pavlicenco is illustrative: “Symbolist poets from the years ‘80-’90 weren’t but some epigones of those poets, to whose names there are related, usually, the greatest achievements of the symbolism in poetry: Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Mallarmé” (Pavlicenco, 2006, p. 297).

Moreover, it should be taken into account that French symbolism has had a significant influence over the European poetry by transforming its old pattern, relieving the verse of the corsets that used to suffocate it, though without totally rejecting the traditional poetical technique, on the contrary, they enrich it.

Whatever is the attitude to symbolism, it can’t be questioned in any way the following fact: the innovatory esprit of the poetic creation by Baudelaire, Verlaine, Rimbaud or by Mallarmé gave a new direction to French lyric, further stimulating the evolution of the European and world lyric as a whole.

In this context, while making reference to the creation of Romanian poets, we see that the most susceptible poet to be touched by the aesthetic of ugliness and by the technique in Baudelaire’s manner is Tudor Arghezi, literary critics often point out similarities regarding the verse alchemy which emphasises the ugliness, disgrace, “the venom from honey”, in an aesthetic product.

As an argument in favour of the stated ideas is the recent research by the academician Mihai Cimpoi, where he mentions an incontestable fact: Eminescu, Bacovia and

Arghezi become relatives with Baudelaire namely through the exploration of the person's anxious state of mind by symbolist means.

More than that, in the creation of these three poets, the intimate approach to the poetica of Baudelaire was nuanced by the specific Romanian reservation with regard to ugly, excessive, lugubrious, indefinite, conventional, to the tradition to place the entire universe within its organic unity.

I referred above to a series of data and facts related to the creation of symbolist poets, to the distinctive features of this literary movement. We shouldn't forget, however, about Alexandru Macedonski among other Romanian poets who were influenced by French symbolism, who brought a fresh, new breath into our native literature throughout his entire literary creation.

Alexandru Macedonski, being considered as a modernizer of Romanian poetry, wrote verses nourished by the leaven of modernist movements from the end of the XIX century and first of all by the symbolist poetry. Alexandru Macedonski's creation appeared to contemporaries as strange and not just once, obscure. Although, its meaning remains to a large extent obscure even after a pretty considerable passing of time. A special interpretation necessitates some data from the poet's biography.

In 1883 he exiled himself to France. Namely here he is captured by the Belgian wing of symbolism. He starts writing in the French language. When Macedonski returns to his motherland, he launches his first symbolist manifest – *Tomorrow's poetry*. (1892).

After this Macedonski's feather laid down the volumes of poems *Excelsior* (1895), *Golden book* (1902), *Le calvare de feu* (1906), *Sacred flowers* (1912), *The rondels poem* (1916) etc.

From the very start, to clarify things: as being a complex personality, the poet doesn't admit to be caught within any pre-established scheme and can not be annexed easily to any doctrines or literary movements. Researchers used to attribute him either to classicism (Ștefan Petică, N. Davidescu, Tudor Vianu, Vladimir Streinu), or to romanticism (the majority did so), either to symbolism (starting with the poet himself), or to Parnassianism (In *Rondels*, in particular), whereas G. Călinescu considers that in Macedonski's creation "romanticism in Byron's – Musset's manner merges with the fine arts Parnassianism, but also with symbolism reverberations" (Călinescu, 1982, p. 183) which makes clear the difficulty to "fix" it within a framework, as well as the creator's polyvalence.

As regarding the poet's background, Tudor Vianu remarks the complementary duality that is composed of misanthropy and running – start, of scepticism and enthusiasm, of trust or contempt for people and of great love for the unaltered forms of the nature. Later, Adrian Marino suggests and then demonstrates “the drama of the ego duality” while conceiving in his vast monography “Literary work of Alexandru Macedonski” the chapters “Ideal and real, Life and death, Escape and regression, Revolt and calm, Willpower and fatality etc.” (Marino, 1978, p. 45).

A special presentation necessitates, in this context, the poem *December night*, which is considered by lots of experts to be the highest peak attained by Macedonski. In fact, namely in this poem the problem of destiny itself as well as the poets' fate are rendered symbolically. It is symbolist, by the symbol that impersonates the author himself; the poem *December night* is in particular new for the musicality of the infinitely nuanced verse and for the rich landscape in images that change each other by merging one into another as orchestra tunes.

Alexandru Macedonski also achieves his supreme art in the poem *May night*. In contrast to his earlier creations, *May night* nither has a plot nor even any literary action. The entire poem is along one hundred verses but a single glorification, a single crescendo of the soul regarding Spring theme. So, the entire poem has a musical construction, I would say, even a symphonic construction, according to the literary critic Ion Pillat.

Taking account of the given exemples, we'll emphasise the fact that Alexandru Macedonski – the initiator of the Romanian symbolism – recognizes both his romantic and Forty – Eighters connection in his creation, as well as the impact of the distinguished French symbolist poets Musset, Lamartine, Gautier etc. Whereas *Nights* represent a synthesis of his entire poetic art. In this case the so called unity through diversity in Macedonski's lyric can be noticed: themes, motifs, ideas, attitudes, means of expression. The suggestion of integrity is created by the sentiment of the infinite rebellion and by the ascending temptation, by the irrevocable contrast between the real and ideal.

Macedonschi is unequal when regarded in all his creation. Correspondingly, so unequal, full of value are *Nights*. The creations *January night*, *February night*, *August night*, *November night*, seem to be successful to a greater extent: they can be compared, by making the necessary dissociations, with *Letters* of Eminescu; as masterpieces have been considered to be *May night* and *December night*, the latter is always compared with Eminescu's *Lucifer*.

In this regard, we'll mention that *Nights* of A. Macedonski appeared between the years 1879 and 1901, initially, they were published in magazines like ("Literator", "Independent review", "Moral force", then in the volumes "Sacred flowers" and "Excelsior"). The poet had a rich artistic experience and he regarded with lucidity his past time full of all kinds of literary hostilities, for treating himself as a cursed poet, aggrieved by a society to the forms and lifestyle of which he couldn't adhere. *December night*, a creation to which I made reference a little earlier, should be understood as a poem in which Macedonski, being in the position of firm ethical beliefs, considers and sets his condition: he should live with dignity, being confident in his star of a great poet who doesn't do any concessions, first of all of artistic character, and always must keep the eyes on his unattainable ideal.

After a deeper familiarisation with Macedonski's poetry, the incontestable truth becomes more and more shaped, attesting that *December night* is the absolute success in all his creation. Macedonski ascends the peaks of the great poetic art through its ethical – philosophical concern, as well as through verse virtuosity, which makes this poem turn into a real modern symphony where the contrapuntal technique leads to the polyphonic support of the ideational substance.

The poet is a romantic by the theme, ideology and symbolic; Macedonski is a symbolist by the musical magic of the text, by the cult of precious stones, by the chromatic nuance predilection. This way, after the sterile practices of the instrumental – symbolism had been consummated, the poet was realizing in *December night* a brilliant synthesis, something between romantic tradition and innovating elements of symbolism. To be added, this poem represents by itself a metaphor of the hostile environment to the man of genius. It consists in the presentation of the man of genius' destiny, who is isolated in a society that is hostile to the value and which aspires to attain the absolute. The central symbol of the poem is Meka, representing the absolute in religion, in belief, in spirit.

Moreover, the experts in the domain are unanimous in the opinion that this poem represents by itself as well a story within a story, to be said more precisely, the poem represents a story in a framework, combining the epic scenario with the profundity of the lyrical significations in the allegory of the superior man condition who is present in the poem *Lucifer* created by Eminescu, and also in *Riga Crypto and lapona Enigel* written by Ion Barbu, as well as in *Wild boar with a silver tusk* by Ștefan Augustin Doinaș.

The adjacent motifs of the text are: the doomed, devoid of inspiration poet; the brilliant ruler; the antithesis between the common man and the superior man.

The final part of the poem *December night* represents a return to the initial setting of the man of genius' affirmed superiority. The society, being philistine to real values, is the presence of allegory in the verse "And wolves are howling on the lowland".

We'll make reference to the experts' in the domain opinions for consolidating the above statements. Accordingly, the literary critic Constantin Trandafir, writing a preface to one of Alexandru Macedoski's poetry collection, wants to emphasise the following fact: "Macedonschi is the first Romanian writer who related more intensely with the innovative literary movements and with the representatives of these, apart from romanticism: Edgar Allan Poe, Baudelaire, symbolism, instrumentalism and decadent movement, especially with Verlaine, Mallarmé, Moréas etc:" (Trandafir, 1998, p. 15).

Whereas A. Macedonski's personality is described in the following way by those who knew him and appreciated his creation: being a spirit tempted continuously by the novelty, he documents permanently, does propaganda in his country, influences himself without falling into imitation, takes a stand pro or con, but even imagine himself, in certain respects, a precursor. He doesn't fix himself dogmatically in any formula, he acts just absorbing essences and arriving to reject the excesses and improprieties. Macedonski shows constantly fresh and unpredictable by the critical adoption of some new poetic attitudes and techniques. Being in contact with the French literary reviews and with creations of writers who moved forward romanticism he was offered the chance for launching and for exceeding an accomplished study.

What is more, A. Macedonski places in circulation Baudelaire's creation in our country, who had been known incidentally. He recognizes Baudelaire's "genius", interprets poems or determines translations, he accepts with discretion Baudelaire's influence. Most of all he feels an approach to the French poet due to the preoccupation for perfect forms, exotic nostalgia, the spleen, the temptation for ascension.

However, Macedonski's strongest relations, but not too fruitful, were with the symbolism, the French symbolism, of course. He is the first theoretician of this movement in the Romanian area. Like Verlaine, the Romanian poet places music prior to everything, affirming that the poetry of tomorrow won't be but music and

image. And it will be suggestion. Symbolism, with the view to suggest any ideas, depicts one or more images which are turning into reflections in the end.

The symbolist impact brought to Macedonski the assimilation of new themes, motifs, nuances, attitudes, techniques like: musicality, the word's magic, symbolist valences, correspondences, suggestion, imitative harmonies, instrumentalism, the free verse. As regards the free rhythm, about the paternity of which the French symbolists also "argued", Macedonski, claims his primacy, by his poem *Hinov* from 1879:

"...Treading on this struck dumb land,

I see what you don't see:

shadows of those heroes

we all descended from;

and sitting in the silent valley,

can't help but laugh at rhythm

and mock at any rule;

my rhythm is the uproar

their mail coats produce."

With the discovery of symbolism and instrumentalism, Macedonski doesn't hesitate to do some exercises in this manner. The creation *On the forest lassos* is recommended by certain connoisseurs as being the first symbolist attempt in the Romanian language:

"In the forest lassos darkness that frightens,

A leaf remains silent close to leaf and tree close to tree;

Night is gloomy, silent night, lifeless night, opaque sky –

Yet the nightingale is singing, yet the nightingale is singing..."

In the next lines we prefer to be concerned with other Macedonski's poetic realisations. So, it is known that he had been writing rondels long before that he left his contemporaries with whom he was in conflict, even when he had decided to show indifference, as it follows from *The rondel of contemporaries*:

"These contemporaries of mine

Go incessantly in for the same sport:

For thirty years they are calling me dead

More and more scoundrel, more and more malicious”.

In fact, namely in the last part of his life Macedonski dedicated himself to this form of verse fix, by implanting it in the Romanian language. *The poem of rondels* (published posthumously, in 1927) represents, alongside with its novelty for our poetry, also the highest peak in Macedonski’s lyric. The recourse to fine arts values, love for inanimate but artisticallized things, aspiration to the magic of the word and to perfection of forms, striving for domination of tumults and for peaceful contemplation speak of the parnassian impact. However, similarly to Ion Barbu’s case, later, can be said that parnassianism doesn’t absorb him and neither the one that exists is not a strict one, in the meaning accredited by Leconte de Lisle (much too glacial and monotonous).

It was noted, starting with Tudor Vianu, that Macedonski is the first among our poets to be captured by the ineffable poetry of things that “speak” – a reality with consequences of the most striking. His preference is heading for objets d’art intensely evocative: in japanese style, chinee style, knickknacks, porcelains, jewelries, suggesting the obsession for perfection, the cult of beauty indifferent to exterior determination. One cannot exclude the contagion of Jose Maria Heredia.

This passion for miniature and gracious, the refinement placed in love for things and for the chiselled image with great care will make a tradition in our poetry (Dimitrie Anghel, I. C. Săvescu, Al. Obedenaru etc.). *The Murano Cup Rondeau* is the most significant while regarding the affinity for inanimate objects, but spiritualized by man.

“‘ Tis not a gold; tis of rays of sun.

By gryphons held and stretched.

It is a casting splendour,

With it I raise a toast to you”.

Like symbolists, Macedonski receives the abundance of colouring and gets drunk with the parfumes (in 1920, the poet died by inhaling rose parfume):

“My garden’s stunned by roses

And all around is too

Stunned would be the heaven blue,

And, buzzing, drunk, the bee”. (*The Rondeau Drunk with Roses*)

Next, “that rare drunkenness” turns into a musical oblivion:

“... When I smile, I constantly forget, and sing,

Despite the misdemeanours of my life...

And roses are still here... and there”. (*The August Roses Rondeau*)

As everywhere, in conformity with the symbolist technique, in *The Dying Roses Rondeau* the poet resorts to musical suggestions, to the delightful virtues of words:

“It’s dying roses season, see?

They die in gardens, just as they die in me

So full of life were they,

And yet so easy they will die today.

In everything a shiver runs through,

Grief is felt by everyone and you.

It’s dying roses season, see? –

They die in gardens, just as they die in me”.

It is evident that namely in *Rondels* Macedonski wished to ascend to sublime by the construction of some paradise lands, where he wished to isolate conceitedly, but he couldn’t overcome – it wouldn’t even have been, probably, advantageous – the passionate and combative temperament, which is so clearly seen in all his poetry. Instead, he succeeded in creating some of the most expressive Romanian poems. By the way, this fact is confirmed also in the opinions of many literary critics. For example, Tudor Vianu states: “...Macedonski ends as a poet- musician, as an artisan of the word, a feature, which in all his endowing alternated with that of a descriptive and visionary poet, with the view to realise one of the most complex formula of the Romanian literature” (Vianu, 1972, p. 216).

“It has been told that Macedonski would be an innovator regarding the new poem. Nothing, is actually true. Macedonski was our greatest classical poet: his innovatory value consists just in the fact that one thousand and one circumstances placed his greco – latin concept about art in front of Eminescu, who contented himself with

being a simple poet of genius... This is about a poet for whom writing has an incontestable value of intellectual harmonisation of sentiments, of his enhancement in large graciously meandering lines, of a clear unfolding of his entire concept and of a rigidly consecrated form”, (Davidescu, 1976, p. 205) - this is the opinion of the expert in domain N. Davidescu, who reconfirms Alexandru Macedonski’s literary creation value.

It also should be mentioned that in the journal “The Literary Man”, 1880, A. Macedonski paves the way for the new artistic direction. While theorising the symbolism, he showed meanwhile taste and sympathy for nearly all other literary movements having an innovative character.

While approaching, before 1890, the problem related to the art of romanticism and of symbolism, Macedonski states that a poet is not but an instrument of the sensations received from nature, which he transmits then in unique formulations; his poem appears as an overflowing of the sentiment. The poet emphasises, this way, the romantic side of poetry. After 1890, in *The Art of Verses*, he reveals the fact that poetry has an interior music, that is nothing other than prosody musicality. This idea will be echoed in *The Poetry of tomorrow* (1892), in which it is stated that poetry is music and image, form and music. Its origin would reside in the universal mystery.

Poetry would have a private logic; it tends to differ from prose, by creating a tongue of its own.

Other times, he states that poetry doesn’t have any direct relation to cogitation: the domain of poetry is thus far from being the property of cogitation. It belongs to image. In another article (*About poem*), he reveals that to be a poet means to feel: poetry should awake cogitation, it shouldn’t be a cogitation by itself. Macedonski pleads for lyrical synthesis and, a poem should comprise keen limits of spiritual state, it should be the man’s heart by itself. So, here is the poet opting for a veritable poetry; this way have been explained the reservations that he will manifest the moment symbolism becomes, partly, extremist and decadent. After Macedonski, decadence has no regard for fundamental principles of human nature and of surrounding nature.

I have presented here a set of data and supporting arguments referring to life and activity of A. Macedonski that convince us in the necessity to study and interpret his writings in the perspective of the contemporary generation, due to the fact that he is a poet for whom writing has an incontestable value, considered unique because of the remarkable harmony of sentiments.

This is one of the most perfect poets and it is our duty to look for him and to propagate his creation, especially the genre in which he realized himself with absolute dedication.

Thus, referring to poetic writings by the above mentioned masters of literary art we conclude that they expressed plenty of spiritual states and first of all their veneration of native landscapes, which, actually, ensure our Romanian identity.

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